

# **Was Christ Crucified?**

## **THE DEBATE**

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## **Ahmed Deedat** *Opening Arguments*

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen. On the subject of crucifixion, the Muslim is told in no uncertain terms, in the Holy Qur'an, the last and final revelation of God, that they didn't kill Him, nor did they crucify Him. But it was made to appear to them so. And those who dispute therein, are full of doubts. They have no certain knowledge; they only follow conjecture, guesswork. For of a surety, they killed Him not.

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen. Could anyone have been more explicit, more dogmatic, more uncompromising, in stating a belief than this? The only one who was entitled to say such words is the all-knowing, omniscient Lord of the universe.

The Muslim believes this authoritative statement as the veritable Word of God. And as such, he asks no questions, and he demands no proof. He says, "There are the words of my Lord; I believe, and I affirm." But the Christian responds in the words of our honorable guest. In his book, Josh McDowell with Don Stewart in "Answers to tough Questions" on pages 116 and 117, states the Christian's attitude toward this uncompromising statement of the Muslim. He says, "A major problem with accepting Mohammed's account is that his testimony is 600 years after the event occurred, while the New Testament contains eyewitness, or first hand, testimony of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ."

In a nutshell, the Christian asks how can a man a thousand miles away from the scene of the happening of the crucifixion and 600 years in time away from the happening know what happened in Jerusalem? The Muslim responds that these are the words of God Almighty. And therefore, as such, God knew what had happened. The Christian naturally reasons that, had he accepted this book, the Qur'an, as the Word of God, there would have been no dispute between us. We would all have been Muslims!

We have eyewitness and earwitness accounts of these happenings which are stated for us in the Holy Bible, more especially in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Now, the implication of this crucifixion is this: it is alleged that Jesus Christ was murdered by the Jews by means of crucifixion 2,000 years ago, And as such, the Jews are guilty of the murder of Jesus Christ. We Muslims are told that they are innocent because Christ was not killed, nor was He crucified, And as such, I am given the [mandate] by the Holy Qur'an to defend the Jews against the Christian charge. I'm going to defend the Jews this afternoon, not because they are my cousins, but simply because justice must be done. We have our points of difference with the Jews - that is a different question altogether. This afternoon, I will try my very best to do justice to my cousins, the Jews.

Now, in this argument, this debate, this dialogue, I am actually the defense counsel for the Jews, and Josh McDowell is the prosecuting counsel. And you, ladies and gentlemen, are the ladies and gentlemen of the jury. I want you to sit back, relax and at the end of this, give judgment to yourself, to your own conscience whether the Jews are guilty or not of the charge as alleged by the Christians.

Now, to get to the point, as the defense counsel for the Jews, I could have had this case against the Jews dismissed in just two minutes - in any court of law, in any civilized country in the world, simply by demanding from the prosecuting counsel the testimonies of these witnesses, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, And when they are presented, in the form of sworn affidavits, as we have them in the gospels, I could say that, in their original, they are not attested. And the proof - you get any authorized King James Version of the Bible, and you'll find each and every affidavit begins: "The Gospel according to St. Matthew, the Gospel according to St. Mark, the Gospel according to St. Luke, the Gospel according to St. John." I'm asking, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, what is this "according ... according ... according"? Do you know what it means? It means Matthew, Mark, Luke and John didn't sign their names. It is only assumed that these are their work. And as such, in any court of law, in any civilized country, they would be thrown out of court in just two minutes.

Not only that, I can have this case dismissed TWICE in two minutes in any court of law in any civilized country. I said twice because one of the testators in the Gospel of St. Mark, chapter 14, verse 50, tells us that at the most critical juncture in the life of Jesus, all His disciples forsook Him, and fled. ALL. If they were not there, the testimony of those who were not there to witness what happened will be thrown out of court. I said, twice in two minutes, in just 120 seconds flat, the case would be over. In any court of law. in any civilized country in the world.

But where is the fun of it? You have come a long way from far and wide, after all the threatening rains. And now, if we say the case is closed and go home, where is the fun of it? To entertain you, I will accept those documents as valid, for the sake of this dialogue, and we are now going to put these witnesses into the box for cross- examination. And I want you to see where the truth lies.

The first witness that I'm going to call, happens to be St. Luke. And St. Luke has been described by Christian authorities as one of the greatest historians. As a historical book, the Gospel of St. Luke is unique. Now, we get St. Luke. chapter 24. verse 36. I'm going to tell you what he has said - what he has written in black and white. He tells us that it was Sunday evening, the first day of the week, when Jesus Christ walked into that upper room, the one in which He had the Last Supper with His disciples. This is three days after His alleged crucifixion. He goes in, and He wishes His disciples, "Peace be unto you." And when He said, "Peace be unto you," His disciples were terrified. Is that true? We're asking you. I would like to ask Him, why were the disciples terrified? Because when one meets his long-lost master, his grandfather, his guru, his Rabbi - we Eastern people embrace one another; we kiss one another. Why should His disciples be terrified? So Luke tells us they were frightened, because they thought He was a spirit.

I'm only quoting what he said. And you can verify in your own Bible at home. They were frightened, they were terrified because they thought He was a spirit. I'm asking Luke, did He look like a spirit? And he says no. I'm asking all the Christians of the world again and again, of every church and denomination, this master of yours, did He look like a spirit?

And they all say no. Then I say, why should they think that man is a spirit when He didn't look like one?

And everyone is puzzled - unless Josh can explain. Every Christian is puzzled. Why should they think the man is a spirit when He didn't look like one? I will tell you. The reason is because the disciples of Jesus had heard from hearsay that the Master was hanged on the cross. They had heard, from hearsay, that He had given up the ghost. In other words. His spirit had come out: He had died. They had heard from hearsay that He was dead and buried for three days. All their knowledge was from hearsay, because as I said at the beginning (Mark, chapter 14, verse 50), your other witness says that at the most critical juncture in the life of Jesus all His disciples forsook Him and fled. All! They were not there.

So, all the knowledge being from hearsay, you come across a person who you heard was dead for three days. You assume that He's stinking in His grave. When you see such a person. naturally, you're terrified. So Jesus wants to assure them that He's not what they're thinking. They are thinking that He has come back from the dead. A resurrected, spiritualized body, so He says - I am only quoting what Luke says - He says, "Behold My hands and My feet." Have a look at My hands and My feet, that it is I, Myself. I am the same fellow, man, what's wrong with you? Why are you afraid? He says, "Handle Me and see. Handle Me and see. For a spirit has no flesh and bones, as you see me have."

A spirit: indefinite article "a." A spirit, any spirit, has no flesh and bones, as you see me have. So, if I have flesh and bones, I'm not a spirit: I'm not a ghost: I'm not a spook. I am asking the English man - the one who speaks English as his mother tongue - since I have flesh and bones. I'm not a spirit: I'm not a ghost: I'm not a spook. I say. is that what it means in your language?

I say, you Afrikaner, when a man tells you that, does it mean that he's not what you are thinking? That is, he is not a spirit, he is not a ghost, he is not a spook. And everybody responds "yes." If a man tells you a spirit has no flesh and bones, it means it has no flesh and bones. As you see, I have these things, so I'm not what you're thinking. You are thinking that I was dead, and I have come back from the dead and am resurrected. If a spirit has no flesh and bones, in other words, he's telling you that the body you are seeing is not a metamorphosed body. It is not a translated body; it is not a resurrected body. Because a resurrected body gets spiritualized.

Who says so? My authority is Jesus. You say, "Where?" I say Luke, you look again - chapter 20 in verse 36. What does he say? You see, the Jews were always coming to Him with riddles; they were always asking Him, "Master, shall we pay tribute to Caesar or not? Master, this woman, we found her in the act. What shall we do to her? Master ..." Again and again. Now, they come to Him and they ask Him, it says. "Master," Rabbi in the Hebrew language, "Master, we had a woman among us, and this woman according to a Jewish custom, had seven husbands." You see, according to a Jewish custom, if a brother of a man dies and leaves no offspring. then the man takes his brother's wife to be

his own wife. And when he fails the third brother does likewise, and the fourth and the fifth and the sixth, and the seventh.

Seven brothers had this woman as a wife. but there was no problem while on this earth because it was all one by one. Now, they want to know from Him that at the resurrection, in the hereafter, which one is going to have her, because they all had her here. In other words, there will be a war in heaven, because we believe that we will all be resurrected simultaneously. All together. at one time. And these seven brothers wake up at the same time. and they see this woman and every one would say, "My wife! My wife!" and there would be a war in heaven between the brothers for this one woman.

So they want to know from Him which one is going to have her on the other side. Luke. chapter 20, verse 36. Check it out. In answer to that. Jesus said about these resurrected men and women, "Neither shall they die anymore." In other words, "Once they are resurrected, they will be immortalized." This is a mortal body. It needs food, shelter, clothing, sex, rest. Without these things mankind perishes. That body will be an immortalized body. An immortal body, no food, no shelter, no clothing, no sex, no rest. He says neither shall they die anymore. For they are equal unto the angels.

