

Quran confirms - Injil unchanged

1. The Injil is a revelation from God given to Jesus for his followers and available in the time of Muhammad

Al-Ma'ida 5:51 (48):

*"To you (Muhammad) We revealed the book in truth, **attesting to (the truth of, not just part of it) that which IS between his (its) hands from the scripture (the Torah and Gospel), and guarding it (wa muhaiminan `alaihi)...**"*

The classical Arabic of the Quran can only be understood by those Arabic speakers who were trained in it. The phrase "between his hands" (bain yadaihi) found here and in a number of other relevant verses [Surah Fatir, 35:31, Yunus, 10:37, Yusuf, 12:111, Al-Ahqaf, 46:29-30, Ali `Imran, 3:3] needs to be translated word for word to give the sense of the present tense which it has.

Sometimes it is understood literally as, "between or in his hands". Usually it is an idiom for "in his presence", or "in his power", or "in his possession", or "at his disposal". Examples are "The words are between your hands", meaning "you have the floor" or "you may speak". "No weapons are between his hands", meaning "he is unarmed".

Surah Saba, 34:12 speaks of Solomon and "the Jinns who worked between his hands". Yusuf Ali translates this passage as "worked in front of him", but in a note he explains, the Jinns "worked under his eyes".

If the Quran is the final judge, then does it not follow that those who are being judged and guarded are still around?

2. The prophet of Islam appeals to the Injeel

Al-Ma'ida, 5:47

"And let the People of the Gospel JUDGE by what God has revealed in it. If any fail to judge by what God has revealed, they are licentious."

How can the Christians in the 7th century be asked to judge according to the Injil if it was changed or partly corrupted?

Al-Ma'ida, 5:65-68 (or 68-71)

If only the People of the Book had believed and been righteous, we should have blotted out their sins and admitted them to gardens of bliss. If only they had performed the Torah and the Gospel and all that was revealed to them from their Lord, they would have eaten from above and from under their feet. Among them is a People (umma) on the right course, but evil is that which many of them do... Say, "O

People of the Book! You are not (founded) on anything until you PERFORM the Torah and the Gospel, and what was revealed to you from your Lord." ...

The verses above show clearly that the true Injil continued to exist during Muhammad's lifetime. Otherwise this command to stand firmly by those previous books would be impossible to follow.

Al-A`raf, 7:156-157

*"And I will write down (my mercy) for those who are righteous and give alms and who believe in our signs; who follow the apostle, the unlettered prophet, **whom they find written in the Torah and the Gospel that IS WITH THEM.**"*

Al-Baqara 2:113

*"The Jews say, 'The Christians are not (founded) upon anything.' And the Christians say, 'The Jews are not (founded) upon anything.' And yet **they READ the Book**"*

Ta-Ha, 20:133:

*"They (the Meccans) say, 'Why does he not bring us a sign from his Lord?' What! Has not a **clear sign come to them in what IS in the former pages (al-suhuf al-aula)?**"*

Yunus, 10:94:

"If you (Muhammad) are in doubt regarding that which We have revealed to thee, ASK those who READ the book from before you..."

If the Injil was changed, why would God send Muhammad to ask (note the present tense) people who read a corrupted book? If only a part of their book had survived corruption, how would they know what bits were still reliable in order to answer Mohammad?

Ali `Imran, 3:79

*"It is not for a man to whom is given the Book and wisdom and prophecy that he should then say to people, 'Be worshipers of me in place of God.' But rather, **Be true teachers (rabbaniyin), since you teach the Book and you STUDY it earnestly.**"*

How can people be commanded to teach the book which they study earnestly as true teachers if it was lost, changed or only partly reliable? This verse rightly questions the content and interpretation of teaching not the source of it, God's book.

Al-Fath, 48:29

*"On their faces (of the Muslim believers) are their marks, the traces of their bowing (in worship). **This IS their likeness in the Torah; and their likeness in the Gospel***

IS like a seed which sends forth its blade, then makes it strong. It then becomes thick, and it stands on its own stem, and delights the sower."

This seems to be a definite allusion to Jesus' words as recorded in the Injil, Mark 4:26-28 which reads:

"and he said, `This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground... all by itself the soil produces grain - first the blade, then the head, and then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe he puts the sickle to it because the harvest has come."

Al-Baqarah, 2:4

And who believe in what has been revealed to you, [O Muhammad], and what was revealed before you, and of the Hereafter they are certain [in faith].

How can this command be followed if what is revealed before you has been changed or does not exist anymore?

3. The Injil has been preserved from any change

Al-An'am 6:115

The word of thy Lord doth find its fulfilment in truth and in justice: None can change His words: for He is the one who heareth and knoweth all. (See also Yunus, 10:64)

Since the Injil is also the word of God, none can change it either. This is confirmed by the Injil too in Matthew 24:35.

