

Conversation with Mohammed about Jesus death and resurrection:

From previous conversation:

Mohammed15: *The truth is that Jesus did not die because his prayers to the Father (the only true God) to save him from death were answered because God loved him as Jesus was a righteous man, a chosen Messiah, and a great prophet. In Hebrew 5:7, it says “during the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears **to the one who could save him from death**, and **he was heard** because of his reverent submission.” May the One who answered Jesus prayers and saved him from death guide us all to the truth and have mercy on us both in this life and in the hereafter. Amen.*

First communication:

Huggy1: About Hebrew 5:7 that you used to argue that Jesus did not die on the cross:

You misunderstood the meaning of the verse.

First, you have to read 5:7-10 to understand what the verses mean. Verse 7 says that Jesus prayed fervently to God to save Him from the death. But in Mark 14:32-35, Jesus said “not what I will but what You (God) will” and then, He went to the cross to die by obeying God’s will (Mark 14:43-15:47), so “he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him” (Hebrew 5:9).

Second, you have to read Hebrew 10:11-14 to understand the Hebrew 5:7 correctly. Hebrew 10:11-14 says that the priests of Old Testament sacrifice animals every year for redeeming their sins, but Jesus offered one sacrifice for sins forever by saying “¹¹Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ¹²But when this priest (Jesus) had offered for all time one sacrifice (death on the cross) for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³and since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool. ¹⁴For by one sacrifice (death on the cross) he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.” These verses clearly mention Jesus death as an eternal sacrifice for our sins.

2. Jesus predicted His death and resurrection three times in

1st prediction: Mark 8:27-33, Matthew 16:13-28, Luke 9:18-21

2nd prediction: Mark 9:14-32, Matthew 17:14-23, Luke 9:43-45

3rd prediction: Mark 10:32-34, Matthew 20:17-19, Luke 18:31-34

3. Jesus suffering/death on the cross and His resurrection are described in detail in the following Bible verses.

I recommend you to read Mark 15:1 – 16:20 as it is concise.

Matthew 26:47 – 28:20, Mark 14:43 – 16:20, Luke 23:1 – 24:53, John 18:28 – 20:29

4. Jesus’ disciples all forsook or denied Jesus when He was arrested (Mark 14:43-52, 14:66-72). But after they got Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1- 16) they spread the Good News of Jesus’ death and resurrection for our sins all over the world risking their lives in the book of Acts. (Note: Acts is a history book of how Jesus’ disciples spread the Christianity all over the world after Jesus death/resurrection and ascension to heaven – Please read Acts at least from chapter 2 to chapter 11).

Acts 2:22-24, 2:32, Acts 3:1-16, Acts 4:1-22, Acts 5:22-32, Acts 13:26-31, Acts 17:1-4, Acts 17:29-34

5. In Acts 3:1-16, 5:12-16, 9:32-43, 14:8-18, Jesus’ disciples performed a lot of miracles in the name of Jesus, which prove that their messages of Jesus’ death and resurrection are true. Similar miracles occur in modern time to whoever believes Jesus’ death and resurrection for our sins. There are many Muslims experienced similar miracles after accepting Jesus even now. One example is Ahmed Joktan.

Second communication:

Mohammed1: I have read the Hebrew 5:7-10 again. It says “**and he was heard because of his reverent submission.**” I do not know what you understand from this verse (I would appreciate it if you could please share your understanding) but my understanding in plain English is that Jesus was asking God to save him from death and his prayer was heard/answered so God saved him from death. He prayed 3 times in **Mark 14:32-41**. Surely, Jesus was trying so hard to ask God to save him from death. Jesus did not want to die and was not willing to take the penalty on your behalf.

Ans1: *I realize that you refer many Bible verses but selectively to justify your argument. Please read my response in my previous email about Hebrew 5:7 more carefully. You have to know what Jesus said in Mark 14:36, “not what I will but what You (God) will”. God heard Jesus’ prayer and gave Him spiritual power to obey God’s will so He went to the cross. And I said that Hebrew 10:14 explains more clearly of Jesus’ death.*

Mohammed2: You mentioned that the priests of the Old Testament sacrifice animals every year for redeeming their sins. Did this sacrifice cover their sins? Were their sins forgiven after this animal sacrifice? By the way the sacrifice in the Old Testament did not require animal/blood sacrifice. Plant offerings were also acceptable for sins. Also, in the Old Testament, sacrifice is only for unintentional sins (please see **Leviticus 4**). International sins can only be forgiven by repentance so repentance is more important than sacrifice. Please see **Hosea 6:6**. Also, in Mathew 9:13, Jesus said “**But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'** For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

