

Muslims – In Need of a Savior

“And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what [shall be] the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.” Matthew 24:3-13

In this article, we would like to look at the life of one of these false prophets Jesus warned about, and the belief system that he put into place—a belief system that has blinded the eyes of at least 1 billion people around the world today.

To begin, what is a Muslim? Who are these people in need of a Savior?

A Muslim is a person who adheres to the religion known as Islam. *Islam* means submission, and in this context means submission to the will of Allah. (Allah is the name Muslims use for God.)

The religion of Islam was founded by a man named Mohammed. He is considered to be a great prophet by his followers. They say he is a prophet who superseded all the prophets who came before him including the One the Muslims call Jesus, Son of Mary.

Who was this man known as Mohammed? Consider these basic historical points:

- He was born in the city of Mecca, Arabia, around 570 AD.
- He was raised as a polytheist (as a child he was taught to believe in many gods.)
- Both his parents had died by the time he reached age 6.
- He was sent first to his grandfather and then passed off to his uncle, Abu Talib, to be raised.
- As a caravan driver, he met Christians and Jews on his travels who believed in one God.
- He was noticed by a wealthy 40 year old widow named Khadija, who was impressed by his abilities. She proposed marriage and he accepted. They were married when Mohammed was 25 years old.
- Married to this woman of wealth, he had lots of time to think. He would go out to a mountain cave to fast and meditate. It was there he claimed to receive visions of the angel

Gabriel choking him in order to force him to recite.

- In these trances he would go into convulsions and fall on the ground.
- His wife and his cousin Ali became his initial followers, and after a time he began to preach in public, reciting the verses of his revelation, which came to be known as the Qur'an (Koran). He gained some prominent converts, but the movement grew slowly.
- Mohammed was ridiculed in the city of Mecca and moved to Medina, a city about 200 miles north.
- He then began to raid the caravans that passed through Medina.
- He organized an army and drove the Jews out of Medina, murdering about 700 men.
- As his forces grew strong through plunder, he got strong enough to overthrow Mecca.
- He killed several poetesses and also a nursing mother.
- After Khadija died, Mohammed married many other women including a 9 year old girl.
- His immorality is well documented in Muslim literature (A sickening account of one Muslim's discovery of Mohammed's evil deeds can be read in Nabeel Qureshi's book "Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus" in chapter 43.)
- He began to "convert" all Arabia to Islam at the threat of death and was in control of the whole area when he died at age 63.

We would like to share 4 reasons why Mohammed is one of the false prophets that Jesus warned would come:

1. Mohammed claimed that Old and New Testaments spoke of him. Two passages Muslims use are Deut 18:18 and John 16:12-13

De 18:18 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

Joh 16:12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

In examining Deut 18:18 we observe that Mohammed was not of Jewish descent and he commanded things that are against the will of God. Mohammed was also not "like unto thee" (referring to Moses.) Moses met God face to face, wrought miracles, and was the meekest of men. This description fits Jesus perfectly, but not Mohammed!

In looking at John 16:12-13, Mohammed's followers say "that's him! Mohammed is the prophet that Jesus was saying would come." But Mohammed was no such comforter. Jesus said this Comforter would be a spirit of truth; not a very sinful man! Jesus said this comforter would dwell within the apostles. Mohammed obviously could not have done that. Jesus also said this Comforter would be with them forever. Mohammed was most assuredly dead and buried at 63 years of age. Many generations of true Christians could testify to a personal experience with the Holy Spirit of God that fits this description perfectly,

2. Mohammed was not a holy man. In 2 Peter 1:21 “*holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*”

We will not go into all the details of Mohammed’s personal life, but he was a wretchedly immoral man. Not only did he do these immoral deeds, but he also had them put in the Koran as permissible. In Sura XXXIII The Confederates (CIII.) we read: *And when Zaid had settled concerning her to divorce her, we married her to thee, that it might not be a crime in the faithful to marry the wives of their adopted sons, when they have settled the affair concerning them. And the behest of God is to be performed. No blame attacheth to the prophet where God hath given him a permission.* So you see when Mohammed wanted personal liberties, he tailored his so-called holy book [Koran] to fit it in! He was also a murderer. Remember the caravans? Remember the poetesses? Remember the 700 Jews?

Let’s ponder the question. Which man is most worthy of our allegiance? Compare the sensual, sinful, vengeful life of Mohammed with the description of Jesus in 1 Peter 2:21-24.

For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: 22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: 23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: 24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. 25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

That, dear friends, was written by a man who knew Jesus personally. Peter knew that Jesus was guilty of:

- Not a single lie.
- Not a single attack on passing caravans.
- Not a single act of immorality.
- Not a single murder of anyone, let alone old women and nursing infants.

