

Muhammad vs. Jesus:
Which One Offered the Ultimate Miracle?
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Introduction: Which Religion, Islam or Christianity, Provides Proof It Is from God?

I. Muhammad's "Miracle": The Quran.

A. The only "miracle" that Muhammad offered as proof that he was Allah's prophet was the Quran itself.

*"This Qur'an is **not such as can be produced by other than Allah**; on the contrary it is a confirmation of (revelations) that went before it, and a fuller explanation of the Book - wherein there is no doubt - from the Lord of the worlds." – SURAH 10:37*

Note: Some Muslims believe, even without evidence in the Quran, that Muhammad performed many great miracles that went beyond natural law based on the Hadith (i.e., reports of his sayings and deeds) (See The Correct Books of Bukhari, vol. 6, bk. 60, no. 390).

B. To Muslims, what makes the Quran an even greater miracle is that it was written by Muhammad who they believe was illiterate.

*"Those who follow the apostle, the **unlettered** Prophet, whom they find mentioned in their own (scriptures),- in the law and the Gospel;- for he commands them what is just and forbids them what is evil..." -- SURAH 7:157*

Note: Some scholars believe that "unlettered" should be translated "gentle" or "heathen."

1. Muslims believe there is no way an illiterate man could have written such a great work of literature (the Quran) without the help of Allah, in which they say there is no comparison.

"Or do they say, 'He forged it'? say: 'Bring then a Sura like unto it, and call (to your aid) anyone you can besides Allah, if it be ye speak the truth!'" -- SURAH 10:38

C. Muslims believe the Quran is great in beauty and elegance and that this is evidence it is from Allah and that Muhammad is his prophet.

*"Say: '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'." – SURAH 17:88 (See also Surah 2:23)*

"Muslims do not claim any miracles for Muhammad. In their view, what proves Muhammad's prophethood is the sublime beauty and greatness of the revelation itself, the Holy Qur'an, not any inexplicable breaches of natural law which confound human reason." – Al-Faruqi, Muslim author

D. Muslims also point to two passages of the Quran (30:2-4; 89:2) as “fulfilled prophecies” as further proof that the Quran is a miracle from God.

II. Jesus’ Miracle: His Resurrection from the Dead.

A. Jesus performed many miracles, as recorded in the gospel accounts (Mat. 4:23; 11:4-5; Jn. 2:23; 11:43; etc.): *Even the Quran admits this!* (Surah 3:49; 5:110).

B. The greatest miracle or sign Jesus offered was His resurrection from the dead that gave proof that He was the Christ, the Son of God (Mat. 12:38-40).

Rom 1:4 (NASB) who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,

C. The resurrection of Christ is essential to the foundation of Christianity.

1 Cor. 15:12-15 (NASB) 12 Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; 14 and **if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.** 15 Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we witnessed against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised.

WHICH ONE (Muhammad or Christ) PROVIDED A TRUE “MIRACLE”?

III. Did Muhammad Provide a True Miracle? (i.e., the Quran).

A. There were no eye-witnesses of Muhammad receiving revelation from God.

1. The Quran comes from one source, one man alone - Muhammad.
2. There are no witnesses, no one who can corroborate his testimony.
3. The entire body of “evidence” that the Quran is from God is founded on what one man said: Muhammad.

B. There were no miraculous signs performed by Muhammad to verify that he had received the revelation of God.

“The signs are only with Allah, and I am only a plain warner...” -- SURAH 29:50

C. The apparent beauty and elegance of the Quran is not enough to prove that it is from God (i.e., too subjective, based on man’s opinion).

D. The only “prophecies” made in the Quran were not true prophecies at all!

1. Muhammad’s prediction of the victory of the Romans over the Persians (Surah 30:2-4) was too general and vague, not specific in detail as true prophecy is (e.g., he predicted victory in a few years; It took 14 years).
2. Surah 89:2 refers to their sacred season of Pilgrimage (first 10 days of Dhul-Hijah), not 10 years of persecution (Too vague to be prophecy!).

IV. Did Jesus Provide a True Miracle? (i.e., His resurrection).

A. First of all, Jesus did actually die on the cross.

Muhammad declared, in the Quran, that Jesus never died, but was taken away by Allah:
“They killed him not , nor crucified him, but it appeared so to them... For surely; they killed him not ... But Allah raised him up unto Himself” – SURAH 4:157-158

- Muslims contend that Jesus never really died on the cross, but instead fled to India! There is a shrine that supposedly marks Jesus’ burial place in Srinagar in the valley of Kashmir, India.

1. Some Muslims have charged that Jesus merely “swooned” or fainted and passed into a state of semi-consciousness that was mistaken for death.
2. Other Muslims charge that Jesus had been given a drug that made him appear to die, putting him into a coma-like state temporarily.
 - a. However, Jesus refused drugs to deaden the pain (Mk 15:23); He only received sour wine to quench his thirst (John 19:28-29).

