

## **Islam and Christianity:**

Islam is the second largest religion in the world. The number of American Muslims is estimated to be five to six million. Many Muslims come from countries where no Christian witness or Bible teaching has been permitted for centuries. The term "Islam" means submission or surrender.

### **A. Religion of Islam:**

For Muslims, Muhammad is the last and greatest of the prophets, surpassing Jesus. He was born in Mecca in the Arabian Peninsula in the year 570 A.D. to a pagan family who worshiped idols; they had no faith in God. Mecca's heart of worship at the time was the local Ka'bah (shrine), or the black stone, and its 360 idols. According to Islamic tradition, Abraham's first born son, Ishmael, and Ishmael's mother Hagar, after being banished by Sarah, ended up in the desert surrounding Mecca, where they were Ka'bah during Muhammad's day. It is recorded in Genesis 21:17 that God has heard the voice of the lad, and speaking of Ishmael, God instructed Hagar., *"Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him by the hand; for I will make a great nation of him"*. Further ,in verse 20 it declares that God was with the lad. God still longs to be with the descendants of Ishmael. Yet, many of Ishmael's descendants have, for centuries, been strangled spiritually by the deception of Ishmael which seeks to have pre-eminence and domination over God's ordained plan for His chosen people (believers). There is only one hope in this desperate spiritual war. Oh, that God would pour out His Spirit on Ishmael's descendants, the Muslims, and save them! From church history we learn that during the first 5 centuries the church faced false teaching and doctrine about the deity of Jesus. During the fourth century the followers of the persecuted sects took refuge in Arabia and Persia. Later, Egypt, followed by Ethiopia and some parts of India embraced the Jacobites' doctrine. The church lost itself and its witness. Arabia was largely

pagan, but we remember that Judaism and Christianity were both present. Jewish tribes had lived in Arabia for hundreds of years by the time Muhammad was born. They were established, prosperous, and well respected. There were also many Christian cults in Arabia: The Ebionites who denied His humanity; the Arians who attributed to Him a subordinate deity; and the Nestorians, who denied the proper union of His two natures. In one of these caravans Muhammad met Buhaira, a Nestorian monk. Ibn Hesham recorded that Buhaira looked at Muhammad's back and saw a mole on it, which was supposed to be a sign of prophethood, and warned his uncle Abu-Talib to protect him from the Jews.

When Islam arrived, the church in Syria and Egypt was divided and the native population was indifferent. It is obvious that the so-called Christian communities and tribes carried only the name of Christianity without its genuine practices. Eastern churches inside or outside Arabia used the Aramaic language in the language of their religious services, a language only understood by the priests. The Bible was translated into thirteen languages, but not translated into Arabic, so it was not available to the Arabs. Illiteracy was prevalent among most of the Arab tribes. The church that belonged to Nestorian and Jacobite missionaries reflects the impact of the Zoroastrian doctrine of dualism of good and evil in its creed. Most of its members, who were from the old-aged pagan cults of the Aramaic and Arabic speaking elements of Mesopotamia of southern Iraq, produced some results in the northeast among the Arab tribes such as Taghlibs, Bakr bin Wa'il, Bahra', Juzam, as well as some members of the tribes of Shiban, Iyad, Thaqif, al-Khazraj, and Quraysh. It is obvious from the available pre-Islamic literature and Islamic documents that the polytheist Arabs believed in a supreme god (Allah) different from God in the Bible. Muhammad's father's name was Abdullah, which means the slave of Allah. We can see from that name that Allah was a deity known to the Arabs before Islam. He is the moon god

and not the God of the Bible. The God of the Bible, whom the Jews and Christians worshiped, was not called Allah but Yahweh (Psalm 83:18).@

This god is content with himself, and has no direct relationship with man. They also believed in other deities as subordinate to him. In addition to these cults there were also true Christians in Arabia who believe in the Trinity and rejected all the heresies at that time. But it seems to us today, that Mohammad adopted all these cults and heretical teaching about Jesus Christ and Christians that arose between 100-700 AD.

**B- The major beliefs of Islam include the following:**

1) About God - The central doctrine of Islam is that there is one God and that no partner is to be associated with him.

2) About angels - The angels are beings made out of fire. In the gap between the Qur'an and humankind exists a hierarchy of angels.

3) About the prophets of God - According to tradition, a total 124,000 prophets have been sent. Most are unknown, but many include biblical personages such as Adam, David, Solomon, Jonah, John the Baptist, and Jesus. However, Muhammad is the only prophet who is for all time, and he is considered to be the Seal of the prophets.

