

JESUS

عیسیٰ علیہ السلام

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INTRODUCTION

The topic of discussion is Jesus Peace Be Upon Him (PBUH) as mentioned in the Quran, Bible and History. Throughout this topic we will learn the realities that indicate when he was sent, who he was sent to, why he was sent and what was his message to mankind. By the end of this review of history we will have a better understanding of who Jesus' the son of Mary was, as found by looking at the textual evidence.

It is important to note the principles that differentiate Jesus PBUH from other prophets. In Quranic terminology there is a difference between prophets (Nabi) and Messengers (Rasool). Prophets have been in the hundreds of thousands whereas Messengers have been limited, with only a few mentioned in the Quran, and they are sent to nations to act as a judgement for their people.

God almighty has mentioned this law of his as decreed from the first man Adam (PBUH) where God almighty sends prophets to give the message to people; who either choose to accept or deny the message. For those who believe in the oneness of God almighty and believe in the messengers they are saved whereas those who reject/deny the messengers face the consequences in this world and in the Hereafter. This law can be seen actioned throughout history with evidence from the past nations such as Aadd, Thamud, Noah, Lot, Ibrahim and Jesus (PBUH), as detailed in the Quran and Bible.

"And for every community there is a Rasool (messenger). After their Rasool (messenger) has come, judgment is passed on them in all fairness, and they are not wronged." (Quran 10:47)

In the Quranic discourse Jesus pbuh is described as having had a miraculous birth to a virgin named Mary through God almighty's will. Quran describes the reasons as to why he was sent down in Surah Al-Imran - Chapter 3 Verse 49 as well as supporting evidence from the Bible in Matthew 15:24 and 10:5.

Surah Al-Imran - Chapter 3 Verse 49 which states

"He will send him (Jesus) a messenger to the Children of Israel...."

Matthew 15:24 *"I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel"*

Matthew 10:5-6 *"These twelve (disciple's) Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel."*

Matthew 3:11

John the Baptist (Yahyaa) is saying to the people *"I am baptising you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptise you with the Holy spirit and with fire."*

From the above evidence, it can be seen clearly that Jesus PBUH was sent as a Messenger (Rasool) to pass judgement specifically and only on the children of Israel. There was a forewarning to the people about Jesus PBUH from John the Baptist (Yahyaa) that you may believe in what I am inviting you towards or not believe in it, with no major consequences in this world for you but with Jesus PBUH you will either be saved or perish in this world as well as being held to account in the Hereafter which once again highlights the fact that Jesus PBUH came to pass judgement on the Children of Israel. This demonstrates who Jesus PBUH was and what his mission was.

Who were the Children of Israel?

As previously mentioned from beginning of time God almighty sent down prophets and messengers to people who would remind them of their purpose in life and bring them back to preparing for an everlasting life in the hereafter. This method was used by God Almighty up until Ibraheem PBUH was sent; about 4000 years ago, in the area of Ur, in current day Iraq. Ibraheem had two sons Ismaiel and Ishaq, From thereon, God almighty decided that the messenger-ship will be given to a nation as opposed to an individual! Thus Ibraheem's progeny was chosen to become the torch bearers of the message of God. They were chosen by God almighty to deliver the message of God almighty as a nation. They were not chosen as some type of favourite people who could do whatever they liked and had some guarantee to Heaven

regardless of action or intention. Prophets would now come only through this line of Abraham PBUH as shown below.

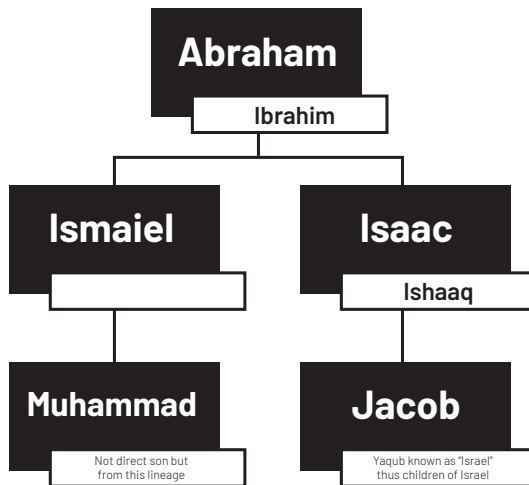


Figure 1: Abraham Lineage

Brief History of Children of Israel

Ismail and his descendants were commanded to stay in Makkah and ordered to build the first house of God, the Kabbah. The descendants of Ismaiel were called the Quraysh and from whom came the last of the Messengers called Muhammed PBUH. From Abrahams lineage, until Muhammed PBUH, all prophets came from the line of Jacob who was also known as Israel and thus came the name Children of Israel. The Children of Israel settled in "Levant" or greater Syria area which includes Syria, Palestine and Jordan which was called "Kanaan" in that time.

1300 years before Jesus PBUH, which is 700 years after Abraham PBUH came Moses PBUH.

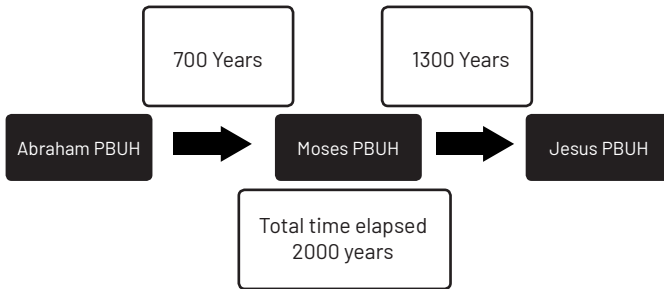


Figure 2: Chronological dissent of messengers

Moses PBUH came at a time when Children of Israel had moved from Kanaan to Egypt at the request of Prophet Joseph (Yusuf) PBUH who had authority in Egypt at that time. Later, there was a revolt in Egypt, and the Children of Israel were taken slaves by the Egyptian Pharaohs; from which they were delivered by Moses PBUH. When Moses PBUH delivered them from the pharaoh and the Egyptians, he ordered them to fight the people of greater Kanaan to which the Children of Israel refused. As a punishment God almighty did not give them that country at that time and Moses PBUH passed away in the wilderness. After some generations passed,

the people became better and found the courage to fight for this greater Kanaan area. Later on the 12 tribes of Israel became united under the rule of Prophet David (Dawuud) and after him his son Prophet Solomon who became the king after David. Prophet Solomon PBUH formulated what is known as the United Kingdom of Judia or the United Kingdom of Jews in an area which today we understand as trans Jordan, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, and Syria. In Palestine he built the massive temple known as the first temple in 870 B.C.

This lasted approximately 400 years but due to internal conflicts in the Jewish community to the extent that the Jewish community killing its Prophets as well, when they disagreed with them, hey were thus punished by God almighty through a king from Babylon named Nebuchadnezzar who destroyed Jerusalem in 526 BC and led away many Hebrews into captivity in Babylon. He enslaved the people, destroyed the temple and their tablets.

Only a couple of relics were preserved that were saved in the so called Arc. This resulted in a Torah that had been destroyed and the Children of Israel becoming captives once again in Babylon. This is when they lost Hebrew as their language and embraced Aramaic, which was the language of Babylon. The Children of Israel were later on freed by the King Cyrus (Zulqarnain). Prophet Uzair was sent by God and God almighty had Torah re-written through him thus allowing the Jewish community to resettle. Later on they were again attacked by the Persians who took over and had control over them before finally coming under the rule of Roman empire at the time of Jesus PbuH.

Jewish groups at the time of Jesus PBUH

Approximately 300 years before the arrival of Jesus PBUH, Alexander the Great took over the area of the Jews among other areas by defeating the Persians and taking control over the ruler-ship of the Jewish community. After that a new culture called "Hellenization" which was Greek-Roman culture spread throughout the world which is in essence the western culture of the world today. This Greek Roman culture was accepted by one of the main Jewish groups. By installing kings from amongst the Jewish community in the trans Jordan area the Roman Greeks, kept control of their kingdom.

At the birth of Jesus PBUH, king Herod was the stooge of Romans, as mentioned in the Bible in Matthew 2:1, who was working under the authority of the Roman Greeks. It is important to note that at this time the Jewish people had become so corrupt, breaking all of God Almighty's laws, killing messengers and believing that they are a chosen nation and can pretty much do anything they pleased and had long forgotten the essence of being chosen- to deliver the message of God!

Scriptures of Jews

The Tanakh is a collection of written books of which there are 24 books in total. From this the first 5 books are named the Pentateuch that are claimed to be from Moses PBUH such as Deuteronomy, Leviticus, Genesis, Exodus and Numbers. The remaining 19 books have been written by Rabbis. The other scripture used by Jewish community is the Talmud that has all the discussions and opinions of the Rabbis in the Jewish community which is also called the oral Torah. Today the Talmud is followed by the Jewish community more than the Tanakh.

The four main Jewish groups at the time of Jesus:

1) Sadducees - The elite members of the society who were exempt from punishment for breaking many of God almighty's laws. This included priests, nobles, wealthy individuals, politically strong people in the society. They believed in only the Tanakh- the written Torah. They were in control of the temple (2nd temple) and focussed on rituals in the temple such as sacrificing animals in temple and burning incense in certain area of the temple for certain people to enter. They believed religion was inside the temple. They received and benefitted from the donations from common people with minimal effort on their own.

2) Pharisees - The common citizens who did not agree with the Sadducees' understanding of the religion. They believed in the Tanakh and the Talmud. They always disagreed with each other. They were not as focussed on the inside temple rituals and believed that the real-life application of the religion was outside the temple.

3) Essenes - These were the individuals that had given up the luxuries and wealth of the world. They lived in the jungles and bathed in the morning, immersing themselves in water which was known as Baptising-purifying themselves. Even at that time, where owning slaves was common practice, they were against this practice. They knew of the signs of the Messiah and were waiting for the Messiah to come and so it's no surprise that most of the followers of Jesus PBUH were from this group.

4) The Zealots/Sikrim (Aramaic word)-They would attack Roman stooges with daggers before running away. They did not agree with the Greek Roman rule.

All these groups had over the generations lost the essence of the teachings of Moses PBUH that he had given them and had reduced the whole message of God Almighty to a few lifeless rituals and converted the house of God into a business venture for the elite! Jesus was sent to revive the true message of God and was sent with the purpose as mentioned in the Quran in Surah Ale-Imran Chapter 3 Verse 48 where it mentions what Jesus PBUH was tasked to do:

"He will teach him the Scripture and wisdom, the Torah and the Gospel."

