

ELEMENT

christian church



Islam – Muslims

Islam was founded by the Prophet Mohammad.

For Muslims, Muhammad is the final prophet of Allah who supersedes all other prophets and who alone delivered the final and perfect word of God. Muhammad Ibne Abdullah was born in 570(?) in Mecca which is now located in Saudi Arabia. Mecca was then the cultural and religious center of Arabia. The area had no central government and was full semi-warring tribes with numerous, competing, polytheistic religions.

At the heart of Mecca was the Ka'aba (cube in Arabic), a shrine about 60 feet, by 60 feet, by 60 feet, containing hundreds of idols, and known as the House of Allah. Allah was one of many deities that Islam made into the supreme deity, but was originally worshipped along with other deities. The Ka'aba was said to have been built by Abraham and his son Ishmael on the same spot as the first shrine to God built by Adam. On the eastern corner of the Ka'aba is the Black stone called in Arabic, Hajar al Aswad. The Black Stone is probably a meteorite.

Muhammad is born

Muhammad was born to his mother Amina, into the Quraish, the then ruling tribe of Mecca. Up to the age of eight, he was raised by his grandfather Abdul Muttalib because Abdallah, his father, died in Yathrib a few weeks before Muhammad was born. Amina, his mother, died when he was six. After the death of his grandfather, his uncle Abu Talib then assumed responsibility for raising Muhammad. Abu Talib was a businessman involved in trade so it is likely that Muhammad went with him on business trips and encountered both Jews, 280 miles to the north in Madina, and Christians also to the north and to the south in Nejran. History tells us that when he was 12 he accompanied his uncle on a trading caravan to Syria. His encounters with Jews and Christians seems to be reflected in the Qur'an in passages that refer to "The People of the Book" (3:64, 71, 187; 5:59). *The term "People of the Book" is a reference to Jews and Christians who had received God's word through the prophets before Muhammad.* That does not mean that Muhammad had the highest regard for them; in Sura 5:41 Jews are called people "who will listen to any lie" and Christians are enemies (Sura 5:14), and Muslims were not to have Christians and Jews as friends (Sura 5:51).

At 25 years old, Muhammad was hired to manage the business of a wealthy widow named Khadija who was 15 years older than he. He went to Syria and traded there successfully. Apparently this impressed Khadija. She ended up proposing to Muhammad later and in 595 they were married. They had two sons, who died in infancy, and four daughters: Zaynab, Ruqaiyah, Fatima and Umm Kulthum. Muhammad and Khakija were married for 25 years until Khadija died at the age of 65 during the month of Ramadan, well after the start of Islam.

Around 35 Muhammad assumed the habit of going outside of Mecca to Mt. Hira for meditation and contemplation. There was a cave there and he often went there for solitude. It was during one of these times of meditation that Muhammad said an angelic being appeared to him, calling him. This disturbed Muhammad (Qur'an 81:19-29) and he told his wife Khadija that he thought he had been visited by an evil Jinn. *Jinn are supposed to be living beings like people, but not angels, who were created from fire and are invisible, yet dwell on the earth.* A short time later, in the year 610 (believed to be the 26th of Ramadan), while in a cave on Mt. Hirah, Muhammad said that the angel Gabriel appeared to him and commanded him to recite (96:1-19). This recitation became the Qur'an. In these encounters with the angel Gabriel, sometimes

he would see the angel, other times he would only hear him, and at others he only heard the sound of a bell through which the words of the angel came.

Muhammad could neither read nor write so he was instructed to memorize the words given to him by Gabriel. **This complete recitation which Muhammad received over a 23 year period, ending in 632, the year of his death, is known as the Qur'an.** Initially, Muhammad doubted that he was being called by Allah to be a prophet. Others, including his wife and a cousin, counseled him by saying that Allah would only be truthful to him and would not allow him to be deceived. Muhammad became convinced and even wrote in the Qur'an, "Say: Whoever is an enemy to Gabriel-for he brings down the (revelation) to thy heart by Allah's will, a confirmation of what went before, and guidance and glad tidings for those who believe," (2:97).

Islam takes root

It became the mission of Muhammad to proclaim the truth of Islam, given to him by Allah, through the angel Gabriel. Muhammad called the people of his area to repent from their idol worship, to do good, and to serve the one and true God, Allah. He taught that man is God's slave and it is his duty to submit to God and obey him. He said that the Day of Judgment was coming and that a man's works will be weighed on that day. Those whose good deeds outweigh their bad may, by Allah's grace, be saved and enter Paradise which is full of sensual pleasures. The unsaved go to hell. His first converts were his wife, Khadija, his cousin Ali, and his adopted son Zaid ibn Haritha. Soon afterwards, Abu Bakr also believed. In his first three years of proclaiming Islam, he had 40 converts.

Though his continued preaching brought only a few converts, it did bring much opposition. The ruling tribe, the Quraish, tried to get Muhammad to stop his preaching by appealing to his uncle, Abu Talib. But, Muhammad adamantly refused to stop proclaiming the message he had received. Because Abu Talib was very influential in the Quraish, Muhammad's life was protected and he was able to continue his preaching which angered many people. The Quraish began to persecute the Muslims by beating them and boycotting their businesses. During public prayers, Muhammad was accosted and mocked. His followers were likewise treated poorly. But, Muhammad remained steadfast.

Because of the persecution, the Muslims moved to Abyssinia, Ethiopia today, **and were protected by the Christian ruler there.** After a time, he returned to Madina and continued his preaching. More converts joined his ranks and more "idolaters" sought to defeat him. Because Islam covers belief, society, behavior, ethics, etc...This monotheistic belief system threatened the lucrative business that grew around the pilgrimages to the Ka'aba that so many Arabs enjoyed. The ruling tribe, the Quraish, soon found that within their reign a small band of believers, a small "country" unto themselves, was rising up. The ruling party became more and more concerned and threatened by the Muslims and their pressure increased against Muhammad.