In other words, they will be angel-ized. They will be spiritualized; they will be spiritual creatures; they will be spirits! For they are equal unto angels and the children of God. Such are the children of the resurrection - spirit! He said "A spirit has no flesh and bones, as you see Me have." In other words, "I'm not resurrected." And they believed not for joy and wonders - Luke 24 again. What happened then?

We thought the man was already dead, perhaps stinking in His grave. And they believed not for joy - overjoy - and they wonder what happened? So He says, "Have you any broiled fish and a honeycomb here, meat - something to eat?" And they gave Him a piece of bread and He took it and ate it in their very sight. To prove what? I'm asking ladies and gentlemen of the jury, what was He trying to demonstrate? What? "I am the same fellow, man; I am not what you are thinking, I have not come back from the dead."

This was Sunday evening after the alleged crucifixion.

Let's go back. What happened in the morning? Your other witness, John, chapter 20, verse 1, tells us that it was Sunday morning, the first day of the week, when Mary Magdalene went to the tomb of Jesus. I'm asking John, why did she go there? Or, let's put another of your witnesses on the stand, Mark, chapter 16, verse 1. Mark, tell us - why did Mary go there? And Mark tells us, "She went to anoint Him." Now, the Hebrew word for anoint is 'massahah' from which we get the word messiah in Hebrew and masih in Arabic. The root word for both Arabic and Hebrew is the same. Massahah means to rub, to massage, to anoint.

I'm asking, do Jews massage dead bodies after three days? And the answer is no. I say to you Christians, do you massage dead bodies after three days? Do you? The answer is no. We Muslims are the closest to the Jew in our ceremony of law. Do Muslims massage

dead bodies after three days? The answer is no. Then why would they want to go and massage a dead, rotten body after three days? Within three hours, you know that rigor mortis sets in, the hardening of the cells, the rotting of the body, fermentation from within. In three days' time the body is rotten from inside. Such a rotting body when you massage it falls to pieces.

Why would she want to go and massage a dead, rotten body unless she was looking for a live person? You see, according to your witnesses, from only reading, she must have seen signs of life in the limp body as it was being taken down from the cross. She was about the only woman who, with Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, had given the final rites to the body of Jesus. All his other disciples had forsaken Him and fled. They were not there. So if this woman had seen signs of life, she was not going to shout, "There, He's alive! He's alive!" - to invite a sure death.

Three days later, she goes in, and she wants to anoint Him. And when she reaches the sepulchre, she finds that the stone is removed. The winding sheets are inside. So, she starts to cry. I'm asking, why was the stone removed and why were the winding sheets unwound? Because for a resurrected body you won't have to remove the stone to come out. For the resurrected body, you don't have to unwind the winding sheets to move. This is the need of this physical body. This mortal body. Because a poet tells us, "The stone walls do not a prison make nor iron bars a cage," For the soul, for the spirit, these things do not matter. Iron bars or walls. It's the need of His physical body. Jesus Christ, according to the Scriptures, was watching her from wherever He was, not from heaven, but from this earth.

Because this tomb, if you remember, was privately owned property belonging to Joseph of Arimathea. This very rich, influential disciple had carved out of a rock a big, roomy chamber. Around that chamber was his vegetable garden. Now, don't tell me that this Jew was so generous that he was planting vegetables five miles out of town for other people's sheep and goats to graze upon.

Surely he must have bought his laborers quarters. Or for people who looked after his garden, or perhaps his country home where he went with his family for holidays, on the weekends.

Jesus is there and He watches this woman. He knows who she is and He knows why she's there. And He goes up to her. He finds her crying. So He says, "Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?" I'm asking, doesn't He know? Doesn't He know? Why does He ask such a silly question? I'm telling you, this is not a silly question. He's actually pulling her leg, metaphorically. She, supposing Him to be the gardener - I'm only reading you evidence as it is given. She supposed Him to be the gardener - I am asking, why does she suppose He's a gardener? Do resurrected bodies look like gardeners? Do they? I say, why does she suppose He's a gardener? I'm telling you, because He's disguised as a gardener. Why is He disguised as a gardener? I say, because He's afraid of the Jews. Why is He afraid of the Jews? I say, because He didn't die. And He didn't conquer death. If He had died, and if He had conquered death, there's no need to be afraid anymore. Why not?

Because the resurrected body can't die twice. Who says so? I say the Bible. What does it say? It says it is ordained unto all men, once to die, and after that, the judgment. You can't die twice.

So, if He had conquered death, there would be no need to be afraid. He's afraid, because He didn't die, So she, supposing Him to be the gardener, says, "Sir, if you have taken Him hence, tell me where have you laid Him to rest?" To relax, to recuperate, not where have you buried Him. "So that I might take him away." I alone - one woman a frail Jewess. Imagine her carrying away a corpse of 160 pounds, at least, not 200 like me. A muscular carpenter supposed to be a young man in the prime of His life, at least 160 pounds. And another 100 pounds' worth of medicines around Him, John, chapter 19, verse 9. That makes Him 260.

Can you imagine this frail Jewess carrying this bundle of a corpse over 260 pounds, like a bundle of straw, like a super-woman in the American comics? And take Him where? Take Him home? Put Him under a bed - what does she want to do with Him? Does she want to pickle Him? What does she want to do with a rotting body. I ask you?

So Jesus - the joke has gone too far - says, "Mary..." The way He said "Mary," she recognized that this was Jesus. So, she wants to grab Him. I'm asking why. To bite Him? No! To pay respect. We Eastern people do that. She wants to grab Him. So Jesus says, "Touch Me not," I say, why not? Is He a bundle of electricity, a dynamo, that if she touches Him she will get electrocuted? Tell me, why not? I say because it hurts, You give me another reason why not, "Touch Me not for I am not yet ascended unto My Father." Is she blind? Can't she see the man is standing there beside her? What does He mean by "I'm not gone up" when He is here? He said, "I am not yet ascended unto My Father." In the language of the Jew, in the idiom of the Jew. He's saying, "I am not dead yet."

The problem arises: who moved the stone? How could she get to Him; who moved the stone? And the Christians are writing books upon books. One is Frank Morrison, a rationalist lawyer, He writes a book of 192 pages and he gives six hypotheses, At the end of the 192 pages, when you are finished, you still haven't got the answer. Who moved the stone? And they're writing books upon books: who moved the stone? I can't understand why you can't see the very obvious. Why don't you read your books: These gospels, you have it in black and white in your own mother tongue. This is an anomaly that you read this book in your own mother tongue.

The Englishman in English, the Afrikaner in Afrikaans the Zulu in Zulu. Every language group has got the book in their own language. And each and every one is made to understand the exact opposite of what he is reading. Exact opposite. Not just merely misunderstanding.

I want you to prove me wrong. I'm telling you ... I'm only quoting word for word exactly as your witnesses have said it. Preserved it for us in black and white. I'm not attributing motives to them. I'm not saying that they are dishonest witnesses. I'm telling you. Please read this book of yours once more. Remove the blinders, and read it again. And tell me

where I'm not understanding your language. You Englishmen, or you Afrikaners, you Zulu. You come back to me and if you feel that at the end of the talk. our honored visitor has not done justice to the subject, you call me - to your Kingdom Halls or to your school hall or anywhere you want to discuss it further with me. I am prepared to come.

Who moved the stone? I'm asking. It's very simple - they're talking about 20 men required. It is so huge, it needed a superman from America to move it. One and a half to two tons. I'm telling you, please read Mark and Matthew and he tells you that Joseph of Arimathea alone, put the stone into place. One man - alone. One man! If one man can put it into place, why can't two persons remove it, I ask you?

Now, all those happenings - you know that this was prophesied. It was ordained. And all the stories about what happened afterward - I'm telling you that Jesus Christ had given you a clear cut indication of what was going to happen. And that's also preserved in black and white in your testimony in the Gospel of St. Matthew, another of your witnesses, chapter 12. verses 38. 39 and 40. The Jews come again to Jesus. with a new request.

Now they say. "Master, we would have a sign of Thee." We want You to show a miracle to convince us that You are the Messiah we are waiting for. You know, something supernatural like walking on the water, or flying in the air like a bird. Do something, man, then we will be convinced that You are a man of God, the Messiah we are waiting for.

So Jesus answers them. He says, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign. But there shall be no sign given unto it, except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the belly of the earth." The only sign He was prepared to give them was the sign of Jonah. He has put all his eggs in one basket. He didn't say, "You know blind Bartimaeus, I healed him. You know that woman with issues who had been bleeding for years. She touched Me and she was healed. You know, I fed five thousand people with a few pieces of fish and a few pieces of bread. You see that fig tree. I dried it up from its very roots." Nothing of the kind. "This is the only sign I will give you, the sign of Jonah." I'm asking, what was that sign?

