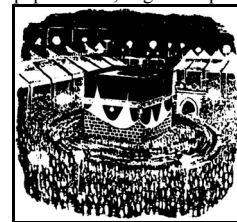


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1. Islam and Muslims

Islamist terrorists, Muslim suicide bombers, assassination of political opponents, death threats against Christians in the Arab world – the news are pouring into our homes on radio, TV and newspapers. Fear, anger and plain hatred against this powerful intruder is in the mind of many, whether Christians or simply civilized, moderate people.



But there is also great ignorance about the true nature of this strange religion. Many a pastor and ordinary Christian is greatly concerned about church- or family members becoming Muslims, often, as it were, over night.

No wonder some express their alarm about Islam as “the greatest threat to the Church today”, or others believe and teach that “Muslims are just under a curse and beyond redemption”. A few have even tried to witness to these “Islams” or “Mohammedans” as they may falsely name them, but have only reaped fierce opposition. Instead of “converting Muslims” they have found themselves at the receiving end where they suddenly became the “mission objects” to be switched over, bombarded with arguments against Christianity, or enticed by all kind of benefits to embrace Islam.

If Christ is your master you will want to listen and obey His commands, and follow his example. The words of Jesus to his disciples are still relevant today: “I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I **must** bring them also.” (John 10:16)

And the apostle Paul affirms that “God our Saviour wants **all** men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.” (1 Tim 2:4)

Is it too much to expect Christ’s followers to share the message of forgiveness, joy and truth with Muslims too? No, “for God did not give us a spirit of timidity (fear), but a spirit of power, of love and of a sound mind (self-discipline).” (2 Tim 1:7)

So, what can we learn about this religion? – The Arabic word “Islam” means “submission”, and “Muslim” stands for “one who submits”. This forms the basic understanding of the Muslim faith as expressed in Surah 19:93: “There is none in the heavens and the earth but (that) cometh to the Benificent as a slave.” (Pickthall)

1

1.1 How Old is Islam?

When we check the year 2002 in the Islamic calendar it says 1424 A.H. The A.H. stands for “after the Hijrah.” This refers to the time when Muhammad, the founder of Islam, was in trouble in his home town (Mecca) and fled to another town (Medina). This flight marked the beginning of Islam.

Is Islam Older than the Christian Faith?

No! It is about 600 years younger! That is why Muslims can say that they also believe in God (Allah), Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, Jonah and other biblical prophets, including Jesus.

But why then did Islam form a new religion? Why are they not simply content to believe in these prophets and Jesus?

Because their book tells them otherwise which makes them feel superior over other people. Surah 61:9 “It is He who has sent his messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, that he may proclaim it *over all religion.*” And Surah 3:110 “You are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah.” (S. = Surah = chapter of the Qur’an, the ‘holy book’ of Islam).

Also, the very nature of Allah, as introduced in the Qur’an, is not as we know the God of the Bible and Jesus Christ.

Islam and the Christian faith look similar only on the surface.

Christians and Muslims Agree that... But Islam Contradicts the Bible Saying that...

God created the world and all that is in it as well as heaven and hell.	Jesus was no more than a prophet. He was not the Son of God (S.5:78).
God is all-powerful, He knows everything and He is everywhere all the time.	Jesus was a good man, but was certainly not divine (S. 5:19).

God revealed His will to mankind through certain prophets.	God is not a Trinity (details chapter 7); to believe in such teaching simply is blasphemy (S. 4:171; 5:75-78,119).
--	--

God gave laws which should govern the lives of His people and prevent them from doing wrong.	Jesus did not die on the cross for sinners. (S. 4:157)
--	--

God will judge all people. Some will be permitted to go to heaven, while all others are doomed to hell. There is no atonement or reconciliation of the sinner to God by means of Jesus’ sacrifice or any other substitutionary sacrifice (S. 22:36+37)

1.2 The Crux of the Matter

FACT 1: If Jesus is not the Son of God, but only a prophet; if He is not part of the Trinity, i.e. part of God, and if He did not die on the cross for sinners to reconcile them to God – then all Christians believe a lie! Then it would follow that our Bible is not the Word of God, the Truth, for the original Bible has been changed by men just as the Muslims say! Then we were still unsaved and would face hell, because we believe something God never said!

FACT 2: But if Jesus is the divine Son of God, if the Bible is the truth, because it is God’s unchangeable word, and if Jesus died for us on the cross, then all Muslims are lost and face judgement and hell, because they refused to accept God’s offer of salvation.

Muslims Say:

“We have the final truth. The Bible is not true, because it was changed, that is why God sent the Qur’an, so that all people can believe the right way.”

Christians Say:

“The Bible we have is God’s unchangeable Word. We can fully trust what it says.”

Who is Right?

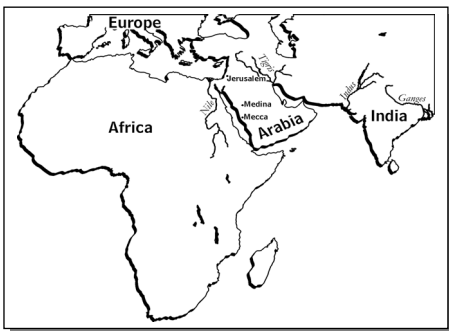
The Muslims say: “We are!”
Christians also say: “We are!”

How can we find out? How can we be sure that what we believe is God’s truth?

We will have to reflect on these questions very carefully, because our eternal future depends on it!

1.3 Focus Back to History

The Lord Jesus was born in Israel, where He lived all His life and where He was also crucified and killed. There He rose from the grave and from there He was raised to heaven. Israel is right in the centre of three large continents: Europe, Asia and Africa.



When the apostles and evangelists began to share the Good News, the Gospel, with the people, and when the New Testament was completed, the Gospel spread very fast. First to the countries near Israel, and also to Ethiopia and

North Africa, then to Europe and later to other countries. (Read Acts 2 and note the countries listed.) That is why you learned about God and the Lord Jesus Christ and what He did for you! But many of your neighbours and friends do not know. How can they find out?

During the New Testament period a number of countries could not easily be reached by the apostles and evangelists. One of these was the large desert country of Arabia. There were some Christians, but we are not at all sure if they really loved the Lord Jesus. Perhaps they did not even have a Bible. Likewise the Jews who had settled in Arabia did not hold on to the Old Testament scriptures.

The people of Arabia were mostly herdsmen (they had goats, sheep, horses and camels) or traders. Since there were no trucks or railroads at the time all overland transport was done on the backs of camels. One of the main trade routes from Africa to Europe and Asia went through Arabia. The traders brought slaves and goods from Africa and sold them elsewhere, and also brought other goods back to Africa such as silk and spices.

All this shows us that Muhammad was brought into a world dominated by idolatry and witchcraft. This certainly had an effect on him. We read in the Qur'an of Muhammad: "I have been commanded to serve the Lord of this city". (S. 27:91)

Of course all Muslims will say that this means Allah. And they are probably right! But at that time the Lord of Mecca was Hubal. Besides, Allah was the name which was also used for the high-god ("il-lah" = the strong one), and he was also called the father of the three female deities al-Lat, al-Uzza and al-Manat. These "daughters of Allah" were widely worshipped in Arabia at that time.

2.3 The Early Life of Muhammad

Muhammad was born just about 570 years after the birth of our Lord Jesus in Mecca, the major trading city of Arabia. Before he was born his father had already died. His mother passed away when he was only six years old, and Muhammad was left an orphan. He was brought up first by his grandfather, and when he also died about a year later, by an uncle. Altogether Muhammad had five foster parents before he reached the age of eight. When Muhammad was 25 years old, he married his employer, a twice-widowed lady by the name of Khadijah. We learn of Muhammad that he was a clean living, quiet young man. The marriage with Khadijah, who was 15 years older than Muhammad, lasted 25 years and ended with her death. There seems to have been a good relationship between the two. They had several children, but their only son died as a little child. Muhammad never overcame this loss.

2.4 Muhammad's First Revelations

At the age of forty Muhammad began to seek for a deeper meaning in life and often went out of town to a cave in a mountain called Hira to meditate, sometimes for days. There in the cave he heard strange voices which he later claimed to be revelations given by the angel Gabriel. These would later become the 'holy book' of Islam, the Qur'an.

At first he was quite terrified. Thereafter he received messages over a period of 22 or 23 years until he died. Islamic tradition reports that Muhammad was strangely affected and very troubled by these experiences. At times he foamed from his mouth and roared like a young camel. It seemed as though his soul was taken from him and he looked intoxicated. No wonder many of his contemporaries called him names such as "a possessed one" (S. 37:35; 44:13; 52:29; 68:2; 81:22), "magician" (S. 10:2;

2. Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam

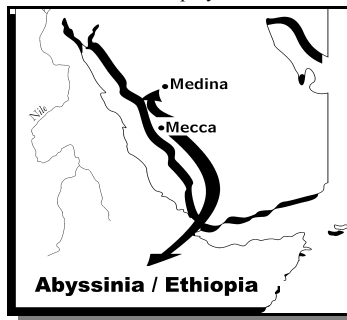
2.1 How Islam Began

Most of the people of Arabia were pagans. They believed in many gods and worshipped these particularly in a holy shrine which they called "Ka'ba". That is the Arabic word for cube. In this house a 'god' called Hubal was kept. He had been brought from Moab, a little east of Israel. That is where the heathen 'god' ha-Baal (ha 'the' in Hebrew) was worshipped, of whom Yahweh Elohim, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of Israel, warned so often in the Old Testament! (Num 25:1-3; Lev 18:1-5; Judg 2:10-13; 1 Kings 18:16-40). You can see the similarity: Hubal - haBaal, and even more so when we are aware that in both the Hebrew and Arabic written languages vowels were not shown. Let's be aware:

Whatever we know about Muhammad, his family and friends, and the early history of Islam comes from Islamic sources. Apart from these we would know nothing.

2.2 Before Muhammad was born

These sources tell us that the grandfather of Muhammad had no sons. He went to the Ka'ba to pray for sons. He laid his hands on the statue of Hubal and said: "Please Allah, give me sons". He promised that if he would have 10 sons he would offer one of them as a sacrifice to Hubal / Allah. He got 10 sons! When he went to the idol Hubal - who was called 'the Lord of this city' - the choice fell on his son Abdallah (the name means 'the servant of Allah'), who later became the father of Muhammad. By the guidance and advice of a witch, Hubal was asked to accept 100 camels in exchange for Abdallah, and he accepted. So Abdallah lived, and in due time Muhammad was born.



15:16; 38:3), "bewitched" (S. 17:50; 25:9; 44:13; 81:25), "fortune-teller" (S. 52:29; 69:42) and "poet" (S. 37:35; 52:30; 69:43).

At first these messages emphasized that there is only one god, Allah, and that all idols must be destroyed. Added were warnings of the coming judgement, the need for right living and the prospect of eternal life in paradise or hell. Both were described in very graphic details and must have made a great impression on his hearers.

Initially Muhammad preached with little success. The people of Mecca ridiculed him. In fact, his wife became his first convert. But over the years a couple of hundred other citizens of Mecca followed him.

One day Muhammad received a revelation which must have appealed to the people of Mecca: "Have you considered al-Lat, al-Uzza and al-Manat, these three? Their intercession is to be hoped for." These were the very words used when the pagans came for their religious feasts to the Ka'ba and walked around it seven times chanting these words. Now more Meccans became Muslims and the persecution of Muhammad and his companions stopped for some time. Soon, however, he changed his mind claiming that these verses (S. 53:19) had been inspired by Satan (thus called "The Satanic Verses"), and that the angel Gabriel had the last part withdrawn at a later stage: "their intercession is to be hoped for". In this manner a number of verses were taken away from the Qur'an, and others were added.

2.5 Muhammad's Flight to Medina

This withdrawal of "revelation" made the people of Mecca even more hostile, so Muhammad decided to follow a call to go to the city of Yathrib, about 250km north of Mecca. This happened soon after the death of both Khadijah and his influential uncle Abu Talib who had given him protection all along. In Yathrib a small number of people had become Muslims, but there were also three Jewish tribes and some pagans. They needed someone to lead and arbitrate between them. So in 622 Muhammad 'fled' to Yathrib which later came to be known as Medinah (= the City of the prophet). As we learned earlier, this is called the *Hijrah* and was the beginning of the calendar of Islam (AD 622), and of the Islamic era. It was in Medina that Muhammad became recognised as the head of a community, the Islamic 'ummah', for the first time. This formed the basis on which Islamic law could be established and Muhammad rose to become both religious and political leader of this city state. As someone has said:

"Islam is only Islam when Islam rules."

2.6 Muhammad's Change in Life

Now a totally new and different epoch began, both for Muhammad, now 52 years old, and Islam: the humble, quiet, faithful man became a powerful political leader. He married 13 wives, and not just to provide shelter and protection to destitute widows, as Muslims today like to think. This fact is extensively documented in early Islamic tradition.

The Life of Muhammad

570 Born in Mecca

595 Married Khadija

610 Received first revelation

622 Moved to Yathrib = Hijrah

Start of Islamic calendar

632 Died in Medina, age 62

His youngest wife was Aisha (Ayesha). She was seven when he married her, but nine when he "consummated the marriage" with her. It is touching to read that "she took her dolls with her", when she moved in with Muhammad. (Sahih Muslim, vol. 3, p. 716)

In order to provide for himself, his family and his nearly 100 companions and their families who came with him to Medina, some livelihood had to be found. So they ambushed one of the camel caravans of the Meccans. All the goods were taken and the prisoners were sold for a ransom back to their families in Mecca. Today we call men who do this 'bandits' or 'highway robbers'. In Islam it became the beginning of the 'holy war' (*jihad*). In an Islamic tradition we read: "This is the best method of earning both spiritual and temporal rewards. If victory is won, there is enormous booty of a country, which cannot be equalled to any other source of income. If there is defeat or death, there is everlasting paradise..." (Mishkat 2, p. 253)

Naturally the people of Mecca hit back and the Battle of Badr was fought. The Muslims occupied a very favourable position and won with their 300 men over the 1000 men of Mecca, which was, of course, interpreted to have been by the intervention of Allah (God). A number of battles were fought, and all but one were won by the ever growing number of Muslims. It was at this time that Muhammad had the following "revelation":

"...fight and kill the pagans wherever you find them, and seize them, beleaguer them and lie in wait for them ... Therefore when you meet the unbelievers, smite their necks off ... Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the last day, nor hold that forbidden which had been forbidden by Allah and his Apostle (that is Muhammad!) ... Until they pay the Jizya (a special tax for non-Muslims) with willing submission.

8

... 'Fight them on until there is no more tumult or oppression and there prevail justice and faith in Allah all-together and everywhere...' (S. 9:5; 47:4; 9:29; 8:39).



Based on this principle, Islam has divided the world into two dominions: the 'Dhar-ul-Islam' and the 'Dhar-ul-Harb', the 'territory or household of Islam' and the 'territory of war'. The aim is absolute world domination, and wherever there is no Islamic state governed by Islamic Law (Shariah), every effort must be made to bring this territory under the rule of Islam.

2.7 Muhammad at Medina

Let's have a closer look at the events in Medina. We are informed that the three Jewish tribes which lived there did not accept Muhammad as a prophet from God. They had to pay dearly for that. They were either expelled from the town or killed. At one point Muhammad ordered all men from one Jewish tribe to dig trenches in the market of Medina. Then he had all 600 – 800 men beheaded. Their women were distributed to the Muslims as concubines. Muhammad himself took one of them by the name of Rihana and that was not the only concubine he had (in addition to his other wives)! The more powerful Muhammad became, the more his character changed. He called for the murder of a number of people, whom he named "enemies of Allah and his messenger". Twenty-seven such assassinations are recorded (Details in the *Siratu'l Rasul* by Ibn Ishaq, rev. by Ibn Hisham).

Muhammad's 'Revelations' Brought Him Many Advantages

Many of the 'revelations' he received were for his own benefit and advantage. The Qur'an allows up to four wives for a Muslim man (not the other way round, mind you!), but to Muhammad as many as he was pleased to have:

"O Prophet! 'We have made lawful to you your wives ... and those whom your right hand possesses [slave girls] ... and any believing woman who dedicates her soul to the Prophet if the prophet wishes to marry her. This is only for you and not for the (other) believers! You may defer (turn off) any of them that you please, and you may receive any as you please. There is no blame on you if you invite one whose (turn) you had set aside'" (S. 33:50-51).

9

We even learn from the Islamic tradition in which circumstances this was revealed: the favourite wife of Muhammad, young Aisha, reported:

"I used to backbite those (females) who offered themselves to the Mes-senger of Allah. So I asked: Does a woman offer herself? Then the Almighty Allah revealed: 'You may put off whom you please of them, you may take to you whom you wish...'. I said: 'It seems to me that your Lord hastens to satisfy your desire'". (Mishkat 1, p. 210)

Muhammad's Wives + Concubines

1. Khadija	(Age at marriage =) 40
2. Sa'uda Bint Zama	30 ?
3. Aisha Bint Abu Bakr	9
4. Hafsa Bint Umar	18
5. Zainab Bint Khusaima	30
6. Umm Salama	29
7. Zainab Bint Jahsh	38
8. Juweiriyah	20
9. Rayhana (Jewish) – Concubine	?
10. Maryam (Christian) – Concubine	?
11. Safia	35
12. Umm Habiba	17
13. Maimuna	27

Muhammad was well over 50 years old, when He married these wives, except Khadija.

Muhammad's authority was not to be questioned:

"When a matter has been decided by Allah and his Apostle (Muhammad), it is not fitting for a believer ... to have any option about their decision." (S. 33:36)

The decision in question was that, against former laws, Muhammad fell in love and married the wife of his adopted son Zaid. He had indirectly provoked Zaid to divorce her. When Muhammad had treated one of his wives wrongly he swore to her and another of his wives to grant them a favour, if they would keep his fault secret. However they did not comply. Promptly this 'revelation' came:

"You seek to please your consorts (wives)... Allah has already ordained for you the dissolution of your oaths, and Allah is your protector...." (S. 66:1-2).

By that token he was even encouraged to break his oath. Little wonder then that toward the end of his life he said: "Whoever obeys me shall enter Paradise and whoever disobeys me has refused (paradise)". (Mishkat 1, p. 173)

2.8 The End of Muhammad's Life

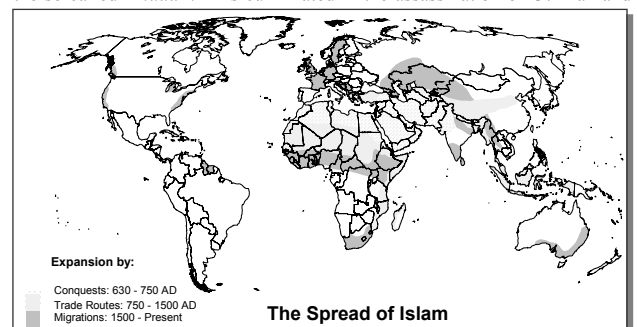
In the year 632 AD Muhammad died, but not before he had subjugated his old home city of Mecca (in 630 AD). He approached the city with 10,000 warriors and the Meccans finally surrendered without resistance. Muhammad smashed all the idols, but he fitted into his religion most of the pagan rituals which were practised around the Ka'ba, and others.

2.9 Evaluation of Muhammad

Muhammad's achievement during his life were truly amazing: from a poor orphan boy he rose to power to become the ruler of the Arabian peninsula. He must also be credited for taking the Arab people from a stage of idolatry and polytheism to a firm belief in one god only. However, he certainly did not rise to the moral height to become a model for all mankind, nor did he ever meet the biblical qualifications of prophethood.

2.10 The Spread of Islam

Muhammad left a reasonably well established Arab empire with a strong and motivated army. But after his departure much ugly strife, jealousy and dissension developed between his closest followers which led to a rebellion, the so-called "rida". This culminated in the assassination of Uthman and



Ali, two of the successors of Muhammad and his closest companions. Despite of these inner struggles the troops of Islam soon began to conquer the whole of the Middle East, North Africa, parts of India and Spain. Later, Islam was spread less by violence and more by traders. They penetrated the Sahara on camel back and came with their ships down the East Coast of Africa, and settled on many of the islands (Mombasa, Zanzibar, the Comoros, and also Ibo and other islands of Mozambique) from which they influenced the coastal regions.

Today, one out of every five people is a Muslim. By that we see it is the second largest religion in the world, only outnumbered by the Christian community.

2.11 Islamic Ambitions for Africa Today

Let us have a closer look at the present impact of Islam in Africa. It is no secret that every effort is being made to make Africa the first Islamic continent:

❖ Did you know that in 1989 Muslim representatives from 24 African States came together in Nigeria to found the 'Islam in Africa Organisation'. In the document drawn up it is clearly stated that its objective is to strengthen all Islamic committees to establish Islam everywhere, and that in the 24 member states all political positions of importance should be given to Muslims only!

❖ Did you know that enormous sums of money are invested to build mosques and Qur'anic schools everywhere, even in countries with only a tiny minority of Muslims? In Malawi, many mosques are being built sponsored by Islamic countries. Ethiopia's Muslims claim to have long outnumbered orthodox Christians. Even in Botswana, where a few years ago there were practically no Muslims, many mosques have been built. Schools are often attached to these in which free education is offered up to degree level, even studies overseas (in Islamic universities).

❖ Did you know that enormous sums of money are invested by Muslims in African countries to make them dependent on them and to control their economy, and thereby the state?

This is not strange, if one considers the Qur'an and its teaching. The oil wealth of the Arab countries has given them virtually in-exhaustible riches, and these are heavily used to propagate Islam and to attack the Christian faith, the strongest contender for Africa. All over Africa this can be observed. Who will win the battle for the souls of this continent? Will we Christians wake up and use all our effort to evangelize the people, disciple

and teach them? Do we also aim to persuade the Muslims that Jesus Christ is indeed their only chance for eternity? Or do we leave Muslim men and women enslaved to Islam?

What can we Christians do About it?

The Lord Jesus said: "If you love me, keep my commandments" (Jn 14:15). He gave us the Great Commandment and the Great Commission: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your souls, and with all your mind...and love your neighbour as yourself ... Therefore go and make disciples of all nations (including the Somali, Tuareg, Hausa, Yao, Makonde, Mande, Swahili, Arab, Pakistani Muslims) ... teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matt 22:37-39; 28:18-20)

Just consider:

When we decided to follow the Lord Jesus, we decided to do His will. We must do our best to grow spiritually by studying God's Word day by day. How otherwise, can we hope to share a faith which we don't even know ourselves? *A One-Year-Bible-Reading-Plan can be ordered from our Office.* We should also learn about Islam to help us know how Muslims feel and think, so that we can speak to them in such a way that they really understand the message of Christ, the Gospel.

But let us never forget:

We are not called to fight our Muslim fellow citizens! We are told not only to tolerate our enemies, but to love them - even when they do not return our love and refuse to come to the Saviour!

*The system of Islam is the enemy of the Christian Faith.
But the Muslims are people loved by God!
The Lord Jesus died for them on the cross!
And He commanded us to share the Good News with them!*

➔ Please turn to page 106
and go through the study questions now!

3. The Qur'an - the Book of Islam

3.1 How the Qur'an Came into Being

The Qur'an was given to Muhammad alone over a period of about 23 years. Muslims believe that it was taken piece by piece from the "heavenly tablets" and revealed to Muhammad by the angel Gabriel. Whatever was revealed, Muhammad shared with his companions who committed the text to memory. Some parts were also written down. As the content of the Qur'an contradicts the Bible on many fundamental issues, we have to ask the question which of the two Books is

true. A wrong choice leads to eternal damnation (everyone who seems to have made no choice has in reality made one against God already!).

