



JESUS IS GOD: A COMPARATIVE SCRIPTURAL SURVEY OF JESUS' TRUE IDENTITY (THE BIBLE AND THE QUR'AN)

Dele Alaba ILESANMI, PhD

The Redeemed Christian Bible College, Ado-Ekiti

Associate Professor of Biblical Christian Education (Pneumagogy) and Biblical Research,

Testament Theological Seminary

pstdeleilesanmi3@gmail.com; +234-08062197040

ABSTRACT

The question, “Who is Jesus?” forms the epicentre of theological discussion, which has culminated in Christological debate in the past and recent times. Right from the New Testament days to the present day, this question generates a lot of conflicting views. The Pharisees and the Sadducees were confused about the personality or real identity of Jesus Christ. Even the church and the people outside it, the heathens, differed in their understandings. In the quest for this enigmatic personality, the paper seeks to revisit the historical Jesus by encapsulating the

biblical and qur'anic teachings on His true identity by examining His Virginal Conception, Virginal Birth, and His Names and titles applied to Him in both the Bible and Qur'an to remove doubt and establish the truth. The methodology adopted in this work is *solus primus scriptura research (SPSR)* (*bibliosearch*, **scriptural or biblical-based research**) and **expository research model**, and extra-biblio sources, such as Quran, Christian books, journals, and websites relevant to the study, as its secondary sources. Though the study concludes that both the Bible and the Quran attest to the divinity (deity) of Jesus, the nuance is that the Bible is explicit while the Quran is implicit about this. In this paper, the implicitness of Qur'an is theologically unveiled and the explicitness of the Bible is theologically embellished and expounded for graphic understanding to establish the truth that Jesus is God.

Key words: Jesus is God, Jesus' true identity, the divinity of Jesus, the Bible and the Quran,

INTRODUCTION

Much has been written over the centuries about the enigmatic personality of the historical Jesus. In the West particularly, and Africa recently, sizable tomes have been composed speculating upon the nature and historical background of the foremost characters of World leading religion, Jesus Christ. Some of these works are either poorly researched or the identity of Jesus Christ misconstrued, antithetical to Scriptural depictions. It is not surprised that “Many have tried to dig into the precious few clues as to Jesus’s identity and come up with a biographical sketch that either bolsters faith or reveals a more human side of this godman to which we can relate.” (Acharya S, and D.M. Murdock 2011, 3). They stressed further that the energy and time spent on the subject of Christianity and its legendary founder, Jesus Christ, are very vital to the Western mind and culture, and the entire world.

No doubt, Jesus’ enigmatic nature has culminated in Christological debates and undue wars between some Christians and Islamic fundamentalists in the past and recent times. This is not new to the contemporary Christian scholars. As Jesus Christ remains the fulcrum on which Christianity revolves and the absolute fundamental to it, the person of Buddha is not essential to the teaching of Buddhism nor is the person of Mohammed essential to the Islamic faith.¹

Furthermore, Jesus sees the need to address the issue of His identity in a discourse with His disciples. He asked His disciple a theological question, “Who do men say that I am?” (Mark 8:27; cf., Matt.16:13; Lk.9:18).² The answers given by His disciples show that there is a great variety of opinions among the people: for example, “some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the Prophets.” Then, Jesus went on in His theological inquiry whether His own disciples who have been with Him for some time know Him or not. He asked them this question: “But whom say ye that I am?” (Mat.16:15; Mark 8:29; Lk 9:20). Indeed, this is the heart of the matter. At least everyone has to give his own personal answer

¹ Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary, is hereafter referred to as “HIBD”, p.899.

² All Bible quotations are from King James Version, except otherwise stated.

and make his own personal confession³. From the answer Simon Peter gave and Jesus' response in Matthew 16:16-17, it is clear that the real identity of Jesus Christ cannot be known by flesh (natural man) or blood (human knowledge, philosophy, understanding or calculation). This implies that any revelation or explanation outside the realm of the Holy Spirit will not only provide man with a blurred picture but also an inaccurate portrait Jesus' real identity (Kolawole, Oladotun Paul, 2022). Thus, the role of the Holy Spirit in human understanding of the mystery of God cannot be downplayed. In other words, man's education, exposure and meditations cannot substitute the revelation of the Holy Spirit. Jesus had to ask His disciples to affirm this true confession so that they would not follow the people who are not of the Spirit but of the world, who only saw Jesus as one of the prophets, not necessarily the Messiah. The writings and collections of the New Testament are not disconnected from the Old Testament documents; rather, they form an integral part of the unique book from beginning to the end. How appropriate and sequential it would have been if Muslims had included all the previous scriptures in the Qur'an to allow for proper reading and comparison (Kolawole, O P, 2022). Thus, using human effort (knowledge) to comprehend the true identity of Jesus will be abortive.

The liberal theologians have attempted to separate Christ from Christianity by suggesting that Jesus' teaching forms the best of Christian religion. Therefore, they intend to assert that it is possible for one to accept the teaching of Jesus Christ without accepting the person of Jesus.⁴ This may be true but, in contrary to bibliology (the teaching of the Bible), a Christless Christianity is a contradiction of terms. It is a paradox for one to practise Christianity without accept Christ because the prefix of Christianity is Christ⁵ and it originates from Him. Separating the teaching of Christ from Christ Himself will throw Christianity into oblivion because Christ is the reason for the practice of Christianity.