Al-Ma'ida 5:14-16

"And of those who say, 'we are Christians', We have taken their covenant and they have forgotten a part of that whereby they were admonished. So We have placed enmity and hatred between them, until the day of judgement. And soon will God show them what it is they have done. "O People of the Book! There has come to you Our Apostle, revealing to you much that you used to hide in the Book, and passing over much (that is now unnecessary)."

While Christians are described as people who forgot a part of their covenant, of hiding much, of quarrelling among each other and being in doubt about the content of the Injeel (Al-Shura, 42:13-14), nowhere in the Quran it says they changed their book.¹

This is in contrast to verses saying that some Jews refused the Quran, tried to change it, wrote verses on paper and claimed them to be part of the Torah,

¹ A mixed picture from good to bad develops in the Quran from the early Mekkan to the late Medinan Surahs regarding Jews and Christians. Could it be because: first Mohammad wanted to win over the Christians and the Jews. He spoke well of them. Once they did not accept him he changed his tone in the Quran.

concealed verses in their own Torah, were doubting and quarrelling about it and threw its meaning behind them. (See Surah Al-An`am, 6:89-92, Hud, 11:110, Al-Baqara 2:40-44, 75-79, 85, 89-90, 97, 101, 140, 146, 159, 174, Ali`Imran, 3:69-71, 75, 78, 113-114, 199, Al-Ma`ida, 5:13-14, 44-51, Al-Nisa' 4:44-47).

At any rate, it is important to note that the Quran describes good Jews and Christians (Al-Hadid, 57:26-27) who certainly would never have changed their Scriptures, even if bad ones were attempting to. The latter could at best only have succeeded locally in Saudi Arabia. However, there were already thousands of manuscripts in the original languages. The first translations of the Injil were made beginning at the end of 2nd century AD into the Syriac, Latin, and Coptic languages.² Any attempts to change the Scriptures in the 7th century, the advent of Islam, would have been found out quickly.

4. Questions

A. Is the Injil mentioned in the Quran so favourably not a book that got lost?

Ibn Kathir, the classical Muslim Quran commentator wrote about Surah Al`Imran 3:48:

And Allah will teach him the Book and Wisdom the Law and the Gospel.

It seems that what is meant by Book here is writing. Tafsir al-Quran il-`Azeem.

The Sunni Muslim website *Islam Question and Answer* continues under its general supervisor: Shaykh Muhammad Saalih al-Munajjid:

But we do not have any evidence that the revelation was written down at the time of `Isa (peace be upon him). The fact that the Gospel is called "a Book" in the Holy Quran does not indicate that it was written down on pages at the time it was revealed. The fact that it is called a Book only refers to that which is with Allah in al-Lawh al-Mahfooz (the Preserved Tablet), or that it was something that could be written. This also applies to the Holy Quran, as Allah calls it a Book. Rather it was transmitted verbally as well as being written down randomly on skins and parchments. In fact it was not a compiled Book until the time of Abu Bakr al-Siddeeq (may Allah be pleased with him). Indeed, Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"And even if We had sent down unto you (O Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)) a message written on paper so that they could touch it with their hands, the disbelievers would have said: 'This is nothing but obvious magic!'" [6:7]

al-Tahir ibn `Ashoor said in his commentary on Surat Maryam: 30:

The Scripture refers to the law which is usually written lest it be subject to change. The word Scripture is applied to the Law of `Isa (peace be upon him) just as it is applied to the Quran. Al-Tahreer wa`l-Tanweer.

² Vööbus, Arthur (1954). Early Versions of the New Testament. Stockholm. pp. 1-128, 211-240.

Similarly the Christians do not believe that there is a book that was written by the Messiah or one of his disciples during his lifetime that was lost after that.

The great scholar al-Tahir ibn 'Ashoor says in *al-Tahreer wa'l-Tanweer*, commenting on the tafsir of Surat Al 'Imran:

With regard to the Gospel, this is the name of the revelation that was sent to 'Isa (peace be upon him) and was compiled by his companions.³

B. Is the Injil mentioned in the Quran not different from the Gospel or New Testament of the Christians?

To answer this question accurately it is important to let Christian primary sources and early Christian communities throughout the world define the meaning of the name given to their book.

