

Muslims around the world are being trained to ask Christians, “Where did Jesus say, ‘I am God, worship me,’ *in those exact words?*” However, if Muslims are suggesting that Jesus could only claim to be God by uttering a specific sentence, we may reply by asking, “Where did Jesus say, ‘I am only a prophet, don’t worship me,’ *in those exact words?*” The unreasonable demand for a particular statement, if applied consistently, would thus force Muslims to reject their own view!

Fortunately, we have a simple way to examine what Jesus said about himself. According to both the Bible and the Qur’an, there are certain claims that only God can truly make. For instance, God alone can correctly state that he created the universe. Of course, a mere human being can pronounce the words, “I created the universe,” but the statement would be false coming from anyone other than God.

Hence, if Jesus said things that can only truly be said by God, we must conclude that Jesus claimed to be God. Interestingly, Jews, Christians, and Muslims agree on many of the claims that cannot be properly made by (or about) mere human beings. Let us consider a few of these.

THE FIRST AND THE LAST

Surah 57:3 of the Qur’an refers to Allah as “*the First and the Last*, the Most High and the Most Near.” The Old Testament agrees that God is the “First and the Last,” as we read in the Book of the prophet Isaiah:

Isaiah 44:6—Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: “I am the first and I am the last, and there is no God besides Me.”

When “LORD” is written in all capitals in the Old Testament, the term refers to *Yahweh*, the creator of the universe. Since both the Bible and the Qur’an give the title “the First and the Last” to God, it should be quite shocking for Muslims to open the New Testament and read Revelation 1:17-18, where Jesus says:

“Do not be afraid; *I am the first and the last*, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.”

Would a mere prophet claim to be the “First and the Last”?

WHO FORGIVES SINS?

While one human being may sin against another human being, there is a sense in which all sin is rebellion against God. Similarly, while you and I may forgive one another for the wrongs we commit, only God can offer ultimate forgiveness. Thus, the prophet David could say to God, “Against You, You

only, I have sinned and done what is evil in Your sight” (Psalm 51:4), and the Prophet Daniel could declare, “To the Lord our God belong compassion and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against Him” (Daniel 9:9).

The Qur’an agrees that ultimate forgiveness belongs to God, for it asks, “Who can forgive sins except Allah?” (3:135).

It might surprise Muslims to learn that, in the New Testament, Jesus claims the ability to forgive sins. In Mark 2, a paralyzed man is brought to Jesus in order to be healed. Jesus’ response leads the religious leaders to accuse him of blasphemy:

Mark 2:5-7—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?”

The scribes correctly recognized that only God can forgive sins. Yet Jesus (who referred to himself as the “Son of Man”), knowing their thoughts, replied that “the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins” (Mark 2:10). He then healed the paralytic, proving that his claims were true.

THE LIGHT

In Psalm 27:1, the prophet David proclaims: “The LORD is my light and my salvation.” Similarly, the Qur’an declares that “Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth” (24:35). Yet Jesus tells his listeners that he is “the Light”:

John 8:12—“I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.”

THE TRUTH

The prophet David refers to Yahweh as the “God of Truth” (Psalm 31:5). According to the Qur’an, “Allah is the Truth” (22:6). Jesus, however, applies this as a title for himself:

John 14:6—Jesus said to him, “I am the way, *and the truth*, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”

How can a mere human being claim to be “The Truth”? Wouldn’t a prophet simply say that he *brings* the truth?

THE FINAL JUDGE

In Chapter 3 of the Book of the prophet Joel, Yahweh declares that the nations will be gathered and that he “will sit to judge all the surrounding nations” (v. 12). According to the prophet David, “the LORD abides forever; He has established His

throne for judgment, and He will judge the world in righteousness” (Psalm 9:7-8).

The Qur’an maintains that Allah will judge the world, rewarding believers with “gardens of bliss” and punishing unbelievers in hell:

Qur’an 22:56-57—The kingdom on that day shall be Allah’s; He will judge between them; so those who believe and do good will be in gardens of bliss. And (as for) those who disbelieve in and reject Our communications, these it is who shall have a disgraceful chastisement.

So why, we may wonder, would Jesus tell his followers that he will be the final judge of all people?

Matthew 25:31-32—“But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.”

Jesus goes on to say that he will admit certain people to heaven and cast others into hell. Isn’t this something only God can do?

THE RESURRECTION

The Bible and the Qur’an agree that God is the one who will raise the dead.

1 Samuel 2:6—The LORD kills and makes alive; He brings down to Sheol and raises up.

Qur’an 22:7—Allah will resurrect those who are in the graves.

Since God will raise the dead at the resurrection, why would a mere prophet tell his followers that he will resurrect the dead? Wouldn’t this be blasphemy?