Muhammad remained with Khadijah for twenty-five years before she died in 620. In the year 620 Muhammad also lost his beloved uncle Abu Talib (who never became a Muslim). After a few months Muhammad sought comfort by marrying the widow of one of the believers named Sawdah. He also later married Ayisha, the seven-year old daughter of his friend Abu Bakr, who he took into his home three years later. By the time of his death he had twelve wives and two

concubines (including Maryam, an Egyptian Coptic slave). Sura 4:3 limits the number of wives to four, and in Sura 4:31 marriage to one's daughter-in-law was prohibited. But in Sura 33:36–40, Muhammad was conveniently given a new revelation from God that ordered Zaid, Muhammad's adopted son, to divorce his wife so Muhammad could marry her by God's command.

Hegira (or Hijira)

622 is a significant date for Muslims. It is known as the year of the Hijra, or Migration from Mecca to Yathrib (which later became Medina) where they established their first real Islamic community. The Muslim calendar begins its history from July 16, 622 the first day of the lunar year in which the Hegira took place.

In Medina, he preached about Allah and monotheism and urged all people to return to the true faith of Abraham. At that time in Medina, he would pray facing Jerusalem, as did the Jews who were very populous in that city. He preached about repentance, one God, and forgiveness of sins. His first sermon in Medina was on a Friday. **Therefore, Islamic congregational worship occurs on Fridays.**

Gradually, however, the Jews began to disapprove of him and his movement. He confronted them and told them they had misread the Scriptures. **This estranged the Jews in the region and finally one day while praying, he suddenly changed direction and faced Mecca.** He said the Ka'aba, in Mecca, was the true place of worship since it was built by Abraham. To this day, all Muslims are to face Mecca when praying.

After two years in Medina, the Muslims were not fairing too well financially and that, combined with mild persecution, prompted a revelation to come to Muhammad permitting him to raid passing caravans. This he did and the Muslim financial problems were solved. Soon afterward, there was then a significant battle at Badr where Muhammad, with 350 men, defeated an army of 1,000 men. This boost gave confidence to the Muslims, encouraged more converts, and made the Quraish even more uneasy.

In the fifth year of the Hegira, the Quraish tried to destroy the Muslims but failed. By now the Muslims were too strong so the Quraish never again tried to defeat them. Muhammad then set his sights on Mecca. In 628, Muhammad took 10,000 men and entered Mecca unchallenged. The leader of the Quraish converted to Islam.

In 630 Muhammad had conquered Mecca and he destroys all the idols in Mecca.

In 632, Muhammad delivers his last sermon, later falls ill, and dies in the presence of his favorite wife, Aisha, and her father, Abu-Bakr. He was buried in Medina in his own house. His father in law, Abu-Bakr, becomes **Caliph**, the religious leader of Islam.

When Muhammad started his new movement, he encouraged nonbelievers to freely consider Islam: Sura 2:256 says, "Let there be no compulsion in religion." Later, however, he seemed to have developed a much harsher attitude: Sura 9:5 says, "Fight and slay the idolaters wherever you find them, and seize them, and besiege them, and lie in wait for them."

What may be considered crimes against the state and crimes against God are dealt with in Sura 5:33, "The punishment of those who wage war against God and His Apostle, and strive with might and main for mischief through the land is: execution, or crucifixion, or the cutting off of hands and feet from opposite sides, or exile from the land."

Numbers

- ✓ Islam has 1.2 billion adherents)
- ✓ Christianity has 1.9 billion adherents
- ✓ Judaism has 14 million adherents

But all trace their lineage to the same place: Abraham.

The word "Islam" means "surrender" or "submission." A Muslim (or Moslem - which means one who surrenders to God) is an adherent of Islam.

Scripture

Sura refers to the divisions within the Quran, and roughly corresponds to our "chapter." The Quran contains 114 revelations, each composing one sura or chapter. The shortest revelations appear first, the longest ones last. There is no chronological arrangement in the Quran.

The Koran (or Qur'an, which means "the reading" in Arabic) is the sacred book of Islam which covers the subjects of ethics, history, law, and theology. It is highly revered by Muslims as the direct, literal word of God. The Qur'an (also spelled Quran and Koran) was delivered by the angel Gabriel (also known as the Holy Spirit) to Muhammad over a 23 year period after Muhammad's initial encounter with Gabriel in a cave when he was 40 years old.

Second only to the Islamic belief in the unity/oneness of God is the supremacy of Muhammad as Allah's prophet. But, Islam acknowledges that several prophets preceded Muhammad. The major ones are Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and Jesus. These predecessors to Muhammad are considered prophets who spoke for God to specific people and whose message was meant for that time. Jesus, then, was simply one of many prophets according to Islam.

In addition to the Qur'an is the Hadith. The **Hadith**, Arabic for the "collected traditions" are the supposed words of Muhammad and are the customs that provide source material for the intricate political and social structure of Islam. The Hadith has additional principles not found in the Qur'an. The Hadith are considered the inspired truths of God transmitted in the style and words of Muhammad where the Koran is the exact words of God which is supposed to be protected from corruption by Allah.

God

The Arabic word for god is "allah" which has become a kind of name of God in Islam. Islam teaches that Allah is the one and only deity in all existence (Qur'an 5:73; 112:1-4). He is supreme, all knowing (40:20), ever-present, different from all of creation (3:191), and in complete control of all things. According to Islam, Allah created the universe in six days (2:29; 25:61-62) and all that is in it continues to exist by his permission and will. Allah is non-Trinitarian (5:73), absolute, and eternal.

- ✓ There is only one God (5:73; 112:1-4).
- ✓ God is called Allah by Muslims (5:73)
- ✓ Allah sees all things (40:20), is present everywhere (2:115; 7:7).
- ✓ Allah is the sole creator and sustainer of the universe (3:191).
- ✓ Allah is not a Trinity, but is one (5:73).

- ✓ Allah is all-knowing (2:268; 10:61) and all powerful (6:61-62).
- ✓ Allah created the heaven and earth (2:29; 6:1, 73; 25:61-62; 36:81; 46:33).

To the Muslim, God is not **only** a harsh, wrathful God, (even though he is those things too). The Muslim considers his God loving and merciful, as Sura 11:90 says, "Ask forgiveness of your Lord, then repent to Him; surely my Lord is All-compassionate, All-loving" and 85:14 says, "He is the All-forgiving, the All loving."

The Quran is clear that Allah is compassionate and merciful, but aside from the two above passages where God is called the "All-loving," there is not a single passage in the Quran that indicates that God loves any portion of mankind, nor is there a single verse that indicates that people can know God on a personal, relational level (although Muslims believe God to be a personal). BUT unlike the Christian, the Muslim cannot have a *personal* relationship with God.