The Arabic word *Injil* (إنجيل) is derived from the Syriac Aramaic word *awongaleeyoon* (ܐܘܢܓܠܝܘܢ). It is found in Mark 1:1 of the Syriac translation of the Bible, known as Peshitta (common) from the end of the 3rd century AD⁴. Both words originate from the Greek *euangelion* (Εὐαγγέλιον) of the New Testament where it means *Good News*. In old English it was known as *gōdspel* or *evangel* and in modern English as *Gospel*.⁵

The *Injil* is known as the *Gospel*. Besides containing a fourfold section known as *Gospel*, 23 additional and equally inspired writings are also part of the *Injil*. All of them were written approximately within 60 years after the physical ministry of Jesus on earth. These 27 writings are included in the *New Testament* part of the *Bible*. They were first completely listed by Origen, a church father in about 250⁶ AD and are identical with today's, 21st century copies. Here is evidence for this definition of the *Injil*, universally accepted among Christians:

Injil or *Gospel* occurs about 77 times in the New Testament. The message in it, whether spoken or written, is called *the Gospel* (Mark 1:1, Romans 16:25,26, 1 Thess. 1:5). Hazrat Isa committed his *Injil* into the hands of his followers to write down and publish throughout the world.

Various historical documents clearly show that the early church used the word *Gospel* as a title for all or part of the New Testament long before Islam arrived:

F.F Bruce, Rylands Professor of Biblical Criticism and Exegesis at the University of Manchester, England, wrote: *At a very early date it appears that the four Gospels were united in one collection. They must have been brought together very soon after the writing of the Gospel according to John. This fourfold collection was originally*

³ <https://islamqa.info/en/85280>

⁴ britannica.com/topic/Peshitta This was probably the translation of the *Injil* around in the time of Muhammad since a number of words used in the Quran to describe details of Biblical stories are from the Syriac language.

⁵ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gospel_in_Islam

⁶ michaeljkruger.com/what-is-the-earliest-complete-list-of-the-canon-of-the-new-testament/

known as "The Gospel" in the singular, not "The Gospels" in the plural; there was only one Gospel... Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, (35-107 AD, a disciple of the Apostle John mentioned in the Gospel) refers to "The Gospel" as an authoritative writing, and as he knew more than one of the four "Gospels" it may well be that by "The Gospel" sans phrase he means the fourfold collection which went by that name.⁷

About other books in the New Testament Bruce writes: *The corpus Paulinum, or collection of Paul's writings, was brought together about the same time as the collecting of the fourfold Gospel. As the Gospel collection was designated by the Greek word Euangelion, so the Pauline collection was designated by the one word Apostolos...*⁸

A Hadith of great reliability shows that the prophet of Islam credited wahi (divine Inspiration) to one of the Apostle Paul's writings:

Abu Huraira told that after God's messenger had stated that God most high has said, "I have prepared for my upright servants what eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has entered into the heart of man," he added, "Recite, if you wish, 'No soul knows what comfort has been concealed for them'" (Bukhari and Muslim)⁹.

This is close to what Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 2:8-9, a book that is part of the New Testament: *None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. However, as it is written: "What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived"— the things God has prepared for those who love him.*

Toward the end of the second century, Irenaeus an early church father, wrote: *The Word (Jesus) gave to us the Gospel in a fourfold shape, but held together by one Spirit.*¹⁰

In the fourth century AD, Chrysostom, another church father, wrote: *We assert, therefore, that, although a thousand Gospels were written, if the contents of all were the same, they would still be one, and their unity no wise infringed by the number of writers. -- Whence it is clear that the four Gospels are one Gospel; for, as the four say the same thing, its oneness is preserved by the harmony of the contents, and not impaired by the difference of persons.*¹¹

Augustine, one of the most famous early church fathers wrote in the fourth century: *"For I ask them, is it good to take pleasure in reading the Apostle? or good to take*

⁷ The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable? 1943, p. 23.

⁸ Ibid., p.25.

⁹ 110 Ahadith Qudsi (Sacred Hadith) Hadith no: 26: ahadith.co.uk/chapter.php?cid=144&page=3&rows=10

¹⁰ Harrison, Introduction to the New Testament, p. 99.

¹¹ Schaff, A Select Library of Nicene and Post- Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church: First Series. vol. 8, p. 7.

pleasure in a sober Psalm? or good to discourse on the Gospel? They will answer to each, 'It is good'.¹²

Christian theologian B.B. Warfield sums up the whole topic under discussion well when he writes:

The earliest name given to this new section of Scripture was framed on the model of the name by which what we know as the Old Testament was then known. Just as it was called "The Law and the Prophets and the Psalms" (or "the Hagiographa"), or more briefly "The Law and the Prophets," or even more briefly still "The Law"; so the enlarged Bible was called "The Law and the Prophets, with The Gospels and the Apostles" (so Clement of Alexandria, "Strom." vi. 11, 88; Tertullian, "De Præs. Hær." 36), or most briefly "The Law and the Gospel" (so Claudius Apollinaris, Irenæus); while the new books apart were called "The Gospel and the Apostles," or most briefly of all "The Gospel." This earliest name for the new Bible, with all that it involves as to its relation to the old and briefer Bible, is traceable as far back as Ignatius (A.D. 115), who makes use of it repeatedly (e.g., "ad Philad." 5; "ad Smyrn." 7).¹³

C. Are there not different Gospels around? How do we know which ones are correct?

The Injil mentions a number of groups of false teachers who preached a different spoken Gospel¹⁴ message from the one given by Jesus. His early followers clearly refuted them as described in various parts of the New Testament.