What is the Qur'an like? Every Christian who plans to share the Gospel with Muslims should at least read some of it to get a better understanding of Muslims and how they are thinking.

3.2 The Structure of the Qur'an

In content the Qur'an is a little shorter than the New Testament and is, like the Bible, divided into chapters and verses: 114 chapters with 6616 verses altogether. A chapter is called a Surah and a verse an Ayah, which means 'a sign'. Except for the first Surah, which is like a prayer, the chapters are ordered roughly according to length: the second Surah being the longest, the third a little shorter, etc., and the 114th Surah is one of the shortest. There is absolutely no historical order. In the Bible we open to the first book and the first chapter when we are looking for the Creation story, and expect thereafter an order of events: after the creation of Adam we read of his descendants, and later Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Samson, Samuel, David, Solomon; and when we want to read about Jesus we turn to the Gospel. There is no such order in the Qur'an. Many biblical persons and events are mentioned, but they appear and reappear at random with no logical connection to each other.



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ
إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ
اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ
صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ
غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

Surah 1 (in Arabic)

3.3 The Qur'an Contradicts the Bible

Much of the Qur'an is made up of Bible stories. However, they are often distorted and misunderstood. Look at some samples and compare with the Bible:

- ☉ Noah had only one son - and he drowned in the flood (S. 11:4243).
☞ How many sons did Noah have in the Bible? Did they drown? (Gen 6+7)
- ☉ The father of Abraham in the Qur'an was Azar (S. 6:74).
☞ Who was Abraham's father in the Bible? (Gen 11:31)
- ☉ Moses was, according to the Qur'an, adopted by Pharaoh's wife (S. 28:89).
☞ Who adopted Moses as a child in the Bible? (Exod 1:5-10)
- ☉ Pharaoh told Haman to build a lofty tower' so that he 'may go up to the God of Moses'. This is obviously referring to the Tower of Babel (S. 28:38).
☞ Who built the Tower of Babel? (Gen 10:32 - 11:4) Did Pharaoh and Haman live at the same time? No! Pharaoh lived about 800 years after the Tower of Babel was built, and Haman lived about 900 years after Pharaoh!
- ☉ The Qur'an teaches that sacrifices are good for food, but that neither their flesh nor their blood 'reaches Allah', but only the piety of the one who sacrifices (S. 22:37).
☞ The Bible teaches very clearly that it is the blood of the sacrifice, which makes atonement for our sins (Lev 16; 17:10). and that the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus 'has made perfect forever those who are being made holy' (Hebr 10:14); and that He 'appeared once for all to do away with sin by the sacrifice of Himself (Hebr 9:26).
- ☉ The Qur'an teaches that Mary, the mother of our Lord Jesus was the sister of Aaron and the daughter of Imran (S. 19:17-28).
☞ Is that true? Was Moses the uncle of our Lord Jesus? Miriam was the sister of Aaron, but she lived about 1400 years before Jesus was born?

*All this shows that the Bible and the Qur'an
cannot both come from God.
Muhammad had a rather scanty hear-say knowledge of the Bible
and wrote down what he thought was biblical.*

3.4 The Sources of the Qur'an

Many of the stories of the Qur'an can easily be traced to other sources like the Talmud, the Mishna and other Jewish religious books. The legendary stories about Jesus were not apostolic and subsequently did not become part of the New Testament.

Other parts of the Qur'an can be traced to the Zoroastrian religion of Persia. Muhammad had for a time a companion by the name of Salman, the Persian, who must have given him this information.

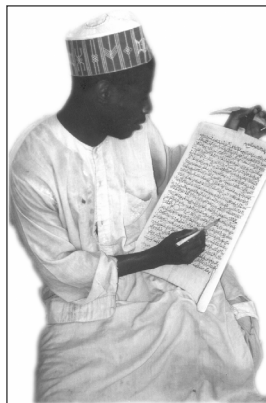
Apart from biblical stories, there are others which relate to Muhammad's time. They were, of course, the passages which favoured Muhammad and his life style, and justified his influence and many commandments. These were mostly from the later period in Medina.

To recite the Qur'an is considered a 'good deed' by Muslims. Many even memorize whole chapters of the Qur'an in Arabic which entitles them to proudly bear the title "Hafiz"; even though they may not understand its message. That is considered to be of secondary importance! Spiritual benefit is merely derived from the recitation of the "holy book", not so much from its understanding. As Christians our use of Scripture should be very different from the Muslims' one!

We do not doubt that some of the Qur'an was revealed to Muhammad. But we do not believe that this revelation came from the same God who revealed Scripture to us, because the message of the Qur'an contradicts the Bible fundamentally. We have no choice but to assume that the inspiration came from another source, from the one who is known to be a confounder (greek *diabolos*). We believe the Bible to be God's Word, and we have good reasons for this, as we will show later.

Sources of the Qur'an

- ❶ Jewish books (Talmud)
- ❷ Persian religious beliefs
- ❸ Arab pagan practices
- ❹ Biblical stories
- ❺ Muhammad's ideas



"Umar, who later became Khalif, i.e. a successor of Muhammad, reported that he went to mosque and overheard two other Muslims recite a certain Surah different to the way he had (learned it from Muhammad)? In anger Umar took them both to their prophet and told him of their different reciting. Muhammad listened to them all reciting (differently) and said: "This way it has been revealed.." Umar confessed that disbelief entered his mind because of this. Muhammad gave him a pat on the chest and said: "This Qur'an has been revealed in seven forms, so recite what appears easy therefrom". (Mishkat 3, pp. 702-704)

Parts of the Qur'an were Withdrawn and Substituted by Others

Muslims today want us to believe that at no time was the Qur'an changed even to the dot of an "i", but that it is an exact copy of the original in heaven. This is evidently nonsense, which is shown by the following verses of the Qur'an:

"None of our revelation do we abrogate (retract or invalidate or take out), or cause to be forgotten, but we substitute something better or similar. 'Don't you know that Allah has power over all things?'" (S. 2:106)

"When we substitute one revelation for another - and Allah knows best what he reveals - they say: 'You are a forger'. But most of them understand not". (S. 16:101).

What had happened was that Muhammad had obviously changed the Qur'an in a number of places by taking out a verse or two and replacing it by something else. The verses taken out are called '*mansukh*' and those put in '*nasikh*'. This is known as "The Law of Abrogation". However, since both kind of verses are still in the Qur'an Muslims today can not easily tell us the later from the earlier ones. Also, since the present version of the Qur'an was already fixed, we cannot know how many passages have been changed. A famous Islamic theologian (Jalalu'd-Din) estimated between 5 and 500. We are sure about the following changes:

3.5 What else should we Know About the Qur'an?

The Qur'an was Revealed in Seven Forms

Parts of the Qur'an were already recited by Muslims during the time of Muhammad. An amusing story is reported to us in a tradition:

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- ☒ The direction of prayer was changed (S. 2:142-144)
 - ☒ The division of inheritance was changed (S. 4:7,11)
 - ☒ The duration of night prayers was changed (S. 73:2,20)
 - ☒ The punishment for adultery was changed (S. 4:15-16; 24:2)
 - ☒ Laws about the 'holy war' were changed (S. 2:256; 9:3-5; 2:217; 47:4; 8:39)
 - ☒ Retaliation in cases of crime was changed (S. 2:178; 5:48; 17:33)
- [Note: the word 'lewdness' (S. 4:15) should be adultery, shameful deed, scandal]

All this happened in spite of the emphatic statements in the Qur'an:

"There is none that can change the Words of Allah" (S. 6:34)
"No change can there be in the Words of Allah" (S. 10:64)

Even more confusing is yet another statement: "If it were our will, we could take away that which 'We have sent to you by inspiration.'" (S. 17:86)

With so many contradicting statements in the Qur'an, how can any Muslim ever be sure about its message!

There Were Other Copies of the Qur'an Which Differed

We know of a number of passages which were added or taken out of the Qur'an, or they had a different wording to the earliest manuscripts.

After the death of Muhammad the first Khalif (Abu Bakr) gave for the first time the order to collect and write down the Qur'an. A number of Muslims wrote down whatever they had learned by heart from Muhammad. Together there were as many as twenty-eight versions. The most prominent were the Qur'an versions by Ibn Masood, Ubai ibn Ka'b, and that by Abu Musa.

The Qur'an was Compiled After the Death of Muhammad

It was only natural that after a while the Khalif Uthman was told that the soldiers in his army were reciting differing versions of the Qur'an. So he ordered all existing different versions to be brought. Out of these a revised text of the Qur'an was compiled, and all the other originals were then burned. The so-called "Uthmani text" is still in use today. We know of all this, even in great detail, from theological writings which have been preserved. (Mishkat 3, p.708) In spite of this, Muslims maintain that not the slightest change has ever happened to the Qur'an and that "today's Arabic text is absolutely identical with the one revealed from heaven". We know better!

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3.6 How should Christians treat the Qur'an?

There is no doubt that Muslims treat the Qur'an with utmost respect; many of them are convinced that the present Qur'an copies are exactly the same as the first Qur'an put together by Uthman. For the Christian witness there is no need to attack Muslims on their "holy book" and alienate them from listening to us. Rather we could – at the right time! – put forward some thought-provoking questions:

❑ If the Qur'an was already available at the time of Muhammad's death, why was it necessary to compile it (again) some 20 years later by his successors?

❑ Your book teaches that "no change can there be in the Words of Allah". Why is it then that verses of the Qur'an were lost as your traditions report?

❑ Why were there variant readings of the Qur'an over the first centuries after Muhammad, considering that you say it was directly dictated by the angel Jibreel (Gabriel) and taken from the heavenly tablets?

❑ Since the Qur'an is the Holy Book of Muslims, why was it felt necessary to first destroy many of the original manuscripts? – **The Christian Church never destroyed any of our manuscripts of the Bible; it was always their enemies who burned God's word.**

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4. The Traditions of Islam

During the first few hundred years order was brought into Islam and theological structures and forms were created. It was soon clear that the Qur'an could not be interpreted consistently without difficulties. So, theologians declared that the Qur'an can only be interpreted rightly by the one to whom it was revealed.

4.1 Traditions were Needed to Interpret the Qur'an

But that person was dead! So a search was done for all the thousands of legends, which had been preserved by hundreds of people about Muhammad. What did he say? What did he do? What did he allow or forbid?

A system evolved how to interpret the Qur'an. Muslims will call this the making of a 'tafsir' of the Qur'an. It is based on what Muhammad said, did or permitted, and how he acted. His life and lifestyle is seen as the best interpretation of the Qur'an.

4.2 How the Traditions were Collected

This necessitated a collection of all the *Hadith* (traditions or stories). About 250-300 years after Muhammad, several Muslim theologians committed themselves to this task quite independently. The best known of them, Al-Bukhari, collected some 600,000 Hadith. After scrutinizing them, he kept 7,200 (of which about half are duplicates) as reliable, and the rest he discarded. This was his arbitrary choice and not decided by the consent of a group of scholars.

Six of these collections are now accepted as "Sihahu Sittah" = correct books:

al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, at-Tirmidhi, Abu-Abdir-Rahman and Abu Abdullah Mohammad.

The trustworthiness of the Hadith was established by checking the line of transmitters (*isnad*): how reliable were the men or women who were in possession of the Hadith? Did those who originally reported them belong to the circle of Muhammad's companions? And who were the men and women who passed on these traditions until they were finally recorded?

Al-Bukhari Collection

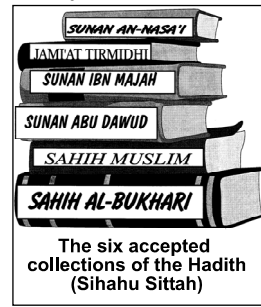
250 years after Muhammad
600,000 stories received
from 40,000 informants
and 7,200 selected.
That is 1.2% said
to be trustworthy
...or nearly so!

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Later a "collection of the most authentic sayings and doings of the Prophet Muhammad" were "selected from the most reliable collections of Hadith literature" by Al-Baghawi, which is called in short the '*Mishkat*' (full name: '*Mishkatu'l Masabih*').

4.3 What the Hadith Teaches

All Hadith collections have been given a certain order and contain all kinds of subjects like faith, knowledge, prayer, ablution (ritual washings), funerals, charity, the pilgrimage, fasting, business of all kinds, slavery, testaments, holy war, the virtues of Muhammad, marriage, divorce, food and eating, medicines, sacrifices, dress and manners, predestination, oaths, inheritance, punishment for crimes and apostasy from Islam, dreams, cleanliness, eternal judgment and even things like sneezing, yawning, the trimming of beard and hair, the use of perfume, cleaning of teeth and nose, and other mundane topics.



Some of these Hadith are quite serious and descriptive, others make us smile a bit:

"The Messenger of Allah said: When a fly falls into the dish of one of you, immerse it, because there is disease in one of its wings and cure in the other, and because it first throws its wing wherein there is disease. So immerse it entirely". (Mishkat 2, p.152)

"Ibn Umar reported the messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) as saying: A believer eats in one intestine, whereas a non-believer eats in seven intestines". (Muslim 3, p. 1137)

"Jabir reported that Allah's messenger (may peace be upon him) commanded the licking of fingers and the dish, saying: 'When one of you eats food he should not wipe his hand until he has licked it himself, or has given it to someone else to lick'. (Muslim 3, pp. 1119-1120)

A book such as *Do's and Do Not's in Islam* (by Abdul Rehmad Shad, Kazi Publications, Lahore, 1983) is quite popular, and full of amusing – alarming – amazing rules:

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Page 148 ♦ "Whoever has grey hair Allah will write for him a merit in exchange and remove a sin in exchange." Therefore: "It is improper to pluck out grey hair in old age."

146 ♦ Daily combing is not recommended because "the apostle of Allah prohibited combing except on every second day."

93 ♦ Divorcing ones wife (*tahlil*) is very serious indeed, and a Muslim is not allowed to remarry his former wife "until the second (husband) has tasted her sweetness as the first one had tasted."

192 ♦ Lying is not permitted except in four cases: (1) to reconcile hostile Muslims, (2) to patch up relations between wife and husband, (3) against tyrants and oppressors, and (4) in *jihad* (war).

299 ♦ "It is lawful to seek blessings (*baraka*) from the sacred shrines of certain saints."

203 ♦ "It is not fit for the servants of Allah to behave arrogantly. It is a great blessing for humanity to live in peace and it can be established through humility."

82 ♦ "It is lawful to give slight punishment to the wife for her adverse behaviour, but it is not permissible to beat her black and blue. ...woman is created from a rib – the most crooked part of the rib is its upper part. If you attempt to straighten it, you will break it and if you leave it its crookedness will ever remain."

183 ♦ "It is unlawful to make or draw pictures which resemble the human beings created by Allah."

Most Muslims learn such things from early childhood and are encouraged to copy what Muhammad did. If the prophet of Islam was the perfect model, then the safest way to heaven would be "to do as he did" (= *Sunnah*). This resulted in Islam becoming a rather outward religion. "Doing" the right things is much more important than "being" a devoted child of God, acting out of gratitude.

4.4 The Sunnah - Copying the Lifestyle of Muhammad

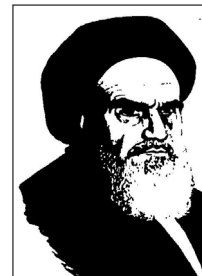
Muhammad is quoted to have said:

"I leave with you two things. As long as you hold fast by them both, you will never be misguided: the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of his messenger." Mishkat 1, p. 159)

The book of Allah is obviously the Qur'an. The "Sunnah" is the copying of what Muhammad did, said, forbade or allowed. In other words, the imitation of the lifestyle of Muhammad became the model for all Muslims and therefore Muslims strive to copy it as closely as possible.

4.5 The Shariah – Islamic Law

Muslims will undoubtedly point to the Qur'an and Hadith as foundation for their way of life. But a truly Islamic society will always be governed by the Shariah. The word "*shariah*" means "path (to the watering place)". It is a system of laws and regulations classified into practices that are beyond



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dispute, obligatory, exemplified by Muhammad, occasionally done and simply desirable. These have been developed over time in Islamic history based on the two principles of consensus among Islamic scholars, and on comparing modern issues with principles derived from similar (comparable) occasions during Muhammad's time. Sunni Law is administered according to the four recognised schools of law, namely Hanbali, Hanafi, Shafi'i and Maliki. These are accepted in different regions, eg. in East Africa the school of Ash-Shafi'i is most prominent.

Muslims do their religious duties to earn eternal life - Christians choose to act right out of gratitude for what Christ did for them

➔ Please work through the study questions for chapters 3 and 4 on page 107 !

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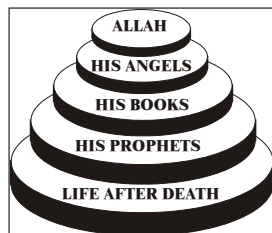
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5. Faith and Practice of Islam

5.1 THE FAITH OF ISLAM

This is often summed up in five fundamentals Muslims must believe in:

- **Allah** – one god only (the unity or singleness of Allah, called ‘*Tawhid*’ is strongly emphasized)
- His **angels** – both good (*malaikah*) and evil ones (jinni); S. 16:2; 19:17; 2:31-32
- All His **revealed Books** (S. 2:136; 4:136).
These are named to be:
 - The *Taurat* (the 5 books of Moses or perhaps the whole of the Old Testament)
 - The *Zabur* (the Psalms of David)
 - The *Injil* (the Gospel given to Nabi Isa [Jesus]; or the New Testament)
 - The *Qur’an*. Unfortunately Muslims are taught that the former books are no longer valid today, and that the Qur’an is all they need to know.
- All **Prophets** sent by God (S. 16:36; 4:164).
Muslims believe that 124,000 prophets have been sent to all nations, but only some 25 are mentioned by name. Among these are: Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, Jesus and Muhammad.
- **Life After Death**
This includes Predestination and the coming Day of Judgment (often just called “the hour” S. 25:11; 9:29) which will determine whether a Muslim reaches paradise or hell.

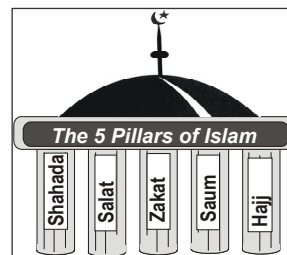


(We will look at these beliefs in chapter 6; more details in our Trainers Textbooks.)

5.2 THE PRACTICES OF ISLAM

These are also known as “The Pillars of Islam”:

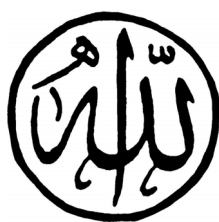
- The open **confession of faith** (“*Shahada*”) “There is no god but God, and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah.” This formula is the first and last a Muslim is to hear in life, and to repeat it – in Arabic only – means to confess adherence to Islam. Therefore Muslims will always seek to force a new convert from Islam to Christ to have him recite this confession and thus revert to the Islamic fold.
- The five **daily prayers** (“*Salat*” [pronounce “*Salah*”]) These comprise set prayers that are to be repeated 17 times a day with clearly described body movements (such as kneeling, prostrating, standing etc). Again these prayers are only valid in the Arabic language and at the precise time of the day having performed the necessary ablutions, and declaration of intent.
- The keeping of the **fast** during the full month of Ramadaan (“*Sawm*”). This involves to abstain from all food or drink (not even swallowing ones saliva), including other pleasures, from sunrise to sunset. As this is carefully watched by the Muslim community, Ramadaan becomes the most difficult time for any nominal Muslim, and more so for the Christian from an Islamic background. Muslims are however allowed to eat, drink or celebrate during night hours, and this is usually done in a lavish way.
- The giving of **alms** (“*Zakat*”, pronounce: “*Zakah*”) The exact amount of alms is clearly determined and Muslims are reminded to follow these painstakingly in order to gain merit for their after-life. Other free-will giving (“*sadaka*”) is likewise encouraged.
- The **Pilgrimage** to Mecca should be performed at least once in a lifetime, provided one has the means for that (*Hajj*). The hajj is considered the spiritual and emotional highlight in a Muslim’s life, and some are convinced that it will grant them remission of all their sins. Muslim men (or women accompanied by a male relative) are often willing to sacrifice considerable resources and comfort for this great cause.



6. Major Teachings of Islam

6.1 Allah

Muslims regard Allah with the greatest awe and respect. He is “*tawhid*”, which means a unity in himself, absolutely single. This is in opposition to the many ‘gods’ which were worshipped by the Arab polytheists (those who worship many gods), but, no doubt also to contradict the deity of Jesus Christ, our Lord, and the triune nature of God (see pp. 21-23).



Allah is the altogether different one, unlike any other being. He is detached and absolute in his being, his will, his power or knowledge. He is the creator of all, good and evil. Nothing happens without his will – and that includes sin! Allah is beyond a human standard of good or bad, right or wrong. He is totally justified in whatever he does, even if we humans would consider this improper. He alone is to be worshipped and obeyed.

Allah is called (in the Qur’an) “*al-Rahman*” and “*al-Rahim*,” the compassionate and merciful one, although this is really in contrast to his true nature as derived from the Qur’an. Altogether 99 “most beautiful names” have been attributed to Allah from the Qur’an, and it is considered a merit to recite these names in prayer. This is usually performed with the help of a prayer rosary, the “*Tasbeeh*”, consisting of 33 or 99 beads plus one in a special drop shape. The drop shaped one stands for “Allah”. When praying a Muslim will mention each of these “most beautiful names”, but sadly the name “Father” (Isaiah 9:6) is unknown to them.

It is indeed an awful sin to attribute any partner to Allah. One who does this is called a “*Mushrik*” and the act of doing so is known as “*shirk*”. Therefore a convert from Islam to Christ is accused of committing “*shirk*”, the unpardonable sin, that both deserves eternal punishment and fierce persecution here and now.

Perhaps the most obvious way to demonstrate Allah’s nature is found in the Islamic doctrine of predestination.

6.2 Predestination

The Islamic concept of predestination has given more than a headache to many Muslims. When the Bible speaks of predestination or election, it does not mean blind fate, but implies happenings “according to the

foreknowledge of God” (1 Pet 1:2; Rom 8:29). Because God knows that we will repent and turn to Him for salvation, He elects or chooses us. He predestines us to “be conformed to the likeness of His Son”. The Islamic view is altogether different from this. In Islam the meaning is the execution of Allah’s sovereign and arbitrary (capricious) will:

“*Nothing will happen to us except what Allah has decreed for us.*” (S. 9:51)

This would be fine, if Allah were a loving God who seeks our best. But this does not seem to be the case:

“*This is an admonition: ‘Whosoever will, let him take a path to his Lord. But you will not, except Allah wills ...’*” (S. 76:29-30).

The words ‘if He will ...’ or ‘whom He will ...’ or ‘as He pleases’ are ever occurring in the Qur’an:

“*Allah leads astray whom He pleases and guides whom He pleases...*” (S. 14:4) (see also S. 5:20; 4:88; 32:13).

Thus the Muslim is entirely “at the mercy” of Allah and what He would have pre-decreed for him. No wonder are the words “*insha-Allah*” most common on the lips of every Muslim.

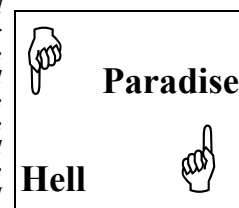
One of the most shocking passages on this issue is:

“*If Allah had willed, He could make you all one people (or religious group). But He leads astray whom He pleases and guides whom He pleases: but you shall certainly be called to account for all your actions.*” (S. 16:93)

If you are told about a translation which reads that Allah “leaves straying” instead of “leads astray”, that is simply a falsification of what it actually says, an attempt to avoid embarrassment about this text.

