

The very first revelation starts out with providing an ingredient for contradiction:

Proclaim!

In the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, who created -
created man, out of a **mere clot of congealed blood**.

-- Sura 96:1-2

Apart from the fact that "a mere blood clot" is [scientifically wrong](#), let us see what the further ideas the Qur'an presents on how God creates human beings.

It is he who has created man from **water**

-- Sura 25:54

And God has created **every living creature** from **water**.

-- Sura 24:45

We created man from **sounding clay**,
from mud moulded into shape.

-- Sura 15:26

Amongst his signs is this,
that he created you from **dust**.

-- Sura 30:20

Blood clot? water? clay? dust? The Qur'an doesn't really seem all that sure what God used and seems to imply that He took just anything he could get his hands on. But this is still not all in this confusion:

God createth what He willeth:

When he hath decreed a plan,

He but saith to it, "Be," and it is!

-- Sura 3:47

He just says the word "be" and it is, there is no making a mess with water, clay, blood clots or dust, just a clean "there it is". Right?

Sura 4:82 claims that there is **no** discrepancy in this Qur'an!

A Muslim's Response by [Randy Desmond](#)

Date: Fri, 27 Sep 1996 12:36:30 PDT

I made a cake.

I made a cake from flour.

I made a cake from sugar.

I made a cake from eggs.

I made a cake from water.

Do you think I just "took anything I could get my hands on" to make my cake? (I think leaving out any of those ingredients would no longer render it a cake) Do any of my statements contradict each other? So just like I know what my cake is made from, so does the Qur'an know

what man was made from.

As for the claim that the Qur'an is scientifically wrong, I also suggest you read what Jochen has referenced. [In this link it explains the meanings of the word that has been translated as "clot" and admits that it can have a scientifically viable meaning eventhough it is trying to "prove" it as unscientific.](#)

Was there a discrepancy in my making of a cake? If not, then where is the discrepancy in the Qur'an's testimony of what a man is made from?

I wonder how you would look if I said "I made a cake from nothing" since Sura 19:67 says

But does not man call to mind that We created him before **out of nothing?**

-- Sura 3:47

which fits together with the above mentioned "be and it is" (3:47). Although you might mention different ingredients at different verses, but none of those goes together with "nothing".

The above "harmonization" is another **ad hoc** explanation since there is no indication that these verses were giving "some of the ingredients only". They do not read that way. They never say: "We created man from water **among other things**".

And I bet, if today I do say **only** that "I made a cake from water" that you would still not believe me. And if I say next week "I made a cake from sugar" then then you would also find that strange. Because you know that nobody can make a cake from sugar only or from water only. But you would not automatically assume that the water and sugar are supposed to go together. After all, I am telling you so at vastly different times. And these suras are also revealed sometimes with years in between them. Assuming that they belong together and each give only some ingredient, is a rather artificial explanation. What do you think was the truth content of the verses revealed at the beginning if the Muslims didn't know if there even would be coming any more revelations to give more ingredients? For them these were indeed absolute statement. Just as they appear to us today.

There is an assumption on your part, and I also assumed it for my initial response, that what man was created from was an ingredients list. While I do believe four of the six verses you quote do list "ingredients", there is another possibility we left out. What about "from" in the temporal or conceptual sense? Aren't any of these possible?

For example...

I made a cake.

I made a cake from a recipe.

I made a cake from batter.

I made a cake from a rising thing.

And what do you know...

Surah 40:67

"He it is who created you from dust, then from a sperm-drop, then from a leech-like clot, then brings you forth as a child ..."

Surah 23:12-14

"Verily We created man from a product of wet earth, then placed him as a drop of seed in a safe lodging, then We fashioned the drop a clot, and of the clot We fashioned bones, and We clothed the bones with flesh. Then We produced it as another creation."

Now, back to the top of the page, we see 96:1-2 as a stage. We see the ingredients of water, dust, sounding clay and mud in the other verses can be resolved with elementary set theory.

And one more thing, does the fact that God can create at will by saying "`Be` and it is" mean he can not form man however he wishes. God is the owner of all. He can do whatever He wants.

Saying "I made a cake from water" does not imply that there are anymore or anyless ingredients. If my initial response (or any response) seems so general, does that render my explanation wrong?

Well, it does imply that there are NOT any less ingredients. If he says "from water" then we would expect that water is at least a part of it. Otherwise it is just a lie. And you haven't touched at all at the statement in 3:47.

Your adding another sentence of making cakes out of "batter" or "a rising thing" doesn't change the argument at all, it only adds a few more ingredients. The "recipe" is not comparable since that is an algorithm and not a (material) ingredient. All the verses cited so far are concerned with the matter out of which man is created.

Surah 3:47 states that God created man out of nothing. I did not address this because I thought it was easy to understand. There was no creation before creation, right?. Does it not make sense that man was created from nothing?

I would, once again, like to stress that the above verses are not necessarily an ingredients list. There is nothing saying that they can not denote stages. The verse quoted above shows that they may.

Okay, I think that is my last comment on it. You now produce a mixed argument that some is "ingredients" and some is "stages". The problem is that you can't see this from the text. They look pretty much all the same: "... created from ..." If you want to explain it that way, that is fine with me. But that is the view of somebody who already is a believer and therefore committed to find some harmonization.

Maybe we can have a compromise in the following way: It is possible to give a somehow intelligible harmonization, but it is obvious that the statements seem to be able to be interpreted in many different ways. Therefore we cannot claim on the other hand that the Qur'anic verses give a precise scientific statement about the development of man as many Muslims claim. The verses are far too ambiguous and unclear. This flexible poetic language lends itself to read a lot of different interpretations into it. Some which are favorable to the Muslim understanding and others just as obvious which are less favorable. Therefore: "To you your interpretation and to me mine." The Qur'an is in this case neither disproven nor are these statements proof of divine authorship. For using them as proof they would have to be more precise so that they are actually falsifiable. They are just not clear enough to do a scientific evaluation on them.

[Contradictions in the Qur'an](#)

[Answering Islam](#) home page

Last edited: October 1, 1996

Where is Allah?