Starting from the second century AD a number of different written pseudo Gospels emerged.¹⁵ Early Christians did not accept them based on the content of the Injil that had been completed and widely circulated by the first century AD already.

Muslims faced a similar situation. In Mohammad's time and afterwards different people claimed to be prophets with various revelations. They were refuted by his followers.¹⁶

¹² The Confessions of St. Augustine, p. 144.

¹³ The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible, p. 413.

¹⁴ Galatians 1, 1 John 2:18-27 The context (Galatians 3:1, 6:12) makes it clear that these false teachers believed Jesus died on the cross and rose again but either disputed the meaning of it or tried to avoid persecution. They did not come with writings.

¹⁵ biblestudytools.com/encyclopedias/isbe/apocryphal-gospels.html

¹⁶ rightfulreligion.com/en130_false-claimants-of-prophethood-in-islam lists those who claimed to be a prophet during Mohammed's time as: Musailama al-Kazzab: caused numerous troubles among Muslims, had many followers, eventually surrendered along with supporters in Al-Yamam battle, led by Abu Bakr, and was killed. Sajah al-Kahenah and his wife, Sajah al-Kahenah: she reversed position after husband had been killed. Saf son of Sayyad: claimed he was Prophet when on threshold of adolescence, was initially believed to be false messiah, later repented and embraced Islam. Tulayha son of Khwailid: later repented, returned to fold of Islam. Aswad al-Ansi: was based in Yemen, killed by companions of Prophet. Claimants to prophethood after Mohammad's death: Al Mizra Abbas: In 1233 AH/1818 CE he appeared in Tehran, Iran, died in Palestine. Saleh son of Tarif Burghwati: claimed prophethood and Mahdihood in 125 AH. After ruling over his people for 47 years, in 174 AH he abdicated the throne in favour of his son. Abu Mansoor 'Eessa: claimed prophethood and Mahdihood in 341 AH and ruled over his people for 28

D. The Quran denies a number of Christian beliefs. Is that not evidence that the Injil has changed?

The Quran rightly denies a number of false teachings that were sadly taught incorrectly among some Christian communities at the time of Muhammad. However, the actual text of the Injil is not questioned. Here are a few examples:

Most Muslims who attend Quran classes from a very young age are reading in their holy book that Christians allegedly worship three gods, that Mary is one of those gods¹⁷, that God is Jesus¹⁸ and that Jesus is the son of God in a physical sense.¹⁹

As a result Christians are understandably looked at as polytheists, blasphemers, as people who hold false understandings, who are not to be obeyed²⁰ and who are cursed²¹ by God. No wonder Muslims are not interested in the Injil.

The above mentioned descriptions found in the Quran and consequently taught by Imams in the mosques, of course, do not accurately reflect the Biblical teaching.²² It has been held by the Christian church throughout the world, well before the beginning of the Islamic religion in the 6th century. However, the comments in the

years. Al-Harith son of Sa'id: claimed prophethood during reign of Umayyad caliph, Abd al-Malik son of Marwan. A number of royal soldiers were suspected of supporting him, was executed in 698-699 CE. Mahmud son of al-Faraj: appeared in 849-850 in Samara CE with claim that a Quran was revealed to him through angel Gabriel, had some followers in Samara and Baghdad, was executed on orders of caliph, al-Mutawakkil. Mohammed son of Sa'id: considered one of four infamous forgers of hadith, distorted hadith: "I am the seal of prophets and there is no prophet after me" by adding: "unless Allah wills {otherwise}", claimed prophethood for himself, was executed on orders of Abbasid caliph, Abu Jafar al-Mansoor. Bab: Mizra Ali Muhammad was predecessor of Bahaullah, initially declared himself the "Bab" (Gate) to the Mahdi, eventually progressed into other claims, was embraced by the Shaykhis sect of Shi'a, who were then renamed "Babis", he declared himself to be Shi'ite's hidden Mahdi. Afterwards, he moved on to call himself Nuqtiyuula, declaring that Quran and Muslim Shari'a were now abrogated. Shi'a and Sunni scholars condemned him and Bab faced series of imprisonment, trials, and indignities before being shot dead by a firing squad in 1850. Bahaullah: Mizra Hussein Ali Nuri, self-proclaimed successor to Bab, another claimant to prophecy. In 1863 Hussein Ali, a prominent member of the Babi group, declared himself to be person whom God will make manifest, whom Bab had foretold, took name Bahaullah (Glory of God) and formed new religion, Bahai faith. Was banished from Persia, imprisoned in Akka-Palestine. Wrote main work, Kitab-ul-Aqdas (Most Holy Book), developed doctrine of Bahai faith into comprehensive teaching. Elijah Muhammad: succeeding Wallace Dodd Ford, was another in the line of prophets, founded the convoluted belief system based on ideas extracted from everything from Christianity to Masonry to Islam in Detroit, Michigan in 1930s, referred to it as "Nation of Islam". Kareem Agha Khan: In early 1970s, another claimant to prophecy appeared within Ismaili sect, who proclaims himself to be a manifestation of God on Earth and a spokesman for Allah. Rashid Khalifa: he came from Egypt, and claimed there to be an intricate numerical pattern to the Qur'an revolving around number 19 in 1974. Because of this, he claimed to be Messenger of God, alongside Prophets Ibraheem (Abraham) and Muhammad, founded the group called "United Submitters International", rejecting hadeeths of Prophet, denounced ayats 9:128-129 of Qur'an, was Imam at Tuscon Mosque, Arizona for many years, stabbed to death there 1990. Mizra Ghulam Ahmad: appeared in India to quell resistance against British colonialists, claimed to be Messiah as similitude of Prophet 'Eessa, the Mahdi, a Prophet, a Messenger, and the second advent of Prophet Mohammed simultaneously. Mahmood Mohammed Taha: false claimant to prophecy, based in Sudan, beheaded in 1985.

