



The Challenge of

Islam

(PART ONE): WHAT IS ISLAM?

Bible Study Discussion Guide

The Challenge of *Islam* (PART ONE): WHAT IS ISLAM?

Getting the Most From This Discussion Guide

This is an interactive study guide. We designed it to be flexible so you can fit it to your own group and personal use. It includes boxes (like the one below) which include extra information and links to Internet sites where you can browse and dig as deep as you want.

DIGGING DEEPER: Islamic stuff

Suggested Links: [www...](#)

Group Discussion: Please feel free to move at your own pace through this study and take as much time as you need for each lesson. You are welcome to dig in as deep as you want, but you might find it helpful to skip over these boxes and use just the Bible passages and discussion questions.

Individual Study: If you want to dig deeper and all you have is a paper copy of this study guide, it's not going to be very interactive. So here is a step-by-step guide to finding and using the Internet links:

- 1) Log on to www.lhmmen.com.
- 2) Click on "Bible Studies" in the left column.
- 3) Choose this study from the page by clicking the underlined title (located to the right of the study's graphic).
- 4) On the bottom of this page, click "download videos & materials."
- 5) Enter your e-mail address and password (and register, if necessary).
- 6) Find this study guide, then click the "download now" button.
- 7) In the File Download box, click the "save" button.
- 8) Save it to your desktop.
- 9) Click on the file to open it.

Now you can use the online discussion guide to its fullest. Click the hyperlinks (underlined words or phrases) that interest you and start digging.

LESSON 1 - The Foundations of Islam

Opening Prayer: Heavenly Father, You are bringing many Muslims to our country. As I meet and interact with these men, women, and children, help me understand their faith, and grow in my own, that through my words and actions You may show them the light of Christ. I pray in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Muslims in America?

- Do you know any Muslims at work, school, or in your community? If you do, describe what they are like.

If you don't know any, then take a close look the next time that person behind the counter hands you your motel key, or the next time you pick up that cup of coffee or soda when you get gas. There's a good chance you're looking at a Muslim. (The Arab community is very close-knit, integrating many of its immigrants to the United States through these industries.)

See Where Immigrants are Settling in the U.S.: [click here](#).

We don't know the exact number of Muslims living in the United States today, but seven million seems a pretty good estimate. As that population keeps growing so will their influence in our world. What affect will their Muslim faith have on our families, our communities, and our country? First we must ask, "What is a Muslim?"

Many people think of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam as ancient religions that all worship the same God, and even share many of the same prophets. But that would be a tragic mistake.

Four thousand years ago, God called a man named Abram to leave his home and his country. He had no idea where God would send him; he simply trusted God and set off on his new life of faith. In the book of Genesis, Moses left us a faithful record of this father of believers.

From generation to generation for more than 2,000 years the story of Abraham was passed from father to child unchanged. Our Lord Jesus and His apostles proclaimed the same Abraham as the friend of God and father of believers.

But early in the 6th-century A.D., more than 2,000 years after Abraham's death, Muhammad hijacked the story of Abraham and twisted it for his own purposes. No longer was Abraham the father of believers and the man of faith. Now he was Muslim and so were Adam and all the prophets of the Old Testament. In fact Muhammad even hijacked Jesus Himself, claiming *He* was a Muslim.

When Muhammad first declared his new twist on Bible history, the people ridiculed and ignored him as a foolish, insignificant man. But once he got an army behind him, he set out to make the whole world Muslim.

Do Muslims and Christians believe the same things? Is one religion as true and good as the other? Let's start by looking at the man Muhammad claimed to be the father of Islam.

Abraham

When God called Abraham, He picked a real man for a really tough job. That's why he's a legend—both in Islam and Christianity.

Read Genesis 12:1-20.

- 1 The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.
- 2 I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.
- 3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."
- 4 So Abram left, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran.
- 5 He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there.
- 6 Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land.
- 7 The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the LORD, who had appeared to him.
- 8 From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD.
- 9 Then Abram set out and continued toward the Negev.
- 10 Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe.
- 11 As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, "I know what a beautiful woman you are.
- 12 When the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife.' Then they will kill me but will let you live.
- 13 Say you are my sister, so that I will be treated well for your sake and my life will be spared because of you."
- 14 When Abram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that she was a very beautiful woman.
- 15 And when Pharaoh's officials saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh, and she was taken into his palace.
- 16 He treated Abram well for her sake, and Abram acquired sheep and cattle, male and female donkeys, menservants and maidservants, and camels.
- 17 But the LORD inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh and his household because of Abram's wife Sarai.
- 18 So Pharaoh summoned Abram. "What have you done to me?" he said. "Why didn't you tell me she was your wife?"
- 19 Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' so that I took her to be my wife? Now then, here is your wife. Take her and go!"
- 20 Then Pharaoh gave orders about Abram to his men, and they sent him on his way, with his wife and everything he had.

Whether you're a Christian or a Muslim, you have to admit Abraham is a rock.

- What obstacles would a 75-year-old man face when leaving his country, his people, and his family?
- How does Abraham's obedience encourage you?