He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six Days;
then He mounted the Throne. ... (Pickthall Translation)
-- Sura 57:4

It was We Who created man,
and We know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him:
for **We are nearer to him than (his) jugular vein.** (Yusuf Ali)
-- Sura 50:16

Is the throne of Allah at your jugular vein? That question is silly, so it seems. Obviously one can easily understand these verses to mean, that Allah is near to you and to everyone equally since he is not in any location in particular. Allah is "everywhere" in the sense that there is no place that is without his presence. What about the throne? The throne symbolizes the power and sovereignty of Allah's rule. One does not need to understand it as a physical location. And in fact, Yusuf Ali translates it as if it is not an act of sitting down on the throne (which is the literal meaning of the Arabic), but as a metaphorical expression for his power.

He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in Six Days,
and is moreover firmly established on the Throne (of Authority). ...

This would solve the question if each mentioning of Allah's throne could always be understood metaphorically. But what then do we make of this following ayat?

And He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six Days -
and His Throne was upon the water -
that He might try you, which of you is best in conduct. ...
-- Sura 11:7

Is the water also metaphorical? Even if it might not be entirely clear *where* this water was (the ocean, the rain clouds, ...?), this seems to be clearly a statement of location for this throne and no longer to be metaphorical. Also, the Arabic is past tense, and the question is then: Is the throne still upon the water, and if not, where has it moved to? And then there is this verse:

He rules (all) affairs from the heavens to the earth:
in the end will (all affairs) **go up to Him**, on a Day,
the space whereof will be (as) a thousand years of your reckoning."
-- Sura 32:5

The angels and the spirit **ascend unto him in a Day**
the measure whereof is (as) fifty thousand years:
-- Sura 70:4

If Allah is nearer to us than our jugular vein, why is there any need for the "affairs" (?), angels and the spirit to travel at all to reach Allah? Is there any interpretation of Sura 32:5 and 70:4 which does not involve a physical "distance" between the earth and Allah that has to be bridged?

Sura 50:16 could be understood that Allah is equally near everywhere, and there is no place you can go to be nearer to Him than were you are at this time.

Then why does anyone or anything have to travel to reach Allah?

[Contradictions in the Qur'an](#)
[Answering Islam](#) Home Page

Is Evil from Satan, Ourselves, or Allah?

4:78

Say: "**All things are from Allah.**"

4:79

Whatever good, (O man!) happens to thee, is from Allah;
but **whatever evil happens to thee, is from thyself.**

4:82

Do they not ponder on the Qur'an?
Had it been from other than Allah,
they would surely have found therein much **discrepancy.**

Evil things are without doubt a subset of "all things", and if "all things are from Allah" then the evil things are from Allah as well, and the author of the Qur'an can't pass the guilt on and blame others as done in verse 79.

It is interesting that Muhammad would contradict himself within two consecutive verses and then write three verses later that discrepancy is a sign that it is not from God.

But this topic isn't over with just yet.

38:41

Commemorate Our Servant Job, behold he cried out to his Lord:
"**Satan has afflicted me** with distress and suffering!"

Now we have a third party joining the contest for responsibility. Is evil from ourselves? Is it from Satan? Or is it from Allah?

Any two of them contradict each other, but in particular do the first two (4:79, 38:41) contradict the third (4:78) as Allah claimed all things as from himself.

In fact, the above passages are only the beginning of the problems raised in the Qur'an and Hadith on the issue of [predestination, free will, and the responsibility for sin](#).

[Contradictions in the Qur'an](#)

[Answering Islam](#) Home Page

How Merciful Is Allah's Mercy?

6:12

He [Allah] has inscribed [prescribed] for himself (the rule of) mercy.

6:35

... If it were Allah's will, He could gather them together unto true guidance. ...

If it is Allah's will that some perish, if it is his will that some are not guided as 6:35 clearly says, how can aya 12 of the same sura be true, that He has prescribed mercy for Himself? Is it merciful to lead astray as it is said in

14:4

Allah leads astray whom he pleases,
and he guides whom He pleases, ...

More about the contradictory statements in Qur'an and Hadith about [predestination and free will](#).

[A Muslim response](#)

[Contradictions in the Qur'an](#)

[Answering Islam](#) Home Page

Inquiry in Paradise?

For when the trumpet is blown,
that day there shall be no kinship any more between them,
neither will they question one another.

-- Sura 23:101

... this is the Day of Judgement...

Nay, but **that day** they shall submit (to Judgement);
and **they will turn to one another, and question one another.**

-- Sura 37:20,26,27

As to the Righteous, they will be in Gardens, ...

They will advance to each other, **engaging in mutual inquiry.**

-- Sura 52:17,25

A Muslim's Response by [Randy Desmond](#)

Date: Fri, 27 Sep 1996 12:48:47 PDT

Surah 23:101 is talking about the Judgement. Surah 52:17,25 is talking about the Paradise. This should be very clear from the context, and is certainly not a discrepancy.

By the way, the above inconsistency is found in *Al-Itqan* by as-Suyuti; chapter on contradiction and inconsistency.

Sura 37:20,26,27 were inserted later after the Muslim response arrived. That is the reason he didn't comment on this (yet?).

If you want to restrict the first one to **only** the day of Judgement, then there might not be a contradiction. The question is if that is the original sense. It seems that it is more natural to read 23:101 as "from the blowing of the trumpet onwards" since it says "no kinship **any more**" or do you suggest that kinship is also only dissolved for the Judgement only and is reinstated afterwards? The first and second, the kinship and the questioning, seem to be parallel items and what holds for the first should be holding for the second. Anybody may decide for himself what he thinks is the most reasonable reading of this verse in its context. And afterwards see if it fits the other verse in Sura 52.

[Another Muslim response](#)

[Contradictions in the Qur'an](#)

[Answering Islam](#) Home Page

Besides Allah you have **NO** protector nor helper [2:107, 29:22]

But in Sura 41:31 the angels themselves say:

"We are your protectors in this life and the Hereafter."

And also in other suras is their role described as guarding [13:11, 50:17-18] and protecting [82:10].