And Peter knew that instead of causing others to suffer, Jesus suffered FOR you and for me!

Oh, if Muslims would only have the courage to compare the sordid character of Mohammed with the spotless character of Jesus Christ, would not the blindness fall from their eyes?

3. Mohammad denied the Deity of Christ Mohammed denied that Jesus was the Son of God. And even today, Muslims cling firmly to that teaching. If you would go into the 3rd most holy Muslim shrine, the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem you would see in three places the Arabic inscription that spells out Islam’s denial of Christ. “Allah has no son.” And Mohammed’s words in the Koran in Sura V The Table (CXIV) are: *Infidels now are they who say “God is the Messiah son of Mary.”*

But what does the Bible say? Isaiah 7:14 *“Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”* Matthew 1:23 *“Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.”* Isaiah 9:6 *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*

Here’s another passage from the Koran in Sura IX.1 Immunity (CXIII.) *“The Jews say Ezra is a son of God and the Christians say The Messiah is the Son of God. Such the sayings in their mouths! They resemble the saying of the Infidels of old! God do battle with them! How are they misguided!*

Compare this with *“When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”* Matthew 16:13-18

What then is the state of the over 1 billion Muslims before God? John 3:36 makes it very clear. Jesus said, *“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”* Does your heart not ache for all these poor deluded souls? They are under God’s wrath!

4. Mohammed was driven by an evil spirit. Consider this quote: *Stricken with panic, Mohammed arose and asked himself, “What did I see? Did possession of the devil which I feared all along come to pass?”* Mohammed’s first response, and might I add the correct one, was that he was dealing with an evil spirit. God’s Spirit does not choke us and throw us into sweating convulsions like Mohammed went into when he prophesied.

2Timothy 1:7 *“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”* Mohammed had very likely been exposed to the truth when he spoke with Christians in his younger days. When he rejected to follow Christ, he automatically became a servant of Satan.

Now we will quickly review the 10 points that make up Islamic belief and practice. First, there are the 5 Articles of Islam, and then there are the 5 Pillars of Islam.

5 Articles of Islam

1. One God whose name is Allah
2. Angels—every person has two
3. Last Days—when the good one has done will be weighed against his bad deeds.
4. Scripture—Muslims accept the Torah, Psalms of David, the four Gospels, Koran (the words

Mohammad said when he came out of his trances, which were memorized and later written down, though he could not read or write)

5. Hadith—recordings of what Mohammed did and said (an appendix to Koran to help interpret it)

5 Pillars of Islam

1. Shahada—There is no God but Allah and Mohammed is his prophet
2. Daily prayers—Five times a day toward Mecca
3. Almsgiving—1/30th of a person's income
4. Fasting—during the month of Ramadan—sunlight hours only
5. Pilgrimage—a once in a lifetime trip to Mecca

Other characteristics of Islamic culture:

- Women - It is a well-documented fact that women are considered inferior to men in many parts of the Muslim world, and in some cases treated most cruelly.
- Jihad – *“Fight and slay the pagans wherever you find them and lie in wait for them in every stratagem of war. Fight those who do not believe in God in the last day, and fight the people of the Book, and fight them also who do not accept the religion of truth”*. Muslims believe the only way they can know they will go to Paradise is to die while fighting. This, in part explains the fanatical zeal of the suicide bombers of 9/11 and groups such as Al Qaeda, Hamas, and Hezbollah. Many Muslims despise the West and want Israel destroyed more than anything else.
- Conversion - Converting to Islam is very easy. All one needs to do is make the statement publicly, “There is no God but Allah and Mohammed is his prophet.” Well, you say, what if I don't mean it? It doesn't matter. Under Muslim teaching that is a genuine conversion. They consider a statement of the lips to be a genuine conversion. The heart does not need to be involved at all. That is so different, from the God we serve, isn't it? God doesn't want a lip profession, He wants our heart! Jesus said *“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.”* When the Ethiopian and Philip were in the chariot, and the Ethiopian inquired about baptism, Philip said... *“If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest”*. Christianity is not about getting people to perform certain phrases, prayers, payments, and pilgrimages. Christianity is about a transformed life; a life that voluntarily pours itself out in loving service to a loving Savior.
- Apostasy - If you renounce your belief in Islam, you have 60 days to recant. If you do not, you become open game for death. You can renounce Islam the 2nd time, and again have a 60 day chance to repent. But if you renounce it the third time, you don't have 60 days. You can be killed on sight immediately.
- Conflict - Muslims are deeply divided into two main camps, the Shiites and the Sunnis.

Muslims do not believe Jesus died on the cross. Some of them say God took Jesus to heaven and replaced Him with someone that looked like Him. Some say Jesus just fainted, and then managed to get out of the tomb when He came to.