Jesus PBUH was sent to share the "Kitab"-shariah or God almighty's laws and "Hikmah"- essence of those laws which means the essence/ethics/morality behind those laws which the Children of Israel had completely lost. They were focussing so much on the form/the outward looking of the law that the true nature of their relationship with God and their purpose of sharing the message of God with the rest of the world had long been lost.

This is why Jesus PBUH's teachings were repeatedly emphasising this aspect of God's commands as an example on seeing the people trying to stone a lady who was accused of adultery. Jesus PBUH said as mentioned in the Bible in John 8:7:

"If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her."

This and many such incidences mentioned in the bible show how Jesus was trying to teach them the essence of the laws as opposed to the literalness of the law which they were so used to implementing as and when it suited them. The elite amongst the society used to hold the weakest of the society to account even for minor mistakes and would meet out the harshest of punishments to them.

Whereas for the elites they would be able to get away from any punishment—even murder! Thus the social fabric was so corrupt that the actual essence of the law was not being followed, and that the elite were using the laws for their own interests.

These examples highlight perfectly well as to what type of people the Messenger Jesus (as a judgement) was sent to. The previous nations were destroyed completely when they rejected God almighty's Messengers. The difference here being that the people who rejected Jesus PBUH were supposed to uphold the message of God so God almighty chose to humiliate them as a punishment in this world as a sign for all nations to come!

The society had fallen in total disarray that the Sadducees who included the priests were in control of all power in the society. The Pharisees (commoners) would pay money to the temple. The priests who were in the thousands were being paid and fed due to the donations of the common people. They had no job and contributed nothing towards the society and lived of the money of the public. There was a large amount of wealth and livestock in the temple. As was a common practice since the time of Moses PBUH, livestock was donated for sacrifice to the temple to be sacrificed to God almighty. What these greedy priests would do is hoard the animals and then because of the vast number that could not be consumed, the priests sold the same gifted animals back to the common people at a cut rate and kept the money for themselves. These animals provided as a "gift" to God almighty which were for sacrifice should have been slaughtered and their meat distributed towards the poor and vulnerable of the society. However, what transpired was a never-ending cycle of business showcasing the level of moral degradation that had rotten the society to the very core!

This provides the background to when in Matthew 21:12-13 it states:

“Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves. “It is written.” He said to them. “My house will be called a house of prayer”, but you are making it a ‘den of robbers’.”

As well as in Mark 11:15-17

“On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple area and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of money changers and the benches of those selling doves and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts. And as he taught them, he said “Is it not written: “My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations?” But you have made it ‘a den of robbers’.”

God almighty’s house had in essence been turned into a business place. This is emphasised in the Quran in Surah Al -Baqarah Chapter 2 Verse 41 where it states:

“And believe in the Book I have now sent down; as it confirms the Scriptures you already possess, be not the first to reject it; barter not away My Revelations for paltry worldly gain, and guard yourselves against My wrath.”

The Pharisees were revolting against the Sadducees because of the religious difference where the Pharisees believed in the written and oral Torah whereas the Sadducees only believed in the written Torah. To ensure that order could be ordained in the society, a chief priest was appointed that was the final authority, the one that made the final decision on any matter that these two groups differed on.

Chief priest importance

The appointed chief priest, throughout history, came from the lineage of "Laavi" who was one of the sons of Jacob. Through that lineage came Moses and Aaron PBUH. Through Aarons lineage would come the chief priests. At the time of Mary, the chief priest was Zachariah PBUH. As a chief priest there were areas of the temple that were accessible only to the chief priests giving them special status. Apart from the chief priest there was a committee of 70 people that made decisions on religious and societal matters. This committee included members from both the Sadducees and the Pharisees. This committee or tribunal was called "Sanhedrin" that governed every Jewish law in the community. They were supposed to have passed the judgement on killing Jesus PBUH according to Bible as mentioned in John 18:19-27.

Thus the above description allows us to understand the geopolitical scenario in place at the time of Jesus PBUH.

What was Jesus PBUH sent for?

This has been mentioned in the Quran in Surah Al -Imran Chapter 3 Verse 3 and 33 where it states:

"It is He who sent down to you (Step by step), the truth, the Book, confirming what went before it; and He sent down the Law (of Moses) and the Gospel (of Jesus) before this, as a guide to mankind, and he sent down the criterion (of judgement between right and wrong)"

"God almighty chose Adam and Noah and the descendants of Abraham and of 'Imran above all mankind."

(Imran was the father of Moses and Aaron, and has been mentioned in the Bible as Amram)

Thus Jesus pbuh was sent for the following reasons:

Firstly, that Jesus PBUH was sent down as a messenger (Rasool) to pass judgement on the Children of Israel, based on the state of the society, after explaining the message of God almighty. As mentioned before, he was a judgement in this world for those people to whom he was sent just like all previous Rasools or messengers. As explained before, a Rasool is sent to determine the fate of the nation in this world based on their response to the invitation and message of their respective Rasool i.e. messenger. Jesus was thus sent as a judgement for the children of Israel on account of their long history of ignoring the responsibility that they were charged with by God i.e. to be the torch bearers of God's message in this world and also on account of their devious and treacherous ways which had taken hold of their elite and commoners alike leading to such heinous crimes like killing the very Prophets of God.

Secondly, Jesus PBUH was sent to the Children of Israel for reviving the teaching of "Hikmah" which means an explanation of the essence of God almighty's law explaining the moral sense of that law and moreover the ethics and behavioural aspects of people. He re-established the principle of Mercy by explaining to the ritualistic Rabbis the fact that mercy is what gives meaning to justice as opposed to brute justice, it is this very mercy which provides the balance between forgiveness and the law in itself. Thirdly, the above verses explain that Jesus PBUH came to restore order for the lawful things that were made unlawful by the Children of Israel, of their own accord without any sanction from God.

Mary, the mother of Jesus PBUH

Mary was born at a time when their society was completely steeped in hypocrisy. The elite people who controlled the religious authorities were let away with breaking God almighty's laws such as being treacherous, corrupt, and having extra martial affairs. However, if it was someone from a lower social standing that committed the same acts, they would be made an example of by the very same authorities using God Almighty's Torah as justification, demonstrating their double standards. As we can see there was a need to purify the society's mind-set and actions of the corruption and double standards that were present. We can imagine what such a society would think and do to Mary; who was a virgin lady having a child! This was a massive test for her and the whole society to accept regardless of which society that is. God almighty had his plan and was executed in the best of ways.

In the Jewish society traditionally men were devoted to the temple. At Mary's birth the chief priest was Zachariah. From the same family was a couple named Hannah and Imran who were the parents of Mary or Maryam. When Hannah was pregnant with Mary she made a pledge to God almighty that she would devote her child to the temple, thinking that it would be a boy as mentioned in detail in Surah Al-Imran Chapter 3 Verse 33-59. The Quran in verse 36 states:

"But when she gave birth, she said, 'My Lord! I have given birth to a girl'-God almighty knew best what she had given birth to: the male is not like the female..."

As Hannah had made this pledged, she offered the child to God almighty. As Mary grew up and was in her teenage years she was raised as the finest of ladies in terms of manners, attitude, behaviour and beauty as mentioned in the Quran.

God almighty says I chose Mary above all females in the world as the best. She was chosen and purified and given preference over all the females of the world.

As she was growing up and preparing herself for dedicating herself to the temple the priests and rabbis made a huge fuss regarding a woman being in the temple which went against the society's norms. As mentioned in the Quran they were "fighting" with one another over how it could be fathomed to allow a woman into a temple that had previously been for men only.

On the other hand, people mentioned that she was pledged to be in the temple which more so then was given priority and recognition. She was from the pious family to which Zachariah- the chief priest belonged, and so she was again given special recognition as well as her pious good nature which was exemplary for all to see within the society.

After it was agreed to allow Mary into the temple, it was under the provision of a specially built area for Mary to use in the temple for which the Quran mentions the word "Mehrab" a separate room was built. The next issue that arose was who would take responsibility for this young girl. In verse 44 of chapter 3 Quran describes that the priests put lots down and from those lots Mary's uncle Zachariah was chosen as her guardian. In verse 37 of Surah Al-Imran it states:

"Her Lord graciously entrusted her to the charge of Zachariah. Whenever Zachariah went in to see her in her sanctuary, he found her supplied with provision. He said, 'Mary, how is it you have these provisions? and she said, 'There are from God almighty: God almighty provides limitlessly for whoever He wills'

Mary was being provided an abundance of food without leaving the temple, as a sign of a miracle from God almighty. Zachariah PBUH saw this miracle and asked for another miracle in terms of a child of his own as mentioned in Surah Al-Imran V 38-41. He and his wife did not have a child and had grown old. By God almighty’s will they were provided with a child named John (Yahyaa) ‘The Baptist’ PBUH who was 6-9 months older than Jesus PBUH.

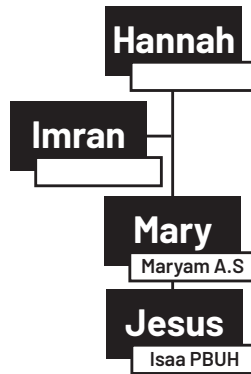


Figure 3: Jesus PBUH family tree

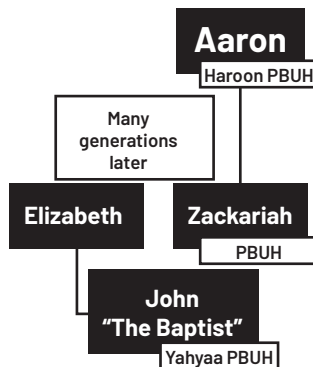


Figure 4: John “The Baptist” family tree

John The Baptist was known as the harbinger. As a prophet of God almighty he was sent to forewarn and declare before people the coming of Jesus PBUH. He in Matthew 3:11 states:

"I am baptising you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptise you with the Holy spirit and with fire."

As part of John's role; he would baptise people in water to symbolise cleansing them so that they may turn back to God almighty before the messenger Jesus PBUH arrives. The above verse from Mathew means that if you accept John's baptising or not it may not affect you in this world but the messenger that is coming will baptise you in a way that there will be no coming back from his ruling. John's word is a message and an invitation but Jesus's PBUH words are a final judgement-hence likened to baptising with fire!

