

Islam versus christianity: which is true? assignment

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There are similarities in the two faiths, but this paper will challenge the allegations Muslims make against the Christian religion, and put the issues to rest. This paper will explore the Islamic faith, from the inception, and compare the worldviews and doctrines with Christianity. Islam and Christianity cannot both be true. MUHAMMAD BACKGROUND Muhammad was born in Mecca, which was a very appropriate birthplace for a prophet who would radically change world history. He was an orphan by the age of six, and was cared for by family members. When he was old enough, he began to articulate in the family business of trading caravans.

His life changed when he met and married Jihad, a woman of property, who was instrumental in helping his religious development. But before his religious endeavors, he was a successful merchant and father. When he was about 40, he began to engage in annual periods of solitary religious contemplation. Every year, during the month of Ramadan, he secluded himself in a cave on Mount Hair. Eventually he started having dreams involving angels and he began to experience mysterious phenomena such as lights and sounds, having no source. It was from these dreams that he became convinced that he was the prophet his people had been expecting.

After a period of several years, Muhammad was finally convinced that he was receiving messages from the God of Moses, and began to preach to the Quasars, bringing them a scripture in their own language. This was the birth of the Islam religion and the Quern. The Quern was revealed to Muhammad over a period of twenty-three years, line by line, bit by bit. It came to Muhammad in a random manner, not in the order we see it today.

Muhammad could not read or write, so the Muslims learned it by heart, and

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the iterate ones wrote it down. It was not until twenty years after his death that the first compilation was made.

BACKGROUND OF ISLAM Islam is one of the great three faiths that arose out of the Middle East. The other two are Judaism and Christianity. They are all three linked, as they worship one God. Being a Muslim, a follower of Islam, has nothing to do with being an Arab. Nowadays there are many millions of Muslims all over the earth, of diverse races, and Arab Muslims form only a small percentage of this segment. Muslim simply means, 'one who submits'. Muslims believe two basic things: that there is one god, supreme and unique; and that the revelation by Muhammad is the complete and undisputed revelation from this one god.

THE QUERN The Quern is a book with 114 chapters of revelations that were given to Muhammad between 610 CE, and his death in 632 CE. The chapters are listed in descending length, not in the order given. According to the Quern, Muhammad was one of three prophets entrusted with the sacred words of God, or Allah. The other two were Moses and Jesus. Unlike Jesus, though, Muhammad was just a mortal man, but a perfect example of what all Muslims should be. The Muslims believe the Quern is God's full ND final revelation. **THEMES IN THE QUERN REVELATIONS** The revelations appearing in the Quern have four primary themes.

First, that Muhammad has been sent to institute true monotheism (there is one and only one God). The second theme is that it was time for unity among the three faiths based on their common tradition. His revelations retell many accounts from both the Old and New Testaments, all of them meant to

demonstrate that Islam was the final fulfillment of Jewish and Christian scripture. The third theme of Muhammad revelations was that everyone will be bodily resurrected at Judgment Day, whereupon the righteous will enter Paradise and all others will suffer eternity in Hell.

The fourth theme is concerned with leading the moral life and obeying divine authority, predicated, of course, on the doctrine of divine Judgment and the afterlife. The Quern itself admits that it is ambiguous in places, so Muslims have adopted a body of exegesis which has become their traditional and authoritative text. Muslims believe that reciting the words of the Quern in any other language but Arabic is not possible, as this was Allah's divine plan, to be read in Arabic. They believe that the very literal interpretation would get lost in the translation.

CHRISTIANITY IN THE QUERN The Bible in the Old Testament, and the Quern, each affirm that the creation is the absolute beginning of time. They believe there was an omnipotent creation from nothing. Both the Bible and the Quern speak of the fall, but in the Quern, a fallen angel is the one who tempts Adam and Eve. The belief in the covenant with Abraham is shared by Christianity and Islam. This is due to the fact that Abraham was unique, unlike his ancestors, in that he worshipped only one God. There were two divine promises made to Abraham that were repeated throughout Genesis: "I will make you a great nation... (Gene 12: 2); and "I will give this land to your descendants" (Gene 12: 7). The story of how Moses overmastered the Pharaoh is in more detail in the Quern, than even in the Bible, where it occupies a large portion of Exodus. Moses managed to secure the freedom for the nation of Israel. Muslims believe there were many prophets, including

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Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad. There are specific laws in the Bible, as well as in the Quern, that prohibit certain things, such as swearing, drinking, dietary restrictions, and theft, which may have extreme consequences.