3. *Jesus did in fact die by means of crucifixion.*

a. Even before being crucified, Jesus was scourged (Mat. 27:26).

- When it was determined by the centurion in charge that the prisoner is **near death**, the flogging is stopped and he is led to his crucifixion: *Roman floggings usually consisted of 39 lashes or more!* (scourged with a flagrum which has bone and metal to lacerate the flesh).

b. Crucifixion was a real practice during ancient times.

- In 1968, archaeologists discovered the remains of a crucifixion victim from the year A.D. 70: His two heel bones were still fastened together by a single iron nail to wood.

c. Crucifixion is designed to bring about a certain death **as medical authorities confirm** (e.g., The Journal of the American Medical Association, (March 21, 1986), 1463).

- With arms outstretched, spikes were driven through the wrists on to the horizontal crossbar, and with the knees bent, spikes were driven through the feet.
- The actual hanging on the cross with arms outstretched would cause a dislocation of both shoulders (Psalm 22:14, 16).
- Crucifixion puts stress on the muscles and diaphragm, putting the chest into the inhaled position; In order to exhale, the person must push up on his feet.
- Slowly, but surely the victim dies as his oxygen level decreases; He soon suffers hypovolemic shock due to the loss of great amounts of blood and eventually cardiac arrest and heart failure.

d. Roman guards verified Jesus’ death.

- Commonly, they broke the legs of the victims of crucifixion to hasten death (so they could not push upward to breathe). In the case of Jesus, they did not break his legs, for he was already dead (John 19:33).
- The Roman guard piecing the side of Jesus indicated his death as both blood and water came forth (John 19:34) -- **medical proof of his death** (e.g., Samuel Houghton, MD., University of Dublin)

e. Even if by chance Jesus survived the cross, he would have suffocated by being wrapped with linen wrappings and spices for his burial (a hundred pounds! - John 19:39-40).

B. Jesus was buried in his own new tomb.

1. Joseph of Arimathea, a member of the Jewish Council that voted to condemn Jesus, asked for his body and buried him in a new tomb (Mat. 27:57-60).

Note: Joseph did not vote with the Council to condemn Jesus (Lk 23:50-52).

a. Jesus was safely buried (1 Cor. 15:4), not eaten by birds on the cross nor dug up from the grave by wild dogs.

C. Apostolic witnesses of Jesus' resurrection are credible by all accounts in a court of law!

1. They were in a position to know the facts, having spent a considerable amount of time with Jesus (about 3 years; 1 John 1:1-3).

2. They had no ulterior motive in preaching that Jesus had risen.

1 Cor 15:30-32 (NASB) 30 Why are we also in danger every hour? 31 I protest, brethren, by the boasting in you, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. 32 **If from human motives I fought with wild beasts at Ephesus, what does it profit me?** If the dead are not raised, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.

a. They had nothing to gain materially; Instead, they received persecution, ostracism, and martyrdom.

b. All the apostles, except for John died martyrs deaths according to reliable, ancient tradition:

- Simon Peter, Simon the zealot, Andrews, James, son of Alphaeus, Philip & Bartholomew crucified.
- Matthew and James, son of Zebedee killed by the sword.
- Thaddaeus killed by arrows. * James, brother of Jesus, stoned to death.
- Thomas killed by a spear thrust. * Paul was beheaded.

3. Their writings are historically accurate (e.g., Luke 1:1-4; 3:1-2).

- Sir William Ramsey, regarded as one of the greatest archaeologists and historians who ever lived said this: *“Luke is a historian of the first rank; not merely are his statements of fact trustworthy... this author should be placed along with the very greatest of historians. Luke’s history is unsurpassed in respect of its trustworthiness.”*

-- William Ramsay, St. Paul the Traveler and the Roman Citizen (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1982).

4. There was agreement between numerous witnesses (1 Cor. 15:1-8), *including* non-Bible sources (e.g., Cornelius Tacitus, Suetonius, Plinius Secundus, Flavius Josephus).

V. The Proof That Jesus Offered a True Miracle – the Miracle!

A. Jesus was buried in His own **new** tomb with a large stone against the entrance.

Matt 27:59-60 (NASB) 59 And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, 60 and laid it in **his own new tomb**, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away.

1. No other dead bodies would be sharing this tomb with Jesus (e.g., tombs typically held up to six bodies!). **Only one body to account for.**
2. The tomb was cut out of rock: There would be *only one* entrance which would also be the *only* exit from the tomb.
3. “A large stone against the entrance of the tomb” prevented people from gaining easy access to the body of Jesus.