Obviously the "solution" is to say that the angels are protectors "by the leave or command of Allah", but then again **nothing** happens without the leave of Allah and this is a little too convenient an explanation which would cover all contradictions ever imaginable. Even the contradictions in the Qur'an are in there only "by the leave of Allah" and therefore they don't contradict anymore other statements which "Allah" makes in the Qur'an like that "there are no contradictions"?

A Muslim's Response by [Randy Desmond](#)

Date: Fri, 27 Sep 1996 13:45:57 PDT

Jochen gave us the obvious solution. Let's keep it.

As for the argument that this would make contradictions in the Qur'an uncontradictory because the contradictions would be there by the leave of God, that is a faulty logical argument.

Why?

Because one of the commands of Allah is that you would have found a discrepancy if the Qur'an was not from God. To say that a contradiction is present by God's command is to attribute hypocrisy to God (I seek shelter in God from all evil and ask his forgiveness). God is, after all, the Truth.

Now, to say God protects, and by his command angels protect is a coherent explanation. It does not attribute double-talk to God, and logically coincides.

Would God say there are not discrepancies and then command that there would be? No way. If you have been following the responses I have put forth, no proposed contradiction has been proven. It is up to you to read what Jochen proposes and what the response is and decide if there is any contradiction at all. I know I am convinced there are no contradictions, but I am still looking at Jochen's web page. Could there be a contradiction? I have enough faith and experience to say that these proposed contradictions are probably misunderstandings. Being honest to ourselves is the most important step in drawing any meaningful conclusion from these discussions.

It's time for my question to the reader. What would you do if you also come to the conclusion that there are no contradictions in the Qur'an? I hope you would become a Muslim because of the simple beauty of its

message; God is One, and all worship is for him only.

[Contradictions in the Qur'an](#)

[Answering Islam](#) home page

Last edited: September 27, 1996

To Him belongs every being
that is in the heavens and on earth:
all are devoutly obedient to Him.
-- Sura 30:26

This is just not true. The Qur'an itself talks hundreds of times about the disobedient, the transgressors and the evil-doers, both among men and among jinn.

A Muslim's Response by [Randy Desmond](#)

Date: Fri, 18 Oct 1996 05:12:26 PDT

Do you honestly think anything happens that God does not will? If so, what? As long as everything is under the domain of God's will, then it can ONLY be obedient to Him.

[Contradictions in the Qur'an](#)
[Answering Islam](#) home page

Last edited: October 18, 1996

In the [last contradiction](#) we were already looking at idol worship and the golden calf was mentioned in Sura 4:153. No let us have a closer look at this specific story.

In Sura 20:85, Allah told Moses "We have tested thy people in thy absence; the Samiri has led them astray". Allah did not place any blame on Aaron. Aaron admitted that he did no wrong: "O my people! Ye are being tested in this ... so follow me and obey my command" (20:90).

Since Moses knew this (because Allah told him already), why did he place the blame on Aaron? "O Aaron! What kept thee back, when thou sawest them going wrong, from following me? Didst thou then disobey my order?" (20:92). And why did he drag him by the hair (7:150)? These two accounts contradict. According to (7:151), Aaron was partly responsible for the sins of his people because Moses prayed for Aaron's forgiveness. And this time (contrary to his other confession), Aaron admits to idol making/idol worshipping in verse 150 "because of the people who nearly killed him when he tried to resist it. But seemingly he gave in and did as they said.

Furthermore, in 7:149, the people repented about worshipping the golden calf **before** Moses returned, but according to 20:91 they refused to repent but rather continued to worship the calf it until Moses came back.

This is all very confusing.

A Muslim's Response by [Randy Desmond](#)

Date: Fri, 18 Oct 1996 05:12:26 PDT

Please reread it.

In no place does Aaron (Peace be upon him) admit to idol making and/or worshipping. In fact the people go near to slaying him! (Surah 7:150). Aaron (pbuh) is only guilty of not wanting to split up the Children of Israel.

As for the sequence of Moses returning and the Children of Israel repenting, there is no conflict. In Surah 7, verses 149 and 150 both start with the Arabic "wa lammaa" which means "and when(at the time of)" or "as for when". This is not denoting sequence in time according to the Arabic.

[Contradictions in the Qur'an](#)

[Answering Islam](#) home page

Last edited: November 6, 1996

Was Jonah cast on the desert shore or was he not?

Surah 37 ("as-Saaffaat") reads in verse 145:

"fa-nabadhnaahu bil-`araa`i wa-huwa saqeemun"

A verbatim translation is:

"Then We cast him on the desert plain and he was sick"

The well known Muslim translators render this verse:

Pickthall: "Then We cast him on a desert shore while he was sick"

Yusufali: "But We cast him forth on the naked shore in a state of sickness"

Shakir: "Then We cast him on to the vacant surface of the earth while he was sick"

Contrary to that, surah 68 ("al-Qalam") has in verse 49:

"law laa an tadaarakahu ni`matun min rabbihi la-nubidha bil-`araa`i wa huwa madhmoomun"

Translated verbatim this means:

"If not had reached him a favour from his Lord, he surely would have been cast on the desert plain and he would have been reprobate."

or according to

Pickthall: "Had it not been that favour from his Lord had reached him he surely had been cast into the wilderness while he was reprobate."

Yusufali: "Had not Grace from his Lord reached him, he would indeed have been cast off on the naked shore, in disgrace."

Shakir: "Were it not that favor from his Lord had overtaken him, he would certainly have been cast down upon the naked Found while he was blamed."

Though the translations differ in style and in some minor points, all duly agree that in verse 31:145 Jonah (Yunus) is reported to **have actually been cast on the desert shore**. In contradiction to this, they again duly agree that in verse 68:49 Jonah is reported **not to have been cast on the desert shore**, because this fate only would have hit him if the divine grace hadn't pardoned him.

[Contradictions in the Qur'an](#)

[Answering Islam](#) Home Page

Many verses in the Qur'an make clear that the Injil is given to Jesus who was born several hundred years [about 1,400] after Moses.