The behavior of Salami's prophet, Muhammad, was the example of how to live a pure and perfect life. His conduct, down to the minutest details, was a template for Muslim behavior. ISLAMIC BELIEFS AND WORSHIP PRACTICES In the foundations of Islam there are Five Pillars, that Muslims were expected to follow. First, there is the Shaded, which is the Muslim confession of faith: Muhammad is the messenger of God. Second, the Salt, which is the formal prayer five times a day (and at other occasions), including body postures-?? bowing, prostrating, and sitting-?? while facing Mecca.

Every Friday Muslim men must go the Mosque for prayers. The chanting, or the continually repeating of God's name, is meant to remind the chanter that there is no God but God. We remember, and forget, but we always remember again. Third, the Gate: alimenting. They are required to give alms to support those in need and to do so at the end of each year. This is an obligation to Allah. Fourth, the Swam, which identifies the duty to fast from dawn to dusk each day during the month of Ramadan. Fifth, is the Hajj], which is the expectation that all Muslims will make a pilgrimage to Mecca during their lifetime.

AGREEMENTS/DISAGREEMENTS WITH THE CHRISTIAN FAITH The following are Just a few particulars about Islam versus Christian sects. Christianity confirms, while Islam denies, that God is a Trinity and Jesus Christ is God

incarnate. Islam states that this is polytheism. Islam denies that Jesus claims his own deity and instead teaches that this is a distortion by the church.

Islam accepts the virgin birth of Jesus. The Quern, however, denies that He is God or the Son of God, but considers Him a prophet. Islam does not believe that Jesus died and rose again.

Muslims hold that God removed Him from the physical world to await a triumphant turn to earth. Islam believes that the torture involved in the crucifixion was not appropriate for a prophet to endure. Islam believes no man can act as intermediary when asking God for forgiveness, unlike some Catholic sects who confess to a priest. Islam states that our actions get us into heaven, not just by faith, as Christians believe. Islam and Christianity agree that Jesus worked miracles, including curing the sick and rattans the dead.

WORLDVIEW OF ISLAM The six key doctrines of the worldview of Islam are as follows. First, Islam states there is only one God, whose name is Allah.

Second, there are angels and demons, even a chief demon named Satan.

Third, there are many prophets; Muslim tradition affirms as many as 124,

000; the last ' seal of the prophets' is Muhammad. Fourth, the prophets received divinely inspired books, such as the Torah from Moses, the Psalms from David, the Gospel from Jesus, and the Quern from Muhammad.

However, when the Bible contradicts the Quern, the Muslims deem the Bible in error.

Fifth, the Muslim doctrine teaches that if a person's good deeds outweigh the bad, that person may hope for paradise as a reward. Sixth, Allah is

absolutely sovereign and prayer involves reciting parts of the Quern and invoking Allah's power, but does not include requests of him. This is what the following five pillars of Islam, discussed earlier, are based upon. TESTING THE WORLDVIEW According to Grassroots, there are certain criteria when testing the worldview. These criteria will be applied to the Islamic faith. There are eight of these. First, does it explain what it ought to explain?

If a proposition is mysterious, then that is a strike against that worldview. Muslims believe that Jinni's, or genies, inhabit another dimension in which you cannot see them. There are good and evil Jinn's. They believe that Jinni's are made out of the residue of scorched fire. They can contact a person only through their thoughts, goading people with suggestions. Muslims believe that the Jinn's haunt houses, possess people, spook animals, and cause other unexplained phenomena. This is mysterious and non-verifiable. That is strike one against the Islamic worldview. Second, is there internal logical consistency?

Essential elements must converge without contradiction. Salami's main elements as listed earlier are that there is one true God; there are angels and demons; there are many prophets; the reports received divinely inspired books; if a person's good deeds outweigh the bad, that person will go to paradise; and Allah is absolutely sovereign and prayer must worship him, without asking anything of him. There is consistency among these items, so this indicates Islam passes this test. Third, is there coherency? A bunch of facts does not constitute a belief system (if ideas are connected, it's more likely to be true).