How would Muhammad interpret this doctrine? Let us ask the Hadith:

“*The holy prophet said: ‘Allah created Adam. Then He stroke his right shoulder and took out a white race as if they were seeds and He stroke his left shoulder and too out a black race as if they were coals. ‘Then He said to those who were on his right side: Towards paradise and I don’t care, He said to those who were on his left shoulder: Towards hell and I don’t care.’*” (Mishkat 3, p. 117)



Muhammad said something which should worry every Muslim intensely. When a companion of Muhammad asked him:

"O Prophet of Allah! I believe in you and in what you have come with (faith in Allah and the Qur'an). Do you still fear for us?"

Muhammad's answer was:

'Yes! The hearts (of men) are between the two fingers of Allah. He changes them as he likes'. Mishkat 3, p. 111

Even Muhammad felt unsure of his eternal future:

"Verily the Almighty and glorious Allah took hold of one with His right hand and another with the other hand, and said: "This is for this and this is for this, and I don't care. I don't know in which of the two (hands) I am". (Mishkat 3, p. 118).

One would wish this had been expressed more clearly, but it surely means that no Muslim, not even the prophet of Islam, can know what Allah is planning to do with him or her. Indeed, Allah may have decreed for him to commit adultery:

"The Apostle of Allah said: 'Verily Allah preordained for the sons of Adam (i.e. mankind) his share of fornication. That will overcome him without doubt". (Mishkat 3, p. 103)

This is confirmed by another Hadith:

"Verily Allah has fixed the very portion of adultery which a man will indulge in. There would be no escape from it!" (Sahih Muslim 4, p. 1396)

All this is based on the misconception that man has no free will. The sovereign Allah does not allow him to choose between right and wrong.

Along the same line is the following Islamic story:

"There was an argument between Adam and Moses. Moses said to Adam: You are our father. You did us harm and caused us to get out of paradise'. Adam said to him: You are Moses. Allah selected you and wrote with His own hand the Book for you. Despite this you blame me for an act which Allah had ordained for me forty years before he created me". (Sahih Muslim 4, p. 1307)

Let us close this subject with one more statement:

"The Holy Prophet said: "When you hear about a mountain that it has shifted itself from its place, believe it. But when you hear about a man that has changed his nature, don't believe it. It will return to what it was created upon". (Mishkat 3, p. 121)

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All this is infinitely sad and in stark contrast to what the Bible teaches:

"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old is gone, the new has come!" (2Cor 5:17)

As we look at this strange doctrine of predestination in Islam we should be aware that hardly any Muslim knows about this. If you touch this subject you may be told fanciful things like this: "A lion is predestined to eat meat, and a zebra is predestined to eat grass or leaves. So Allah has created a certain order restricting each being in some way or other."

We find this teaching to be shocking. Even so it provides us with an evangelistic tool. When we know Muslims reasonably well we may ask them whether they believe in man's free will. Most likely they will confirm this. Then you may say: "But as a Muslim you should accept the doctrine of 'taqdir'" (as it is called in Arabic), and share with them what you just studied. They may be upset about this, particularly when you share the biblical counterpart, but they will surely have to rethink their beliefs, for who likes to live in such uncertainty!

6.3 Sin and Judgement in Islam and Bible

This is another point we may use in evangelism. Jews, Christians and Muslims believe in the coming Day of Judgement.

Let us first make sure that we understand the Biblical teaching: The Bible teaches that sin, in whichever form, separates us from God and is liable to punishment by death, because sin is essentially a rebellion against God and His will, law and order.

But God has offered us a way of restitution, of reconciliation to Him. A sin cannot be compensated for by a 'good deed'. Good deeds are expected from us anyway! But God has offered the way of substitution. Sin must be dealt with, for it is totally against His holy nature. So much so, that a person with sin in his or her life cannot share in God's presence. And that is what heaven is all about: living in the very presence of God for ever and ever.

So God allows this sin to be paid for by a substitute, by somebody else. In the Old Testament (Lev 16:21-22) it were animal sacrifices ("scapegoats") on which the sin was symbolically transferred and which were then killed. When our Lord Jesus came to John the Baptist at the river Jordan (Jordan = death) to be baptized, John exclaimed: "Look! This is the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (Jn 1:29)

**SIN is what we are: rebels against God
SINS is what we do: breaking God's law again and again**

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Note well that it speaks here about "sin" not "sins". Sins are individual transgressions against God's purpose and law. **Sin is the principle by which Satan governs mankind.** The "Lamb of God" was God's special provision to take away the sin (and by that the sins) of the world. i.e. of every person.

The only condition is that a sinner must want this and that he or she is prepared to crown the Lord Jesus as his or her new Lord. A refusal of Jesus as Saviour and Lord means that the pardon offered by God through Jesus is rejected. This is the same as saying to God: "I can do it myself. I am good enough to earn my way to heaven!" or "I don't want you! I want to live my life without you!"

All those, who unknowingly or spitefully do not make use of God's offer for pardon, are awaiting God's final judgement, when the living and the dead will be judged according to what they have done (Rev 20:11-15).

Only those who are 'found written in the Book of Life' will not be condemned and thrown into hell (the place' of separation from God in all eternity). The moment a person genuinely seeks God's forgiveness and trusts that Jesus died on the cross for their sin is saved and his name is "written" into the Book of Life. True repentance always includes confessing ones sins with the resolve to flee from sins and to follow Jesus Christ. Despite of this again and again pride, greed, jealousy etc, will successfully trap a believer. But we can keep clean by the grace of God:

"If we confess our sins He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." (1 Jn 1:9)

All this is different in Islam: A Muslim must literally observe thousands of laws about every aspect of life. Obviously he transgresses many times, considering the almost endless amount of Do's and Don'ts. No doubt, a great number of Muslims are sincere people and really try hard, but still they fail.



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You see, Muslims have a major problem, namely a wrong understanding of sin. To them, the one most terrible sin is 'shirk', adding a partner to Allah (an idol of some sort, or 'another god'- as we do in their eyes, when we recognize Jesus as God). This is practically apostasy, a falling away from Islam. All other sins Islam has graded into serious and less serious ones and has outlined what to do with these. Some may be neglected, others need to be neutralized by doing 'good deeds', while for yet others one has to ask forgiveness. For the 'serious sins' one even has to repent. There is no conviction of the seriousness of sin. One can hardly expect a Muslim to agree with this radical assessment of human nature:

"I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not; but what I hate I do. I know that nothing good lives in me ... What I do is not the good I want to do. No, the evil I do not want to do - this I keep on doing ... It is sin living in me!" (Rom 7:14-20)

This text was not recorded by a weak backslider, but by someone who really knew sin and its consequences. But he also knew the Lord. Only by knowing God's holiness and purity could he see his own unrighteousness. Before he became a Christian, this man was very religious indeed. It was Paul who wrote:

"Regarding the Law (of God), I was a Pharisee ... regarding righteousness of the Law, I was faultless". (Phil 3:5-6)

**The realisation of the Holiness of God makes us aware of
the Seriousness and Ugliness of Sin and Our own Sinfulness**

Muslims as a rule have a wrong understanding of God, Man, Sin, and Reconciliation (see also p. 52). With their totally false understanding of sin Muslims just minimize its seriousness. Subsequently, they also have a totally false concept of man, whom they see as capable of pleasing God by making up for their sin. And that again is caused by a false understanding of God, whom they see as simply relenting without dealing with sin and removing it, which is altogether inconsistent with his holiness.

When we share the Gospel with a Muslim in the traditional way, his reaction is likely to be: "I am no sinner! You Christians just try to pressurize people to have a bad conscience. But our Allah is most merciful, gracious and forgiving. Besides I am a Muslim, I pray five times a day, I fast during Ramadan, I give alms and ..."

A parable comes to mind:

31

"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector (an extortionate officer, symbol of a sinner). The Pharisee stood up and prayed to himself: "God, I thank you that I am not like all other men - robbers, evildoers, adulterers - or even like this tax-collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get". But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast (a token of repentance) and said: "God, have mercy on me, a sinner!" (Luke 18: 14)

Christ gave his verdict in no uncertain terms:

"I tell you that this man, rather than the other (Pharisee), went home justified before God".

The difference was that the Pharisee trusted in himself and what he did, had done and could do, while the sinner relied solely on God and His grace. The Pharisee had a false concept about God, himself and sin.

Having looked at the fundamentals, let us now look at the expectation a Muslim has regarding judgement and eternal life.

6.4 Life After Death in Islam

According to Islam there is firstly the "Punishment of the Grave". At the time of death

'...the eyes are taken out, the veins are snatched away, the backbone is crushed and the whole physical frame is put to agonies which no human being can express. If there is a wound in the body, the whole body suffers pain. Imagine the condition of the body when the entire bodily limbs will be snatched away one by one. This is the turning hour of a man from one stage to another, from a life of flesh to a life of spirit'. (Mishkat 4, p. 83)

Elsewhere we read:

"The believer, who dies, feels pain in every vein separately. At the time of death, Satan, the enemy of Allah, is very near to the dying man". ("What Happens After Death" by Ahmed Saeed Dehlwi, p. 55)

About the torment in the grave we read in the same book:

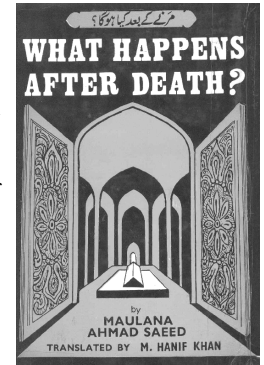
"Firstly the grave contracts around him (the dead) so that his breast bones break and pierce into each other. Secondly, a fire is lit up in his grave. Thirdly, a snake is sent to overpower him.

The appearance of the snake is such that its eyes are like fireballs...this snake says: 'I have been appointed over you by my Lord in order to bite you till sunrise for having missed the morning prayers... till afternoon for missing the noon prayer..' etc. In the same manner he will continue to suffer this torment till Doomsday".

This is the punishment for a person having missed prayers. Who did not? In Islam a Muslim must recite ritual prayers five times a day at set prayer times?

In the book "What Happens After Death" various causes for punishment in the grave are given:

- Carelessness in urinating
- Performing the prescribed prayer like unburdening a load or treating these prayers as a burden
- Those whose actions differed from their words the corners of their mouths ripped open
- Nails are thrust into the eyes and ears of those who tried to see and hear illegitimate things
- For refusing to suckle their babies, women's breasts are bitten by snakes
- For those who broke the fast too early, hanging upside down and licking mud
- Those who used to play chess suffer the beating with pillars of fire



All this ends at Resurrection Day which is followed by the Day of Judgement. The Hadith stories about this are equally terrifying:

"Allah will say: take out those who will be sent to the fire (hell). He (Adam) will ask: How many are those who will be sent to the fire? He (Allah) will say: 999 out of every 1000!"

6.5 Salvation in Islam

Muslims believe in a book of deeds, and the Balance on which the good deeds of a man are weighed against his bad deeds. A sword-like bridge over hell to paradise over which all must walk makes ones future destiny even

more precarious. Only the deserving people reach the desired "Garden" or paradise.



All this appears strange to us because it is void of any assurance to reach God's presence, and it certainly is unbiblical. One wonders whether all this was written to terrorize Muslims not to leave Islam, or to take life easy thus neglecting their religious duties?

We are told: (ISLAM by Ismail R. Faruqi, 1979, p. 9)

"In the Islamic view, human beings are no more 'fallen' than they are 'saved'. Because they are not 'fallen', they have no need of a saviour. But because they are not 'saved' either, they need to do good works - and do them ethically - which alone will earn them the desired 'salvation'. Indeed, salvation is an improper term, since, to need 'salvation', one must be in a predicament beyond the hope of ever escaping from it (What a compelling definition!). But men and women are not in that predicament. Humans are not ethically powerless. They are not helpless puppets capable of neither good nor evil. They are capable of both. To 'save' themselves by deeds and works is their pride and glory."

Salvation as we Know it From the Bible is Unknown to Muslims

Believing the Islamic creed and following the five pillars plus plenty of good deeds constitute their vague hope. Of course, every Muslim expects Allah to be merciful to him or her. Indeed, God is merciful! But His mercy is expressed on the cross, which every Muslim rejects. Based on the Word of God, the Bible, no Muslim will ever go to heaven unless he comes to Jesus for salvation. What an obligation for every Christian to be a witness to Muslims, who do not know and understand the Gospel because Islam has brainwashed them against it!

➔ Please take time and go through the questions on page 107 now !

7. Muslim Objections to the Faith

We already discovered that the Qur'an teaches that the Bible is God's word. Muhammad must have believed that Islam was a continuation of the existing "book religions", i.e. Judaism and Christianity. Muhammad viewed the New Testament teaching on Jesus, the Son of God in the Trinity, and His substitutionary death on the cross as utter blasphemy. Did he merely assume that this was not God's original revelation, but a human addition, a heresy? Or did he deliberately attack the central doctrines of the Bible as is evident in the Qur'an:

"... the Christians call Christ the son of Allah. This is a saying of their mouths. In this they imitate what the unbelievers of old used to say. Allah's curse be on them! So they are deluded away from the truth." (S. 9:30)

These are strong words indeed, yet every committed Muslim feels that intensely hostile about the Christian faith.

Muslims believe that our Bible is not the original book, made up of Ibrahim's Taurat [Law], Daud's Zabur [Psalms] and Nabi Isa's Injil (Gospel). They strongly maintain that the Jews and Christians have corrupted and changed the original, and added the teaching of Jesus' divinity and sonship, the concept of the trinity, and also the crucifixion along with the doctrine of atonement. Most of their anti-Christian literature spread from mosques, Islamic Propagation Centers and bookshops, is violently attacking the very foundations of our faith, challenging us to submit to the only true religion, Islam.

"Whoever desires a religion other than Islam, it shall not be accepted from him, and in the hereafter he shall be one of the losers." (S. 3:85)

How do we respond? The Bible presents a wonderful way to do so:

**"In your hearts set apart Christ as Lord!
Always be prepared to give an answer
to everyone who asks you to give the reason
for the hope that you have.
But do it with gentleness and respect."
(1 Peter 3:15)**

Let us learn a few very important lessons from that:

- **The Lordship of Christ** – Whatever we say, in whatever way we behave, we do it in the presence and under the Lordship of Christ!
- **Be prepared** – We do not argue points we do not know or understand. We seek to obtain correct information and then answer intelligently, wisely and convincingly. Again, this does not just apply for pastors in the pulpit, but for all Christians ALWAYS and in all places!
- **We have got an answer** – Often, when sharing the Gospel trans-culturally or trans-religiously, Christians answer the questions *they* feel Muslims have. These answers are actually useless to a Muslim because he thinks and reasons in very different ways. The gospel must be presented in such a way that it corresponds (“aha!”) with a Muslim’s mind!
- **Check your attitude, and present hope** – When speaking with Muslims, we do not come as “crusaders”, but as witnesses! We do not fight, bully or preach at them! The love of Christ guides us. We do not bulldoze, but we share, clarifying point after point what Muslims need to know and understand.
- **Do it with gentleness and respect** – Never use the information in these notes as a weapon against Muslims. They are tools to help you understand what Islam is in its essence. This tool should help you to gently and kindly demonstrate to a Muslim the difference of a life assured of God’s favour through Christ’s death over against the uncertainty Islam offers its followers.

Please note this principle:

A Muslim Will Understand what we Say in Proportion to how we Understand him

Rarely ever does ‘preaching’ to a Muslim bring about positive results. And taking Muslims to church meetings might even cause more damage than good! We have to sit down with them, listen, ask, observe, and gain understanding. We must first learn from them before we teach them. We don’t just throw Bible verses at them as though there were some magic in them. God’s Word must be understood! “Faith comes from hearing the message (Rom 10:17)”, but surely this must lead to understanding. That takes time, often much time. Instant results are rarely achieved in Muslim evangelism, unless a person has already been exposed to Christian witness

and teaching. Loving a Muslim means caring enough for him to invest yourself in his life!

“We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us”. (1 Thess 2:8)

How to Answer Muslim Objections

Because the Bible contradicts the Qur’an and vice versa, both books cannot come from the same source. At least one of them, or both, have been manipulated by man and been changed.

It is therefore our task to sit down with Muslims to establish the truth together. There is no point in insisting that we are right because the Bible is true, while the Muslim insists that the Qur’an is inspired and true. We are to “reason our hope”: *Why do we believe the Bible to be true? Why does he believe the Qur’an to be true?*

Be prepared to respond to these arguments from Muslims:



7.1 “The Bible has Been Changed and Corrupted!”

We have come to know that all Muslims should accept the Bible and the Qur’an. A person cannot claim to be a Muslim without accepting the Bible as God’s Word, since this is clearly stated in the ‘Iman’, the faith of Islam (see p. 25):

“Say: We believe in Allah, and the revelation given to us (i.e. the Qur’an), and to Abraham, Ishmail, Isaac, Jacob and the Tribes (of Israel), and that given to Moses and Jesus ... ‘We make no difference between one and another of them...’” (S. 2:136)

“We believe in Allah and His Apostle (i.e. Muhammad and the Scriptures which He has sent to His Apostle, and the Scriptures which He sent to those before. He who denies ... His Books ... has gone far astray”. (S. 4:136)

“We believe in the revelation which has come down to us and in that which cone down to you. Our Allah and your Allah is one ...” (S. 29:46).

Of course, Muslims do not believe in our Bible. They say that they believe in the ‘original Bible’ which has been corrupted by the Jews and Christians.

To them the original Bible is no more in existence. That is nonsense, for all biblical manuscripts go back long before Muhammad was born, or the Qur’an was written. The Qur’an confirms this:

“You People of the Book! Why do you conceal the Truth while you have knowledge of it?” (S. 3:71)

Muhammad accused the “People of the Book” (Jews and Christians) of distorting the Book with their tongues (and not with their pens!):

“As they read you would think it is part of the book but it is not part of the Book and they say: That is from Allah! But it is not from Allah. It is they who tell a lie against Allah, and they know it!” (S. 3:78)

How could they know without the original? It says that they concealed the truth and lied by knowingly distorting the Book. This could only mean that they knew the Book, because they had it!

Thus it is up to the Muslims to prove to us and to themselves why and where the Bible is corrupted.

Here are **some good questions** that have kept Muslims thinking hard:

❗ **Why** should anyone change the Bible, when it is written that those who add to it or take away from it will suffer eternal punishment (Rev 22:18-19)?

❗ Should **anyone** have changed the Bible, all the other Jews and Christians who observed that change would have objected to it. No man single-handedly could have changed all the Bibles or portions thereof.

❗ **When** was the Bible changed? If *after* Muhammad, Muslims should know that all biblical manuscripts date far before him. If *before*, surely the Qur’an would have accused Christians or Jews for that crime. Besides, even Muhammad appealed to the Bible to authenticate his message.

❗ **Who** changed the Bible – Jews, Christians, or both together?

❗ **Where** is the original, so that we can compare this with our established text?

❗ How can anyone believe that the Bible was changed, unless at least several of our questions would be answered satisfactorily?

Besides: The Qur’an expressly states that the Taurat, Zabur and Injil have been given by Allah!

And the Qur’an also states that “no man can change the words of Allah.” (S. 6:34 and 10:64)

It is possible that some Muslims may say that the original Gospel is the “Gospel of Barnabas”. This a forgery of the 14th century and can be exposed as such very easily. (We refer to our Trainers Textbooks.)

Muslims may also reason that - according to the Qur’an - the Gospel was given to Jesus, and that the Gospel in the Bible is recorded by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, so it cannot be the original. But to Jesus no Gospel volume was ever given! He is the content of the Good News and the One who inspired and reminded his servants in the recording of the message!

Trained Muslims will come with a number of arguments questioning the Bible text, or producing literature regarding this. (We refer again to our other literature in answer to this. Write to us and we will gladly help!)



7.2 “How can you Believe in Three Gods and Claim that He is one? This does not Make Sense.”

The Qur’an attacks the Trinity in these words:

“Allah will say: O Jesus, son Mary! Did you say to men, ‘worship me and my mother in derogation of Allah?’...People of the Book (i.e. Jews or Christians)! Commit no excesses in your religion; nor say of Allah anything but the truth. Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, was no more than an apostle (messenger) of Allah, and His Word which He bestowed on Mary and a Spirit proceeding from Him ... Say not Trinity. Desist! It would be better for you, for Allah is One Allah. Glory be to him (far exalted is He) above having a son”. (S. 4:171)

“They do blaspheme who say: ‘Allah is Christ the son of Mary’ .’O Children of Israel. Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord’. Whoever joins other gods with Allah – Allah will forbid him the garden (paradise), and the fire will be his abode ... ‘They do blaspheme who say: ‘Allah is one of three in a Trinity...’” (S. 5:75-76).

“He begetteth not nor is He begotten; and there is none like unto Him.”(S. 112:3-4)

Yussuf Ali is quite explicit what this means. He comments: “This is to negative (sic) the Christian idea of the godhead, ‘the Father’, ‘the only-begotten Son’, etc.”

We can see quite clearly the strange understanding Muhammad had of the Trinity. It consisted of Allah, Mary and Jesus, and it is implied that Christ

was born out of a physical relationship between Allah and Mary. Little wonder that Muhammad rejected that idea. We do too!

It is interesting, however, that in Surah 19 Allah is by implication clearly the originator of Mary's pregnancy, thus confirming God's 'father' role, though different from a physical copulation:

"It is not befitting to Allah, that He should beget a son. Glory be to Him! When He determines a matter, He only says to it: 'Be! And it is'". (S. 19:3-5)

What is our response?

What do we mean when we speak of a triune God? This concept is equally impossible to fully understand or to imagine as the concept of eternity or infinity. What we know of God we realize from what He has done and is still doing, and from what He revealed about Himself in Scripture. And God ultimately revealed Himself in Jesus Christ:

"Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9); "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30); "...in these last days He spoke to us through the Son..." (Heb 1:2).

We acknowledge that the Sonship of Jesus and the Trinity of God are implied in Scripture rather than explicitly taught. Reflect on Jer 23:5-6; 33:15-16; Isa 7:14; 9:6; 63:7-10 (the word "saviour" = Jeshua = Jesus!). A verbal translation of Deut 6:4 reads: *"The Lord our God, the Lord is one (in a unity)".* The very name of God, "Elohim", is plural. Also in Ps 110:1 and 2:1-7 we find this affirmed. In the New Testament this is confirmed by statements such as Matt 28: 18-19, 2Cor 13:14 and various other passages (Baptism of Jesus, Transfiguration). Surely God is too great, too different from us, for us to comprehend Him, but we should believe what He says about Himself.

7.3 "Don't Make More of Jesus than He Himself did. He Never Claimed to be the Son of God."

We read in the Qur'an:

"The Jews call 'Uzair a son of God, and the Christians call Christ the Son of God. That is a saying from their mouth: (In this) they but imitate what the unbelievers of old used to say. Allah's curse be on them; how they are deluded away from the Truth!" (S. 3:30)

We must state here that the Qur'anic - Islamic critique of this biblical fundamental teaching is extremely weak.

On the other hand we should take note of the high regard in which Jesus (Nabi Isa) is kept in the Qur'an.