Scripture tells us that those who trust in Christ, according to the Father's will, have been redeemed and have been adopted as sons (Romans 8:14–15 and Galatians 3:26). We are heirs of God (Galatians 4:7) and the Father deals with us as His children (Matthew 12:47; Mark 3:35 and Hebrews 12:5, 7). We can even be called His friends (John 15:13–15 and James 2:23).

"All- loving" in Islam appears to be nothing more than a divine name that describes God's mercy on those who repent and practice Islam, as opposed to being a personal characteristic. To Muslims God has no likeness (Sura 42:11), is transcendent (Sura 4:171), and is wholly other and totally different. He is neither physical nor spirit. The Bible, contradicting the Quran, tells us that we have been created in God's image and likeness (Genesis 1:26–27) and that we have knowledge of God in our hearts (Romans 1:19–20). Moreover, Scripture tells us that God is spirit (John 4:24).

Jesus

- ✓ A very great prophet, second only to Muhammad. Jesus is not the son of God (9:30) and certainly is not divine (5:17, 75) and he was not crucified (4:157).
- ✓ Jesus did not die on the cross, someone else did in his place that was made to look like Jesus. *"And because of their saying, 'We killed Messiah Jesus, son of Mary, the Messenger of God' - but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but the resemblance of Jesus was put over another man (and they killed that man), and those who differ therein are full of doubts. They have no knowledge, they follow nothing but conjecture. For surely they killed him not (Jesus, son of Mary). But God raised him (Jesus) up unto Himself. And God is ever All-Powerful, All-Wise" (Qur'an 4:157-158).*
- ✓ Jesus is not the Son of God because God does not has a literal son
- ✓ Islam denies the deity of Jesus, the need for His atoning sacrifice (4:157-158), and the Trinity (5:73). According to Islam, no sacrifice is needed to be forgiven, only faith in Allah, sincere repentance, and obedience to Islamic law (3:135; 7:8-9; 21:47; 49:14; 66:8-9).
- ✓ To the Muslim, Jesus Christ is merely one of the many prophets of Allah (Sura 4:171; 5:74). According to Islam, the prophet Muhammad supersedes Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is not the Son of God or a part of any Trinity (Sura 5:17; 5:116; 19:35).
- ✓ Jesus was nothing but a slave on whom God showed favor (Sura 43:59; we are told the Messiah is not a slave [Sura 4:172]).

- ✓ Jesus Christ did not atone for anyone's sins, although He was himself sinless (Sura 3:46) and is one of those who are near to God (Sura 3:45).
- ✓ The Quran says that Jesus Christ performed miracles (Sura 3:49; 5:110) and was the Messiah (Sura 3:45; 4:157, 171).
- ✓ Most Muslims believe that Jesus Christ was taken bodily into heaven without having died (Sura 4:157). However, Sura 199:33 says He died and would be resurrected.

Compare Jesus and Muhammad according to the Quran.

- ✓ Jesus did miracles (Sura 3:49; 5:110), but Muhammad did not (Sura 13:8: "thou art a warner [of coming divine judgment] only"; also 6:37; 6:109; 17:59 and 17:90-93);
- ✓ Jesus was sinless (Sura 3:46), but Muhammad sinned and needed forgiveness (Sura 40:55: "ask forgiveness of thy sin"; 42:5: "ask forgiveness for those on the Earth"; 47:19: "ask forgiveness for thy sin"; 48:2: "that Allah may forgive thee of thy sin").
- ✓ Jesus was called "the Messiah" and was even born of a virgin (3:45-57)! Yet Muhammad is supposed to be the greatest of the prophets.

Holy Spirit

- ✓ The Holy Spirit is the angel Gabriel (2:97; 16:102). *There is no actual verse where the Holy Spirit is said to be Gabriel or is identified as Gabriel. These verses show that both the Holy Spirit and Gabriel brought down the revelation.*

Trinity

Islam denies the Christian doctrine of the deity of Jesus, the need for His atoning sacrifice (4:157-158), the Trinity (5:73), and much more. According to Islam, no sacrifice is needed to be forgiven, only faith in Allah, sincere repentance, and obedience to Islamic law (3:135; 7:8-9; 21:47; 49:14; 66:8-9). In fact, in Islam, the greatest of sins, called shirk, is to attribute "partners" to God. In other words, to say that God is a Trinity of persons is an unforgivable sin to a Muslim.

Salvation and Judgment

- ✓ Allah will judge all people on the day of judgment (3:30; 35:33-37; 99:6-8).
- ✓ If your good deeds exceed your bad deeds, and you believe in Allah, and sincerely repent of sins, you may go to heaven (3:135; 7:8-9; 21:47; 49:14; 66:8-9).
- ✓ There is an eternal hell for those who are not Muslims, not practicing and of the truth faith (3:77).
- ✓ Hell is a place of unlimited capacity (50:30) eternal torment (2:39; 14:17; 25:65; 39:26), fire (9:63; 11:16; 25:11-12; 104:6-7), with boiling water (38:55-58; 55:43-44), where skin is burned and renewed (4:56), for unbelievers (3:13; 19:49) and Jinn (11:119), with faces covered with fire (14:49-50).
- ✓ There is a tree in hell, named Tree of Zaqqum, from which bad fruit is given and the damned are forced to eat (37:62-67; 44:43-48; 56:52-55).
- ✓ Heaven (Paradise), a Garden (79:41) of bliss and fruit (69:21-24), has rivers (3:198), with maidens pure and holy (4:57), and carpets and cushions, (88:8-16).
- ✓ There will be a physical resurrection of all people (19:93-95) on the day of judgment (3:77; 15:25; 16:38; 42:29).
- ✓ Judgment is based on a person's sincere repentance (66:8-9) and righteous deeds (5:9; 24:26; 45:21-22; 64:7).

- ✓ The primary "truth" of Islam is found in the the first pillar of Islam known as the shahda: "There is no true God except Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah."

