

WEEK 5 OF 6

Scripture Wars

Bible Corruption Claims and Muhammad in the Bible

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Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church • Tampa, Florida

Review and Introduction

Weeks 1–4 Recap

Week 1

Muhammad, the Qur'an, and why this matters

Week 2

Tawhid vs. the Trinity — two views of God's oneness

Week 3

Jesus in the Qur'an vs. Jesus in the Bible

Week 4

The Cross and salvation — two irreconcilable gospels

Today — Week 5

Shift

From soteriology to bibliology — from salvation to Scripture

Topic A

The Islamic charge of Tahrif: was the Bible corrupted?

Topic B

Is Muhammad predicted in the Old and New Testaments?

Goal

Equip you with text-based, firm and respectful responses

The Charge of Tahrif (تحريف)

Tahrif al-Lafz

تحريف اللفظ

"Textual Corruption"

The actual words of the Bible were changed — scribes inserted, deleted, or altered the text itself. This is the dominant modern Muslim apologetic claim.

Tahrif al-Ma'na

تحريف المعنى

"Corruption of Meaning"

The words remain intact, but the Jewish and Christian interpreters have misread or deliberately mis-translated them. Held by early Muslim scholars such as Ibn Khazm.

"The Bible has been corrupted by the Church over the centuries — that is why it now contradicts the Qur'an. The original Injil (Gospel) given to Jesus has been lost."

— Common Muslim apologetic claim

White's Counterargument: The Qur'an Affirms the Bible

Surah 5:47

"Let the People of the Gospel judge by what Allah has revealed therein. And whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed — then it is those who are the defiantly disobedient."

- Commands Christians to judge by the Gospel — which assumes it is intact and authoritative.

Surah 10:94

"So if you are in doubt about what We have revealed to you, then ask those who have been reading the Scripture before you."

- Muhammad is told to consult those who read the prior scriptures — useless if those scriptures are corrupt.

Surah 3:3–4

"He has sent down upon you the Book in truth, confirming what was before it. And He revealed the Torah and the Gospel before, as guidance for the people."

- The Torah and Gospel are described as God's guidance — not corrupted documents.

White's Point: The Qur'an never identifies a single specific corrupted passage. If the Bible was corrupt at Muhammad's time, the Qur'an would not command Muslims and Christians to judge by it.

Source: [Qur'an \(Saheeh International\)](#), [White, ch. 8](#) — "[The Charge of Corruption](#)"

Manuscript Evidence for the Bible

Dead Sea Scrolls

250+

biblical manuscripts

Discovered 1947 at Qumran. Copies dating from 3rd century BC to 1st century AD — pre-Islamic by 600+ years. Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa-a) matches MT virtually word-for-word across 1,000 years.

Greek NT Manuscripts

5,800+

Greek manuscripts

Earliest papyri (P52, P66, P75) from the 2nd century AD. More than Homer (1,800), Caesar (250), and all classical authors combined. The NT is the best-attested document in antiquity.

Spread and Early Date

< 25 yrs

to earliest copies

Paul's letters predate the Gospels; 1 Corinthians 15 creed (vv. 3–7) dates within 3–5 years of the resurrection. Manuscripts were copied across three continents simultaneously.

Textual Stability

99.5%

text certain

Of the NT text, over 99.5% is not in meaningful dispute. Variants are largely spelling, word-order, and minor style differences. No core doctrine is affected by any variant.

Is Muhammad in the Bible?

Examining the key texts claimed by Muslim apologists

Deuteronomy 18:18 — "A Prophet Like Moses"

"I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him." — Deuteronomy 18:18 (ESV)

Muslim Claim

- "Their brothers" = the Arabs (descendants of Ishmael, brother nation to Israel)
- Muhammad, like Moses, came with a new law, new scripture, and military campaigns
- The prophet "like Moses" must be a non-Israelite

Christian Response

- "Brothers" in Deuteronomy consistently means fellow Israelites (Deut 17:15, 18:2; the same chapter!)
- The NT explicitly identifies this prophet as Jesus: Acts 3:22–23 (Peter) and Acts 7:37 (Stephen)
- Jesus fulfills the pattern: like Moses, he is a mediator of a covenant, a prophet-deliverer, intercedes for his people

Song of Solomon 5:16 and the Paraclete

Claim 1: Song of Solomon 5:16

"His mouth is most sweet, and he is altogether desirable (machamaddim). This is my beloved and this is my friend." — Song 5:16 (ESV)

Muslim claim: machamaddim is the proper name "Muhammad" in the Hebrew text.

Christian response:

- Machamaddim (from chamad, "desirable/lovely") is a common Hebrew adjective, not a proper name
- The plural -im is a Hebrew intensifier ("most desirable"), not part of any name
- The same root appears dozens of times in the OT for desirable objects and people (Isa 64:11; Lam 1:10; Ezek 24:16)

Claim 2: The Paraclete (John 14–16)

Muslim claim: parakletos (Helper/Comforter) in John 14:16, 14:26, 15:26, 16:7 is really "Muhammad" — derived from periklutos (praised one).

Four marks of the Paraclete that exclude Muhammad:

1. John 14:26 identifies the Paraclete as "the Holy Spirit" — Jesus' own definition
2. "He will be with you forever" (14:16) — Muhammad died; the Spirit is eternal
3. "The world cannot receive him... it neither sees him nor knows him" — the Paraclete is invisible; Muhammad was a physical person
4. "He dwells with you and will be in you" — the Spirit indwells believers; this is impossible of any external person

Discussion Questions

- 1** If the Qur'an affirms the Torah and Injil as divine guidance and commands Muslims to judge by them, how can Muslim apologists simultaneously claim those same books are corrupted?
- 2** What would it take to corrupt tens of thousands of manuscripts scattered across Egypt, Syria, Anatolia, Italy, and North Africa — all producing a consistent corrupted text with no trace of the "originals"?
- 3** When someone shows you a verse claiming Muhammad is in the Bible, what is your first exegetical question? (Hint: Context — what does the same author use this word to mean elsewhere?)
- 4** How would you explain the Holy Spirit's role to a Muslim friend who has been taught that "Paraclete" means Muhammad? What passages would you use?

WEEK 6 OF 6

Next Week:

Is the Qur'an Perfect?

Textual Criticism of the Qur'an and Faithful Witness • October 11, 2026

Topic A

Qur'anic parallels and extra-biblical sources (Infancy Gospel, Talmudic legends)

Topic B

The Uthmanic revision, burning of variant codices, Sana'a manuscripts

Topic C

How to be a faithful, gracious witness to Muslim friends

Reading for next week: White, "What Every Christian Needs to Know About the Qur'an," Chapters 10–11