In the Islam faith, there is correlation among the facts that there is one true God, and that the prophets received messages from the true God. The one true God is sovereign, and must be revered. The formal prayers and the pilgrimage are consistent with worshiping one true God. Islam passes this test. Fourth, is there factual adequacy? There is no factual accuracy in the Muslims identification of Jesus. They confirm He is the Messiah, but their definition of the Messiah was not one that died and was raised from the dead, as proven by historians and scholars. They saw him as a prophet, on the same level as Muhammad.

This is another failed criterion. Fifth, is there existential viability? For a worldview to be a likely candidate for truth, its essential beliefs must be viable. It is a confirmed fact that Jesus was crucified on the cross, confirmed by scholars and historians both. Since Islam denies this fact, they fail this criterion also. Sixth, is there intellectual and cultural fecundity? Is this worldview (1) truly explanatory, (2) internally consistent, (3) coherent, (4) factually adequate, and (5) existentially viable, then it should inspire cultural and intellectual discovery, creativity and productivity.

Just because Islam has a large following globally and has produced a great civilization, does not make this criterion true. It must not fail any of the previous tests, which it did. Cultural success cannot count decisively in its favor. Seventh, is there radical ad-hoc readjustment? Does Islam substantially alter its view in light of counterintuitive? Islam states that murder is the greatest of all crimes because it is sacrilege. It was a commandment given by God through Moses, thou shall not kill. Moses was a

prophet that they fully endorsed. However, they changed their view in light of holy wars.

They advocate that killing in the name of God is acceptable (Quern 4: 74-76). This is morally reprehensible. They fail this criterion. Eighth, worldviews should not be more complex than is required to explain what they propose to establish. The Islamic faith is not very complex to understand. Their traditions and edicts are detailed down to what they can eat and what they can wear. They pass this criterion. So, overall it can be seen, that Islam does not pass most of the criterion necessary to prove their worldview. They are not basing their claims on historical or factual knowledge.

It is all based upon one man, who claimed to be a prophet, who had revelations that may or may not have come from a higher power. Many of his "revelations" contradict the Bible, which deems the religion inadequate. CHARGES MUSLIMS MAKE AGAINST CHRISTIANITY Islam denies that Christianity is the permanent revelation of God. They state that Muhammad corrects the past errors, what they call aberrations of Christianity. They state that Islam is the replacement for Christianity. This is based upon five major claims made by Islam against Christianity.

Claim one: Muslims need to account for the differences in God's nature while supporting their belief that Moses, David and Jesus were prophets of Allah. They claim that the Holy Book has been distorted. This would mean that either the writings of the Bible were distorted, or the original Christian documents supporting Islam were tampered with after the fact. But scholars have proven that the New Testament has been transmitted with accuracy.

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The Old Testament that one reads today is substantially similar to the ones printed in Muhammad day.

Jesus endorsed the Old Testament as God's revelation (Matt 5: 17-20). There would have to have been an enormous effort to insert all of the contradicting evidences into the "unedited" Bible, such as the Trinity, the incarnation, the crucifixion of Jesus, and salvation through faith alone. It also would have been next to impossible to seize and alter all of the texts that had been disseminated. The Quern itself states to consult Christian Scriptures to corroborate the veracity of Muhammad message (Quern 10: 94). This is yet another Quern contradiction, since Islam claims the Bible has untruths.

The second claim is that Jesus was not crucified. It is unthinkable in the Islam mind, that a prophet would be tortured as Jesus was. All of the Gospels confirm that Jesus was crucified and died. Historians have verified this fact. Scholars have studied the Gospels for centuries and have come to the same conclusion. Therefore, Islam must answer the challenge to this and provide a reasonable explanation. The third claim is that Jesus is not divine. They reject the trinity because Allah has no partner or son (Quern 4: 171, 5: 72). The New Testament is the most reliable source in this respect.

