

MUSLIMS

Islam, is now a major world religion. It was founded in Arabia based on the teaching of Muhammad, who was called the Apostle or the prophet. The Arabic word Islam, means to surrender, and in the Koran, Islam's guidebook, it means "to surrender to the will of God and His Apostle." There are at least 25 references in the Koran which require that a faithful Muslim 'obey God and obey the Apostle'(Surah 5:90 is an example.) The texts of the Koran are identified and numbered and called Surahs. The Koran identifies the faithful as Muslims of whom Muhammad was the first. (Surah 6:138) Muslims go to a mosque for prayers, sermons, and counsel. Holy efforts to spread Islam are called 'jihad.' The five pillars of Islam are;

1. Confess that Allah is the one true God and that Muhammad is his prophet.
2. Pray five times daily facing Mecca.
3. Give alms
4. Fast during the month of Ramadan.
5. Make a pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in a lifetime.

That third duty of a Muslim to give alms, or pay 'zakat' which was originally the tax by Muhammad and later by Muslim states on the wealthier members of the community, primarily to help the poor, but also used for winning converts to Islam, for ransom of captives, for relief of people in debt, and for jihad, or Holy War; the struggle for the cause of Islam. It was a tax of 2 1/2 % of income and could also be used for health, education, travel, and communications. In most Muslim states zakat is no longer collected by the government, but is still an essential duty of all Muslims. There are about 23 references for believers to "render the alms levy' (tax) in the Koran. Some examples are Surah 34:39, "*Whatever you give in alms He will recompense you for it.*" Surah 58:10, "*When you confer with the Apostle give alms before such conference...*" Surah 64:12, "*If you give a generous loan to God, He will pay you back twofold...*"

Other important laws of Islam are the prohibition of alcoholic consumption and eating of swine. The writings of Islam are the **Koran**, also spelled Qur'an, the **Hadith**, a book of Muhammad's words and deeds, the **Torah**, (the Biblical law given to Moses) and the **gospel**

of Jesus Christ. The Koran claims that its revelations *"confirm the scripture which preceded it"* (Surah 3:1 is an example) referring to the Torah and the Gospel. There is an interesting statement in Surah 6:153 which would indicate that either the angel or the prophet were not writing the Koran to 'confirm scripture'. *"The scriptures were revealed only to two communities before us; We have no knowledge of what they read; or; had the scriptures been revealed to us we would have been better guided than they."*

Division in the religions of Christians and Jews is used as a justification for the new revelation.

Muhammad was born in 570 AD, a few months after his father died. His mother died when he was only six years old. He was raised by a grandfather and later by an Uncle. As a youth he traveled with the trading caravans from Mecca to Syria. His first marriage occurred in 595 AD at the age of 25 to a wealthy widow named Khadijah. She was fifteen years older than he. In his travels he acquired a reputation for honesty and wisdom. Also while passing through the land which had been Israel, he came under the influence of Jewish and Christian teachings. Arabian paganism was worshipping Allah, the supreme Semitic God,

-71~

and a number of female deities whom they regarded as daughters of Allah. Muhammad firmly believed that he was a messenger from God, sent to confirm previous scriptures. God had revealed His will to Abraham, the Israelites, and the Christians through chosen prophets and Apostles, but they disobeyed God's commandments and divided themselves into sects. The Koran repeatedly mentions and accuses the Jews of corrupting the Scripture, and the Christians of dividing into sects, making monks and clerics, and worshipping Jesus, son of Mary as Son of God. Islam teaches that there is only one God and He had no son or daughters.

Muhammad received his 'call' about 610 AD in the areas of Mecca and Medina. The head quarters has been in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. There are now many sects of Muslims such as, Sunni, Shite, Ismailis, Druze, Kurds, and Babis, while the Koran in Surah 6:158 and 30:30 teach, *"Have nothing to do with those who have split up their religion into sects"* and *"Do not divide your religion into sects, each exalting its own doctrine."* The very thing was considered a major flaw of the Jews and the Christians has also happened to Islam. There is also a mystical movement called Sufism which originated in the eighth century. Some small circles of pious Muslims, reacting to the growing worldliness of the Islamic community began to

emphasize the inner life of the spirit and reaching for moral purification: by the 12th century Sufism developed into a complex popular movement.

There is a struggle under way between those for whom Islam is a faith based on justice, humanism, and mercy, and those who use it for hatred, violence, and political control.

Women are still forced to wear a chador from head to toe, in some countries they cannot drive an automobile. They cannot travel without permission from their male guardian, and while the Koran gives little rights to women, it is only by 'selective' interpretation of the Koran, Hadith, and Shariah, that woman's rights have been restricted. The word 'Islam' means 'submission. The goal of Islam has been to bring the world into subjection to its teachings. Islam forbids any other religion beside Islam. Death is the punishment for any found following another religion. In any Muslim dominated country we do not find religious freedom. When Muslims are weak in an area, they will talk about friendship and peace, but when they are strong, they will crush all others, and put these laws into place.