But the Bible insists on one thing, and that is Jesus did indeed die on the cross of Calvary! And if that is true, (and all history, Biblical and otherwise, support it) then the passage in the Koran that says that Jesus was neither killed nor crucified is false. Like a row of dominoes, the entire Koran falls to the ground. Muslims themselves believe that if there is one error in the Koran, all of it is false.

Now, in spite of everything we've just discussed, Islam is 2nd largest religion in the world today. That's correct only because Roman Catholics are included with the Christians. Around 65 nations in the world are Islamic today. Nearly half of them are 85% Muslim or higher. India and China both have 100 million Muslims. Indonesia has nearly 200 million Muslims. One out of every 5 people on the face of the earth is Muslim.

What is even more alarming is the rapid growth of Islam in the West. In 1945, England had one mosque (Muslim place of worship) in the whole country. Today there are well over 1,000, and Muslims outnumber Methodists and Baptists combined. Think about it – in England, the denominations of John Wesley and Charles Spurgeon are outnumbered by the followers of Mohammed. As churches are closed in England they are being reopened as mosques. The very church that sent out William Carey, the great missionary to India, is a Muslim mosque today.

The picture is also sobering in the United States and Canada. In 1990, there were 30 mosques in America. Today there are over 3,000 and a new one being established every week.

What are the reasons they are growing like this?

- Islam is an aggressive religion, and is sponsored by oil rich Islamic nations
- Muslim's high birthrate—4 or 5 children vs. 2 or fewer of most supposedly Christian nations
- An easy to follow religion—recite the creed and you are converted
- A universal religion—accepts all races and nationalities
- The vacancy in men's hearts because many churches are no longer preaching the Gospel

Many Muslim countries are very closed against Christians. The word "missionary" to them is equivalent to the word "spy" If you do manage to get in you are very handicapped and live there at risk of your life.

But God is bringing the Muslims to North America, where Christians can reach out to them in relative safety. Dearborn, Michigan, has more Muslims than in some entire Islamic countries. More Iranians are in Los Angeles than in every city in Iran itself, except one.

Muslims move here thinking that all Americans are Christians. One of our responsibilities in talking with them is to let them know that true Christians are people who obey the Word of God.

We must make it clear to them that Jesus taught that the way to everlasting life is straight and narrow and invite them to walk in that way.

How can we witness to a Muslim?

Be a friend, listen, then respond. (We actually have quite a few beliefs in common that make it easier for us to witness to Muslims.) Some beliefs we have in common or that are similar are:

- One God over all created all things
- There will be a Judgment day
- In the end, there is a Heaven and Hell
- Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and Jesus are from God and everything they said is true. (The way they get around the verses where Jesus indicated that He is the Son of God is by saying that the Gospels have been corrupted).

So ask your Muslim friend what he believes and then listen. Christians don't have to be afraid to hear what Muslims believe because Islam has nothing to offer a born again Christian. They have a dead prophet; we have a living Savior! They have a God who only loves you if you earn his love by doing a lot of things; we have a God who loved us when we were dead in trespasses and sins! They have no assurance of salvation, because their salvation is based on works; we can go to rest each night with the sweet assurance that it is well with our soul!

Let a Muslim tell you what he believes and then ask him "You believe in Jesus don't you?" They will say "Yes." (Muslims believe Jesus was a mighty truthful prophet and that He never sinned.) Then just tell him what Jesus has done for you. How sinful, scared, helpless and hopeless you were before you knew Christ. How frightening eternity looked without Jesus. And then share with them that when you surrendered to Christ, He became your dearest friend, and He helps you say "no" to sin, and He gives you peace and He gives you rest, and you love Him so much, and you want to love Him more!

Don't get into attack mode; don't mention terrorism; don't get into a "my book versus your book" argument. Just talk about Jesus!

It takes love and it takes time to reach Muslims. Relationships are important to them. Many Muslims have been saved simply because someone showed love to them. Anabaptist Christians have a special obligation to Muslims. The average Christian has a hard time convincing a Muslim that he is a sinner because the Muslim will say, "I pray and I fast faithfully, I don't drink, I dress modestly -what can you offer to me?" And what can the average Christian say?

You can also contribute financially to the various publishing houses that are sharing the Gospel in the form of books and pamphlets. You may not be able to personally travel to Turkey or Egypt, but your gift can help sow many seeds of truth in those countries by way of the printed page.

Pray for the salvation of the Muslims. Do all we can to reach them for Christ. Their ultimate

goals are no different than Christian's goals. They have jobs. They have children. They want to be happy, and they want to go to heaven when they die. And Jesus is the answer for the longing of the Muslim heart! He said in John 10:10 *I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*

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