Other

1. There is an afterlife (2:154;75:12).
2. There are such things as angels, created by Allah, that are created from light. Angels are obedient slaves incapable of refusing to do Allah's will. The angel Gabriel brought the revelation of the Koran to Muhammad (2:97).
3. The Holy Spirit is the angel Gabriel (2:97; 16:102).
 - A. There is no actual verse where the Holy Spirit is said to be Gabriel or is identified as Gabriel. These verses show that both the Holy Spirit and Gabriel brought down the revelation.
4. Jinn are unseen beings, created (51:56) from fire (15:27; 55:15), but are not angels. They have communities. There are good and bad Jinn.
5. The Devil, called Iblis, (2:34) is a bad Jinn.
6. Jesus was a great prophet but not the son of God (9:30), is not divine (5:17, 75), was not crucified (4:157).
7. Muhammad is Allah's greatest and last prophet and his message supersedes all other past prophets including Jesus.
8. The Koran is Allah's word. He literally spoke it to Gabriel who gave it to Muhammad.
9. There are other holy writings but they are superseded by the Koran.
 - . The other works are
 - i. Torah - the First Five books of Moses
 - ii. Injeel - the message that Jesus gave, written down, but no longer exists. The writings have been altered by scholars. Whatever agrees with the Koran is true.
 - iii. Zaboor - the Psalms
10. Pre-ordainment (Qadar) is the teaching that all things, good and bad, are preordained to occur.
11. Fasting is to be observed during the month of Ramadan (2:185).
12. Drinking alcohol is forbidden (2:219; 4:43; 5:93-94; 16:67)
13. Gambling is forbidden (2:219; 5:90-94).
14. Man is made from the dust of the earth (23:12).
15. There is no last minute repentance (4:18).

Angels

Islamic theology teaches that angels were created from light, that jinn are another race of beings, created from fire, who are invisible yet all around us.

Divisions

Like most ancient religions, there are sects. Islam is no different. The major sects in Islam are the Sunnites and the Shiites.

The most important place of worship for the Muslim (all sects) is the Mosque which is always pointed towards Mecca, the birthplace of Muhammad which is located in Saudi Arabia. All Muslims must face Mecca during their times of prayer because in Mecca is the Ka'aba, a cube structure allegedly built by Abraham which contains a sacred stone. When a Muslim is in

Mecca, he or she faces the Ka'aba (even if it is not east).

With Muhammad's death in AD 632, disagreement broke out over who should succeed him as leader of the Muslim community. Umar ibn al-Khattab, a prominent companion of Muhammad, nominated Abu Bakr. Others added their support and Abu Bakr was made the first caliph (leader of state). This choice was disputed by some of Muhammad's companions, who held that Ali ibn Abi Talib, his cousin and son-in-law (yes, it sounds like Mississippi), had been designated his successor. Later, during the First Fitna and the Second Fitna (Islamic civil wars which broke them into the Shi'ites and the Sunni's) the community divided into several sects and groups, each of which had its own idea about successorship.

From a religious viewpoint, Sunnis assert that even though Muhammad never appointed a successor, Abu Bakr was elected first caliph by the Muslim community. The Sunnis recognize the first four caliphs as Muhammad's rightful successors.

- Abu Bakr (632-634 A.D.)
- Umar ibn al-Khattab, (Umar I) (634-644 A.D.)
- Uthman ibn Affan (644-656 A.D.)
- Ali ibn Abi Talib (656-661 A.D.)

Shi'as (Shi-ites) believe that Muhammad explicitly named his successor Ali at Ghadir Khumm (On the 18th of Dhul-Hijjah, 10 AH [roughly March 15, 632 C.E.], the caravan of Muhammad coming from his Farewell hajj stopped at the pond of Khumm and he gave a sermon (that is disputed) that set up Ali as the next leader of Islam.

The two groups also disagree on Ali's attitude towards Abu Bakr, and the two caliphs who succeeded him: Sunnis tend to stress Ali's acceptance and support of their rule, while the Shi'a claim that he distanced himself from them, and that he was being kept from fulfilling the religious duty that Muhammad had appointed to him. Sunnis maintain that if Ali was the rightful successor as ordained by God Himself, then it would have been his duty as leader of the Muslim nation to make war with these people until Ali established the decree. Shias contend that Ali did not fight because firstly he did not have the military strength and if he decided to, it would have caused a civil war amongst the Muslims.

Sunni Muslims

Caliph is Arabic for "deputy" and refers to the main leaders of Islam, especially the immediate successors of Muhammad.

These are followers of the Hanifa, Shafi, Hanibal and Malik schools of law (or hadith). They constitute a 90% majority of the believers, and are considered to be main stream traditionalists (e.g., 90 percent of the Egyptian Muslims, 90 percent of the Jordanian Muslims, 90 percent of the Saudi Arabian Muslims, and 98 percent of the Libyan Muslims). Because they are comfortable pursuing their faith within secular societies, they have been able to adapt to a variety of national cultures, while following their three sources of law: the Qur'an, Hadith and consensus of Muslims.

The Sunni emphasize the power and sovereignty of Allah and his right to do whatever he wants with his creation. Strict determinism is taught. Its rulership is through the Caliphate, the office

of Muslim ruler who is considered the successor to Muhammad. This successor is not through hereditary lineage.

Shi'ite Muslims

Ayatollah refers to a spiritual master or leader in Shi'ite Islam.

The Shi'ite school is much more literal in its interpretation and application of the Quran and is much more militant than the Sunnite. Ninety-five percent of Iran's Muslims are Shi'ites, and today Iran is a Shi'ite Islamic republic. Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Iraq, and Yemen also have large numbers of Shi'ites. The name Shi'ite is a corruption of ***Shi'at Ali*** ("partisans of Ali") and refers to the fact that they rejected all subsequent caliphs who were not descendants of Ali. The Shi'ites (also known as the Ja'firi school) split with the Sunni over the issue of the successor to Muhammad. Shi'ites believe that the successor to Muhammad should have been Ali, his son in law, and that subsequent successors should have been through his lineage through his wife Fatima.

Shi'ism is broken into three main sects: the Twelve-Imam; (Persia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Pakistan, and Syria), the Zaydis (Yemen), and the Ismailis (India, Iran, Syria, and East Africa). Each group, of course, has differences of doctrine.