As we have seen, both the Qur'an and Muslims reject the divine nature of Christ. But the Bible claims this in no uncertain terms and with all the evidence needed. It is really worth to study these verses in the Qur'an:

He was born of a virgin	(S.19:20)
He came with clear signs	(S. 43:63)
He was holy and faultless	(S. 19:19)
He is a sign to all mankind	(S. 19:21; 21:91)
He is the Messiah	(S. 4:171)
He is illustrious in this world and the hereafter	(S. 3:45)
He is the Word of God (!)	(S. 4:171)
He is a spirit from God	(S. 4:171)
He was raised to heaven (where he still is)	(S. 4:158)
He created life	(S. 5:113)
He healed the sick	(S. 5:113)
He will come back for judgement	(S. 43:61)
He raised the dead	(S. 5:113)

*These are 13 true statements about Jesus Christ. Can we think of any man, who ever lived, excepting Elijah perhaps, that could truthfully claim just 3 of these for himself?
This evidence from the Qur'an alone makes Jesus more than a prophet, but clearly give Him a divine status.*

Not only does the New Testament teach that Jesus is the Son of God and divine, even the Old Testament states this clearly in prophesying the coming of the Messiah:

*"A virgin will be with child and give birth to a son and will call him "God with us'." (Isa 7:14)
"To us a child is born, to us a son is given ... and he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isa 9:6)*

The Lord Jesus had the natures of both His Father and His mother in Himself. His appearance was totally human. He had to eat, drink and sleep. He felt pain, was sad and expressed joy. He also felt the need to pray. But it was His divinity which enabled Him to feed the 5000 with five loaves and two fish, to heal the lepers, the maimed, the paralysed and blind, to raise the dead, to still the storm, to forgive sins, to walk on the water and to rise from the dead Himself.

John 14:6	Colossians 1:15-20	1 John 5:20
John 10:25-33	Matthew 26:63-64	Titus 2:11
Luke 7:48-50	Daniel 7:13-14	Philippians 2:5-6
Matthew 14:32-33	Acts 20:27-28	John 1:10-12
John 5:21-27	John 20:26-29	Hebrews 1:1-4
2 Corinthians 4:4	Romans 9:4-5	

Based on these texts, try to answer the following questions:

- What does the title 'Son of God' convey? What powers go with it?
- When did the Lord Jesus begin to be the Son of God?
- Does the title 'Son of God' actually mean that Jesus is God?
- What does it mean that Jesus is the image of God?

7.4 "Our Book Tells us that Jesus was not Crucified."

Perhaps the strongest resistance by Islam is against the crucifixion and death of our Lord:



*"They (i.e. the Jews) said in boast: "We killed Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, the Apostle of Allah'. But they killed him not, nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them ... Truly they killed him not!" (S. 4:157)
"Christ, the son of Mary, was no more than a messenger...will you, besides Allah, worship something which has no power either to harm or benefit you?" (S. 5: 78-79)*

In many Islamic books, booklets, tracts, audio- and video cassettes, both old and new, this claim is put forward, seemingly even from our Scripture. Some Muslims say he was nailed to the cross, but did not die there. So he was actually not crucified. He fainted, was taken down in that state and recuperated with the aid of the women in the tomb, others say Judas was mistaken to be Jesus (or changed to his likeness) and crucified. The word crucified is made up of the Latin words 'crux' = cross and 'ficere' = to hang up or fix. Consequently Muslims sometimes say that crucifixion means that a person is fixed to the cross, but not necessarily the death of a person on the cross. This, of course, is nonsense.

The Cross of Jesus Has Always Been a Stumbling Block, an Offence!

Again we could ask our Muslim friends to ponder on some questions:

- Who was crucified? – If it was not Jesus, who else?
- Did God originate (invent) a lie about Jesus?
- Who is more trustworthy, an eye-witness or someone commenting 600 years later?

We remind ourselves that

"Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." (1Cor 1:22-24)

In Galatians 5:11 we read of "the offence of the cross". What is so offensive about it?

The sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross indicates that man is utterly unable to enter into the presence of God by his own goodness and strength. Jesus put it this way: *"Apart from me you can do nothing"* (Jn15:5). Paul confesses: *"I know that nothing good lives in me"* (Rom 7:19). Man needs Jesus who became our sacrifice, who died in our stead to open the way to heaven. Man's pride makes him rebel against God's verdict. He is offended that God cannot accept his own efforts!



7.5 "It's not Fair that Someone else Should Suffer for me. Everybody has to Pay for his own Faults."

In Hebrews 9:22 we read: "Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness."

This refers, of course, to the blood of a sacrifice. The Old Testament teaches this throughout: "... It is the blood that makes atonement..." (Lev 17:10). Atonement means reconciliation, the restoration of a broken relationship.

For Satan to invalidate salvation altogether, he has to deny the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross or make it appear unnecessary. The Qur'an does just that. Since this is very crucial, we will have to patiently explain to our Muslim friends the facts about the crucifixion and death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Helpful points could be:

- ❑ Just less than one-third of the Gospel deals with the last week in the life of Jesus and his death! Look at this for yourself.
- ❑ The sacrifice of Jesus is the logical conclusion to the teaching of the Old Testament. (Note Luke 24:26,44.)
- ❑ The Old Testament prophesied the death of the Christ on the cross in enormous detail.
- ❑ We have the testimony of eye-witnesses. What sense would it have made for them to invent such a story?
- ❑ During his life on earth Christ predicted His own death several times (see Gospel reports). Therefore Jesus' death was not an accident that happened to an "impotent god". He said: "I lay down my life - only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord." (John 10:17-18)
- ❑ There is accepted historical evidence of the crucifixion and death of Jesus (see 1Cor 15:12-20).



7.6 Other Objections Brought up by Muslims

There will always be one or the other new pothole Muslims try to place into our way, but it helps if we are aware of trouble-spots and can negotiate our route in encounters with such 'dawah-workers' (= Muslim missionaries).

OBJECTION	REASONING	RESPONSE
1. Jesus was not a universal prophet, but sent to the Israelites only.	He said: "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel" (Matthew 15:24).	Jesus clearly taught, "I am the light of the world ..." (John 8:12). Obviously 'the world' is much bigger than 'Israel!' - 1 John 2:2.
2. Muhammad is prophesied in the Bible.	In the Qur'an Jesus is made to state: "I am indeed the messenger to you...giving you glad tidings of a messenger who shall come after me whose name shall be Ahmad" (Surah 61:6). Muslims argue that this affirms Deut 18:15 and John 14:16-17: "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever."	In applying this prophecy to Muhammad Muslims must accept: - That Jesus is God. "Unless I go away, the counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I (Jesus) will send him to you" (John 14:17). - That Muhammad is not dead! How could a dead person be with believers forever (John 14:16)? We also note that the disciples already knew that counsellor, while Muhammad came 600 years later!
3. We Muslims are better Christians than many of you, because we are all circumcised.	Muslims allege that one cannot be accepted in God's eyes unless one is circumcised like Abraham and all his descendants after him.	The Bible speaks for itself, "Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing." (1Cor 7:19). See also Gal 6:15.
4. Why are Christians lacking reverence for the Almighty refusing to take off their shoes when they pray?	Since God commanded Moses to remove his shoes in Ex 3:4-5 all worshipers must remove their shoes whenever	This command was only given to Moses at that particular time. If it were a general command, we would

Or ... You do not perform ablutions...	they come to a holy place.	better walk barefoot all the time since it also says, "the whole earth is full of his (God's) glory" (Isa 6:3). See Ps 51:10; Ps 22:29; Eph 3:14; Matt 26:39.
Or... You do not prostrate face down...		
5. The Church was not built on Peter, but actually on Satan.	"And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. Jesus turned and said to Peter: 'Get behind me, Satan!'" (Matt.16:18).	Peter was called Satan because he refused to accept Jesus' death at the cross (Matt. 16:22). Besides, Jesus is the foundation of the church as 1Cor 3:11 tells us.
6. Paul cannot have been a messenger of God; he actually is the one who invented Christianity.	Muslims take exception in accepting Paul as a messenger of God. - "Wasn't it Paul who came up with the idea of the Trinity, the Doctrine of Atonement and many other heresies?" they would ask to make their point.	The Bible states: "Paul, an apostle - sent not from men nor by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father..." (Gal. 1:1). And Paul insists: "...the gospel I preached is not something man made up...I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ" (Gal 1:11-12).
7. Christianity does not deserve to be called a religion today, because you don't practice it any longer.	Your own Book says: "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." (James 1:27)	Good deeds cannot save us, but trusting in Jesus alone for the forgiveness of our sins. Then we will seek to live a life of obedience to Jesus as a Christian. (John 1:12 and Mark 9:41)

As Christians we have Some Great Evidence for the Truth:



7.7 Eye-witness Reports Attest to the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus

Paul refers to a host of eye-witnesses:

"What I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures ... and he appeared to ... more than 500 brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living". (1Cor 15:3-6)

What the apostle Paul is saying is: if you don't believe me, take a boat from Corinth to Joppa, walk up to Jerusalem and ask them yourselves!

Peter gives the eye-witness evidence. Just imagine what would have happened after Peter finished his sermon on Pentecost, had this not been true!

"Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs ... as you yourselves know. This man was handed to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge, and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross!" (Acts 2:22-23)

Remember, this was spoken just seven weeks after the crucifixion! The hearers could have said: "My dear Simon Peter, you must have been dreaming! Who was crucified and killed?" And when the Gospel began to be circulated, the people of Jerusalem would have loudly objected to such a story - if it was untrue. Just go through the "Book of Acts" again with this in mind.

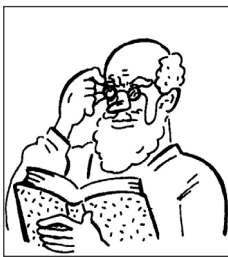


7.8 Historians Confirm the Crucifixion of Jesus

The very well-known first-century-historian Tacitus recorded: "The name Christian comes to them from Christ, who was executed in the reign of Tiberius by the procurator Pontius Pilate". Please note that Tacitus was a sharp critic of the Christian faith. Yet he accepted as a known fact the crucifixion of Christ Jesus by a Roman ruler.

At almost the same time the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus wrote:

"There was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him many Jews and many Gentiles. He was (the) Messiah. And when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principle men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him, for he appeared to them alive again the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold..." (Antiquitates Judeaicum, The Works of Flavius Josephus, vol. 2, p. 412; in "Christians Answer Muslims", 98-102)



We note:

The Jews admit the crucifixion of Jesus; but deny that he was the Messiah! (-After all, they were there!)

Muslims confidently call Jesus the Messiah, but deny that he was crucified. But they were not there! And their claim is based on one voice raised 600 years after the event!

The Fulfillment of the Prophecies About Jesus in the OT are Abundant Evidence of the Truth of the Bible

Here and there we already had brief looks at what the prophets of old had foretold about Jesus, the Messiah. Let us now consider these in more detail:

	Old Testament: Prophecy	New Testament: Fulfilment
He was to appear 483 years after the decree to build Jerusalem after destruction by Nebuchadnezzar	(Dan 9:24-26) (B.C. 445)	
He was to be born in Bethlehem	(Micha 5:2),	Luke 2:42ff
Born by a virgin	(Isai 7:14)	Matt 1:18ff
To be God Himself (which did not mean that God would not also be everywhere else!)	(Isai 7:14; 9:6),	Matt 1:18ff
His name is Saviour (=Jesus)	(Isai 49:1-8; 63:8),	Matt 1:21

He would come to save and heal	(Isai 35:4-5),	Matt 1:21; Lk. 19:10
Jesus would ride into Jerusalem on a donkey	(Zech 9:9)	Matt 21:1-9
He would be betrayed by a friend	(Ps 41:9)	Mk 14:10; 21:43-44; Matt 27:3-8
Sold for 30 pieces of silver	Zech. 11:12-13	Matt 26:15
He would be tried and executed, but not for wrongs He did!	(Isai 50:6; 53:1-12; Jn 18+19)	
His hands and feet were to be pierced	(Ps 22:1.7-17)	Jn 18 + 19
His garments would be divided and lots would be cast for his robe	(Ps 22:18)	Jn 18 + 19
But the Holy One would not see corruption	(Ps 16:10)	Lk 24:1-11
He would be raised to heaven, to sit at the right hand of God	(Ps 110:1)	Matt 26:64; Hebr 1:13
He will come back, and all inhabitants of Jerusalem will look on the one that was pierced	(Zech 12:10)	Still to be fulfilled!

These prophecies were given between 1000 BC - 500 BC. All describe in astonishing detail something totally unforeseeable which has been fulfilled in every detail. Can anyone expect more evidence for the truth of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus?

We conclude:

Because of these divine signs we can absolutely depend on the truth of the Bible. The Qur'an, on the other hand, can supply neither prophecy nor any other token to support its claims to be divine. The arguments Muslims name, such as the beauty of its style in the original Arabic, the seeming impossibility for an illiterate man like Muhammad to compose it, and a claim to its perfect content, are subjective reasoning, and not even correct.

➔ Remember to work through the questions given in the Appendix on page 108. If you need help - don't hesitate to contact us!

8. Witnessing to Muslims

8.1 The Situation as it is Today

At no time has the Church taken Muslim evangelism seriously. Small groups or individuals have in isolated cases tried to witness, but this was the exception rather than the rule.

One of the main causes for the lack of witness to Muslims is ignorance and fear

It is crucial to realize that fear is based on ignorance. Everybody is scared of snakes. But if I know how they behave and react, and what can be done in case of a snake bite, I lose an irrational fear. Knowledge and experience greatly reduce this fear.

The same applies to Muslim evangelism. An ignorant Christian, who does not know Islam or Muslims, and is confronted with typical Islamic anti-Christian propaganda, just cannot deal with this. Ignorance causes fear, and fear suppresses evangelism.

So, in order to come to the actual question of how to witness to Muslims, we had to take a long detour investigating the faith of Islam and its claim, as well as Muslims' thinking about the Bible. We ought to have knowledge about this in order to explain the Gospel meaningfully and explicitly to a Muslim. Obviously God can and does overrule matters in some cases, and for that we are indeed thankful. However, we should be properly prepared when we intend to reach our Muslim neighbours and friends.

8.2 Is there such a thing as a Normal Situation?

Yes and no. No, because the religious practice of, let's say, an Arab Muslim, has many facets and elements different from a Muslim in Turkey, Malaysia or Tanzania. Even within a given country there are orthodox Muslims and those who practise what we call "Folk Islam", perhaps with many elements of a former religion, fear of spirits and occult practices. Then there are those who are only Muslims by name. There are rich and poor, educated and simple, rural and urban, extrovert and introvert people. After all, we too are just as different!

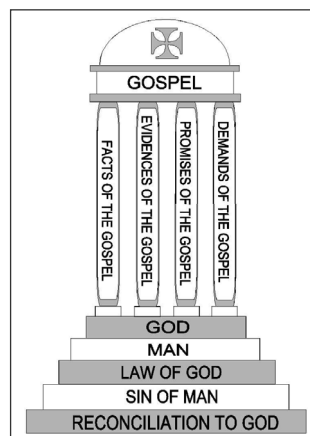
And yet we may say "Yes, there is a normal situation." With the advance of technology and literature, knowledge and formal training becomes more and more available and uniform. The Indian, Turkish and Tanzanian Muslims are very likely arguing the same way and they will have the same

basic faith and conviction. Muslims living in a country with a strong exposure to Christianity will be better trained to resist a Christian approach, but only to a certain degree.

8.3 What do we mean by Evangelism?

Evangelism means first of all to pass on information about:

God ► Man ► Law of God ► Sin of man ► Reconciliation to God



When this information is understood – and we do not speak of spiritual understanding as yet – the invitation should be extended to a person to accept God's offer: full pardon for sin in answer to repentance. God in Christ suffered for sin on the cross and paid the price for it. As far as God is concerned, our sin-problem is settled, when we accept His pardon, resolve to stay clear of sin in the future, and live in union with Him. Receiving the new life through grace by faith means that the Holy Spirit, Who has opened our eyes to the ugliness of sin and the impending judgement over it, now leads a new believer into all

truth – provided, of course, that the transaction was indeed serious. Even so, we have to accept that we will not be able to live a sinless life! We still live under grace (Rom 5-8).

Perhaps we think of evangelism too often only as an invitation to receive Christ as Saviour. That would really mean a mutilation of the Gospel. Indeed the Gospel is much more than that!

(1) The Facts of the Gospel

God loves the world, or should we say more precisely, the people of His world. He hates their sin, but looks with pity and compassion on their depravity. Their lack of belonging, purpose and sense of value moved God to devise a plan to reconcile the people back to Himself. So many people

lead a superficial life largely geared to get as much pleasure, power over others and goods or money – that was never His intent.

He reconciled them, as Isaiah said, by becoming their Jesus - or when we translate this name - their Saviour (Isa 63:8). In our “distress He was distressed, and he saved” us; “In His love and pity He redeemed us”; lifted us up and cared” for us (vs. 9). But most people “rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit” (vs. 10). In spite of this we read in the last book of the Bible, that Jesus said: “Look! I stand at the door and knock. If any man hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in!” (Rev 3:20).

God became our Jesus. He became a man and died - something which God as a spiritual being only could not do. He “laid down His life for His sheep” (Jn 10:15), paying with His own life-blood the price for our guilt, sin and shame to buy us back to Himself (Matt 20:28; 1Tim 2:6; Heb 9:15). He came so that all who are “dead in sin” could be raised to a new life - eternal life in His presence (Eph 2: 1-2,6-10; Rom 6:4; Jude 24-25; 1Thess 3:9) Who knows why God chose this way, and no other? No one! But the main thing is that we can trust Him fully.

(2) The Evidences of the Gospel

In His own way God gives the assurance that we can trust Him and be accepted by Him: “His Spirit witnesses to our spirit that we are the children of God.” (Rom 8:16) This is, of course, a very subjective knowledge. Is there nothing more substantial, more convincing? Yes, there is! We already had a fairly close look at it previously: detailed, totally unforeseeable prophecies which God inspired to be recorded by the Old Testament prophets, and which came true. The whole history of Israel, including the diaspora (dispersion) of the Jews and the reestablishment of Israel after 1900 years - indeed something totally unique in world history - had been foretold. (More information on request)

Even more stunning are the prophecies concerning Christ. Do you know that, in the Gospel according to Matthew alone, there are some 24 sentences like “as the prophets foretold,” “in order to fulfill what was said by...etc”?

The good thing is that we can show this *internal evidence* to anyone to prove the truth of the Gospel. I suggest you carry a list of these prophecies and their fulfillment in your Bible!

The skilled witness will also be able to add evidences from archaeology, history and the eye-witnesses. No person can, after having been shown this in detail, honestly maintain that the Bible is just a book constructed by humans.

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But we should add to this also

(3) The Promises of the Gospel

A Muslim once related to us how he had puzzled his sheikh with the question: “What promises do we Muslims actually have?” He added: “I know there are far more promises in your book than in our Qur’an.” Indeed, we can rejoice with the Psalmist:

“How sweet are your promises to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth” (Ps 119:103).

Do we know and treasure them? Just look at some:

He promised to his followers His mercy (Ps 103:7), forgiveness (Ps 103:12; Isa 59:3; 43:25; 44:22; Jer 31:34 etc.), eternal life (Jn 10:22-28; Matth 25:34,46b etc.), a new life (2Cor 5:17), His rest (Matt 11:28; Rev 14:13), His continued presence in our lives (Matt 28:20b). He wants to give us what all the world is craving for - and not really finding - love and peace and joy (Jn 14:27; 15:9,11; Gal 5:22). Most importantly He promises us, his followers, heaven (Jn 14:3; Rev 5:10). He also gives us gifts to assist us in our task on earth (1Cor 12:8-10; Eph 4:11; Rom 12:6-8; esp. Acts 2:38b).

Last but not least, we have to know that there are also

(4) Conditions of the Gospel

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven”. (Matt 7:21)

Before someone is invited to come to the Lord Jesus to ask for pardon, he or she should sit down and count the cost (Lk 14:28)! Repentance is a pre-condition for pardon, and that is the willingness to forsake sin (Lk 13:3). We all know that we just can’t leave sin.

But God made provision for that too: “I write this to you ... that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have One Who speaks to the Father on our behalf, Jesus Christ, the Righteous One” (1Jn 2: 1). The willingness to obey (Hebr.5:9) proves that we trust God, because He knows best. Endurance and faithfulness is likewise a condition for salvation, for “He that endures to the end shall be saved”, says the Word of God (Hebr 3:6; Rev 2:4; Matth 24: 13). Faith and “faithfulness” belong together. That shows that a decision for Christ is not to be confused with conversion (i.e. undergoing change) and salvation. A believer is set aside for God and His special purpose. The Bible calls that sanctification. “Without holiness no one shall see the Lord”, says the Bible (Hebr 12:14; 1Pet 1:13-19).

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To withhold this information from a potential convert is telling him only one side of the Gospel. We must make sure not to do that! But let us also be aware of this: God is the author and finisher of our faith (Phil 1:6). The Christian life is a supernatural life! If it were not for God’s help and even initiative, no one would come to Christ, never mind endure to the end!

8.4 Pre-Evangelism

Most Muslims we meet have considerable prejudice against the Christian faith. This makes them misunderstand our faith totally. Pre-evangelism aims to clear the way for evangelism. The “rubble” in the way of knowing Christ is removed. This may take some time, but it should be done before one asks a person to accept Christ as personal Saviour and Lord.

Let us look at it this way: Why should a Muslim want to come to Christ, as long as he thinks that Jesus was a prophet to the Jews and brought a message which has been corrupted and was replaced by an unaltered new edition through Muhammad? A Muslim feels much the same way about us as we would feel when the Mormons or Jehovah’s Witnesses approach us with the intention to share their religious views with us! Pre-evangelism should clarify false concepts and ideas.

8.5 “Friendship Evangelism”

Muslims in a crowd are in most instances unapproachable and hostile. In a one-on-one or two-on-two situation, preferably in the relaxed atmosphere of his familiar environment, a witness needs to be able to lead a conversation as naturally as possible to a spiritual plane.



Muslim evangelism is, as a general rule, personal evangelism

This is much easier with Muslims than with members of most other groups. Muslims are generally religious. They readily talk about their faith. They want to persuade us and are likely to expect that we want to do the same to

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them! So let us aim to build a relationship with them even though the Qur’an warns Muslims in this regard:

“O believers, take not the Jews or Christians as friends. If any one of you takes them for his friend, he surely is one of them ...” (S. 5:57)

Never will the Christians be satisfied with you unless you follow their form of religion”. (S. 2:120)

You are the best of people, evolved for mankind, enjoying what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah. (S. 3:110)

‘O you, who believe! Take not into your intimacy those outside your ranks. They will not fail to corrupt you. They only desire your ruin.” (S. 4:144)

On the other hand there are also more positive statements; Surah 5:85 ranks first among them:

“And nearest among them in love to the believers will you find those who say: ‘We are Christians’: because among these are men devoted to learning and men who have renounced the world, and they are not arrogant.”

Should we then disguise our intentions pretending that we do not seek to present them with the Gospel? Such attempts of “tactical contextualization” introducing ourselves as “Jesus Muslims” who have embraced Islamic practices such as fasting during the month of Ramadaan, praying in the direction of Mecca and others, will likely be interpreted by Muslims along their own lines of using lies in order to conceal their true intentions. This is known as “*taqiyya*” (= tactical deception) and is based on Surah 16: 106! The Bible gives a clear answer:

“We have renounced secret shameful ways: we do not use deception, nor do we distort the Word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God”. (2Cor 4:2)

Muslims certainly do not “beat around the bush”. They openly and often emphatically declare their standpoint. Let us do likewise! Just remember: Between a kind, loving, gentle, respectful sharing of one’s faith and tactless bulldozing is a very wide gap. These bulldozing self-appointed ‘martyrs’ close the doors for a serious and sensitive witness. So let us do what is right with both boldness and respect!