What is more, Jesus is regarded as a highly significant character in the Qur'an. It bestows upon Him more noble titles than any other historical figure. It refers to Him as a "sign," "mercy,"

³ Ilesanmi, Dele A. *Jesus' Birth (1): Demystifying and Demythologizing the Great Mystery of a Great God* in ChristoPress Magazine, 2023

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ For a better understanding, see Ilesanmi, Dele A. "Jesus' Birth: The Impact of His Sonship and Divinityship on Humanity" in *Mature: Journal of International Institute of Christian Theologians, Scholars, and Professionals*, 2023. E-ISSN: 3027-1525 <https://mature.ictsp.org/>

"witness," "example," someone who is honourable, distinguished, and "one brought nigh unto God." It bestows upon Him the titles Word of God, Servant, Prophet, Messiah, Son of Mary, and a Spirit from God. Among all the prophets mention in Qur'an, Jesus is the only one who was born of a virgin and performed the greatest and most amazing miracles. Jesus is mentioned more than any other prophets in Qur'an. He is mentioned in not less than ninety verses strewn among fifteen surahs that mention Jesus. According to Kolawole (2022), citing Parrinder Geoffrey (1965), "The significance and prominence of Jesus in Islam is reflected in his being mentioned in the Qur'an in ninety-three verses with various titles attached – 'Son of Mary', 'Spirit of God', and 'Word of God'". The dignity accorded Jesus in Qur'an is massive and matchless. Kolawole points out that:

No Muslim is a true Muslim unless he believes in Jesus (the one who is already blessed) as an Apostle of Allah. Muslims inherently presents this at the forefront of any discussion with Christians about the personhood of Jesus Christ. The dignity awarded to Jesus is very high – even when Muhammad's name is mentioned, Muslims say "may God's prayers and peace be upon him". This connotes that Muslims pray for Muhammad whenever his name is mentioned, regardless of the number of times, but Jesus is referred to as one who is already blessed⁶.

Thus, this paper seeks to summarise the biblical and qur'anic teachings on the deity of Jesus by examining His Virginal Conception, Virginal Birth, and His Names and titles applied to Him in both the Bible and Qur'an to provide the answer to the question, *Who is Jesus?* The author adopts *solus primus scriptura research method (bibliosearch, scriptural or biblical-based research)* and expository paradigm. The *solus primus scriptura* search involves scripturally based research, which is a type of research that relies primarily only on first-hand evidence from the impeccable source of God's work, the Bible, as accurate, reliable, and inerrant source (Ilesanmi, Dele, 2023)⁷. All the evidence from this source is considered accurate, reliable, and inerrant because it is directly from the author's mouth (God) and any

⁶ Kolawole Oladotun Paul, "A Reflection on the Islamic Portrait of Jesus". Pharos Journal of Theology ISSN 2414-3324 online Volume 103 - (2022).

⁷ Op.cit. Ilesanmi, Dele A. "Jesus' Birth: The Impact of His Sonship and Divinityship on Humanity"

*other evidence outside the Bible is considered extra-biblio evidence.*⁸ The expository research explains the modes of discourse and systematic presentation of writing manner in reflection of all that is entailed in the research (Udo, 2011). The expository method of research aims to consolidate and clarify already-completed strategic research (Ottuh, John, 2014 cited Muehlhauser, 2014). The extra-biblio sources, such as Qur'an, Christian books, journals, and websites relevant to the study, are considered as secondary sources in this study.

QUR'ANIC POSITION ABOUT JESUS

Jesus (Arabic: عيسى, 'Īsā) is regarded as one of God's most significant prophets in the Quran. The Qur'an called Jesus the Word of God (Q An-Nisa 4:171; Q At-Tahrim 66:12 (Arabic: كلمة الله, Kalimat Allāh), the Spirit of God (Q 4:171; Q 66:12), the son of Mary (Arabic: مريم, Maryam), and the Messiah (Arabic: المسيح, al-Masīḥ). The Quran claims that Mary gave birth to Jesus miraculously and without a father. God sent Jesus to lead the children of Israel to validate the books of Torah and Psalms, the earlier written texts.

According to legend, Jesus was a kind man who worked numerous miracles, such as healing the ill, rising the dead, and calming storms. The Quran makes it clear that Jesus was a human prophet, even though He came from God, rather than a divine one. The Qur'an reject the Trinity and sonship of Jesus. In addition, the Qur'an's stand is that Jesus was not crucified but rather was exalted by God to paradise. According to the Qur'an, Jesus will make a triumphant return to Earth at the end of time, bringing justice and subduing the powers of evil. The messianic figure known as the Mahdi, who will lead the faithful and set the stage for the Day of Judgement. It is believed that Jesus was not crucified or killed (Q 4:157-158). In summary, Qur'an teaches that:

- Jesus was born through the Holy Ghost (Q 19:16-21)
- When Maryam (Mary) conceived by the Holy Spirit she was taken to Bethlehem valley about 4-6 miles from Jerusalem. That is, Jesus was born in Bethlehem (Q 19:22).

⁸ Ibid.

