

Islam: From God Or Man? #3

Introduction. No matter how many times Muslims claim that Islam is a religion of peace, the fact of the matter is that Islam is becoming increasingly radicalized. Radicals are winning the battle for the hearts of the moderate Muslim populace. The publication, *TransState Islam*, said that "the great majority of all mosques in Democratic countries are controlled by extremists." The views of the extremists may very well lead to terrorism. Authorities argue that radical Islam only comprises 10-15% of the Muslim population. Many of them are peaceable in appearance, but they all could be potential killers. But you must remember that could be as many as 150 million people.

One can see that Islam is not a religion of peace by the fact that most wars or conflicts today involve Islam. A horrifying example of this can be seen in Sudan where, since 1983, Muslims have killed an estimated two million non-Muslim blacks in south. Another five million have been displaced. Slavery, rape, torture, forced Qur'anic indoctrination of children, and bombings of churches are regular events. I do not believe it to be an overstatement to say that the future of the world greatly depends upon the future development of Islam.

With all this in mind, let's examine three final comparisons of the Qur'an to various concepts in the scriptures.

I. ***The Qur'an And God***

- A. The Muslim concept of God is based on a misunderstanding of the Old Testament instead of the truth of the New Testament. This means that Allah has a very different personality than portrayed in the Bible:
 1. To the Muslim, Allah is portrayed as a fierce, relentless Oriental despot, with no love for humanity outside the followers of Muhammad. This, of course, ignores the many passages which assert the universal love of Jehovah (1 John 4:8, 10, 16; John 3:16; Romans 5:8-11; 2 Peter 3:9).
 2. In Islam, Allah has 99 names. However, "love" is not one of them. Allah seems to only love those who love him. The only time it is mentioned that Allah is loving is in relationship to those who follow him. Everyone else seems to be outside of that love until they have come under submission to him.
 3. In Islam, Allah is "transcendent," which means that he is beyond us as human beings, and unrelated to anything that we can know or comprehend. He is an unknowable and impersonal being that does not relate to or interact with his creation in an even remotely personal way.

- B. One very good question in Islam is why the term "Allah" is used instead of "God." The Muslims cite three reasons for using the term "Allah":
1. "Allah" is the personal name of God as used in the Qur'an.
 2. "Allah" has no gender. "God" can be male or female (i.e. god/goddess).
 3. "Allah" is one and literally means "the God." "God" may be singular and plural (i.e. God/gods and goddess/goddesses). Muslims flatly reject the teaching of three individual Beings that make up God (4:171; 5:73-74). The Qur'an says that those who so believe await a "grievous punishment." But the Bible does indeed teach that three persons compose the Godhead (Matthew 28:19; John 1:1-2; Acts 5:3-4; 1 John 5:7; Romans 15:16).
- C. The cult of the deity termed simply "the god" (Allah) was known throughout southern Syria and northern Arabia and it was obviously of central importance in Mecca, where the building called the Kaaba was indisputably his house.
1. The Muslim profession of faith attests to precisely that point: the Quraish (the tribe of Meccans Muhammad belonged to) are being called upon to repudiate the very existence of all the other gods save this one.
 2. It seems equally certain that Allah was not merely a god in Mecca but was widely regarded as the "high god," the chief and head of the Meccan pantheon, perhaps the result, as has been argued, of the growing influence of Jews and Christians in the area.
- D. "Allah" was originally a phase of the moon god, but early in Arabian history the name became a generic term for their primary god. This has led scholars to tie Allah to the moon god worshiped by the pagan Arabs.
1. Moon worship has been practiced in Arabia since 2000 B.C. The crescent moon is the most common symbol of this pagan moon worship as far back as 2000 B.C.
 2. One Muslim apologist confessed that the idol of moon god Hubal (later called Allah) was placed upon the roof of the Kaaba about 400 years before Muhammad. This may be the origin of the crescent moon on top of every minaret at the Kaaba and the central symbol of Islam atop of every mosque in the world. When Muhammad came along, he dropped all references to the name Hubal but retained the generic name "Allah."
- E. According to The Encyclopedia of World Mythology and Legend, Allah was married to the sun goddess. Together they produced the three goddesses, named Al-Lat, Al-Uzza, and Manat. All of these "gods" were viewed as being the top of the pantheon of Arab deities. So one can

see that Muhammad retained almost all the pagan rituals of the Arabs at the Kaaba and redefined them in monotheistic terms. Although Islam is today a monotheist religion, its roots rely heavily upon paganism.

