
IS THE GOD OF ISLAM THE SAME AS THE GOD OF THE JEWS AND THE CHRISTIANS?

Islam, Judaism and Christianity are all monotheistic religions. In other words, they believe in one God. But do those who follow Islam believe in the same God as the Jews and Christians? At this critical time in our nation we see on television, in newspapers and magazines that Islam is depicted as a “religion of peace.” We do not desire to be critical of another religion. However we do believe the question is worth examining to see if there is a difference.

Jesus said in John 14:6, *“I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.”* The Apostle Paul said in Galatians 1:6-9, *“I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel — which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preach to you, let him be eternally condemned. As we have already said, so now I say again: if anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned.”* In comparing Islam to Christianity, is it “another gospel?”

ISLAM is an Arabic word which means “submission” or “surrender.” Within the context of Islam, it means submission or surrender to Allah; the name of the god of the Muslims.

MUSLIMS are the people of Islam. The word “Muslim” means “one who submits”.

In pure Islamic nations under Islamic (Shari’a) law there is no democracy, no free will and no freedom of expression, which is totally contrary to the freedom we have in Christ. When a nation is ruled by Islamic Law, freedom to preach the gospel is not allowed because Muslims are not permitted to change their religion. The rejection of Islam for any other faith, either by action or word of mouth, is considered a rejection of Allah and Muhammad, thus making it an act of apostasy. Under Shari’a law, changing your religion from Islam to Christianity is punishable by death. This is practiced in many Muslim nations such as several North African countries; Afghanistan, Pakistan and Malaysia, and many Middle Eastern countries.

The stated purpose of the system is to achieve world domination. According to a July 4, 1998 newspaper article of an Islamic gathering in Fremont, CA, Omar M. Ahmad, Chairman of the Board of the Council on American-Islamic relations (known as CAIR), urged Muslims not to shirk their duty of sharing the Islamic faith with those who are on the ‘wrong side’. *“Muslim institutions, schools and economic power should be strengthened in America,”* he said. *“Those who stay in America should be open to society without melting (into it), keeping mosques open so anyone can come and learn about Islam,”* he said. *“If you choose to live here (in America) you have a responsibility to deliver the message of Islam,”* he said. *“Islam is not in America to be equal to any other faith, but to become dominant.”* He continued, *“The Koran, the Muslim book of scripture, should be the highest authority in America, and Islam the only accepted religion on Earth.”*

THE KORAN (the Qur’an) is their holy book. The Koran cannot be questioned or criticized, or recited in any other language than Arabic. As a result the majority of Muslims have very little knowledge of true beliefs of Islam because they are not versed in the Koran or in the history of Islam.

MUHAMMAD is the founder and leader of the Islamic faith. He was born in 570AD in the city of Mecca in Arabia. His father died before he was born and his mother died when he was six. He was placed in the care of his grandfather, but he also soon died. Muhammad was then raised by his uncle. At age 25 he married a wealthy widow named Khadijeh, who was 40 years of age. During that time both Jews and Christians lived in Arabia, but it seems they lacked the power to convince Muhammad and the other Arabs that Jehovah, the God of Judaism and Christianity, is the one true God.

Muhammad would go occasionally to a cave three miles north of Mecca to meditate. At age 40 he had a visitation and he believed it to be the angel Gabriel who told him to recite. When Muhammad asked what he was to recite, he was told, “Recite, in the name of the Lord who has created, created man from the clots of blood.” This experience brought great doubt to Muhammad, but when he shared this experience with his wife, she convinced him that he was appointed as a prophet to the people. This experience continued to depress him and he even considered

suicide. Revelations continued to come to him — sometimes an “angel”, sometimes a voice, sometimes a dream. He received his revelations when he had fits and seizures. His followers chose to believe that these were true words of God because they considered Muhammad to be illiterate. Messages continued to come to him over a period of 22 years. As a result, he preached that there is no god but Allah and that he was the prophet of Allah. When his wife died he remarried. (Actually he had up to 35-40 wives and concubines). He also married a seven year old girl and consummated the marriage when she was nine. In 628AD he received a “revelation” that Islam was to be exalted above all other religions, including Christianity and Judaism. Becoming the political leader of Arabia, the message of the domination of Islam was spread with the sword. The city of Mecca became the center of the religion.

In conversing with a Muslim in our nation today they may say, “We also believe in the Bible; we believe in Moses, David and Jesus.” (For this reason many people in our nation see Islam as just another way to God). But what is it that Islam really believes? They believe in the prophets, but they also believe the Bible has been corrupted. In a number of places the Koran emphasizes that Jesus Christ is a prophet, but the Christian view of Jesus Christ as the literal Son of God is blasphemy to the Muslim. Islam denies His divine nature. In Sura (chapter) 43:59 the Koran asserts, “Jesus was no more than a mortal man whom [Allah] favored and made an example to the Israelites.” They believe Jesus did not die on the cross, but rather a substitute took His place; probably Judas. Jesus said in John 8:24 . . . “if you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins.”

Christians are told in Ephesians 2:10 that we are saved by grace through faith; it is the free gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast. What does Islam teach?

William Miller was a missionary to Muslims in Iran from 1919 to 1962. He wrote about the Islamic view of salvation, its dependence upon good works and personal merit, and the uncertainty which this brings to the heart of every Muslim:

“Islam has no Savior. Muhammad is rarely called Savior. He is said to have brought God’s (Allah’s) laws to men, and they, by keeping those laws, must satisfy God’s requirements and win His approval . . . Since God (Allah) does not make known how the accounts stand, a Muslim facing death does not know whether he is to go to paradise to hell. After all, the decision is made by the arbitrary will of God (Allah) and no one can predict what this decision will be. And so the Muslim lives and dies, not sure of his final salvation.”

Islam is a totally different religion from Christianity and Judaism and the god of Islam is not the God of the Christians and the Jews. However, we must see the Muslim people through the heart of God, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. Many devout Muslims have a true hunger to know God. A paraphrase of John 3:16 says,

“For God so loved the 1.2 billion Muslims in the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”

OUR PRAYER:

Father, reveal Your heart to us for the Muslim people of our nation, and the world. Allow us to see them through Your eyes, and give us Your strategy for prayer, and for outreach. May we be the generation to reach them with the light and truth of the gospel, in Jesus name. Amen!

(For further insight, read the book “Inside Islam” by Reza Safa [ISBN #0-88418-416-7]. He was raised a devout Muslim in the Middle East and his faith in Islam was unshakable . . . until he heard the gospel and gave his life to Jesus. Since that time Safa has preached in more than 40 countries around the world.)