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How Could Everyone I Have Ever Known Be Wrong?

As a child growing up in America, my education about Islam was very poor. There were one or two times when Islam was presented briefly in a history book at school. What I remember from those readings is that Muslims had a god called Allah and a warlike prophet named Muhammad and that they prayed and dressed strangely and, finally, that Islam was an Arab religion.

I guess that the rest of my education about Islam came from the media. Islam was exotic, backward and evil. Muslims were uneducated, led by tyrant rulers, and were cruel. Some of them thought it were good to blow up babies on airplanes and to beat women and treat them like property.

I did not understand that there was any relationship between Islam and Christianity or Judaism. As far as I knew, Christianity and Judaism were the only two religions that dealt with the One God, the God of Moses and Abraham (as). Islam was bunched with all the other religions like Buddhism and Hinduism.

There was not much out there to make me want to learn about Islam. I was sure that Christianity held the Truth, and had no inclination to look at other religions, especially not one that was so obviously evil. In those days, I could actually believe that an entire nation of people was evil at heart, and that we (meaning the West, or America) were surely the good guys. After all, how could everyone I had ever known be wrong?

An obvious question, then, is what made me finally look at Islam. In order to answer that fairly, it is necessary to first briefly explain my religious life prior to that point. Mostly everyone I knew believed in God and that Jesus (as) had died for our sins. Often, it didn't go much beyond that. People I knew had religious belief and tried to be moral people, but they did not associate with a particular church or do anything outlandishly different in their lives that marked them as religious. Spirituality and religion were

not the stuff of conversations. God was not talked about at home or at school. Religion was a private thing between the individual and God.

When I was little I was sent to a few Sunday Schools to gain a basic acquaintance with religion. My parents very rarely went to church but rather dropped my brother and I off at the Sunday School and then picked us up when it was over. By the time I was in second or third grade our religious training was over.

That was enough for me until I got to junior high school. Perhaps it was then that I began to realize that the world was not a fair place and question what was going on around me. I went through periods of depression and low self-esteem. During this time, I began to question religion. Where was the scientific proof of God? If He existed, why was He hidden from us? Why did He allow bad things to happen? What made something right, and another thing wrong? Did the universe and life on Earth come about as a course of purely random events without a Creator? Why did I exist?

For awhile I nearly convinced myself that God did not exist, but rather that He was a fantasy created by humans. However, when I got into high school I was searching for God again. I became very serious about Christianity. I joined the Fellowship for Christian Athletes and I read the Bible regularly. I found a magazine called The Plain Truth advertised on a religious TV show and published by the Worldwide Church of God, and I became interested in that particular church.

This group took the Bible literally. They did not celebrate Christmas because it was not in the Bible. They did not celebrate birthdays, they did not eat pork, and they observed the same holidays that Jesus (as) was recorded as observing in the Bible. They kept the Sabbath on Saturday based on what was written in the Bible. I was strongly attracted to this group because it took God seriously, and it took the Bible seriously. It did not regard religion as just a feel-good thing like so many groups seemed to be doing. They seemed more logical than other groups, and they were making religion a daily part of life instead of an occasional one. The idea of religion as a way of life appealed to me. I knew that God had something in mind when He made us, and I believed that there ought to be a best way, or a most-correct way of doing everything. So when I found this church, I was attracted. Yet, I never went to their meetings because I thought my family would not approve of me getting involved with such a radical group (one that I later learned is often considered a cult) especially while I was in high school. I put it in my mind that when I got older I would investigate the group more closely.

In my freshman year of college I joined a Bible study group sponsored by Campus Crusade for Christ. And, I finally went to the Church of God after meeting someone at school who belonged to the church. They were very nice people and very welcoming. However, after one visit I knew that church was not what I was looking for. My host was telling me how the church was in a state of chaos because of a major division among the national leaders. It was splitting into two churches; one group cleaving off

because they felt the original church had become corrupted. This man and his family were at odds to decide which side of the fence they were on. Which of the two factions held the Truth?