Ans2: *This OT’s sacrifice of animals is in Hebrew 10:11-14. The Bible verses say that OT priests sacrifice animal every year, but by Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross, no more animal sacrifice every year (Hebrew 10:14). The Hebrew verses state that Jesus death on the cross is the permanent sacrifice.*

Mohammed3: If Jesus knew from the beginning that he was going to die and rise again from death, why would he then pray to his God to save him from death. Why was he so troubled and worried? Why was he trying to defend himself by asking Peter and the two sons of Zebedee with him to keep watch with him (**Mathew 26: 37-38**)? If Jesus himself was God, could not he save himself? The true God does not die anyway so if Jesus was a true God then no need to discuss this because he should not die?!

Ans3: *In order to understand the Bible verses correctly, you must first understand my 2D-3D analogy (in my first article sent to you) for explaining Jesus as God’s incarnation in human form (God’s fingertip touched on the 2D plane), who came to this world for our salvation. Therefore, He knew His death and resurrection and told it to His disciples three times in advance.*

Yes, the transcendent God cannot die as He is not a finite being of this world. That is why He incarnated to a human form (Jesus), so He could die on the cross for our sins.

Mohammed4: I have read Mark 15:1-16:20. In Mark 15:34, Jesus cried “**Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?**” (which means “**My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**”). I am assuming that Jesus was talking to the Father here and he called him God. So the Father is the God of Jesus (Your God has a God?) and he left Jesus alone and forsake him instead of saving him and the Father did that to save people from their sins. So it is Father who saved you from your sins not Jesus because it is clearly that Jesus did not want to die for you.

Ans4: *Again, you misunderstand the relationship between God (Father) and Jesus (Son). God (Father) is the transcendent God whom we cannot comprehend (as 2D person cannot comprehend the 3D person unless the 3D person touches his finger on the 2D world) but Jesus is God’s incarnation in human form. If you do not understand this relationship, you cannot understand the deep meaning of the Bible verses.*

Here, Jesus is on the cross as God in human form. He must accept the death by taking all human sins. As Holy God in human form, it would be humiliating for Jesus to take all human sins and die. During Jesus’ death, even though temporarily, Jesus was disconnected to the transcendent God, which was unbearably painful for Jesus. That is why Jesus cried out “My God, My God, why have you forsake me?” But as Jesus was God’s incarnation, death could not hold him forever, so He resurrected in three days.

Mohammed5: As you said, all of Jesus disciples forsook him and fled (**Mark 14:50**). None of Jesus disciples and none of the authors of the New Testament witnessed the claimed crucifixion of Jesus. This crucifixion claim is not supported by any strong evidence.

Ans5: *When Jesus was arrested and interrogated by the religious leaders, initially all His disciples run way (and Peter denied Jesus three times during the time). But when Jesus was on the cross, some of His disciples and some*

women who ministered Jesus were looking on the cross from afar (Mark 15:40-41). John 19:25-27 says that John, Jesus mother, and other women approached near to the cross before Jesus' death. In addition to them, there are several religious leaders (e.g Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus) were near the cross (John 19:38-40). After resurrection, Jesus appeared to his disciples (Mark 16:12-14) and to 500 people (1 Corinthians 15:3-10).

Mohammed6: You mentioned that Jesus disciples performed a lot of miracles in the name of Jesus and that is a proof of the truthfulness of their messages of Jesus death and resurrection. You claim that a lot of Muslims experienced miracles after they accepted Jesus (I believe you mean here after becoming Christians because no one can be a Muslim unless he/she accepts Jesus. I accept Jesus as a true prophet, a righteous man and a chosen Messiah but I certainly do not believe he is God). “Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'”

Jesus also said in Mathew 24:24 “For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.”

I am not sure what is the nature of the miracles you can perform but Jesus said in Mathew 21:21, “Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and it will be done.”

Since you believe in Jesus as your savior and you believe you have faith and hopefully you do not have doubt, according to Jesus whom you believe to be your God and savior, if you say “go, throw yourself into the sea” to the mountain, the mountain would do just as you asked. So can you do that? Or perhaps Mr. Joktan can do that? I would like to see you (or Mr. Joktan) doing that maybe to a rock by Lake Michigan and tell the rock to go and throw itself in the lake and see if something happens.