8.6 Confrontation or Accommodation?

We just spoke about friendship evangelism. I like to replace the word ‘friendship’ with ‘relationship’, simply because someone who does not love

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God or has not been redeemed by Christ cannot be my friend in the fullest sense of that word. The Bible has a lot to say about friendship with the world or being under an unequal yoke (2Cor 6:4). Deeply committed friendship with unbelievers is certainly not encouraged!



But in order to communicate the Gospel well, a personal relationship will prove to be indispensable. Here a mutual trust and respect can grow and that is indeed a good foundation.

Even so, the direct or indirect challenge of the Truth, which we endeavour to transmit, is likely to result in rejection. Nobody likes to be rejected. It hurts! It also leads to an

end of sharing the Gospel. Therefore we must try to strike the right balance. We make sure that we are offensive only by what we carefully and lovingly share from God's Word.

Accommodation on the other hand means that we are prepared to compromise. This is likely to extend our relationship, possibly indefinitely. It is done by not saying what the other does not want to hear about the Bible - and by saying what he likes to hear about Islam. When we try to take a little of Islam (or another religion) and mix it with the Christian message to make it more appealing, we slide into syncretism. Avoiding this may well lead to confrontation and possibly rejection. The Bible already tells us about this:

"Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ... If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you." (1Pet 4:12-14)

No servant is greater than his master. If they persecute me, they will persecute you also ... They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the One who sent me". (Jn 15:20)

"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me." (Matt 5:11)

➔ Please ponder on these matters
using the questions on page 108.

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9. Communicating in the Power of God

9.1 Truth and Power in Evangelism

After a large "Gospel crusade" in a major African city it was claimed that thousands of Muslims were saved and healed. An assessment a year later showed very sad results. Not one Muslim was known to have been added to any of the churches and there was no knowledge of anyone having been healed! 'Power Evangelism' often seems to be more a psychological or persuasive power than "the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes" (Rom 1:16).

9.2 The Power of God - or the Power of Human Personality?

No doubt the true power of God is always clothed in the humility of the messenger. If he tries to inflate his image by volume of voice or drama on the 'stage', this power display is likely to be his own. Unfortunately people are often so gullible or intimidated, and so used to such shows that they fail to see the difference between the power of God through a speaker with authority, and simply an overpowering personality.

9.3 Power in Weakness

We read of Paul that he came to the Corinthians in 'weakness and fear and with much trembling'. He also confessed that God told him that His grace was sufficient for him for His power is made perfect in weakness (1Cor 2:3). But his message (i.e. the form in which it was said) was "not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power!" (1Cor 2:4-5) We read also that "our Gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction" (1Thess 1:5). And again we read: "For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of talk, but of power" (1Cor 4:20)

We can be sure that the power was not in an amplifier. We also know that Paul was not a terrific speaker. What then is this power? From Scripture we may deduce that this means that the attention is transferred from man to God. The Holy Spirit uses a person to kindle faith in God and trust in His Word, i.e. "deep conviction". It is a communication from the Spirit of God via the preacher to another man's spirit and not from man to man's psyche or soul.

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How do we transfer attention from ourselves to God? By identifying what the power of God really is. The Bible is abundantly clear about this:

"The Gospel ... is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes" (Rom 1:16).

"The Message of the cross ... is the power of God" (1Cor 1:18)

"Christ crucified... the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1Cor 1:23).

The Message of the Cross = Christ Crucified = the Gospel

This is God's declaration of the inability of man to save himself by 'good works' or any other means, and his absolute dependency on what God has already done.

**The Gospel, which is the Message of the Cross,
Alone Contains the Power of God
that Effects Salvation and Godly Living
and the Ability for Service**

Therefore the gospel must first of all be understood (and we will do our best to inform and explain). Then a decision must follow, whether a person wants to accept Jesus Christ by faith, or go their own way.

We believe this to mean His "demonstration of the Spirit's power."

"The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." (2Cor 10:3-5)

9.4 The Power of Satan

The Shaman, the witchdoctor, the soul-guide in Sufism and Hinduism, the Sheikh or *Mwalimu (mganga)* who uses portions of the Qur'an or other things as "medicine" or magic spells and curses against someone, are all using spiritual power. But their's is of "the power of this dark world" (Eph 6:12). We read of people who were under the power of the devil (Acts 10:38). He is pictured as a lion (1Pet 5:8), the very symbol of power.

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9.5 Power Encounter

Muhammad used this kind of power too. When a Christian delegation from Najran, in Southern Arabia, visited him they discussed religious matters for several days. When they still refused to accept Islam, Muhammad challenged them in a public meeting. Surah 3:61 tells us about this event:

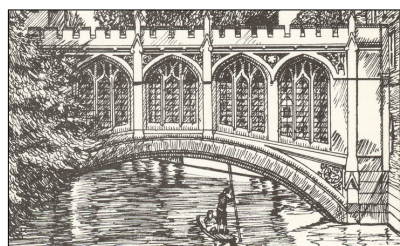
"Say: 'Come! Let us gather together our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves: then let us earnestly pray, and invoke the curse of Allah on those who lie!"

Muhammad wanted to curse the Christians in the name of Allah, and the Christians were to curse him in the name of Jesus to see who would be the stronger one. "Power encounter" is what we call this today in missiological terms. The Christians refused, for they were not called upon by God to curse, but to bless! I myself (G. Nehls) have been in the same situation once, and was also cursed by a Muslim, who assured me that I would die within a couple of months. This was many years ago.

Pagans will want to know whose spirit is more powerful, for they want to find refuge under the most powerful Shaman or witchdoctor. Many Muslims and nominal Christians do the same, and by that prove that they are really pagan in their hearts! Jesus defeated the devil. Of course we, who are redeemed, are under His power and protection! We have, in fact, been given authority by Jesus over all the host of the enemy and nothing shall be able to harm us (Lk 10:19). Why then go back to pagan fears and beliefs?!

9.6 Proper Communication

Communicating the Gospel depends on two things. Let me liken them to the two foundations on which a bridge rests on either side of a river. While



everything depends on the witness to make this truth clear and fully understood, considering the background and position of the hearer, it depends equally on whether or not the hearer listens to the Holy Spirit to persuade him and to 'convert' him.

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Therefore proclamation is always inseparably tied to

- a clear, sensitive, understandable message and
- our devoted prayer that human understanding may be translated by the Holy Spirit to faith and commitment.

Someone suggested, perhaps rightly, that we should work to present the Gospel, disciple and teach as though it depends solely on us to make things clear. And that we should pray as though all our efforts are futile, and it all depends on what God is doing. So we do our work 100% yet trust God 100% for the results. The Lord Jesus said it very clearly: "Without me you can do nothing!" (Jn 15:5)

9.7 Spiritual Warfare

"The god of this age (i.e. the devil) has blinded the minds of unbelievers (who don't believe in Christ) so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ." (2Cor 4:4)

**Spiritual warfare is based on the fact that there is a war between God and Satan. (Rev 12:7)
It is the effort to break the satanic influence which blinds and binds people.**

A blind person just cannot see! Any effort to explain the beauty of the deep blue sea or a brilliant red flower is in vain. A blind person cannot understand blue or red, never mind how well we explain it! Only a person able to see can appreciate colour or visual beauty.

A Muslim, like anybody else, is blind to spiritual reality, to the need for a saviour because of his sinfulness. How can we help him to see? It is by spiritual warfare against the forces that blind and bind him.

That is not done by prayer alone. We do not ask the devil or his demons to leave. We command them in the name of the Lord Jesus to let go! We command them to leave! "In the name of Jesus" we have the authority to do so. It is not the words that will have a magical effect on Satan! But we command on behalf of the Lord Jesus Christ (and always say "Lord Jesus Christ" - for even a demon may call himself "Jesus"!). We command with His authority:

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"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations." (Matt 28: 18-19)

"Look, I have given you authority..., to overcome the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you." (Lk 10:19)

Once a government has given authority to a police officer, this man has now the power to arrest a criminal. The government stands behind this officer. All its power supports him, when he does his duty. He acts, so to speak, on behalf of the government. The president or prime minister needs not do this himself.

Likewise we have been empowered, authorized, to be God's instruments of His righteousness, and are given the task and authority to "arrest" the spiritual "criminals".

But Satan also has limited authority:

"Our struggle is not against flesh and blood (i.e. human beings), but against... the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in heavenly realms." (Eph 6: 12)

However, they have been disarmed:

"Having disarmed the powers and authorities, Christ triumphed over them by the cross" (Col 2:14, 15). "Jesus Christ has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand, with angels, authorities and powers in submission to Him" (1Pet 3:21-22).

Although that has been done, Satan and his demons still exercise some power and authority even though that given to us is stronger. "The end will come, when ... He has destroyed all dominion, authority and power" (1Cor 15:24).

There is always the chance, if not the rule, that the "criminals", (in our case demons in Satan's service), resist our authority. An interesting story is found in Acts 19:13-16, and we do well to study this.

A believer in Jesus Christ is given authority over demons "in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." By faith we use this authority. That means we do not give up when we see no immediate results! Satan will always try to confuse us, to bluff us, so that we may not persist but rather give up. By faith we claim the victory.

That does not mean that we can pray any unbeliever into the Kingdom of God, however. Man has been given the free will to choose (Deut 30:19; Jos 24:15 etc) whom he will serve. We can witness to a person. In the case

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of spiritual bondage, oppression or possession we may in the name of Christ command the binding forces to leave - and we should do this persistently - but that does not automatically mean that the person will choose Christ as Saviour and Lord. We read of Stephen, the first Christian martyr, that he was full of the Holy Spirit. Yet, when he spoke of Christ, his listeners were furious and "gnashed their teeth", they "covered their ears and yelled at the top of their voices" (Acts 7:55-57). They rejected the message. Would we blame Stephen for that?

In Islam the blindness and bondage is perhaps stronger than in any other religion. This is partly due to the system in which a Muslim lives. No doubt he is also bound by the "Spirit of Islam", the "Lord of this house" (the Ka'ba in Mecca). Therefore our ministry neither begins nor ends with our witness to the Gospel, but with prayer to God to open the eyes of the blind. As a rule, this will often be a period of prayer (sometimes with fasting; Matt 17:21) and exorcism (commanding evil forces to leave), and it may stretch over a period of time.

"Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith... (1 Pet 5:8).

A lion will attack when one runs away from him. "Resist him! Stand firm!" A lion is frightened when he meets someone to stand up against him!



Likewise we should also resist evil forces which bind and blind those we witness to. We must not allow Satan to keep his prey, but boldly attack.

Jesus asked: "...how can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man?" (Matt 12:29)

The "strong man" is Satan and his demons. His possessions are the unbelievers. They cannot be liberated, they cannot see, unless the "strong man" is bound first. The Lord Jesus Christ did that! But He also said to Peter: "Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose (untie) on earth will be loosened in heaven" (Matt 16:19).

Later he told the same to all his disciples (Matt 18:18).

Have we ever done that? It is part of the "Great Commission", part of sharing the Gospel?

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God's Holy Spirit came to convict people of sin, to convince them of the truth of His Word and to lead them to an understanding of the message in it. The counterfeit are the devil's evil spirits, which try to hinder that. So let us always resist them and bind them so that they may not hinder God's witness.

Let us sum up:

- ◆ Satan has been defeated at the cross of Christ.
- ◆ Yet he still exercises a limited power over unbelievers whom he by his evil spirits blinds to the truth and binds as his slaves.
- ◆ In order to set the captives free, the "strong man" has to be bound. Jesus did that already. However, we are also called upon to bind and cast out evil by prayer and exorcism.
- ◆ Christ has given us spiritual authority over demons and evil spirits (see Mk 3: 15).
- ◆ But even then the individual may choose to reject the pardon of God in Christ.
- ◆ Spiritual warfare is not a substitute for good and faithful communication of the Gospel or vice versa.
- ◆ We realize that we have no power or authority of our own. We have a delegated authority, however. That fact should keep us very humble. Therefore prayer is the acknowledgement of our impotence and God's all-sufficiency.
- ◆ Our prayer is that Islam as an anti-Christian system will break down; and that the Muslims we know will be delivered from its bondage.

➔ You will benefit much more from this study guide by working through the questions on page 108 - 109. Please take some time now to do this as the Holy Spirit is working in you.

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10. Gospel Concepts for Muslims

Good preparation for service is always commendable, but when it never results in touching the life of a Muslim it degenerates into a futile exercise. **“What is the sense of a life touched by God but not touching the lives of other people?”**, we ought to ask ourselves (Dr. E. Chandran).

You may wonder whether there are certain truths of the Bible that are more attractive to Muslims than others. That is a very good point. For even our Master did not preach the same standard message to everyone he encountered. A walk through John’s gospel will quickly convince us that supreme teacher deliberately dwelled on topics that were brought up by his conversation partner: Nicodemus - Ch. 3, woman at the well in Samaria - Ch. 4, or connected to the circumstances and needs of the people he addressed: I am... the bread, light, way, truth, good shepherd, resurrection and life.

There are many topics that are of special interest to our Muslim friends

Here are some topics along with Scriptural truth; and you may want to make your own study of each of these topic:

10.1 Islamic concepts – compare with Christian practices

- **Hajj** – Do Christians go on pilgrimage also? > Read Heb 11:9-10; 13-16; 1Pet 1:1
- **Qibla** – What direction do we face in prayer? > John 11:41-42; Heb 12:2
- **Shahada** – What is your confession? Do Christians have a creed? > Deut 6:4; John 17:3; 1Tim 2:4-5
- **Shariah** – What law do you follow? > Rom 6:14; John 13:34
- **Wudu** – Do you practice special rituals of cleansing? > Eph 5:25-27; Ps 51:10; 32:1-4
- **Zakat** – How much are Christians expected to give to the poor and needy? > 2Cor 9: 7+15
- **Zamzam** – What is the story behind that special well? > Gen 21:19; John 4:13-14

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10.2 The Prophets – and what we can learn from them

Remember that Muslims “believe” in all the prophets sent by God. But many know hardly more than their names! This provides us with an excellent opening to explain from the Biblical records who these men and women were. Take time to study together the lives and lessons taught to us from Scripture about:

- ◆ **Adam and Christ** – Did you ever wish you could start your life all over again? > Gen 3; Rom 5:19-21; 1Cor 15:22
- ◆ **Abraham, the Friend of God** > Are you also longing to have such a close relationship with God? (see special outline in the appendix section)
- ◆ **Isaac and Ishmael** – Who was the true son of promise? > Gen 17:19; chapters 19 – 21; Heb 11:17-18; Gal 4:28-31
- ◆ **Jacob, the Man who struggled with God** – Can we expect God to care for our life? > Gen 27-32; 32:22-32
- ◆ **Joseph, from slave to ruler** – How can we learn to forgive those who intentionally harm us? > Gen 37-50; 50: 20-21
- ◆ **Moses, the man who walked with God** – Can we have a face-to-face walk with God as our guide in life? > Exodus 2-3; 14:19-20; 33:7-23; 2 Cor 3:7-18

10.3 Life Events, Feasts and Life-style Issues

These are natural entry points where we meet with Muslims for celebrations or talk about questions on life and death. These could include:

- **Birth, Name giving, Circumcision, Wedding and Funerals** – It is good to ask questions about these or during times of socializing and celebration. Reflect how to share ideas from the Bible that can be helpful to your Muslim friend. You may want to start them thinking by asking: If a Baby is born with a pure, clean heart, why bring a sacrifice at a name giving festival? – Why do (some) Christians not circumcise their boys; how does it matter? > Gal 6:15? – What is the secret of a happy, fulfilled marriage of a Christian husband and wife? –How will you answer God, when you stand before Him one day? Is there any way we can know that we will not go to hell? Are you sure it is smart to wait until Day of Judgment to find out what your final destination will be?
- **Muslim and Christian Feasts** – What is the significance of your big feasts Eid-ul-Adha (qorban – sacrifice) and Eid-ul-Fitr (end of Ramadaan celebrations)? Do you know why we celebrate Easter, Christmas, Ascension Day...? – There are many, many spiritual lessons that can be drawn from these feasts.

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● **Life issues** such as family life, upbringing of our children, polygamous marriages, cleanliness, bad influences through charms, curses, evil eye etc. These could all be great departure points into a reflection on Biblical principles and examples that govern our lives as Christians.

10.4 Desires and Longings that we share as human beings

Many times we will discover that we can well identify with a Muslim enquirer in his search for

- ☑ Peace
- ☑ Joy
- ☑ Love
- ☑ Forgiveness
- ☑ Assurance
- ☑ Truth
- ☑ Power over sin, bad influences and evil forces.

These are inner needs that create a vacuum in the human soul that can only be filled by our creator himself. (For many of these topics we have specially designed gospel outlines that can be ordered from us.)

10.5 Stories with a special message

Everybody loves to listen to a well-told story, especially if he can identify himself with one or the other character in it. Apart from the short illustrations, parables and stories in the appendix we have a number of other great stories in tract form that you could obtain and share with or tell it to some Muslim folks. (Ask for our *Servants of Truth Tracts*.)

- ☞ **The Debt of Rashid Davids** > Accepting pardon rather than trying to pay ones own debt.
- ☞ **A Letter that came from a far Country** > A bold journey to receive God’s wonderful offer.
- ☞ **The Wisdom of a Sheikh** > Finding deliverance from the flood of sins.
- ☞ **The Gold Coin that did not ring true** > The danger of trusting into false security and wealth.
- ☞ **The Blood Feud of the El-Hanouchi** > The power of hatred and the joy of a life of safety.
- ☞ **Faithful unto Death** > The true testimony of one condemned to death.
- ☞ **Converging Destinies** > Reflections about Jerusalem, peace and the Messiah.

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10.6 Good conversation opens on spiritual matters

- ☞ **What do you think of the Messiah?** > Also available in tract form.
- ☞ **We all need divine guidance to make it safely through the journey of life.** How can we make sure that we arrive at the right destination, the one we all desire to reach?
- ☞ **What is different about the church community as compared to the ‘ummah’ in an Islamic society?**
- ☞ **What is true repentance? How can we be sure to be forgiven?**
- ☞ **How do you raise your children in an increasingly secular society?**
- ☞ **How do race and colour affect our religious beliefs and practices?**

Some of these topics present opportunities to “meet around a table” for a more extensive conversation in either home or organized settings. These will not only create opportunities for witness in word, but also for better understanding, and relating through our lives as well (1Thess 2:8).



➔ **Take time now to go through some of these suggested topics and make your own notes for witnessing.**
There are also some questions on page 109 for your deeper insight.

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11. Practical Aspects of Muslim Evangelism

11.1 Preparation and Experience

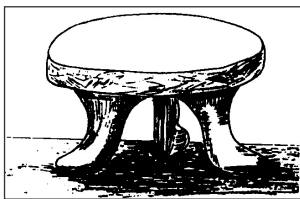
There are three ingredients to Muslim evangelism. May I liken these to the three legs of a stool. Let one break off, and the one sitting on it will fall to the ground.

The three supporting legs are:

Spirituality

Knowledge

Experience



Neither is a substitute for another!

We already looked at the aspects of knowledge, understanding and prayer. Let us now look at experience.

Nobody who starts something new is already experienced! Experience simply comes by doing! Everybody who is a witness for Christ started without experience. So we just have to start somewhere to gain it.

Preparation, on the other hand, is a necessity without which more damage might be done than good. Preparation is the obtaining of knowledge on this specialized field of evangelism. When you study these notes, when you attend a training seminar, you are preparing yourself for service.

How much knowledge must I have before I can begin to witness to Muslims? If you have studied these notes you should be well prepared, even if you do not remember all you read. You know where to look for possible answers when you need them. Remember, that you can always write to us about any problem you might have! So, get ready, and then set your mind to go to work.

But you might still ask: "WHO AM I, LORD?" - "Am I qualified?" Every humble servant of God is likely to ask such a question.

Moses asked that question (Exod 3:11) and so did Isaiah (Isa 6:5). Both became faithful servants thereafter (*read on from the given passages!*). Jeremiah also questioned his ability until God gave him a clear answer (Jer 1:6). Even Paul asked the question "who is fit for such a task?" (2Cor 2: 16). The answer given is:

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"Not that we are competent to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God" (2Cor 3:5).

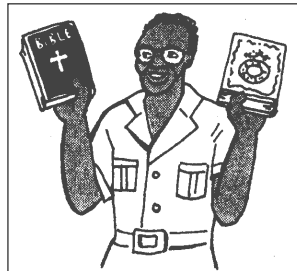
No one has ever been intelligent, experienced or spiritual enough to be partners in the work of God! I have to confess that even after many years of visiting Muslims in their homes I still tremble when I stand in front of a door and knock. "What will be their reaction? How can I get their attention? Will they listen?" Only God can ultimately open the hearts of people. After all "our competence comes from God."

11.2 Entering into a Conversation

Before entering into a conversation with a Muslim to present the Gospel to him we should consider our position in some potential danger areas.

Do we quote the Qur'an when we Speak With Muslims?

Generally speaking, no! Quoting the Qur'an would immediately be perceived as a threat by most Muslims and they might just refer us to their "specialist", the local *Iman* or *Sheikh*. Carrying a Qur'an with you will surely be met with suspicion, if not hostility, and most likely destroy chances for an open and friendly talk. In some special situations, and when one has a goodly knowledge of the Qur'an, you might benefit from drawing on it. If we do so, we have to make sure, however, that a Muslim will not begin to think that we quote the Qur'an as our authority, i.e. as the Word of God.



One could avoid this by saying: "You as a Muslim believe that ..."

At an advanced stage of a discussion one will have to point out the differences and also the shortcomings of the Qur'an. This should make a Muslim doubt his own faith, and that is often a "departure point" before he will decide for something better, more evidenced.

Should we Attack Islam?

To attack what is holy to a Muslim is, to put it mildly, poor taste. And yet - he must become aware that Islam is a religion which can and does not provide an offer of God's salvation. He must know that what he trusts to be

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revelation is in contrast to the Bible; and that the Qur'an has more problems than he thinks the Bible has, and that it is without acceptable evidence of divine origin.

When we communicate the truth of the Bible, we directly or indirectly say that the Qur'an is not inspired by the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and that its teaching is wrong. We imply that Muhammad is not a prophet of God and that Islam is a deception. This is highly offensive to any Muslim and may close the door for further witness, yet it is an important aspect of Muslim evangelism. Wisdom, tact and love in the timing and mode are essential to communicate that.

I will never forget a conversation with a Muslim whom I deeply respect. When the conversation came to a point of conflict, I told him that what I needed to say would hurt him. He replied that even so I should say it, if I consider it important. Before going ahead, I touched him and said: "I would like you to know that it hurts me deeply to hurt you. I only do it because the Truth must be made apparent". I am sure I did hurt his feelings deeply, but because of my attitude, he could listen well and this Truth had no adverse effect on our relationship.

Answering: "What do you Think of Muhammad?"

How do we answer a straightforward question like: "What do you think of Islam or Muhammad?" I have never had any problems by answering: "I am a Christian with deep convictions. If I were convinced that Islam is the right way - and that must be approved by God - I would surely not be a Christian, but a Muslim. So far nobody has convinced me. You see, we believe in the Bible, and in it we are warned not to accept any message which does not carry the Biblical guarantee of reliability, which is fulfilled prophecy (see Deut 18:21-22; Zech 4:9; Isa 41:21; 44:7,26; Amos 3:7; Jer 28:9; Deut 13:1-4 etc.) Let me give you an example!" And from here we can show a Muslim the Old Testament prophecies announcing Jesus, what He would come to do, and how he would die. We may then continue to show that the Qur'an contradicts the very purpose of Christ's coming, His fate on the cross to reconcile us to God, the Father.

