

Answering Missionary Allegations that Jesus claimed to be God

By Sami Zaatari

The Qur'an states clearly that it rejects the concept that God became the man Jesus. Rather, the Qur'an affirms that Jesus (pbuh) is a prophet of God, and was given revelation (the Injil – or Gospel). The Qur'an informs us that the preservation of the gospel's message was corrupted over time and changed into the form we know today (i.e. The New Testament Bible). This is affirmed by the majority of western Biblical scholarship we have today.

However, some Evangelical Christians try to argue that the Qur'an affirms the Bible, using this verse: **'Let the people of the Gospel judge by what Allah hath revealed therein. If any do fail to judge by (the light of) what Allah hath revealed, they are (no better than) those who rebel'.** (Qur'an 5:27)

However, this verse does not refer to the Bible, but rather it refers to the Injil (Gospel). The Qur'an precisely asks Christians to abide by the laws that were revealed by God – it does not tell Christians to judge by the *Bible*. And secondly, the context of this verse is about laws (i.e. "judge by"), and not beliefs. So for Evangelical Christians to use this verse for

the purpose of validating the Bible is a twisting the Qur'an's meaning.

However, Allah (swt) has not left the Christians without the possibility to realise the truth about Jesus being purely and only a human servant of God:

'They do blaspheme who say: "Allah is the Messiah, the son of Mary." But said the Messiah: "O Children of Israel! worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord."' (Qur'an 5:72)

And we see this statement of Jesus still (roughly) preserved in the Bible's fragments of the Gospel: **"Go to my brethren and say to them, 'I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God'" (John 20:17)**

If Jesus was God, then how can God have a god over him? It is only rational to conclude that because Jesus had a God, and it was the same God over everyone else, then he was merely a servant, just like his fellow Jews.

Why does Jesus call God his father?

The term 'son of God' was always understood by the Jews to mean Prophet, Holy man, or Righteous person – and calling God, your father, meant that you follow Him as your lord. In ancient Israel, the Jewish way of speaking, described their relationship with God using more colourful words than the Qur'an does.

For an example of Jewish manners of speech; Adam (pbuh) is called the '**Son of God**' in the Bible (Luke 3:38), and it is reported in the Bible that God told David (pbuh) about his future son Solomon (pbuh):

'His name will be Solomon, and I will grant Israel peace and quiet during his reign. He is the one who will build a house for my Name. He will be my son, and I will be his father'. (1 Chronicles 22:9-10)

Furthermore, in Jewish manners of speech, men can also be referred to as gods **"You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you!"** (Psalm 82:6)

In the Jewish Bible, Moses is called a god to the people of Pharaoh – with his own prophet!

"And the LORD said to Moses, see, I have made you a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron your brother shall be your prophet" (Exodus 7:1)

Throughout Jewish history, no Jewish scripture has ever used the term 'Son of God', or terms likening a man to God, to be taken literally. Yet when the Bible uses such terms for Jesus, Christians want it now to be literally true! This is called the logical fallacy of 'special pleading'.

Does the Bible teach that God can be a man?

God openly rejects that he is a man, or even the son of man: **'God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor Son of man, that He should repent'** (Numbers 23:19)

And Jesus affirms that he is a son of man: **"Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?"** Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you." (John 9:35-37)

So if God (in the Bible) declares He is not a man, nor 'son of man' – but Jesus says he is the son of man, then it is logical to conclude that God is NOT the Jesus.

But let us see if the more obvious sayings of Jesus in the Bible would seem to imply he is God:

Jesus is ignorant of certain knowledge (but 'the Father' [i.e. God] is all-knowing): **"No one knows about that [last] day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son (i.e. Jesus), but only the Father (i.e. God)"** (Matthew 24:36 / Mark 13:32)

Jesus is less powerful than the Father: "**The Father is greater than I**" (John 14:28), and Jesus is himself powerless: "**By myself I can do nothing**" (John 5:30)

Is Jesus God because he forgive sins according to the New Testament?

Christians like to quote this verse to demonstrate that Jesus forgave sins:

And Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." But some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?" (Mark 2:5-12)

However when see the same story quoted in the gospel of Matthew, the reaction of the crowd is revealing: "**When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to men**" (Mathew 9:8)

In fact, Jesus openly claims it is not him who actually speaks forgiveness of sin, but he merely relates what he hears from God:

"The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father... These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me" (John 14:10-23)

Does the Bible believe only God will be judging people on the day of Judgement?

Christians claim that since Jesus is mentioned by the Bible as a judge on the day of Judgement, that must mean he is God. Well if that is true, then Jesus' disciples must also be gods too:

And Jesus said unto them, "Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon

twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel". (Matthew 19:28)

Even if the Bible portrays Jesus to be a judge, it explains how he is able to give judgement:

"By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me" (John 5:30)

Does that sound like something God would say?

Is Jesus God because he is described as a 'Light of the world' in John 8:12?

What our Christian friends have failed to realize is that just because you are given a name or description, that is a similar name and description given to God, does NOT make you equal or identical to Him. For example, when Allah is called the 'light of the heavens and the earth' in the Qur'an, this has a completely different meaning and context to when the Prophet Muhammad is called a light:

'O people of the Book! There hath come to you our Messenger, revealing to you much that you used to hide in the Book, and passing over much (that is now unnecessary). There has come to you from Allah a (new) light and a perspicuous Book' (Qur'an 5:15)

This is like when the Prophet Muhammad is called a mercy to mankind, that doesn't make him Allah, just because Allah is also known as the Merciful one.

Is Jesus God because the Bible says he is the 'First and the Last' (Revelation 1:17-18)?

The only place that says that in the Bible, is the book of Revelations, a book based upon a 'dream' or 'vision' of a man living on an island – who never claimed to have met Jesus. Hardly an authoritative source!

Does the Bible claim Jesus brings the dead to life day of resurrection (John 5:25-29)?

The answer is no, since the Bible verse does not say he will raise up people by his power. However, there is colourful use of expressions meaning that if you believe in Jesus, you will live (i.e. be saved), which Muslims already agree with (since to be saved, we must believe in all the prophets.).

'O you who believe! Answer (the call of) Allah and the (Prophetic) Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you life' (Qur'an 8:42)

Does Jesus ask God to share his glory with him in the Bible (John 17:5)?

If you read carefully, Jesus never asks to have the glory of God. Jesus never says "Oh father glorify me with your glory", so he is not asking God to share God's glory. Rather Jesus only asks the Father to glorify (i.e. honour) him by being returned to God's presence – which is something all the righteous will receive in heaven.

Is Jesus God because he is described as 'Lord of the Sabbath' in the Bible (Matthew 12:1-14)?

No, since scholars say that Jesus' did not say he was lord of the Sabbath, but that all men are lords of the Sabbath, since 'the Sabbath was made for man'.

In conclusion, all the (alleged) sayings of Jesus in the Bible, do not clearly claim Jesus to be God. Rather the opposite is what we find.

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