Islam focuses on Abraham's submission and his response to God.

- Discuss the things Abraham had to deal with when he started moving his family and possessions to an unknown land.
- If God called you to a new land, what difficulties would you face? How would you convince your family to come along?

Christians certainly recognize Abraham's great sacrifice and faith. But we focus on God and the promises He gave Abraham in verses 2-3.

- Describe the three promises God gives Abraham in verses 2-3.
- Which promises reassure Abraham that God will provide for him and his family? What assurances do they offer?
- Which promises reveal the coming of Jesus Christ, God's Son? What do they tell us about Him?
- How do you know God's promise did not depend on Abraham's submission and obedience?

As we go back to the video, consider how Islam focuses on Abraham's obedience instead of God's promise.

Watch The Video: Lesson 1 - The Foundations of Islam

As we saw in the video, Islam focuses on Abraham and all he did for God.

- At this point, would you expect Islam to be a religion of faith or works? Why?
- What makes Islam so appealing to men?

Digging Deeper: The Pillars of Islam

- **Shahada** - Say "there is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is His messenger"
 - o Prerequisites for the Declaration of Faith
 - o Can Christians Call God "Allah"?
- **Salah** - Pray five times a day
 - o Rituals & Requirements for Muslim Prayer
- **Sawm** - Fast during the month of Ramadan
 - o Who is Dis-qualified from Sawm?
- **Zakat** - Give to a charity 2.5% of leftover salary after bills are paid
 - o Rules for Zakat
 - o On-line Calculator
- **Hajj** - Make a pilgrimage to Mecca once in life
 - o Hajj information
 - o Stoning of the devil

Read Romans 4:1-5, 13, 18-25.

- 1 What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered in this matter?
- 2 If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God.
- 3 What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."
- 4 Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation.

- 5 However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.
- 13 It was not through law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith.
- 18 Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, "So shall your offspring be."
- 19 Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah's womb was also dead.
- 20 Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God,
- 21 being fully persuaded that God had power to do what He had promised.
- 22 This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness."
- 23 The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone,
- 24 but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.
- 25 He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

God has a way of picking guys when they're weak, putting them in tough positions, and showing His strength through them. That's what made Abraham such an awesome man.

- Why do you think God waited until Abraham was an old man?
- Why is it tough on a guy when he has to depend on someone to do something he can't do for himself?
- Describe how Jesus stepped in to help us when we couldn't help ourselves.

Search the Word: Abraham

Gives Sarah away (Gen. 12:10-20); gives Lot the choice (Gen. 13); heroically rescues Lot (Gen. 14); is reassured of God's promise (Gen. 15); Abraham and Sarah take matters into their own hands: Ishmael is born (Gen. 16); submits to God's will: circumcision (Gen. 17:1-14); Isaac's birth announced (Gen. 17:15-18:15); prays for Sodom (Gen. 18:22-33); Sodom is destroyed (Gen. 19:1-29); Gives Sarah away- again (Gen. 20); Isaac born (Gen. 21:1-7); Sends Ishmael away (Gen. 21:8-21); Sacrifices Isaac (Gen. 22); Buries Sarah in Promised Land (Gen. 23); Provides Wife for Isaac (Gen. 24); remarries, has other children, then dies (Gen. 25:1-10)

Muslim view of Abraham's place in Islam, Judaism and Christianity

Comparison Points For My Muslim Neighbors:

Remember that your Muslim neighbor is watching you. He wants to know if your life matches your words. Is your God as important to you as Allah is to him?

- Frequent prayer is part of the life of a devout Muslim. At every prescribed hour of prayer, he will get out his prayer rug, kneel down toward Mecca, and offer his prayer in front of the whole world. Are you as serious about prayer as he is? When you go out to eat is it clear to him that you are a man of prayer? (John 14:12-14; 15:7-8; 16:23-24)

- Muslims frequently make reference to Allah's will. When you tell others about your plans, do you always submit yourself to God's will, saying "If the Lord is willing, I'll take my vacation in Orlando this year? (James 4:13-17)
- Islam requires submission to the will of Allah. Do you show joyful and humble submission and obedience to God's will, or do you insist on going your own way and playing loose with God's rules? Jesus demands total allegiance from His followers (Luke 14:26; Luke 9:62; Matthew 24:13; 2 Timothy 2:4). Our joyous, voluntary submission resonates strongly with Muslims.

Talking Points:

- For a Muslim the number-one thing is giving Allah honor and glory. Ask what Allah did to show Abraham His goodness, glory, and faithfulness.
- Discuss how Allah protected Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, and Ishmael in their times of great weakness and danger.
- Recognize that God made great nations from both of Abraham's sons—Ishmael, as well as Isaac. And realize that Abraham loved Ishmael, too (Genesis 17:18; 21:10-11).
- Allah blessed Abraham to be a blessing to the whole world.
- Discuss the promises God made to Abraham, and how He fulfilled each of them, especially blessing all nations through Abraham's son, Jesus Christ.