John 5:25-29—“Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, *when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live*. For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this; *for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth*; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.”

John 11:25—Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies.”

GOD'S GLORY

The Qur'an tells us that "Whatsoever is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Allah" (57:1).

In the Old Testament, we find that Yahweh will not share his glory with anyone.

Isaiah 42:8—"I am the LORD, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another." (Cf. Isaiah 48:11—"My glory I will not give to another.")

Yet Jesus claimed, not only that he would be glorified with the Father, but that he had glory with the Father before the world was created!

John 17:5—"Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was."

How can anyone see this as anything but a claim to deity?

FURTHER EVIDENCE

In Mark 2:28, Jesus calls himself the "Lord of the Sabbath." In Matthew 22:41-45, he proves that he is the Lord of the prophet David. In John 8:39-58, Jesus says that he has seen the prophet Abraham. In Matthew 12:6, Jesus claims to be greater than God's Temple.

Jesus tells us that he has an absolutely unique relationship with the Father (Matthew 11:27), that he can answer prayers (John 14:13-14), that he is present wherever his followers are gathered (Matthew 18:20), that he has "all authority in heaven and on earth" (Matthew 28:18), and that he is with his followers forever (Matthew 28:20). He even makes the startling declaration that "All things that the Father has are Mine" (John 16:15).

According to Jesus, all people must honor him just as we honor the Father:

John 5:21-23—"For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes. For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him."

Since one of the ways we honor the Father is by our worship, it should come as no surprise that Jesus' followers worshiped him on numerous occasions. Indeed, the Gospel tells us that Jesus was worshiped throughout his life: shortly after his birth (Matthew 2:11), during his ministry (Matthew 14:33, John

9:38), after his resurrection (Matthew 28:17), and after his ascension to heaven (Luke 24:52). Jesus' disciple Thomas even addressed him as "my Lord and my God" (John 20:28).

ASSESSMENT

Where did Jesus say, "I am God, worship me"? As we have seen, Jesus claimed to be the First and the Last, the forgiver of sins, the Light, the Truth, the Final Judge, and the Resurrection. Jesus proclaimed that he had glory with the Father before the world was created, that he is Lord of the Sabbath and of King David, that he had seen Abraham, and that he is greater than God's Temple. Jesus has a unique relationship with the Father, he can answer prayers, he is with his followers no matter where they are, he has total authority on earth and in heaven, he is with his followers forever, and he owns everything. Jesus even demanded that he be honored just as the Father is honored. While someone may argue that one or two of these points could be interpreted differently, when we see them as a whole, these obviously are not the claims of a mere human being. They are not even the claims of a mighty prophet. These are claims only God can truly make. This is why Christians believe that Jesus is God.

POSTSCRIPT: THE ISLAMIC DILEMMA

Since the Bible obviously supports the Christian view of Jesus, Muslims who want to deny the deity of Christ will have to argue that the Gospel has been corrupted. But if the Gospel has been corrupted, why does the Qur'an command Christians to judge by the Gospel? By commanding us to judge by what we find in the Gospel, the Qur'an has inadvertently ordered Christians to reject Islam!

But it gets worse for Muslims. The Qur'an affirms the inspiration and reliability of the Christian Scriptures (3:3-4, 5:47, 5:66, 7:157, 10:94), as well as man's inability to corrupt God's Word (6:114-115, 18:27). Muslims therefore cannot reject what the Gospel says, which leaves them with quite a dilemma. If the Gospel is reliable, Islam must be false, since the Gospel presents Jesus as God. Alternatively, if the Gospel is unreliable, Islam must be false, because the Qur'an tells us that the Gospel is the Word of God. Either way, Islam is false, and anyone who is searching for the truth will never find it in the Qur'an.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Many readers will have questions or objections to the arguments contained in this pamphlet. We have therefore provided a comment section at the following link:

<http://www.answeringmuslims.com/2011/06/where-did-jesus-say-i-am-god-worship-me.html>

WHERE DID JESUS SAY, "I AM GOD, WORSHIP ME"?

The Qur'an commands Christians to judge by the Gospel:

Qur'an 5:47—"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."

وَلِيَحْكُمَ أَهْلَ الْإِنجِيلِ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ
فِيهِ ۖ وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ
فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفٰسِقُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

Thus, when Christians present their beliefs, it makes sense for Muslims to ask, "Could you show us where the Bible says that?" Christians should therefore be eager to present evidence from the Gospel, because Muslims cannot condemn us for doing what the Qur'an commands. Indeed, since the Qur'an affirms not only the Gospel, but also the Torah (Qur'an 5:43), Muslims cannot ignore what the Bible says without thereby rebelling against Islam.

(Note: This pamphlet contains verses of the Qur'an in English and Arabic. Please do not dispose of it improperly.)