- The angel announced that Jesus is a Messiah who He will be honoured here on earth and in heaven. He will be near to (a friend of) God (Q 3:45).
- Jesus is born as a Sign for mankind and Mercy (Q 19:21).
- Jesus is the Word of God and the Spirit of God (Q 4:171; 66:12)
- God saved Jesus from being crucified. He was not killed but God raised His body and soul to Himself to heaven (Q 3:55; 4:157-158).
- Jesus was raised by God and those who follow (worship) Him will be superior to those who reject Him (Q 3:55)
- Jesus is a great Physician (Doctor, Healer), Creator, Giver of life, Life and Resurrection (Q 3:49).
- The Qur'an prophesies that Jesus will return to Earth before the Day of Judgment (Q 43:61).
- He will come as a judge and will break the cross and kill the Antichrist (Dajjal) (Q 43:61).
- Jesus is considered a righteous servant (prophet) of God (Q 19:30).
- He is said to have been given the Gospel (Injeel) as a revelation which should be used as a standard of judgement (Q 5:46).
- The Qur'an emphasizes that Jesus was not killed but raised by God unto Himself (Q 4:157–158).
- Jesus was born by virgin Mary, He died, and raised alive (resurrected) by God (Q 19:33; cp. Q 3:55; 4:157-158).

The Names and Titles of Jesus in Qur'an

The Qur'an, the sacred book of the Muslims, recognises Jesus, the Son of Mary, and places Him above any other servants of God. The names and titles ascribed to Jesus in the Qur'an are listed below:

- **Isa (Jesus):** The most common name used for Jesus in the Qur'an is "Isa," which is derived from the Aramaic "Yeshua." It signifies his human nature and his role as a Messenger of God
- Jesus is Isa ibn Maryam (Jesus son of Mary) and Messiah or "Al-Masih," which means "The Messiah." (Q Al-Imran 3:45); Q An-Nisa 4:157, 171; Q Al-Ma'idah 5:17, 75), etc.
- Jesus is the Word of God (Kalimatullah): Jesus is described as "Kalimatullah," which translates to "The Word of God." (Q Al-Imran 3:45; Surah An-Nisa (4:171).

- Jesus is the Spirit of God (Ruhullah) (Q An-Nisa 4:171).
- Jesus is regarded as a Messenger of God (Rasulullah) (Surah An-Nisa 4:157; Q Al-Ma'idah 5:75).
- Jesus is the Servant of God (Abdullah) (Q Maryam 19:30).
- Jesus is **The Prophet of God (Nabiullah)** (Q 3:49, 5:75)
- Jesus is a Messenger to the Children of Israel (Q 3:49)

BABLICAL POSITION ABOUT JESUS

The entire Bible is about Jesus. Its position about Jesus is very clear. The Bible teaches that: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." (Gen 1:1).

John gives us a clearer picture of this God that created the heaven and the earth when he writes:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made (1:1-3) ... And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. (1:14)

Additionally, God is "I Am" and Jesus is "I Am" (Exo 3:14; Isa 43:10; John 8:24, 58). Jesus is the second Person in the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (Matt 28:19; 1John 5:7), the Mighty God (Isa 9:6), Jesus is Emmanuel, meaning, God with us (Matthew 1:23), Almighty (Rev. 1:8; Mt. 28:18), The Everlasting Father (Isa 9:6), Beginning and the End (Rev 22:13), the Alfa and Omega (Rev 1:8; 22:13), First and Last (Rev. 1:17; 2:8; 22:13), the Creator of all things (John 1:3), Author of Life (John 14:6; Col. 3:4), Captain of Salvation (Heb. 2:10), Saviour (Isa 60:16 Matt 1:21; Luke 2:11; Eph. 5:23; Titus 1:4; 3:6; 2 Pet 2:20), the I Am: (Exodus 3:14; John 8:58), King Eternal (1 Tim. 1:17), Lord of All (Acts 10:36), Resurrection And Life (John 11:25), Word of God (John 1:1, 1John 5:7-8; Rev 19:12-13), My

Lord and my God (John 20:28), God my Saviour (Luke 1:47); great God and Saviour” (Titus 2:13); etc.

Furthermore, the Word of God is a mystery. The Bible says unambiguously that Jesus is God when Paul writes:

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory (1 Timothy 3:16)

Again, the Bible teaches that Jesus is a Son of God, yet He is God: “But unto the Son *he saith*, Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness *is* the sceptre of thy kingdom” (Heb 1:8).

The Names and Titles of Jesus in the Bible

There are over 200 names and titles of Christ found in the Bible and each of these names carries profound significance. These names not only identify Him as a God but also reveal His nature, qualities, and relationship with humanity. Some of these names are listed below alphabetically with scriptural references.