Well, go to the book of Jonah. I brought the book of Jonah for you - one page by God - it is only one page in the whole Bible. This is the book of Jonah. Four short chapters. It won't take you two minutes to read it. It's hard to find the book because, in a thousand pages, to find one page is difficult. But, you don't have to go there. If you went to Sunday school. you will remember what I'm telling you. I'm telling you that Jonah was sent to the Ninevites. You know, God Almighty told him, "Go to Nineveh," a city of 100,000 people. He was to warn them that they must repent in sack-cloth and ashes; they must humble themselves before the Lord. Jonah was despondent because these materialistic people -worldly people - "They will not listen to me. They will make a mockery of what I have to tell them." So instead of going to Nineveh, he goes to Joppa. That's what this one-page book tells you. He went to Joppa and was taken aboard a ship - he was going to Tarshish. You don't have to remember the names.



On the way, there's a storm. And according to the superstitions of these people, anyone who runs away from his master's command, who fails to do his duty, creates a turmoil at sea. So, they begin to question in the boat, who could be responsible for this storm. Jonah realizes that as a prophet of God, he is a soldier of God. And as a soldier of God, he has no right to do things presumptuously on his own. So he says, "Look, I am the guilty party. God Almighty is after my blood. He wants to kill me, so in the process He's sinking the boat, and you innocent people will die. It will be better for you if you take me and you throw me overboard. Because God is really after my blood."

They say, "No, man, you know, you are such a good man. Perhaps you want to commit suicide. We won't help you to do that. We have a system of our own of discovering right from wrong," and that is what they call casting lots. Like heads or tails. So, according to the system of casting lots, Jonah was found to be the guilty man. And so they took him, and they threw him overboard.

Now I'm going to ask you a question. When they threw him overboard. was he dead or was he alive? Now, before you answer. I want you to bear in mind that Jonah had volunteered. He said, "Throw me." And when a man volunteers, you don't have to strangle him before throwing, you don't have to spear him before throwing, you don't have to break his arm or limb before throwing. You agree with me?

The man had volunteered. So when they threw him overboard, what does your common sense say? Was he dead or was he alive? Please, I want your help. Was he dead or was he alive? Alive. You get no prize for that - it was too simple a question. And - astonishingly the Jews say that he was alive, the Christians say he was alive and the Muslims say he was alive. How much nicer it would be if we would agree on every other thing.

We all agree that he was alive when he was thrown into that raging sea. And the storm subsided. Perhaps it was a coincidence. A fish comes and gobbles him. Dead or alive? Was he dead or was he alive? Alive? Thank you very much.

From the fish's belly, according to the book of Jonah, he cries to God for help. Do dead men pray? Do they pray? Dead people, do they pray? No! So he was alive. Three days and three nights the fish takes him around the ocean. Dead or alive? Alive. On the third day, walking on the seashore, I'm asking - dead or alive? Alive. What does Jesus say? He said, "For as Jonah was." Just like Jonah. "For as Jonah was, so shall the Son of Man be," referring to Himself. How was Jonah - dead or alive? Alive. How was Jesus for three days and three nights in the tomb according to the Christian belief? How was He? Dead or alive? Dead.

He was dead according to our belief. In other words, He's unlike Jonah. Can't you see? He says, I shall be like Jonah and you are telling me - there's one thousand two hundred million Christians of the world - that He was unlike Jonah. He said, I will be like Jonah, you say He was unlike Jonah. If I was a Jew, I would not accept Him as my Messiah. I am told in the Qur'an that Jesus was the Messiah. I accept. He was one of the mightiest

messengers of God - I accept. I believe in His miraculous birth. I believe that He gave life to the dead by God's permission. And He healed those born blind and the leper by God's permission. But if I was a Jew, according to the sign that He has given, He failed. Jonah is alive - Jesus is dead. They are not alike. I don't know in what language you can make them alike - that they are like one another. So the clever man, you know, the doctor of theology, the professor of religion, he tells me that I don't understand the Bible.

Your Bible, I don't understand. Why don't I understand the Bible? He says, "You see Mr. Deedat, Jesus Christ is emphasizing the time factor." Note, He uses the word "three" four times. For Jonah was three days and three nights. so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights. He uses the word "three" four times.

In other words, He's emphasizing the time factor - not whether He was dead or alive. I'm telling you that there is nothing miraculous in a time factor, Whether the man was dead for three minutes or three hours or three weeks, that's not a miracle.

The miracle, if there is one at all, is that you expect a man to be dead and he's not dead. When Jonah was thrown into the sea, we expect him to die. He didn't die, so it's a miracle. A fish comes and gobbles him - he ought to die. He didn't die, so it's a miracle. Three days and three nights of suffocation and heat in the whale's belly, He ought to die: he didn't die. It's a miracle, it's a miracle because you expect a man to die and he didn't die.

When you expect a man to die, and if he dies, what's so miraculous about that? I ask you, what's miraculous about that? If a gunman took a gun and fired six shots into the heart of a man and he dies, is that a miracle? No. But if he laughs it off. if he is still alive and walking with us and if, after the six shots tear his heart to pieces, he laughs: ha ha ha ha -- - he's alive. So we say it's a miracle. Can't you see? The miracle is when we expect a man to die and he doesn't die. When the man who is expected to die, dies, it's no miracle.

We expect Jesus also to die. For what He had been through, if He died, there is no miracle. There's no sign. If He didn't die, it's a miracle - can't you see? So He says, "No, no. It is the time factor." Drowning men clutch at straws - drowning women do the same. He says, "No. it's the time factor." I say, did He fulfill that? He says, "Of course, He fulfilled that." I say, how did He fulfill it? Look, it's very easy to make statements. HOW did He fulfill it? I say, watch. When was He crucified, I ask you? The whole Christian world says on Good Friday. Britain, France, Germany. America, Lesotho. Zambia - in South Africa we have a public holiday - every Christian nation commemorates Good Friday. I am asking, what makes Good Friday good?

So the Christian says, "Christ died for our sins, That makes it good." So He was crucified on the Good Friday. He says, yes. Yes. I say, when was He crucified - morning or afternoon? So the Christian says in the afternoon. How long was He on the cross? Some say three hours, some say six hours. I say, I am not going to argue with you. Whatever you say, I accept. You know, when we read the Scriptures, they tell us that when they wanted to crucify Jesus, they were in a hurry. And they were in such a hurry that Josh

tells us in his book, *The Resurrection Factor*, that within some 12 hours, there were six separate trials. Six trials He went through.

These things only happen in films. These sort of things - six trials in 12 hours from midnight to the next morning and on, only take place on films. But I believe whatever you tell me. Whatever you tell me, I accept. So the Jews were in a hurry to put Him up on the cross. Do you know why? Because of the general public. Jesus was a Jew. The general public loved Him. The man had healed the blind and the lepers and the sick and had raised the dead. He had fed so many thousands of people with bread and fish. He was a hero, and if they discovered - the general public - that their hero's life was in danger, there would have been a riot.

So, they had a midnight trial. Early in the morning they took Him to Pilate. Pilate says, "He is not my kettle of fish - take Him to Herod." Herod says, "I'm not interested - take Him back to Pilate. And hurry, hurry, hurry." And they held six trials within 12 hours. Six. As if they had nothing else to do, but I believe what you tell me.

They succeeded in putting Him up on the cross, according to your witnesses. According to your witnesses. But as much as they were in a hurry to put Him up, they were in a hurry to bring Him down. You know why? Because at sunset on Friday, at six o'clock, the Sabbath starts. You see, the Jews count the days, night and day, night and day. We Muslims count our days, night and day, night and day. Not day and night. We count night and day. Six o'clock, our day begins in the evening.

So, before sunset, the body must come down because they were told in the book of Deuteronomy that they must see to it that nobody is hanging on the tree on the Sabbath day. "That thy land be not defiled which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance." So quickly, quickly, they brought the body down and they gave Him a burial bath, and they put a hundred pounds of medicine around Him. And they put Him into the sepulchre. Not a grave - a sepulchre. A big, roomy chamber above ground. So it's already evening. From three o'clock in the afternoon, for whatever you do, the details are given in Josh's book. Burial baths normally take more than an hour. You read the details about how the Jew give a burial bath to the dead. That takes more than an hour itself. But let's say they succeeded in doing all these things in a hurry, hurry. You know they were in a hurry. Six trials in 12 hours. Now they put Him into the sepulchre.

By the time they put Him in, it's already evening. So watch - watch my fingers. Friday night He's supposed to be in the grave. Watch my finger. Saturday day, He still is supposed to be in the grave. Am I right? Saturday night, He still is supposed to be in the grave. But Sunday morning, the first day of the week, when Mary Magdalene goes to the tomb, the tomb was empty.