The Koran was written in book form during the years 644-656 AD from writings on various available materials left by Muhammad who died in 632 AD. For Muslims it is the infallible Word of God as revealed to Muhammad by the angel Gabriel. Except for the opening verse and some passages in which the prophet speaks or an Angel speaks in the first person, the speaker is thought to be God. Islam teaches that God is one, yet much of the Koran is written using the pronoun 'We'. (Example: Surah 7:11, "*We created you and gave you form. Then We said to the angels, 'Prostrate yourselves before Adam...' "*) The Koran is a collection of the passages said to be revealed to Muhammad during the years 610-632 AD.

Jesus is said to be one of many prophets given by God to many communities. Jesus was born of a virgin, was the son of Mary, but is not the son of God. Jesus was sinless, but not divine nor was he God. He was not crucified and is not a savior. He did ascend to heaven without dying. He is referred to as messiah, word, and spirit from God, and ayatollah or sign from God. The Koran says in Surah 9:27,

"The Christians say messiah is the Son of God. Such is their assertions, by which they imitate the infidels of old." It is interesting that the angel Gabriel from whom Muhammad claimed his revelations, said to the virgin whose name was Mary, as recorded in **Luke 1:31-35**, "*And behold, you shall conceive in your womb, and bring forth a son, and you shall call His name*

*Jesus. 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: And He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end. Then Mary said unto the angel. How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The power of the Holy Ghost shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you: therefore also the holy thing which shall be born of you shall be called **the Son of God.**"*

Here **Gabriel** is saying God will have a Son by Mary but then 610 years later that "God has never begotten a Son." (Surah 17:111 as example) **Is this the same Gabriel?** The Koran was written to 'confirm' the Torah and the Gospel, but on this point it refutes them. The Koran in Surah 6:100 says "Creator of heaven and earth. How shall He have a Son when He had no consort?" Luke records Mary as 'consort' to be the mother of the Son of God. The Koran says of the scriptures given to the Jews, (Surah 45:11) "We gave the book to the Israelites and bestowed on them wisdom and prophet hood..." Isaiah, one of those prophets recorded a prophecy in Chapter 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." Matthew, an Apostle of Jesus records how this came about in Matthew 1:18-23, "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. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary for a wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins. Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet saying, Behold a virgin shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, **God with us.**"

The Koran declares that God is one, and that is true. It was God in the flesh that was born of Mary. God incarnate, John another Apostle of Jesus explains this in chapter one, "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

*any thing made that was made." Verse 14, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. (and we beheld His glory, the glory of the **only begotten of the Father,**) full of grace and truth." The divinity of Jesus was declared by God Himself and recorded by Matthew in two places; at His baptism and His transfiguration. Matthew 3:16 "And Jesus when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and he (John) saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him: and lo a voice from heaven saying, **This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him.**"*

God is one, God is invisible, and God is Spirit. Christ is His image, Firstborn of everything, and He made everything else. God being invisible, made for Himself an image, His firstborn. Explained by the Apostle Paul in the Epistle to the Colossians, chapter one speaking of delivering us from the power of darkness, and translating us into the Kingdom of God's dear Son in verse 15 it reads, "*Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature; for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by and for Him. And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.*" Verse 19, "*For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell.*"

Jesus is God. Jesus is the image of God. Jesus was made in flesh to live among us as God and man, to be in position to pay the penalty necessary to reconcile us, as sinners, to God by His death on the cross. Monotheism is central to Islam, a belief in only one God. Belief in a plurality of gods or in the extension of God's divinity to any person is rejected. Christians believe in one God, Jews believe in one God, God can be and is in multiple forms and still be one, in unity and omnipotence. (Water can be ice, liquid, or vapor and still be H₂O) Jesus in the Koran is referred to as spirit of God, and a prophet regarded as any other prophet or apostle. Many Muslim scholars see the angel Gabriel as the Holy spirit. Surah 43:72, "*Say (to the Christians) if the Lord of Mercy had a Son, I would be first to worship him.*"

Salvation is a matter of faith and good works. Surah 2:80 and at least 35 other references indicate: "*But for those that have faith and do good works are the heirs of paradise,*" Humans are basically good, but fallible and need guidance. The balance between good and bad deeds determines eternal destiny in paradise or hell. God's mercy may tip the balances but is uncer

tain. Surah 8:25. *"Believers, if you fear God He will grant you salvation and cleanse you of your sins and forgive you."* Surah 92:1, *"For him that gives in charity and guards himself against evil and believes in goodness, we shall smooth the path of salvation..."* In both the Torah and the Gospel it was necessary that a sacrifice of blood was offered for sins, along with faith. In the Torah it was animal sacrifice, in the Gospel it was the Son of God who was the lamb of God that takes away the sins of the believers. In the Koran only 'faith and good works' are necessary, no blood sacrifice needed here.