Jasmin: potentially false claimant to prophethood, appeared in 1998 in Bosnia, claiming War of Bosnia and Herzegovina was Battle of Armageddon, claims he is Messiah.

¹⁷ Sura 5:73-75,116

¹⁸ Surah 5:17

¹⁹ Surah 6:100-101, Surah 72:3

²⁰ Surah 25:52, 26:151, 33:1, 68:8, 76:24.

²¹ Surah 9:30, Surah 1:7, Surah 2:159 (repeated at least 17 times as part of daily Muslim prayers)

²² For correct understanding of these teachings see: christianityexplained.net/explainedto/muslims/index.html

Quran may well be a justified reaction to false teaching held by some isolated heretic Christian cults, operating and being known in the Middle East at that time.²³

Sunnis, Shias, Ahmadis, Ishmaelis, etc. hold many different opinions regarding the interpretation of the teachings found in the Quran. However, they would never accuse each other of not possessing the unchanged or a different Quran. Why then is this accusation made against Christians?

E. Is the central teaching in the Injil that Jesus Christ died on the cross not denied in the Quran?

It is true that the Injil, the early church fathers and all New Testaments Bibles used in all churches throughout the world clearly teach the death of Jesus Christ on the cross and his resurrection on the third day for the forgiveness of our sins. This is the central teaching²⁴ held by all Christians everywhere from the very beginning until today. As a matter of fact, without this belief it is impossible to be called a Christian.

There are a number of verses in the Quran that confirm the death of Jesus:

Behold! Allah said: 'O Jesus! I will take thee (Arabic: 'mutawaffika') and raise thee to Myself...' (Surah 3, Ali 'Imran, 55, also Surah 5, Al Ma'idah, verse 117)

The translation of 'mutawaffika' in this verse is disputed among Muslim scholars. The word and its derivation are found over 25 times in the Quran. (see 2:234,240; 3:55,193; 4:15,97, 5:117; 6:61; 8:50; 10:46,104; 12:101; 13:40; 16:28,32,70; 22:5; 32:11; 40:67,77; 47:27) In all but two places they imply death or are associated with it. In the two exceptions (6:60, 39:42) the context reveals that 'mutawaffika' figuratively means slumber. This is not the case in the two verses that speak about the death of Jesus (3:55, 5:117)!

If Jesus did not die Surah 19, Maryam, verse 31 would not make sense. There Jesus allegedly said, '...and hath enjoined on me Prayer and Charity so long as I live:' According to the traditional Muslim view, Jesus was taken up to heaven alive. But nobody can seriously believe that he still gives alms up to this day!

The following Hadith about the day of judgement, collected by Al-Bukhari is further proof that Jesus died:

On the authority of Ibn Abbas: The Prophet of Allah said, '...Then I will say as the pious slave Jesus, son of Mary, said: 'And I was a witness over them while I dwelt amongst them. When you caused me to die ('tawaffaytani') you were the watcher over them, and you are a witness to all things...' (see, Bukhari, Nuhammad Ibn Ismail. Sahih of al-Buhari, trans. Muhammad Muhsin Khan, New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan, 1984, vol. 3, number 3263. See also vol. 4, number 4349, 4463.)

Since the prophet of Islam referred to himself with the same phrase ('tawaffaytani') Jesus is said to have used in Surah 5, Al Ma'idah, verse 117 it becomes clear that

²³ <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/wace/biodict.html?term=Collyridians>

²⁴ 1 Corinthians 15:1-20

the prophet of Islam, who died, confirms that Jesus also died! A further confirmation is found in Surahs 10, Yunus, verse 46, 13, Al Ra'd, verse 40, and 40, Ghafir, verse 77 where basically the same term that is used for Jesus' last moments, 'natawaffayannaka' meaning, 'we indeed cause you to die' is applied to Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) From our study so far we can say with certainty that the death and resurrection of Jesus is a fact, even in the Quran.