That's what your witnesses say. I am asking - how many days and how many nights? You remember, I said, supposed, supposed, supposed... You know why? Because the Bible doesn't say actually when He came out. He could have come out Friday night. The Bible doesn't say how He came. So, Friday night, Saturday day, Saturday night. I'm asking,

how many days and how many nights? Please, if you can see, if your eyes are not defective, tell me how many? How many do you see? Right! Two nights and a day. Look at this. Is it the same as He said, for as Jonah was three days and three nights, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights? Three and three. Look at this: two and one. Please tell me now it means the same thing.

I want to know what you are reading. I want to know what you are reading in your own book! The man is telling you that what is going to happen will be like Jonah. And the sign of Jonah is a miracle. And the only miracle you can attribute to this man, Jonah, is that we expected him to die and he didn't die. Jesus - we expect Him also to die. If He died, it is not a sign. If He didn't die, it is a sign.

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen of the jury. Can you see, the people have been programmed. We all get programmed from childhood. When I went to America, and spoke at the University in San Francisco, I said you people are brainwashed. I told them, "You are brainwashed." Of course, I could afford to talk to them - the American will take it. He is the almighty. You know, great guy. He can take it. So I said, "You people are brainwashed." So one American, a professor, interjected, "No, not brainwashed - programmed." I said, "I beg your pardon - programmed." So, Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, I hope, by the time this meeting is over, you will be re-programmed into reading the book as it is, and not as you are made to understand.

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen.

**Josh McDowell**  
*Opening Arguments*

Ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon. Mr. Deedat, and the wonderful people of this city, and this country of South Africa, I am thankful for the opportunity to be a part of this symposium on Islam and Christianity's view of the crucifixion and the resurrection.

In preparation for this, I didn't realize that I would be dealing with so many different theories on the crucifixion from the Islamic viewpoint. I found out, first of all, that the majority of the Muslims throughout the world hold to the substitutionary theory. That in Surah number 4, in the Qur'an, a substitute, another person, was placed in Christ's position on the cross that Jesus was removed and taken to heaven.

In other words, it was someone else. But then, I found such a diverse opinion among Muslims. Some Muslim writers say that it was a disciple of Jesus who was placed on the cross in His stead. Another Muslim writer, Tabari, quoting Ibn Ishaq, said it was a man by the name of Sargus, or Sergius, who was placed on the cross. Another Muslim writer by the name of Baidawi, said it was a Jew named Titanus who was placed on the cross. Another, Ath-Tha-'labi, says it was a Jew named Fal Tayanus, who was placed on the cross. And still another Muslim writer. Wahb ibn Munabbah, said it was a Rabbi of the Jews, Ashyu, who was placed on the cross.

Then, others feeling that it might be a little unfair to put an innocent man there, say, well, it must be Judas Iscariot who was placed on the cross. Now, Mr. Deedat might be able to correct me, but I do not believe there is any evidence whatsoever in the Qur'an for that. There are in some of the sects. earlier than Islam, references to that. But I always wondered, why did God have to have a substitute? Why couldn't He have simply taken Jesus then?

Others will say - and this is not what the majority of Muslims believe - that Jesus died a natural death some years after the crucifixion and the alleged resurrection. In other words, "Hazrat Isa," Jesus is dead! This is a more recent development in Islam. And I'm always wary of recent developments.

It was started mainly by a man by the name of Venturini, who said Jesus really didn't die on the cross - He just swooned or passed out, then was put into a tomb and resuscitated. This is also the theme of the Ahmadiyahs, a radical sect of Islam. One of their main doctrines, established by their founder and allegedly their prophet, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, it is a part of the doctrine of Qadianism.

Some will say to be crucified means to die. Therefore, Jesus wasn't crucified because He did not die on the cross. I'm not quite sure how they got that definition. What I need to do is this: present the facts to you, as I have been able to document them in my books, and then let you, as fair minded, intelligent people, make up your minds. The background for the points I'm going to make is that when I was in the University, I wanted to write a book against Christianity. I wanted to refute it intellectually. The last thing I wanted to do

was become a Christian. But after two years of research and spending a lot of money and time, I discovered facts - not only facts that God has stated in His Holy Word, the Bible, but facts that are documented in sources in history. Men and women, these are some of the facts that I found as I tried to refute Christianity and I couldn't.

The first fact I found is that Jesus was not afraid to die. In fact, He predicted His own death and resurrection. He said, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem." He said to His disciples, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered up to the death. And they will deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to whip and to crucify Him. And on the third day He will be raised up" (paraphrased from Matthew 17:22-23).

In another place He began to teach them that He had discovered many things. And then He said He'd be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, He would be killed, and He added that after three days, He was to rise again (Matthew 20:18, 19).

In Matthew 17, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and He will be raised again on the third day."

The second thing I learned as I studied the life of Jesus Christ is that Jesus was willing to die. In Matthew 26, He said, "My Father, if it is possible, let this Cup pass from Me." But what a lot of people leave out is the context of what Jesus said. He said, "Yet not as I will, but as Thou wilt, Father" (Matthew 26:39).

Now Jesus did not hide Himself. He is very clear about where He is. It says in John 18 that He went to the place where they usually found Him. He didn't want to hide from the authorities. He knew what was going to happen. In John 18, verse 4, it says, "Jesus therefore, knowing all the things that were going to come upon Him." He knew it! And He was ready for it. In Matthew Jesus says, "Don't you understand, I could call on twelve legions of angels to protect Me?" But He said, "I want Your will, Father." and God answered His prayer and let Him fulfill "the will of the Father." Jesus said in John 10: "The Father loves Me because I lay down My life that I may take it up again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative." You have to remember - Jesus being the God-Man, came as God the Son, the eternal Word, to take the sins of the world upon Himself. The Holy Bible (I Corinthians 5:21) says that He, God, made Jesus sin for us, and, if you can, imagine the agony that the eternal Word, the Son, was going through at that time.

The third fact that I learned is that the Jews were not guilty of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. I was very surprised. Mr. Deedat, that you needed to be the defender of the Jews. There are Muslims and Christians that have gotten that distorted all through history. Jesus said in Matthew 20. verses 18 and 19, "We are going up to Jerusalem, and they will condemn Me to death. and will deliver Me over to the Gentiles, to mock and whip and crucify Me." Jesus said, "I lay down My life." If anyone was guilty, Jesus was. He said, "I have the power to lay it down, I have the power to take it up."

Also, Mr. Deedat, I feel that both you and I are responsible, because the Bible says, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). It was our sins that drove Jesus Christ to the cross.

The fourth fact that I learned is that the Christians are called to an intelligent, intellectual faith - not a blind faith. I was quite surprised when I read in the little booklet, *What Was the Sign of Jonah?* by Mr. Ahmed Deedat, that over one thousand million Christians today blindly accept that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ. I'm a little confused, because really, Mr. Deedat, you read from the Qur'an and you said you accept it, you don't need facts, you don't need any evidence. You simply accept it and then you're saying that Christians, because they accept what God, Yahweh, has revealed through the Holy Bible, that Jesus is the Christ, that because we accept that, we do it blindly. I'm amazed, because in the Muslim book, the Qur'an, it states that one of the titles given to Jesus is "al-Masih." I believe it is referred to 11 times that way. The Muslim translator of the Qur'an into English, Yusuf Ali, translates the Arabic here as "Christ" in the English translation. So, why are we accused of being blind in accepting Jesus as the Christ?

In my country, one of the greatest legal minds that ever lived - the man who made the university of Harvard famous - was Dr. Simon Greenleaf. He became a Christian through trying to refute Jesus Christ as the Eternal Word and the resurrection. Finally, after trying to do it, he came to the conclusion that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is one of the best established events of history, according to the laws of legal evidence administered in the courts of justice.

C.S. Lewis, the literary genius of our age, was the professor of medieval and renaissance literature at Oxford. He was a giant in his field. No one could question his intellectual capabilities. He became a believer in Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord when he tried to refute the reliability of the New Testament and he couldn't. And he said, "I was one of the most reluctant converts, but I was brought to Jesus Christ because of my mind."

Lord Caldecote, the Lord Chief Justice of England, a man that held the highest offices that anyone could hold in the legal systems of England, said, "... as often as I have tried to examine the evidence for Christianity, I have come to believe it as a fact beyond dispute."

Thomas Arnold was the headmaster of a major varsity and university for 14 years. He is an historian and the author of the famous three-volume series, the *History of Rome*. He said, "I know of no one fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better and fuller evidence than the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

Dr. Werner von Braun, the German scientist - the man who immigrated to my country - was one of the creators of the American Space Program. He said he never really became a scientist until he came to know Jesus Christ personally as Savior and God.