"Which do you expect me to accept: What the many biblical prophets foretold over hundreds of years in great detail, and which was fulfilled with great accuracy, recorded by four independent witnesses in the Gospel, confirmed by eye-witnesses whose eternal life depended on their truthfulness and which was also confirmed by history and archaeology - or what one man handed down 600 years later in a book containing no

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prophecy?" An attempt to compare our respective faiths, the what and the why of it, is then profitable.

Speaking About the "Lord Jesus" and the "Prophet Muhammad"

How do we relate to these titles? Is Jesus Christ the Lord of a Muslim? Is Muhammad your prophet? These questions already hold the answer. When I speak to my Lord in prayer, or when we as Christians speak about Him, we will address Him as Lord Jesus. When speaking with non-Christians, I feel much more comfortable when naming Him "Jesus Christ", or the "Messiah Jesus". Likewise I do not refer to Muhammad as a prophet, because I do not believe him to be one, at least not a prophet in the Biblical sense.

A Christian = A Westerner?

Muslims normally assess the Christian faith by looking at the lifestyle of the "Christians", meaning all those who are not Jews, Muslims or pagans. They conclude that the Western lifestyle with its loose morality, alcohol abuse, imperialism, broken up family life etc is the result of Christianity. **It is very important to make it quite clear that a Christian is a follower of Christ**, and that most of what is seen in Hollywood films is neither moral nor Christian.

But we also have to say that our faith does not consist of a list dividing all one does into 'permitted' (*halaal*) or 'forbidden' (*haram*). To a Muslim a book such as "*Do's and Do Not's in Islam*" is of great importance, for it seemingly helps to obtain a place in heaven. Christians need not earn their salvation, but do right because of their devotion to God and His will, and out of gratitude for Christ's death on the cross for our sin. We are called upon to make our own moral decisions. These may not be identical among all Christians. Neither do we have to follow all the same patterns of life or worship, because we live before God also as individuals and that excludes uniformity, because we are all made differently - and not without a purpose.

Must we Avoid Arguing About Religion?

Many Christians keep telling us that it is wrong to argue about spiritual matters.

Paul did not think so:

*"He talked and debated" with the Greeks and the Jews (Acts 9:29).
"He reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving*

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(Acts 17:2). 'He reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews... day by day with those who happened to be there - (Acts 17:17). "Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade..." (Acts 18:4) "He ... went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews (Acts 18:19). "Paul ... spoke boldly ... for three months, arguing persuasively about the Kingdom of God ..." (Acts 19:8).

The word "reasoning" (Greek 'dialeptomai') means "to dispute with others, to look at other view points and discuss them". This is good. We object, however, to "having an argument" that is conducting verbal fist-fights with Muslims about God or the Bible.

11.3 Reaching Muslim Women and Children

An African proverb says: "A woman has no religion". This means that a woman will automatically follow her husband's religion in regard to her convictions and actions. Whether consciously or not this assumption has deluded missionaries and church leaders alike. They have concentrated their efforts almost exclusively on the man as the head of the home, and the leaders of communities. In so doing they developed a "gender-blind missiology", and tragically missed out on the heart-beat of the Islamic society.

Muslim women, whether illiterate, liberal or emancipated, often will not automatically follow their husbands, if they should become Christians.

Fathoming the Deep Needs of a Muslim Woman

The first need, of course, is her husband's love, which she wants to have for herself, and for herself alone. Therefore it is so important, that she presents her husband with the children he wants (especially boys!). The Muslim wife tries to give her all to see her husband satisfied with her, and yet she rarely succeeds.

The husband – who is given almost unrestricted moral freedom in Islam – is often encouraged to think wider than monogamy; to be satisfied with only one wife will be laughed at by many "real men" in a Muslim world. The wife's concern to win her husband's love at any price can often have the opposite effect. ('Don't let it get into your head that you could be the only one!')



The other deep need is her desire for social recognition. External appearance often takes on a compelling role: dress/outfit, jewellery, hair-style etc. For these are signs which indicate to everyone around her how well her husband "loves" and cares for her. But signs do not always match up with reality, so some might even be willing to go into debts in order to maintain their image. In her home, however, reality is inescapable; and when the husband takes another woman, the first wife feels deeply wounded. Her self-esteem has been severely shaken, and she will want to hide this from her neighbours and friends.

But her most overwhelming fear is that of being divorced. For if that should happen she will lose her children, her home, her social status; even paradise moves further away. Because she has been told over and over again: "Absolute obedience to your husband alone gives you assurance to enter paradise." (see "Barriers in Muslim Evangelism")

The happiness of any Muslim woman (educated or illiterate) depends on the fulfilment of these needs, and she will go to any length to achieve these.

Stepping Stones or Bridges to Reach Muslim Women

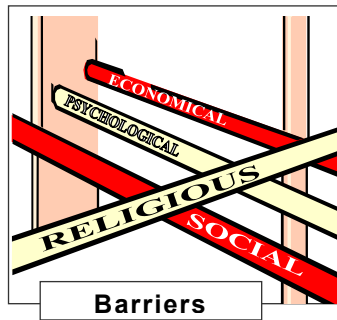
Muslim women usually are not so engrossed in following the "right beliefs", the doctrinal creed of their religion. They are more concerned how to succeed in the struggles of their daily lives.

- They long to be loved, recognized and accepted.
- They wish to have faithful husbands, and obedient, or better still, successful children.
- They dread to be divorced, or having to endure a co-wife.
- They fear losing their status, respect or honour.
- They fear the power of "jealousy curses", the "evil eye" of their neighbours or relatives.
- They are afraid of the gossip in society and the shame that this may bring to the family.
- They fear sickness, death or disability of a child or relative.
- They long for God to be close, to touch them, heal their pain and be cleansed.
- They desire to understand more about their religion, life or Holy Books.
- They would often like to listen to the Word of God, the Bible and its true life stories – if they could keep this a secret.

Where Muslims and Christians live side by side, Christian women have so many opportunities of sharing their lives with Muslim women. If only

Christian women could see these "Daughters of Abraham" through eyes of compassion, building relationships will never be too hard. Building trust to them might soon be rewarded, and the Muslim woman will start asking you questions such as these:

- ⊗ What magic does the Christian wife use to keep her husband faithful to her?
- ⊗ Why is the Christian woman not fearful of the "jealousy curse" or "evil eye" of her neighbour?
- ⊗ How can you be so sure to be forgiven and go to heaven when you die?



Use of Stories as a Gentle Way to the Hearts of Women

In more traditional settings Muslim women listen all day to stories passed on from generation to generation by their religious heads, whether men or women. They look out and long for stories of hope. So equip yourself with good stories that fit into the life of your Muslim neighbours and friends. Remember that Muslims earnestly desire a better understanding of the Qur'an, and they are eager to listen to the stories of the revealed Scriptures. Seek to boldly share God's Story with them.

Communicating the Stories of the Bible

The Bible has some wonderful stories that (Muslim) women can identify with easily:

- ⊗ Struggles and strife in a polygamous household with two wives: Lea and Rachel (Gen 29), Hannah and Peninnah (1 Sam 1+2).
- ⊗ A deep sense of loss in not having children - Rebecca, Hannah
- ⊗ Insecurity and vulnerability as a refugee - Hagar (Gen 16)
- ⊗ A mother coping with the loss of children - Cain and Abel (Gen 4)
- ⊗ Problems between husband and wife due to favouritism in the family - Esau and Jacob, Jacob and Joseph
- ⊗ Adjusting to life with a disabled or handicapped child - Mephibosheth (2 Sam 9)

These are all too familiar problems to many Muslim women, but rarely do they receive help in solving the riddles of life. Often they know no other way than to visit shrines of saints, get help from witchdoctors, shamans or other "dark sources". How much more do we have to offer!

Reaching Muslim Children

Children are usually well protected by the family in Islam. Fathers, uncles older brothers are watching the conduct of their young boys and, more so, girls. In sub-Saharan Africa we have relatively few Islamic schools. Most schools are mixed, and Muslim and Christian children interact freely. Some schools have a dual system of CRE (Christian Religious Education) and IRE (Islamic RE), but in many places only few Islamic teachers are available and Christian teachers will instruct Muslim children even in religious classes. Parents are willing to compromise because good education is so important to them that they don't mind Christian influence.

Many adult Muslim background believers have testified that their longing for the truth has been stirred during their school years

From as early as age four children attend Madressa classes, where they are taught Islam and the basics of Arabic. There is a growing importance placed on good reading skills, and every Muslim child is expected to know how to recite the Qur'an, even if Arabic is not their mother tongue. Through these classes they get acquainted with Islamic thinking, customs, rituals, code of conduct. But more often than not anti-Christian propaganda is injected into Muslim children from small on, just to safeguard them from courting with the Christian faith.

However, this should not discourage us from seeking opportunities to share the gospel with children from Islamic households whenever possible. There are wonderful opportunities for Christian teachers during IRE lessons to share biblical truth with Muslim children. If they know how to relate the biblical stories sensitively, pupils will start trusting their teachers and develop a love for the Bible that may stay with them for life. Sometimes smaller children are allowed to join Sunday school or Bible clubs in the neighbourhood. Such experiences can instil a love for Christian songs, Bible stories and prepare the ground for a growing openness to the gospel in future encounters with Christians.

The Church could be very supportive of such group leaders, where Muslim children participate: pray for them, provide counsel and training, or help to organize sport or other fun-events.

Leaders should try to build relationships with the parents of these children, invite them for special events and keep the communication line open to break down prejudices between the different cultures and religions.

At the same time it is important to encourage Christian children to show love to their Muslim friends, include them in their games, and invite them to their home. Observing Christian family life and comparing it with their own context can be a great testimony for Muslim children and help them developing their own values to make good choices for their future.

Opportunities to minister to Muslim children are so many, just think about:

🕒 **Holiday Bible clubs** as a special outreach possibility. Often both parents have to work and are happy for their children to find some “day-care”.

🕒 **Singing** as a wonderful attraction to children. This should be a good part of the program installing biblical truths into the minds of children; while singing “Jesus songs” at home they share in a natural way.

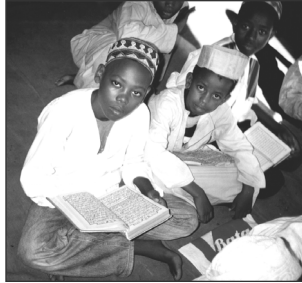
🕒 **Biblical Stories** should be told simply and understandably, and “spiritual vocabulary” should be avoided. If Bible stories differ from Islamic stories, don't get into a big discussion about it... find out the child's question and provide the answer later in a personal talk.

🕒 Put the **stories in Drama form** and involve the children that they can identify with the stories. Use pictures and other object lessons to make the stories memorable.

🕒 Teach them **Bible verses** by heart. Muslim children are used to memorize, and in this way a treasure is hidden in their heart.

🕒 **When you pray** with the children speak to God “as our Father” and only slowly introduce Jesus to them in prayer. One does not have to close ones eyes and it can be done while standing without folding of hands.

🕒 **Handle the Bible** with care, so the children can observe your respect for the book; but also follow it up in your behaviour and life style. Never place the Bible negligently on the floor.



🕒 **Never put any pressure** on the child to accept Jesus as their Saviour; give them time and freedom to choose to become a Christian.

When children grow older, especially during puberty they are often no longer allowed to come to Sunday school or Bible clubs. Therefore early childhood is an important period to expose them to the message of the Gospel.

If a child wants to follow Christ, make sure it has understood what it means to become a Christian, and what the “straight path” with Christ looks like. (Reading of God's word, Praying, Fellowship with other believers.)

But they also need to know that difficulties, temptations and opposition will come their way.

Make sure to give the child a translation of the Bible which is easily understood (no “thee” and “thou” version!) and invite them to a prayer-time at school such as Scripture Union clubs or other events, where it can grow, and understand more of the word of God.

11.4 Guiding Muslim Background Believers

Witness and Conversion

“No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him...”
(Jn 6:44).

We can witness to the Gospel, but we cannot convert! Even so our witness definitely aims to help and invite a person to commit his or her life to God.

To push for a commitment is carnal endeavour, but when a person knows and has understood enough of the Gospel the need for a definite commitment must be stressed and an invitation to do so should be extended.

Conversion and Discipleship

A decision for Christ is to be expected - even among Muslims. This may be in the form of a process rather than a decision as one expects in a Gospel campaign. The point is reached when a Muslim accepts the claim of Christ that He is indeed the Son of God Who died for his sins personally. He then accepts the gift of God, forgiveness and the new life through the death of Christ on the cross. While the form may differ from the ‘customary’, the content of faith ought to be fundamentally biblical. Perhaps there will still be some open questions.

As long as these are not of a fundamental nature, we should not make an issue of them, but pray that the Word of God will in time provide the answers personally. The Holy Spirit will guide.

Nevertheless in listening to the conversion stories of hundreds of former Muslims, and learning from God's ways in drawing people to himself, we can detect several factors for conversion.

FIVE FORCEFUL FACTORS FOR CONVERSION

- ① **The Person of Jesus**
Jesus is so attractive!
- ② **The Truth Encounter**
I have found the ultimate truth.
- ③ **The Church Community**
At last - people whom I can trust.
- ④ **The Need for Forgiveness**
I have tried all my life; now I know!
- ⑤ **A Personal Encounter with God**
*I want a God who is near;
one who hears me when I pray.*

Source: *Called from Islam to Christ*
by Jean-Marie Gaudeul

Once a Muslim has expressed his faith and commitment to God by receiving Christ as Saviour and Lord, he/she should now be discipled. This means first of all that a teaching programme on the fundamentals of the Christian faith should be designed and implemented. In principle we strongly suggest doing this in a “house church” or by a somewhat informal instruction. Here the convert can learn about faith and its function etc. He will also become acquainted with Christian forms which differ widely from Islam.

He will be introduced to worship in song. The wise teacher will take much care in explaining everything new, and will make sure to point to the biblical origin. The meaning of baptism should be explained without pushing the young believer. It is going to be a very big step for him or her!

Learning to Walk With Christ Day by Day

After a decision the work is by no means done. The young convert needs close Christian friends to stand by him, to assist and advise. How should he behave at home? How should he tell his family that he has found the Saviour? How should he react to rejection and persecution? Must he now eat pot? What about the fast? The customary prayers? Considerate and mature counsel must be given when questions and problems arise. For an extended period the new convert should be accompanied in his new walk of life with Christ. He needs to be upheld in prayer and taught in the Scripture.

He needs assistance in finding a new world to live in, for his old world and family will have rejected him, has broken down. Understanding, kindness and personal care will have to continue until such a person has become a devoted disciple.

The New Believer and the Church

“Our church as a home for Muslim converts” ought to become the watchword of every congregation. But as a general rule we should not hurry to invite such a Muslim to a church meeting, for a practising Muslim needs “stepping stones” to come to church and to understand what is happening there. Did you ever participate in a *Jumaa* service (Friday service) in a mosque? You probably didn't. If you have, you must have felt very insecure and came out with many a question. Once when I had a commitment to preach in a service, I had to tell a Muslim visitor to our home that I needed to leave. In a spell of curiosity he asked me whether I would mind if he came along. Of course not! So he came. He insisted, however, on sitting next to the isle in the back. Later he confided that he was terribly scared and was ready at any time to run out of the church.

A “house church” or fellowship consisting of some informed and sympathetic people, preferably from a Muslim background, could be such a “stepping stone”. Here the would-be-convert or young convert can explore the fundamentals of the Bible with some mature Christians. He can learn step-by-step by experiencing how we pray and sing, and how we conduct ourselves in a service. But such a “house church” should not be a Gospel meeting! Rather advise a new convert informally for what and whom he should decide!

Stepping Stones:

- Home
- Fellowship
- One-to-one study



Rejection Facing the Convert

Practically every Muslim who turns to Christ for salvation will be radically rejected by his family, friends and, of course, by the Muslim “*ummah*”, the community. It is therefore incumbent on the church or group of believers

which leads him on, to become his new family and community; and not just for a couple of weeks! He needs our support until he/she is well grounded in the faith and settled in the family of God.

11.5 Other Helpful Rules for our Contacts with Muslims

APPROACHES TO MUSLIMS are best when they come naturally, and the opportunities will be many once we overcome our inhibitions to *befriend Muslims*. After all, Muslims are also people with all the desires and needs others have, and these include a longing for unreserved acceptance and love. Superficial acquaintances are not enough; deep level sharing will evoke a willingness for opening up where it really hurts.

But a church might (hopefully) decide to work more systematically by visiting all (Muslim) homes in the vicinity. We would call this a *house-to-house outreach*. Here the approach is not natural, but one has to introduce oneself and state the reason for ones coming. The choice then is between a direct and indirect approach. *"We are doing a religious survey in this area and would kindly ask for a few minutes of your time to fill in a questionnaire."* A well-designed *questionnaire* will lead to meaningful questions which in turn are likely to lead to a fruitful witness. One will,



however, have to decide whether one should build up a relationship with the Muslim family first, or come straight to the point. I would strongly opt for a step-by-step evangelism for a number of reasons. *(Such questionnaires may be ordered from our office).*

Christians with little experience may want to use *specialized literature* for Muslims, or invite Muslims to a suitable Christian video show. Others, who have already a little experience may visit a home introducing a *daily devotion for the family*. Muslims are likely to point to their daily prayer sessions. We really ought to commend them for that act of devotion, but answer that we actually do not mean the performing of the *Salat*, but a devotion, which has two parts - the listening to God's Word and our response to that in personal prayer and obedience. Muslims are then likely to say that they read the Qur'an. *"Do you read the Qur'an every day?"* -

"Well, no, not every day", is the likely reply. One is now already in a spiritual conversation.

A more direct approach is perhaps when *asking*: *"Do you know what is going to happen to you if you were to die today?"* or *"Suppose you were to die and stand before God, on what grounds do you expect Him to let you into His heaven?"* Such an approach in our case is really only a door opener to a spiritual conversation.

Loving Christians will be able to think of many other ways to reach out

ASKING QUESTIONS is a very good way to open a conversation. First of all most people feel good when they are invited to talk about themselves, their feelings, circumstances and faith. *Listening* is indeed a very important aspect of a conversation. To bombard the other with our "message" or even Bible verses is likely to push them into the defensive, or it is an invitation to a confrontation which is here uncalled for. But too many questions at once might not be helpful either, for people might mistake you for a police inspector!

Questions asked should be calculated to further a spiritual conversation:

♣ *"I hear (or noticed) that you pray five times a day. Why do you do that? Why does everybody do it the same way?"* - *"After you have said the prayer 10,000 times, how can you still feel a genuine devotion in it? Is it not becoming a mere habit after a while?"*

♣ *"I hear (or noticed) that you bring sacrifices. Is that done in the same way and for the same purpose as God commanded to Abraham or Moses? What does the offering of a sacrifice accomplish?"*

♣ *"Muslims consider Islam to be the religion of Abraham. In which way?"*

♣ *"Have you been on the pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj)? How does it feel to be there with thousands of other Muslims? Does this not cost a lot of money? Why do you kiss the black stone in the Ka'aba? We would see this as an act of idol worship. Why did Muhammad, although he introduced a new religion to Arabia, keep all the pagan rituals?"*

Obviously the one asking the questions should know the Biblical answers! There are questions without end. Each one should be asked with a purpose in mind: the Muslim friend should begin to think! He should begin to compare!

Of course, there is no magic in reaching out! Muslims may just tell us to leave them alone, but this rarely happens. While Muslims answer, more

questions will come up, or we may simply reply *"Oh, we see this quite differently. The Bible teaches that ..."* and now we can share God's Word.

LEADING A CONVERSATION is often very necessary. Muslims have a way of changing the subjects, when they feel they cannot answer and defend themselves by attacking the Bible. When they come up with non-relevant questions without being prepared to listen to the answer, one will have to firmly lead the conversation, else it will just be a stupid argument (2Tim 2:23-26).

EMOTIONS are likely to go high when Muslims try to attack the Scriptures or Jesus Christ. Particularly then we have got to keep cool! There is no point in losing ones temper! Nothing is achieved when an irrational argument gets out of control. Of course, some Islamic arguments are calculated to make us loose our composure. But we should be Spirit-controlled enough to act Christ-like!

ILLUSTRATING OUR POINT is of great importance. Few people can follow abstract thought easily. In certain cultures the very use of the language is symbolical or illustrative. Almost any transmission of abstract thought - and a spiritual presentation is just that - will be enhanced by using parables, metaphors or allegories. Our Lord Jesus made it almost a rule to use these. This should encourage us to do the same, but we should learn to use illustrations, proverbs and stories from our listener's context of life. *(In the appendix many selected examples are given. You may know some others. Please take time to sit down and share them with us, so we can pass them on to others!)*



A farmer went out...

TACT AND UNDERSTANDING and considerate ways hardly need to be stressed. When we enter a home, we are guests - and should behave as such! If we use the Bible or lead a spiritual conversation, and there is a knock at the door and family or friends come to visit, one should not embarrass the host, but rather put away the Bible to protect him, and possibly even change the subject for the time being. Muslims are afraid of other Muslims and do appreciate such considerate behaviour.

HOLY BOOKS are treated with much respect. The Qur'an is always kept, possibly wrapped in a cloth, on the highest shelf in a room. To place a holy book on the floor would be considered sacrilegious. This should guide us in the way we too handle our Bibles.

ALWAYS BE READY TO SUBSTANTIATE what you say! Our personal view and opinions are of very little use. When we make a statement, be it from the Bible, history or Islam, let us make sure that we are not vague about it, by providing the necessary point of reference. This may not always be possible at once, but we can offer to provide this at a next meeting. Always aim to prove your point, but also expect this from your Muslim friend who will hardly be able to prove much of what he stands for, particularly when we are reasonably well informed about Islam ourselves.

MALE-FEMALE CONTACTS in a Muslim society are organized in a much stricter fashion than in Christian circles. Remember, God expects us to be moral in all our social contacts. That is natural to us. In Islam all things are regulated by laws, and this naturally applies also to all social contacts, particularly between the sexes. It is therefore not recommended to seek even a religious conversation between a male and a female, except in company. In many Muslim countries women are kept away from the public altogether unless they are veiled. This brings us to another topic.



DRESS. Muslims consider our Western forms of dress, and very particularly of ladies' dresses, immodest, not to say immoral. This is again based on our different views of modesty or morality - whether this is outward or inward. Even so a lady witness will do well to dress in a way which is considered modest in the Islamic culture, e.g. using a scarf when visiting another home. Obviously what is considered an appropriate way of dressing differs widely in various countries and contexts (eg campus, work place or homes), and being "overdressed" does not help in acceptance.

MANNERS vary in different cultures. In Islam the right hand is used for "clean" purposes and that includes eating. The left hand is for "unclean"

tasks and is regarded as such. One ought to be careful not to offend. In some Muslims societies sitting cross-legged is considered rude. Dogs are considered unclean animals and should not be fondled, the considerate witness will, perhaps by asking, find out what manners would be considered offensive.

HOSPITALITY is one of the facets of Eastern culture which can hardly be overlooked. To refuse an offered hospitality may be very offensive. On the other hand, we ought to know that Muslims are often reluctant to accept our hospitality. There is a reason for that. They are afraid to be offered something "haram" (ritually unclean or forbidden). Muslims must be careful to eat "halaal" food only. In modern countries all kinds of foods show a "halaal" sign to signify ritual purity. As a rule, however, it is mainly meat which needs to be "clean" and that must be from a "clean" animal; no pork is allowed to Muslims. The animal must be killed accompanied by a certain prayer in Islamic fashion by cutting its throat. When inviting Muslim guests, it will be a matter of decency to serve only halaal food, and this should be made known to the prospective guests.