In the Bible, there is no specific or an agreed account of what happened to Mary. The 4 canonical bibles which are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, were written several years after Jesus PBUH by unknown authors who never met Jesus PBUH. Matthew was written 65-75 years later, Mark and Luke was written 75-85 years and John was written 110 years after Jesus PBUH. In chapters of Matthew, Mark and Luke, Jesus PBUH was never called God almighty, son of God almighty or divine. This only occurs later in chapters of John.

When we look at the status of Mary in the Bible we do not get a sense of a lady that was chosen over all other women of the world, as she is described by the Quran. In fact, she seems to have been given no special value in any of the canonical bibles. Mary is mentioned 54 times in the Bible. Out of these only 12 times as Mary mother of Jesus. In comparison, Mary Magdalene is mentioned 13 times in fact it was only when Paul provided divinity to Jesus, did the mother of Jesus PBUH become a prominent figure in Christianity yet not in the Bible.

In comparison the Quran has a whole chapter named after Mary. She is the only woman mentioned by name in the whole Quran showing her status in the eyes of the God as well as in Islam and therefore in the hearts and minds of Muslims.

Encounter of Mary with the Angel.

When Elizabeth was 6 months pregnant, the angel in a human form, visited Mary. As would be expected she was frightened to see someone in her chamber (Mehrab) other than her uncle that would be allowed to visit. This encounter is mentioned in the Quran Surah 3 in the following verses:

"The angel said, 'Mary, God almighty gives you glad tidings (Bashara) of a word (Kalimah) from Him, whose name will be the Messiah, Eesa (Yeshua), son of Mary, who will be held in honour in this world and in the next world, who will be amongst those closest to God almighty.'" (3:45)

The Quran clarifies that the "word or Kalimah" means "Kun fa ya kuun" i.e. "Be and It Comes into being"

"Maryam (Mary) submitted: 'O my Lord, how shall I have a son when no man has ever touched me?' He said: 'Allah creates what He pleases.' When He decides (to do) some work, He just gives it the command 'Be', and it becomes" (3:47)

"Surely, the example of 'Isa (Jesus) in the sight of Allah is the same as that of Adam whom He formed from clay, then said (to him): 'Be'. And he became" (3:59).

In surah 19 the Quran further describes the encounter with the Angel:

"Mary exclaimed: "I surely take refuge from you with the Most Compassionate Lord, if you are at all God-fearing."

"He said: "I am just a message-bearer of your Lord, I have come to grant you a most pure boy."

The angel told her not to be alarmed and that he was sent by God almighty with a "word" which was "Kun fa ya kuun" (Be and it is) and this "word" has become a massive issue in Christianity.

The Quran uses the word "kalimah tullah" in 3:35 which is a word of God almighty.

It's all in the "Word"

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" John 1:1

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." John 1:14

It's all in the "WORD"/s! let's try and analyse the verse of John 1:1 and understand how the misunderstanding about Jesus being God came up and where it stems from.

The actual Greek reads like this:

En arche een ho logoskai ho logos een pros ton theon kai theos een ho logos

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was A god"

Ernest Cadman Colwell who is one of the authorities on the subject of Greek words and Aramaic words in the Bible and he after graduating from Emory College and Candler School of Theology,

Colwell earned a Ph.D. in the Department of New Testament and Early Christian Literature at the University of Chicago for his 1930 dissertation on "The Character of the Greek of the Fourth Gospel: Parallels to the 'Aramaisms' of the Fourth Gospel from Epictetus and the Papyri".

With respect to John 1:1, he writes,

The absence of the article does not make the predicate indefinite or qualitative when it precedes the verb, it is indefinite in this position only when the context demands it.

So, whether the predicate (theos) is definite, indefinite or qualitative depends on the context. The commonly held theology that Jesus is God naturally leads to a corresponding translation. But a theology in which Jesus is subordinate to God leads to the conclusion that "... a god" or "... divine" is the proper rendering.

So John simply called Jesus a god, not THE God, this was something normal back then, to call people gods. When someone was called a god, it meant he was a prophet, a righteous man, a judge, and even the Messiah.

As described above the Quran clarifies that the "word" means "Kun fa ya kuun" which translates to the fact that when God decides to do something, all He has to say is

"Be and it is". God almighty doesn't need laws and materials; like we do, to create things. Jesus PBUH is mentioned in Quran as the word of God almighty which again is "Be" and thus Jesus PBUH became reality-in terms of a life form. This has been highlighted in the Quranic verses as explained above

“The angel said, ‘Mary, God almighty gives you glad tidings (Bashara) of a word (Kalimah) from Him, whose name will be the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, who will be held in honour in this world and in the next world, who will be amongst those closest to God almighty.’”

Mary was pacified, she was given all the directions and details that her son will not be an ordinary person. Mary is now contemplating her situation, as an unmarried virgin lady who is about to have a baby. Peoples’ opinions are secondary, with the initial question being what will happen to me? She was reassured that Jesus PBUH will be a great personality who will speak out as a baby as mentioned in Verse 46 where it states:

“He will speak to people in his infancy and in his adulthood, he will be one of the righteous.”

The Bible quotes in Luke 1:36 as:

“Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who said to be barren is in her sixth month.”

This is to reassure Mary that if Elizabeth as an old lady can be pregnant despite her old age by God almighty’s will then this is another example of God almighty’s power.

Birth of Jesus PBUH

As time passed and it was approximately the time for Jesus PBUH to be born, the Quran mentions that Mary moved away to Bethlehem which was away from the temple that she was devoted to in Surah Maryam (Mary) Chapter 19 Verse 22 where it states:

“Then she conceived him and withdrew with him to a far-off place.”

When she conceived the child, she left the sanctuary and went to Bethlehem (Bait Laham is an Arabic word which means a place where lambs are available/sold) to escape the bitter criticism of the people. They would have said: Look at the virgin daughter of the pious house of Aaron! She has conceived a child and that, too, in the sanctuary where she had retired for devotion! Thus, she temporarily succeeded in concealing the shame of the conception, this event itself is a proof that prophet Jesus was born without a father. Had Mary been married and had a husband, she would not have left his or her parents' house by herself and chosen a distant place for the purpose of delivery.

On the way to Bethlehem, she felt the pangs of childbirth as mentioned in the Quran in Chapter 19 Verse 23:

"Then the birth pangs drove her to the trunk of a palm-tree, and she said: "Oh, would that I had died before this and had been all forgotten."

She is directed by God almighty towards a tree and directed to shake that tree until the soft dates fall which she consumed. At her feet water gushed out which allowed her to refresh and clean herself. The words "Would that..." show the extreme state of anxiety in which Mary found herself at that time. She did not utter these words on account of the labour pains but due to the pangs of sorrow as to how she would explain the birth of her child to her people. The angel's words, grieve not at all explain why she had spoken these desperate words. When a married girl is delivering her first baby, she might be dying with pains, but she is never so sorrowful and grieved.

She had from a very early age broken a lot of cultural traditions such as being devoted to the temple despite not being a male. Now the fear of the rabbis would appear to have been vindicated by their ignorant notion that woman should not be in the temples.

What is causing Mary such anguish is the command from the angel that she has been instructed to go back to the first temple along with her baby, with all these thoughts reverberating through her mind!

Mary facing her community

The Bible says that Mary was engaged to Joseph and so Joseph took Mary in, believing in her virginity and went together to Bethlehem to register the baby Jesus PBUH. This is mentioned in Luke 2:5 where it states:

“He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.”

Even if the story of Joseph is accepted the point however, remains that Mary had still conceived out of wedlock and would have been punished under Jewish law!

What is even more intriguing, is the fact that there is no mention in the Bible of Jesus PBUH speaking to the people, as a baby, which is not only a miracle mentioned in the Quran but a proof that the rabbis and the society could not say anything against Mary.

The Quran mentions that Mary was ordered by God almighty to go back to her people. This interaction between the people and Mary was very much a torturous time for Mary as she was belittled, mocked, and ridiculed by the people. This has been captured in the Quran in Surah Maryam Chapter 19 Verse 27-34 where it states:

She went back to her people carrying the child, and they said, ‘Mary! You have done something terrible! Sister of Aaron! Your father was not a bad man: your mother was not unchaste! She (Mary) pointed at him (Jesus PBUH). They said, ‘How can we converse with an infant?’ He (Jesus PBUH) said: ‘I am a servant of God almighty.

He has granted me the Scripture; made me a prophet; made me blessed wherever I may be. He commanded me to pray, to give alms as long as I live, to cherish my mother. He did not make me domineering or graceless. Peace was on me the day I was born, and will be on me the day I die and the day I am raised to life again."

This so called "told you so" attitude was refuted by Jesus PBUH protecting his mother's honour. Mary was commanded by God almighty to stay silent before she arrived in the city as mentioned in Surah Maryam A.S (Mary) Chapter 19 Verse 26 where it states:

"so eat, drink, be glad, and say to anyone you may see: "I have vowed to the Lord of Mercy to abstain from conversation, and I will not talk to anyone today."

We can see the obedience of Mary to do what her Lord commanded her to, not giving into her fears and desires to defend herself. She had belief that the Lord would respond to all of them in the best of ways ensuring no harm would come to her. In the previous scriptures including the Torah, keeping a fast was common where fasting could include not eating, drinking, and refraining from speaking. When Mary said that she was completing her speaking fast, the people were becoming more agitated. Their doubts and accusations in their minds were being substantiated as the refusal to speak increased their doubts and confirmed their ignorant thinking.

The people were so riled up, accusing her of indecency, shouting at her and planning to stone her to death that it was time for the intervention. God almighty's plan is superior to man's plan. God almighty demolished the people's accusations in one simple miracle by commanding the baby Jesus PBUH to speak. The people initially laughed and mocked the prophet's mother, pointing at the baby and ridiculing Mary as if she had gone mad.

This miracle is not mentioned anywhere in the Bible and perhaps explains the reason for the introduction of Joseph the husband of Mary to explain how the society did not punish her!

Issue with Biblical discourse

The issue relating to the Biblical discourse is that if Joseph is taken as the father of Jesus PBUH, then there is no miraculous birth in the eyes of the people and history. Other than God almighty, angel Gabriel, Mary and Joseph no one else would know about the miracle of Jesus PBUH being born without a father. A fundamental phenomenon in his birth which has been used as a catalyst for divinity has no substance. As he cannot be the son of God almighty, or God almighty, if his father is Joseph. When it is mentioning in the Bible that he is divine, or a God then question is who told these anonymous authors that Jesus PBUH is born to other than Joseph.