4) About the holy books - There are four holy books, Torah, Zabur (psalm), Injil (Gospel), and the Qur'an. Muslims contend that only the Qur'an has been preserved in an uncorrupted state.

Surah 42:51 tells of the three methods of the Qur'an: Allah revealed the contents of the Qur'an through direct inspiration, by Allah speaking from behind the veil and by angelic messengers.

The Hadith: Tradition of Islam records how Muhammad experienced these revelations through dreams, visions, an angel appearing in the form of a young man, an angel appearing as an angel,

through rapture and like the sound of a bell. To a Muslim, when he hears the Qur'an recited it is

God's voice to him. The sound of it being chanted can be moving. Muslims approach the Qur'an with fear, humility and awe. They put it away on a high place in the room. They won't put it on the floor or where anyone is apt to sit and they do not write notes on it.

**C. Main differences between Islam and Christianity are:**

1)- The authority of the bible, 2)- The nature and character of God, 3)- The Nature of Man, 4) The nature and means of salvation, 5) The nature of Jesus Christ: Jesus was a human, not divine and not crucified. 6) The authority of Jesus and Muhammad; Christians are polytheists. Muslims are confused about Christianity. Muslims are convinced that Christians worship more than one God.

**D- Contradictions between Christianity and Islam:** Muslims and Christians agree that it is impossible for God to inspire error in His word. The Bible says His Word is eternal, no one can change it. The Qur'an, however, contains a large number of statements that contradict the Bible. Again how could Allah be the inspiration behind both books? Dr. Robert Morey and other Christian scholars on Islam, list more than 100 contradictions.

I will mention some:

**God in Islam:** there is one god, and his name is Allah. The relationship between Allah and man is not relational, and not based on love. They believe that Allah has only 99 names. They believe that Allah carved the numbers of these names on our palms of our hands. One can read on the right hand the number 18 in Arabic. and on the left hand is written number 81. If you add the two together you will get 99. They assume that God put them there to remind us of Him every time we look in our hands. In the Semitic languages the word for God is ELOHIM, which implies power and strength. Elohim is a plural form and can be translated as A powerful God. The word

“Allah” in Islam, however, is singular and means: He is the power! This Arabic name in its true sense cannot designate a triune God. It can only be singular.

Allah in Islam is different from the God in the Bible. *Yahweh*, who is a person who regards Himself as the Father of man and the Husband of the believers in Him, as a "Lover".

Jesus revealed God in a way that is contrary to the Islamic understanding: God who has bound Himself to his children for eternity. No Muslim can find such a personal contact with God in Islam. He cannot imagine the assurance of the care and love of God. Jesus Christ is the ultimate revelation of God. His life and teachings are the measure. In the Qur=an God never reported to love someone who does not love Him first, nor is God's love ever used to draw someone close to Him. In contrast, the Bible records that God loves everyone regardless of their sin. In the Bible, we see God as not only the initiator of love but as one who loves those who are sinners and his enemies. *"The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because you were more in number than any people; for you [were] the fewest of all people...."* (Deut. 7:7). *1John4:8 AHe who does not love not know God for God is love@.*

The Son of God idea is also rejected in Islam:

Muslims put Jesus in a high place. They believe he was born of a virgin, raised the dead, performed miracles, he is the Messiah, word of God, holy and faultless, he is alive and he will come back for judgment. But to call him Son of God is blasphemy. They call Issa the son of Mary.

Biblically adoption is very legitimate. The Bible permits the adoption of children, giving them the father=s name and allowing them to share in the father=s will. God adopted believers and gave them His name and inheritance. According to Islamic law, it is forbidden for a Muslim to adopt a child and to give the child the father=s name. An adopted son is not allowed to have a

share with the blood-related relatives when his father dies. The father and adopted son can even marry each other's wives, and, in fact, Mohammed married his adopted son's wife after his son divorced her.

They say that Christ was not crucified, and that the Jews crucified a substitute.

They think it was Judas Iscariot who was crucified. Some groups think a disciple of Christ volunteered to take Christ's place and some say, a Jewish bystander was mistakenly crucified instead. And some believe a Roman soldier was made to look like Jesus and was crucified.

The exact meaning of Issa in the Qur'an is not Jesus:

The name Issa (Jesus) appears more than 20 times in the Qur'an .