Closing Prayer:

Heavenly Father, You accomplished great things for Abraham and his family. Thank You for sending Your Son as the promised Child of Abraham. Strengthen my faith in You that I may show others the great things You accomplish for us and through us. I pray in Jesus' Name, Amen.

Digging Deeper: Why Do Muslims Reject The Trinity?

The Holy Trinity is probably the most difficult teaching in the Holy Bible. It consists of two statements, which seem completely contradictory:

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one" (Deuteronomy 6:4).

"Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19).

How can God be one and three at the same time?

Muhammad had a simple answer. God cannot be both three and one, so He must be only one. Relying on his reason, he concluded there can be no Son and no Holy Spirit.

All of the heresies that divided the Christian church came when leaders tried to solve an unsolvable mystery. That's the problem when human pride tries to completely unravel the mystery of God.

The Bible teaches that God is profound, far beyond our ability to understand or grasp. Likewise, the mystery of the Holy Trinity is far beyond our understanding. The Triune God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—is a mystery, and we must simply bow in humility before this mystery and believe like children.

Islamic viewpoint:	Answering Christianity (uses reason to deny the Trinity)
Christian viewpoint:	Sam Schlorff; Christian Articles defending the Trinity to Muslims

Martin Luther On Muhammad:

"Here is where Mr. Smart Aleck, reason, takes offense, presuming to be ten times wiser than God Himself... The Jews, Mohammed, the Turks, and the Tartars also belong to this category of super-intelligent people. With their spoonful or nutshellful of brain they can comprehend the incomprehensible essence of God and say that since God has no wife, He can also have no son. Fie, fie, fie upon you, devil, together with Jews and Mohammed and all who are the disciples of blind, deaf, and wretched reason in these exalted matters, which none but God alone can fathom, which we grasp only in the measure in which the Holy Spirit has revealed them to us through the prophets."
(*Luther's Works*, Vol. 15, p. 292)

LESSON 2 - Angels, Jinn, and the Qur'an

Opening Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for Your holy angels. As You send them to guard and protect me, keep me mindful of Satan's schemes and keep me safe in Your truth. I pray in Jesus' Name. Amen

Angels and Jinn

Spirits, angels, and genies—what man doesn't like talking about the invisible world around him? Both the Bible and the Qur'an teach about special spiritual beings. In this lesson we explore angels and *jinn* in the Qur'an.

WATCH THE VIDEO: Lesson 2, Part 1 - Angels and Jinn

Like the Qur'an, the Bible speaks of angels and their work.

Read 2 Kings 6:8-23.

- 8 Now the king of Aram was at war with Israel. After conferring with his officers, he said, "I will set up my camp in such and such a place."
- 9 The man of God sent word to the king of Israel: "Beware of passing that place, because the Arameans are going down there."
- 10 So the king of Israel checked on the place indicated by the man of God. Time and again Elisha warned the king, so that he was on his guard in such places.
- 11 This enraged the king of Aram. He summoned his officers and demanded of them, "Will you not tell me which of us is on the side of the king of Israel?"
- 12 "None of us, my lord the king," said one of his officers, "but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the very words you speak in your bedroom."
- 13 "Go, find out where he is," the king ordered, "so I can send men and capture him." The report came back: "He is in Dothan."
- 14 Then he sent horses and chariots and a strong force there. They went by night and surrounded the city.
- 15 When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh, my lord, what shall we do?" the servant asked.
- 16 "Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them."
- 17 And Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes so he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.
- 18 As the enemy came down toward him, Elisha prayed to the LORD, "Strike these people with blindness." So he struck them with blindness, as Elisha had asked.
- 19 Elisha told them, "This is not the road and this is not the city. Follow me, and I will lead you to the man you are looking for." And he led them to Samaria.
- 20 After they entered the city, Elisha said, "LORD, open the eyes of these men so they can see." Then the LORD opened their eyes and they looked, and there they were, inside Samaria.

- 21 When the king of Israel saw them, he asked Elisha, "Shall I kill them, my father? Shall I kill them?"
- 22 "Do not kill them," he answered. "Would you kill men you have captured with your own sword or bow? Set food and water before them so that they may eat and drink and then go back to their master."
- 23 So he prepared a great feast for them, and after they had finished eating and drinking, he sent them away, and they returned to their master. So the bands from Aram stopped raiding Israel's territory.

- Have you ever encountered an angel or heard someone else's angel story? Describe it to the group.

We read in Hebrews 1:14, "Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?"

- How does this promise reassure you?
- How is this different from the role of angels described in the Qur'an?

Digging Deeper: Angels, Jinn, And Genies

Muslim viewpoint: *Jinn* and Angels

Sam Shamoun: Are *Jinn* a group among the Angels?

Books:

- *Angels, Jinn and Spiritual Warfare*, by Andy Bannister

Talking Points About Angels And Jinn:

- In Islam, Allah is very distant from humans. This is why the angels and *jinn* are so important to Muslims. Jesus Christ revealed to us how close the almighty God is to each of us.
 - o We must be careful not to make our God distant by being more concerned about material prosperity and putting our trust in the things of this world. We need to recover the sense of God's presence in our daily lives.
- Don't spend time arguing whether the *jinn* are really angels. Both Christians and Muslims agree there are good spirit beings that serve God, and evil spirit beings that disobey God and wish to harm us. That's close enough.
- Discuss how they understand angels and how they feel about them.
- Discuss any fears your Muslim friends may have about *jinn*, and how you feel about demons.
- Discuss how Jesus drove out unclean spirits and protects us from them.