1. Adam: (1 Corinthians 15:45)
2. Advocate: (1 John 2:1)
3. **Almighty (Rev. 1:8; Mt. 28:18)**
4. **Alpha And Omega: (Revelation 1:8; 22:13)**
5. Amen (Rev. 3:14)
6. Apostle Of Our Profession (Heb. 3:1)
7. Arm of The Lord: (Isaiah 51:9)
8. Atoning Sacrifice for Our Sins (1 John 2:2)
9. **Author And Finisher of Our Faith: (Hebrews 12:2)**
10. **Author And Perfecter of Our Faith (Heb. 12:2)**

11. **Author of Life (John 1:3)**
12. **Author of Salvation (Heb. 2:10)**
13. **Beginning and End (Rev. 22:13)**
14. **Beginning of Creation of God: (Revelation 3:14)**
15. Beloved Son: (Matthew 12:18)
16. Blessed And Only Potentate: (1 Timothy 6:15)
17. Blessed And Only Ruler (1 Tim. 6:15)
18. Branch: (Isaiah 4:2)
19. Bread Of God (John 6:33)
20. Bread Of Life (John 6:35; 6:48)
21. Bread Of Life: (John 6:35; 6:48)
22. Bridegroom: (Matthew 9:15)
23. Capstone (Acts 4:11; 1 Pet. 2:7)
24. Captain Of Salvation: (Hebrews 2:10)
25. Chief Cornerstone (Eph. 2:20)
26. Chief Cornerstone: (Ephesians 2:20)
27. Chief Shepherd (1 Pet. 5:4)
28. Christ (1 John 2:22)
29. Christ Of God: (Luke 9:20)
30. Consolation Of Israel: (Luke 2:25)
31. Cornerstone: (Psalm 118:22)
32. Counsellor: (Isaiah 9:6)
33. **Creator: (John 1:3)**
34. Dayspring: (Luke 1:78)
35. **Deliverer (Rom. 11:26)**
36. Desire of The Nations: (Haggai 2:7)
37. Door: (John 10:7)
38. Elect Of God: (Isaiah 42:1)
39. Emmanuel: (Matthew 1:23; Isaiah 9:6)
40. Eternal Life (1 John 1:2; 5:20)
41. **Everlasting Father (Isa. 9:6)**
42. Faith And True Witness (Rev. 3:14)
43. Faithful And True (Rev. 19:11)
44. Faithful Witness (Rev. 1:5)

45. **First And Last (Rev. 1:17; 2:8; 22:13)**
46. First Begotten: (Revelation 1:5)
47. Firstborn From the Dead (Col 1:18; Rev. 1:5)
48. Firstborn Over All Creation: (Col 1:15)
49. Forerunner: (Hebrews 6:20)
50. Gate (John 10:9)
51. Glory of the Lord: (Isaiah 40:5)
52. God (John 1:1; 20:28; Heb. 1:8; Rom. 9:5; 2 Pet. 1:1; 1 John 5:20; Etc.)
53. Good Shepherd (John 10:11,14)
54. Good Shepherd: (John 10:11,14)
55. Great God and Saviour” (Titus 2:13)
56. Great High Priest (Heb. 4:14)
57. Great Shepherd (Heb. 13:20)
58. Head of the Church (Eph. 1:22; 4:15; 5:23)
59. Head of the Church: (Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; 5:23)
60. Heir of All Things (Heb. 1:2)
61. High Priest (Heb. 2:17)
62. High Priest: (Hebrews 2:17)
63. Holy and True (Rev. 3:7)
64. **Holy One: (Acts 3:14; Psalm 16:10)**
65. Hope (1 Tim. 1:1)
66. Hope of Glory (Col. 1:27)
67. Horn of Salvation (Luke 1:69)
68. **I Am: (Exodus 3:14; John 8:58)**
69. **Image of God (2 Cor. 4:4; Col 1:15)**
70. **Jehovah: (Isaiah 26:4)**
71. Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:1, Mark 1:1, John 1:17)
72. Jesus of Nazareth: (Matthew 21:11)
73. Jesus: (Matthew 1:21)
74. Judge of Israel: (Micah 5:1)
75. Judge: (Acts 10:42; 2 Timothy 4:8)
76. **King Eternal (1 Tim. 1:17)**
77. King of Israel (John 1:49)
78. **King of Kings (1 Tim 6:15; Rev. 19:16)**

79. **King of Kings and Lord of Lords: (1 Timothy 6:15)**
80. King of Saints
81. King of The Ages (Rev. 15:3)
82. King of The Jews (Mt. 27:11)
83. King: (Zechariah 9:9)
84. Lamb (Rev. 13:8)
85. Lamb of God (John 1:29)
86. Lamb of God: (John 1:29)
87. **Lamb Without Blemish (1 Pet. 1:19)**
88. Last Adam (1 Cor. 15:45)
89. Lawgiver: (Isaiah 33:22)
90. Leader And Commander: (Isaiah 55:4)
91. **Life (John 14:6; Col. 3:4)**
92. Light of the World (John 8:12)
93. Light of the World: (John 8:12)
94. Lion of the Tribe Of Judah (Rev. 5:5)
95. Living One (Rev 1:18)
96. Living Stone (1 Pet. 2:4)
97. **Lord (2 Pet 2:20)**
98. Lord [yhwh] Our Righteousness (Jer. 23:6)
99. **Lord of All (Acts 10:36)**
100. Lord of Glory (1 Cor 2:8)
101. **Lord Of Lords (1 Tim 6:15; Rev 17:14; 19:16)**
102. **Man From Heaven (1 Cor. 15:47)**
103. Man Of Sorrows: (Isaiah 53:3)
104. Mediator of the New Covenant (Heb. 9:15)
105. Mediator: (1 Timothy 2:5)
106. Messenger of the Covenant: (Malachi 3:1)
107. Messiah: (Daniel 9:25; John 1:41)
108. **Mighty God: (Isaiah 9:6)**
109. **Mighty One: (Isaiah 60:16)**
110. Morning Star: (Revelation 22:16)
111. Nazarene: (Matthew 2:23)
112. Offspring Of David (Rev. 22:16)