But in Sura 7:155-157 is the problem that Moses prays to Allah and in Allah's response to Moses we read

Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered Prophet,
whom they find mentioned in their own (Scriptures), -
in the Taurat and the Gospel - -- Sura 7:157

The obvious problem is that the Gospel has not been revealed yet at that time, and nobody was able to find anything in it a nonexistent gospel.

A Muslim's Response by [Randy Desmond](#)

Date: Fri, 18 Oct 1996 14:02:51 PDT

We should realize that this is God telling Moses(pbuh) that Muhammad(pbuh) will be found in the Tawrah (Torah) and Injil (Gospel). If the past tense seems confusing, it shouldn't. Arabic and Hebrew both used past tense when prophecies were mentioned.

But it isn't speaking in past tense but in present tense ("whom they find mentioned). [More details on this issue and a discussion of the verse in its context.](#)

[Contradictions in the Qur'an](#)
[Answering Islam](#) Home Page

Those who slander chaste women are cursed forever [in this life and the Hereafter] according to Sura 24:23.

But Sura 24:5 says that they can be forgiven if they repent after they have been beaten with 80 stripes. since it says to let them come back into full rights as members of society, restoring their right to testify, BECAUSE Allah is (also) oft-forgiving, most Merciful.

The earthly forgiveness would not have any foundation or counterpart if Allah would not extend forgiveness as well. That is the very basis on which He commands earthly forgiveness.

A Muslim's Response by [Shaahin Amiri-Sharifi](#)

Date: Sun Nov 24 00:17 EST 1996

hi

this is to answer:

--Can slander of chaste women be forgiven?

--verse 24:5 is about "women" in general, even unbelievers but 24:23 talks about "believing women".

the punishment in case that the acuser doesn't provide 4 witnesses is 80 stripes and losing the credibility as a witness in the society, unless they repent and DO GOOD after that, to make it clear that they have repented honestly and sincerely.

this punishment goes for both cases. but the one who accuses "believing women", is cursed forever too. in the later case, no extra "earthly" punishment is considered.

allah is the most forgiving! he may even forgive the people in the second category. this forgiveness is not contradictory to the fact that they are cursed forever.

to make it clearer, suppose that you being "retaliated" by a person who suffers from a crime you committed against him. after, say cutting your hand off(!), he may forgive you, but the "curse" of losing hand is yours and with you forever. point is, being "cursed" doesn't mean being "unforgiven".

shaahin

Sura 84:10 says that the lost people are given the Record (of their bad deeds) behind their back, but in Sura 69:25 it is given in their left hand.

Yusuf Ali's commentary states that their hands are tied behind their backs [where does he get that from?] and it is given into their left hand, behind their back ... but that's not what the Quran says, and a "harmonizing assumption" has to be made to resolve the problem.

A Muslim's Response by [Randy Desmond](#)

Date: Fri, 18 Oct 1996 14:12:14 PDT

Yusuf Ali assume the Qur'an does not conflict. His "harmonizing assumption" does not assume anything contradictory to the Qur'an and it is perfectly acceptable explanation.

[Contradictions in the Qur'an](#)

[Answering Islam](#) home page

Last edited: November 6, 1996

Qur'an Contradiction:

Can Angels Disobey?

About the angels: For NONE are arrogant (before their Lord). They ALL fear their Lord, high above them, and they do ALL they are commanded. -- Sura 16:49-50

And behold, we said to the ANGELS: "Bow down to Adam". And THEY bowed down, EXCEPT Iblis. He refused and was haughty. -- Sura 2:34

The command of Allah is given to the angels. Since Iblis is accused of not being obedient, he has to be one of the angels.

Contradicting 16:50, he refused = is disobedient, and is haughty = arrogant (before his Lord).

See also 7:11, 15:28-31, 17:61, 18:50, 20:116, 38:71-74.

A Muslim's Response by [Shaahin Amiri-Sharifi](#)

Date: Sun Nov 24 00:39 EST 1996

hi

this is to answer:

--Can angels disobey?

--"iblis" is not from "mala'eka" (angles), but a "jin" according to the exact quote of quran (18:50), and "jin"s do have free will, unlike "mala'eka" (angles). all the angles did bow down to adam, again according to the exact quote of quran (15:30 and 38:73). here is an explanation about why usually, and mistakenly in my opinion, "iblis" is considered as if he is an angle or as if he was ordered to bow down to adam too. the story says: god orders "angles" to bow down to adam (not "iblis"! he isn't included. but he was a member of god's court and therefore present during this scenario), they "all" do, and "iblis" refuses. this "refusal" is not, by itself, the reason that god rejected him from himself, after all he was not included in the given order. but his explanation, when he reveals his racist nature (he is from "smokeless fire" and adam from "mud", so considers himself higher), then god rejects him from his court.

shaahin

The below responses to Saifullah will make Shaahin Amiri-Sharifi's explanation irrelevant as well. We need not give any further answer to it.

Further discussion on the above issue in our responses to Saifullah: [1](#), [2](#), [3](#).

[Contradictions in the Qur'an](#)
[Answering Islam](#) Home Page

Say: Whoever is an enemy to **Gabriel** -
for he brings down the (revelation) to thy heart by Allah's will,
a **confirmation of what went before**, and guidance and glad tidings
for those who believe, - ...
-- Sura 2:97

When We **substitute one revelation for another**, -
and Allah knows best what He reveals, - they say,
"Thou art but a forger": but most of them understand not.

Say, the **Holy Spirit** has brought
the revelation from thy Lord in Truth,
in order to strengthen those who believe,
and as a Guide and Glad Tidings to Muslims.

We know indeed that they say,
"It is a man that teaches him."
The tongue of him they wickedly point to
is notably foreign,
while this is Arabic, pure and clear.
-- Sura 16:101-103

This gives three contradictions:

First, 2:97 says that it is the (angel) Gabriel who brings down the revelation from Allah to Muhammad, while 16:102 says it is the Holy Spirit. BECAUSE of these two verses Muslims usually identify the Holy Spirit with Gabriel and say that this is just another name for Gabriel. However, in another context they completely forget that they have made this identification already and they ALSO want Muhammad to be the Holy Spirit and comforter who promised by Jesus in John 14-16 in order to desperately find somewhere the prophecy of Muhammad claimed in Sura 61:6. But obviously the Holy Spirit cannot be both, Gabriel and Muhammad.