Now we rejoin the video as Sam Shamoun discusses the Muslim holy book- the Qur'an.

Watch The Video: Lesson 2, Part 2 - The Qur'an**Dig Deeper: Muslim Claims:**

Why God revealed His message in the form of Scriptures, and a brief description of the two Scriptures of God: the Bible, and the Qur'an: [click here](#).

- Do Christians you know think as highly of the Bible as Muslims think of the Qur'an? Why or why not?
- Who requires a stricter life—Allah of the Qur'an or the Triune God of the Bible? Why?

Read Hebrews 1:1-2; 2:1-4

- 1:1 In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways,
 2 but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, and through whom He made the universe.
 2:1 We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away.
 2 For if the message spoken by angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment,
 3 how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard Him.
 4 God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to His will.

The Qur'an teaches that salvation depends on human efforts. Its Five Pillars (statement of faith, prayer, fasting, offering, and pilgrimage) might seem a strict way of life for us, but compared to the Ten Commandments (and especially Jesus' interpretation of them in Matthew 5:21-30), the Five Pillars are greatly watered down.

- Why don't these Five Pillars accurately reflect God's holiness and justice?
- How strict was your father when you made mistakes? Describe some situations where he let you be less than perfect. Explain how God is more strict and demanding than any human father (see Matthew 5:21-28).
- What does it say about Jesus that God the Father could say of Him, "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well pleased"? What does it say of God the Father?
- Why is God more furious when people ignore the Gospel than when they ignore the Law?
- What comfort does the Qur'an give people who have a guilty conscience?

Talking Points For My Muslim Neighbors:

- Your Muslim neighbor believes God sent Jesus and gave Him the Gospel. Discuss what they think that Gospel is. Share your understanding with them (John 3:16).
- Why did Allah permit His earlier Word (Torah and Gospel) to be distorted, added to, and omitted from? Why didn't He protect His Word from corruption?
- Why would He intend the Gospel only for a limited time?
- The Bible says God never changes. If Allah never changes, why would He need to amend His Word from the earlier prophets as he gave it to Muhammad?

Closing Prayer:

Gracious God, You have revealed Yourself to us through the prophets and apostles, but chiefly through Your own Son. Open our hearts and lips to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ, that Your Spirit may turn the hearts of the disobedient to faith and wisdom. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Martin Luther On Muhammad:

"I have some parts of Mohammed's Koran (Qur'an), which in German might be called a book of sermons or doctrines... When I have time I must translate it into German so that everyone may see what a foul and shameful book it is."

"In the first place, he greatly praises Christ and Mary as being the only ones without sin, and yet he believes nothing more of Christ than that he is a holy prophet, like Jeremiah or Jonah, and denies that he is God's Son and true God. Furthermore, he does not believe that Christ is the Savior of the world who died for our sins, but that he preached to his own time and completed his work before his death, just like any other prophet."

"On the other hand, Mohammed highly exalts and praises himself and boasts that he has talked with God and the angels, and that since Christ's office of prophet is now complete, he has been commanded to bring the world to his faith, and if the world is not willing, to compel it or punish it with the sword; there is much glorification of the sword in it. Therefore the Turks think that their Mohammed is much higher and greater than Christ, for the office of Christ has come to an end and Mohammed's office is still in force."

(Luther's Works, Vol. 46, p. iii-184: The Christian in Society III)

LESSON 3 - Islamic Teachings about Jesus

Opening Prayer: Heavenly Father, You sent Your Son to save all of us from sin, death, and hell. Open the hearts of our Muslim neighbors to believe in Your one and only Son, our Savior. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Jesus in the Qur'an:

- How would you guess the Qur'an treats Jesus?

Would you be surprised to learn Islam treats Jesus with great respect? Whenever a devout Muslim mentions Him by name ("Isa" in Arabic) he always immediately adds, "peace be upon Him." As you watch the video, notice how many of the Bible's teachings about Jesus were retained in the Qur'an by Muhammad.

Watch The Video: Lesson 3 - Islamic Teachings about Jesus

From what you learned in the video, write yes or no in the blanks below.

Was/Is Jesus:	The Bible says	The Qur'an says
Eternal Son of God?	Yes	_____
Born of a virgin?	Yes	_____
A prophet?	Yes	_____
A miracle worker?	Yes	_____
Crucified?	Yes	_____
Dead?	Yes	_____
Buried?	Yes	_____
Resurrected?	Yes	_____
Ascended bodily?	Yes	_____
Returning?	Yes	_____
Judge?	Yes	_____
(answers at end of this lesson)		

- Where do we find agreement with Muslims? Why would Islam not feel threatened by a Jesus like this?
- Look at the places where we disagree with Islam, is there still enough agreement for a Muslim to be saved? Why or why not?
- How can we use this agreement (and disagreement) to share the truth about Jesus Christ with a Muslim?

