
BIBLE TALK

This week the question is: ***Was Mohammed predicted in the Bible?***

The holy book of Muslims, the Koran, states in Surah 7:157 that Mohammed was prophesied in the OT law of Moses and also in the NT gospels. Because of this passage of scripture found in the Koran, Muslim scholars have diligently sought to find a passage in the OT and in the NT which they think prophesies the coming of Mohammed. Though it is not agreed by all Muslim scholars, the following seems to be the most popular conclusions:

- The passage in the OT which most Muslim scholars believe predicts the coming of Mohammed is Dt 18:15-22.
- The passage in the NT which most agree on is Jn 14:16.

This week we will examine the passage in Dt 18 and see if this passage indeed predicts the coming of Mohammed. Let's begin by reading a portion of the passage:

Deuteronomy 18:15

¹⁵ "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear,

In order for this passage to be a prediction of the coming of Mohammed, Muslim scholars draw the following conclusions:

- First, the word "brethren" is interpreted to refer to descendents of Ishmael, one of the sons of Abraham.
- Second, Mohammed is the only descendent of Ishmael to claim to be a prophet.
- Third, Mohammed is more like Moses than anyone else.
- Therefore, the passage must be a prophecy of the coming of Mohammed.

“BRETHREN”

Let’s begin with the word “brethren.” Do the OT scriptures use the word “brethren” to refer to Ishmaelites? The answer is simply and emphatically NO. In the OT, the word “brethren” means a fellow Israelite. Notice the very chapter we’re reading from:

Deuteronomy 18:1-2

¹ "The priests, **the Levites** — all the tribe of Levi — shall have no part nor inheritance with **Israel**; they shall eat the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and His portion.

² Therefore they shall have no inheritance among their **brethren**; the LORD is their inheritance, as He said to them.

Who are the “Levites”? They are one of the twelve tribes of Israel. According to this passage they are to have no inheritance with someone. They shall have no inheritance with the other eleven tribes of Israel. What are the other eleven tribes called? They are called “brethren.”

In other words, the context clearly shows that the word “brethren” refers to fellow Israelites. The Ishmaelites (Arabs) are never called “brethren” in the Bible. Muslim scholars are being unfair when they use Dt 18:15, 18 to refer to Mohammed.

MOSES

But let’s ask the next question: Was Mohammed more like Moses than any other person? Muslim scholars answer yes. Here are the similarities which they point to:

- Moses and Mohammed were both lawgivers, military leaders, and spiritual guides of their peoples and nations.
- Moses and Mohammed were at first rejected by their own people, fled to exile, but returned some years later to become the leaders of their nations.
- Moses and Mohammed made it possible for the immediate and successful conquests of the land of Palestine after their deaths by their followers – Joshua and Umar respectively.

At the same time, Muslims have been taught that Jesus is so different from Moses that He could not possibly be the Prophet of Dt 18.

Here is the comparison made by Muslims:

- Moses was only a prophet, but Jesus is the Son of God – according to Christians.
- Moses died naturally, but Jesus died violently on a cross.
- Moses was the national ruler of Israel, but Jesus was never a national ruler during His earthly ministry.

Q: Do these similarities and contrasts prove Mohammed is the “prophet like Moses” (Dt 18)?

1st) The comparisons between Mohammed and Moses offered by Muslims and the contrasts between Jesus and Moses do not prove anything.

The Bible often calls Jesus a prophet as well as the Son of God.

Matthew 21:10-11

¹⁰ And when [Jesus] had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, "Who is this?"

¹¹ So the multitudes said, "This is **Jesus, the prophet** from Nazareth of Galilee."

The fact that Jesus died violently has nothing to do with identifying Him as “*the prophet*” since many prophets died violently. Even the Koran admits this:

Surah 2:91

... Why then have ye slain the prophets of Allah in times gone by, if ye did indeed believe?

Furthermore, the Bible teaches the church is “*spiritual Israel*” (Gal 6:16). The church is the fulfillment of what Israel was only a type. So ... just as Moses led the nation during his lifetime, Jesus now leads the church of Christ from His throne in heaven. Therefore, in this respect, Jesus is really like Moses.

Colossians 1:18

¹⁸ And [Jesus] is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

2nd) If we reverse the process, we can show many similarities between Jesus and Moses and at the same time show how Mohammed is different from Moses.

- Moses and Jesus were both Israelites – Mohammed was an Ishmaelite. This is a crucial factor in determining the identity of the “Prophet.”
- Moses and Jesus both left Egypt to perform God’s work. Mohammed was never in Egypt.

Hebrews 11:27

²⁷ By faith [Moses] forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible.

Matthew 2:14-15

¹⁴ When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt,

¹⁵ and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "**Out of Egypt I called My Son.**"

- Moses and Jesus both forsook great wealth to share the poverty of their people. Mohammed did not.

Hebrews 11:25-26

²⁵ [Moses was] choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,

²⁶ esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.

2 Corinthians 8:9

⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

So we have seen similarities between Jesus and Moses where Mohammed is different. This shows the weakness of trying to compare Moses with Mohammed.

We will continue this investigation next week.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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