Shi'ite theology includes a doctrine known as the five supports:

- Divine Unity (tawhid),
- prophecy (nubuwwah),
- resurrection of the soul and body at the Judgment (ma'ad),
- the Imamate (imamah) - is an Arabic word (*Imam*) with an English language suffix (*ate*) meaning *leadership*.
- and justice ('adl).

The first three are found in Sunni Islam, albeit with some differences of emphasis; the Imamate, however, is the essence of Shi'ism, and the last, justice, is an inheritance from the Mu'tazilites, or rationalists, whose system is in many ways perpetuated in Shi'ite theology..." The Imamate, from the word "Imam", in the Shi'ite traditions is the political and religious leader of the Shi'ite sect. This person possess great power and influence. *According to Shi'ite doctrine, the Imam must be a biological successor of Ali.* The Imam is also sinless and infallible on all matters of Islamic doctrine and will intercede for Muslims in the afterlife. The Shi'ite and the Sunni differ in some interpretations of the Qur'an and Hadith and even have a different canon of Hadith.

Sufi Muslims

The Sufi are a mystical tradition where the followers seek inner mystical knowledge of God. This sect "officially" developed around the 10th century and has since fragmented into different orders: Ahmadiyya, Qadariyya, Tijaniyya, etc. Of course, the Sufi believe their roots can be traced back to the inception of Islam in the early 7th century.

The Sufi mystic must follow a path of deprivation and meditation. There are various forms of abstinence and poverty. Worldly things are renounced and a complete trust in God's will is taught. The goal is to attain to a higher knowledge and experience of Allah. The mystical focus meant that the Qur'an could be interpreted in different ways and so Sufism taught that the Qur'an had mystical meanings hidden within its pages. Out of this mysticism a type of

pantheism developed among some Sufi believers. Pantheism is the teaching that God and the universe are one. Of course, the orthodox Muslims, called the Sunni, reject this idea since they claim that Allah is the creator of the universe and distinct from it.

In part, Sufism arose as a reaction to the growing Islamic materialism that had developed in the Empire at that time. Islam had achieved great power and geographical scope and with it, the material gain was great.

All groups of Muslims hope for *shari'ah* the complete rule of Islamic law in the world.

Ahmdiyani

Another Muslim school of note is the Ahmdiyani school, which was founded in the 1800s by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1839–1908) of Punjab, India. He claimed to be the Messiah and the very image of Muhammad. He taught that Christ fainted and was revived by medication (an ointment called Marham Esau ["Jesus salve"]) and traveled to India, where he died in Kashmir. This small group has produced the bulk of Islamic apologetics against Christianity and Judaism over the last forty years. The Ahmdiyans are highly visible on American campuses and practice strong proselytizing techniques on American students.

Theology

The Five Pillars of Islam are core beliefs that shape Muslim thought, deed, and society. A Muslim who fulfills the Five Pillars of Islam, remains in the faith of Islam, and sincerely repents of his sins, will make it to Jannah (paradise). If he performs the Five Pillars but does not remain in the faith, he will not be saved.

The Quran teaches that all have sinned: "If God were to take mankind to task for their wrongdoing, he would not leave here one living creature" (Sura 16:61a; see also 42:5), and were created weak (Sura 4:28). We are even told that Muhammad sinned (Sura 40:55; 47:19; 48:2). Every Muslim who hopes to escape the judgment of Allah must fulfill the works of the Five Pillars of the Faith (Sura 10:109)

1. Shahada

- A. The Shahada is the Islamic proclamation that "There is no true God except Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah."
- B. This is the confession that Allah is the one and only true God, that Allah alone is worthy of worship, that Allah alone is the sovereign lord who does what he wills with whoever he wills. It means that all his rules and laws found in the Koran are to be followed. It means that the Christian doctrine of God as a Trinity is false as are all other belief systems including pantheism.
- C. Muhammad is the true and greatest prophet of Allah and recognition of Muhammad as the Prophet of God is required. It was through Muhammad that Allah conveyed the last and final revelation.

2. Prayer (Salat)

Prayer involves confession of sins which begins with the purification of the body and ends with the purification of the soul. Prayer is performed five times a day. The first prayer is at dawn and the last at sunset.

The names of the prayers are Fajr, Dhuhr, Asr, Maghrib, Isha. The Maghrib prayer is the sunset prayer. Isha is the prayer that is said after sunset. There is also a prayer that is said right after Fajr known as Shurooq.

3. **Fasting (Saum)**

The month of Ramadan is the month of fasting in Islam. It is an act of worship where the faithful follower denies his own needs and seeks Allah. Usually, this fasting entails no drinking, eating during, or sexual relations during the daylight hours for the entire month of Ramadan.

4. **Alms-giving or charity (Zakat)**

Charity given to the poor. It benefits the poor and it helps the giver by moving him towards more holiness and submission to Allah. Alms-giving is considered a form of worship to God.

5. **Pilgrimage (Hajj)**

This is the pilgrimage to Mecca. All Muslims, if they are able, are to make a pilgrimage to Mecca. It involves financial sacrifice and is an act of worship. Muslims must make the pilgrimage the first half of the last month of the lunar year

Women

It is okay to beat wives

- ✓ "Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given the one more (strength) than the other, and because they support them from their means. Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient, and guard in (the husband's) absence what Allah would have them guard. As to those women on whose part ye fear disloyalty and ill-conduct, admonish them (first), (Next), refuse to share their beds, (And last) beat them (lightly); but if they return to obedience, seek not against them Means (of annoyance): For Allah is Most High, great (above you all)," (4:34).

In Paradise, voluptuous women await men for sensual gratification

- ✓ "In them will be (Maidens), chaste, restraining their glances, whom no man or Jinn before them has touched," (55:56).
- ✓ "We have created (their Companions) of special creation. And made them virgin - pure (and undefiled), - Beloved (by nature), equal in age,- For the Companions of the Right Hand," (56:35-38)
- ✓ "Verily for the Righteous there will be a fulfillment of (the heart's) desires; Gardens enclosed, and grapevines, And voluptuous women of equal age," (78:31-33).

There will be more women in Hell than men

- ✓ "I have seen that the majority of the dwellers of Hell-Fire were women....[because] they are ungrateful to their husbands and they are deficient in intelligence. " (The Prophet Muhammad) Sahih Bukhari V 2, B 24, N 541

Women are deficient in mind and religion.

