

Comparisons and contrasts between the bible and the koran

[Religion](#), [Bible](#)



The topic that I have chosen to discuss describes the comparisons and contrasts between the Bible and the Koran. As there are many, I only go into detail about a few.

I discuss the importance of the Bible and its significance to Christians, as well as the Koran and its significance to Muslims. Afterwards, I compare the similarities as well as the differences in the Bible and the Koran, in relation to three chosen events that appear in both books. I then go on to give a synopsis in the conclusion of my work.

Comparisons and Contrasts between the Bible and the Koran

The Koran and the Bible are both sacred religious books. Yet, they both have many differences, as well as many similarities. The two books resemble each other in the manner in which they contain certain facts referring to eschatology, the devil as a figure of evil, prayer, miracles, God having a relationship with humans, and Immaculate Conception, along with many other similarities.

Some of the differences that I have discovered include those that refer to the belief in trinity, crucifixion, days of worship, salvation, the Holy Spirit, the wearing of gold and secular governments. Although this may sound very strange, it seems as though most of the similarities in both the Bible and the Koran help to construct the differences in both.

Though many of the ideas and events are similar, the way in which the ideas and events are carried out are different. This is why both the Bible and the

Koran are so unique. However, despite the similarities and differences, Christians hold their belief only in the Bible and Muslims only in the Koran.

There is no interchanging, as it refers to the Christian or Muslim faiths. This is yet another reason why both are so unique. As it is mentioned in both the Bible and the Koran, I will discuss the similarities and differences relating to the creation of humanity, Noah and the flood, Joseph as he appears in both of these sacred books, Cain and Abel also known as Qabil and Habil, and lastly, David and Goliath also known as Dawud and Jalut . The similarities will be addressed first, followed by the differences between these events as they appear in both texts.

There are several events that are present in both books in some form. The Biblical versions are concerned mainly with narrative and detail, while the Koran's version is much more concerned with the stories as parables and moral teachings; often containing little detail.

The first event that appears in both books is the creation of humanity. This story appears in Genesis 2: 4-4: 1 in the Bible. It appears in many verses in the Koran: verses 30-39 of Sura 2:, verses 11-25 of Sura 7: verses 26-42 of Sura 15:, verses 61-65 of Sura 17:, verses 50-51 of Sura 18, verses 110-124 of Sura 20:, and verses 71-85 of Sura 38.

The Biblical version of the creation of humanity states that after God makes the heavens and the earth he makes a man, named Adam. When this is done, God gives Adam life. He then puts Adam into the Garden of Eden, which contains trees, fruit, and a river for watering. Then God creates a companion for Adam, Eve. The serpent, who is also residing in the Garden,

starts to deceive Eve into eating the fruit. Eventually, they both eat the forbidden fruit off of the tree that God distinctly asked them not to eat.

They each realize that they are naked and begin to hide once they hear God coming. God tells Eve that because she has been disobedient, she will bear great pains during childbirth. He tells Adam that because of his deeds, he will suffer through painful toil all his life in order to have food. Following these events, God drives them both from the Garden.

The Koran has a slightly different version of the creation of humanity. It begins by stating that God tells the angels that he is going to create a vicegerent on Earth. God then creates Adam. He brings Adam to the garden, where all angels and jinns reside. One angel, by the name of Iblis, refuses to bow to Adam as he enters the garden. He was the chief of jinns, who were creatures created from smokeless fire.

They also inherited tendencies, which gave them the ability to exercise freewill. God asks Iblis why he does not bow to Adam, and Iblis responds by saying that he is better than Adam is, because he is made of fire, not clay. After God hears this, he threatens to throw Iblis out the garden. He tells Iblis that any man that should follow in his footsteps would go to hell. After this God adds Hawa to the garden. Once again, God tells Adam and Hawa not to eat of the forbidden tree. Encouraged by Iblis' lure, Adam and Hawa both eat of the tree.

He then dismisses them from the garden and sends them both down to Heaven, where he tells them to listen to his messengers. In both books, the same concept is used, but the manner in which it is used differs. There is a

difference in names, a difference in events that proceed and follow the creation, and a difference in the form that the angels present themselves.

The next idea relates to Noah and the Flood. The version of the flood in the Koran differs from that in the Bible in three ways: the way in which the participants converse, the views of Heaven, and the way in which the flood is depicted and described. These differences reflect a fundamental variance in the ways in which the two cultures view man's relationship with God. In the Koran, Noah talks to the people and says, ' Seek forgiveness of your Lord, He is ever ready to forgive you.'