After hearing him speak, I was disappointed. I felt this group was closer to the Truth that I was looking for, but probably neither of the two factions had it right. After all, they all were just humans and were not gifted with perfect judgment. I wanted whatever it was that God had originally sent and that was truly intended for us; not something concocted by men. Not even by men with good intentions. So, I never went back.

I had resigned myself to being one of those many religious people without a church because I was convinced that all churches were flawed. After all, they were all man-made. In my Bible study group, I often felt uncomfortable. The other members seemed to have much greater joy in their faith. When we would study a Bible verse, they had so many different interpretations and they always seemed to see the verses differently than me. I wondered what I was doing wrong and why things did not make sense to me like it did to everyone else, but I was still very devout. My friends talked about inviting Jesus (as) to live in their hearts, and that when they did, he came in and their lives were changed forever. I had made that invitation many times, but my life never changed forever. I had done it when I had gone to church with friends, I had done it when I watched the preachers on TV, and I had done it on my own time. What did they mean by saying that he lived in their hearts? Were they really changed so much by the experience, and if so, why hadn't I been? It wasn't due to lack of sincerity, at least.

As I pondered these questions, my life began to change around me. That year, I met a Muslim. When I met him, I didn't know he was Muslim or even that he was an Arab. In time, we became acquainted, and I learned that he was a Muslim; I didn't really know what that meant but it made me worried about him because I had been taught that unless he believed Jesus (as) died for his sins, he would go to hell. At least that is what everyone in my Bible study said.

Could it be true that this guy would go to hell simply for not believing Jesus (as) died for his sins, when in every other way he was more pious and more humble before God than anyone I'd ever met? It did not seem right. I told him about my fears and he was very concerned for me instead of for himself. I even talked him into going to one of the Campus Crusade meetings with me. That amazes me more today than it did then because now I think of the name of the group – Campus Crusade – and realize how offensive it really is. However, the meetings were not so bad; we sang or listened to religious songs, had a guest speaker and met with my Bible study leader.

I was hoping to save my friend, and at the same time I wanted the Bible study leader to meet him because I really needed help to clear my confusion. I had questions after I'd picked up a translation of the Qur'an and was surprised by what I read. It talked about the very same God of the Bible, the One whose Truth I was seeking. It talked about the prophets (sa) I already knew, but it did not describe them

as adulterers and those who commit incest and other lewdness like the Bible did.

“We believe in Allah (the One True God) and that which is revealed unto us, and that which was revealed unto Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the tribes, and that which Moses and Jesus received, and that which the prophets received from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them.” (Qur’an, 2: 136)

The only major thing that really bothered me about the Qur’an was what it said about Jesus (as). But why? How did I know what I knew about him -- that Jesus was in a three-part God and that he died for our sins? I went back to the Bible and looked for those beliefs that were so important to Christianity. I knew I had read them a hundred times so they ought to have been easy to find, but they weren’t! I could find verses that seemed to say those things, but they weren’t very clear. And other verses seemed to say the opposite. Why, I pondered, if this belief that Jesus is God and that he died for our sins -- why if it is the most essential thing to believe, is it not absolutely clear?

I asked my Bible study friends, “Where does it say this?” They would direct me to a verse and I would read it and I found that most of the time it did not clearly say what I had asked for, but was open to interpretation. Mark 10:18 reads, “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered, “No one is good – except God alone.” That verse clearly seemed to indicate that Jesus was not God. Other verses were interpreted by my friends to indicate that he was God, although he never came right out and said, “I am God.”

Some Christians would say that while Jesus was on Earth, he lived as a man but was still God or a part or form thereof, yet being in the flesh made him fully human, facing all the trials and temptations of human life. I didn’t get it. I’d never really gotten it before, either, but I had taken for granted that it was true anyway. I could not explain to myself, nor could anyone else explain to me, how God could be a single God and yet have three independent parts or forms. I could not understand why the death of a sinless individual was necessary for forgiveness of sins. Is not God all-powerful?