Ans6: *At the early time of Christianity, Jesus' disciples experienced and performed many miracles (please read Acts). I and my wife also experienced miracles. I saw visions two times and my wife speaks tongue (Acts 2:1-4, 10:44-46). Ahmed Joktan and Nabeel Qureshi also saw visions of Jesus. A tumor in the head of my friend's wife disappeared after she got a prayer from a guest preacher in Alabama. My friend in Korea had a severe leg injury but was completely healed while he and his wife were praying together. In South Korea we saw many miracles (mostly healing) in the churches in 1960 - 1970 while worshiping and praying. We need to pray with strong belief in God and His power without any doubt and our prayer should be aligned to God's will. But still it is up to God's sovereign decision.*

We should be also careful to the miracles. Some Korean Christian preachers received spiritual gift to heal people but later they used their God given spiritual gifts for their own advantage and became cult leaders and damaged the Christianity and the society. As you mentioned above referring Mathew 24:24, they are false messiahs and false prophets. We have to use God given spiritual gift for God's glory only.

Mohammed7: Unfortunately, I was not around when the early Christians were doing many miracles so I was not able to see these miracles. However, I am lucky to have a Christian friend like you who have a strong faith and so I am hoping that you will show me God's glory by showing me how you can perform the miracle of asking the mountain to throw itself into the sea (Mathew 21:21) or drink a deadly poison like it says in Mark 16:18. Because I love you and care about you, I would not recommend you performing the miracle in Mark 16:18 (drinking the deadly poison as the verse says) but I think it would not cause harm if you try to show me the first miracle (asking the mountain to throw itself into the sea). Only then, I would believe that you can perform miracles (with God's will, of course).

Ans7: You do not need to ask me to perform a miracle but you can also experience God's miracles if you accept Jesus as your savior.

My recommendation is to read Mark from the beginning to the last and then read Acts with humbling yourself to the words of God. That is how I experienced Holy Spirit and then my life changed.

Mohammed8: Thank you so much for your note. I completely agree with you. I do not need to ask you to perform a miracle. Generally, I never talk about miracles and do not discuss this topic because I personally do not believe a true faith is based on miracles, even if these miracles are truly supernatural. I would not call anything a miracle unless it is supernatural any way but some people call lots of things miracles even if they are not supernatural.

You have brought miracles into the discussion and I felt the need to respond in order to engage in the discussion. You have mentioned in the 5th point in the email you sent me on Monday that "Jesus' disciples performed a lot of miracles in the name of Jesus, which prove that their messages of Jesus' death and resurrection are true." However, I did not agree with this statement. Doing many miracles cannot on itself be a proof of truthfulness. The Bible also agrees with me and I have referenced Mathew 7:21-23 & 24:24 in the response I sent you on Monday. I think you also agree with me because you called those Christian preachers in Korea who perform miracles for their own advantage as false messiahs and false prophets even though they received God's gift of healing people, which you called a miracle. So the statement you wrote earlier is not true. A miracle on itself is not a proof of truthfulness of a person or a message so having the disciples perform miracles does not prove that their message is true.

You have also talked about the miracles that other Christians performed including your wife who speak tongues and you referenced some verses from the book of Acts. I was wondering if you also can perform other miracles that your savior talked about in your own holy scripture (Mathew 21:21 & Mark 16:18). This is the only reason why I asked you to perform these miracles.

I apologize if I bothered or offended you by referencing Mathew 21:21 or Mark 16:18. I was only trying to address some of the points regarding miracles that you brought to the discussion.

May our Creator guide us all to the straight path, the path of those who have His favor, and not the path of those who have His anger or the path of those who are lost. Amen.

Huggy: In Christianity, miracle is an important topic as Bible has full of the story of miracles. But not many people want to discuss it, especially in this modern time. But I think miracle is an important topic we should understand correctly.

My responses to your comments as follows:

***Ans8:** You made a good point. Performing miracles cannot guarantee truthfulness as Satan can also perform miracles. We have to check the performer of the miracle for his/her motivation. The cult leader's motivations are not for glorifying God but for gaining personal advantages. We also have to check the fruit of his work.*

On the other hand, Jesus' disciples performed and experienced a lot of miracles by the power of God while they were spreading the Good News to the people. God gave them the spiritual power not for their advantage but for witnessing Jesus' death and resurrection to unbelievers. The motivations of the disciples' good work were not for their selfish gain but for witnessing Jesus and glorifying God. The fruit of their work is that I could hear Good News and became a Christian.