B. Jesus was buried in a **securely sealed** tomb.

Matt 27:62-66 (NASB) 62 Now on the next day, which is the one after the preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together with Pilate, 63 and said, "Sir, we remember that when He was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I am to rise again.' 64 "Therefore, give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day, lest the disciples come and steal Him away and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last deception will be worse than the first." 65 Pilate said to them, "**You have a guard; go, make it as secure as you know how.**" 66 **And they went and made the grave secure, and along with the guard they set a seal on the stone.**

1. The Roman guard was placed at the tomb and a Roman “seal” was placed on the stone (stamped w/ official signet ring of Roman governor).
 2. The seal signified the power and authority of the Roman Empire!
 - a. Those who dared to break the seal would incur Rome’s wrath!
- An edict believed to have come from either Tiberius Caesar, who was Roman emperor at the time of the resurrection of Jesus, or from Claudius Caesar who ruled shortly afterward, was uncovered in 1878 at Nazareth, the hometown of Jesus. This edict, “The Nazareth Inscription,” was engraved in marble with the following words:
“Proclamation of Caesar. It is my desire that graves and tombs remain sealed for the benefit of those who have made them and for their children, family members and their religion. If, however, anyone accuses that another has either destroyed them, removed the buried, or with ill intent has taken them to other places in order to wrong them, or has removed the sealing on other stones, I order that person be brought to trial. Just as a man should respect the gods, so also with regard to me, for all should respect the buried. It is therefore forbidden for anyone to disturb them. Should this edict be violated, the offender is to be sentenced to capital punishment on the charge of violating a sepulcher.”
3. Grave robbers would have to get past the “guard” at the tomb (Mat 27:66; 28:4): *A Roman “guard” or “watch” consisted of 16 soldiers!*

C. Who could have moved the stone at the tomb of Jesus?

1. *The Jewish leaders did not move the stone*, for they attempted to prevent the resurrection (Mat. 27:62-64).

a. Had they done so, they could have presented the body on Pentecost when the apostles preached that Jesus had risen (Ac 2).

2. *The Romans did not move the stone*: The death penalty was often given to the Roman guard who failed to do his job (e.g., Acts 16:27; 27:42).

- Ancient historians have recorded (Justinian's Digest 49.16), that eighteen offenses of soldiers were punishable by death. *There are records of the temple guard having their clothing set on fire for being caught asleep on duty!*

3. *The disciples did not move the stone.*

Note: Even if somehow Jesus survived the cross (which he did not) and the disciples stole the body (which they did not), He would not have been seen in his condition as a victorious conquer of death nor a Savior!

a. Though they were accused of stealing the body (Mat 28:11-15), this would of been impossible for them to do so.

- The Roman guard typically placed four soldiers to stand guard while the remaining 12 would sleep in a semicircle. Every 4 hours they rotated the soldiers.

b. The disciples would have to walk over those soldiers asleep and get past the four remaining guards posted in front of the tomb!

c. The guards were to say they were asleep and the disciples stole the body, yet how could they sleep with a big rock being moved?

d. Why weren't the disciples arrested as grave robbers?

4. Only God could have moved the stone!

Matt 28:2 (NASB) And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it.

Acts 13:29-30 (NASB) 29 ... they took Him down from the cross and laid Him in a tomb. 30 "But **God** raised Him from the dead;

D. Credible eye-witnesses confirm that Jesus did in fact rise from the dead!

1. Witnesses saw that the tomb was empty (e.g., John 20:1-8).

2. Several women, the apostles, and over five hundred brethren saw Jesus who had risen from the dead! (Mat. 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-14; Luke 24:13-40, 50-52; John 20:11-28; 21:1-23; Acts 1:3; 1 Cor. 15:1-8).

3. Eyewitness testimony was at the core of the gospel message preached to the world (Acts 3:14-15; 5:30-32; 10:39-43; 13:27-31).

Acts 2:31-32 (NASB) 31 he [David] looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay. 32 **"This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses.**

VI. Why Must a Revelation of God Be Proven By a True Miraculous Sign?

A. To follow any teaching in religion, we must have **evidence** that it is from God.

Hebrews 11:1 (NKJV) Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the **evidence** of things not seen.

John 20:30-31 (NASB) 30 Many other signs therefore Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but **these have been written that you may believe** that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

1. The apostles of Christ also gave evidence or confirmed the Word they preached to be from God by the miraculous signs they performed by the power of the Holy Spirit (Jn. 14:26; 15:26; 16:12; Acts 2:4; Mark 16:20).

2 Corinthians 12:12 (NASB) **The signs of a true apostle** were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles.

B. To follow any man's teaching without divine, miraculous proof that it is from God is foolhardy and dangerous to one's own soul (**Prov. 14:12**).

C. Scripture declares miracles have ceased at the completion of God's revelation (i.e., "the perfect" - 1 Cor. 13:8-10), therefore all latter day revelations are false.

Conclusion: The Ultimate Sign of Jesus (i.e., His resurrection), Proves to the World That the Gospel Is from God and not from Men and Thus It Has the Power to Save!

1 Cor. 15:1-4 (NASB) 1 Now I make known to you, brethren, *the gospel* which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, 2 *by which also you are saved*, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. 3 For **I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,**