

The Gospels as the Injil: A Christian Apologetic for Dialogue with Islam

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INTRODUCTION: THE GOSPELS AND THE INJIL IN CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM

In both Christianity and Islam, Jesus—called Isa in Islam—plays a key role in God’s plan. Christians know Him as the Savior and the fulfillment of God's promises, while Muslims honor Him as a prophet who brought a divine message called the Injil. However, there is confusion and debate about what the Injil refers to. Many Muslims believe it was a book given directly to Jesus and that this original Injil was either lost or corrupted over time.

In contrast, Christians believe the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John accurately record Jesus’ life and teachings, reflecting God’s revelation through His Son. This paper offers a bridge between these two views, arguing that the Gospels are the Injil mentioned in the Qur’an. It demonstrates that the message of the Gospels aligns with the Qur’an’s description of the Injil and explains why claims of corruption are not supported by historical evidence.

WHAT DOES THE QUR’AN SAY ABOUT THE INJIL?

The Qur’an mentions the Injil as a divinely inspired message given to Jesus. It describes the Injil as containing “guidance and light” (Surah 5:46), meant to confirm the truth of earlier revelations like the Torah. It also instructs Christians to follow their

scriptures: *“Let the people of the Gospel judge by what Allah has revealed therein”*
(Surah 5:47).

This verse suggests that the Gospels available during Muhammad’s time were valid and still contained divine truth. However, modern Muslims often claim that the Injil was lost or altered (tahrif) over time.

Interestingly, early Islamic scholars like Ibn Abbas and Al-Tabari held a different view. They believed that no one could change God's words, and that any corruption referred to misunderstanding the message (tahrif al-ma’na), not changing the text itself. This opens the door to dialogue about whether the Gospels are, in fact, the Injil.

HOW THE GOSPELS REFLECT THE INJIL’S MESSAGE

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are not just biographies of Jesus—they are inspired accounts of God’s work through Him. They provide a complete picture of His life, teachings, miracles, death, and resurrection. Christians believe that Jesus Himself is God’s ultimate revelation, fulfilling the promises of the Old Testament (John 1:14).

Here are some ways the Gospels align with the Qur’an’s description of the Injil:

- **Guidance and Light:** The Gospels emphasize love, forgiveness, and obedience to God. Jesus teaches: *“The greatest commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength”* (Mark 12:30).
- **Confirmation of the Torah:** Jesus often quotes the Torah and emphasizes fulfilling it: *“I have not come to abolish the Law but to fulfill it”* (Matthew 5:17).

- **Righteous Living:** Jesus' ethical teachings in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7) reflect the same values of mercy, humility, and justice found in the Qur'an.

These shared themes suggest that the Gospels preserve the essence of the Injil, as described in the Qur'an.

ADDRESSING CLAIMS OF CORRUPTION (TAHRIF)

Muslims often argue that the Gospels have been corrupted (tahrif al-lafz) over time, making them unreliable. However, historical evidence challenges this view.

- **Manuscript Evidence:**

- The **Codex Sinaiticus** and **Codex Vaticanus**, dating to the 4th century, show that the Gospels have been accurately preserved.
- The **Rylands Papyrus (P52)**, a fragment of the Gospel of John from around 125 AD, demonstrates the early transmission of these texts.

These manuscripts reveal remarkable consistency over time, disproving claims that the Gospels were drastically altered.

- **Early Islamic Views:**

Scholars like Ibn Abbas argued that tahrif refers to a misunderstanding of meaning, not physical corruption of the text. If the text of the Injil was still intact during Muhammad's time, the Gospels were likely the scriptures referenced by the Qur'an.

- **Multiple Gospels as Complementary, Not Contradictory:**

Muslims sometimes argue that having four Gospels suggests inconsistency. However, Christians understand these Gospels as complementary accounts that highlight

different aspects of Jesus' life. The differences reflect the perspectives of different authors writing to different audiences, not contradictions.

COMMON GROUND BETWEEN THE GOSPELS AND THE QUR'AN

Both the Gospels and the Qur'an present Jesus as a messenger of God who performs miracles and calls people to righteousness.

- **Jesus' Miracles:**

- The Gospels recount many of Jesus' miracles, such as healing the blind and raising the dead (John 11:43-44).
- The Qur'an similarly describes Jesus performing miracles by God's permission (Surah 3:49).

- **Ethical Teachings:**

- Both texts emphasize love, mercy, and justice. For example, the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) teaches compassion, much like the Qur'an emphasizes charity and justice (Surah 2:177).

- **Jesus' Return:**

- Both Christianity and Islam teach that Jesus will return at the end of time. Christians believe He will come as the King and Judge (Revelation 19:11-16), while Muslims believe He will defeat the Dajjal (antichrist) and establish justice (Surah 43:61).

WHY THIS MATTERS: A CALL TO DIALOGUE

Understanding the Gospels as the Injil opens the door for meaningful dialogue between Christians and Muslims. Both faiths honor Jesus and share many of His

teachings. Recognizing the Gospels as authentic reflections of the Injil can help build bridges of understanding and respect.

Instead of focusing on differences, this approach encourages both communities to explore common values and engage in discussions about Jesus' life and mission. Through open dialogue, we can better understand each other's faiths and deepen our shared commitment to truth and righteousness.

CONCLUSION: THE GOSPELS AS THE INJIL

This paper has shown that the Gospels align with the Qur'an's description of the Injil. They contain the same message of guidance, light, and faithfulness to God's law. Historical evidence supports the reliability of the Gospels, countering claims of corruption. Early Islamic scholars like Ibn Abbas also challenge the modern assumption that the Injil was lost or altered.

By recognizing the Gospels as the Injil, both Christians and Muslims can move beyond misunderstandings and engage in meaningful conversations about faith, ethics, and Jesus' mission. This perspective honors the truths shared by both faiths and opens the door to greater unity in seeking God's will.

FURTHER READING

- **Mustafa Akyol** – *The Islamic Jesus: How the King of the Jews Became a Prophet of the Muslims*
- **Shabir Ally** – *Jesus in the Qur'an and the Bible*
- **Codex Sinaiticus and Vaticanus** – Early New Testament Manuscripts
- **The Qur'an** – Sahih International Translation

APPENDIX A: THE INJIL: A SHARED REVELATION ACROSS FAITHS



This image represents the Injil, or Gospels, as a bridge between Christian and Islamic traditions. At the center, an open Gospel book radiates divine light, symbolizing revelation and guidance. Surrounding it are elements of spiritual harmony: a dove for the Holy Spirit, olive branches for peace, and a crescent moon with a cross overlay, uniting Islamic and Christian iconography.

The background features Arabic calligraphy referencing the Qur'anic mention of the Injil, alongside ancient scrolls representing continuity and the preservation of scripture. The candlelight and soft glow evoke a contemplative atmosphere, encouraging interfaith dialogue and understanding of the shared theological heritage between Christianity and Islam.

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