We have been asking the question; **Is one religion as good as another?** In Surah 2:61 and 5:65 *"Believers, Jews, Christians, and Sabeans - Whoever believes in God and the last day and does what is right - shall be rewarded by their Lord: they have nothing to fear or to regret,"* Surah 29:46, *"Be courteous when you argue with the people of the book..."* *"We believe in that which has been revealed to us and which was revealed to you."* Here they believe all can be rewarded by God, but the religions are not the same!

The Koran says there will be that final day of reckoning and rewards, and resurrection of bodies. Eternal paradise for those who believe in Islam and eternal hell for infidels; infidels are those who reject Islam. In the Surahs above, believers such as Jews, Christians, and Sabeans also had possibility of reward. It is not consistent to be a Christian and a Muslim simultaneously believing two religions that are not the same in doctrine.

Infidels are the enemy. The Koran orders Muslims to fight in the cause of Allah which is the religion of Islam. There is no separation of church (mosque) and state in Islamic teaching. The government is or should be the religion, and the religion is or should be the government. This requires bloodshed. Surah 9:121, *"Believers, make war on the infidels who dwell around you, deal firmly with them."* Surah 66:7, *"Prophet, make war on unbelievers and the hypocrites and deal sternly with them. Hell shall be their home, evil their fate."* Surah 8:59, *"Let not the unbelievers think that they shall ever get away. They have not the power to do so. Muster against them all men and cavalry at your command, so that you may strike terror into the enemy of God and your enemy."* There are over thirty references to fighting for the cause of God in the Koran. Surah 4:91, *"If these do not keep their distance from you, if they neither offer you peace nor cease their hostilities against you lay hold of them and kill them wherever you find them. Over such men we give you absolute authority."* Surah 9:111, *"God*

has purchased from the faithful their lives and worldly goods, and in return has promised them a garden. They will fight for the cause of God, they will slay and be slain. Such is the true promise which He has made in Torah, the Gospel, and the Koran."

The term 'jihad' is usually translated as 'holy war', and designates the struggle toward the Islamic goal of 'reforming the earth,' which may include the use of an armed force to convert people to Islam, or gain political power to implement principles of Islam into public institutions. The concept of jihad has been used by some Muslim rulers to justify war for political ambition. Jihad is still used by some Islamic groups in an offensive way. There is no freedom of religion in Muslim dominated areas of the world. According to classical Islamic law, the world is divided into three zones, The house of Islam, where Muslims are in power; the house of peace, where there are peace agreements with Muslims and other powers; and the rest of the world, considered infidels.

There are rewards for the faithful. Surah 3:192. *"-those that suffered persecution for my sake and fought and were slain: I shall forgive them their sins and admit them to gardens watered by running streams... "* Surah 9:18, *"Their Lord has promised them mercy from himself, and His pleasure, and gardens of eternal bliss where they shall dwell forever."* Surah 38:44, *"Reclining face to face upon soft couches, they shall be served with a goblet filled at a gushing fountain, white, and delicious to those who drink it..."* *"They shall sit with bashful, dark eyed virgins, as chaste as the -eggs of ostriches."*

Islamic law, called Sharia, spells out the moral goals of the community. Islamic law is based on four sources, or roots of law. The first two are the Koran and the Sunna, or Hadith, The third source, called ijthihad is *"responsible individual opinion."* It is used as an analogical reasoning for issues not covered by the Koran or Sunna. A fourth source of law is consensus of the community, an informal process that has required a long period of time to develop, and can change, discarding some opinions and accepting others. There are variations of Islamic law in areas dominated by sects of Sunnites or by Shiites. They all use systematic reasoning to deal with areas of law not covered by the Koran or Sunna. Islamic law includes both legal and moral or religious rules.

Muslims traditionally have not sought dialogue with people of other religions, but recently

have engaged with representatives of Christianity and Judaism, recognized in Islam as other religions of the book.