On one hand you have the Bible stating that angels told shepherds that there is someone with a miraculous birth. On the other hand, the people are being told that Joseph is partnered with Mary and are expecting a child and are registering their baby. There are two different accounts as to when the shepherds meet the baby Jesus PBUH, they should be expecting a hostile reception from the locals who have been told that Joseph is the father of Jesus PBUH.

It poses another question on how the locals would accept pre-marital relations from one of their pious serving women in the temple and a well-respected man. The birth of Jesus PBUH is an important historical event and so a disagreement in if he was born from divinity, or not would have been well documented as well as the disagreement between the shepherds guided by angels and the locals who had two very different conceptions of where Jesus PBUH came from! Not to mention the local people would have been repulsed with the behaviour of Mary and Joseph and would have not accepted this without causing a fuss.

This gives credence to the Quranic description of baby Jesus speaking in front of the accusing crowd and defending the honour of his mother. Babies don't speak at that age, yet clearly baby Jesus PBUH is speaking coherently to the people answering specifically to their allegations.

Jesus as a teenager

The Bible then mentions in Luke 2:41-52 the discourse of Jesus as a teenager of 12 years of age when he stayed in a temple for approximately 4 days. Jesus PBUH's "parents" were preoccupied with a big festival of the "Passover". Jesus PBUH was at that time asking the Rabbis very difficult thought-provoking questions in the temple. The Rabbis who had lost the essence and understanding of their rules were being provoked to think deeply by a young man in Jesus PBUH, who for his age, was extremely intelligent. After the festival had passed, the parents came looking for him and found him in the temple. The bible then mentions that Jesus PBUH's response to his mother when questioning his whereabouts. In Luke 2:48-49 it states:

"When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you." "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?"

These verses portray Jesus PBUH as an abrupt, rude teenager who is disrespectful to his mother. This does not seem to be in keeping with the nature of a God if you take him so from the Biblical perspective nor of a prophet and messenger of God almighty in the Islamic perspective. The portrayal of Jesus PBUH in the Bible does not seem to be reflective of a very special one. The Islamic discourse believes in he who submits himself to God almighty, would have a great regard and respect for his mother let alone a prophet and messenger like Jesus PBUH.

There is also another feature here that Mary refers to Joseph as Jesus's father again which as 12-year-old would lead to believe that the people accepted Jesus as non-divine or born out of wedlock? Can this be the account of a noble individual that would be allowed into a temple in the society that was so vicious and vindicating to Mary not even one decade ago?

In contrast to this the Quran in Surah Maryam (Mary) Chapter 19 Verse 32 states:

"(God has made me) To cherish my mother and has made me dutiful to my mother. He has not made me oppressive, nor bereft of God's blessings."

This type of cherishment does not fit in with the Biblical narrative portrayed above. The prophet Muhammad said as quoted in Bukhari & Muslim

Abdullah ibn Mas'ud reported: I asked, "O Messenger of Allah, which deed is best?" The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "Prayer in its proper time." I asked, "What is next?" The Prophet said, "Good treatment of your parents." I said, "What is next?" The Prophet said, "Jihad in the way of Allah." I became silent and if I had asked him more, he would have told me.

Jesus PBUH was the best of people, as are all prophets and messengers of God almighty. They possess good qualities which makes people want to listen to them out of admiration and not out of fear.

Prophet John at birth of Jesus PBUH

Just before Jesus started inviting the children of Israel to the message that he was sent with the prophet upholding the invitation to oneness of God almighty was John PBUH (Yahyaa) "The Baptist" who had given up the world. He was known as the "Green" prophet who lived in the jungle, ate and lived with animals. He would tell people to repent and those who accepted his message were baptised.

Those who believed in John PBUH were also disciples of Jesus PBUH after he declared his Prophethood. John PBUH was repeatedly telling people that the messiah is coming. John PBUH baptised Jesus PBUH on request but then informed him that his baptism is not going to help him and it should be in the reverse order as mentioned in Matthew 2:13-14 where it states:

"Then Jesus came from Galilee to the river Jordan to be baptised by John. "But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptised by you, and do you come to me?"

This showed that John PBUH was informing Jesus PBUH that he needs Jesus PBUH's baptising, and the former baptising was no more than a ritual rather than an act of saving a sinful Jesus PBUH.

What Did Jesus PBUH Bring?

In the Quran it mentions why prophet Jesus PBUH was brought into this world. The first of these evidences is mentioned in the Quran, in Surah Al -Baqarah Chapter 2 Verse 87 where it states:

"We gave Moses the scripture and we sent messengers after him in succession. We gave Jesus, son of Mary, clear signs and strengthened him with the holy spirit.

So how is it that, whenever a messenger brings you something you do not like, you become arrogant, calling some impostors and killing others?”

Here it is clearly stated that the book was given to Moses PBUH and following him a succession of prophets followed with Jesus PBUH being amongst that succession with special signs. Jesus PBUH performed amazing miracles as mentioned in the Quran and the Bible. He brought the dead back to life (See in the Bible- Romans 6:8-11), cured individuals from leprosy (See in the Bible- Matthew 8:2-3), cured the blind (See in the Bible- Mark 8:22-2) amongst many other miracles.

These are physically impossible in relation to the chemical, biological and physical laws that he broke under the guidance of God almighty with help from the angel Gabriel. Therefore, they all acts were his miracles. These are not actions that a normal individual without supernatural help can perform.

The Quran mentions the fact that Jesus was helped by the Holy spirit (Gabriel) in the performance of all the miracles. This is important as when Jesus PBUH was performing these miracles, the Pharisees and Sadducees were rejecting his miracles. They would say this is the work of “Beelzebub” who is also identified in the New Testament as the Devil, “the prince of demons” which is the name of the prince or chief of the devils i.e. Satan.

This is important to note that those who opposed Jesus believed that the devil was helping Jesus PBUH and thus portrayed Jesus as someone who worshipped or worked with evil powers and that they were upholding the side of righteousness and truth. The Pharisees and Sadducees had no evidence for their claims yet had an immoral society, businesses, and way of life to protect by these false accusations.

The Quran categorically rejects their falsehood by reiterating every time that it was by the will of God and with the help of the most pious of all Angels, Gabriel that Jesus performed all those miracles.

Jesus Sent with Injeel (Gospel)

The Quran in Surah Al-Zukhruf Chapter 43 Verse 63-64 states:

"When Jesus came with clear signs he said 'I have brought you wisdom; I have come to clear up some of your differences for you. Be mindful of God almighty and obey me: God almighty is my lord and your Lord. Serve Him: this is the straight path."

In the Bible in John 21:17 it states:

"Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."

Jesus PBUH was sent just as other messengers were sent to their respective people. Just like other Rasools of God almighty, Jesus PBUH was refuted by most of the people. One principle which differentiates Jesus PBUH from other prophets, which makes him special was his hikmah for God almighty's laws. The "Injeel" or as contemporarily associated as New Testament, as revealed to Jesus PBUH, was filled with hikmah- which means the teachings that focus on the essence of faith and ethics/morality.

The Quran talks about both Al-Kitab (The book) and also Al-Hikmah which is the (faith/ethics/mortality/). In the Quran, in Surah Al-Jumu'ah Chapter 62 Verse 2 states:

"He it is Who has sent to the gentiles a Messenger from among themselves, one who rehearses to them His verses, purifies their lives, and imparts to them the Book and the Wisdom although before that they were in utter error;"

That Prophet Muhammed PBUH teaches the book and the hikmah. The book which has the laws and then the hikmah to teach you how to implement those laws from a micro to a macro level by understanding the ethics and essences of those laws.

Looking at Surah Al-Zukhruf Chapter 43 Verse 63-64 this second part is highlighted and it shows that Jesus brought the answers to the problems that the people were facing. Jesus PBUH was unique that he came into a society that was entrenched in troubles. The Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes and Sikrims were in total disarray and disagreement with each other.

They were all following their own rabbis and leaders making issues and troubles with each other over even the most trivial of matters. What made Jesus PBUH, unique was that his teachings provided a solution to their problems. This brought people together that were previously at constant quarrel with one another. This caused these self-styled chiefs to view their small kingdoms as the be all and end all of religion and such trivial issues became so important for these priests, rabbis, commoners and zealots that they were totally immersed in them. These bigwigs also realised that without these "differences and debates" the need for these individuals lessens and the only way to keep themselves relevant and important for the masses they had to stress on their own views and understandings, with total disregard of the commands and message of God Almighty! No wonder therefore that it was a dangerous and a frightening thought that the status quo was effectively being proposed to be turned upside down by Jesus PBUH.

As previously mentioned, Jesus PBUH came with hikmah to confirm that which came before it i.e., the Torah. In the following verse in Matthew 5:17-18 it states:

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished."

Jesus PBUH is categorical in saying that he is not there to change the law not even a single letter! All the prophets and messengers from Adam PBUH to Muhammad PBUH came with the same message which again is being revealed by one of his prophets and messengers Jesus PBUH.

It is surprising to see that Christians today do not follow these clear instructions of Jesus PBUH as mentioned in the Bible. Instead, they follow that which Saint Paul has written in his chapters that are now included in the Bible. Saint Paul said that the Law was only for the children of Israel so for all other Christians the laws of Bible do not apply!

From the way Jesus PBUH prayed- with his head on the ground (Matthew 26:39), to the way he told the people that actions matter (James 2:24) to telling people that only the Father-God almighty-knows the hour (mark 13:32) all are Biblical evidences of how the followers of Jesus PBUH should behave yet what we see is the complete opposite.

In the following verse in Matthew 5:19 it states:

"Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

The Biblical and Quranic discourse here agree that practicality of religion is a must to attain salvation. The message that Jesus PBUH is proclaiming so eloquently in these verses is categorical that fulfilling the teachings is compulsory. If Jesus PBUH was praying, then why are his followers not? If Jesus PBUH is fasting for 40 days why are his followers not inclined to do it? When you believe in someone you try to follow what they command you to as otherwise the belief is reduced to just a hollow and lifeless claim!

People making changes based on what Paul said does not negate what Jesus PBUH said or practiced. As people who oppose hypocrisy, we should be fair and call a spade a spade. If you are following the commandments of Paul, as many people are, then be open and honest about it and proclaim your following Paul's teachings over Jesus PBUH's.