The fifth fact that I discovered was the historical accuracy of the Christian Bible. The Christian New Testament is exceptional in its reliability and trustworthiness and survival

down through history. It is unrivaled in manuscript authority. A manuscript is a hand-written copy over against a printed copy. Men and women, of the Christian New Testament alone, there are more than 24,000 manuscripts. Not versions of the Bible, Mr. Deedat, manuscript copies. Men and women, the number two book in all of history in manuscript authority and literature, is Homer's Iliad, with 643. The number two book in the whole of history in manuscript authority.

Then, Sir Frederick Kenyon was a man who was second to no one in the ability and the training to make authoritative statements about manuscripts of literature in history. The former curator and director of the British Museum, he said, "The last foundation for any doubt that the Scriptures have come down to us as they were written now has been removed. Both the authenticity and the general integrity of the books of the New Testament may now be regarded as finally established."

The point: there are some people who do not have an historical perspective of literature, who try to make an issue out of the fact that the writers of the four accounts of the gospel, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, never signed their names. Please, men and women, we need to go back through history and see how they did it then.

First of all, the manuscripts were so well-accepted as being authoritative, with everyone knowing who wrote them, they did not need names placed on them. You might say it was the writers' way of not distracting from the purpose of making Jesus Christ the central issue. Also, the work of these authors, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, went through the apostolic age. They went through the test of the apostolic period of the first century to confirm their accuracy, authenticity and reliability. Other people, through limited reading and absence of any type of research, say that the documents of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are hearsay because the writers were not eyewitnesses of the events surrounding the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The people who say that will often appeal to Mark 14:50. They say that within two minutes they could dismiss the argument because Jesus' followers all left Him and fled. So therefore, everything was hearsay. Men and women. this line of reasoning ignores common sense in the facts of the case. For example, read just the next four verses. It says this: "And Peter followed Him." You see, they left Him in a group, but they came back individually - immediately, Mr. Deedat.

Verse 4 says: "And Peter followed Him at a distance." He went right into the courtyard of the high priest. And he was sitting there with the officer. Can you imagine? With the officers, and warming himself. In Mark 14, it says, "And Peter was below, in the courtyard." Men and women, if you have studied the Scriptures, you'll realize that Mark, in his gospel, was writing down all the eyewitness accounts of Peter. Peter was right there. Then we go to John 18, verse 15: "And Simon Peter was following Jesus, and so was another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest and entered with Jesus into the court of the high priest." John 19:26, "When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, 'Woman, behold your son.' " They were eyewitnesses. They were there.



About being permissible in a court of law. In most legal situations, you have what can be referred to as an ancient document rule. Now, you have to go to law to substantiate these things. Dr. John Warwick Montgomery is a lawyer and dean of the Simon Greenleaf School of Law, and a lecturer at the International School of Theology and Law in Strasbourg, France.

He said that the application of the ancient document rule to the documents of the New Testament (especially the four gospels) - this is a head of a law school speaking - "Applied to the gospel records, and reinforced by responsible lower (textual) criticism, this rule would establish competency in any court of law."

The greatest eyewitness testimony is not found in the gospels. It is found in I Corinthians, the epistle by the apostle Paul, chapter 15, and was written in A.D. 55 to 56. I have yet to find a reputable scholar who would deny that. Paul says (now it's 20 years earlier, right after his conversion - he had met with the leaders. He had met with James, the brother of Jesus in Jerusalem), that the tradition was passed on to him that there were over 500 eyewitnesses of the resurrection. If you take that into a court of law, give each eyewitness just six minutes, that would make 3,000 minutes of eyewitness testimony, or 50 hours of eyewitness testimony.

However, that's not the key point here. That was the tradition handed down to him, what he had examined personally. But Paul says then, the majority of them are still alive right now. Not when the tradition was passed down, but right now. Men and women, Paul was saying, "If you don't believe me, ask them."

Also, many people overlook the fact that when the message of Jesus Christ was presented by the apostles and disciples, and the New Testament was shared, present in the audience were hostile and antagonistic witnesses. If they would have dared to depart from the truth of what was said, there were hostile witnesses to correct them immediately. In a court of law that is referred to as the principle of cross-examination. They did not dare to depart from the truth. Also, apart from the Bible, you have several extra biblical secular sources.

One, a man by the name of Polycarp, was a disciple of the apostle John. He writes in his works. going back almost 2,000 years ago, "So firm is the ground upon which these gospels rest, that even the heretics themselves would not undermine it." They had to start from what was presented and then develop their own heresy. Because even then, they could not say, Jesus didn't say that. Jesus didn't do that then ... they couldn't do that. So, they had to start with what He said, and develop their own heresy.

The conclusion of many scholars is a tremendous confidence in the Christian Bible. Mr. Millar Burrows was on the staff of Yale University, one of the most prestigious universities in my country. He said, "There is an increase of confidence in the accurate transmission of the text of the New Testament itself." Dr. Howard Vox, a researcher and archaeologist, said, "From the standpoint of literary evidence, the only logical conclusion

is in the case where the reliability of the New Testament is infinitely stronger than any other record of antiquity."

The sixth fact that I discovered was that Christ was crucified. What does the historical, reliable record show? It is clear, not only from the Christian's biblical historical record, but also from secular sources, which are documented in the back of my book, Evidence That Demands a Verdict, that He not only predicted His death by crucifixion, but that He was actually crucified. Jesus said that He would be whipped and delivered over to be crucified. And then, in John 19:17, 18, "They took Jesus therefore, and He went out, bearing His own cross, to the place called the Place of a Skull.... There they crucified Him, and with Him two other men, one on either side, and Jesus in between."

Let's follow through what actually happened. First of all, it points out that Jesus was whipped by the Romans. What did that mean? The Romans would strip a person down to the waist and would tie him in the courtyard. Then they would take a whip that had a handle about a foot and a half long. At the end of the handle, it had four leather thongs with heavy, jagged bones or balls of lead with jagged edges, wound into the end of the straps. A minimum of five. They would be different lengths. The Romans would bring the whip down over the back of the individual and all the balls of lead or bone would hit the body at the same time, and they would yank the whip down. The Jews would only permit 40 lashes. So they never did more than 39 so they wouldn't break the law if they miscounted. The Romans could do as many as they wanted. So, when the Romans whipped a Jew, they did 41 or more out of spite to the Jews. And so he had probably at least 41, if not more, lashes.

There are several medical authorities that have done research on crucifixion. One is a Dr. Barbet, in France, and another is Dr. C. Truman Davis, in the state of Arizona in my country. He is a medical doctor who has done meticulous study of the crucifixion from a medical perspective. Here he gives the effect of the Roman flogging:

"The heavy whip is brought down with full force again and again across (a person's) shoulders, back and legs. At first, the heavy thongs cut through the skin only. Then, as the blows continue, they cut deeper into the subcutaneous tissues, producing first an oozing of blood from the capillaries and veins of the skin, and finally spurting arterial bleeding from vessels in the underlying muscles. The small balls of lead first produce large, deep bruises, which the others cut wide open. Finally, the skin of the back is hanging in long ribbons, and the entire area is an unrecognizable mass of torn, bleeding tissue."

Other sources I have documented said that sometimes the back is literally opened up to the bowels within. Many people would die just from the whipping.

After the whipping they took Jesus out to the execution area and drove spikes into His wrists and His feet. It says that late that Friday afternoon they broke the legs of the two thieves hanging with Jesus, but they did not break His legs. Now, why did they break someone's legs? When you are prostrate on the cross, or hanging there, they bent the legs

up underneath and drove the spike through here. When you died by crucifixion, often what would happen is you would die from your own air. The pectoral muscles would be affected and you could not let your air out. You could take it in, but could not let it out.

And so, you'd hang there and suffocate, you would push up on your legs to let the air out, and then come down to take it in. When they wanted to bring about the death immediately, they broke their legs and they couldn't push up, and they would die. Jesus' legs were not broken. As the Holy God, revealing His Holy Word in the Bible, points out, Jesus had died. Men and women, if they had broken His legs, He would not have been our Messiah. He would not have been the Eternal Word, because God, Yahweh in the Old Testament, prophesies in Psalms that His legs would not be broken. His bones would not be broken. Men and women, He was fulfilling what God, Yahweh, had already revealed would take place.

The next fact that I discovered was that Christ was dead. That's the seventh fact that I discovered, Men and women, in John 19:30, Jesus willed Himself to die, That's why He didn't take so long, He came to die. He said, "I lay My life down." And in John 19, He said, "It is finished," and He bowed His head and He gave up the Spirit, He willed Himself to die, Now, in John 19, verse 34 (Mr. Deedat, in his booklet, has referred to it as 'Evidence That Jesus Was Not Dead') you have reference to the blood and water.