Abd Al-Masih in the book the Great Deception said; The name Jesus already existed in Arabic on the day of Pentecost. It is pronounced Yesua. In Hebrew the name is Yeshua or Joshua.

Muhammed confused the Arabic name for Jesus by putting the first letter of the original name at the end and the last letter at the front. There are variety of explanations why Muhammad named Jesus Issa. The name Issa was most probably derived from Syrian pronunciation for the Greek name Jesus (Isau in Arabic). Others say his name was changed to rhyme with Musa (Moses).

Some scholars even claim that exchanging the first and last letters of a name indicates a spell or curse on this person. No one knows for certain why the name of all names was changed in Islam.

Issa in Arabic sounds more like Esau, the brother of Jacob. @

In Matthew 1:21 and Luke 1:31 The angel Gabriel explained, His name shall be Jesus because he will save his people from their sins. The whole idea and plan of salvation is hidden in Jesus' name, at which Satan trembles. There is power in the name of Jesus and every knee will bow down to his name and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Phil. 2:10-11).

The belief in the Trinity is also rejected by Muslims.

The Trinity reminds Muslims of paganism since they believe that we worship three Gods (Allah, Issa, and Mariam "Mary"). They call it *AAl-shirk@* or Apolytheism@.

Muslims replaced the Torah, Zabur (psalm), Injil (Gospel) with the Qur=an: Muslims are content that only the Qur'an has been preserved in an uncorrupted state. The Old and New Testaments no longer are reliable as God's word to man because of this corruption of God's word. The Qur'an claims that the Tawrat of Moses and Zabur of David (Psalm) were corrupted, God had to send the Injeel, because the Jews were a stiff-necked, disobedient people. He scattered them all over the world and sent Jesus to establish a new book and Christianity. Later in the fifth century, however, Christianity had become so corrupt that God sent the promised one that Jesus talked about in John 14 and his name is Muhammad to establish Islam, God=s final revelation. They believe that the Qur=an contains the essence of all heavenly books and includes both Judaism and Christianity. To them the Qur=an is perfect and without error. They believe also that Christian tradition has added many stories and erased any references to Islam and Muhammad. In Hebrews 1:1-2 and Mark 13:31, if the Bible is God=s word, and Jesus is the word of God how can a man have courage to change it? Who are we accusing when we say it=s been changed? Aren=t we accusing God Himself by saying He was not able to protect it from being changed? Are Christians the ones who changed the Bible? Which parts were changed, and for what reason? The Word became flesh and redeemed us, John 1:1, 14.

The Qur'an professes that salvation is obtained through works.

One must believe and perform all the Pillars of Islam whenever possible. Muslims believe that Qur=an provides a complete way of life. It gives them value for what is good and bad, and for what are righteous deeds and sinful deeds, and gives them all the norms for daily life. Islam teaches that God chose and made a covenant with Ishmael, not Isaac, and that Abraham took

Ishmael to be offered to God. The Bible, on the other hand, presents us with a God who suffers because of his disobedient people. He is grieved, and he is angered. The prophets of Israel reveal Him as a wounded lover, a husband who feels the pain of betrayal because of His unfaithful wife, a father whose heart is broken because of His rebellious children, a shepherd who leads his sheep in the wilderness and takes care of them, and a king who rules his subject in justice and truth.

In Islam, on the day of Judgment. Each person's deeds will be weighed in the balance; those whose bad deeds outweigh the good will be damned, but those whose good deeds outweigh the bad will be rewarded with paradise.

A Muslim, as a result, has no assurance that he or she will be accepted by God. In the Bible, *Matthew 25 31-46 All the nations will be gathered before Jesus and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Simply, those who believed and accepted Jesus and did his will be in heaven, and those who rejected Jesus and his redemption will be judged. The people who believe and receive Jesus will have assurance in their hearts that they will be accepted by God.* (1John 5:11-13)

The Qur'an's rules are earthly rules made for living on earth only. The inconsistency of these rules is that many of the laws forbid things on earth, like drinking wine and having sex outside marriage, but promise to grant those same things in heaven. In the Bible rules are made to instruct and to train us about life in heaven. The law in the Bible shows us our sins and how much we need God's help and grace. By accepting Jesus in our life, God will empower us by his Spirit to do good deeds and obey God's law. And He will give us the ability to control our weaknesses and be free. God's law is freedom and love.