- ✓ Mohammed asked some women, "*Isn't the witness of a woman equal to half that of a man?*" The women said, "*yes,*" He said, "*This is because of the deficiency of the woman's mind.*" Vol. 3:826
- ✓ "*I have not seen any one more deficient in intelligence and religion than you.*" Vol. 2:541

Women are a bad omen.

- ✓ "*Bad omen is in the woman, the house and the horse.*" Vol. 7:30

Women are harmful to men.

✓ *"After me I have not left any affliction more harmful to men than women."* Vol. 7:33
Women may not wear wigs.

✓ *"Don't wear false hair for Allah sends His curse upon such ladies who lengthen their hair artificially."* Vol. 7:133

Other Bizarre Stuff

Jesus spoke while in the cradle

"But she pointed to the babe. They said: "How can we talk to one who is a child in the cradle?"³⁰ He said: "I am indeed a servant of Allah: He hath given me revelation and made me a prophet," (19:29-30).

King Solomon learned the speech of birds

"And Solomon was David's heir. He said: "O ye people! We have been taught the speech of birds, and on us has been bestowed (a little) of all things: this is indeed Grace manifest (from Allah.)" (27:16).

"And Solomon was David's heir. And he said: O mankind! Lo! we have been taught the language of birds, and have been given (abundance) of all things. This surely is evident favour," (27:16, Pickthall, trans.).

Ants can speak

"At length, when they came to a (lowly) valley of ants, one of the ants said: "O ye ants, get into your habitations, lest Solomon and his hosts crush you (under foot) without knowing it," (27:18).

"Till, when they reached the Valley of the Ants, an ant exclaimed: O ants! Enter your dwellings lest Solomon and his armies crush you, unperceiving," (27:18, Pickthall, trans.).

Shooting stars are for driving away evil spirits

And we have, (from of old), adorned the lowest heaven with Lamps, and We have made such (Lamps) (as) missiles to drive away the Evil Ones, and have prepared for them the Penalty of the Blazing Fire, (67:5).

The soul exits through the collar-bone when leaving the body.

"Yea, when (the soul) reaches to the collar-bone (in its exit),²⁷ And there will be a cry, "Who is a magician (to restore him)?"²⁸ And he will conclude that it was (the Time) of Parting, (75:26-28).

HUMAN RIGHTS

Islam is to be imposed by force.

✓ Mohammed said, *"I have been ordered to fight with the people till they say, "None has the right to be worshipped but Allah, and whoever says, "None has the right to be worshipped but Allah, his life and property will be saved by me." (otherwise it will not).* Vol. 4:196

Apostasy is punishable by death.

✓ Mohammed said, *"Whoever changes his Islamic religion, kill him."* Vol. 9:57

A Muslim must not be killed if he kills a non-Muslim.

✓ Mohammed said, *"No Muslim should be killed for killing a Kafir" (infidel).* Vol. 9:50

Ethnic cleansing is practiced.

✓ Mohammed said to the Jews, *"You should know that the earth belongs to Allah and His Apostle (Mohammed) and I want to expel you from this land (The Arabian Peninsula), so, if anyone owns property, he is permitted to sell it."* Vol. 4:392

Mohammed's last words at his deathbed were: "*Turn the pagans (non-Muslims) out of the Arabian Peninsula.*" Vol. 5:716

ABROGATION (FROM *KINGDOM OF THE CULTS* BY WALTER MARTIN)

One of the prerogatives of the Quran is what is called *abrogation*, a legal term referring to the "destruction or annulling of a former law by an act of the legislative power, by constitutional authority, or by usage." This is something taught in three separate places in the Quran. Sura 2:100/106 says, "And for whatever verse we abrogate or cast into oblivion, we bring one better or like it"; Sura 13:39 has, "Every term has a Book. God blots out, and He establishes whatsoever He will; and with Him is the Mother of all Books"; Sura 16:101 "And when we exchange a verse in the place of another verse—and God knows very well what He is sending down—they say, 'The art a mere forger!' Nay, but the most of them have no knowledge. Say: 'The Holy Spirit [in Islam the angel Gabriel is the Holy Spirit] sent it down from the Lord in truth, and to confirm those who believe, and to be a guidance and good tidings to those who surrender."

Rahman argues that abrogation in the Quran does not have the legal meaning, but should be understood as "substitution" necessary for progressive revelation. Since substitution means replacing one thing for another for some purpose, why is it necessary if the Quran is the eternal speech of God? This seems to indicate that God can change his mind, something vastly different from the biblical God who is unchangeable in His character and essence. If God is the All-knowing, on what basis is there a need to substitute? So despite all arguments to the contrary, if the Quran is abrogated, we run into a multitude of theological problems.

- 1) The Quran cannot be trusted because it contains "divinely inspired" contradictions. If God has a history of abrogating his own revelation, the "eternal speech of God," how can one be certain that he will not abrogate it again in the future?
- 2) It may be argued that it cannot be abrogated again in the future since Muhammad was "the last prophet." But how do we know that God will not abrogate that and send us more prophets?
- 3) If God can abrogate his eternal speech, how can we trust him with our eternal soul? Shall we depend on his mercy and compassion? How do we know that he will continue to be as merciful in the future as he has been in the past? How do we even know that he has been merciful in the past since the mercy sections of the Quran may themselves actually be substitutions?
- 4) If God has done any abrogating, as the Quran indicates, it does not indicate progressive revelation, which is additive, but rather contradiction and annulment, which subtracts from revelation since at least some portion of past revelation has been canceled. This would mean that God either did not know how future contingent events would turn out, or that he did but purposefully changed his mind. So the God of Islam is either not All-knowing or is a liar. A third possibility would be that God can have the attribute of omniscience and not have it at the same time (thereby actualizing a contradiction) by not only not having a physical or spiritual nature, but by not having a nature of any kind! Obviously this is absurd, but it does seem to follow from the Quranic view of God.
- 5) If God can abrogate past divine revelation it seems to indicate intellectual weakness at the very least. It not only causes problems for omniscience, since he did not have sufficient foreknowledge to avoid the need for abrogation, but also for omnipotence

(because if he did have sufficient foreknowledge he apparently did not have the power to carry out effective preventive measures), as well as other attributes.