Many Christians say that God is beyond our comprehension. He does not have to make sense. I ultimately decided that I couldn’t accept that, because then religion becomes purely a matter of faith without any room for reason. A book claiming to be the Word of God could say absolutely anything about Him, and no matter how ludicrous it was we could not reject it if God doesn’t have to make sense. No, I realized, in order for us to be able to tell right guidance from falsehood, God must make sense in terms of human reason.

I approached my Bible study leader to talk about my questions. I had learned that he had worked as a missionary to Muslims in Algeria. So, I figured he would be able to help me understand the Qur’an, the Bible and the fate of my Muslim friend. When I questioned him, he told me straight away that my friend

would go to hell. He told me that the Qur'an was similar to the Bible because it was Satan's trickery, and something which appears close to the Bible is a better trick! Then, when I tried to ask him a specific question about what the Qur'an said about Jesus (as), he told me he had never read the Qur'an because when he tried it made him ill. When he said that last thing, I was astounded, in tears, and got out of that room as fast as I could.

How could he sit there and tell me the Qur'an was Satan's trickery when he himself had not read it? What kind of person does missionary work to Muslims and does not bother to read the book of the Muslims? A voice in my head screamed "He could not know! He cannot be trusted!" I believed that God would not deceive those who read the book of another religion, as long as they were seeking Truth. But he apparently believed differently than me. My Bible study leader was only repeating what he had been told, or else he was making it up as he went along. I was so angry then, at him, and at all the church leaders who had treated Islam as an absolute evil and yet they were more ignorant of Islam than a college girl who'd picked up a Qur'an translation at the corner bookstore.

And now I was deathly afraid. I was afraid because I could not trust those people anymore. It was up to me, and only me, to decide what I found to be true and what I found to be falsehood. No one could help me. I felt a tremendous burden on my shoulders. And I was terrified of making the wrong choice and spending eternity in hell because of it. I pleaded with God to be a God who does not misguide one who seeks the Truth, to be a God who could forgive one who has doubts and looks around for the answers, and to be a God who would protect me from making the wrong choice.

I didn't know where to begin, so I began with the Bible and Qur'an, and a few books of early Christian history. I learned much in reading the early Christian history books and wondered why I'd never heard any of it before. The beginnings of the religion were anything but unified and clear. Some early Christians believed Jesus (as) was God, others did not. Their practices and beliefs varied much more greatly than those of Christians today.

The New Testament was not written until at least a generation after Jesus' (as) apparent death, and was written by many people. Their stories often conflicted with each other, and there were hundreds of gospels out there. It was only at the Council of Nicaea, more than three centuries after the time of Christ that the New Testament as we know it today began to take shape. The Council picked four out of the hundreds of gospels that coincided with the Roman Emperor's belief and made them the official belief. The others were burned and destroyed, and those who were found in possession of them were killed. Since then, most of the other gospels have disappeared and the four official gospels have modestly changed from time to time. Some versions of the gospels contain verses that others do not, and of course some Bibles have entire books that others do not. There is no "original" Bible in order to verify there have not been changes. There are old manuscripts, but no definitive "real" Bible.

To some people that is not a problem, but for me it was fast becoming a problem. The modern Christian belief seemed to me to be comprised of something of God's message but also a lot of conjecture or interpretation of phrases that are not totally clear. And it seemed to be the conjecture parts that determined whether or not one went to hell! Where does clearly Jesus (as) say that he will die for our sins and that belief in that is compulsory? It is mere conjecture that the phrase "Son of God" that is used so often in the Bible attests to Jesus' (as) divinity. In fact, the people who lived at the time of Jesus (as) did not take it to mean that at all. According to leading Biblical historians, the phrase "Son of God" did not mean something divine to the writers of the Bible or those who witnessed Jesus (as). It indicated a fully human being and was regularly used as a title for Jewish holy men.

King David is referred to as a son of God in 2 Samuel 7:14:

"I [God] will be his father and he [David] will be my son."

Job 1:6 and 2:7 in the NIV version of the Bible mention angels, with a footnote that the Hebrew word translated as angels actually means "sons of God".

"One day the angels [sons of God in footnote] came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan [accuser in footnote] also came with them."

"On another day the angels [sons of God] came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them to present himself before him."