According to some Muslims, music is almost an evil and a sin. Muslims are chanting the Qur'an without music. In the Bible music is a part of the God's praise and worship, and God will dwell among those who worship Him. Praise and worship is from the heart for God's goodness towards us and for his attributes. It is also a command and it is the language of heaven.

The Muslims replaced the Christians and the Jews with Islam. The mosque replaced the physical and spiritual temple. In reality, Mohammad the great messenger of Allah (an unknown god) and the Qur'an are replaced by Jesus the Creator, the image of the invisible God, the first born over all creation. For by Jesus all things were created, things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rules or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. (Col. 1:15)

Muhammed and the Angel Gabriel replaced the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit in the Bible will replace Jesus as Comforter to the Christians who believe in Jesus as Savior. He will remind, teach, and guide Christians with Jesus' teaching. The Holy Spirit will be abiding in those who accepted Jesus as their savior and Lord. The Holy Spirit will be testifying for Christ and glorifying Jesus. He will condemn those who rejected Christ as Lord, and converting those who rejected the redemption of Christ.

The Qur'an claims that the Angels are made out of fire. The Bible states that Satan and demons are all fallen angels who have been excluded from heaven and sentenced by God to hell for all eternity and that they are spiritual beings who do not have a gender. They cannot have sex, and they cannot reproduce. The Qur'an and Muslim traditions teach that Satan and demons are beings made out of fire. Demons have a body and a gender. They get married, and they reproduce. Muslims believe that there are demons who are Muslim believers and who will go to heaven.

Some Muslims talk to the "Gin" (demons) and order them to do anything they want and allow intermarriage between people and demons.

Muslims replaced marrying one wife with marrying four wives. The bible commanded one woman for one man with no permission for divorce except for adultery. A Muslim can marry two, or three or four women in the same time. And he can marry a large number of women during his life time. *Sura Al-Nisa 4:3 Marry women of your choice, two, or three, or four; but if you fear you shall not be able to deal justly then only one, or that which your right hands possess*@ Pertaining to Marriage, it is clear that the Qur=an calls for the possibility of marrying four women at the same time. In Chapter 4:3...Treat them fairly but in chapter 4:129 we read *AYou will not be able to deal equally between your wives however much you wish to do so*@ The Bible commands the husbands to be kind to their wives, to honor, to submit and love them. *The Qur=an Surat Al-Nisa AAs to those women on whose part you fear disloyalty and ill-conduct, admonish them, refuse to share their beds, and beat them*@ There is always suspicion of disloyalty on the part of a wife and it is just for the husband to beat her.

The Qur=an declares that Noah=s wife entered hell, and that one of his sons was drowned by the flood *Surat Al- Tahrim 66:10*. The Bible tells us that the human race descended after the flood from Shem, Ham and Japheth and none of them drowned.

In the Qur=an we read that Mariam=s father was named Imran, and that she is also the sister of Aaron. In the Arabic Bible both Mariam, the sister of Aaron, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, are named Maryam. But in the Bible tells us that, the mother of Jesus, is not the daughter of Imran or the sister of Aaron.

The Qur=an says that Abraham=s father=s name was Azar. The Qur=an teaches that Abraham was a Muslim not a Jew. He lived and worshiped in the valley of Mecca and not in Hebron.

Actually Abraham=s father and family were pagans. Also in the Qur=an, Abraham did build the

Kabah,(Surah 2:125-127) and he was thrown into fire by Nimrod as the Qur=an claims Suras 21:68,69. The bible states none of the above.

Surah 12:21 said that the one who bought Joseph was called Aziz, when his name was really Potiphar (Gen36, 37) and also the Qur=an made all Jesus= disciples Muslims.

Muslims replaced Peace with Sword. Jesus said to Peter in *Matthew 26:52* *APut up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword@.* Before and after Jesus= appearance to his disciples, he talked about peace and gave them his peace and commanded them to spread it to the whole world as a blessing and an assuring of his kingdom. Islam Al-Tabari=s *page 144.* Muhammad said: *AIt was sent by the sword, the good is with the sword, the good is by the sword. My followers will be always good as long as they carry the sword Islamic Caliphate, And in Sura Al- Anfal AO prophet! Rouse the believers to fight@.* Many verses in the Qur=an command Muslims to fight.