Read John 10:22-38.

22 Then came the Feast of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter,
23 and Jesus was in the temple area walking in Solomon's Colonnade.
24 The Jews gathered around Him, saying, "How long will You keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly."
25 Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in My Father's Name speak for Me,
26 but you do not believe because you are not My sheep.
27 My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow Me.
28 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of My hand.
29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of My Father's hand.
30 I and the Father are one."
31 Again the Jews picked up stones to stone Him,
32 but Jesus said to them, "I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone Me?"
33 "We are not stoning You for any of these," replied the Jews, "but for blasphemy, because You, a mere man, claim to be God."
34 Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your Law, 'I have said you are gods'?
35 If he called them 'gods,' to whom the Word of God came—and the Scripture cannot be broken—
36 what about the one whom the Father set apart as His very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse Me of blasphemy because I said, 'I am God's Son'?
37 Do not believe Me unless I do what My Father does.
38 But if I do it, even though you do not believe Me, believe the miracles, that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father."

Muhammad latched onto the biblical teaching that there is only one God, and he rejected the passages that declare there are three Persons in that one Godhead. Jesus expresses the mystery of the Trinity (three Persons in one God) when He says, "I and the Father are one."

- Why do you think Muhammad chose not to completely reject Jesus?
- Why might this make Islam attractive to Christians?
- What difficulties does this add to sharing Christ with Muslims?

Digging Deeper: Is Muhammad The Greatest Prophet?

The Qur'an compares Jesus with Muhammad.

JESUS

Conceived and born of a virgin
Called a "word" of God
Worked outstanding miracles
Taught the Gospel
Taken up bodily into heaven

MUHAMMAD

Born of a mother and father
Prophesied in Scripture
Worked some miracles
Taught Islam
Died and was buried

Consider these Qur'anic passages, which indicate Muhammad did not perform miracles: [Click here](#).

If Muhammad was greater than Jesus, why didn't he do greater things?

Talking Points For My Muslim Neighbors:

- Mary is a very important person in Islam. She is highly revered as the pure virgin mother of Jesus by the power of God. Discuss why Mary is so revered. Consider why her child had to be conceived of a virgin without a human father but Muhammad did not. (For Christians Jesus must be born of a virgin to escape original sin and guilt before God.)

Digging Deeper: What Do Muslims Think Of Mary?

Mary in Islam

Mary in the Qur'an

- Muslims agree with Christians that Jesus is a prophet, and God validated Jesus' message through his miracles. Discuss with your Muslim friends what miracles Allah gave Muhammad to prove his validity as a prophet. How do these compare with Jesus' miracles in the Qur'an?
- Muslims consider Jesus' death on the cross too dishonorable for a great prophet of Allah. Explain why a just and holy God cannot overlook sins and leave them unpunished, why Jesus had to die to save us.

Closing Prayer:

Heavenly Father, I praise You for sending Your only begotten Son to be our Savior. Strengthen my belief in Him, and bless me to share His grace and love with everyone I meet. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Was/Is Jesus:	The Bible says	The Qur'an says
Eternal Son of God?	Yes	NO
Born of a virgin?	Yes	Yes
A prophet?	Yes	Yes
A miracle worker?	Yes	Yes
Crucified?	Yes	NEVER
Dead?	Yes (Good Friday)	Yes (in future)
Buried?	Yes (Good Friday)	Yes (in future)
Resurrected?	Yes (Easter)	Yes (on Judgment Day)
Ascended bodily?	Yes (after resurrection)	Yes (before crucifixion)
Returning?	Yes (Judgment Day)	Yes (before Judgment Day)
Judge?	Yes	NO

LESSON 4 - Islamic Teachings about Muhammad

Opening Prayer: Holy Father, deliver mankind from the darkness of sin and unbelief. Shine on me, that I may shine the light of Your Word to all my neighbors. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Today we explore Muhammad, the founder of Islam, and the message he claimed he received from a familiar angel.

Watch The Video: Lesson 4 – Islamic Teachings about Muhammad

Muhammad's encounter with the angel is a pivotal moment in Islam. Clearly the identity of this spiritual visitor is of utmost importance. Was this a demon bringing a lie as Muhammad thought at first, or the angel Gabriel bringing a message from God?

Recall from the video that in Muhammad's first visit, the angel supposedly pressed himself forcefully against Muhammad three times. In fact, he pressed him so forcefully Muhammad couldn't breathe. Compare this to Daniel's experience when he first met the angel Gabriel.

Read Daniel 10:5-19.

- 5 I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of the finest gold around his waist.
- 6 His body was like chrysolite, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude.
- 7 I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision; the men with me did not see it, but such terror overwhelmed them that they fled and hid themselves.
- 8 So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision; I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless.
- 9 Then I heard him speaking, and as I listened to him, I fell into a deep sleep, my face to the ground.
- 10 A hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees.
- 11 He said, "Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been sent to you." And when he said this to me, I stood up trembling.
- 12 Then he continued, "Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them.
- 13 But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia.
- 14 Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come."
- 15 While he was saying this to me, I bowed with my face toward the ground and was speechless.
- 16 Then one who looked like a man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the one standing before me, "I am overcome with anguish because of the vision, my lord, and I am helpless.