In Hosea 11:1, God calls all of Israel His son

"When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son."

The use of capitals when calling Jesus (as) by that title is a choice of the translators and is not indicated in the original Greek or Hebrew.

It is also conjecture that Jesus (as) was the only Messiah, or that the title "Messiah" has something to do with a return at the end time or status as a savior. Messiah and Christ both mean, "anointed one".

Anointed ones were the leaders of Israel, anointed in an ancient version of an inauguration ceremony. In 1 Samuel 10:1 it says,

"Then Samuel took a flask of oil and kissed him, saying, 'Has not the Lord anointed your leader over his inheritance?'"

The Hebrew root for anointed here is the very same that is translated as Christ and Messiah in the New

Testament.

In truth, Jesus (as) never asked or commanded people to pray to him or to worship him. He told people to pray to God and to worship God. Yet, how many Christians today pray to and worship God by name? It is far more common that their prayer begins, “Dear Jesus” than “Dear God”. A sincere Christian would do well to obey Jesus (as) and change his/her prayers to be directed at “God” rather than “Jesus”.

Some things that are commonplace in Christian belief and practice today do not have their origins in Jesus’ (as) teachings, but rather in a vote by church authorities or papal decree. This of course includes the celebrations of Christmas and Easter, as well as definition of the Trinity, and permission to pray to the Mother of Jesus, Mary. The word “trinity” does not exist in the Bible and yet it is an essential belief of Christians. The trinity concept was invented by church leaders to explain their beliefs; and even today the church leaders have votes and decrees over the natures and functions of the different parts of their Godhead. The faithful Christians trust that their leaders are God-inspired and that the authors of the Bible were as well.

Most of the faithful believe that if they find the Bible unclear it is because they, being human, possess limited understanding. God, they say again, does not need to make sense. Or, if they find an apparent contradiction in the Bible, it is because it is not the details that matter, but the overall message of what is written. There are thousands of examples of apparent contradiction within the Bible. Many of those involve records of how many people were at a place or who exactly was there. If one account of an event says that there were 100 men there, and another says that there was 1000, the faithful Christians say that this does not change the overall meaning of the passage. That may be true, but why do the passages not agree? God surely knows what happened, so why couldn’t the Bible get it right if it is indeed His book? Maybe a monk or priest when transcribing the Bible made a mistake that stuck. Or maybe he thought he was correcting a mistake that a previous transcriber had made. Or maybe he thought a larger number made a better story.

In my experience, many Christians believe that either these errors are not errors but only seem to be to our limited faculties, or else they are errors but are very minor and that God has protected the “important” part of His message in the Bible. However, I contend that any contradiction or error is important because it indicates the work of men rather than the work of God. When one mistake is found, how can we be confident that another mistake that does indeed change the meaning of the text has not occurred? For Christians, that is simply a matter of faith. But should it be?

As an example of what I’ve been talking about, I provide the NIV translation of the story of Mary Magdalene at the tomb of Jesus (as), as it is recorded in three of the gospels:

Matthew 28: 1–7

After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

Mark 16:1-8

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?" But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. "Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as I told you.'"

Luke 24:1-12

On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead?"

He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee. 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.'" Then they remembered his words. When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw strips of linen lying by themselves, and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened.

These are three accounts of the same event, obviously. This event is very important to the belief that

Jesus (as) was crucified and raised to life after having died for the sins of all mankind. It establishes witnesses to the absence of Jesus' (as) body after an appointed time, and holds testimony that he had come back to life as promised. But these accounts differ considerably in the details as to what actually happened. Take a minute to examine the three passages and try to answer the following questions: Who went to the tomb with Mary Magdalene? How many went altogether? Were the guards there or not? How many beings did the women encounter at the tomb, and were they men or angels? Did Peter go to the tomb or not? What did the being(s) say to the women? Did the women prostrate themselves before the being(s) or not? Where were the being(s), and did they come as the women watched or were they already there? Was the stone rolled away as they watched, or was it already rolled away when they arrived?