Look at the hikmah (morality) of what Jesus PBUH is saying as mentioned in Matthew 5:21-23 where it states:

"You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, 'Raca,' is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell. Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift."

If you say a bad word or generally commit a bad deed you will be required to repent to God almighty. The question then becomes who you are repenting to if God almighty died for your sins.

Any sin after that time is being recorded and reported to who? From Jesus PBUH's teachings it shows that if you wrong someone then you should ask them directly for forgiveness. The principle highlighted by Jesus is that you must seek pardon from the person whom you have wronged, no point trying to take your money or donate to a religious place as if to "bribe" God for something that you did wrong to an individual!

When Jesus PBUH mentioned this to the people, they did not like that. For example, the priests were giving rulings against one another calling each other disbelievers over several issues, like the Muslims of today. When Jesus PBUH informed the people that the original person who has committed an error or sin will be judged accordingly and no amount of justification will help you nor would your bribing of priests or Rabbis help, they could not stomach this.

That each individual will be held to account for what they have done and each person carries individual responsibility and that no one will shoulder their burden was the hikmah and essence of the Torah that Jesus was trying to teach them which they had long forgotten! This is also interesting that Jesus is teaching and focusing on taking individual responsibility but the Christians of today under the influence of Paul believe in atonement through Jesus dying for their sins; what an irony!

This essence of the law contradicted the ritualistic approach that the Rabbis had formulated and were implementing in their society where the aim was for materialistic gains which is mentioned by a passionate Jesus PBUH in the Bible in Matthew 21:13 and Mark 11:17 where it states:

"My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it a 'den of robbers'."

Unfortunately, this trend of changing the word of God for personal benefits has a history in human story. Those that become holders of authority in religious groups tend to become less fearing of God and due to mutual jealousy and a desire to be holier than thou they lose their path. The Quran describes this state of affairs in the Surah 2 verse 213:

“Mankind was one community (before they divided themselves) so God sent Prophets with glad tidings and warnings, and with them He sent down the Scripture in truth to judge between people in matters wherein they differed. And only those to whom (the Scripture) was given differed concerning it, after clear proofs had come unto them, through mutual jealousy of one another. Then God by His leave guided those who believed to the truth of that wherein they differed. And God guides whom He wills to the straight path). (2:213)

Towards the end of Jesus’s PBUH teachings, the frustrations of Jesus PBUH is showing. Look at what he is saying to the society that this mighty prophet had to deal with. It is mentioned in the Bible in Matthew 23:15 it states:

“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when you have succeeded, you make them twice as much a child of hell as you are.”

This is as they would go around and tell people about their religion and convert them baptising them in that ritualistic approach. After that however, they would fill the heads of these new converts with such nonsense in the name of God almighty becoming so lost that they became twice as much a child of hell as the priests/teachers. This is relatable to today when we see nonsense that is being pushed by many individuals.

Allamah Iqbal, one of the greatest thinkers of the Muslim world, translated in English says:

"I am very thankful to these imams that they teach people the word of God almighty, however when they interpret his word, it puzzles God, The Messenger Muhammed and the Angel Gabriel!"

Jesus further goes to chastise these materialistic Rabbis and priests in Mathew 23:16 where it states:

"Woe to you, blind guides! You say, 'If anyone swears by the temple, it means nothing; but anyone who swears by the gold of the temple is bound by that oath."

This is what they used to do. People used to gift gold to the temple. Everyone had to gift at every stage of the temple. You enter the temple door- gift given. You leave the temple doors- gift given. You see the priest/Rabbi-gift given. You kiss the hand of the priest/Rabbis-gift given. All these acts which are centred around materialism. This is unfortunately still happening even today in the Christian and Muslim communities.

In terms of the importance given to wealth -gold over that of the temples Jesus says in Mathew 23:17-22:

"You blind fools! Which is greater: the gold, or the temple that makes the gold sacred? You also say, 'If anyone swears by the altar, it means nothing; but anyone who swears by the gift on the altar is bound by that oath.' You blind men! Which is greater: the gift, or the altar that makes the gift sacred? Therefore, anyone who swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it. And anyone who swears by the temple swears by it and by the one who dwells in it. And anyone who swears by heaven swears by God almighty's throne and by the one who sits on it."

When the people would give the gold, the priests would say that if you swear by the gold in the temple then that oath holds. However, if you swear by the temple itself then that's not as strong an oath. Jesus PBUH reminded the people of the essence of the law is not the gold in the temple but the temple itself. He wants people to think about the importance of the laws and make the people come out of their misguided ways.

Verses 23-24 refers to the teachers of the laws such as the Rabbis, who were being told about what the hikmah was regarding. This is the essence of what Jesus PBUH is talking about.

"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel."

Taking away the 10% which is the zakat that was taken at that time from the people and given to the temple so it could be distributed amongst the poor and vulnerable of the society. However, more important qualities such as justice, mercy and faithfulness were ignored by never giving to people as they rightly should have been. The importance of fairness whilst paying the charity (Zakat) is used as an example for the Children of Israel to make them understand the essence (hikmah) of God almighty's laws. This is truly applicable to us today as well.

It then follows on in Mathew 23: 25-26 where it states:

"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish,

and then the outside also will be clean.”

In Mathew 23: 27-28 it states:

“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean.”

“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You build tombs for the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous.”

The intensity of what Jesus PBUH is saying to the people as one of the most merciful messengers itself shows how frustrating it is to try and convince the religious leaders of their failings and misunderstandings. It is rightly said that convincing a religious teacher is almost impossible once he/she refuses to review their understanding.

It further states in Mathew 23:30-36

“And you say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our ancestors, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.’ So you testify against yourselves that you are the descendants of those who murdered the prophets. Go ahead, then, and complete what your ancestors started! You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell? Therefore, I am sending you prophets and sages and teachers. Some of them you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town. And so upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Truly I tell you, all this will come on this generation.”

In Mathew 23:37-39 Jesus continues as follows:

“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing. Look, your house is left to you desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’”

In these verses Jesus PBUH is prophesying to the Children of Israel that the time for their judgement on this very earth on account of rejecting the Rasool of God Almighty has come and that they will now be punished. Their houses will be ruined and if you do not come in the name of God almighty you have no choice left as this is what judgement is all about. Those that will abide by God’s command will be blessed and saved.

History bears witness that in the short space of about 40-50 years of Jesus’s PBUH making this statement and passing away the Sadducees, who were the religious elite and main opponents of Jesus, were wiped out as a punishment for rejecting Jesus and trying to get him killed and the rest of the Jewish community was driven out of their homes and dispersed throughout the world and that continues to be the case even now. Thus the prophecy that Jesus PBUH had made and is mentioned in the Quran as well came true for everyone to see.

Giving up this world

Living in accordance with God almighty’s commands does not require you to forfeit this world. As people that believe in one God, we understand that submitting ourselves to him is vitally important yet does not restrict us from enjoying his numerous bounties in this world. The Quran makes it crystal clear that our worldly life is

a test which determines our path for the next life, based on our decisions in this life we will either qualify for a life of eternal bliss in the everlasting paradise or deserving of punishment in the hell fire. As aforementioned, in the Bible in Luke 18:28-30 it states:

“Peter said to him, “We have left all we had to follow you!” “Truly I tell you,” Jesus said to them, “no one who has left home or wife or brothers or sisters or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God almighty, who shall not receive many times more as much in this age, and in the age to come eternal life.”

If you go out for the sake of God, if you do something for the sake of God you will obtain much more in the hereafter. The agreement of the Bible and the Quran shows you that dedicating yourself to God almighty will be rewarded. Even in the above verse of Luke, it is pointing to the fact that you will be rewarded for leaving your family such as “.....wife or brothers or sisters or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God almighty....” This means that you are leaving them for something better. More importantly you need to have them in the first place to leave them! You need to have a wife, siblings and children which are family that you are leaving. So becoming a nun or priest and not having a spouse or children would mean that you cannot leave these relations for the servitude of God almighty when situation demands and attain this great reward that Jesus PBUH has informed us in the Bible.

Birth of Christian Asceticism

Jesus PBUH has never been quoted to have said, neither in the Quran nor in the Bible, that there is a religious obligation in partaking in asceticism. To dedicate your life by giving up worldly life was not a command from God almighty or Jesus PBUH but no surprise that it came from Saint Paul. Paul wrote many articles and letters which are now part of the Bible e.g. in 1st Corinthians 7:32-35 where it states:

“I would like you to be free from concern. An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord’s affairs—how he can please the Lord. But a married man is concerned about the affairs of this world—how he can please his wife— and his interests are divided. An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord’s affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world—how she can please her husband.”

So, once again, it was Paul who introduced the concept of giving up this life, no need to get married and fulfil these human relationships that have been in place since the beginning of time. Paul is contradicting what Jesus PBUH said in the Bible by advising people to give up marriage and the subsequent relationships in marriage. It should be appreciated that it is a bigger sacrifice to leave your family for the sake of God almighty. It cannot be then deemed appropriate to equate a single man’s commitment to his religion with a family man who is committed himself to God almighty and the associated sacrifice that is being completed by that individual by not only devoting himself to God but at the same time having to fulfil the rights of people as well!

Jesus predicting the coming of Muhammed PBUH

Apart from reforming the ritualistic approach of the Jewish religious scholars there is another reason why Jesus PBUH was sent down which is mentioned in the Quran in Surah As-Saf which is surah 61 verse 6 which states:

“And call to mind when Jesus, son of Mary, said: “O Children of Israel, I am Allah’s Messenger to you, I verify the Torah which has come before me, and I give you the glad tiding of a Messenger who shall come after me, his name being Ahmad.” Yet when he came to them with Clear Signs they said: “This is sheer trickery.”

Jesus PBUH is saying to the people of Israel that I am a messenger of God almighty sent down for your judgement. I am here to verify what was said in Torah which already testifies to my coming as the messiah. My second role is to give you glad tidings about a prophet, a Rasool, who will come after me and his name will be Ahmad. When Jesus PBUH came to the Children of Israel and showed them the various miracles they denied them under the ruse of witchcraft and sorcery.

One of the duties of Jesus PBUH is to inform the people of the coming of the final prophet. Then Jesus PBUH tells us that this prophet is going to be coming immediately after me and finally his name will be Ahmad or Muhummed which are universally exchangeable in the Arabic language. Ahmad was the name of the final messenger and he was given the name Muhummed as a title which means praiseworthy and very lovable.