Second, in Sura 2:97 the Qur'an claims to be a **confirmation** of the earlier revelation (as it does in many other verses), while in Sura 16:101 the Qur'an is viewed as "substituting" the earlier revelations. And the people call him a forger exactly because it does not fit together with the established revelation of God.

What is Muhammad's answer? "They just don't understand" (verse 101).

Third, despite the fact that 16:103 says "this is Arabic, pure and clear", and supposedly this is proving wrong those who say Muhammad learned his message from a human teacher who was not fluent in Arabic, the Qur'an contains words and phrases that belong to other languages. Just two of many examples:

"Pharoah" comes from the Egyptian language and means king or potentate. The word for "king" in Arabic is different.

"Injil", which means "gospel" = "good news", comes from the Greek language. The correct word in Arabic is "bisharah".

A Muslim's Response by [Shaahin Amiri-Sharifi](#)

Date: Wed Nov 27 00:19 EST 1996

this is to answer:

--Three contradictions in 16:101-103 ,

--according to muslim belief, based on quran,
"gabriel" is the name for "holy spirit" the dearest
angel of god. and it is NOT the prophet. it is also
mentioned in quran as (angel) "rouh" , meaning spirit.

about john 14:16, the verse never mentions the comforter
is holy spirit. if it is a christian interpretation of
the verse (John 14:16) i dont know about that, but
what muslims say is that, this comforter is mohamed(pbuh).

so if christians believe that "comforter" is holy spirit,
and muslims believe that "comforter" is mohamed(pbuh), this
does NOT result in that holy spirit is mohamed(pbuh)!
you are referring to opposite sides to get a result.

regarding 2:97 and 16:101, and "confirmation" of the
earlier revelations and at the same time "substituting" them,
quran does confirm earlier revelations (not the changed
version of them of course!), and please note that
the word translated as "substituting" means rather
"transforming" and not substituting . and what is meant
is like "updating". point is, islam is the religion of
adam (pbuh) to mohamed (pbuh), but in different levels.
it was "updated" until it reached the final form which
was brought by mohamed (pbuh). so while maintaining the
same spirit, it was "transformed" to what it is now.
i hope this explanation makes the situation clear!

about quran being in "pure" arabic. yet another
misunderstanding of quran caused by looking a "translated"
copy rather than arabic! the word "mubeen" means clear with
explanation, understandable, NOT pure (in the way you
perceive). and of course it is not in pure arabic.
there is no "pure" language at all! in every language you
can find the trace of other languages, older or contemporary
ones.

shaahin

I have read that Muslims believe all of the revealed books are exact copies from (part) of the book kept by God in heaven, [not sure if that is Qur'anic, but it is tradition]. If it is "updating" one might wonder if the tablets in heaven became updated too... And how God and his word can be perfect if his word needs "updating."

I am often amazed how utterly unable Yusuf Ali seems to be in his translation.... Yes, I do know I read a translation, but please, do give a translation you think is a good one and I will then argue based on that translation. If you say it is not translatable, then why would I believe that you give a better translation for the word above than Ali gives? Anyway. Let us look at the context and not just at one word. Isn't the point verse 103 makes exactly that it cannot originate from this person charged to be behind the forgery, because this person is a foreigner, not speaking pure Arabic, while the Qur'an is pure Arabic? If this means not "pure" then the whole point this verse is trying to make falls to the ground. There is no reason why a foreigner cannot explain and speak "clearly" and "understandably". The contrast is "that this foreigner who doesn't speak pure Arabic" and the "purity of the language of the Qur'an". And exactly this is what Yusuf Ali says in his footnote 2143: "... They must need to postulate some human teacher. Unfortunately for their postulate, any possible human teacher they could think of would be poor in Arabic speech if he had all the knowledge that the Qur'an reveals of previous revelations. Apart from that, even the most eloquent Arab could not, and cannot, produce anything of the eloquence, width and depth of the Qur'anic teaching, as is evident from every verse of the Book." (That is quite an exaggeration in itself, I cannot resist to add.)

But let us assume this word does mean "clear and understandable". Then you are only trading in one contradiction for another.

He it is Who has sent down to thee the Book: In it are verses basic or fundamental (of established meaning); they are the foundation of the Book: others are allegorical. But those in whose hearts is perversity follow the part thereof that is allegorical, seeking discord, and searching for its hidden meanings, but **no one knows its hidden meanings except Allah**. And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say: "We believe in the Book; the whole of it is from our Lord:" **and none will grasp the Message except men of understanding.**
 -- Sura 3:7

If this verse says anything, then it is this: There are verses in the Qur'an which are **far from clear** in their meaning.

[Contradictions in the Qur'an](#)

[Answering Islam](#) home page

Last edited: December 3, 1996

What happened to Lot's family?

He [Lot] said [to the evil people around him]: "I do detest your doings."

"Oh my Lord! deliver me and my family from such things as they do!" So we delivered him and his family, - all except an old woman who lingered behind.

-- Sura 26:168-171

But we saved him and his family,

except his wife: she was of those who lagged behind.

-- Sura 7:83

Either this is a contradiction, since at one time it is "an old woman" and in the other "his wife", or, according to the Muslim commentators, his wife is the same as the old woman. This "solves" the identity problem but it is not conveying much respect for the wife of this prophet. "An old woman" which is not even worth to be properly "identified." Is this contempt for women in general or for old women? Isn't the most important person in a man's life his wife? How much respect does the wife of a prophet deserve? Why did Allah not hear Lot's prayer for his family which seemed to include his wife?

They said: O Lut! we are the messengers of your Lord;

they shall by no means reach you;

so remove your family in a part of the night --

and let none of you look back -- except your wife,

for surely whatsoever befalls them shall befall her;

surely their appointed time is the morning;

is not the morning nigh?

-- Sura 11:81

Now, obviously, God can command whatever he wants to. But here it becomes clear that it is not stubborn disobedience of Lot's wife to look back despite God's command, but it is Allah himself who has no interest to save Lot's wife and Lot is told by the angels to not even bother about his wife since God will destroy her anyway. If that is not cruel as a response to a prayer to God to save him and his family, ...

