

**The following are objections to Christianity by Imam Karim Abu Zaid**

(The parenthetic numbers are to the approximate time when the imam starts a point)

**Jesus (in the Koran) said who He is right after birth in cradle: "I am the servant of God." (25:56)**

The imam thinks that it is impossible for one who-is-God to serve God, but such a conclusion shows that he does not understand John 1:1 correctly.

John 1:1b-c: The Word was with God, and the Word was God.

An illustration may help. During the last three years of King David's life, he had a co-regent: his son Solomon. Let us imagine that King David and King Solomon were together one day.

Solomon could truthfully say, "I am Israel's King and I am with Israel's King [David]."

David could truthfully say, "I am Israel's King and I am with Israel's King [Solomon]."

The Son can truthfully say, "I am God and I am with God [the Father and the Spirit]."

Likewise, the Father can truthfully say, "I am God and I am with God [the Son and the Spirit]."

Likewise, the Spirit can truthfully say, "I am God and I am with God [the Father and the Son]."

In light of this, I have no problem with saying that Jesus is God and is the Servant of God.

**Jesus is one of 5 mighty messengers: Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Mohammed. (26:04)**

- I have three critiques:
1. Mohammed does not belong in the list,
  2. Many others in OT and NT could be added to the list,
  3. Heb 1-2 calls Jesus the pre-eminent revealer, not one of a series.

**Jesus had a miraculous (virgin) birth (26:18) and He raised the dead, by the permission of God (26:22), but Jesus never claimed divinity in NT (27:06)**

The imam has missed the big one. He also assumes that it is a problem that He consults the Father.

**1. Jesus was born, which means He had a beginning, so He cannot be God, because God always existed (Gen 1:1). (27:37)**

The imam's error here is a common one. It was an objection that Jesus faced in His day.

**2. No explicit text in NT where Jesus actually says He is God, but differentiated Himself from God (Isaiah 36:9), Jesus quoted Sh'ma (Deut 6:4: in Mark 12:29). What do you do with that text, it is ABC. If God comes down as man, John 1:1, we cannot just deduce it; it must be explicit. (28:20)**

The imam is just-plain wrong.

**3. God cannot be seen (John 1:18), but Jesus is seen—so how could He be God? John 6:46 [the imam said John 5:86]. We will only be able to see God in our new body. (30:30)**

The imam has not understood a fundamental difference between Jesus' humanity and His deity. Jesus exists as both man and God. His humanity has a visible expression (as with other humans), but that does not imply that His deity had visible expression. No one has seen the Son's deity, but people did see His humanity.

I would not claim that our resurrection bodies will enable us to see deity.

**4. Jesus prayed, neither ANY Jews nor His disciples thought Jesus was God (31:40)**

The inferences that the imam draws from Jesus praying are just-plain wrong.

**5. Jesus ate, so He used the restroom. God would not do this. (32:15)**

Once again, the imam is confusing Jesus' humanity with His deity. He has created a paper tiger.

**Besides the restroom issue, if He eats, sleeps, drinks—people cannot live w/o food. then He has needs. God is all sufficient and needs nothing. (32:58)**

Once again, the imam is confusing Jesus' humanity with His deity. He has created a paper tiger.

**Jesus fell down on His face (like Muslims do) to pray (Mat 26:39). He is praying to someone. (33:15)**

Once again, the imam is confusing Jesus' humanity with His deity. He has created a paper tiger.

**Jesus has limited knowledge (Mat 24:36). Only the Father knows the hour. God knows everything. (33:45)**

Once again, the imam is confusing Jesus' humanity with His deity. He has created a paper tiger.

**6a. Jesus was not crucified to pay for anyone's sins. 1<sup>st</sup> record (Matthew; with Mk and Luke being later) of Jesus' "crucifixion" was written 50 years after the time, but all of His disciples ran away, so none of them saw any crucifixion. (34:30)**

1. The crucifixion was in A.D. 33. Matthew and John were written prior to 41 (within eight years). Luke was written in 61; Mark in the mid-60s. Revelation (written in A.D. 71-72) is the only NT book written after A.D. 70).

2 Jesus' predictions of the disciples scattering in fear does not mean that none of them saw His crucifixion. Note John 19:25-27 and 35. Matthew 27:55-56 // Mark 15:40, 47 // Luke 23:49 speak of women and all His acquaintances standing at a distance from the cross. In other words, they were far enough away to avoid arrest, but close enough to be witnesses. The imam is wrong.

**6b. He claims that Jesus was not crucified (based on Mat 12:40), As Jonah was in belly of whale for 3 days and 3 nights, so must the Son of Man be, but Fri, Sat, Sun morning does not have 3 nights. But Jonah was alive in the belly of the whale, because he prayed. Some Coptic Christians in Egypt say that Simon of Cyrene (Mat 27:32 // Mar 15:21 // Luk 23:26) took Jesus' cross and died on it. (37:40)**

The imam has horrendously twisted Mat 12:40. He IMAGINES that Mat 12:40 is saying that Jesus' status while in the ground will be exactly the same as the status that Jonah had while in the sea creature (that the imam calls a whale, even though the text does not call it a whale). Thus, the imam notes that Jonah prayed while in the belly, so Jonah was alive, If Jonah was alive, then the imam infers that Jesus was also alive while in the tomb.