In the Bible, the Lord says to Noah, ' Take your whole family with you into the boat, because you are the only one on this earth who pleases me.' The two books are different in the manner that in the Koran, God wants Noah to talk to the people so that they can be saved. In the Bible, God is disgusted with the way that the humans are behaving and decides to teach them a lesson. The Koran does not speak of the actual flood.

The only evidence is when Noah tells God not to leave a single unbeliever in the land. In the Bible, it states, ' The sky opened like windows, and the rain poured down for forty days and forty nights.' This creates a huge difference between the two works, because the flood is described in detail in the Bible, while there is no description of the flood in the Koran.

In pertaining to the views of Heaven, the Koran and Bible also differ. In the Koran, Noah states the God created the seven heavens, one above the other. In the Bible, there is no record of God creating different levels of Heaven.

The Koran and the Bible each offer an account of Joseph. In both versions, Joseph is favored by his father over his eleven other brothers, and sold into slavery in Egypt by his brothers. Aside from a few differences, there are many similarities in the Koran and in the Bible concerning the account of Joseph. Joseph dreams that eleven stars, the sun, and the moon, bow down to him. These events represented that his eleven brothers, mother and father would give obeisance to him.

Due to this dream, Joseph's brothers became very jealous of him and plotted to kill him. The story of Joseph in the Bible, states all of these same facts, but it adds that had Reuben not interfered, his other brothers might have killed him. Joseph was placed into a pit by his brothers, where he was left to die. Instead, Midianites took him and sold him to the merchants.

These merchants brought Joseph to Egypt where Medanite slave dealers in turn, sold him to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's and captain of the guard. Joseph prospered in Potiphar's household and was eventually made head of the servants. He was then accused of rape by the Photiphar's wife and was cast into state prison.

Years later, Pharaoh had a strange dream, and remembered Joseph. Joseph was then brought from prison to interpret the Pharaoh's dream. Since Pharaoh was pleased with Joseph's interpretation, he gave him authority over all the land of Egypt. His dream became a reality and eventually his family did bow down to him. In return, Joseph forgave his brothers and moved his family to Egypt, while blessing them abundantly. There are some differences in the Koran, although the moral of the story is the same.

Some of the differences are that Joseph is regarded as being of the highest moral character, even as a youth. He also refuses to leave prison until Potiphar's wife admits her guilt and proves him innocent of his crime. The story of Joseph has many similarities, but the Bible teaches us that the Lord favored Joseph, and it is clear that Joseph had to earn his role as God's chosen servant and guardian of the people of Israel.

The story of Cain and Abel appears in Genesis 4: 1-16 in the Bible, and in verses 27-31 of Sura 5: al-Ma'idah (The Repast) in the Koran. In the Bible, it is noted that Cain and Abel are the sons of Adam and Eve. Abel keeps the flocks while Cain works in the soil.

Cain gathers some of the fruits of the soil and makes an offering to God. Abel gets some of the fat portions of his flock and also makes an offering to God. God accepts Abel's offering but not Cain's. Cain becomes very angry with God's decision and asks him why he is angry.

Later on, Cain takes Abel to a field and kills him. God asks Cain where Abel has gone and Cain replies by stating that he is not his brother's keeper. God curses Cain in punishment, by exiling him from Eden, and telling him that he would never be able to grow crops again. Cain believes that he will be killed because of his crime. So God reassures Cain that if anyone kills him, then he shall be punished and Cain is marked as a warning to any possible killers. Cain then moves on and has a child with his wife.

In the Koran's version of Cain and Abel, the two brothers are not named and are only referred to as the son's of Adam. Traditionally, they are called, Qabil and Habil. The story states that both men offer a sacrifice to God. While not

directly stated in the Koran, it is presumed by some scholars of Islam, that while Habil chose the best of his flock to give to God, Qabil grudgingly went along with the idea of sacrifice, and put forth the least of his crops. Subsequently, God only accepts one sacrifice, which is that given by Habil. Qabil becomes angry and tells Habil that he will kill him. Habil states that if God only accepts the sacrifices of the righteous, then something must be wrong with Qabil.

He also tells Qabil that if he is attacked, that he will not retaliate, because he fears God. The difference in this particular event between the two books is that, we now know of conversation that was brought about between the two brothers in the Koran; whereas the Bible does not mention any conversation before Cain kills Abel. Qabil then kills Habil and becomes one of the 'lost ones'. God then sends down a couple of ravens to fight each other in sight of Qabil. When one kills the other, the victor digs at the ground with its claws to bury its fallen enemy.