My problem is not so much with contemptuous expression of "an old woman", but it is with the character of God as it is displayed here in the Qur'an. But the description of his wife as "an old woman" is in keeping with God's disinterest in the fate of Lot's wife. See also Sura 27:57 which reads "her we destined to be of those who lagged behind".

Muslim Responses by [Randy Desmond](#)

Date: Thu, 9 Jan 1997

I am sorry that the author(of the contradiction)'s response is an expression of his personal dissatisfaction with the Qur'an more than it is a logical argument.

Certainly that author, himself, could see (and in fact did point out) a resolution to the proposed contradiction. Ironically, he then decides to criticize God's character because he did not approve of a

man's wife being called "an old women." As if being an old women and not being mentioned by name or family relationship is demeaning somehow. Haven't you ever heard a story where the characters are referenced in many ways? In fact, when you consider that she was among those left behind, God is even then the most Kind. God doesn't speak ill words about her, but only states the facts of her situation.

So how do you reckon the fate of Lot's wife within the Biblical story? Let's look in Genesis 19...

[15] When morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, "Arise, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city."

.
. .

[24] Then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomor'rah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven;

[25] and he overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.

[26] But Lot's wife behind him looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.

Sounds pretty similar to the Qur'an. Do you then question God's character in the Bible?

Yes, the punishment for Lot's wife is in the end the same in Bible and Qur'an. The important difference is that God does not predetermine her punishment in the Bible. All of Lot's family is called to be saved. The wife then disobeys the orders of the angels and is turned to a pillar of salt. In the Qur'an on the other hand, God predecides that he will punish Lot's wife and tells Noah to not even bother with her. The contempt and judgment is decreed beforehand. There is no door open to salvation and obedience. God has decided to punish and lead astray. No discussion about it. Just as Allah silences Noah in 11:45-47 when he asks about the son of his who got lost in the flood.

But we saved him and his family,
except his wife: **her We destined** to be of those who lagged behind.
-- Sura 7:83

[Contradictions in the Qur'an](#)
[Answering Islam](#) Home Page

Last edited: January 9, 1997

And his people gave NO answer but this:
They said, "Drive them out of your city:
these are indeed men who want to be clean and pure!"
-- Sura 7:82 & 27:56

But his people gave NO answer but this:
They said: "Bring us the Wrath of Allah if thou tellest the truth."
-- Sura 29:29

Obviously the answer is different. And since it says both times "no answer but this" they could not have said both with one part reported in one sura and the other part in another, because then there would be "another answer" contradicting the "no answer but this".

Muslim Responses by [Randy Desmond](#)

Date: Thu, 9 Jan 1997

There are two obvious ways I can think of which we can solve this proposed contradiction. One way is to consider the context within the questions Lut(Peace be upon him)'s people answer. The second way is to consider the questions themselves.

If we look at the context of the questions (see the verses which precede the one's listed here), we notice that for similar contexts, we get the same answer. And where the context is slightly different, we get a different answer. This would mean that with respect to the same context, the answer is only one. When the question was changed (and with it the context), the answer was different, and that answer is the only answer given for that context.

The other way to solve this proposed contradiction is to entertain the possibility that because the questions themselves differ for each of the verses, then it can be understood that for each of these questions only one answer was given for each question and so for two of the questions the answers happened to be the same.

Look at it this way: If you asked me what color is a red car and a different time you asked me what color is a red truck, because my only answer would be red for both questions, does that mean you asked the same question both times?

I think it is a bit sneaky to just compare the answers without considering the questions that were asked, and as already pointed out the context of the questions disprove any discrepancy there too.

There is no contradiction here. My faith keeps growing. Islam has all the answers to any challenges. God is one.

I like and can accept the first answer. And the second one is actually the same as the first. So, it is repetitive but still okay.

Even though 7:80 and 29:28 are basically the same wording, sura 29 adds some more charges and might be a different occasion. Also, it would be strange to assume that a prophet would speak up on the sins of the people only once. No, usually he will continually preach and warn about the judgement of God. So, at one occasion they might have said this, and on another occasion they might have said the other in response. One would have to look at the Arabic if the tense of the verb would preclude this and indicate that this was each time meant to be their 'constant' answer to his ongoing preaching or if that is indeed indicating one time events on the time line.

Whether Islam has answers to all questions that is difficult to conclude from one issue. And I haven't challenged that God is one. No clue what this has to do with the discussion. I also testify that there is only one God, creator and sustainer of the Universe. This is confirmed by both of us. None of the contradictions on this site calls this into question. The question is which of the two revelations claimed to be from this one God is indeed the true one.

[Contradictions in the Qur'an](#)

[Answering Islam](#) home page

Last edited: January 9, 1997

He punishes whom He pleases,
and He grants mercy to whom He pleases, ...
-- Sura 29:21

Allah leads astray whom he pleases,
and he guides whom He pleases, ...
-- Sura 14:4

Does Allah "take pleasure" in punishing people and leading them astray?

A Muslim's Response by [Randy Desmond](#)

Date: Tue, 1 Oct 1996 13:07:27 PDT

The Arabic word used in these verses means "he wills" (NOT he pleases).

Does the then mean his own will is not pleasing to Allah? Any way you turn it, Allah's action in the above verses seem very arbitrary and it is Allah's will or pleasure to lead some astray and punish them and nothing can be done on our side to counter this decision.

The question of free will and predestination is difficult in Christian theology as well. But Muslims need to find an answer for themselves and cannot be consoled that Christians are struggling in this area too.

Ultimately the question is: Who is responsible for my life and is punishing me for something God has "forced" me to do still possible to be called "justice"? Both Christianity and Islam uphold that God is sovereign and that God is just.

[Contradictions in the Qur'an](#)
[Answering Islam](#) home page

Last edited: January 8, 1997

The accounts of Abraham, Suras 19:41-49, 6:74-83 differ quite a bit from Sura 21:51-59.