- 17 How can I, your servant, talk with you, my lord? My strength is gone and I can hardly breathe.”
- 18 Again the one who looked like a man touched me and gave me strength.
- 19 “Do not be afraid, O man highly esteemed,” he said. “Peace! Be strong now; be strong.” When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, “Speak, my lord, since you have given me strength.”

Notice both Daniel and Muhammad found it difficult to breath in the presence of this spiritual being.

- Why couldn't Daniel breathe?
- Does Gabriel respond more like an angel or a devil? Explain.
- Why couldn't Muhammad breathe?
- Does this Gabriel respond more like an angel or a devil? Explain.
- Discuss what kind of angel would so trouble Muhammad he would consider suicide.

The Angel Gabriel In The Bible:

Daniel 8:15 While I, Daniel, was watching the vision and trying to understand it, there before me stood one who looked like a man. **16** And I heard a man's voice from the Ulai calling, "Gabriel, tell this man the meaning of the vision." **17** As he came near the place where I was standing, I was terrified and fell prostrate. "Son of man," he said to me, "understand that the vision concerns the time of the end." **18** While he was speaking to me, I was in a deep sleep, with my face to the ground. Then he touched me and raised me to my feet. **27** I, Daniel, was exhausted and lay ill for several days. Then I got up and went about the king's business. I was appalled by the vision; it was beyond understanding.

Luke 1:8 Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, **9** he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. **10** And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside. **11** Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. **12** When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. **13** But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to give him the name John.

Luke 1: 26 In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, **27** to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. **28** The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." **29** Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. **30** But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God."

We learned in the video that at first Muhammad was convinced a demon was visiting him. He only came to believe it was the angel Gabriel when he talked to his wife's cousin who was a Christian monk.

- What should this Christian monk have done?
- What happens when our Christian witness is less than it should be—either through our words or through our actions?
- Discuss a time when you should have spoken up but kept your mouth shut instead.

Luther On Islam:

(Luther believed Muhammad arose from three Christian heretics (1)

"Arius (2) singled out this one article of the faith [and said] that Christ was not God but a creature.

"The heretic Macedonius (3), bishop of Constantinople, also believed all articles of the faith except the one that the Holy Spirit was true God.

"Nestorius, who was also bishop of Constantinople, was a man who strictly adhered to all but one of the articles of faith; but, with respect to one article he was a heretic, for he held that God's Son, Christ, was not born of Mary, the Virgin, and that Mary was not and could not be a mother of God.

"From these three heretics there eventually emanated and came to light additional heresies, until the abominable Muhammad emerged. For all history books testify that Muhammad was a product of the Arians, the Macedonians, and the Nestorians to whom he adhered right from the beginning."

1 *Luther's Works, Vol. 38, p. 310*

2 Around A.D. 320 Arius, a presbyter in the church at Alexandria, denied that Christ as Son of God was co-equal and co-eternal with God, the Father.

3 Macedonius, bishop of Constantinople, was deposed from his office in 360 because he held that the Holy Spirit is a creature subordinate to the Son, thus denying the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity.

Talking Points For My Muslim Neighbors:

- Discuss other biblical accounts of the angel Gabriel visiting people (Daniel, Zechariah, and Mary). Muhammad at first thought he was possessed by a demon; he was only convinced later when a Christian monk told him he wasn't.
- Muhammad considered committing suicide many times because of the angel. If he was the chosen prophet of Allah, why should this be?
- We don't have trouble with God choosing an illiterate, uneducated man as a prophet. In Acts 4:13-18, the Jewish rulers and religious leaders described Peter and John as "uneducated."

Closing Prayer:

Holy Lord, thank You for sending Your Son Jesus Christ to save us from Satan's domain. Strengthen Your people that we may joyously share this saving faith with those who do not yet know You. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

LESSON 5 - Muhammad, 70 Virgins and Paradise, Predestination and the Pillars of Islam

Opening Prayer:

Holy Father, Your Son, Jesus Christ, has won eternal life and salvation for us by His life, death, and resurrection. As we examine that life today, guide us by Your Holy Spirit. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

If Islam was true and Allah planned to send a string of prophets, we would expect him to send his greatest prophet last. We would also expect Him to foretell the coming of this great prophet. Sam Shamoun discusses Islamic claims that the Bible prophesies the coming of Muhammad.

Watch The Video: Session 5, Part 1 - Muhammad

Now that we have heard what the Qur'an says, let's look at two biblical prophecies:

Read Deuteronomy 18:15-20.

- 15 "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him.
16 For this is what you asked of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, 'Let us not hear the voice of the LORD our God nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die.'
17 The LORD said to me: 'What they say is good.
18 I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put My words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him.
19 If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in My name, I Myself will call him to account.
20 But a prophet who presumes to speak in My name anything I have not commanded him to say, or a prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, must be put to death.'"