- 113. Only Begotten Son of God (John 1:18; 1 John 4:9)
- 114. Our Great God and Savior (Titus 2:13)
- 115. Our Holiness (1 Cor. 1:30)
- 116. Our Husband (2 Cor. 11:2)
- 117. Our Passover: (1 Corinthians 5:7)
- 118. Our Protection (2 Thess. 3:3)
- 119. Our Redemption (1 Cor. 1:30)
- 120. Our Righteousness (1 Cor. 1:30)
- 121. Our Sacrificed Passover Lamb (1 Cor. 5:7)
- 122. Power Of God (1 Cor. 1:24)
- 123. Precious Cornerstone (1 Pet. 2:6)
- 124. Prince Of Kings: (Revelation 1:5)
- 125. Prince Of Life: (Acts 3:15)
- 126. Prince Of Peace (Isa. 9:6)
- 127. Prince Of Peace: (Isaiah 9:6)
- 128. Prophet (Acts 3:22)
- 129. Redeemer: (Job 19:25)
- 130. Resurrection And Life (John 11:25)
- 131. Revelation 19:16)
- 132. Righteous Branch (Jer. 23:5)
- 133. **Righteous One (Acts 7:52; 1 John 2:1)**
- 134. Rock (1 Cor. 10:4)
- 135. Rock: (1 Corinthians 10:4)
- 136. Root of David (Rev. 5:5; 22:16)
- 137. Rose of Sharon: (Song of Songs 2:1)
- 138. Ruler of God's Creation (Rev. 3:14)
- 139. Ruler of the Kings of The Earth (Rev. 1:5)
- 140. **Savior ()Matt 1:21; Luke 2:11;Eph. 5:23; Titus 1:4; 3:6; 2 Pet 2:20**
- 141. Seed of Woman: (Genesis 3:15)
- 142. Shepherd And Bishop of Souls: (1 Peter 2:25)
- 143. Shiloh: (Genesis 49:10)
- 144. Son of David (Lk. 18:39)
- 145. Son of God (Matthew 16:16, Mark 1:1, Luke 1:35; John 1:49; Heb. 4:14)
- 146. Son of Man (Matthew 8:20; Mark 2:10; Luke 19:10; John 5:27)

147. Son of the Blessed: (Mark 14:61)
148. Son of the Most High God (Lk. 1:32)
149. Source of Eternal Salvation For All Who Obey Him (Heb. 5:9)
150. Sun Of Righteousness: (Malachi 4:2)
151. **The Visible God (Image) of the invisible God (Col 1:15)**
152. The Just One: (Acts 7:52)
153. The One Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5)
154. The Stone the Builders Rejected (Acts 4:11)
155. True Bread (John 6:32)
156. True God: (1 John 5:20)
157. True Light (John 1:9)
158. True Vine (John 15:1)
159. True Vine: (John 15:1)
160. **Truth (John 1:14; 14:6)**
161. **Way (John 14:6)**
162. Way, Truth, Life: (John 14:6)
163. Wisdom Of God (1 Cor. 1:24)
164. Witness: (Isaiah 55:4)
165. Wonderful Counsellor (Isa. 9:6)
166. **Word of God (John 1:1, 1John 5:7-8; Rev 19:12-13)**
167. Word Of Life: (1 John 1:1)

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF JESUS' DIVINITY IN BOTH THE QUR'AN AND THE BIBLE

Jesus' true identity as a deity or divinity can be examined and established through His conception, Virgin Birth, and names, which the Bible and the Qur'an attest to. The Virgin Birth of Jesus and the concept of His Name ("The Word of God" and "The Spirit of God") are the main thrust of the discussion here to establish the veracity of Jesus' true identity as God incarnate as entrenched and attested to by the Qur'an and the Bible.

The Qur'anic and Biblical Conception of the Virginal Conception and Birth of Jesus

The true identity of Jesus Christ can be mirrored through His virgin conception and birth. Jesus was conceived miraculously in the womb of the virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit without any sexual intercourse. This is called virginal conception of Jesus which led to His virginal birth by which the eternal Son of God through the Word of God by the power of the Spirit of God became incarnate as fully human and consubstantial with God. He was born of Mary with a true body and a reasonable soul. The virgin birth also is the means by which Jesus was born holy, sinless, and righteous. This miraculous conception and birth distinguish Jesus Christ from all other children born naturally since the days of Adam hitherto. Indeed, Jesus was not represented by Adam when the first man sinned, and is therefore not “in Adam.” Instead, Jesus is the head of new creation⁹. Both the Bible and the Qur’an agree that Jesus Christ was born by the virgin Mary (Maryam) through the power of the Holy Spirit and without having sexual intercourse with any man. Without any controversy, the theological construct of the Christian and Islamic doctrines as regards the Virgin Conception and Birth of Jesus are in perfect agreement. The Virgin conception and birth without sexual intercourse till the day of birth is what this author refers to *Absolute virginal birth*. If there is a woman who has virginal conception but has sexual intercourse thereafter before birth, this can be called *Inabsolute virginal birth*. Thus, this author uses *Absolute virginal birth* in this paper because Mary, the mother of Jesus, did not have any sexual intercourse with any man, including Joseph her husband, after her conception till the day Jesus Christ was born.