He was on the cross and they'd already acknowledged Him being dead, but they thought they'd give a parting shot, as you would say, They took a spear, and thrust it into His side. Eyewitness accounts said blood and water came out separated, Mr. Deedat, in his book, appealed to this phenomenon as evidence that Christ was still alive, He supports this in his writing, by an appeal to an article in the Thinkers Digest 1949, by an anesthesiologist. I was able to acquire medical research by various people in this area.

I have time to share just two of the findings. First, from a scholastic viewpoint: many medical and university or varsity libraries that once carried this journal, no longer do so. It is considered by many in the medical field to be not only out of date, but behind the medical times.

Second, from a medical viewpoint: A wound of the type inflicted on Jesus, if the person were still alive, would not bleed out the wound opening, but bleed into the chest cavity, causing an internal hemorrhage. At the aperture of the wound, the blood would be barely oozing from the opening, For a spear to form a perfect channel that would allow the blood and serum to flow out the spear wound is next to impossible. The massive internal damage done to a person under crucifixion, and then being speared in the heart area, would cause death almost immediately, not even including what happens with the details of a Jew's burial.

At the State of Massachusetts General Hospital, over a period of years, they did research on people who died of a ruptured heart. Normally, the heart had 20 cc's of pericardial fluid. When a person dies of a ruptured heart, there is more than 500 cc's of pericardial

fluid, And it would come out in the form of a fluid and clotted blood. Perhaps this is what was viewed at that time.

The Jewish burial would have been a final death blow. Mr. Deedat says in his book, page 9, in "What Was the Sign of Jonah"? that they gave the Jewish burial bath, plastered him with 100 pounds of aloe and myrrh. Now, going through whipping, where the back is almost laid open, having your arms and feet pierced, being put on a cross, having a spear thrust in your side, being taken down and then plastered with 100-some pounds of spices of cement consistency - it would call for a greater miracle than the resurrection to live through that,

Then, the severe discipline of the Romans. Pilate was a little amazed, and I would have been too, that Christ had already been dead, or that they had come and asked for the body, So, he called a centurion in. And he said, "I want you to go and confirm to me that Jesus is dead." Now men and women, this centurion was not a fool. He was not about ready to leave his wife a widow.

The centurion would always check with four different executioners. That was Roman law. There had to be four executioners. They did that so in case one man was a little lax, the other one would catch him in it, And you would never have all four lax in signing the death warrant. Discipline was severe with the Romans.

For example, when the angel let Peter out of jail in Acts 12 in the New Testament, Herod called in the guard and executed them all - just for letting one man out of jail. In Acts 16 in the Christian New Testament, the doors had been opened up in the jail for Paul and Silas, their chains had been loosened, and the moment the guard saw they were freed, he pulled out his own sword to execute himself. And Paul said, "Wait a minute!" You see, that guard knew what would happen, He would rather die by his own sword, than be executed by the Romans.

Then Christ was dead. Flavius Josephus, the Jewish historian, records that when he went into Jerusalem in A.D. 70 when Titus was destroying it, he saw three of his friends being crucified. They had just been put up there. They had been whipped and everything. He went to the commander of the guard and he said, "Please release them." Now, you have to understand, Flavius was the name given to Josephus by the Roman Emperor who had brought him into his own family. That's why he had influence as a Jew. And you know, immediately, the Roman guard captain took the three men down from the cross and still, men and women, two of the three died. They'd just been put up there and they were removed quickly. Crucifixion was that cruel.

The Jews knew that Jesus was dead. In Matthew 27 they went to the Roman leader and said, "Sir, we remember that when He was still alive. ..." In other words, what is He now? Dead! "When He was still alive He said, 'After three days I am to rise again.' "I believe Mr. Deedat has his books saying that the Jews realized they'd made a mistake. He really wasn't dead, so they thought they wouldn't make a second mistake, so they go and get a guard unit put there. Well, the Jews themselves said He was already dead. "We just want

to make sure no one takes His body so there won't be any deception." The Jews have been accused of a lot of things, but very seldom have they ever been accused of stupidity. They knew He was dead.

The next fact I discovered was the burial procedure of the Jews. Some people say they were hurrying because of the Sabbath coming, and they had to carry Him back. Men and women, I checked this out in detail. And I documented in my Resurrection Factor book that the burial procedure was so important they could even do it on the Sabbath. They didn't have to worry about the Sabbath coming up. They didn't want the body to hang on the cross once the Sabbath began, but they could take their time burying Him. They would put spices around the body - in this case, 100 pounds of aromatic spices - along with a gummy, cement substance.

They would stretch the body out or straighten it out. They'd take a piece of linen cloth 30 centimeters wide. They would start to wrap the body from the feet. In between the folds, they put the cement consistency and the spices. They wrapped the body to the armpits, put the arms down, started below the fingers again, wrapped to the neck, and put a separate piece around the head. In this situation, I would estimate an encasement of 117 to 120 pounds.

The next fact that I discovered is that they took extreme security precautions at the tomb of Jesus Christ. One, it says that they rolled large stone against the tomb. Mark says the stone was extremely large. One historical reference going back to the first century says that 20 men could not move the stone. Now, I think it was exaggerated a little bit there. But he was making a point about the size of the stone. Two engineering professors, after they heard me speak on the stone, went to Israel. As non-Christian engineering professors, they calculated the size stone needed to roll against a four-and-a-half to five-foot doorway of the Jewish tombs. They wrote me a well-documented letter, and said it would have to have a minimum weight of one and a half to two tons.

Mr. Deedat, in his books, makes an issue that one man, or two at the most, rolled the stone against the entrance. Therefore, one or two men could roll it back. It says Joseph of Arimathea rolled the stone against the entrance. Don't force on the Bible or the Qur'an anything you would not force in conversation today. For example: when I came to the stadium the other day to look it over. I said to one of the people that brought me here, "How did all these chairs get here?" He said, "Mr. Deedat brought them." Mr. Deedat, did you bring all 700 of these chairs personally, yourself? No! They were brought by many people. I could go away from here saying Mr. Deedat put on this symposium. But I think there were some others that helped make all the arrangements.

History says Hitler invaded France. Now, maybe he would have tried it in France alone, but I don't think he would try it in South Africa alone.

There could have been a number of people that helped Joseph of Arimathea. Plus, you find when you go back and research it out that the tombs had a trough going up the side. They placed the stone there. They had a block. Then, men and women, my seven-year-

old daughter could roll it, because you simply pull up the block, letting the stone roll down the front and lodge itself against the entrance of the tomb.

Then, a security guard was put there. The Jews wanted one. They went to the Romans and said, give us a guard unit. The Greek word was *kustodia*. Men and women, a *kustodia* was a 16-man security unit. Each man was trained to protect six square feet of ground. The 16 men, according to Roman history, were supposed to be able to protect 6 square yards against an entire battalion and hold it. Each guard had four weapons on his body. He was a fighting machine, almost the same as was true of the Temple Police.

Next, a Roman seal was placed on the tomb with a Roman insignia. That seal stood for the power and the authority of the Roman Empire. The body of Christ was encased with 100 and some pounds of cement and aromatic spices. A one-and-a-half to two-ton stone was rolled against the entrance: a 16-man security unit was placed there, and a Roman seal. But something happened. It's a matter of historical record: after three days, the tomb was empty.

I don't have to debate that. Mr. Deedat agrees the tomb was empty. So, I won't waste any time here.

The sign of Jonah - I'm so glad you brought that up. The sign of Jonah - won't take too much time there because I don't think it's necessary in this sense. Whenever you study something, you study it in the language and the culture of that day. Now, you go back to the Jewish language, and the Jewish culture of that day. Not today - not South African, not Indian, not American. The Jewish-Israelite culture of that day.

Let's see what three days and three nights mean. In Esther, chapter 4, in the Old Testament of the Christian Jewish Bible, it says there was a fast for three days and three nights. But then, it went on, and it says they completed the fast on the third day. You see, in Jewish language, "after three days and three nights," meant "to the third day" or "on the third day." Jesus said in Matthew 12:40 He would be buried for three days and three nights.

In Matthew 20, Jesus said He would be raised up on the third day - not after the third day. The Jews came to Jesus, and they said in Matthew 27, verse 63, "Sir...that deceiver said 'After three days I am to rise again.'" So, they asked for a Roman guard. Now watch the language here. "Therefore, give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day," not after the third day. They knew what Jesus said, three days and three nights, meant until the third day, "lest His disciples come and steal Him away."

Friday before six o'clock they had three hours to bury Him. It took less than an hour. The Jewish reckoning of time in the Jewish Talmud and the Babylonian Jerusalem Talmud (the commentaries of the Jews), said any part, an "onan" - any part of the day is considered a full day. On Friday before six o'clock by Jewish reckoning, any minute was one day and one night. From Friday night at six o'clock to Saturday at six o'clock, was another day and another night.