There is only one reference in the Quran that appears to say when Jesus did not die. It is found in Surah 4, Al Nisa, 157-159:

That they said (in boast) 'We killed Christ Jesus the son of Mary, the messenger of Allah'- But they killed him not, nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them, and those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge, but only conjecture to follow, for a surety they killed him not- Nay, Allah raised him up unto Himself; and Allah is Exalted in Power, Wise- And there is none of the People of the Book but must believe in him before his death; and on the Day of Judgement he will be a witness against them.'

This passage, like all the others concerning the end of Jesus' life on earth in the Quran, is unclear. It is not surprising therefore, to find a number of interpretations concerning it. However, to say that the crucified one 'was somehow or other taken for Christ'²⁵ would turn the Holy and Righteous God into the greatest deceiver of all! From a Christian point of view it is totally unacceptable to think that He would be responsible for misleading 1.7 billion people who call themselves Christians today! Some Muslims will say, 'Allah can do whatever He wants. If it pleases Him, to mislead all the Christians, He has the right to do so!' However, they are not willing to use the argument of God's sovereignty, when they study the Christian concept of the Trinitarian God who sent Jesus to die on the cross for sinners.

Muslims like Ahmad Deedat²⁶ and the Ahmadiyyas give new meanings to a number of verses from the Biblical account on the death and the resurrection. According to them Jesus was crucified but he did not die on the cross, he only swooned. By coming up with these unsubstantiated theories they actually contradict Surah 4, Al Nisa', verse 157 which is traditionally interpreted to mean that he was not crucified:

...But they killed him not, nor crucified him...

To justify their position they say that the words in the Quran '...nor crucified him...' mean that Jesus did not die as a result of the crucifixion (See the Ahmadiyya version of the Quran with footnotes, Volume 2, page 583). They think that to be crucified means to be killed and since Jesus only swooned he was not crucified in the sense that he did not die from it. Verses like the one in Acts 2,23 proves them wrong. There we read that the words 'to crucify' (=to nail on a cross) do not necessarily mean 'to kill.' If it was not so why would Peter have been inspired by God to say:

'This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.'

²⁵'The Meaning of the Quran' by Maududi, Islamic Publications, Pakistan, 1992, commentary on Surah 4, Al Nisa', verse 157

²⁶See, 'Crucifixion or Crucifixion?', H.M Bageel see, 'Christian Muslim Dialogue'

If the words "nailing him to the cross" would be equal to "death" there would be no need for one or the other! (See also Acts 5:30) In retrospect it is truly amazing how people like Ahmad Deedat who even contradict their own Quran are still tolerated by the Muslims community in general to represent their religion through past debates and in literature. Only God knows how much damage they have done to thousands of souls.

How then should we interpret Surah 4, Al Nisa', verses 157-159 in the light of what has been said so far? In Muhammad's time Muslims were commanded to seek advice in a particular question from those who possess the previous Scriptures, the Jews and the Christians. (Surah 16, Al Nahl, verse 43; Surah 21, Al Anbiya, 7) Therefore, it is surely right to do it in this case as well.

The Jews were boasting THEY had crucified and killed Jesus because they were convinced he was a false prophet. Against their arrogance verse 157 says, 'THEY slew him not nor crucified him, but it appeared so unto them.' The Biblical accounts tell us that Jesus was not killed by the Jews in the last instance, but because God brought about his deliberate and well-thought out plan. In Acts 2:23 we read:

'This man (Jesus) was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked man, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.'

It only appeared to the Jews that they successfully killed Jesus whereas in reality God, in his sovereignty, even used those wicked people in order to bring about his purposes. The emphasis is not that the Jews killed Jesus but that God allowed them to do so! Verse 157 seems to speak out against this wrong, boastful emphasis only not against the fact that Jesus was killed.

Verse 158 speaks about the ascension of Jesus, when he was taken up to be with God which is well documented in the Injil (Luke 24:50-51, John 6:62, Acts 1:9-11, 1 Timothy 3:16) and undisputed by both Muslims and Christians. However, Muslims who believe that Jesus was just a messenger, will have to answer the following question: 'Mere men may only be able to go to Paradise. Since it is created Allah will not be there because he is completely separate from his creation according to Islam. Does not the fact that 'Allah raised Jesus up unto himself' proof that Jesus was more than just another prophet?'