The Prediction Of Paraclete!

If we now look at the New Testament in John 16 Verses 4-16 it states:

“I have told you this, so that when their time comes you will remember that I warned you about them. I did not tell you this from the beginning because I was with you, but now I am going to him who sent me. None of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ Rather, you are filled with grief because I have said these things. But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Paraclete will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: about sin, because people do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to

the Father, where you can see me no longer; and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, Paraclete, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you." Jesus went on to say, "In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me."

What is Jesus PBUH telling his disciples in the above verse? To answer this, we need to keep in mind that many words have been substituted as a translation of Paraclete, such as helper, advocate etc. Paraclete is an English translation of a Greek word that has been translated from the language of Jesus PBUH which was Aramaic. There is no definitive way of knowing what the original word was in Aramaic. However, the reason why Paraclete is not used is because Paraclete means "Ahmad" which is someone that is lovable, someone who is praised or a comforter. In the above verse, the prince of this world who is condemned is Satan.

Some Christians scholars have renamed the Paraclete as the spirit of truth. If that is true how can a spirit guide the masses to the truth whilst at the same time being a different mode of information to before. Throughout history it has always been man mentioned as prophets and messengers that came to people of their time. As humans will respond to their kind in guidance. If a spirit was to arrive, this would no longer require freedom of choice as people in their awe would accept the message as spirits are supernatural in their being and not a common occurrence.

..... He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you." Jesus went on to say, "In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me."

This can be seen as an interjection in the original message. Initially in the above verse its talking about how the final prophet will hear from God almighty, he will listen to what God almighty has to say and then goes on to say that this Paraclete will glorify me and that its Jesus PBUH who has sent him down.

For people who want to be unbiased and see the reality as it is, we can clearly see this change of language from praising God almighty to now praising Jesus with divinity attributes such as the knower of the unseen. This clearly demonstrates the editing by men in the Bible throughout time. There is an additional issue with this as if the people did not believe Jesus PBUH, then why would they believe in Paraclete with relation to sin.

The Christian commentators say that Jesus PBUH died for our sins. This means if they believe in Jesus PBUH, they wouldn't need to listen to Paraclete's message in the future. Hence, sending a Paraclete would become a futile exercise and yet the above verses make it clear that the coming of the Paraclete is much more important as he will convey the real message which Jesus could not convey due to his time constraint in this world!

This should leave no doubt in anyone's mind that the Paraclete is the final Messenger who came with all the words and things that Jesus could not say to his disciples and it was no other than Muhammed pbuh.

In the Quran in Surah As-Saf Chapter 61 Verse 6, it mentions that Jesus PBUH will give you good news of the coming of Muhammad PBUH. In the above Biblical verse where it states;

“but now I am going to him who sent me. None of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ Rather, you are filled with grief because I have said these things. But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

This is further evidence that Jesus PBUH has to go because unless and until he does the Paraclete cannot come. The Christian interpretation of these verses is that the Paraclete, comforter, advocate, whatever you want to call it, is the spirit which can be the angel Gabriel (Jibril) or some other special spirit which has been unidentified as yet. This is the same holy spirit, that makes up the trinity. However, none of the above makes sense in the wake of what Jesus is actually predicting unless it is applied to one and the only right interpretation i.e. the coming of a new Messenger, Muhammed pbuh.

Christian objection to applying Muhammed to Paraclete

There is a resistance from Christians to apply the Paraclete to the prophet Muhammed PBUH. In the Bible Jesus PBUH promises of the holy spirit as an essential part of the Christian faith. In the Bible, in John 14:16-17 and additionally in John 14:26 state:

“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.”

“But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”

Paraclete has been translated as spirit of truth in these three verses. However, in John 15:26-27 and also in John 16:7-15 they refer to a coming of a prophet. The former is below for reference as John 15:26-27 states:

“When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me. And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.”

What we see in these verses is a total contradiction of each other, which again highlights the fact that words have been interjected in order to try and conceal the truth. In the very same book, you cannot have on one side this discussion that someone is going to come to you, stay with you and he’s going to speak with you about the words of God almighty, he will speak with the words he hears from God almighty. And then talk about it as a spirit who, obviously, won’t speak to all the people. This can only be done by a prophet or messenger as has been done from the beginning of time.

This clear contradiction highlights the facts about what the original word Paraclete was and the attempt to hide the original word. The title spirit of truth and advocate speak about the promise of the holy spirit. The reality is the text has been changed which is evident to any unbiased reader. You cannot have a spirit as a prophet that hears the message and shares the message and then comes back to you and then Jesus PBUH must leave for him to come to the people.

One of the most important points, however, which is crystal clear; from these verses of the Quran and the Bible is that Jesus PBUH is clearly talked about the coming of a messenger, who will come once he has left the world and that the messenger will speak about him, that will talk about the sin. The Quran talks about the same issues, highlights that faith is not just rituals, sins are about morality as well and how you treat one another. The Quran further details how the hikmah that was given to prophet Jesus PBUH was also given to prophet Muhammed PBUH.

Moses PBUH prediction of Muhammed PBUH

The coming of future prophets is a common theme that has been consistent in the previous texts. This is again shown in the Old Testament in Deuteronomy 18 :15-20 where it states:

“The Lord your God almighty will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him. For this is what you asked of the Lord your God almighty at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, “Let us not hear the voice of the Lord our God almighty nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die.” The Lord said to me:

“What they say is good. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their fellow Israelites, and I will put my words in his mouth. He will tell them everything I command him. I myself will call to account anyone who does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name. But a prophet who presumes to speak in my name anything I have not commanded, or a prophet who speaks in the name of other Gods, is to be put to death.”

Moses PBUH is mentioning in the above verses that a prophet like me will come, i.e. similar to him in all aspects. From your brethren is mentioned as opposed to amongst you (Children of Israel). Who are the brethren of the Children of Israel? The only brethren they have are the children of Ismaiel (the older Son of Ibraheem). Moses PBUH is saying that you shall heed him. Moses PBUH reminds them when he says "Let us not hear the voice of the Lord our God almighty nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die."

This refers to the time the Children of Israel said we want to see God almighty and God almighty put up a whole mountain on them and they backtracked on their initial request. Thus this is a reminder of that covenant that similarly the people took heed on that day of God almighty's plan so you should also take heed of the one that will come just like me. It goes to say:

".....and I will put my words in his mouth....." This is clarification that even though the final prophet will be like Moses PBUH he will not be able to speak to God almighty directly like Moses PBUH did. In saying that I will not speak directly to him but put words in his mouth.

".....He will tell them everything I command him. I myself will call to account anyone who does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name. But a prophet who presumes to speak in my name anything I have not commanded, or a prophet who speaks in the name of other God's, is to be put to death."

Explaining this verse, the Jewish view point is that the brethren mentioned is Joshua. Joshua was the individual that took over after Moses PBUH and led the expedition of the philistine area of Kanan that the Jews were promised. However, this does not carry any weight as it is well known that Joshua did not speak to God almighty at all. He never received a book either. The Christian

missionaries believe this to be Jesus PBUH. This is incorrect due to several reasons. The Muslims say that the brethren refer to the progeny of Ismaiel, the real brethren of Moses and Children of Israel.

Criterion for who could be the brethren

We will now look at the criterion to find out as to who fits the criteria that is being referred to in the Old Testament.

The first criteria mentioned in Deuteronomy is that he will be raised as a prophet. Joshua was not a prophet and not like Moses PBUH. He never received revelation, God almighty never spoke to him, Joshua never said God almighty revealed to me anything. However, both Jesus and Muhammed PBUH were prophets and God spoke to both of them.

The second aspect from Deuteronomy is that he will be raised from the brethren of Israel of which neither Joshua nor Jesus PBUH qualify as they were both from children of Israel. In this regard only Muhammed PBUH was from the brethren of Israel i.e. children of Ismaiel.

The third aspect from Deuteronomy mentions that he will convey the exact words of God almighty as revealed to him. This cannot apply to Joshua as explained but can apply to Jesus and Muhammed PBUH.

The fourth aspect from Deuteronomy is that if the person is a pretender, then he will be defeated and will die. This does not apply to either Joshua, Jesus or Muhammed as none of them was defeated nor did they die in war.

Thus when applying all of the above criteria and parameters we can clearly see that Joshua or Jesus do not fulfil all of them and that only Muhammed PBUH qualifies for all the criteria mentioned in it.

If we now look at the comparison between Moses and Muhammed PBUH we can see the similarities. They both had to fight to preach the message, both had received the book from God almighty, people believed in both of them, both became victorious in battle, both freed people, both of them showed people the right path and made a new nation. These do not all apply to Joshua or Jesus PBUH.

Jesus and Crucification?

To understand why the subject of Crucification is important to Muslims, Christians and Jews alike we need to look at the reasoning behind the views of each group.

The Jewish reasoning:

The Jews of Jerusalem were adamant that Jesus pbuh should be crucified because that would mean Jesus would have had a cursed death and therefore proved that Jesus was not the Messiah, this was based on the following verse of Old Testament:

*"If someone guilty of a capital offense is put to death and their body is exposed on a pole, you must not leave the body hanging on the pole overnight. Be sure to bury it that same day, **because anyone who is hung on a pole is under God's curse.** You must not desecrate the land the Lord your God is giving as an inheritance" (Deuteronomy 21:22-23).*

We can see why the Jews were so adamant on carrying out the Crucification.

The Christian reasoning:

It would be more appropriate to call it Paul's reasoning as he was the one who introduced this thought into Christian beliefs! He writes:

"Christ died for our sins" (1 or. 15:3)

"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law." How did He do it? By "having become a curse for us, because it is written, cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree." He came under the condemnation of sin. He became a curse and took the judgment that was due us by paying our penalty. (Galatians 3:13)

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him" (John 3:16-17)

The Muslim View:

The Muslims believe that Jesus was not only a Prophet but a Rasool. The Law of God about Rasools is that they can never be killed by their opponents, even if only a handful of followers are there to support him. The examples given by the Quran are the Messengers like Lot, Aad, Salih, Noah etc. As Jesus was sent as a Rasool to the children of Israel so he could not be killed and that the people who rejected him would need to be punished in this world, in accordance to the law of God pertaining to His Rasools!

"Allah has decreed that most certainly I and My Rasools (Messengers) will always prevail. For indeed Allah is Most Strong, Most Mighty. (58:21)

Rasools are sent to nations to act as a judgement for their people in this very world!