Men and women, from Jewish reckoning - not ours - any moment after six o'clock Saturday night is another day, another night. We do the same thing in my country. If my son was born one minute before midnight on December the 31st, on my income taxes to my government, I could treat my son with the same time principle as having been born at any time during that one full year - 365 days and 365 nights.

When the Roman guards failed in their duty, they were automatically executed. One way they were executed was they were stripped of their clothes and burned alive in a fire started with their own clothes. The seal was broken. Men and women, when that seal was broken, the security forces were thrown into finding that man or men, and when they were found, anyone breaking that seal was condemned to crucifixion upside down.

The stone was removed, men and women, and I'll ask Mr. Deedat to check it out carefully. The revealed Word of God in the Christian New Testament, in the original Greek (as the Qur'an is in Arabic, the New Testament is in Greek), points out that a one-and-a-half- to two-ton stone was rolled up a slope, away from not just the entrance, but away from the entire tomb, looking like it had been picked up and carried away. Now, if they wanted to tip-toe in, move the stone over, and help Jesus out, why all the efforts to move a one-and a-half to two-ton stone up away from the entire sepulchre? That guard unit would have had to have been sleeping with cotton in their ears and with earmuffs on not to have heard that one.

Then, Mary went to the tomb in John 20. Mr. Deedat says that she went there to anoint the body and that the word "anoint" means "to massage." Well, let me tell you, if that's true - it's not - but if it were true, and that's the way the Muslims do it, it would have killed Jesus. If I went through crucifixion, had my hands and feet pierced, my back laid open to the bowels, 100 and some pounds put around me, I wouldn't want anyone to massage me. The word "anoint" means "consecrated." As Mr. Deedat brought out in his book, the priests and kings were anointed when being consecrated to their office. When He said, "Touch Me not," Mr. Deedat says it means, "I am hurting - don't touch Me." Well, read the next phrase, Mr. Deedat. It says, "Do not touch Me, because I haven't yet ascended to the Father."

That's why they're not to touch Him because "I haven't ascended to the Father." And then He says, "Now, go tell My disciples I am ascending to the Father." A little bit later, He says, "You can touch Me. Grab My feet." Why did He do that? Oh, men and women, this is one of the most beautiful things. In the Old Testament, at the tabernacle, the Jewish high priest would take the sacrifice into the Holy of Holies. And the people would wait outside, because they knew if God did not accept their sacrifice, the priest would be struck dead.

They would wait for the high priest to come back. And when the high priest walked back out, everybody shouted with joy! Because they said, "God has accepted our sacrifice" Jesus said, "Don't touch Me ... I've not ascended to the Father." Jesus, between that time and when the others grabbed hold of Him and touched Him, ascended to God the Father,

presented Himself as a sacrifice, and, ladies and gentlemen, if Jesus had not come back, if He had not permitted the others to touch Him, it would have meant His sacrifice had not been accepted. But I thank God He came back and said, "Touch Me". It's been accepted.

As for the spiritual physical body of Jesus Christ, I think, Mr. Deedat, you need to first study our Scriptures. I think you need to read just as I did to study your scriptures. You need to read I Corinthians 15:44, 51. The explanation of the glorified, imperishable body. It was a spiritual body, and yet, it had substance. He could walk through a door; He could appear in their presence. He didn't need food, but He took food. Otherwise, they would have said, "You're merely a spirit." No, He had what the Bible called the resurrected, glorified, incorruptible body. And if I were in that room and I knew I'd seen Him crucified, buried and everything else, and all of a sudden, with the doors locked, He appeared in the midst of the group, I think I'd be a little frightened, too. Men and women, Jesus Christ is raised from the dead! Thank you.



## **Ahmed Deedat**

### ***Rebuttal***

Mr. Chairman, and ladies and gentlemen of the jury. The crux of the problem - the clear-cut statement by Jesus Christ, is the mistake that the disciples were making in thinking that He had come back from the dead. By assuring them that "a spirit has no flesh and bones, as you see Me have." This is King's English, basic English. And one does not need a dictionary or a lawyer to explain to you what it implies.

Throughout the length and breadth of the 27 books of the New Testament, there is not a single statement made by Jesus Christ that "I was dead, and I have come back from the dead." The Christian has been belaboring the word resurrection. Again and again, by repetition, it is conveyed that it is proving a fact. You keep on seeing the man, the man's eating food, as though He was resurrected. He appears in the upper room - He was resurrected. Jesus Christ never uttered that word that "I have come back from the dead," in the 27 books of the New Testament, not once.

He was there with them for 40 days. And He never uttered that statement. He is proving again and again that He was that same Jesus, the one who had escaped death, so to say, by the skin of His teeth. Because He was ever in disguise. He never showed Himself openly to the Jews. He had given them a sign. "No sign shall be given unto it except the sign of Jonah." No sign, but this. And He never went back to them to the temple of Jerusalem, to tell them, "Here I am." Not once. He was ever in hiding. Now, we will not belabor the things that have passed.

The points were, that Jesus was not reluctant to die. He had actually come for this purpose. Now, my reading of the Scriptures tells me that not only was He reluctant, but He was preparing for a show-down with the Jews. You see, at the last Supper, He raises the problem of defense, telling His disciples, "As you remember, when I sent you out on your mission of preaching and healing, I told you that you were not to carry anything with you. No purse, no sticks. No staff. Did you lack anything?"

And they said "No, we lacked nothing." But now, I tell you, He tells them, "Those of you who have no swords must sell their garments and buy them." You must sell your garments and buy swords. I'm asking you, what do you do with swords? You peel apples? Or you cut people's throats? What do you do with swords? So one of them said, "Master, we have two already." And He said, "That is enough."

And He takes His disciples - 11 of them. Judas had already gone to betray Him. Eleven disciples and Himself, and they walk to Gethsemane. And at Gethsemane - read the book, read your gospels - and it'll tell you that Jesus put eight men at the gate. I'm asking you, why should He go to Gethsemane in the first place? And why put eight at the gate, telling them, "Tarry ye here, and watch with Me."

He means, stop here, and keep guard. Guarding what? What was there to guard in Gethsemane? A courtyard, olive press, empty place. What were they, the disciples, to

guard five miles out of town at Gethsemane? Then He takes with Him, Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee. At least two of them had swords. And He makes an inner line of defense and He tells them, "Tarry ye here, sit ye here, and watch with Me. While I go and pray yonder... I alone go and pray beyond." I'm asking you, why did He go to Gethsemane? Why did He go there - to pray? Couldn't He have prayed in that upper room, while there at the Last Supper? Couldn't He have gone to the temple of Jerusalem, a stone's throw from where they were? Why go five miles out of town? And why put eight at the gate? And why make an inner line of defense?

And He goes a little farther, and falls on His face, and He prays to God. "Oh, my Father ... if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." Meaning, remove the difficulty from Me, but not as I will, but as Thou wilt. In the end, I leave it to You. But I want You to save Me. And, being in agony, He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat was as if it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. Is this how one man, a person goes to commit suicide? Is this how the person who is ordained from the foundation of the earth, for the sacrifice, is this how He behaves, I ask you?

That He is sweating, it says, being in an agony, He prays more earnestly, and His sweat was as if it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. And the Lord of Mercy sends His angel, says the Bible. An angel came to strengthen Him. I say, in what? In the belief that God was going to save Him. What does the angel come to strengthen Him in? To save Him. And in everything that happened from there onward, you can see God planning His rescue. Look. The fact was that the prophecy He had made was that He would be like Jonah - and we are told that He was unlike Jonah. He didn't fulfill. Jonah is alive, Jesus is dead.

Then, Pontius Pilate - he marveled when he was told that Jesus was dead because in his knowledge, he knew no man can die within three hours on the cross. Because this crucifixion was to be a slow, lingering death. This was the real purpose of crucifixion. It was not getting rid of an anti-social character, like a firing squad, or hanging, or impaling a person. It was a slow, lingering death.

And the bones were not broken - says the Bible. It was a fulfillment of prophecy. Now, the bones of an individual - of a dead person - whether you break them or not, is of the least consequence. If the bones were not broken, the only time it can help anybody, is if the person was alive. So you see, for 2,000 years now, it's a programming, a continuous programming. And Paul has put the whole gamut of religion on one point: on this death and resurrection, because he tells us, I Corinthians, chapter 15, verse 14, that "if Christ is not risen from the dead, our preaching is in vain: our faith is in vain." Useless! You haven't got a thing!

So now, like drowning men clutching at straws, the Christian must, by hook or by crook, prove that somehow crucifixion killed the man, so we can earn salvation. Now, we would like you, Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, to read this book once more, and the testimony, word for word. If you examine the prophecies - what Jesus says, and the way He behaves - they are conclusive proof that Christ had not been crucified .