The Standpoints of the Qur’an

The picture of Jesus we find in the Qur’an at first glance agrees with the Bible as to His conception and final emergence into this sinful world. The two Scriptures (the Bible and the Qur’an) under microscopic search confirm unambiguously that Jesus is born of a virgin Mary (Maryam in Qur’an) – Surah An-Anbiyaa 21:91 “And (remember) her who guarded her chastity: We breathed into her of our Spirit and We made her and her son a Sign for all peoples.”¹⁰ The attestation of Qur’an about the virginal conception and birth of Jesus, the God incarnate is clearly stated by the Qur’an. In Surah Al-i-Imran, the Qur’an says:

⁹<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/essay/virgin-birth-jesus-christ/>

¹⁰ https://www.debate.org.uk/debate-topics/theological/islam_christ/

⁴⁵ (Remember) when the angels said: "O Maryam (Mary)! Verily, Allâh gives you the glad tidings of a Word ["Be!" - and he was! i.e. 'Iesa (Jesus) the son of Maryam (Mary)] from Him, his name will be the Messiah 'Iesa (Jesus), the son of Maryam (Mary), held in honour in this world and in the Hereafter, and will be one of those who are near to Allâh." ⁴⁶ "He will speak to the people in the cradle and in manhood, and he will be one of the righteous." ⁴⁷ She said: "O my Lord! How shall I have a son when no man has touched me." He said: "So (it will be) for Allâh creates what He wills. When He has decreed something, He says to it only: "Be!" and it is. (Noble Qur'an 3:45-47)

Surah Maryam affirms the Virgin Birth of Jesus:

¹⁶And mention in the Book (the Qur'ân, O Muhammad SAW, the story of) Maryam (Mary), when she withdrew in seclusion from her family to a place facing east. ¹⁷She placed a screen (to screen herself) from them; then We sent to her Our *Ruh* [angel Jibrael (Gabriel)], and he appeared before her in the form of a man in all respects. ¹⁸ She said: "Verily! I seek refuge with the Most Beneficent (Allâh) from you, if you do fear Allâh." ¹⁹ (The angel) said: "I am only a Messenger from your Lord, (to announce) to you the gift of a righteous son." ²⁰ She said: "How can I have a son, when no man has touched me, nor am I unchaste?" ²¹ He said: "So (it will be), your Lord said: 'That is easy for Me (Allâh): And (We wish) to appoint him as a sign to mankind and a mercy from Us (Allâh), and it is a matter (already) decreed, (by Allâh).' " ²² So she conceived him, and she withdrew with him to a far place (i.e. Bethlehem valley about 4-6 miles from Jerusalem) (Noble Qur'an 19:16-22)

The An-Anbiyaa's incontrovertible verity of Jesus' conception of a virgin Mary through the power of the Holy Spirit is a clear testimony to the true identity of Jesus Christ as God incarnate:

And (remember) she who guarded her chastity [Virgin Maryam (Mary)], We breathed into (the sleeves of) her (shirt or garment) [through Our *Rûh* Jibrael (Gabriel)], and We made her and her son ['Iesa (Jesus)] a sign for *Al-'Alamin* (the mankind and jinns) (Noble Qur'an 21:91)

Unarguably, At-Tahrim affirms Jesus' Virgin Birth:

And Maryam (Mary), the daughter of 'Imrân who guarded her chastity; and We breathed into (the sleeve of her shirt or her garment) through Our *Rûh* [i.e. Jibrael (Gabriel)], and she testified to the truth of the Words of her Lord [i.e. believed in the Words of Allâh: "Be!" and he was; that is 'Iesa (Jesus) son of Maryam (Mary); as a Messenger of Allâh], and (also believed in) His Scriptures, and she was of the *Qanitîn* (i.e. obedient to Allâh).

Yusuf Ali's position on Surah 66:12 is here stated:

...As a virgin she gave birth to Jesus: xix. 16-29. In xxxii. 9, it is said of Adam's progeny, man, that Allah 'fashioned him in due proportion, and breathed into him something of His spirit'. In xv. 29, similar words are used with reference to Adam. The virgin birth should not therefore be supposed to imply that Allah was the father of Jesus in the sense in which Greek mythology makes Zeus the father of Apollo by Latona or of Minos by Europa. And yet that is the doctrine to which the Christian idea of 'the only begotten Son of God' leads.¹¹

The Standpoints of the Bible

The Bible paints a very clearer picture on the virginal conception and birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Matthew and Luke reported in their books that Jesus was born by virgin Mary who knew no man sexually but conceived God by the power of the Holy Ghost. Matthew's and Luke's accounts are very plain and straightforward they are fulfilments of the prophecy in [Isaiah 7:14](#) "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." The word "Emmanuel" or "Immanuel" means "God with us". In other words, God became man in Jesus to dwell with us – His people. This virginal conception and birth is an unheard-of happening in the course of human history and such will never repeat in the course of human existence on earth. Although God has the exclusive repository power, it is the first and the last happening that would ever happen in the history of human existence. This is what this author calls *supernatural virginal conception closure* or *supernatural virginal birth closure* (virginal conception or birth has come to an end, no such miraculous happening can take place again on this planet earth). Here are the Biblical standpoints on the virginal conception and birth of Jesus Christ:

¹¹ Ibid. https://www.debate.org.uk/debate-topics/theological/islam_christ/

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. ¹⁹ Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. ²⁰ But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. ²¹ And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. ²² Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, ²³ Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. ²⁴ Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: ²⁵ And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS (Matt 1:18–25)

²⁶ And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, ²⁷ To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name *was* Mary. ²⁸ And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, *thou that art* highly favoured, the Lord *is* with thee: blessed *art* thou among women. ²⁹ And when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. ³⁰ And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. ³¹ And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. ³² He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: ³³ And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. ³⁴ Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? ³⁵ And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. ³⁶ And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. ³⁷ For with God nothing shall be impossible. ³⁸ And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of

the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her
(Luke 1:26–38)

The Qur’nic and Biblical Concept of the Names of Jesus (the Word of God and the Spirit of God)

God is a name Giver. In Genesis 1, He gave names to all the things He created including the first man, Adam. God made the first man, named him Adam (which means “earth”). He made other living creatures and gave Adam power to name them (Gen 2: 19-23). This shows that God attaches much importance to names. Names are more than a bunch of letters grouped together to sound pleasant to the ear. Our names are an incredibly important part of our identity. They have significance. They have power. They define us. Names of Jesus signify all He is and stands for, His nature, His character, His will, and His authority.

Kalimatullah (The Word of God) is one of the names or title of Jesus in the Bible and Qur’an. This name is used in the Qur'an to emphasise Jesus's divine nature and connection (e.g., 3:45, 4:171). It signifies that Jesus was created by God's command (spoken Word), without a father but Son of Mary. Qur’an acknowledges the special status of Jesus and holds Him in high esteem. He is not just a Messiah from God; He is the Word of God. Surah 3:45 says:

When the angels said: "O Maryam (Mary)! Verily, Allâh gives you the glad tidings of a Word (Jesus), the son of Maryam (Mary)] from Him, his name will be the Messiah 'Iesa (Jesus), the son of Maryam (Mary), held in honour in this world and in the Hereafter, and will be one of those who are near to Allâh (emphasis mine).

According to this verse, Jesus (the Word) is “near to Allah” (God). This verse is saying the same thing with what John says: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” (1:1) (emphasis mine). In English, we typically understand the preposition “*with*” to mean “near” or “beside.” But the original Greek term expresses a living, active union in the closest, most intimate sense.¹² In other word, Qur’an agrees with the Bible that Jesus is God.

¹² <https://www.gotquestions.org/the-Word-was-with-God.html>

Surah 4:171 emphasises further that:

O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Do not exceed the limits in your religion, nor say of Allâh aught but the truth. The Messiah 'Iesa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), was (no more than) a Messenger of Allâh and His Word, which He bestowed on Maryam (Mary) and a spirit (*Rûh*) created by Him; so believe in Allâh and His Messengers. Say not: "Three (trinity)!" Cease! (it is) better for you. For Allâh is (the only) One *Ilâh* (God), Glory be to Him (Far Exalted is He) above having a son. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. And Allâh is All Sufficient as a Disposer of affairs.

The above verses suggest that Jesus is a "word from God," implying that he is a direct manifestation of God's will and message. The term "word" (*kalima*) is often used in the Qur'an to refer to God's revelation or divine decree. In these verses, Jesus is the "Word" that God "conveyed" to Mary. This suggests that Jesus was not merely a human being but also a divine manifestation. The Hebrews often referred to God in terms of His powerful word (Ps 33:6; 107:20). Not only is Christ the image of the invisible God (2Cor 4:4; Col 1:15), but He and the Father are one nature and essence, coexisted and coequal (John 10:30). What is more, when Jesus said, "Before Abraham was born, I am!" (John 8:58). Here, Jesus was claiming to be God. There was no doubt among the Jewish people that these words spoken by Jesus were a declaration of deity. Hence, they reacted by picking up stone to cast at Him. it was believed that Jesus had blasphemed according to Mosaic Law (Lev 24:16).¹³

Ruhullah (The Spirit of God): This title highlights Jesus's connection to God. It implies that Jesus is God. This is because the Bible says God is a Spirit (John 4:24) and Qur'an says Jesus is a Spirit of God (Q 2:87; 4:171). This implies that Jesus is God. The Spirit of God is the Holy Spirit in the Bible and the Holy Spirit is called by a number of different titles. They include the "Spirit of Jesus Christ" and the "Spirit of Jesus." (Acts 16:7; Rom 8:9; Gal 4:6; Phil 1:19). The Holy Spirit was sent by Jesus and is under the authority of Jesus (Luke 24:49; John 20:22; Acts 2:33); The Holy Spirit is sent to man in the name of Jesus and only speaks of Him (John 14:26; 15:26-27; 16:12, 13); and the Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus (John 16: 14, 15). The theological analysis is that: God is a Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, and Jesus is the Spirit

¹³ Ibid.

of God therefore, Jesus is God. The Bible speaks unequivocally about this: "For there are Three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these Three are one." (1 John 5:7); "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." (1 Timothy 3:16).