Jesus claimed deity, and his apostles agreed repeatedly. The fourth claim is that God is not triune. Allah is only one. Any other doctrine is considered polytheism. The Bible speaks of one God and three persons who are divine: the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Quern leaves out the Holy Spirit and deems Mary one of the divine persons. There are no facts to back this up. The Quern is simply wrong on this. Claim five is that Jesus was a prophet of

Islam. Islam claims that the Old Testament prophets' teaching was no different than Jesus gospel: one must worship God and obey His law.

They claim that the simple message of Jesus was lost and replaced by the Christian Gospel, which is a falsification. There is no prophet of Allah in the Bible who exhorts weak humans to know and live up to the divine law.

Instead we find a Savior calling people to Himself for forgiveness of their sins. CHRISTIANITY: THE DEFENSE The verification of the Christian faith is shown many places. There are ancient scholars who mention Jesus, and his life and resurrection. There are historical places which can be verified, as to where Jesus has been and what miracles and sermons he performed there.

There is the Bible, which testifies to His life and times. Christian faith has evolved from the life and teachings of Jesus, to a legacy of love and truth. Many ancient scholars have written about Jesus. Josephus (c. AD 35-100) referred to Jesus as Messiah in his work Jewish Antiquities. Jesus is referred to as a historical person and as Jesus's brother. Josephus makes another mention of Jesus (in his work Testimonies Flavianum) as one who was condemned on the cross by Pontius Pilate, thus confirming Jesus existence, and confirming his crucifixion.

Outside of the Bible, Josephus testimony is the earliest testimony about Jesus. The Babylonian Talmud contains clear references to Jesus of Nazareth, and his miracles. The Babylonian Talmud is a collection of rabbinic teachings finalized in the sixth century. Several texts refer to disciples of Jesus healing in Jesus name. It confirms that Jesus is not a myth; he is a real historical person. It is interesting to note that the miracles or the healing that Jesus

performed were listed in the Talmud as magic or sorcery, but nevertheless, are ascribed as facts.

These charges are identical to other claims in the second and early third centuries in the writings of Justine Martyr (c. 100-c. 165), and Origin (c. 18-c. 254). Nobody could account for Jesus miracles, except by labeling them as magic or sorcery. Some opponents to Christianity in the second century ascribed Jesus miracles to Satan's power, as preference in the scriptures. Even though they dispute the miracle-ability of Jesus, these rabbinic sources confirm the descriptions of Jesus in the New Testament.

The four canonical Gospels, however, are the most ancient sources, and therefore, the most helpful for historical Jesus facts, because they were written when eyewitness testimony about Jesus was still available. There is no dispute that Jesus was crucified on the cross. Again, this has been confirmed as a historical fact. The New Testament confirms this, but even if one discounts this, it should be noted that the New Testament is authored by eight different authors in those 27 books. There are multiple independent attestations of Jesus birth, life, teachings, miracles, death and resurrection.

Christianity is based upon love. It is not a dictatorship. It does not say, do this or else face a vengeful God. Since New Testament times, grace and love have always been the theme in the Bible. Jesus always spoke his words in love, even when he was admonishing people for their sinful deeds. To understand Christianity, one must understand who Jesus really was, as Jesus is the focus of the Christian faith. His words have been witnessed, analyzed,

written down, and confirmed by the Gospels. His words have been confirmed by scholars. He is written about in historical texts.

Christianity does not depend upon doing good deeds to obtain status or attain paradise when one dies. It is not by works, but by faith that favor in God is found. All people fall short in the eyes of God, but by the sacrifice of the Lamb, Jesus Christ, all are brought into the fold of forgiven and accepted children of God. All are saved by the grace of God. One can try to achieve favor with God by helping ore people, or giving more tithes, or shouting his glory from the street corner, but in the end, only God's grace will save. All are sinners, and God loves everyone anyway.

All make mistakes, and God loves everyone anyway. All listen to Satin's voice in their lives, and God loves anyway. The unconditional love of God cannot be matched by any idol or prophet or pleasure in this world. One must therefore, stay the course, and look forward to the Joyful reunion all Christians will have when the time comes. CONCLUSION Islam, then, on the basis of the claims herein, asserts itself as the replacement of Christianity; the one true religion. None of these assertions hold up, in light of the credentials of the New Testament and the supremacy of Jesus himself.