The Old Testament, Torah and the New Testament (The Gospel) both warn against false prophets. Deuteronomy 13:1-5; 18: 20-22, Matthew 7: 15-24; 1 John 4:1-2 are examples. Muslims recognize that there are false teachers in the world. The Gospel speaks of the many miracles of Jesus Christ, and His apostles. The Koran does not claim that Muhammad worked any miracles, but it does teach that Jesus worked miracles. The Koran claims that Christ turned a bird made of clay into a live bird, and He healed *"him who was born blind and the leper by my permission: and how thou didst raise the dead, by my permission."* Surah 5: 110-115 is an example. There are many prophecies in the old Testament concerning Christ and His new covenant, such as Jeremiah 31:31-34, Daniel 2:44, and Isaiah 53. There are no prophecies in the Old or the New Testament predicting the coming of Muhammad. The New Testament recorded many prophecies made by Jesus Christ.

The Koran tells Christians not to go beyond the book, and calls Jesus a messenger from God and a Spirit from God. Christians are told to stay within the bounds of their religion, recorded in the Book, the scripture. The Book says Jesus was without sin, Hebrews 4:15. The Koran recognizes that Muhammad was a sinner and in need of forgiveness. In Surah 47; 19, *"So know (O Mohammed) that there is no God save Allah, and ask forgiveness for thy sin and for believing men and women."*

Christians are not exaggerating or going beyond their religion in accepting what the Book says about Jesus Christ being God's Son and that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit. This is what the Book says in Matthew 1:18-23, Matthew 11:27, Matthew 14:33, Mark 1:1, Luke 1:35, and John 1:34. Three different writers saying this, and showing that this is a fulfillment of prophecies from the Old Testament prophets.

As the Koran says in Surah 5:46, *"Transgressors are those that do not judge according to God's revelations. After them We sent forth Jesus son of Mary, confirming the Torah already revealed, and gave Him the Gospel in which there is guidance and light, corroborating what was revealed before in the Torah: a guide and an admonition to the righteous. Therefore let those who follow the Gospel judge according to what God has revealed therein. Evil doers are those that do not judge according to God's revelations."*

Everything which has been done or taught by professing Christians is not the Gospel or true Christianity. True Christians are those who judge and practice what is in the Book, which God revealed to Jesus and His messengers. If Christians do not do what is in the Book, the Koran agrees that they are 'evil-livers.' It would not be right to judge Christ by what some Christians have done or that Christians have divided into sects. The Book does not authorize these divisions and teaches against them. The Koran agrees that what was revealed to Moses, the prophets, Christ, and His messengers is truth from God. This would then necessitate that a complete study of the Bible should be investigated by all Jews, Christians, Muslims, and Sabeans alike.

In Hebrews 1:1-2 the Book says God, in former ages spoke *"in various manners" "by the prophets"* but in *"these last days has spoken unto us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, and by whom He made the worlds."* The diversity of manners of communication ended, God no longer speaks to men today by angels or prophets, but we have His Word in the New Covenant or Testament. This is God's final words *"in these last days."*

Men or angels that teach a different gospel are accursed. Galatians 1:6-8, *"I marvel that you are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel; which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."*

What is the source of knowledge? 2 Peter 1:3 *"His divine power has given us all things that pertain to life and Godliness."* And *"called us to glory and virtue."* Notice, we have all things necessary for life and Godliness. That would indicate that there is no need for the Koran as the Muslims claim given by an angel and Mohammad their prophet, an obvious false prophet, misled by an angel. If he said we need more than these 'all things' given by Christ we would have too much, if he said less it would add nothing. If it is not the same it cannot 'confirm' the Torah and the Gospel as it claimed to do.

A final thought, from Jude, verse 3 and 4, *"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For*

certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God . and our Lord Jesus Christ."

The Koran denies that Jesus is the Son of God, and does not fit the story of the seed of Abraham as promised by God and told in the Torah and the Gospel.

ISLAMIC DIVISIONS

L

Sunnis

(Elected Leaders)

MUHAMMAD

I Shiites

I

Sufis

(Spiritual Interpretation)

(7th to 10th Century)

Hanafi

(Al-Mazahebul Arb'h) I I

Shafi'y Maliki Hanbali Kharijis

(Khawarif)

(Seceders)

Wahhabis I (Reformers)

(18 Century 'Abd-ul-Wahhabis)

(Osama bin Laden)

I

With

(Principles

Of Islams)

Faqirs

(Darweshes)

I Withol ut

(Principles
Of Islams)

Twelvers

(Imams)

(Descendents of Ali)

I .

(Bloodline of Muhammad)

II

Seveners Zaydis

(Jsmalis) (Fiven) I .1.

Bahaism

(Babism) 1844 AD

(See Bahai

World Faith)

I

Carmathians Fatinites Druses

Surah 6:158, "Have nothing to do with those who have split up their religion into sects."

Surah 23:50, "Yet men have divided themselves into factions, each rejoicing in its own doctrines. Leave them in their error till a time

appointed." Surah 42:13, "Observe the Faith and do not divide yourselves into factions