II. ***The Qur'an And Salvation***

- A. Because the Qur'an teaches that the true religion with God is Islam, salvation is achieved only through submission to the teachings of Allah. Therefore, salvation in Islam requires that one must be a member of the Islamic faith.
- B. There are three basic tenants of salvation in Islam.
 1. Forgiveness is conditioned upon good works and Allah's choice of mercy.
 - a) Muslims believe that by striving to please God and by doing good works, they will hopefully gain entrance to heaven through personal merit.
 - b) The Qur'an clearly teaches that salvation is achieved on the basis of meritorious good works and personal righteousness (2:281; 45:22) In Islam, there is no atonement for sin -- no propitiatory basis for the forgiveness of sins. Allah simply forgives whom He chooses to forgive (4:48; 11:106-108).
 - c) Islam also teaches that on the judgment day one's good and evil deeds will be weighed on a scale. Good works are heavy and evil deeds are light (Qur'an 23:102-103). No Muslim can have an assurance of salvation, because he has no ultimate guarantee of either the weight of his good works or the final favor of Allah. The only exception to this is that radical Muslims have been taught by their clerics that death for the cause of Allah will guarantee them Paradise (Qur'an 4:74-76; 47:4-6; 52:17, 19-20, 22).
 - d) The biblical view of forgiveness involves a free gift of God's grace and mercy as a past action, based on the death of Christ on the cross for sin. Once one obeys from the heart that form of doctrine, they are saved (Romans 6:17-18).
 2. Jesus was not crucified and was not the Messiah.
 - a) Islam practically removes Christ from its doctrinal scheme. To the Muslim, He is not the Lord of the heavenly kingdom, the Son of God, the Savior of men; but is reduced to the rank of a Jewish prophet, inferior in every respect to Muhammad (5:72; 19:88-92). Furthermore, they do not believe that Jesus was equal with God (3:59).

- b) Muslims do not deny the history that someone died on the cross of the New Testament, the squabble merely revolves around exactly who was on that cross!
 - (1) The Qur'an says that someone who looked like Jesus was crucified on the cross in a case of mistaken identity (4:157).
 - (2) Many Muslims appeal to the Gospel of Barnabas as proof that the unknown look alike was Judas Iscariot.
- c) But the Bible says differently.
 - (1) Jesus claimed to be the Son of God. The Jews understood it (Matthew 11:27; 16:13-17; 26:63-65) and the power of miracles proved it (John 9:35-38; 10:30-33; 20:30-31). Jesus was, is, and forever will be God (John 1:1-2, 14; 5:18; 10:30; 14:9; 12:45; 20:28).
 - (2) Jesus died by crucifixion. It was predicted (Mark 8:31) and there were eyewitnesses (John 19:18, 31-35; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8). This same Jesus was raised from the dead (Acts 1:11; 2:36; Romans 10:12; Hebrews 13:8).
- 3. God is fatalistic.
 - a) This is the doctrine that all events are predetermined by fate and are therefore unalterable (14:4; 17:97).
 - b) Abdiyah Akbar Abdul-Haqq observed, "Even if a person desires to choose God's guidance, he cannot do so without the prior choice of God in favor of his free choice. This is sheer determinism." Dr. J. Christy Wilson writes, "The fifth article of Muslim faith is predestination ... the fact that everything that happens, either good or bad, is foreordained by the unchangeable decrees of Allah. It will be seen at once that this makes Allah the author of evil, a doctrine that most Muslim theologians hold."