This teaches Qabil, who had no experience with death up until that time, that like the raven, he should bury his brother's body. Qabil is filled with regret for what he has done. Later narrations of Prophet Muhammad say that on Judgment Day, for every human murdered, an equal amount of punishment for that crime will be heaped by God on both the murderer and on Qabil, for setting the precedent of murder.

These two versions of the story of Cain and Abel are very similar. They relate in the matter of characters, plot, and the type of setting. They differ in the idea that Cain and Abel actually converse about the killing before it happens

in the Koran. In the Bible, Cain just kills Abel. Another difference is that Cain does not feel any guilt behind murdering his brother, as noted in the Bible. Since God sends the ravens down, so that Cain can be taught a lesson, he becomes very guilty, and realizes that he should bury his brother. There is also no mention of ravens in the Bible.

Another set of characters that are mentioned in both the Bible and the Koran are David and Goliath known also known as Dawud and Jalut. This story appears in 1st Samuel 17: 1-58 in the Bible and in verses 249-251 of Sura 2: al-Baqarah (The Heifer) in the Koran. The Biblical version tells the story of the Philistines gathering for war against Israel in Judah. King Saul of Israel and his army get ready for battle and camp near the Philistines' camp at the Valley of Elah.

The Israelites are camped on one hill, the Philistines on the other, with the valley lying between the two armies. Then Goliath comes out of the Philistine camp. He is an extremely tall man – 9 feet to be exact. He wears a bronze helmet and armor, with bronze greaves and a bronze spear and javelin. Goliath calls out to the Israelites, telling them to choose a man to come and fight him. If this man kills him then the Philistines will be Israel's subjects, but if Goliath kills the Israelite, then they will be subjects of the Philistines.

For 40 days, this goes on, with Goliath issuing the same challenge everyday. Meanwhile David, who is a man favored by King Saul for his armor-bearing, and who has been anointed by the Prophet Samuel, in the sight of God, is tending his father Jesse's flock of sheep at Bethlehem. Jesse tells his son to go to his three brothers who are in the army and give them some food

supplies, as well as giving some to the commanders. The next day David goes to the battle fields and meets with his brothers.

Goliath comes out to issue his usual challenge. Some soldiers tell David that King Saul has promised his daughter's hand in marriage, wealth and freedom from taxes for their family to the man who fights and slays Goliath. Nevertheless, David goes to King Saul and tells him that he will fight Goliath. He tells Saul that he has had to kill bears and lions in order to protect the sheep in his father's flock. Then he adds that he also has God's help and power with him. David then approaches Goliath to begin the fight. Goliath believes that David will have no chance of winning against him.

When Goliath moves to fight, David slings a stone at him with the sling. The stone sinks into Goliath's forehead and he falls face down on the ground. David then picks up Goliath's sword and kills him with it. He cuts off Goliath's head and all of the Philistines run away. The Israelites pursue them and try to kill them all. When they return, they destroy the Philistine camp. David, later takes the head to Jerusalem, but keeps the sword for himself. His strength greatly impresses King Saul.

In the Koran's version, King Talut is with his army, marching to fight a battle. David is among the army already. King Talut decides to test his army at a stream that they stop at. He says that if any of the men drink from the stream then they are to leave, but if they abstain then they shall stay with him for the battle.

The army is then purged of any unnecessary soldiers. When the army arrives at the battle site, many are scared at the height of Jalut, a member of the

enemy's army. The battle begins and the army marches towards the opposing army while praying to God. Jalut walks forward and Dawud slays Jalut. Due to David's heroism, he is given much power and wisdom by God's grace. Noted differences of the story between the two books are that there is not much conversation between Goliath and the opposing army in the Koran as there is in the Bible.

Another difference is that David is already marching with the army in the Koran, whereas in the Bible, King Saul sends for him. In the Biblical version, David fight Goliath alone, but in the Koran, David as well as the entire army goes to fight Goliath. The trip to the stream in the Koran is also a difference between the two books, because there is no mention of this trip in the Bible. Besides these 4 key differences, the remainder of the story is the same. In conclusion, there are many other ideas and events with similar and differing characteristics.

Although all of these ideas were not discussed, those similarities and differences are still very important to the entire essence of both the Bible and the Koran. All of the events listed in the Bible and the Koran are very important to its individual cultures. In comparing and contrasting the two sacred books, I believe that all of the similarities assist in creating the differences, therefore creating two great sacred works.