

ISLAM

ORIGIN: Mohammed, born ~ A.D. 570, began preaching Islam (submission to god) in Mecca (now Saudi Arabia). Under persecution he fled to another city, where he and his follower set up a religious community in 622. His writings were collected after his death in 632 and called the Quran, which means “recitation.” Arab genealogy is traced to Ishmael, son of Abraham and Hagar.

BELIEFS:

God: Allah – Only one god who is merciful, forgiving, and just. Hears prayers, gives guidance, rewards those who obey him and punishes those who do not. Unforgivable sin: treating anything else like Allah.

Angels: Allah created angels from light and obey him. They protect humans, keep Allah’s records, deliver Allah’s messages, and administer his punishment. Two angels assigned to each person to keep record of life.

Sacred book: Quran - Muslims believe that the Quran is the absolute word of god and is considered perfect and infallible. Only the word of Allah in Arabic. Books arranged from longest to shortest, not chronological.

Prophets: Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and Jesus are listed, but only Mohammed’s message was final, correct, and directed to all humans.

Final judgment: Believers and unbelievers will be resurrected for a Day of Judgment; some assigned to hell others to heaven. Allah allows Satan to test humans during their life. The response to this testing determines their eternal destiny, but Allah makes final decision. Good deeds outweigh bad deeds 10 to 1.

Allah’s will: Everything occurs only if Allah wills. Humans need to do their best and then hope for the best. Can’t be sure what their eternal destiny is.

DUTIES:

Declare the faith: Must recite the Word of the Witness: “there is no god but God; and Mohammed is the apostle of God.”

Prayer: 5 times per day (daybreak, noon, afternoon, sundown, after dark), face Mecca

Fasting: Ramadan (month Quran received); daybreak to nightfall (month), no food, drink, smoking, or sex.

Charity: Help the poor by donating 2.5% of wealth at end of each year.

Pilgrimage: Journey to Mecca during first third of the 12th month of Muslim year.

What does the Quran say about Jesus?

2:136, 2:285 – urges Muslims to believe in Jesus

3:45 – tells Muslims who Jesus was: the Messiah, word from God

3:47 – born of a virgin

3:49 – spoke from the cradle, healed the blind and leper, raised the dead, and made a clay bird fly

5:75 – Jesus not the Son of God

5:116-18 – not divine

4:157 – did not die for the sins of the world

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do Arabs, Jews, and Christians pray to the same god?

2. Do the Bible and the Quran both reveal the word of God?

3. What does the Bible say about those who deny the deity of Jesus?

References:

Misguiding Lights? Edited by S. Miller, 1991 Bacon Hill Press.

Newsweek, 2/11/2002 – “The Bible and the Quran” p. 50 - 57