If these were from the unaltered Word of God, there should be no contradictions between these three accounts. One might leave out a detail that another has included, but there should be no disagreement as to who was there, what they saw, or what they heard. Eyewitness accounts can have conflicting results, as can stories told over and over and not written down until a generation or two later -- but not the Word of God. If we cannot accurately establish what happened, then what must one believe? It is not unlikely that something did happen that led to the existence of this story, but we simply do not have the means to determine what really happened. One of these accounts may be true while the others are false, or all may be false, and that is the full extent of what we can say about it.

I have given but one example of the difficulties in the Bible, but there are many, many more. The Bible is simply unclear and self-contradictory, and further it is in contradiction with established science. I do not wish to spend too much time on the Bible's problems with science because they are rather commonly known and readily apparent even to a casual reader. For example it is well known that using evidence in the Bible, the Earth is less than 6000 years old. Staunch believers of the Bible hold this to be true even today and claim that scientific evidence dating human remains back at least ten thousand years and dating rock back at least 4.5 billion years is a deception of Satan.

For years, I had believed I could not understand the Bible because something was wrong with me or because it had just not been made understandable by God's will. But after comparing it to the Qur'an, I understood that it is okay to expect logic and clarity in the Word of God. I realized that the Bible itself is flawed.

I could not satisfy myself with believing in something that relied on a flawed book. If I wanted to find God's Truth from the Bible, how could I do it? How could I know which, if any, of the three accounts I related earlier are factual? If I could not determine which of those to trust, how could I decide about the rest of what those three authors wrote? How could I trust anything in the Bible at all when I could not determine what was man-made and what was God-made? And, now the big question, without the Bible to rely on, where does Christianity find itself?

But that is only half the story. I had concluded that Christianity was flawed, but I had not determined that Islam was not flawed also. I had to examine the Qur'an with the same scrutiny that I had applied to the Bible.

So, I asked, "Where does the Qur'an contradict itself? Where does it contradict known science?" After months of searching, I realized the answer to both questions is that it simply does not. It is superior to the Bible in this regard and thus presents itself as more trustworthy. Further, it contains scientific data that were completely unknown to man when it was revealed. The fact that bees' honey comes from their stomachs is a modern scientific discovery, yet it is in the Qur'an (16:49) that was revealed in the 7th century CE. The manner in which a baby forms in the womb is a discovery of this century, and yet it is explained accurately in the Qur'an in several places (22:5, 23:14, 40:67, 75:38, and 96:2). I found in Qur'an the original, true religion that God sent to mankind and am to this day still wonderstruck at the Mercy and guidance of Allah (swt).

"Abraham was not a Jew nor yet a Christian; but he was true in faith, and bowed his will to God's (which is Islam), and he joined not gods with God." Qur'an 3:67

What objection could I have to following the religion of Abraham, the religion of submitting to the will of the One God – the God of the Jews, Christians, Muslims and Creator of the universe? I am certainly not the only Christian to have reached this conclusion. The Qur'an itself talks about Christians converting Islam with tears in their eyes upon recognizing its truth:

"And nearest among them in love to the Believers wilt thou find those who say, 'We are Christians' because amongst these are men devoted to learning and priests and monks, and they are not arrogant. And when they listen to the revelation received by the Apostle [Muhammad], thou wilt see their eyes overflowing with tears, for they recognize the truth. They pray, 'Our Lord! We believe; write us down among the witnesses.'" (Qur'an, 5:82-83)

There are many verses in Qur'an about Jesus (as):

Birth of Mary – (3:34-40, 19:2-15)

Status of Mary in Islam – (3:41-46)

Who Was Jesus – (2:87, 6:85-87, 3:83, 33:7-8, 42:13, 5:46)

Birth of Jesus – (19:16-36)

Miracles of Jesus – (5:110–115)

Teachings of Jesus – (3:49–52, 43:57–59, 57:27, 43:57–63, 5:111)

Jesus sent for children of Israel – (3:48, 5:72, 61:6)

Is Jesus Son of God? – (3:58, 2:116–117, 21:26–29)

Is Jesus God? – (5:117, 5:72–75)

Was Jesus Crucified? – (4:157–158, 3:54–56)

Dialogue between God and Jesus – (5:116–118)

His Last Message – (61:6)

Message to Believers – (61:14)

This is what the Qur'an has to say on the matter of Jesus' (as) crucifixion (4:157–158):

And because of their saying: We slew the Messiah Jesus son of Mary, Allah's messenger – They slew him not nor crucified, but it appeared so unto them; and lo! Those who disagree concerning it are in doubt thereof; they have no knowledge thereof save pursuit of a conjecture; they slew him not for certain: But Allah took him up unto Himself. Allah is ever Mighty, Wise.”