- 6) If the Muslim God is not consistent, then his creatures have no foundation for morality and ethics. Morality and ethics must either be absolute, invariant, and universal or not absolute, invariant, and universal. There is no third option. If God is not invariant, then the moral/ethical system derived from him would necessarily be inconsistent and we would essentially be on our own. We would be autonomous (a law unto ourselves) because we lacked that divine absolute standard that exists only in Christianity. If each person had their own moral standard, there could be no legal basis for a society of any kind. This would seem to conflict with the Muslim concept of sharia. This would make it not only inherently contradictory but impossible.

Comparison grid between Christianity and Islamic doctrine

(This is a general representation of Islamic beliefs)

From the Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry

Term	Christianity	Islam
Afterlife	Christians will be with the Lord in heaven (Phil. 1:21-24), in our resurrected bodies (1 Cor. 15:50-58). Non-Christians will be cast into hell forever (Matt. 25:46).	There is an afterlife (75:12) experienced as either an ideal life of Paradise (29:64), for faithful Muslims or Hell for those who are not.
Angels	Created beings, non-human, some of which, fell into sin and became evil. They are very powerful. The unfallen angels carry out the will of God.	Created beings without free will that serve God. Angels were created from light.
Atonement	The sacrifice of Christ on the cross (1 Pet. 2:24) whereby His blood becomes the sacrifice that turns away the wrath of God (1 John 2:2) from the sinner when the sinner receives (John 1:12), by faith (Rom. 5:1), the work of Christ on the cross.	There is no atonement work in Islam other than a sincere confession of sin and repentance by the sinner.
Bible	The inspired and inerrant word of God in the original manuscripts (2 Tim. 3:16).	Respected word of the prophets but the Bible has been corrupted through the centuries and is only correct in so far as it agrees with the Koran.
Crucifixion	The place where Jesus atoned for the sins of the world. It is only through this sacrifice that anyone can be saved from the wrath of God (1 Pet. 2:24).	Jesus did not die on the cross. Instead, God allowed Judas to look like Jesus and he was crucified instead.
Devil	A fallen Angel who opposes God in all ways. He also seeks to destroy humanity (Isaiah 14:12-15 ; Ezek. 28:13-15).	Iblis, a fallen jinn. Jinn are not angels nor men, but created beings with free wills. Jinn were created from fire, (2:268; 114:1-6).
God	God is a trinity of persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Trinity is	God is known as Allah. Allah is one person, a strict unity. There is no

	not three gods in one god, nor is it one person who took three forms. Trinitarianism is strictly monotheistic . There is no other God in existence.	other God in existence. He is the creator of the universe (3:191), sovereign over all (6:61-62).
Heaven (Paradise)	The place where God dwells. Heaven is the eventual home of the Christians who are saved by God's grace. It is heaven because it is where God is and Christians will enjoy eternal Fellowship with Him.	Paradise to Muslims, a place of unimaginable bliss (32:17), a garden with trees and food (13:35; 15:45-48) where the desires of faithful Muslims are met, (3:133; 9:38; 13:35; 39:34; 43:71; 53:13-15).
Hell	A place of torment in fire out of the presence of God. There is no escape from Hell (Matt. 25:46) .	Hell is a place of eternal punishment and torment (14:17; 25:65; 39:26), in fire (104:6-7) for those who are not Muslims (3:131) as well as those who were and whose works and faith were not sufficient (14:17; 25:65; 104:6-7).
Holy Spirit	Third person of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit is fully God in nature.	The arch-angel Gabriel who delivered the words of the Koran to Muhammad.
Jesus	Second person of the Trinity . He is the word who became flesh (John 1:1, 14). He is both God and man (Col. 2:9).	A very great prophet, second only to Muhammad. Jesus is not the son of God (9:30) and certainly is not divine (5:17, 75) and he was not crucified (4:157).
Judgment Day	Occurs on the day of resurrection (John 12:48) where God will judge all people. Christians go to heaven. All others to hell (Matt. 25:46).	Occurs on the day of resurrection where God will judge all people. Muslims go to paradise (3:142, 183-185, 198). All others to hell (3:196-197). Judgment is based on a person's deeds (5:9; 42:26; 8:29).
Koran, The	The work of Muhammad. It is not inspired, nor is it scripture. There is no verification for its accurate transmission from the originals.	The final revelation of God to all of mankind given through the archangel Gabriel to Muhammad over a 23 year period. It is without error and guarded from error by Allah.
Man	Made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26). This does not mean that God has a body, but that man is made like God in abilities (reason, faith, love, etc.).	Not made in the image of God (42:11). Man is made out of the dust of the earth (23:12) and Allah breathed life into man (32:9; 15:29).
Muhammad	A non-inspired man born in 570 in Mecca who started the Islamic religion.	The last and greatest of all prophets of Allah whose Qur'an is the greatest of all inspired books.
Original Sin	This is a term used to describe the effect of Adam's sin on his descendants (Rom. 5:12-23). Specifically, it is our inheritance of a sinful nature from Adam. The sinful nature originated with Adam and is passed down from parent to child. We are by nature children of wrath (Eph. 2:3).	There is no original sin. All people are sinless until they rebel against God. They do not have sinful natures.

Resurrection	Bodily resurrection of all people, non-Christians to damnation and Christians are resurrected to eternal life (1 Cor. 15:50-58).	Bodily resurrection, some to heaven, some to hell (3:77; 15:25; 75:36-40; 22:6).
Salvation	A free gift of God (Eph. 2:8-9) to the person who trusts in Christ and His sacrifice on the cross. He is our mediator (1 Tim. 2:5). No works are sufficient in any way to merit salvation since our works are all unacceptable to God (Isaiah 64:6).	Forgiveness of sins is obtained by Allah's grace without a mediator. The Muslim must believe Allah exists, believe in the fundamental doctrines of Islam, believe that Muhammad is his prophet, and follow the commands of Allah given in the Koran.
Son of God	A term used to designate that Jesus is divine though he is not the literal son of God in a physical sense (John 5:18).	A literal son of God. Therefore, Jesus cannot be the son of Allah.
Trinity	One God in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit	The Father, Jesus, and Mary
Word, The	<i>"In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God...and the word became flesh and dwelt among us..."</i> (John 1:1, 14).	Allah's command of existence which resulted in Jesus being formed in the womb of Mary.