The key verse from this passage is verse 18 and the words, "I will raise up for them a prophet like you *from among their brothers*."

- Christianity takes these "brothers" to mean Jews who were descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Add this to God's promise to David that one of his sons would be the promised Savior and it is clear this prophecy is speaking of Jesus Christ—not Muhammad.
- Islam takes these "brothers" to mean non-Jews who were related to the nation of Israel. Thus, they point to Muhammad, a descendent of Ishmael, Isaac's half-brother.

Which interpretation makes more sense to you? Why?

At the Last Supper, Jesus promised to send "another Comforter" which was the Holy Spirit. Since Muhammad denied the existence of the Holy Spirit and the Son, he made himself the prophet promised in this passage repeated in three different chapters of John.

Read John 14:25-26; 15:26; 16:5-15.

- 14:25 "All this I have spoken while still with you.
26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."
- 15:26 "When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, He will testify about Me."
- 16:5 "Now I am going to Him who sent Me, yet none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?'
6 Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief.
7 But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.
8 When He comes, He will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:
9 in regard to sin, because men do not believe in Me;
10 in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see Me no longer;

- 11 And in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.
- 12 I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear.
- 13 But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on His own; He will speak only what He hears, and He will tell you what is yet to come.
- 14 He will bring glory to Me by taking from what is Mine and making it known to you.
- 15 All that belongs to the Father is Mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is Mine and make it known to you."

- Which verses make it clear that Jesus is speaking of the Holy Spirit?
- Which make it impossible for Him to be speaking about Muhammad?

The second portion of this video speaks about Islam's vision of paradise.

- How do you picture heaven?

Digging Deeper: Muslim Claims

Islam's biggest complaint against the New Testament is its language. Since Jesus and His disciples spoke Aramaic, Muslims criticize the fact the New Testament was written in Greek instead of Aramaic. It often analyzes Greek words and substitutes Aramaic words, which fit its theology better. These arguments are based on reason, and thus appeal to sinful man.

Biblical prophecies that predict Muhammad's coming: [click here](#)

Watch The Video: Session 5, Part 2 - 70 Virgins and Paradise

Muhammad described a paradise that was more like earth than heaven. (See any parallels there with a raunchy college party?)

- Why does this teaching of Islam hold so much appeal for Muslim men?
- As a man ages, how would you expect the appeal of this teaching to change? Would it diminish or intensify?
- Jesus teaches there will be no marriage (or sexual relations) in heaven. How does that picture of paradise compare to the Muslim view? What appeal does our Lord's teaching offer?
- How has our sinful nature with its evil desires affected our sexuality and distorted our views of paradise?

In Luke 20, Jesus teaches us about marriage and heaven.

Read Luke 20:27-36.

- 27 Some of the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Jesus with a question.
- 28 "Teacher," they said, "Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow and have children for his brother.

- 29 Now there were seven brothers. The first one married a woman and died childless.
- 30 The second
- 31 and then the third married her, and in the same way the seven died, leaving no children.
- 32 Finally, the woman died too.
- 33 Now then, at the resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?"
- 34 Jesus replied, "The people of this age marry and are given in marriage.
- 35 But those who are considered worthy of taking part in that age and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage, and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God's children, since they are children of the resurrection."

God gave us marriage for three purposes:

- Companionship
 - Procreation
 - A healthy outlet for our sex drive
- How will each of these earthly needs be met when we are in the new heaven and the new earth?

We can always say a lot more about how eternal life in the new heaven and earth will be different from this earthly life than how it will be like it.

- What things will be present?
- What things will be absent?

Luther On Muhammad:

"Mohammed promises those who keep his law a temporal kingdom in this life and after this life physical pleasures, and this the heart readily accepts and firmly believes. Unlike Abraham, therefore, Mohammed stays at home, and he is unwilling to go out from home and from the kindred of his father. He is fond of the things that are present, and in them he finds his comfort. But Abraham simply clings to the divine Word and disregards the dangers he will encounter, for he believes that God will be his protector."

(Luther's Works, Vol. 2, p. 267)

In the final segment of the video, we learn what role Allah plays in leading a Muslim to heaven or an unbeliever to hell.

Watch The Video: Session 5, Part 3 - Predestination and the Pillars of Islam

Islam teaches that Allah pre-ordains or predestines some men to salvation, others to hell.

- If the choice of my eternal destiny lies in God's hands and not in my own, what comfort might that offer?
- What problems would that bring?

What does the Bible teach?

Read Romans 8:26-32.

- 26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.
- 27 And He who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.
- 28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.
- 29 For those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers.
- 30 And those He predestined, He also called; those He called, He also justified; those He justified, He also glorified.
- 31 What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?
- 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all—how will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things?

- Why are some people saved while others are damned?

Human reason wants to use the same subject to answer both parts of that question:

Either God chooses who He will save and who He will damn.

OR

Each individual person chooses if he will be saved or damned.