"And for every community there is a Rasool (messenger). After their Rasool (messenger) has come, judgment is passed on them in all fairness, and they are not wronged." (Quran 10:47)

Quran describes the nation to whom he was sent as well as supporting evidence from the Bible in Matthew 15:24 and 10:5.

"He will send him (Jesus) a Rasool (messenger) to the Children of Israel...." (3:49)

"I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel" Matthew 15:24

"These twelve (disciple's) Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel." Matthew 10:5-6

John the Baptist (Yahyaa) says to the people:

"I am baptising you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptise you with the Holy spirit and with fire (judgement)." Matthew 3:11

The Quran clarifies the issue as to why everyone was in doubt about the Crucifixion of Jesus in Surah An- Nisa Chapter 4 Verse 157:

"and their saying: 'We slew the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary', the Messenger of Allah - whereas in fact they had neither slain him nor crucified him but the matter was made dubious to them - and those

who differed about it too were in a state of doubt! They have no definite knowledge of it, but merely follow conjecture; and they surely slew him not,"

The Quran clarifies, in contrast to Jewish community who believed that indeed we have killed Jesus PBUH, the Messiah, the son of Mary and the messenger of God almighty; that for sure they didn't kill him and even further that he was not even put on the cross. However, things were made puzzling to them at that time.

They thought they killed Jesus PBUH, but they were not able to understand what happened. There is a lot of division, discrepancy, and confusion even amongst the people that believe that Jesus PBUH was killed. The Quran clearly says in this verse that the killing never occurred and that Jesus PBUH was never even placed on the cross.

It is important to note that there is no actual historical evidence for the killing of Jesus PBUH. Not a single eyewitness can be traced with the verification of their character, memory or that they witnessed the event. In the above verse of the Quran highlights this fact by the words:

"They have no sure knowledge of this event" which refers to both the Christians and the Jews.

This is now approximately 2000 years ago and without a chain of narration starting with eyewitnesses from that very time we cannot determine the truth of what has been said or reported later on in various versions and books. What we have is the 4 canonical bibles which are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John written in Greek that was not the language of Jesus PBUH. We know from the Bible that the men around Jesus PBUH were unlettered as is mentioned in Acts 4:13 where it states:

“When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus”

Anyone that knows about languages and speaks multiple languages has the first-hand experience that translating any book or article is a very difficult task and most of the times it’s not possible to convey what is contained in the original script.

The true meaning of a word and even the use of a word in a sentence can sometimes be totally mistranslated due to a word for word translation and the essence and even the real message is often completely lost in translation as it cannot be translated fully into the transmitted language. The Christian scholars are now in consensus that these four books i.e. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are written by unknown authors, in a language that was not the language of Jesus so they had to write it as a translation from somewhere!

Moreover, all of these books are in a third person discourse wherein the words of Jesus or events are being

described as a report by someone who is reporting and commenting on it, this is in total contrast to Quran wherein the whole book is in a first person discourse wherein the God Almighty is directly commanding and conveying all His message.

How judgement Came About Through Jesus pbuh

If we then look in the Quran in Surah Al- Imran Chapter 3 Verse 55 it states:

(And it was part of His scheme) when Allah said: 'O Jesus! I will recall you and raise you up to Me and will purify you (of the company) of those who disbelieve, and will set your followers above the unbelievers till the Day of Resurrection. Then to Me you shall return, and I will judge between you regarding what you differed.

The Quran is describing the event wherein God spoke to Jesus PBUH and told him that I will recall you and I will take you up to myself. Even the body would not be left on earth with the people to desecrate it in anyway and will purify you from the people who have disbelieved in you. Then an important statement is being made that those people who are your followers or would become your followers will have the upper hand over the Jews until the day of judgement.

This is a historical fact that the elite class of the Jews who were the real culprits in opposition and planning of murder of Jesus- The Sadducees- were wiped of the face of the earth just 40 years after Jesus PBUH leaving this world by the Roman empire.

It is mentioned in the Bible that On Palm Sunday Jesus Christ rode a donkey from the Mount of Olives down through the Kidron Valley and up into Jerusalem through the east-facing Golden Gate.

"As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you." Luke 19:41-44

In Mathew 24:32-39 Jesus is actually describing how within this very generation's time the judgement will be passed on the children of Israel:

"Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

"But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man"

Jesus was informing them about the destruction that will come upon them as a punishment for rejecting the Rasool of God. As a consequence, and in fulfilment of this prophesy within forty years the Romans had destroyed Jerusalem with its walls, gates and its inhabitants—exactly as Jesus had predicted!

John the Baptist (Yahyaa) had warned the people of this very fate by saying to them

"I am baptising you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptise you with the Holy spirit and with fire (judgement)."
Matthew 3:11

Later on, as we know, the Romans embraced Christianity the rest of the Jewish people were forced to run for their lives. From then until the creation of the state of Israel, the rest of the Jewish people have never had a home for themselves. Even now the Jewish community takes support from the Christian community throughout the world to sustain themselves. So the control, the power, the authority and the superiority, in terms of numbers, material, power, country still continues to be with the Christians; in fulfilment of the Quranic promise of God to Jesus.

It is important to note the fact that when God Almighty was mentioning this superiority (Quran 3:55) to Jesus pbuh, he had only a few followers and was not in a position of power in the earthly meaning.

“Then, all of you will return to me and I will judge between you about all those differences you had in this world”. This verse in a concise manner describes the whole history of Jesus PBUH about what will happen after the taking up of Jesus PBUH from this world.

There is an important issue that requires attention pertaining to the hanging of Jesus PBUH on the cross. The question being why put him on a cross? Similarly, why is the Quran clarifying the aspect of Jesus not even being put on the cross let alone nailed to death? To answer these questions, we need to look back at the Jewish tradition and society in which Jesus pbuh lived. As explained above, in the Jewish tradition anyone who died on the cross was supposed to endure a cursed death (lanat in Arabic). For a messenger of God to be put through such a cursed death would on one side bring the whole concept of God almighty’s judgement into question and on the other side would lend support to the Jews that Jesus was not a messenger for if he was then he would not meet such a fate.

It is a shame that only after Paul said that Jesus PBUH died for the sins that the Christian community accepted this to be true, which the Jewish community wanted them to accept. The followers of Jesus PBUH did not realise that even putting an innocent free man on the cursed ritualistic death doesn't justify their atonement in anyway and most certainly does not let them a freehand for their carefree actions.

In conclusions the Jewish community tried to kill Jesus PBUH yet as a Rasool- as a messenger he is protected by God almighty as were the previous messengers. God almighty will not have his messengers face a horrific death. Then God almighty makes a prediction over what the Jewish people will face in the future until the day of judgement, which we can see is true from history and current affairs. These two verses talk about how Jesus PBUH was lifted back to God almighty and that he was not killed or put on the cross by Jews or Romans!

Biblical discourse on attempted murder of Jesus!

The question then arises how Jesus PBUH left this world. God almighty says it was made a puzzle because the situation was such that Jesus PBUH had to be protected from those who did not really know his face. This can be understood from the Bible.

The Gospel of Matthew has 28 chapters from which chapter 26-28 detail this event. From this discourse we see that Jesus PBUH was not well known by face to everybody. Jesus PBUH was from Galilee, had to preach in different places of the current day Palestine but probably was not so well known by face in Jerusalem. He was known by his actions which people discussed and shared far and wide. Therefore, in the Bible in Matthew 26:1-5 it mentions:

"When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples, "As you know, the Passover is two days away—and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified." Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, and they schemed to arrest Jesus secretly and kill him. "But not during the festival," they said, "or there may be a riot among the people."

This is talking about the last few days whilst the traitors were plotting against Jesus PBUH

In verses 14-30 it details the beginning of the betrayal by Judas and the last supper where it states:

"Then one of the Twelve—the one called Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priests and asked, "What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?" So they counted out for him thirty pieces of silver. From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over.

On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?" He replied, "Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, 'The Teacher says: My appointed time is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house.'"

The disciples were moving around hiding and now Jesus PBUH has told them where they will break the bread.

"So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them and prepared the Passover. When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve. And while they were eating, he said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me."

So it's clear that God almighty has already told Jesus PBUH via the angel Gabriel about what they are planning.

"They were very sad and began to say to him one after the other, "Surely you don't mean me, Lord?" Jesus replied, "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born." Then Judas, the one who would betray him, said, "Surely you don't mean me, Rabbi?" Jesus answered, "You have said so."

The composure of the mighty prophet is to be admired here that even when he knows that his closest have attempted to kill him he is confident and steady in his path.

"While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives."

The following Biblical verses explain what the Quran refers to in Surah An-Nisa Chapter 4 Verse 157 as previously mentioned, when it says they were puzzled because of the situation. Let's look at the Matthew 26:31-33 where it states:

"Then Jesus told them, "This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written: "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee." Peter replied, "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will."

Jesus PBUH is telling the people that you need to leave otherwise you will all be harmed. The mercy and thoughtfulness of this mighty messenger is for all to see as even in the face of death he is caring for others. Jesus PBUH prayed to his lord in the same way that Muslims pray as can be seen in Verse 39 where it states:

"Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

Jesus PBUH asked the father for help when in trouble. He knew his role in this world and asked the Almighty for assistance. It is also important to know that the 12 disciples that knew Jesus PBUH were not there when Jesus PBUH was taken as they had fled the city due to the fear of death. In verses 47-56 it states:

"While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived. With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: "The one I kiss is the man; arrest him." Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him. Jesus replied, "Do what you came for, friend."

Then the men stepped forward, seized Jesus and arrested him. With that, one of Jesus' companions reached for his sword, drew it out and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear. "Put your sword back in its place," Jesus said to him, "for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?"

In that hour Jesus said to the crowd, "Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? Every day I sat in the temple courts teaching, and you did not arrest me. But this has all taken place that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples deserted him and fled."

We learn from this that Jesus PBUH's face was not well known to people. Therefore, Judas had to greet Jesus PBUH as a signal to the other people who had come to arrest him. Otherwise, they would not have known who he is. The guards that came to capture him did not know who he was? This is so important as from the people that capture Jesus PBUH other than Judas no one knows his face. All the disciples that knew Jesus PBUH had left after he was arrested. Even when arrested Jesus PBUH is saying that I can call on my father to help me showing the humility and demonstrating where the source of divinity really is!

"Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the teachers of the law and the elders had assembled. But Peter followed him at a distance, right up to the courtyard of the high priest. He entered and sat down with the guards to see the outcome. The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death. But they did not find any, though many false witnesses came forward.

Finally, two came forward and declared, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God almighty and rebuild it in three days.'" Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, "Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?" But Jesus remained silent. The high priest said to him, "I charge you under oath by the living God almighty: Tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God almighty." "You have said so," Jesus replied."

“You have said so”. He never said I am the son of God almighty!

“But I say to all of you: From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.” Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, “He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?” “He is worthy of death,” they answered. Then they spit in his face and struck him with their fists. Others slapped him and said, “Prophecy to us, Messiah. Who hit you?”

Tearing of clothes was a sign of disagreement. With all this going on Peter was sitting near and deserted him in his time of need. Moving on to Matthew 27:1-4 it states:

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“Early in the morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people made their plans how to have Jesus executed. So they bound him, led him away and handed him over to Pilate the governor. When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. “I have sinned,” he said, “for I have betrayed innocent blood.” “What is that to us?” they replied. “That’s your responsibility.”

The nature and approach of the priests, the religious figures of ensuring the implementation of God almighty’s laws can be seen here as care free and demonstrate a lack of responsibility towards the truth. It then goes on in Matthew 27:5-10 and states:

“So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself. The chief priests picked up the coins and said, “It is against the law to put this into the treasury, since it is blood money.” So they decided to use the money to buy the potter’s field as a burial place for foreigners.” That is why it has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: “They took the thirty pieces of silver, the price set on him by the people of Israel, and they used them to buy the potter’s field, as the Lord commanded me.”

This is the character of the priests; following their religion very diligently! It almost gives the impression that these are God-fearing people. How fitting are the words of Jesus for such “religious devotees” “You strain out the gnat and swallow the camel” Then Jesus PBUH was brought in front of Pilate the Roman governor; in verses 11-17 where it states:

“Meanwhile Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?” “You have said so,” Jesus replied. When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he gave no answer. Then Pilate asked him, “Don’t you hear the testimony they are bringing against you?” But Jesus made no reply, not even to a single charge—to the great amazement of the governor. Now it was the governor’s custom at the festival to release a prisoner chosen by the crowd. At that time, they had a well-known prisoner whose name was Jesus Barabbas. So when the crowd had gathered, Pilate asked them, “Which one do you want me to release to you: Jesus Barabbas, or Jesus who is called the Messiah?”

When reading these passages one must keep in mind the fact that when stories are told like this we see that there are so many discrepancies that creep in because there is no real eyewitness and all of this is a narration from an unknown source written by unknown authors and compiled in a language that is not spoken by Jesus or by his disciples! This is what makes the story interesting, both men are called by the same name Jesus- one is Jesus PBUH of Nazareth and the other is Jesus of Barabbas. It continues in verses 18-26 it states:

"For he knew it was out of self-interest that they had handed Jesus over to him. While Pilate was sitting on the judge's seat, his wife sent him this message: "Don't have anything to do with that innocent man, for I have suffered a great deal today in a dream because of him."

But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus executed. "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" asked the governor. "Barabbas," they answered. "What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called the Messiah?" Pilate asked. They all answered, "Crucify him!" "Why? What crime has he committed?" asked Pilate. But they shouted all the louder, "Crucify him!" When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but that instead an uproar was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. "I am innocent of this man's blood," he said. "It is your responsibility!" All the people answered, "His blood is on us and on our children!" Then he released Barabbas to them. But he had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified."

The governor Pilate does not know who Jesus PBUH is. If so, Pilate would not have run the risk of Jesus PBUH being freed. Even Pilates wife recognised Jesus PBUH as an innocent man and asked him to be spared but it was the priests and elders that persuaded the crowd to have Jesus PBUH killed in the biblical discourse. This would also mean that the crowd also did not recognise Jesus PBUH as they would have not required prompt by the chief priests and elders to vote for Barabbas to be released. This is further explained in verses 27-31 where it states:

“Then the governor’s soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand. Then they knelt in front of him and mocked him. “Hail, king of the Jews!” they said. They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.”

What we can determine is that Jesus PBUH and an individual named Jesus of Barabbas are taken to the governor. Those people that are carrying Jesus PBUH to the governor do not know him as they required a signal from Judah to identify him. Jesus is wearing a robe before and after being spat one, beaten so bad that his blood is dripping of his body. The question now arises as to who was actually captured by the soldiers and who was ultimately nailed on the cross? Was it Jesus PBUH the messenger of God almighty or someone else that had been captured in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. So why would we say that?

As we know from history of the roman society and specifically the roman soldiers, whenever they were ordered to capture someone it was considered a major responsibility. If they were not able to capture somebody the soldiers would be liable to their superiors and would run the risk of losing their life if they did not succeed. So, who is the person the soldiers are being asked to capture? A man who claims to be preaching the words of God almighty that are contrary to the contemporary way of living.

His face is unknown to most people, and he is hiding from the state for fear of his life and so not easily locatable. What we see from the history of the romans is that if they could not find their target, they would find a suitable substitute to save their own skin. As going empty handed to the superiors would surely result in beatings and even death from the hierarchy that did not accept failure. This is one scenario that is possible. As mentioned before, this is a historical third person account with unknown sources and unknown authors written in a different language to that which Jesus PBUH and his disciples spoke.

The second possibility is what is mentioned in the Bible of Barnabas wherein it says that before Jesus PBUH was going to be arrested, four angels came down and took Jesus PBUH away. The face of Judas changed after seeing this and his appearance looked like Jesus PBUH. It was Judas that was arrested and crucified even though he pleaded that he was not Jesus, son of Mary. This Bible of Barnabas is refuted by consensus by the Christian scholars as not being acceptable to them. There are many Muslim scholars who have written exegesis (tafsirs) on the Quran that have mentioned this story.

Keeping all the above evidence or lack of it in view, in conclusion there is no sure way of knowing what actually happened when Jesus PBUH was sought by the soldiers. The Quran says it was left as a puzzle and using that as a criterion of what is correct, we do not have any definitive information that would substantiate any possible theories or scenarios that we put forward. God almighty knows best and we leave it to his lordship to decide what is known and what is unknown as there is no way for us to go back 2000 years in history at the moment to ascertain the actual facts of the matter and this is why the Quran describes this complex situation in the most eloquent way in the following verse:

“And their saying: ‘We slew the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary’, the Messenger of Allah - whereas in fact they had neither slain him nor crucified him but the matter was made dubious to them - and those who differed about it too were in a state of doubt! They have no definite knowledge of it, but merely follow conjecture; and they surely slew him not,”

Quran describes to us how Jesus will Present His Case in The Hereafter!

“And imagine when thereafter Allah will say: ‘Jesus, son of Mary, did you say to people: “Take me and my mother for gods beside Allah?’ “and he will answer: “Glory to You! It was not for me to say what I had no right to. Had I said so, you would surely have known it. You know all what is within my mind whereas I do not know what is within Yours. You, indeed You, know fully all that is beyond the reach of human perception.

I said to them nothing except what You commanded me, that is: 'Serve Allah, my Rabb and your Rabb.' I watched over them as long as I remained among them; and when You did recall me, then You Yourself became the Watcher over them. Indeed, You are Witness over everything. (Quran 5:116-117)

"Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God'" John 20:17

Jesus pbuh returned back to His Lord, Father and Creator thus, we send peace and blessings upon his soul.

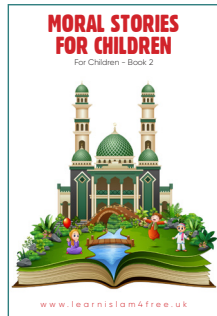
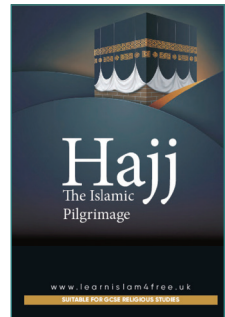
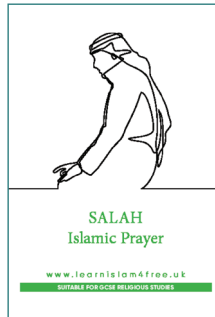
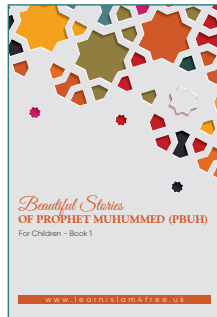
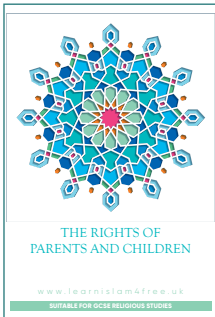
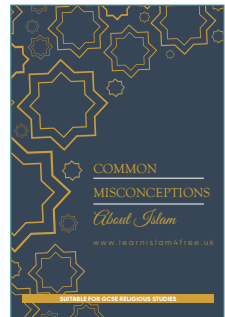
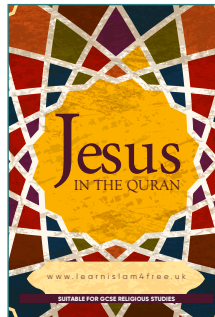
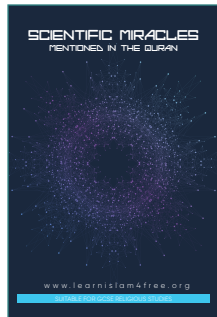
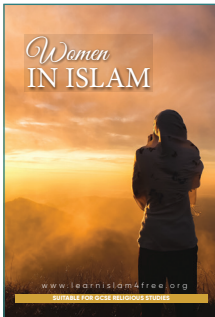
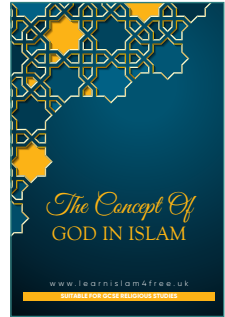
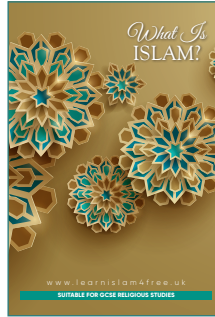
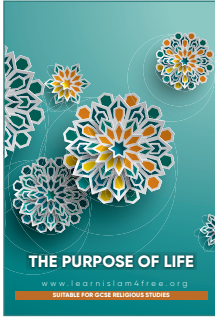
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