This saying does not deny that something happened that led to those stories we find in the Bible. It claims, however, that Christians were not given any proof that Jesus (as) was crucified, but rather made the conjecture that it had happened. In other words, Christians have based their religion upon something that is not fact, but is merely supposed.

The people who supposed it might have been well-intentioned individuals, but that is beside the point. Obviously, a Christian will be irked on reading that verse of Qur'an. My reaction on reading it the first time was to want to throw the book down. It did not agree with what I had been taught. If I believed what the Qur'an was saying, I would have to believe that my mother, my father, my teachers, my preachers, my neighbors, my political leaders, my friends, indeed, everyone I had ever known, had gotten it wrong. How could it be possible that so many people who were so sure in their belief and who seemed so favored by God living in the world's most prosperous country, were wrong?

But then I had to ask myself, would not a girl living on the other side of the world immersed in another

religion have a similar question? For one of us, at least, the answer indeed had to be that all that we had known was wrong. Truly, this was a terrifying concept. My whole world was crashing down around me and I was left with nothing that I could trust. I had no choice but to build my world up again, to examine everything I had ever believed all over again and create a new framework from which to view the world. In the end, the Qur'an convinced me. And the Bible convinced me, too, because I did not find in it the perfection I demanded from the Word of God. Although it is flawed, some truth remains in it and some good can be gained from reading the Bible if it is read with a critical eye. In fact, I benefited from discovering that the Bible contains likely prophecies of Muhammad's (saw) prophethood, Deuteronomy 18:18 being among the more noted possibilities:

"I will raise up for them a prophet like you [Moses] from among their brothers; I will put My words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him."

Christians generally presume this verse refers to Jesus (as), but Muslims find it more likely that it refers to the Prophet Muhammad (saw). First, Muhammad (saw) is more like Moses (as) than Jesus (as). Like Moses, Muhammad (saw) married and had a divinely appointed successor in terms of leadership of the people (Aaron for Moses and 'Ali for Muhammad (sa)). Moses and Muhammad (saw) were both born of both mother and father and came with new religious law. On the other hand, Jesus (sa) was apparently unmarried, was born of mother only and did not bring new law. Secondly, the verse says that the prophet will come from "their brothers", which in context refers to the brothers of the Israelites. Jesus (as) is directly descended from Abraham's second-born son, Isaac (sa), just like the Israelites, and thus is an Israelite himself and not the brother of the Israelites. Muhammad (saw) is the only one with a valid claim to prophethood who is descended from Abraham's first-born son, Ishmael (sa), making him a brother of the Israelites and not an Israelite himself. Finally, Muhammad (saw) fits the final portion of this verse exactly, and certainly better than Jesus (sa), as testified to in the Qur'an:

"Nor doth he speak of (his own) desire. It is naught save an inspiration that is inspired...."
(53:3-4)

Muhammad (saw) is the only prophet with a scriptural record that he speaks only that which Allah (swt) has commanded or inspired, matching the prophecy in Deuteronomy 18:18.

So, that is a small sample of my study before I converted to Islam. The Qur'an stands as a true testament to what it is and what it contains. All evidence indicated that it is what it claims to be:

"This is the Scripture whereof there is no doubt, a guidance unto those who ward off (evil)...." (2:1)

"And this Qur'an is not such as could ever be invented despite of Allah [swt]; but it is a confirmation of that which was before it and an exposition of that which is decreed for mankind – Therein is no doubt – from the Lord of the Worlds." (10:37)

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