**Josh McDowell**  
*Rebuttal*

I'm not sure that I heard, but did you say, "Nowhere in the 27 books of the New Testament did Jesus ever say He was 'dead and now alive'"? May I read to you from the book of Revelation, chapter 1, verse 18? He said, "I am the living one. I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore." Also, Mr. Deedat, He appeared to the Jews. The whole New Testament Church was started with Jews. He appeared to the Jewish antagonist, the apostle Paul, when he was Saul of Tarsus.

But men and women, the greatest thrill to me, when it comes to the resurrection and Christ as my Life and Savior, is that God Yahweh has promised, when a man enters into that relationship through asking Christ to forgive him, who died for our sins, was buried and raised again on the third day, that God, the Holy Spirit, enters that person and changes them. And one of the greatest evidences is my own life. After I came to the point where I acknowledged Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord, surrendered my will up to Him, and trusted Him, men and women, in about six months to a year, or a year and a half, the major areas of my life were changed.

First, I developed a desire to live a holy and godly life. Second, I started to experience a peace and genuine joy - it wasn't because I don't have conflict - it's in spite of conflict, the peace that God gives through Jesus Christ. Third, I gained control over my temper. I almost killed a young man my first year in a university. I was constantly losing my temper. After I trusted Jesus as Savior and Lord, I would catch myself arising to the crisis of losing my temper, and it was gone!

Not only my friends noticed it, but my enemies did a lot sooner. And only once now, in 22 years that I have had a personal relationship with God Yahweh, the Father, through His Eternal Word, the Son, only once have I lost my temper. He has given me a supernatural strength over it.

The greatest area, men and women, that I'm thankful I can share here, is the very love of God. In this sense: My father was the town alcoholic. I hardly ever knew my father when he was not drunk. My friends in school would make jokes about my father making a fool of himself. I lived on a farm and I'd go out to the barn and see my mother lying in the gutter in the manure - the bathroom of the cows - beaten so badly by my father, my mother couldn't get up and walk.

We would have friends over. I'd take my father, tie him up in the bam, and park the car up around the side, and tell my friends he had to go on an important business trip, so I wouldn't be embarrassed. I'd take him into the bam where the cows would have their little calves. I'd put his arms through the boards, and tie them. I'd put a rope around his neck and pull his head all the way over the backboard, and tie it around the feet, so if he shuffled his feet, he would kill himself.

One evening, two months before I graduated from high school, I came home from a date. When I went into the house, I heard my mother crying profusely. And I said, "What's wrong?" She said, "Your father has broken my heart. And all I want to do is live until you graduate, then I just want to die."

Do you know, two months later, I graduated. And the next Friday, the 13th, my mother died. Don't tell me that you can't die of a broken heart. My mother did, and my father broke it. There was no one I could have hated more. But men and women, when I came into this relationship with God Yahweh, through His Eternal Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, after a short period of time, the love of God took control of my life, and He took that hatred and turned it upside down.

So much so, I was able to look my father square in the eyes and say: "Dad, I love you." And the neatest thing is, I really meant it! I transferred to another varsity or university. I was in a serious car accident with my legs, arm and neck in traction. I was taken home. My father came into my room. He was very sober because he thought I was almost dead. He asked me this question: "How can you love a father such as I?" I said, "Dad, six months ago, I despised you. I hated you." Then I shared with him how I'd come to the conclusion seen so clearly, that God Yahweh, the Father, had manifested Himself to us, humanity through the Eternal Word, His Son. And then He had died for our sins, that's the anguish He went through, Mr. Deedat.

If you could imagine all the sins in the world - just your sins and my sins would be enough. But all the sins in the world are upon the Son. The anguish that was involved. And I said, "Dad, I asked Christ to forgive me. I asked Him to come into my life as Savior and Lord." I said, "Dad, as the result of that, I have found the capacity to love and accept not only you, but other people just the way they are."

I can look at you, Mr. Deedat, and say, "I honestly love you ... God has given me a love for you ... I love you so much, I would love to have you come to know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord." And my father finally just said, "Son, if your God can do in my life what I have seen Him do in your life, then I want to know Him personally."

Right there, my father just prayed something like this: "God, if You're God, and Christ is the Eternal Word, Your Son, if You can forgive me and come into my life and change me, then I want to know You personally."

Men and women, my life was basically changed in six months to a year, to a year and a half. And there are still many areas for God to change. But then, take my father. His life was changed right before my eyes. Mr. Deedat, it was like somebody reached out and turned on a light bulb. Do you know, he only touched whiskey once after that. He got it to his lips, and that was it. He didn't need it anymore. Fourteen months later, he died. Because three-fourths of his stomach had to be removed, as a result of 40-some years of drinking. But do you know, ladies and gentlemen, in that 14-month period, scores of businessmen in my home town and the surrounding area committed their lives to the

living God, through the Eternal Word, Jesus Christ, because of the changed life of one of the town's drunks.

My wife, Dottie, puts it this way. She says, "Honey, because Christ was raised from the dead, He lives. And because He lives, He has the infinite capacity through the Holy Spirit to enter a man or woman's life, and change them from the inside out." That is why the resurrected, living Christ said in one of the 27 books of the New Testament, "I was dead, now I am alive." He can say, "I stand at the door of your life and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in."

**Ahmed Deedat**  
*Closing Statements*

Mr. Chairman and ladies and gentlemen of the jury. Man is coward by nature. From the beginning of Adam, you remember, passing the buck. It's not me, it's the woman; and the woman, it's not me, it's the serpent. Man is coward by nature. And we want somebody else to carry the burden for us. We want somebody else to take the medicine when we are sick. We want somebody else's appendix to be removed, when ours is rotten. This is man in general.

But this is not what Jesus Christ said. He wanted you to take up your own cross - get yourself crucified. Listen! He says, "He is not of Me who does not take his cross and follow Me." Take up your cross and follow Me. In other words. Get yourself crucified. No, no, no. No, He didn't mean that. What He meant was, that as I carry My responsibility, you carry yours. As I pray, you pray. As I fast, you fast: as I'm circumcised, you be circumcised, what I do, you do. You carry your own responsibility.

This is what He meant. Now, that is the Islamic system! This is what Islam teaches. You see, the system that saves you after years of alcoholism, after years of pinching 10 cents from the collection plate, you read it here, in Josh's book, He says every Sunday, the only thing he got out of church was he was putting in 25 cents and taking out 35 for milk-shakes. And then, later on in life, if you study, we find the same thing is being done on a very high level of intellectualism, But we haven't got the time to go into that.

Let me end with the message of Jesus: He says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and the pharisees, you shall by no means enter the kingdom of heaven." There's no heaven for you. This is what He says; these are His words. And what is happening is, you are not contradicting His words. This is Islam! Unless you are better than the Jews, there is no heaven for you.

He didn't say it's the blood, but your righteousness, You must be better than the Jews, You must fast, as the Jews fasted, but on a higher level: you must pray, as the Jews prayed, but on a higher level, you must give charity, as the Jews gave charity, but on a higher level. And that is Islam.

So, Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, I say that this resurrection, as has been addressed by Josh in America, under the heading, "Hoax or History," I will conclude that here are one thousand million people being taken for a ride on a cross. In Durban, every week, we have horses taking thousands of people for a ride - every horse. But here, you are being taken for a ride on the cross.

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen.

**Josh McDowell**  
*Closing Statements*

Mr. Deedat, nowhere in the Christian Bible revealed by God is a Christian ever commanded to be crucified. We are told to acknowledge that we are already crucified in Jesus Christ.

In Romans 8:32, God, speaking from eternity into time, says, "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up ... up for us all." In my country, a young lady, who was picked up for speeding, was brought before the judge, The judge said, "Guilty or not guilty?" and she said, "Guilty." He brought down the gavel, and the judge fined her \$100 or 10 days. Then, an amazing thing took place. The judge stood up, took off his robe, placed it over the back of the chair, went down in front, and paid the fine. He was a just judge. His daughter had broken the law.

No matter how much he loved his daughter, he had to say \$100 or 10 days. But he loved her enough, he was willing to go down, and take the penalty upon himself, and pay it. This is a clear illustration of what God Yahweh has revealed through His Holy Word. God loves us. Christ died for us. The Bible very clearly points out the wages of sin is death. So, God had to bring down the gavel.

But, men and women, He loved us so much, He was able to set aside His judicial robe, and come down in the form of the man Jesus Christ. And go to the cross and pay the price for us. And now, He can say, "I stand at the door of your life and knock. And if anyone hears My voice, and opens the door, I will come in."

Yes, Mr. Deedat, one billion Christians are riding on the cross. We are being taken for a ride. I believe God has provided the cross as the chariot to heaven, through the shed blood of His divine Son.

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen, for giving me the privilege, as a person from another country, to come here, and Mr. Deedat, I am greatly indebted to you for this opportunity. And if you come to my country, we'll have dinner together. Thank you.