In 21:51-59 Abraham destroys the idols to show the people that they have no power and argues with them, in consequence they try to kill him by throwing him into fire. [Furthermore: in verse 57 he destroys their idols (their property) behind the back of the people (the owners) and in verse 63 he lies about it. Is that the behavior of an honest prophet?]

Anyway, while in Sura 21 Abraham confronts his people strongly, and even destroys the idols, in Sura 19 Abraham shuts up after his father threatens him to stone him for speaking out against the idols. And he seems not only to become silent, but even to leave the area ("turning away from them all"). Nothing of destroying the idols is said. In Sura 6 he also only argues with the people without taking any action to destroy idols.

Furthermore Sura 6 differs from the other two in the respect that Abraham does initially also worship the creation instead of the creator and only later realizes his mistake [sin] of worshiping that which is not God..

[Contradictions in the Qur'an](#)
[Answering Islam](#) home page

Noah and his son

(Remember) Noah, when he cried (to Us) aforetime:
We listened to his (prayer) and delivered
him and his family from great distress.
-- Sura 21:76

So the Ark floated with them on the waves (towering) like mountains,
and Noah called out to his son, who had separated himself (from the rest):
"O my son! embark with us, and be not with the unbelievers!"

The son replied: "I will betake myself to some mountain: it will save me from the water."
Noah said: "This day nothing can save, from the command of Allah,
any but those on whom He hath mercy!" And the waves came between them,
and **the son was among those overwhelmed in the Flood.**
-- Sura 11:42-43

One of Noah's sons dies in the Flood in contradiction to 21:76 which states that Allah saved him and his family. Now, this contradiction is "solved" in the Qur'an itself. When we read on in Sura 11 up to verse 46 we find Allah replying to Noah in regard to exactly this complaint that he has not saved his son: "O Noah! He is not of thy family: For his conduct is unrighteous. So ask not of Me that of which though Hast no knowledge!"

So, we see that this problem is solved by "divine exclusion" and the Qur'an even admits that this can be something rather difficult to comprehend for normal human beings, even for the prophet of God, Noah.

It is certainly possible to disinherit sons or otherwise to deny them the legal status of a son, but it is impossible even for God that a biological son loses the property of being the seed of his father. As such, the formulation in Sura 37:77 "And made **his seed the survivors**" (of the Flood), is still difficult to reconcile with Allah's answer in Sura 11:46.

A further question might be raised from Sura 11:27 in regard to the identity of those saved and those drowned in the flood.

But the chiefs of the Unbelievers among his people said [in response to Noah]:
"We see (in) thee nothing but a man like ourselves:
Nor do we see that any follow thee but the meanest among us,
in judgment immature: Nor do we see in you (all) any merit above us:
in fact we think ye are liars!"

It is clear that Noah found some who believed his message and followed him. That the unbelievers call the believers "mean" and "immature" is to be expected and angry rethorics. But it cannot be denied that he had some followers, apart from his immediate family (which would not create this reaction, given that it is expected that the family follows the head of the family). This is again hinted at in Sura 7:64 stating:

But they rejected him, and We delivered him, and **those with him, in the Ark:**
but We overwhelmed in the flood **those who rejected Our signs.**
They were indeed a blind people!

Those "in the Ark" are contrasted with (i.e. are the opposite of) those "who rejected", i.e. they are those who believed. It is not as clear as 11:27, but it is pointing in the same direction.

Two issues arise here:

1. This contradicts the Torah where it is clear that only his family and all of his family are saved (eight people, Noah, and his wife and the three sons and their wives).
2. Given that the Qur'an speaks of further people who believe him, why were those who followed him outside his family not saved as well? Again, it says: "And made *his seed* the survivors" (37:77).

The inclusion / exclusion dynamics are rather complex in this story. In Sura 66:10, Noah's wife is assigned to Hell, and Yusuf Ali's commentary implies she perished in the flood. In Sura 11:40, we find the command for embarking on the Ark:

At length, behold! there came Our command,
and the fountains of the earth gushed forth!
We said: "Embark therein, of each kind two, male and female,
and your family - except those against whom the word has already gone forth,-
and the Believers." but only **a few believed with him.**

Here again, we read of "a few believed with him", but why are they seemingly not saved according to Sura 37:77? And looking again at 11:42-43 (above), Noah calls out to his son to embark the Ark. So, he was not one "against whom the word has already gone forth" since then Noah would not have called him in disobedience to Allah's command. Clearly he was not forewarned about the perishing of **this son** as his prayer to Allah shows:

And Noah called upon his Lord, and said:
"O my Lord! surely **my son is of my family!**
and Thy promise is true,
and Thou art the justest of Judges!"
-- Sura 11:45

Allah's answer is:

He said: "O Noah! **He is not of thy family:**
For his conduct is unrighteous.
So ask not of Me that **of which thou hast no knowledge!**
I give thee counsel, lest thou act like the ignorant!"
-- Sura 11:46

Those Allah excluded beforehand are still called "your family" in 11:40, but in regard to the son, of whose exclusion Noah had no knowledge (until Allah's response in 11:46), it is said that he is not of his family.

This is a substantial inclusion-exclusion confusion.

Furthermore, there is a completely different, scientific problem. This whole conversation in 11:42-43 is impossible in the way it is reported. If you ever have been at sea when the waves are towering like mountains then you know how loud it is. Conversation, even when shouting is absolutely impossible. Note, it does not say that the water was already as deep as a mountain is high (but with a calm surface), it

specifically speaks of waves, which means that there have to be strong winds to produce these waves. And that is always very loud. Also, the Ark, a big ship was already afloat, i.e. "out on the water", while Noah's son seems during this conversation to be standing on the dry land in a distance allowing conversation (even if there were no noise around), and not swimming in the water and struggling with the waves. This is physically impossible for any normal landscape imaginable. After all this was not in a haven build for regular docking of ships.

Muhammad was a son of the desert, not acquainted very well with large amounts of water as at an ocean. That might explain why this story is narrated in such an unrealistic way.

[Contradictions in the Qur'an](#)
[Answering Islam](#) Home Page

After much dispute between Noah and his people (11:32) and their rejection of his message, Noah is commanded to build the Ark (11:37). Then we read:

Forthwith he (starts) constructing the Ark:
Every time that the Chiefs **of his people** passed by him,
they threw ridicule on him.
-- Sura 11:38

And then after the Ark is finished the fountains of the earth open up and the flood happens to judge the earth.