Verse 159 seems to say that none of the Jews will believe in Jesus before they die and on the day of resurrection it will be too late for them to change their minds. The Torah, Zabur, and the Injil agree unanimously that Jesus died for our sins on a cross nearly 2000 years ago and that he was raised up to life again! (Isaiah 53, Psalm 22, Matthew 26:26-28; 27:50) Secular history too confirms the bedrock of Christianity, the death and resurrection of Jesus. The names of the historians are Pliny, Cornelius Tacitus, Thallus and particularly Josephus, a Jewish general who defected to the Romans and wrote the Jewish history for them. (Antiquitates indaicae, Vol. 18, III: 3)

F. What does the hadith say on the subject of the Injil?

From about 1465 collections of Hadith, Muslim scholars have singled out six as being the correct ones. They are here listed in the order of importance:

Al-Bukhari, he put his collection together 246 years after the prophet's death. From 6000,000 Hadith he selected 7200 (1.2%!). The choices were made according to the judgement of one individual. Muslim, he put his choices together 251 years after the prophet's death. Al Tirmize, he chose them 269 years after the prophet's death. Abu Daud selected his version 265 years after the prophet's death. Abu Abdur Rahman presented his collection 293 years after the prophet's death.²⁷

Therefore, the picture they present has to be treated with some caution. Here are a number of hadiths that support the fact of the unchanged Injl:

“Khadija [his wife] then accompanied him [The Prophet – PBUH] to her cousin Waraqa ..., who, during the PreIslamic Period became a Christian and used to write the writing with Hebrew letters. He would write from the Gospel in Hebrew²⁸ as much as Allah wished him to write.” Al-Bukhari Vol 1, Book 1, No 3

Narrated by Khaithama bin Abi Sbra: I came to Madinah and I asked Allah for a righteous companion, so He pointed me to Aba Hurayra, so I sat and told Him: I asked Allah to make it easy for me to find a righteous companion فَوَقَّتَ لِي . He said to me, from where did you come from? I said: From Koofah, I came looking for good and ask for it. So Abu Hrairah said: Don't you have among you Sa'd bin Malik the one who's Du'a is accepted? and Ibn Mas'ood هل لا لوسر روهط بحاص dna ? ه Hudhaifah the companion of the secret of the Prophet? And Ammar the one Allah saved from the Shaitan on the tongue of the Prophet(ن اطي ش ل ا نم هل لا م ر ا ج ا ي ذ ل ا ر ا م ع و) dna leejnl eht gninaem) skoob owt eht fo renwo eht namlaS dnA ? (على ل سان ذ بيه) the Quran).

Mishkat, Hadith 6424, Narrated by Attirmidhy

Narrated by Ziad bin Lubaid: The Prophet recalled something and said: That is the time when the knowledge goes. I asked: and how would the knowledge go when we read the Quran and we teach it to our children and our children read it until judgement day? The messenger replied: Oh Ziad, Your mother has lost you! I saw you from among the most understanding men in Madinah, don't the Jews and Christians read the Tourat and the Injeel and don't understand what is in it?

Mishkat, Hadith 277, Narrated by Ahmad and Ibn Majah

G. Christians do not believe in the Quran. Why do they quote from it?

All truth is God's truth, wherever it may be found. For example, there is truth in tabloid newspapers but not all of their content is true. Similarly, all things found in the Quran that do not contradict the Injil can be quoted. A wise person tests all information but only holds on to the correct one.

²⁷ 'Dictionary of Islam' by T.P. Hughes, Asia Publishing House, London, 1988, pages 639-646

²⁸ Other traditions say 'Arabic.' See: Volume 6, Book 60, #478, Volume 9, Book 87, #111as found here: sahih-bukhari.com/Pages/results.php

Summary

It has become clear throughout this study²⁹ that the Injil is a revelation from God given to Jesus for his followers. It was available during the time of the prophet of Islam. He appealed to it several times because it has been preserved from any change.

The Injil is not a book that got lost soon after it was given. According to Islamic commentators, along with the Quran it is called *a book* because it either refers to the preserved tablet which is with God, or to indicate it was something that could be written. In both cases the various sayings were eventually written down by the companions at a later date.

The book itself and early history prove that the name Injil was used interchangeably for either the spoken or written down message of Jesus Christ, the Gospel or all other writings of the New Testament Bible together.

Similar to Islam there were false teachers claiming a different message and later producing different writings. However, they were clearly refuted and not accepted by the true followers.

The Quran rightly denies a number of false beliefs held by a few Christians in the 7th century. They have been clearly identified as heresies, held by a minority. The fact that the Bible was most probably only translated into Arabic after the Quran was written down³⁰ may have contributed to the spread of false teachings among Arabic speaking Christians.

For example, the Injil itself has never commanded anybody to believe in three separate gods, that Mary was one of them, God is Jesus, or that Jesus is the physical son of God.