The sword in Christianity is the division. In *Matthew 10:34 and Luke 12:51-53* *AThink not that I am come to send peace on earth: I come not to send peace , but a sword@* This often happens when one member of the family becomes a Christian, the rest of the family will be against him or her. The sword Christ mentioned is not sword to kill, but a sword of division between those who believe in Him and those who do not. The Qur=an, on the other hand, upholds the use of the sword for killing and for shedding the blood of anyone who does not believe in Muhammad and his Qur=an@

Islam replaces the unity, and freedom with retaliation, bondage and racism

What we read in the Koran is retaliation, racism, life by the sword, polygamy, wife beating and veiling. This is clearly opposite to the glorious teachings and practices of Judaism and Christianity.

Jesus claimed in Luke 4:18-19 *At the spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.*@

### **E. Jihad in Islam**

Since the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon in September 2001. The world media and Christians rushed to learn about Islam, their beliefs and the meaning of Jihad. Religious debates were front-page news. The sects of Islam, moderate Muslims and many groups in Islam disagree for what was happened, say violence has not acceptable in true Islam and even the extremists as it would be to judge Christianity only by the crusades. So many “Fatwas” appeared to prove that Islam is a religion of peace.

Verses from the Qur’an about Jihad: *“If you are slain or die in the way of Allah, forgiveness and mercy from Allah are far better than all they could amass”* (Surah 3:157).

The Prophet Muhammad said, *“The person who participates in (holy battles in Allah’s cause and nothing compels him to do so except belief in Allah and His Apostles, will be recompensed by Allah either with a reward, or booty (if he survives) or will be admitted to Paradise (if he is killed in the battle as a martyr).”* Hadith 1:35

<sup>38</sup>*“Talking head on television continually pass along the politically correct notion that jihad means ‘internal struggle for piety’”... The promise of eternal security is the ultimate motive behind the passion for Allah in the eager young Muslim warrior. He follows the footsteps of the messenger Muhammed, who fought for the cause of Allah. He is obeying the noble words of the Qur’an and Hadith, which*

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<sup>38</sup>Ergun Mehmet Caner, Emir Fethi Caner, Unveiling Islam, (Kregel, publication, Grand Rapids, MI 49501, 2002) P.36

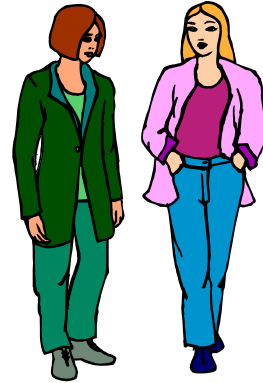
*legitimize his use of the sword. And if he is killed in battle, he achieves the desire of his heart-Allah's guarantee of a spot at the highest level of Paradise"*

The word jihad is often translated as "holy war" but it literally means "struggle", or "exertation" in its religious context the jihad always involves a fight against evil; The Qur'an declares, in Surah 9:5 *"then fight and slay the pagans where you find them, and seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in each and every ambush. But if they repent, perform the prayers and give alms, then leave their way free"* Also in Surah 2:190-194 *"fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you...and slay them wherever you catch them, and turn them out...But if they fight you, slay them. Such is the reward of those who suppress faith"*

Jihad in Islam could take many forms: Jihad of the heart, fight the sinful tendencies by obey the law, five pillars and the Qur'an. Jihad of Physical is violence, proclaiming wars against any Christians, Jews or any nations that not agree with them. They have right to attack non believers in any season, any land and any time. They believe that, United States aims behind these many wars in the Middle East and Islamic world are the Oil, Economic, Religious and Political to serve and support the Jews (the spoil and adopted son Israel) and divert attention from its occupation of Jerusalem to support of building the temple of the Jews and murder of Muslims there. Jihad of mouth (media) verbal argumentation and curses against the enemy, usually we see this in the Islamic countries protest and say words like "death to Israel" or any country don't like. We also see it in al-Jazeera television and other televisions in the Middle East. This has rooted in pre-Islamic Arabia. In the end Jihad of pen, applies the written words and books against the faith of Christians and the Jews or any religions to defend the Islamic faith and Qur'an.

**F. The key principles for sharing your faith in Christ are:**

- 1- Be a true friend.
- 2- Live your faith boldly.
- 3- Use the word of God.
- 4- Remove the fear of Islam from your heart
- 5- Make sure that you have the assurance of your salvation.
- 6- You need to experience the cross
- 7- Be salt and light of the gospel (live a Christian life and witness by action and word)



**- To befriend to a Muslim, it's important to understand the cultural expectations:**

- 1- Friendship 2- Hospitality 3- Conversation 4- Time and Obligation. 5- Family