III. ***The Qur'an And The Unbeliever***

- A. Though it may be true that the actions of terrorists do not represent the feelings of most Muslims, it is not true that their actions are in violation of the teachings of the Qur'an. The majority of Muslims do not practice a "radical" form of Islam, or else we would have a lot more problems than we do now. But the message of the radicals would not find the success it has had if there were not some supporting basis within Islam. The radical movement has been called a struggle for the "heart and soul" of Islam. As I said before, the future of the world greatly depends upon the future development of Islam.
- B. I want it to be clear that I do appreciate the difference between literal and symbolic language. The rules of language dictate that the immediate and remote contexts of a particular word or phrase are what determine its meaning.

1. For example, the New Testament speaks of "fighting" in the Lord's cause (1 Timothy 6:12; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; Ephesians 6:10-17). But the immediate context tells us how to conduct this fight (1 Timothy 6:11-13). Timothy's "fight" was a spiritual one, not a carnal one. The same is true for these other passages.
 2. As you will see, the passages from the Qur'an that are quoted do not speak of a spiritual "fight of faith." They use terms and phrases that make clear reference to physical war, bloodshed, and death. The religion of Islam was founded upon the practice of intimidation, coercion, and terror. Dissenters were not just "avoided," they were massacred. Furthermore, the Qur'an demands the eventual expansion of Islam throughout the world (2:193; 3:19, 85; 8:65). An Iranian Muslim wrote, "Islam came to reform society and to form a nation and government. Its mandate is the reform of the whole world. Such a religion cannot be indifferent. It cannot be without a law of jihad."
- C. Many have said that Muslims are taught to fight only in self-defense. The familiar term "jihad," often translated "holy war," literally means "struggle." Many Muslims emphasize that jihad is about struggling against evil desires and, if necessary, defending one's homeland and religious heritage (2:190-192). The jihad is essentially a permanent state of hostility that Islam maintains against the rest of the world.
1. However, it does not take much to see that the Qur'an advocates fighting against the Jew and the Christian. Muslim radicals believe they are simply exercising their right to "defend Islam" by engaging in an offensive jihad interpreted defensively. Muhammad used the example of "fighting" in Moses' day to defend the practice in his day, and for future generations (2:244-246).
 2. The expression, "People of the Book," is found throughout the Qur'an, and it refers to Jews and Christians. Notice what Muslims are to do with regard to them (4:74-76, 84; 9:29-30, 39, 123; 61:4). The primary reason of the animosity toward Jews and Christians is because of their rejection of Muhammad as the last of the prophets.
 3. Furthermore, the Qur'an frequently promises Allah's favor and reward to those who are slain in battle (3:157-158, 169-171, 195).
- D. Again, not all Muslims believe that Islam encourages, or even approves the use of deadly force in the defense and/or spread of Islam. However, no one can successfully deny that Muhammad approved of such. His political and religious power was purchased with the blood of his allies and his adversaries. The Qur'an unequivocally sanctions the use of carnal methods in fighting the opposition. But the Bible disapproves

of the use of force in either defending or advancing the Lord's kingdom (Matthew 26:52; John 18:36; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5). The Bible says vengeance belongs to God and that we are to "overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:19-21). This is in stark contrast with what we have read in the Qur'an.

Conclusion. As one can see, the teachings of the Qur'an are vastly different than the word of God. There comes a point where one must decide what one will believe. Which do you believe: the Qur'an or the Bible? Sufficient evidence has been shown to demonstrate the terrible shortcomings of the Qur'an. Be ready to give a defense of what you believe (1 Peter 3:15). The Muslim needs converting just like any other sinner. If you have seen evidence to make you believe in God and His promises of obedience, He will freely give you salvation from the penalty and power of sin, a cleansed conscience, a deep peace, an untouchable joy, a new nature, and an eternal home with Him in heaven. Will you come and obey His gospel today?