In Acts 9:1- 22, Jesus called Saul (later Saul changed to Paul who wrote nearly a half of the New Testament) on his way to Damascus to arrest Christians and appointed him as Jesus' chosen instrument to proclaim Jesus' name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel (Acts 9:15, Please read whole chapter 9). After that incident, Paul dedicated whole his life for propagating the good news under constant persecutions to all the gentiles and Jews that he could reach. In Acts 14:8-20, when Paul healed a crippled man from his birth in Lystra, the people in the town saw the miracle and tried to worship him and his companion as their gods. Paul could use the incident as an opportunity to be their king and could have wealth and power over them. He could make a Paulish nation of Paulish religion. But he strongly denied to be their god but instead preached the living God. Next day, he was

stoned to near death by the mob. Paul (and other disciples) did a lot of miracles while he was preaching the living God to the people, not to impress the crowd and get flesh advantage from them but to propagate the Good News and to glorify God. That is why I believe his message of Jesus' death and resurrection for our sins is true.

I think God did not call me and my wife to be a great witness of Jesus like Paul, so I believe He did not give us the spiritual power to do miracles described in Mathew 21:21 & Mark 16:18. But in Acts 28:1-6, when Paul was beaten by a poisonous snake, the people around him thought he would die soon but they found that the snake gave no harm to him.

Mohammed9: Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, performed many miracles, by the will of Allah Almighty, which are recorded in the Qur'an and the Hadith. These miracles were performed during the life of the prophet more than 1400 years ago. Would I expect you today to believe in Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his message because he had done these miracles? Absolutely not! I think it would be naive of me to expect that from you.

You would have to believe in the Qur'an and the Hadith to believe that Prophet Muhammad has done these miracles in the first place because you have not seen these miracles and you were not there when Prophet Muhammad performed these miracles. You do not believe in the Qur'an and the Hadith so I would not expect you to believe in these miracles and, hence, it is meaningless if I talk to you about the miracles that Prophet Muhammad performed more than 1400 years ago. I, myself, did not believe in Islam because of the miracles that prophet Muhammad performed. I believed in Islam and the message of Prophet Muhammad after analyzing his life and teachings logically and rationally with scientific evidence. That is how I became a Muslim. My belief in the miracles that Prophet Muhammad performed is a result of my faith in him after analyzing his teachings. I did not have faith in him because of the miracles he has done.

In fact, in the Qur'an God Almighty does not expect people to believe in prophets because of the miracles they have done in His name but rather He Almighty expects them to believe in Him after thinking and using the tool that God distinguished us from other creatures to investigate the truthfulness of the message of these prophets. That tool is the mind and the ability to think. Throughout the Qur'an, in many verses God calls people to think and to use their mind because those who do will believe and receive guidance. For example, God says in 45:13 *"Verily, in it are signs for a people who think deeply"*.

Some people think that science or logic and religion are kind of opposite which is why lots of people especially in STEM field in the west do not believe in God and are either atheists or agnostics. That is not the case in Islam, God calls people to use science and logic to believe in Him and this is the main reason why He equipped us with minds to think and reflect. God does not expect us to believe solely based on emotional feelings or based on miracles that people performed in His name.

Lastly, Muslims believe that the Qur'an itself is the greatest and most important miracle of Prophet Muhammad. The message of truth that contains guidance and signs for those who reflect and think which was given to the prophet by God is far more important than any other miracles.

Ans9: As I mentioned in my previous email (I do not remember which email as we sent and received so many emails), I became a Christian after I experienced the Holy Spirit. I really want to know how you believe Islam. I have several questions below that come from your email just sent.

1. *What miracles did Prophet Muhammad perform and where are they recorded in Quran?*
2. *What aspects of Prophet Muhammad life and his teaching did you analyze scientifically?*
Can you tell me the life of Prophet Muhammad and his teaching that drew you to believe in Islam?
How logically and rationally with scientific evidence did you analyze his life and teaching?
3. *Why do Muslims believe that the Qur'an itself is the greatest and most important miracle of Prophet Muhammad?*