11.6 A Brief Summary:

- Muslims have their own way of conduct. Avoid offending your Muslim contact by way of dress or behaviour. Use your natural tact, and ask him/her to openly tell you when you act wrongly in their sight.
- Be humble and prepared to listen and to learn. There is much to learn from Muslims about themselves and their faith.
- Take your Muslim contacts seriously! Mutual respect - despite our differing positions - goes a long way.
- Be hospitable. Know that Muslims must observe the 'halaal' law, i.e. they are not allowed to eat all kinds of food (particularly meat) and may be

reluctant to eat at your place. Discuss this openly and try to find a compromise.

- Be positive. Do not enter a verbal boxing match determined to fight until one of you is knocked out! Share the Gospel lovingly and understandingly. Make sure you are really understood. Explain all religious concepts and words and find out, whether your listener has really understood your point.
- Don't be over-accommodating. Again and again we should encourage a Muslim to test the Truth.
- Let us not just re-act. Muslims are likely to keep us in the defence, arguing one point after another. We can find a better way of communication. We should lead a conversation.
- Do not go into a conversation in order to ridicule or debase Islam, Muhammad, the Qur'an or even Allah! These are holy and dear to the Muslim, and the door may be closed irrevocably.

Although it is 'in', avoid using ready made evangelism systems as a shortcut to obtaining a commitment. A decision should not be expected before a person has accepted that the Bible is right when it condemns sin, that man is not a sinner because he has sinned, but he sins, because he is a sinner (and there is a vast difference between the two viewpoints!), and that he is eternally lost, unless God does something for him. Indeed, God has done it through Jesus, the Saviour who suffered and died for what we did in order to present us pure to God.

- We should, as a rule, not try to convey the whole content of the Gospel in too short a time. A Muslim needs to be informed well, concepts or words of a religious nature will have to be defined. Further, a Muslim has to rethink a lot of vital issues and that cannot be rushed. These considerations make a 'Gospel crusade' unsuitable for Muslims! (Though one may get 'decisions', experience shows that this often means very little!)
- Always be aware that ultimately this is a spiritual battle between life and death, light and darkness, God and Satan. Not clever arguments - as helpful as they may be - convict a Muslim that he needs the Saviour, but the Holy Spirit. Therefore make prayer your primary weapon, and not your intellect or communication skills.

12. Into Action

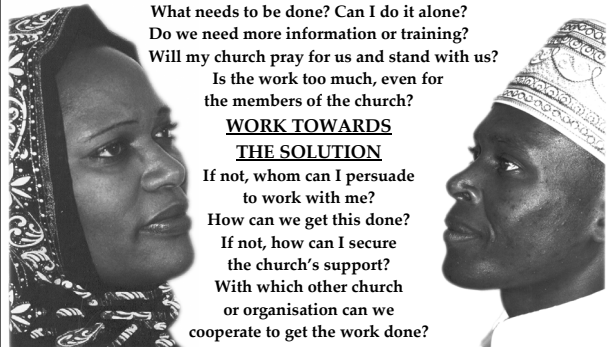
12.1 How then can we Reach Out to Muslims?

When we ask this question seriously before God, and pledge to Him that we are going to be obedient and faithful to the Great Commission regarding the Muslim world, the answer to your question is given. You will soon be aware that you are working in the toughest corner of God's 'vineyard'. But you can be assured of His support and can confidently ask for the needed gifts to do the work well.

How can we reach the Muslims? By going where they are! We already noted that there is little point in trying to invite Muslims to our church. Firstly it is not very likely that they will come. In addition they will hardly understand what is going on and what is said. But also because our Lord said: "Go into all the world..." and not "Wait until the people of the world come to your church"!

12.2 Work Out a Strategy

When you build a house, you first make a plan. You assess the need for rooms, their sizes, the building materials you need, the money you can invest, etc. When all is settled you decide whether you ask a builder to do the work or whether you and your friends are going to do it. In the same way you will develop a plan for Muslim evangelism. Problems should never discourage but ignite us to find the best solutions.



FACE THE PROBLEM

What needs to be done? Can I do it alone?
Do we need more information or training?
Will my church pray for us and stand with us?
Is the work too much, even for the members of the church?

WORK TOWARDS

THE SOLUTION

If not, whom can I persuade to work with me?
How can we get this done?
If not, how can I secure the church's support?
With which other church or organisation can we cooperate to get the work done?

While it is good to have a small beginning, we should always plan to complete the work. That means the motivating and training of as many other Christians as possible. It probably means cooperation with other churches or denominations, provided, of course, they are truly Bible believing. Everybody ought to pray specifically for the Muslims!

Unless Muslim Evangelism Becomes a Peoples' Movement, there is no Way that Muslims can be Reached on a Large Scale

You may want or need to call a 'trainer' in Muslim evangelism to help you start off and to give more training. Try to find one or write to us for help! If you need more training materials, get it. You will need evangelistic literature specially designed for Muslims. Be choosy! Don't just use the normal tracts. They are often not suitable for Muslims.

Begin by recruiting a group of dedicated Christians who are willing to pray and work with you. Then plan together, train together and design a work strategy.

12.3 There are several models or methods:

- ☐ **House to house visitation.** This should be organised well to do it in a systematic and regular way.
 - ☐ **Building relationships** with a view to sharing your faith with friends, neighbours, colleagues etc. Here you will need many people. (Write for our special "Daughters of Abraham" brochure)
 - ☐ **Literature programmes.** If the Muslims in your area are literate, find the right literature, or ask for help to produce your own. Then distribute this literature to every home or establish a lending library. But don't forget to do the follow-up work!
 - ☐ You may think of a still better way. Invite Muslims to a specially designed **Bible study in your home** - or their home. Our comprehensive course **AL KITAB** will prove an excellent tool for many. Love always finds a way!
- Have a large vision! Never forget: without Christ no Muslim has any eternal hope!
- You are the person who can change that. Don't wait for somebody else to begin the work, but cooperate with all who do!
- Remember: We are here to be **YOUR HELPER IN MUSLIM EVANGELISM.**

Note the great wealth of Resources listed in the Appendix!

12.4 What now? - Reach Out!

"Should a man like me run away?" asked Nehemiah in a difficult situation. (Neh 6:11) Of course, he did not! Should a man like you run away from God's expectations? Of course not!

If it is God's will that all men should come to repentance, that no one should perish (2Pet 3:9), that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the Truth (1Tim 2:4), and that YOU should be His witness (Acts 1:8), go and make disciples of all nations (Matt 28: 19), proclaiming the Good News to all creation (Mk 16:15), what are you going to do?

Let us remember the many opportunities other people may have to hear the Gospel - and how extremely little Muslims have in comparison. Why don't you now, like Isaiah, say:

"Lord, here I am - Send me!" (Isaiah 6:8)

➔ *Well done! Just a few more questions on page 109 that will help you to apply what you learned so far in your life and ministry.*

Make sure to work through them, share about it with a friend or write to us and tell us your thoughts.

May God bless you and make you a blessing around you.

Appendix Section

1. Illustrations for your witness to Muslims
2. Parables from the Bible
3. The Abraham Gospel Concept
4. Questions for Further Reflection
5. Fellowship of Daughters of Abraham
6. Recommended Reading
7. Advanced Study Materials for Muslim Evangelism
8. Resources – at your service

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1 Illustrations for your Witness

Why use Illustrations when we could just tell the truth?

"Once upon a time the naked Truth was walking in the streets where she was born. But wherever she went she faced rejection. No one invited her into their house. Everyone fled as soon as they saw her coming. She felt utterly discouraged and very sad when she bumped into Parable.

Parable was dressed in bright shining and colourful clothes cheerfully moving from one place to the next. Noticing the downcast face of her friend she asked Truth: "Tell me, neighbour, what makes you so sad today?" Truth answered in a bitter mood: "Oh sister, things are really bad. I have seen life in all its ups and downs and now I am old, very old, yet no one seems to appreciate me. Worse still, no one wants to have anything to do with me. They are all avoiding me."

As Parable listened she said: "People do not run away from you because you are too old. I am no younger than you. But the older I get the more people like me. I will tell you my secret: Each one likes things a little "dressed up", nicely decorated. Let me lend you some of my most precious and beautiful outfits. Then you will realize that those who rejected you before will invite you into their home and enjoy fellowship with you."

Truth accepted and followed the advice of her friend Parable and borrowed some of her clothes. From this time onwards Truth and Parable walked "hand in hand" and everyone loved to listen to them.

(Source: Yiddish Folktales, Pantheon Books, New York)

C. H. Spurgeon noted:

"A sermon without an illustration is like a room without a window."

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SHAMUEL, THE CAUCASIAN PRINCE — a historical event

Shamuel was a Caucasian prince who lived about two hundred years ago. His people were constantly at war with the Turks. Once he and his army besieged a Turkish city. As usual his mother accompanied him. One night he planned a surprise attack, but the enemy was waiting for him. His secret plans had been betrayed.

In anger, Shamuel announced that, if the traitor was found out he would be punished with one hundred lashes of the whip. In great secrecy another surprise attack was planned, but with the same result.

However this time the traitor was discovered. It was Shamuel's own mother! For three days he withdrew to his tent. What should he do? If he spared his mother, all would rightly say that he was unjust. If he punished her, all would say "This man has no pity, not even for his mother!" At long last he appeared. His men were gathered expectantly. In a sinister manner he addressed his people "We have lost two battles because of treason. Some of our men were killed. There is no excuse - the crime was committed and punishment must be executed according to my judgment - one hundred lashes! Righteousness and justice must be maintained." His mother, pale and shivering with fear, was led into the circle. The executioner lifted his whip - but, before the first lash struck, Shamuel cried out "Wait, she is my mother. I am her flesh and blood. I will take the punishment for her!"

Removing his garment he stepped into the circle and commanded "Executioner, you dare not strike me more lightly than you would have the true victim. Do your duty!" With these words lash after lash was struck until he fell down, unconscious. He survived though against all expectations.

This event, perhaps more than any other in history, fits the picture of Christ. He was God in a human body. He had to execute righteous judgment, but in His perfect love He took on Himself our, my and your own sin. He suffered God's judgment of our sin on the cross.

THE PEARL-DIVER — a true-to-life story

An aged pearl-diver who lived on the East Coast of India had decided to spend the rest of his life in devotion to religion in order to prepare for the next life. His mind was set to go all the way on his knees to the holy city of Benares, on the shore of the holy River Ganges. He had been befriended by

a Christian, whom he invited for a farewell meal. He was the pearl-diver's only friend and it appeared that there were no other relatives.

After the meal the diver disclosed his plans for pilgrimage. His friend tried to dissuade him ... "Your knees will be torn and you will die from infection" he warned him. "If I die on my way to the holy Ganges," the diver replied, "my soul will be justly rewarded."

Later that evening, before the friend was to depart, the diver moved a chest of drawers and rolled up a small mat revealing a secret hiding place. He brought out a tiny parcel and opened it in the dim light of an oil lamp. There lay a pearl of exceptional size and lustre! "You are the only person dear to me," he said, "I want you to have this pearl!"

"But it is worth a fortune!" exclaimed the friend, "I cannot accept such a gift!" The pearl-diver's eyes became distant, "I had a son," he began, "He was the best diver along this coast He could dive deeper and longer than any of us. One day we were diving under the most perfect conditions. I was in the boat while he went down to loosen the shells which I would then open with my knife...

Then it happened! He had spotted a very large shell much deeper down. He went for it but it was fastened to the corals. He tried to lever it loose. Time ran out but he persisted. After what seemed hours he surfaced, blood pouring from his mouth. He died in my arms...

I found this pearl inside that shell. I could never sell it. It is too dear to me." "But it is worth a fortune. Can I not buy it from you? Let me give you at least something for it like a hundred pounds," pleaded the friend. The old diver became indignant. "You want to PAY me a measly hundred pounds for something my son died for? No man can pay what it is worth to me! But I meant you to have it as a gift."

The Christian put his arm around his dear friend. "You know, I did not want to hurt you. But you try to pay God for what His Son died for, namely your sins. Don't you think: YOU offend God by trying to pay for something which is priceless?"

The pearl-diver understood immediately. He abandoned his plan to walk to Benares on his knees, instead he accepted the gift of God's free pardon for his sins!

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THE BIG SWIM — an imagined idea

Have you heard about the big swim from Mombasa to the shores of India? Quite a competition that was! You know what happened? Some people drowned within the first few meters of reaching deep water. Some made it as far as the coral reef. A few exceptionally good swimmers managed to stay afloat for hours. But all of them eventually drowned.

Of course, nobody would ever attempt such a foolish swim. But many of us try to reach heaven hoping to impress God with our good works.

There is no hope that any of us will ever reach heaven on our own strength. Only if we entrust ourselves to God's "rescue vessel" and accept His way of salvation will we be safe.

PAYING FOR YOUR TEA — an illustration by action

Hospitality has been a mark of Muslim people right up to the present day. So often you will be invited to a meal or at least a cup of tea. At one occasion while visiting a long-standing friend, the Christian visitor took out his purse and declared: "I have enjoyed tea at your home so often now, let me pay for it this time." The Muslim host was completely puzzled and for sometime at a loss of words. "You can't pay for the tea", he stammered. "But why not? I do not want to take it for granted any longer. Let me pay today", he insisted with a coin already in his fingers. By now his friend's face turned slightly red and with a raised voice he bluntly said: "But we give you tea out of hospitality. It would be an insult to us if you pay for it." - Just then the host's boy passed by and the Christian offered the coin to him. "Oh thank you, Sir", the boy responded and took the coin without being asked a second time.

You surely can imagine the application the Christian drew from this action. With a brief apology for his rude behaviour he explained that in fact he just wanted to illustrate our attitude towards the great heavenly giver who surely must feel annoyed if we try to pay for our shortcomings with some good deeds..

THE CHAIR — an object lesson

We have often used this lesson to emphasize the nature of true faith. True faith in God can never be an intellectual assent only [agreeing to it merely with your mind], but actually entrusting yourself to what you confess to believe.

As you visit in a Muslim home and have been offered a seat, you might get up at the right time in your conversation and, holding the chair you were

sitting on, start explaining: "When I came here you kindly invited me to take a seat. What if I had just said 'Thank you', but would still have remained standing. You probably would have repeated your invitation and after some time you might have wondered whether I am afraid to sit down on this chair, or what other problem there is. Well, I could have held doubts whether this chair is going to be strong enough to carry my weight. Some chairs have actually collapsed and people got hurt as they tried to sit on them. But by sitting down [just sit down as you speak] I really confirm by action that I do believe this chair to be strong enough to hold me. I have faith in this chair and that's why I entrust myself to it."

"You know, just as my faith in this chair was only seen when I acted on it, so our faith in God must be evidenced by putting our trust in His provision of salvation, Jesus, the Messiah. Indeed, I can assure you, he is able to hold us and to carry us through."

THE PRISONER'S FRIEND — a personal experience

Some time back my wife had to appear in court because of breaking the traffic laws by speeding. She pleaded with the judge to reduce the fine explaining the special pressure she had been under that day. However, even though the fine was reduced she still had to pay about \$ 50. Since there seemed to be no other way to get out of this situation she finally accepted the verdict and produced her cheque book to issue a cheque on the said amount. But to her surprise she was told that she could only settle the fine in cash. "But I don't have the amount in cash", she explained to the cashier. "Can't you make an exception?" - "No, I can't", was the brief response. "Well, then let me go to the Bank to draw the money", she resigned. "No, lady, you can't leave this building", she was informed. "You can only make one phone-call to a friend who might pay the fine for you, otherwise you will be put into prison for five days."

And so it happened that I received a desperate phone-call from my wife to bail her out or otherwise see her go to prison. You guessed right: I quickly went to the court, found my wife at "The prisoner's Friend", paid the fine in cash and my wife has never forgotten it.

The lesson from this experience could be that man can try to satisfy God's rightful requirements by trying to do good and to live an honourable and exemplary life. However, our trespasses of God's holy law cannot be made up for OUR way, but only as God has laid it down in His holy Word. (Acts 4:12)

GOOD NEWS OR BAD NEWS — using a given situation

Often when we visiting from door to door, people would just be watching or listening to the evening news. Instead of being put off by this situation use it as a stepping stone into a conversation by asking: "Sorry, to disturb you while watching the news. Is it more good news or bad news tonight? It seems the bad news are taking over more and more these days, isn't it? Why is that so?" - "Could we disturb you for a few minutes and just ask you a few questions which could help us think about this problem?" Then we would use the opportunity and introduce the "Relationship Questionnaire" to them [write to us for a copy].

THE KEY TO FREEDOM — a fiction story

Three friends of a king got into trouble in a foreign land and were arrested. The King is deeply grieved and sends his son to free them. Overpowering the guard he slips the key through the tiny window to his father's friends. However, instead of making a hasty escape, they sit there and start examining the key, adding their own comments to their discussion, not believing that the key will fit the lock. They even start to change it, breaking off pieces here and there. Finally, they try it in the lock - but to no avail! Embarrassed, they start to mock the king's son arguing that the key would not really have fitted the lock in the first place.

The story illustrates the sad fact that many people who hear the Truth of God, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, misuse it, ridicule it, and often distort it beyond recognition. Eventually, instead of trusting it as the Truth, they reject it completely.

THE FARMER AND THE CAT — a tale

There was once a Caid [Muslim chief] who loved animals, and his special pride was a cat named Antar, which he had trained to serve him and his guests with tea, carrying it on a tray.

One day a friend visited the Caid to tell him about his troubles, for his son was living a very bad life. The Caid demonstrated Antar's abilities and concluded that if the man would concentrate on a good education for his son, all would be well for education had changed his cat's character.

The farmer left, and for several years gave his son the best education he was able to provide for him. All seemed to go well; then the farmer was suddenly thrown back in despair, when his son began to return to his old ways.

Once more the farmer went to see the Caid, taking with him a specially prepared package. The chief listened carefully to the farmer's sad story, but was not able to give new comfort to the man. When eventually the cat brought tea, the farmer quickly unwrapped his package and let loose three little white mice. With a crash of broken tea-glasses, the cat leapt after the mice, and the Caid was forced to realize that Antar's character had not really changed at all.

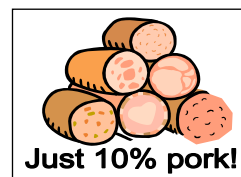
One day, after the farmer's death a few years later, a young man came to see the Caid. He introduced himself as the loose-living son, who had completely changed through reading God's word. After hearing the young man's testimony and seeing his radiant face, the Caid eagerly asked for a copy of the Bible, for he realized that God alone could change a man's character.

The crucial question raised in this story addresses the nature and character of man. Can man transform his evil nature through moral education by observing a set of "Do's and Do Not's"? Are we just weak? - Or is man totally helpless to change himself and utterly dependant on help from outside?

"HALAAL" OR "HARAAM"? — a challenging question

Ask your Muslim friend what he would do if, going to a butchery, he found four different types of sausages to choose from: The first type has 50% beef and 50% pork. The second has 75% beef and 25% pork. The third one has 90% beef and 10% pork. The last one is 100% beef, only for the outer skin pig has been used. Which one would he choose?

A faithful Muslim will immediately respond that ALL four types were "haraam" to him and thus unacceptable for consumption. It makes no difference what percentage of pork it contains or whether it is only stuffed into pork skin. All are unlawful according to Muslim law.



Show that it is just the same with sin! God's judgment for any kind of sin is the same: it is completely unacceptable to H w. Does it make any difference whether I am 80% sinful, 50% or even 10% only? In our judgment of people it plays a big role, but God can only accept us, if we are holy as He is holy. [see Leviticus 19:2 and Matthew 5:48]

TWO MEN WHO WENT FOR PRAYER — a Bible story

Two men went up to pray in the mosque. One was a good Muslim who knew perfectly well how to perform his *salat*; his Arabic was impeccable and he was absolutely accomplished in the phrases and movements of the *salat*. After all, he had faithfully observed his obligations for prayer over many years. He went confidently to the centre of the mosque, knelt and said his prayers confidently and precisely. However, while he was praying his thoughts took him away to the pretty girl which lived next door and had attracted his attention at many times.

The second man was a down-and-out sinner who had led a corrupt life and had never prayed even for years. He couldn't remember how to perform the *salat* and felt very bad as he entered the mosque. Without wasting any time with ablutions he quickly slipped behind a large pillar where he whispered in his own tribal language: "O God, forgive me. I have made a complete mess of my life, but I am really sorry. Help me to change and I want to follow and serve you." Whose devotion, in your opinion, is more acceptable to God?

You will want to use this opportunity to point out that although we may impress people with our religious life, God looks at the heart and judges accordingly. [see also Matthew 23:23-36 for another parable of Jesus]

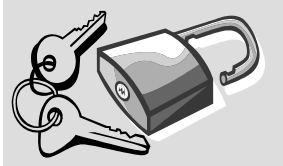
THE SON OF A LOCK — an expression explained

In the Malay language a lock is called "kutshi" and a key "ana-kutshi", which literally means "Son of a lock".

Now please don't think that Malaysian people are so stupid to believe that one 'kutshi' mated with another 'kutshi' which resulted in the birth of an 'ana-kutshi'. Of course, not! The words simply indicate that the key belongs to the lock, because you cannot open the door without the right key which fits the lock. A lock without a key is incomplete, even useless! You may actually have to break the lock to open the door, once the key is lost. The two

are complementary, they belong together.

Similarly, in Arabia a traveller is called a "Son of the Road", a term understood by everyone.



It is in this way that Christians understand the Sonship of Jesus. He is "the key" which opens the way to God to enter into a personal relationship with Him. Remember Jesus' words: 'I am the way and the truth and the life; no-one comes to the Father except by me.'

THE GREATEST FOOL WHO EVER LIVED — a fairy tale

There was once a king who had a clown or "fool" as they were called then. In fact the king liked him so much that one day he awarded him with a special gift: a special artist's staff. "Since I have never had a better fool than you on my royal court, I want you to have this staff, the king explained. If ever you should find a greater fool than yourself, pass on this staff to him."

Years passed as king and fool enjoyed each other's company. Eventually the king became seriously ill with no hope for a recovery. Like many other subjects the fool also went to bid farewell to his king. "Your majesty, I hear you are going on a long journey", began the fool. "Yes, you could say so", replied the king.

"I am sure you have made all the necessary arrangements for your journey and are eagerly expected at your destination", the fool continued.

"No, my fool, I am afraid I haven't done so", was the king's response.

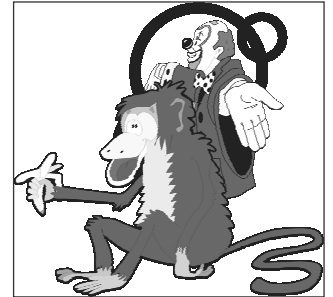
"But didn't you know that you were going on this journey, my king?"

"Oh yes, I did, everybody knows it."

"You mean, you knew about this journey all the time and you never made any preparations for it", the fool went on. The king nodded in silent confession.

Then the fool took his staff and placing it on the king's bed concluded: "Your majesty, I need to return this staff to you because I have never met anyone who acted more foolishly than this."

Makes you think, doesn't it!