Islamic Terms

1. **Adhan** - The call to prayer.
2. **Ahmad** - Another name for Muhammad.
3. **Allah** - The Arabic word for "god." It is often used as a name for God in Islam.
4. **Badr** - The place of the first significant battle between and the pagans of the Quraish. It is located in Saudi Arabia.
5. **Caliph** - A Muslim ruler.
6. **Dajjal** - Antichrist.
7. **Dawah** - The proliferation of Islamic teachings through word and deed.
8. **Din** - Obedience to the revelation of Allah's Qur'an (Koran). It involves total submission.
9. **Fatwa** - Legal verdict given based on the Qur'an (Koran) and the Sunnah which are the recorded sayings and deeds of Muhammad.
10. **Fiqh** - Religious law.
11. **Hadith** - The sayings and deeds of the prophet Muhammad recorded by his followers. Considered authoritative and perfect. A saying is called a Sunnah.
12. **Hajar** - The Black Stone set into the corner of the Ka'aba in Mecca. Tradition states it fell from heaven.
13. **Hajj** - The pilgrimage to Mecca which takes place in the last month of the Islamic calendar. One of the five pillars of Islam.
14. **Hawijah** - The sixth level of hell which is the place for Christians.
15. **Hegirah** - Muhammad's immigration to Medina. It begins the Muslim calendar.
16. **Hijrah** - Moving from a land where a Muslim cannot practice his faith to a land where he can.

17. **Ibadah** - All the words and deeds with which Allah is pleased. These deeds could be prayer and charity.
18. **Iblis** - Satan, a fallen Jinn.
19. **Imam** - The political head of an Islamic state.
20. **Injil** - The inspired sayings of Jesus. The message of Jesus.
21. **Islam** - Submission, the religion of all the prophets of Allah culminating in Muhammad.
22. **Jannah** - The heavenly garden, Paradise. The place of the faithful in the afterlife.
23. **Jihad** - Striving. Fighting against one's own sinful self. Also, a physical fight for the truth of Islam, not allowing anyone to steal the ability to worship. It also can mean "holy war."
24. **Jinn** - Supernatural, invisible beings race of beings, below angels. They were made from fire and are capable of looking like humans or animals. Some may dwell in rocks, trees, etc, and may possess black dogs, and black cats. There are good and bad Jinn and all will be judged on Judgment Day.
25. **Ka'aba** - A cube shaped building in Mecca containing a stone laid there by Abraham and Ishmael. All Muslims face this cube when praying.
26. **Koran** - Also spelled Qur'an. The holy book of Islam given to Muhammad by Allah through the Archangel Gabriel. Koran literally means "the recital." It is the final revelation of Allah given to the prophet Muhammad. It has 114 surahs, or chapters.
27. **Kufr** - Disbelief
28. **Khutbah** - A sermon given in a Mosque, usually on Friday.
29. **Maksiat** - Sinful act
30. **Masjid** - A center for Muslim activity. It is like a local mosque.
31. **Mecca** - The Holy City of Islam. It is the birthplace of Muhammad.
32. **Medina** - The city, then called Yathrib, that Muhammad fled to after announcing Islam.
33. **Mosque** - A Muslim house of worship.
34. **Muhajir** - Immigrant, one who leaves his home town to join a Muslim community.
35. **Muhammad** - the final messenger/prophet of God whose message abrogated all previous revelations. He received the Koran through the angel Gabriel over a 23 year period.
36. **Muhammad ibn Abd Allah** - the full name of Muhammad.
37. **Muslim** - Someone who holds to the religion of Islam.
38. **Nas** - The multitude of people who are not dedicated to Allah and sway to and fro to various teachings.
39. **Nasara** - A word used in the Koran to designate those who are Christians.
40. **P.B.U.H.** - A shortened designation for "Peace be upon him" which is placed in writing or said after the word "Muhammad" is used.
41. **Paradise** - Another word for heaven. A garden (79:41) of bliss and fruit (69:21-24), has rivers (3:198), with maidens pure and holy (4:57), and carpets and cushions, (88:8-16). It is the hope of all Muslims.
42. **Qadar** - Preordainment is the teaching that all things, good and bad, are preordained to occur.
43. **Qatl** - Murder
44. **Qibla** - The direction which Muslims turn for daily prayers, towards Mecca.
45. **Quraish** - An ancient Arab tribe to which Muhammad once belonged.
46. **Rakat (rak'ah)** - One complete cycle of sacred words and gestures during the ritual prayer.

47. **Ramadhan** - The ninth month of the Islamic calendar which is the month of the fast.
48. **Salat** - Prayers
49. **Sawm** - Fasting
50. **Shi'ites** - A sect of Islam that teaches that leaders should be political rulers.
51. **Shirk** - Associating another god with Allah. Associating anything with Allah that is not true and revealed in the Koran.
52. **Sirq** - Theft
53. **Sufi** - A sect of Islam. It is very mystical and teaches strong self denial with the hope of union with God.
54. **Sunnah** - The life, practices, and sayings of Muhammad recorded as examples of perfect conduct in society, religion, action, etc. They contain the Hadith.
55. **Sunnis** - One of the sects of Islam
56. **Surah** - A chapter of the Koran.
57. **Taghut** - Everything that is worshipped or followed other than Allah.
58. **Taiyib** - Pure, clean, wholesome.
59. **Taqwah** - Proper fear and veneration of Allah. A divine spark that enables the person to understand God.
60. **Tauhid** - Monotheism in Islam is the teaching that there is only one God who alone is worthy of worship.
61. **Tauhid-ar-Rububiyah** - Declaring that God is one, the sovereign who performs all his will.
62. **Tauhid-al-Uluhiyah** - Declaring that God is the only one worthy of worship.
63. **Ummah** - A religious community, usually referring to an Islamic one.
64. **Umrah** - A Minor form of pilgrimage to Mecca.
65. **Wa Alaikum Assalam** - The Arabic way of saying "peace be upon him."
66. **Zaboor** - The Psalms
67. **Zakat** - The third pillar of Islam. Alms giving, charity that is given to the poor.
68. **Zinah** - Fornication and adultery.

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