If Jesus is the Word and Spirit of God in both the Bible and Qur'an, both Scriptures agree that Jesus is God. The Bible is very explicit in its position while the Qur'an is very implicit in its stance. However, the implicitness of Qur'an has been theologically explicated to dig out obscured meanings of some texts and the explicitness of the Bible has been theologically embellished and expounded for a better understanding in this paper.

CONCLUSION

This research paper has comparatively examined the biblical and qur'anic positions on the veracity of Jesus' identity through the lens of His Conception, Virgin Birth, and Names (CBN) to provide an answer to the question, *Who is Jesus?* The study established that both the Bible and the Qur'an agreed that the mother of Jesus had no carnal knowledge of (no sexual intercourse with) any man when she conceived and gave birth to Jesus – it was providentially miraculous. The theophany through the Theotokos that produces Jesus Christ is unprecedented in the annals of human existence. This is what this author calls *supernatural virginal conception closure* or *supernatural virginal birth closure* (that is, virginal conception or birth has come to an end, no such miraculous happening can take place again on the earth). This makes Christology a theological relevance. Furthermore, the concept of Jesus' Name ("The Word of God" and "The Spirit of God") found in both Holy Books is an authentic testimony to the verity or veracity of Jesus' true identity as God incarnate. The claim by the Qur'an that Jesus is the Word of God (Kalimatullah) in Surah Al-Imran 3:45; Surah An-Nisa 4:171 and the Spirit of God (Ruhullah) in Surah An-Nisa 4:171 is in agreement with the biblical claim that Jesus is the Word (of God) that became flesh to live among men (John 1:1,14; cf. 1John 5:7-8; Rev 19:12-13). "The Word" is what the Bible explicitly calls "God" who created all things (John 1:1-3; Col 1:15-17). The Bible crescendoed Jesus' deity or divinity. Jesus claims unequivocally that "...I am the Way, the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father except

through me” (John 14:6). This is God incarnate speaking a mystery of sonship-and-fatherhood relationship. Only God can say “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life”. Jesus is, therefore, nothing but God.

About The Author



Pastor Dele Alaba Ilesanmi (B.Ed., PGDE, PGDTh., PDGM., M.A., and Ph.D.) has been a lecturer at the Redeemed Christian Bible College (Satellite Campuses) for over 15 years now and an Associate Research Professor at Testament Theological Seminary with expertise in Biblical Christian Education and Biblical Research. His academic interest is primarily in the fields of Biblical Christian Educational Theories, such as Theogogy, Pneumagogy, Christogogy, Bibliogogy, Homeogogy, etc., Biblical Christian Education, Biblical Research and Theory (the fields he is currently pioneering), Christian Education, and Theology. As of 2023, he has over 80 publications to his credit, including nine books and Christian research articles published in different reputable and registered journals and websites. He is the Chair of the Centre for Biblical Research and Theological Education (CENBRATED), now the Centre for Training, Research, and Development (CTRD), Dean of the School of Christian Education at Testament Theological Seminary, and an editor of three peer-reviewed journals: the African Journal of Kingdom Education (AJoke), the Mature Journal of the International Institute of Christian Theologians, Scholars, and Professionals (MJIITSP), and the ChristoPress Journal of Biblical Research (CJBR). Ilesanmi is also one of the International Reviewers with the Academic Business of Current Data (ABCD) Index. He serves as the President and CEO of ChristoPress Biblical Research Centre (CBRC), an online-based research institute. He is married and the marriage is gloriously blessed. To connect with this author: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4874-0759>; pstdeleilesanmi3@gmail.com; +234-08062197040

REFERENCES

Kolawole, Oladotun P. “A Reflection on the Islamic Portrait of Jesus”, *Pharos Journal of Theology* ISSN 2414-3324 online Volume 103, 2022.

Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary, is hereafter referred to as “HIBD”, p.899.

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/essay/virgin-birth-jesus-christ/>.

https://www.debate.org.uk/debate-topics/theological/islam_christ/

<https://www.gotquestions.org/the-Word-was-with-God.html>

Ilesanmi, Dele A. “Jesus’ Birth: The Impact of His Sonship and Divinityship on Humanity” in *Mature: Journal of International Institute of Christian Theologians, Scholars, and Professionals*, 2023. E-ISSN: 3027-1525 <https://mature.ictsp.org/>

Ilesanmi, Dele A. “Jesus' Birth (1): Demystifying and Demythologizing the Great Mystery of a Great God” in *ChristoPress Magazine*, 2023

Muehlhauser, L. “2013 in Review: Strategic and Expository Research”. 2014. <http://intelligence.org/2014/02/08/2013-in-review-strategic-and-expository-research/>

Ottuh, John A. “The Place of Biblical Research in Pastoral Ministry” in *International Journal of Theology and Reformed Tradition*, Published by Society for Research and Academic Excellence, University of Nigeria, 2014.

Parrinder Geoffrey. “Jesus in Quran”. London: Oxford One World Publication, 33, 1965.

Udo, M.E. "Effects of Problem-Solving, Guided-Discovery and Expository Teaching Strategies on Students' Performance in Redox Reactions", 2011. *African Research Review* 5 (4): 231-241.