However, Mat 12:40 does not compare the status of Jonah in the belly with the status of Jesus in the tomb. The passage focuses on the length of time: three days and three nights. It says nothing about whether Jonah or Jesus was alive or was dead. The imam has inserted an idea foreign to Jesus' comparison: Mat 12<sup>40</sup> For as **Jonah was three days and three nights** in the belly of the great fish, so **will the Son of Man be three days and three nights** in the heart of the earth.

Note that the imam scoffs at Friday afternoon to Sunday morning equalling three days and three nights. However, it was an idiomatic expression. Our idiom is different than that used by Jews during biblical times. One should not impose twenty-first century idioms onto Jesus, but should allow Him to speak in the idiom of His day.

3 days in jail = released on the 3rd day (Gen 42:17-18)

Fasting 3 days, but eating on the 3rd day (1 Sam 30:12-13)

Not fighting 7 days = fighting on the 7th day (1 Kgs 20:29)

Coming after 3 days = coming on the 3rd day (2 Chr 10:5)

Fasting for 3 days, but going on the 3rd day (Esther 4:16—5:1)

**6c. The inventor of the cross was Saul who was a killer of Christians—who never even saw Jesus—who had some sort of a vision, but Jesus never spoke of the cross and never even hinted of the cross. Instead, He said “I will be alive”—and when He talked with Mary Magdalene (Joh 20:17) that He was going to His God and her God, after the so-called crucifixion. But Paul himself said (where ????) that after we die we become unseen angelic beings: we cannot be seen. Jesus, a human who could be seen, not an unseen angel and not God, talked with Mary Magdalene about ascending to God. NT refutes the crucifixion, despite what 50+ year-later books (Matthew, etc.) say. (39:37)**

Paul did see Jesus: Acts 9; 22; 26; cf. Galatians 1

Jesus repeatedly predicted the cross. The imam is wrong.

John 2:19; Mat 12:39-40; 20:22-23 // Mar 10:38-39; and the following:

First passion prediction: Mat 16:21 // Mar 8:31 // Luk 9:22

Second passion prediction: Mat 17:22–23a // Mar 9:20–31 // Luk 9:43b–44

Third passion prediction: Mat 20:17–19 // Mar 10:32–34 // Luk 18:31–34

Note that the angels told Mary Magdalene (and other women with her) that Jesus is risen. That is, He is resurrected, not that He had ascended. (It cannot refer to ascension, since they spoke to Mary before Jesus told her that He had not yet ascended (cf. Mat 28:5-6 // Mar 16:6 // Luk 24:6-7. Cf. also John 20:16-17, etc.

**7. The imam claims salvation has always been through keeping the commandments. If you disobey you should fear. Those who obey will be ok. Jesus Himself said that whoever obeys and teaches others will be great in kingdom (Mat 5:19b). Paul changed it all by saying that Jesus died to pay for sins. In other words, Jesus said that you need to obey. Paul says you can do as you please and do not need to obey. The 5 greats always said that you need to obey. See the NT apocrypha. (40:25)**

Keeping the commands that Jesus speaks about in Mat 5:19b have nothing to do with entering the kingdom. Why didn't the imam quote Mat 5:19a? One who does not keep these commands will be in the kingdom, but will be least in the kingdom.

Everlasting life is received as a gift by believing Jesus' promise. The imam is hoping that he will be good enough to merit everlasting life. What a shame. This is like the people in John 5.

**Jesus is not the son of God nor Messiah. Messiah just means someone anointed. Nothing special. Imam claims that Jacob, etc. are called God's son (ref???). Nothing special about being God's son. The concept is not the Jesus is a little god that was given birth by God. This is proven by Adam had neither father nor mother, Eve had no mother. Jesus had no father. Nothing special, He was not a little god born to God. (41:50)**

The imam is badly confused. Christianity does not say that Jesus came into existence at the birth of His humanity. Cf. John 1:1ff. Jesus has always been God, just as the Father has always been God.

With regard to the idea that ordinary people can become God's children (through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone), the Gospel of John agrees. Cf. John 1:12 etc. However, John 1:14 etc. speak of Jesus as the unique Son of God. The imam has no concept of such things.

**Why believe in crucifixion. Just repent to God, not to a priest. Do not need the cross. Near dawn God descends to every person and will accept anyone's repentance. (44:30)**

The imam knows nothing of universal propitiation. Based on propitiation, God is free to grant everlasting life to believers without requiring them to pass through a judgment. Moslems claim that their god is just, but their god must ultimately ignore sin, saying that devout followers are good enough—despite never having had their sins judged nor their penalty being paid.