This is another example of Islam being a religion of reason. The Qur'an teaches that God makes both choices—i.e. which individuals will be saved and which will be damned. The Bible answers the question differently.

Why are some people saved? Consider God's grace alone, predestining, and calling people by the Gospel (Ephesians 2:8-9; 1 Corinthians 12:3).

Why are some people damned? What part do people play? (Matthew 23:37; Acts 7:51) God wants all people to be saved (Ezekiel 33:11; 1 Timothy 2:3-4; 2 Peter 3:9).

- When our faith seems weak and unsteady at times, why is it comforting to know God alone saves us?
- Why is it comforting to know we could only end up in hell by our own choice and not by God's decree?

Digging Deeper: Qadar Or Taqdir "Divine Decree"

qadar

Talking Points For My Muslim Neighbors:

Biblical Prophecies:

- o Discuss how important the Bible is to your Muslim friends.
- o Discuss biblical prophecies about Jesus Christ.
- o Discuss biblical prophecies purported to be about Muhammad.

Heaven

- o Ask your friend what heaven will be like.
- o How will he get there?
- o How certain is he that he will be good enough to pass Allah's judgment?
- o What about the bad things he has done?
- o Discuss your hope in salvation by God's grace through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

Double Predestination

- o (Your friend may not be clear or certain about predestination.) Ask what role Allah plays in a person becoming Muslim or not.
- o Ask if our destiny has been determined or if there is anything we can do to save ourselves.
- o Does Allah have anything to do with unbelievers ending up in hell?

Closing Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank You for the grace and love You have revealed to all mankind through Jesus Christ our Lord. Strengthen us in faith, and give us courage, boldness, love, and the opportunities to speak to our Muslim neighbors about Your saving love. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

For Further Study:

Sam Shamoun's Articles: (www.answering-islam.org/authors/shamoun.html)

How Muslim Christians speak to Muslims.
How You can talk to an ordinary "folk" Muslim.

Recommended Reading:

Muslim Friends by Roland E. Miller (order)

The Great Divide by Alvin J. Schmidt (order)

How to Respond – Muslims by Ernest Hahn (order)

The Kite Runner and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini (This Muslim writer gives insight into the hopelessness of the Muslim view of life.)

In this **Men's NetWork** Bible study, Sam Shamoun, an Arab Christian, presents an eye-opening perspective on Islam in *The Challenge of Islam (Part One): What is Islam?* Estimates put Muslims at well over one billion throughout the world, yet their beliefs, religious practices, and social philosophy remain confusing to non-Muslims. Shamoun sheds valuable light on Islam's historical development and explains in layman's terms how this faith—born on the Arabian Peninsula 1,400 years ago—is practiced by modern Muslims today. Throughout this study, Shamoun clearly articulates the hope Christians share in the saving grace of Jesus against the works-based futility inherent in Islam's message.

The lessons of *The Challenge of Islam (Part One): What is Islam?* include an introduction and five parts:

- Introduction
- The Foundations of Islam
- Angels, Jinn and the Qur'an (Parts 1 and 2)
- Islamic Teachings about Jesus
- Islamic Teachings about Muhammad
- Muhammad, 70 Virgins and Paradise, Predestination and the Pillars of Islam (Parts 1, 2, and 3)

About Sam Shamoun:

As an Arab Christian, Sam Shamoun navigates two worlds. Born in Kuwait but raised in the United States, he's familiar with the tenets of Islam but believes in Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior.

Challenged for his beliefs during his adolescence by those espousing Islam, Shamoun dug deeper into Scripture. Applying himself to diligent study in both the Bible and the Qur'an, he has become a vocal apologist for the Christian faith—particularly when dealing with Muslim objections.

Today, Shamoun speaks out on matters of faith and is an active witness to the goodness of God's saving grace in his life. He has engaged in spirited debates nationwide, refuting accusations and attacks leveled by Muslims against Christianity. As a writer, he contributes to a Web site covering topics relevant to both Christianity and Islam: www.answering-islam.org.

Anything you want to say?

Topics such as those addressed in this Bible study are considered daily on the **Men's NetWork** Forum at www.lhmmen.com/foruminfo.asp
Check it out, sign up, and join in.



The **Men's NetWork** is a Christ-centered, Scripture-guided, service-oriented fellowship committed to equipping and motivating men to greater levels of leadership and service as they become stronger disciples of Jesus Christ. At our Web site, www.lhmmen.com, we offer video Bible studies, ministry tools to deepen men's faith, practical and easy-to-use resources for hands-on service projects, and other useful information for men's groups.

Copyright © 2009, Int'l LLL, all rights reserved.

Lutheran Hour Ministries (LHM) is a Christian outreach ministry supporting churches worldwide. It is also a volunteer movement more than 100,000 people strong. Scripture taken from the HOLY BIBLE: NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV®, Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. Capitalization of pronouns referring to the Deity has been added and is not part of the original New International Version text.



LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES
People Of Christ With The Message Of Hope

660 Mason Ridge Center Drive • St. Louis, MO 63141-8557
1-800-944-3450 • www.lhm.org