AN ANGEL SURELY CANNOT LIE — a logical conclusion

When your Muslim friends challenge you about the Sonship of our Lord Jesus Christ try to respond in this way: "You are well aware that the angels

are God's faithful messengers, are not you? Then let us look at Luke 1:32 and see, what the angel announces to the virgin Mary. He says, that Jesus will be called "the Son of the Most High". Now, do you notice, who this angel is? Right, it is the angel Gabriel (see verse 26). This is exactly the same one which you believe, revealed the Qur'an to your prophet Mohammed. Do you think that Gabriel could ever tell a lie? Surely not! But even Gabriel calls Jesus here "the Son of God, the Most High". Why then do you find it so hard to believe what even Gabriel has confirmed hundreds of years before Mohammed was even born?!"

The friend who shared this approach with us adds: The Muslims in my town have come to respect me for this answer and we are often involved in very good conversations."

THE POISONED WELL — an allegory

One day a rich farmer discovered a well on his farm. The well gave plenty of water and was ideally located right next to an important caravan-route. The owner immediately noted the potential for earning big money, and had the well properly built and decorated with an impressive water tap. When all was completed the farmer was very excited about the wonderful taste of the water. So he arranged for a signpost to be placed at the well: "Here you find life. This pure delightful water brings you life. Whoever drinks from this water never thirst again. Anyone who wants may enjoy it without any payment.

One, two years passed, but then the water became poisoned and was no longer safe to drink. Whether it happened through an earthquake or through another reason... no one knows. Whoever drank from it thereafter had to live with the consequences and eventually died. There was no cure.

How sad that the well was never closed nor was the sign promising life ever exchanged for a warning sign. - How shall we judge such a Farmer?

THE HOUSE OWNER WHO WOKE UP AT LAST — a parable

A rich Farmer sat in his pitch dark house. A poor person of dubious character passed the house and noticed the complete darkness in it. Not wanting to miss his chance and concluding that no one was inside, he decided to enter and take whatever was there. Very carefully he entered the house and switched on the light. There and then he saw the owner sitting in

a corner, watching the stranger, without the slightest sound. The thief was very surprised at first, but because the owner did not make any move to hinder the thief from enriching himself, yet was obviously alive, the thief took courage again and helped himself to whatever he liked. First very carefully, but soon more and more daringly, he collected every precious item from the room.

The next evening the thief happened to pass the house again, and since the light was out, he decided to try his luck again, this time entering through the window. The owner was still sitting at the same spot as the evening before showing no interest or concern. So the thief decided to enter another room and empty it too. The following night this was repeated with the same results. On the fourth evening the thief entered the house as usual to pick his treasures when the owner suddenly jumped up, shouted at the top of his voice and even attacked the thief. Soon the police arrived, handcuffed the thief and had him thrown into prison. Why should it take a house owner so long to become wise enough to act and protect his property?

Is it reasonable to think that God just stood by watching from a distance as the five books of Moses, the Psalms and the New Testament got falsified and corrupted? Should he only have "woken up" when it was time to protect the Qur'an?

Surely God has always protected his Word, from eternity till now, so that we may hold it in our hands today as the authentic, unchanged Word of God. After all, He has promised to watch over His word.

② Parables from the Bible

The 10 Talents (Luke 19: 12-27)

- Our reward is great if we live for God through Jesus Christ...

The Mustard Seed (Matthew 13: 31-32)

- At first too small to notice, but one day respected and honoured by everyone: the truth in Jesus.

The Fig Tree (Luke 13: 6-9)

- A Gardener pleads for another year of growth for the tree. Time for repentance is limited.

The Wheat and Weeds (Matthew 13: 24-30)

- Good and Evil can grow up together, but each one will finally get his right judgment.

The Farmer Scattering Seeds (Matthew 13: 3-9)

- Watch out how you listen and what you implement

The Fruitless Vineyard (Isaiah 5: 1-7)

- The consequences of a fruitless, wasteful life are terrifying.

The Story of Jotham – The day when the trees went to anoint a king over them (Judges 9:7-20)

- Wrong choice of a Saviour brings harm to the whole nation.

The Labourers in the Vineyard (Matthew 21:33-42)

- Not only the prophets were rejected, even the Son of God came and was killed.

The Poor Man's Lamb (2 Samuel 12: 1-9)

- Conviction of mercy and justice, and the confession of sin.

A Camel and the Eye of a Needle (Matthew 19:24)

- It is hard for rich people to enter the Kingdom of God.

The Narrow Gate (Matthew 7: 13-14)

- Don't align your way of life according to the majority. You have to choose for your life.

The Hidden Treasure (Matthew 13: 44-46)

- No sacrifice is too big in order to gain eternal life.

Lost Sheep, lost Coin, lost Son (Luke 15)

- There is joy in heaven over one sinner, who is turning back to God.

The Two Sons (Matthew 21: 28-31)

- Walk your talk... not only talk your walk! Think before you talk and keep your promises.

The Pharisee and Tax Collector (Luke 18: 9-14)

- God does not look at the outside performance of religion. God looks at the heart.

The Invitation to the Wedding Banquet (Matthew 22: 2-14)

- Rejecting the truth has sad consequences. If you accept God's invitation follow His rules. God is the one, who lays down the conditions we are to follow.

The Ten Bridesmaids (Matthew 25: 1-13)

- Prepare yourself for the coming of Christ as long as you can. Fill your life with the oil of God before it is too late.

③ The Abraham Gospel Concept

Significance of the Topic

"Do you believe in the God of Abraham", was a searching question brought up during a visit in a Muslim home some time ago. - There was no reason to get stuck on this question. "Certainly I do believe in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and I believe that he is the God of the living and not the dead." Indeed: Abraham matters to Muslims [see the following Qur'an references] p. 57

Entering into a Conversation about Abraham

Why do Muslims, Jews and Christians hold a special place for Abraham? What was so special about this man? His deeds or his actions? Or do you think his attitude and faith are more significant?

> *Use Illustration:* If a child empties the savings box to buy a special gift for Mum or Dad, what matters more: the amount of money he/she spent for the gift or the attitude of love, the special relationship, expressed in it?

Leading through the Gospel Presentation

(*Aim:* In starting with various points of common truth for both Muslims and Christians we want to lead the listener to a new and deeper understanding of the spiritual significance of Abraham for us today.)

1. The Title given to Abraham: The Friend of God [arab. 'Khalilullah']

Bible: 2Chron 20:7; Isaiah 41:8; James 2:23

Qur'an: S. 4:125 [Pickthall: 'the upright one']

Ask: Why was Abraham called the Friend of God and what does this tell us about the relationship between God and Abraham?

This title tells us as much about Abraham's God as about Abraham himself!

Emphasize: God can be trusted. He keeps his promises. He does not change his mind. He even wants to share His plans with His servants - see Amos 3:7. What an amazing God!

2. Abraham is indeed the Father of all true people of God

His was a special promise of God which made him to become a blessing for all peoples on earth: Gen 12: 3; 15:1-6; 17:5+19 The Jews considered him to be their father: Luke 3:8; John 8: 33+39 [if time allows follow the whole argument up to verse 58!]

Every true Christian has reason to see himself as a descendant of Abraham: Rom 4:16; 9:8; Gal 3: 7+8

Note: John 8:56 and Gal 3:8 are truly remarkable statements. Who could have imagined that Abraham already looked forward to see Jesus' day and received the Gospel in advance! Make sure to point this out clearly. The Qur'an shows that Abraham is a model leader to all men: S. 2:124 [I will make thee an Imam to the Nations]; 16:120 [a model]; 3:67 [Abraham was neither a Jew nor yet a Christian; but he was true in faith' - just be aware of this verse, but possibly do not introduce it in the discussion yourself]

3. Abraham found approval with God only by his faith

Muslims are encouraged to follow the faith of Abraham: S. 3:95; 2:135; 6:161

Christians are reminded to consider Abraham's faith: Gal 3:6-9

Use an illustration: You may have observed a dog who has been trained to follow commands like "Sit" or "Heel" and it will respond appropriately. But we would not therefore conclude that the dog has faith in its master. It merely has been taught well to obey. Obedience indeed is commendable but it does not qualify as faith. 'Abraham's faith was a reflection of God's faithfulness [1Cor 10:13; 2Thess 3:3], and this God reckoned to him as righteousness [Gen 15:6]

4. The Promise of a son to Abraham

This is stated in both the Qur'an and the Bible.

Qur'an: S. 11:71 [and we gave her glad tidings of Isaac...'] *Note:* Isaac, not Ishmael is the promised son] S. 37:112

Bible: Gen 17:15+16+19

Note: Abraham believed that if God makes a promise, He would certainly fulfil it [Rom 4:18-22; Heb 11:11; Prov 30:5]

5. The command to Abraham to sacrifice his son

S. 37:102-113 shows a marked difference to the biblical record.

To Abraham the question must have arisen: Can such a holy and moral God ask for such a sacrifice? Can He demand unquestionable obedience to Allah's will?

Contrast this with Gen 22:1-13: Abraham was probably shocked, but in faith he obeyed – and discovered that God intended to reveal to him the glory of His salvation.

It was a threefold test: ① to show love for God
② to maintain his trust in God
③ to persevere in his faith

As Abraham usually inquired God's commands [compare Gen 18:23-25], there would have been four possible conclusions:

- ① God has forgotten His promise
- ② God has changed his mind
- ③ He wants me to submit without any questions
- ④ God must yet fulfill His promise somehow

The solution left for Abraham: God will raise my son Isaac from the dead [Heb 11:17-19; comp Surah 2:260]. Thus was Abraham's faith!

Note: Abraham foresaw the whole Gospel: His son, whom he dearly loved → given through an unusual birth, → to be sacrificed as a sin offering, → his son's resurrection, → becomes a blessing to others.

Thus Isaac becomes the object lesson of the atoning work of God's Son. (At this point you could go through the main truths of this concept again or just explain the significance of it further.)

Some useful questions to recap:

1. What has God done to show His love for you?
2. Has God ever done anything for the human race to match Abraham's supreme act of love and self-sacrifice in being willing to offer his own son for God?
3. If the greatest way a man could show his love for God was to be willing to sacrifice his son for God, what is the greatest way God could ever show His love for us?

It is unthinkable that God could ever ask more of a man than what He was willing to do for man!

ABRAHAM IN THE QUR'AN

2:	124	- fulfilled God's command
	125ff	- and Ka'ba (3:96/7)
	130/5	- follow the religion of
	258	- argues with the sceptics
	260	- believes that God gives life to the dead
3:	67	- neither a Jew nor a Christian
	95	- nor a pagan
6:	74	- argues against idolatry (19:41-50)
	75 – 79	- rejects worship of heavenly beings
	80 – 83	- preaches to his people
9:	113 – 4	- Prays for his father (26:86)
11:	69 – 73	- pleads for Lot's people
14:	35 – 41	- his prayer (26:83-87)
16:	120 – 123	- a model
21:	51 – 71	- argues with his people against idols (26:70-82; 29:16-18; 37:83-98)
21:	69	- is safe in the fire
37:	99 – 111	- sacrifices his son
53:	37	- Book of (87:19)
60:	4 – 6	- his example in dealing with unbelievers

(Much of this concept is taken from "Millat-a-Ibrahim: The True Faith of Abraham" by John Gilchrist)

④ Questions for Study and Reflection

Chapters 1 and 2

1. When did the Islamic calendar start:
 - a) with the birth of Muhammad?
 - b) with Muhammad's first revelation experience?
 - c) with the flight to Medina?
 Explain briefly the significance of this event in understanding the nature of Islam.
2. Christians and Muslims agree on some beliefs, but strongly disagree on others. Give some examples of each and tell how this complicates our witness to Muslims!
3. In pagan Arabia people were much involved in occult practices and magic arts. What is your opinion of how this might still influence Muslims today?
4. What are "The Satanic Verses?" Are they still found in the Qur'an today?
5. Tell us something about the change in Muhammad's life after the death of his first wife *Khadjah*. How did her death affect Muhammad's life?
6. Explain the meaning of the terms *Dhar-ul-Islam* and *Dhar-ul-Harb*. How do Muslims explain the idea of "The Holy War" today?
7. Why is it so important to draw a clear distinction between Islam, the system and its adherents, Muslim men and women?
8. Reflect on the basic beliefs and practices of Muslims again. Describe the effects of these in the life of your Muslim friends and neighbours.
9. What do you know about the sects in Islam? Which different Muslim groups are found in your area and what do you know about them? (You will not find the answer to this question in this book!)
10. How was Islam spread after the death of Muhammad? How did Islam come to your country or tribe?

Chapters 3 and 4

1. Make a comparison between Qur'an and Bible in regard to:

	Qur'an	Bible
a)	Number of Books	
b)	Number of Chapters	
c)	How many authors?	
d)	Period of years of writing	
e)	Order of arrangement	
2. What can you say about the sources of the Qur'an?
3. Explain what Muslims mean by "The Law of Abrogation". Why is this law such a big problem in understanding the Qur'an?
4. How would you respond to a Muslim who tells you that the Qur'an has never been changed since the time of Muhammad?
5. Why do Muslims need the Hadith in addition to the Qur'an?
6. Name two of the most famous Hadith collectors. At what time did they live and how does this affect their trustworthiness?
7. How did the Hadith collectors select these traditions?
8. What is the content of the Hadith, and how do these rules affect the life of a Muslim?

Chapters 5 and 6

1. Briefly compare or contrast the Islamic concept of *Tawhid* with the Bible's teaching on the unity of God.
2. Do Muslims know and acknowledge all prophets of the Bible? What differences do you observe?
3. What did you discover in studying Islam's teaching on predestination which is different from the biblical doctrine of predestination?
4. What does Islam teach about conversion? Why do Christians believe in the possibility of a complete change in one's life?
5. Explain the difference between "sin" and "sins". What is the greatest sin against God?
6. What is the meaning of "shirk" in Islam?
7. What can you learn from Islam's teaching on "Life after Death"?
8. Why is it so important that we clearly explain to a Muslim that there is only one way of salvation?

Chapter 7

1. What do Muslims believe about the Bible?
2. What is your experience about preaching to Muslims, or taking them to a church meeting?
3. How would you explain to a Muslim your conviction that the Bible is absolutely trustworthy?
4. How do Muslims understand the Biblical teaching on the Trinity?
5. What could you find out about THE GOSPEL OF BARNABAS?
6. How would you show to a Muslim that Jesus is more than a prophet?
7. Which Old Testament Scripture references would you use to show that Jesus is the promised Messiah?
8. The Bible speaks about "the offence of the cross". What does this mean in our ministry?
9. What reasons do Muslims give for rejecting the doctrine of atonement?

Chapter 8

1. List five or more basic facts of the Gospel.
2. "God became our Jesus", we read in Isaiah 63:8-10. How would you explain this sentence?
3. Go through the "Gospel according to Matthew" and mark all the references which link up the Old Testament prophecies with the actual fulfillment. Write them on a sheet of paper and stick it on the inside of your Bible for sharing with others.
4. There are five areas that deserve special emphasis in explaining the Gospel to Muslims? List them and comment.
5. Give some of the conditions the Gospel has for those who consider following Christ. - Make sure to mention them to a seeking Muslim before a decision for Christ is taken.
6. What lessons can we learn from 2Cor 4:2 for our witness to Muslims?

Chapter 9 and 10

1. How can we become people who witness in the power of God?
2. Do you have an experience of a "power encounter" in your work as an evangelist which you would like to share with us?
3. Explain the balance between what we need to do and what only God can do in communicating the Gospel effectively.

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4. Give some important lessons to remember when we think about "Spiritual Warfare".
5. What is the relationship between truth and love?
6. What plans do you have in order to "touch the lives of others", especially Muslims?
7. Use the "Abraham, the Friend of God" gospel concept with a Muslim and report on your experience.
8. Compare one Muslim and Christian feast. What differences did you observe?
9. Find out what fears influence the life of your Muslim friend. How could they overcome these fears in their life?
10. Compare "church" and "umamah" with each other. What do we Christians have to offer that Muslims do not know?

Chapters 11 and 12

1. In what ways can you prepare to be a witness to Muslims?
2. How would you answer a Muslim who asks you: "I believe in Jesus, but why don't you believe in Muhammad?"
3. Would you take a Qur'an with you when visiting a Muslim home for the first time? Give reasons for your answer.
4. Should a Christian witness argue about religion? Explain.
5. Someone once said: "Muslims are converted in stages". Do you agree with this statement?
6. Give us some of your ideas on how to start a conversation on spiritual matters with a Muslim.
7. A Christian friend asks: "What do you think of Islam?" How would you answer your friend on this question.
8. You just had the tremendous joy of praying with a Muslim to receive Christ as Saviour into his life. What are the next steps to assist this new believer?
9. Explain the meaning of *haram* and *halaal*. Why are these things so important to a Muslim, but not to a Christian?
10. Complete the sentence: "Unless Muslim evangelism becomes..."
11. Give some ideas for a strategy on how to reach Muslims with the Gospel of Christ.

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6 Fellowship of Daughters of Abraham

1. WHO ARE THE DAUGHTERS OF ABRAHAM?

- Daughters of Abraham (DOA) are Christian women who have a heart for Muslim women and want to reach out to them in friendship for the sake of the Gospel.
- Daughters of Abraham form fellowship groups to support each other in the ministry to Muslim women.
- Muslim women are precious in God's sight, and we believe they will become even more precious if they know the Lord.

2. WHAT ARE THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE "DOA"?

- to create awareness among Christian women about the spiritual poverty of Muslim women
- to encourage Christian women to befriend 1-2 Muslim ladies while "rubbing shoulders" with them at work, in the neighbourhood, at shops and market places
- to train and equip Christians to share the gospel with Muslims in a way, they can understand and make a meaningful decision..

3. WHAT IS THE ADVANTAGE OF HAVING A "DOA" FELLOWSHIP?

- It confirms: I'm not alone in this "job"...
- It provides "Shelter" (a Haven) for likeminded Christian ladies in their individual, sometimes "lonely and stormy" witness to their Muslim friends and neighbours.
- It stirs vital prayer support, builds friendship and commitment to each other.
- It gives a place of training to find biblical answers to Muslims objections and life-questions.
- It holds each other accountable in reaching out on a regular basis and increasing the activities of each lady.

*Daughters of Abraham invite you
to become part of a movement to reach
Muslim women in Sub-Saharan Africa.*

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For further information please contact us:

Daughters of Abraham

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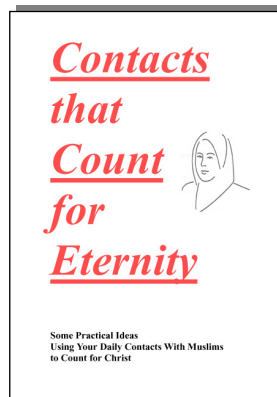
Mobile: 0721-962747

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6 Recommended Reading

Everybody needs a friend he can relate to. This is not different with Muslim people. They long for relationships with people of integrity, love and compassion. Have you ever prayerfully considered who could be the person for whose eternal benefit God wants YOU to become such a friend?

"Contacts that Count for Eternity" will give you some practical ideas how to use your daily contacts with Muslims to win them for Christ.



NOTE:

Many of our publications are also available in French, Kiswahili, Hausa, Amharic and Other languages. Ask at our office.

Evangelistic Literature

- Al-Kitab (a Bible Correspondence Course for Muslim seekers)
- A Testimony to the Truth of the Holy Writings
- Cleanliness is next to Godliness
- Comparing, Confusing, Considering, Concluding
- Purpose and Aim
- Destination unknown
- Dear Abdallah
- Let the Bible speak for itself
- The Message of Nabi Isa
- The Storyteller (Series of 5 tracts)
- What do you think about the Messiah?
- Why you should know the Book

7 Advanced Study Material



FACING THE MUSLIM CHALLENGE

Facing the Muslim Challenge is a comprehensive book of the most common arguments raised by Muslims in response to the average Christian witness. Christians wishing to reach out meaningfully to Muslims will need to know not only what the major points of contention are, but also how to effectively counter them.

This book provides clear answers based on evidence and well-established facts.

It also shows how to turn Muslim objections into a platform for positive witness to the great truths of the Gospel.

LEARN & SHARE

The full set of the popular magazine Learn & Share comprises a series of 20 issues with articles on Islamics, Apologetics, Communication, Comparison, Witness along with Testimonies, Biographies, Illustrations and Book Reviews.

We believe the brief and clear articles will not only help you to get a good basic knowledge about Islam and Muslims, but it will challenge you to put this knowledge into practice.



SHARING THE GOSPEL WITH MUSLIMS



Sharing the Gospel with Muslims takes you on a journey through the Bible, reveals ways of effective witness to Muslims from points of common ground between the two faiths. It covers various Old Testament narratives and prophecies which foreshadow the redemptive work of Jesus Christ and shows you how to apply New Testament teachings about Jesus towards the same end, namely his supreme saving grace for all mankind.

This book is a Biblical manual of resources for Muslim evangelism, enabling you to use the Lord's most powerful instrument to reach Muslims

with the Gospel and to draw them towards the only true saviour of the world.

WELCOME HOME

A Workbook on Discipling Muslim Background Believers - This workbook is written for Pastors, Leaders and Counsellors in the local church who love encouraging and assisting MBBs (Muslims Background Believers). This book will equip them for the task. They will benefit from the experience of counsellors from right across Africa.

The workbook gives a concise introduction into the different areas of ministry to MBBs. Topics address the most important areas in the MBB's life, so you don't have to know it all before you get going. Just work your way through and try to understand the concepts step by step.



BATTLE FOR THE HEARTS - Now available in DVD format!



The series is designed to encourage evangelism by empowering local churches throughout the world to reach out to Muslims. In twelve episodes we gain an in-depth understanding of the origins of Islam, the beliefs and practices of a Muslim, the life of Muhammad, apologetic issues raised by Muslims and practical methods Christians can use in sharing the

Good News with their Muslim neighbours from a team of experts, a panel of young practitioners, and from several Muslim Background Believers.

This outstanding series is the result of five years of cooperation between Life Challenge Africa and Trans World Radio. A Trainers Guide for group leaders enhances the usefulness of this tool and maximises the learning experience through additional materials and offers practical applications. At a very affordable cost and top quality this set should become a standard tool for every church, Christian organisation and theological institution on the continent.

8 Resources - At Your Service

Websites*

- www.lifechallenge.de
- www.answering-islam.org (The most extensive website with many links to other useful sources)
- www.aboutisa.com (Tells Muslims about Jesus)
- www.apostatesofislam.com (not Christian)
- www.copts.net/index.asp (daily documentation of Islamic atrocities on Christians of Africa)
- URL: debate.org.uk/topics/coolcalm/ (Testimonies of ex-Muslims; also available in Arabic)
- URL: injl.org/ (Tells Muslims about Jesus)
- www.itl.org.uk/ (INTO THE LIGHT – Thought-provoking Muslim-Christian discussions)
- www.islam-on-line.org/ (Documenting persecution of Christians by Islam)
- www.islamreview.com/ (Eye-opener to the mistreatment of blacks in Islam)
- www.light-of-life.com/ (Investigates Islam from a Christian point of view)
- www.domini.org/lam/home.html (Support group, give riveting stories)
- URL: www.truthnet.org/islam/source.html (Online book SOURCES OF ISLAM by W. St. Clair-Tisdall)
- www.the-good-way.com/ (Great site for Muslims to understand the Christian faith)
- www.theKoran.com/ (Useful infos on Islam from a Biblical perspective)
- www.islamexpose.com/ (Preaching peace and brotherhood)

***PLEASE NOTE: LCA is not necessarily in agreement with all the arguments, ideas or attitudes presented on these sites. Use your own judgement.**

Please bring other websites to our attention.

Seminars and Distance Learning Courses

Contact our office for opportunities.

You will agree there is no lack of resources just waiting for you to be tapped. So: REACH OUT!

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