

Muhammad and Jesus – what’s the difference and does it matter?

1 Some First Thoughts



- Competitive religion syndrome or self-censoring?
- Just the same in peace or violence or irrelevance?
- Some similarities and important differences, relevant now and forever

2 What do you think of Muhammad?

- “According to Islamic belief, the Prophet Muhammad was the last Messenger of God. He, like all of God's prophets and messengers – such as Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus – was only a human being. Christians came to the mistaken assumption that Muslims worship Muhammad by formulating an incorrect analogy – they worship Jesus so they assumed Muslims worship Muhammad. This is one of the reasons that they called Muslims by the incorrect name "Mohammedans" for so many years!” (From “Do Muslims Worship Muhammad”, <http://www.islamicweb.com/begin/myth3.htm>)
- “Narrated 'Umar: I heard the Prophet saying, “Do not exaggerate in praising me as the Christians praised the son of Mary, for I am only a Slave. So, call me the Slave of Allah and His Apostle.”” (Sahih Bukhari, Vol 4, Bk 55, No 654)
- Abu Bakr: “Whoever amongst you worshipped Muhammad? Muhammad is dead. But whoever worshipped Allah? Allah is alive and will never die. Allah said ‘Muhammad is no more than a messenger, many were the messengers that passed away before him...[Surah 3 Al Imran aya 144]” (Bukhari, Vol 2, Bk 23, No 333)
- Surah 18 Al-Kahf aya 110: “Say: ‘I am only a human being like you, being inspired that your god is One God. Whoever hopes to meet his Lord, let him work righteousness, and never associate anyone with the service of his Lord.’”
- Just a man and only a man, but:
 - None will have faith until he loves Muhammad more than his family and all humanity (Khan’s summary of Bukhari Bk 2, ch 7, No 14-15)

- If you obey Muhammad, then you are obeying Allah and if you disobey him then you are disobeying Allah. (Khan's Summary of Bukhari Bk 53, ch 50, No 1270)
- Best example (e.g. Surah 33 Al-Ahzab aya 21 and 68 Al-Qalam aya 4) – "...philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a cult without images, the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and one spiritual empire, that is Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may ask, is there any greater man than he?" (www.scribd.com/doc/2607490/LAMARTINES-VIEWS-on-Prophet-Muhammad-Peace-be-upon-him)
- So, cartoons might be offensive, but:
 - Unsure he was hearing God, e.g. ibn Ishaq, *The Life of Muhammad*, p106
 - Does not know where he is going, e.g. Surah 46 Al-Ahqaf aya 9
 - No miracles, e.g. Surah 6 Al-Anam 37 and 28 Al-Qasas aya 48
 - Sinned, e.g. Surah 40 Ghafir aya 55, 47 Muhammad aya 19 and 48 Al-Fath aya 1-2
 - Approved of mockers being killed, e.g. ibn Ishaq, p675-6
 - Involved in 20-100 skirmishes/battles, e.g. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_expeditions_of_Muhammad; Surah 9 Al-Tawbah aya 5 cf Bukhari Bk 2, ch 14, No 24; ibn Ishaq p461-465; al Waqidi, *The Islamic Conquest of Syria*
- So, what do you think of Muhammad? At least relevant for truthful relationships today

3 What do you think of Jesus?

- Born of a virgin, proclaimed by angels, resisted temptation, proclaimed good news, brought forgiveness, authenticated by miracles (New Testament/Gospel/Injil, Luke 1-8)
- Jesus is the Messiah/Christ: ¹⁸Now it happened that as he was praying alone, the disciples were with him. And he asked them, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" ¹⁹And they answered, "John the Baptist. But others say, Elijah, and others, that one of the prophets of old has risen." ²⁰Then he said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" And Peter answered, "The Christ of God." (Luke 9:18-20)
 - He is the long-promised king (2 Samuel 7, Psalm 2, Isaiah 9)

- Jesus is the Son of Man who dies and rises again: ²¹And he strictly charged and commanded them to tell this to no one, ²²saying, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.” (Luke 9:21-22)
 - He is the long-promised global ruler and rescuer (Daniel 7 & 9, Isaiah 53)

- Jesus is God’s Son and Chosen One: ²⁸Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. ²⁹And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white. ³⁰And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, ³¹who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. ³²Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. ³³And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah”—not knowing what he said. ³⁴As he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. ³⁵And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!” ³⁶And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen. (Luke 9:28-36)
 - He is greater than Moses (bringer of Law) and Elijah (law enforcer)
 - He is God’s Son and knows where he is going
 - He is God’s Chosen One and must be listened to

- Jesus is relevant now and forever: ²³And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. ²⁴For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. ²⁵For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself? ²⁶For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.” (Luke 9:23-26)
 - So, what will Jesus think of you?