In contrast to the above record we find elsewhere:

Before them the people of Noah rejected (their messenger):
They rejected Our servant and said, "Here is One possessed!"
And he was driven out.
-- Sura 54:9

After that the water comes and the Ark is mentioned and comes somehow "out of nowhere"... Anyhow, if he was driven out of the country or out of the area, he obviously couldn't build the Ark where his people would regularly pass by.

On the other hand, if he build the Ark before their very eyes, and was then driven out, how did he get back to the Ark for the flood? This was not a toy ship, he couldn't take that with him while "being driven out" and away from this ship.

Furthermore, it contradicts the record of Noah in the Tora, which is in this respect in harmony with Sura 11 but not with Sura 54.

[Contradictions in the Qur'an](#)
[Answering Islam](#) home page

Qur'an Contradiction:

Pharaoh's repentance in the face of death?

According to Sura 10:90-92, Pharaoh repented "in the sight of death" and was saved. But Sura 4:18 says that such a thing can't happen.

I am actually not sure what it means when Allah said in response to his repentance and confession of faith that "This day shall We save you in your body, ..."

10:100 does say that "no soul can believe, except by the Will of Allah" and verse 103 affirms that "This is it fitting on Our part that We should deliver those who believe!" And in 10:90 Pharaoh clearly confesses "I believe that there is no god except Him whom the Children of Israel believe in: I am of those who submit." So, according to 100 and 103 this was a work of Allah and he will deliver him. But 4:18 says this is impossible.

But if this cannot be eternal deliverance from the judgment, then "as it seems" maybe it is deliverance from the drowning? I.e. physical deliverance? But this doesn't fit either, because Sura 17:103 makes clear that Pharaoh was indeed drowned and no repentance is indicated in this passage.

A Muslim's Response by [Randy Desmond](#)

Date: Fri, 8 Nov 1996 05:13:58 PST

Surah 4:18

"Of no effect is the repentance of those who continue to do evil until death faces one of them and he says, "Now have I repented indeed." Nor of those who die rejecting faith; For them We have prepared a punishment most grievous."

This is certainly one of your least coherent responses so far. You only gave the text of Sura 4:18 which I referred to above, but then don't say anything to resolve the contradiction with Sura 10:90-92, where it is clear that the Pharaoh who had seen many signs and miracles at the hand of Moses, stubbornly refused to believe and indeed only recognized himself as god (Sura 28:38). But Sura 10:90-92 makes clear he is saved. It does not say "We will save your body" but Yusuf Ali translates "We shall save thee in thy body." Now, if the Pharaoh were drowned, then he could certainly not have been saved in his body. If he drowned (died) and his soul left his body what was "in his body" that was saved? And how is this even deserving the term "saved" if he drowned?

Further discussion: [Response to Saifullah](#)

[Contradictions in the Qur'an](#)
[Answering Islam](#) Home Page

Abrogation?

The words of the Lord are perfect in truth and justice;
there is NONE who can change His words.

He both heareth and knoweth.

-- Sura 6:115

None can change the words of God;

-- Sura 6:34

There is no changing the words of God;
that is the mighty triumph.

-- Sura 10:65

And for whatever verse we abrogate and cast into oblivion

We bring a better or the like of it;

knowest thou not that God is powerful over everything?

-- Sura 2:106

And when We exchange a verse in place of another verse --

and God knows very well what He is sending down --

they say, 'Thou art a mere forger!'

Nay, but the most of them have no knowledge.

-- Sura 16:101

NONE can change the words of God. But God DOES EXCHANGE one verse for another verse. And he does so through his messengers like Jesus [who changed some rules given through Moses] and like Muhammad who gives rules different again from Moses and Jesus.

[Discussions and links on the doctrine of abrogation](#)

[Contradictions in the Qur'an](#)

[Answering Islam](#) home page

Say: '**God - He guides to the truth;**
and which is worthier to be followed --
He who guides to the truth,
or he who guides not unless he is guided?
What then ails you, how do you judge?
-- Sura 10:35

You would sure agree, that this verse argues that we should follow only God, **because** he is the one who guides to truth. And any other can only guide to truth if he himself is guided. Therefore, why rely on any other and not directly follow God?

But, this argument only holds water when we can indeed trust that God leads to truth those who trust him and doesn't deceive those who follow his words and deeds.

That they said (in boast)
"We killed Christ Jesus the son of Mary the Apostle of Allah";
but they killed him not nor crucified him
but so it was made to appear to them
and those who differ therein are full of doubts
with no (certain) knowledge but only conjecture to follow
for of a surety they killed him not.
-- Sura 4:157

WHO did make this appear to them as if Jesus was crucified? Isn't it clear that that is God's acting? Now, in this verse God does both deceive the onlookers about what is happening and then "complain" about the fact that the people believe what he has made them believe.

God made it appear as if Jesus is crucified and killed, but God shifts the blame of being ignorant and full of doubt on those who believe in what is the deed of God himself.

This testimony about God given in the Qur'an doesn't inspire much confidence in this God and his revelations. After all, how do I know that at any time, he isn't currently deceiving me? But taken together with 10:35 which says that God is the one who guides to the truth, that is a contradiction.

Sura 10:35 does NOT say He guides to truth EXCEPT in a few circumstances. "God guides to truth" is an ABSOLUTE statement. And it is wrong, because in 4:157 he does make believe people in something that is false. And the problem is, he mislead also those who want to follow God, not only those who are his enemies anyway. Or how do you explain that the disciples and all of early Christianity believed in the crucifixion?

Allah leads astray whom he pleases,
and he guides whom He pleases, ...
-- Sura 14:4

And how do we know in which of Allah's categories of pleasure we fall? How sure can a Muslim be that he is one of those guided right and not one of those led astray? Indeed how do we know that all of Islam is not the "leading astray" category and Christianity is the right one?

[A Muslim response](#)

[Contradictions in the Qur'an](#)
[Answering Islam](#) Home Page