It can also be argued that the Quran rightly states it was only made to appear to the Jews as if they successfully killed Jesus in the last instance. In reality, it was God in his sovereignty who even used those wicked people in order to bring about his purposes.³¹

Similarly, the fact that various Muslims groups interpret the Quran differently, does not lead them to accuse each other of having a different Quran that had been changed. To conclude the latter from the former is not logical when talking about either, the Injil or the Quran.

All truth is God's truth, in whatever book, newspaper or online article, etc. it may be found. Therefore, it should not be looked at as an inconsistency or contradiction

²⁹For a list of many more studies on this subject see: answering-islam.org/Quran/Bible/

³⁰hts.org.za/index.php/HTS/article/view/2726/4932

³¹For more details see: christianityexplained.net/explainedto/muslims/8.html

when followers of Jesus quote certain verses from the Quran. If they confirm Biblical, secular historical or any other facts, Quranic verses can be used by people other than Muslims, without any problems.

Conclusion

The Quran indeed confirms the Injil to be unchanged in the seventh century AD. For Muslims that means it was reliable in the centuries before, right from the beginning when it was written by the end of the first century AD.

It has been preserved in more manuscripts than any other ancient work. The Injil counts over 5,800 complete or fragmented Greek manuscripts, 10,000 Latin manuscripts and 9,300 manuscripts in various other ancient languages (e.g. Syriac, Slavic, Gothic, Ethiopic, Coptic Armenian). The dates of these manuscripts still in existence range from c. 125 to the introduction of printing in Germany in the 15th century.

Most scholars agree that all the manuscript are 99.5% identical in content, with the differing .5% attributed to minor variations such as spelling or copy mistakes. These variations are not seen to affect the meaning or interpretation of any major doctrine and are usually given referenced in footnotes in most of today's bibles.³² The Quran too faces similar issues when comparing various Arabic versions with one another.³³

We have complete Injils since about 300 AD³⁴ and Gospel books from 5th to 16th century AD³⁵ in various places of the world. It would not have been possible for some bad Christians to agree on the changes to be made. Even if those in Arabia had made changes, the difference between their copies and those of their brothers would become obvious.

When all the early Injils are compared with today's editions there is no substantial change. All agree most certainly on the central message about Jesus Christ, his physical death and resurrection. Even some early Muslims approved of it. They were known as Ikhwan al-Safa, or the Brethren of Purity.³⁶

Would God allow His word to be changed? Imagine a thief who breaks into a house to take stuff and put other stuff in instead. Think of a rich, watching owner who has all the latest security systems and man power at his disposal. Would he not intervene successfully to protect his possessions?

For Muslims too it was unimaginable that God could be so weak as not to protect his word. Only in the 11th Century AD, about 400 years after the Quran was written

³² en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biblical_manuscript

³³ youtube.com/watch?v=m6Zc67FrpWU As of July 2017 Arabic scholars have found 45,377 differences within the 26 Qur'ans they are looking at.

³⁴ blogs.bl.uk/digitisedmanuscripts/2012/12/new-testament-from-oldest-complete-bible-available-online.html Online version: bl.uk/turning-the-pages/?id=b00f9a37-422c-4542-bfbd-b97bf3ce7d50&type=book

³⁵ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gospel_Book#Significant_gospel_books

³⁶ oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e994 For details see especially Leirvik, Oddbjørn. 2010. Images of Jesus Christ in Islam. London. p. 79

down, the idea that the Injil was changed was first proposed by Ibn Hazm. In his book *Kitab al-faslfi-l-l-milal wa-l-ahwa'wa-l-nihil*, Book of Religious Communities and Sects he argued that it would be the only solution to his perceived contradictions and incomplete chain of tafsir for the New Testament books. Although such objections were easily answered, sadly this view has prevailed among many but not all³⁷ Muslims to the present day.

An acceptance of the confirmation of the Quran that the Injil has not changed will significantly alter the discussions between Christians and Muslims. Now the actual content of the Injil can finally be looked at. To find out the reason why it is called 'Good News' will enable both communities to keep the main thing the main thing:

How to honour God by finding peace with Him, one another and how to live life to the full as it was designed by God. To Him alone be glory, honour and praise!

Here is a link to a summary of the contents of the Injil:

christianityexplained.net/injil-summary

Jesus Christ said in the Injil:

'Anyone who chooses to do the will of God will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.' (John 7:17)

"Are you prepared to choose to do God's will and follow his truth, even if it leads you outside your traditions? If the truth is more important to you, then you will find out whether his teaching is from God. Ask him now to show it to you."

For questions and comments please contact:

info@christianityexplained.net or speak to other practicing Christians.

³⁷ Al-Ghazali is one such exception. He argued in his 12th century work *Excellent Refutation of the Divinity of Jesus* that the Gospels were still authoritative but misinterpreted by the Christians. For details see: Leirvik, Oddbjørn. 2010. *Images of Jesus Christ in Islam*. London: Continuum. p. 118