

## **CULTS AND FALSE RELIGIONS**

### **Islam**

#### **REVIEW:**

- What are the 3 assumptions that form the JW world view? (Divine guidance comes only through the WT Society; JW's alone have the truth about God; Every other church is false and controlled by Satan.)
- What is the goal of Mormons? (To attain godhood on the basis of good works)

#### **READING: Matthew 26:50-52**

**INTRODUCTION:** This morning we shall study a false religion that has been much in the news recently, especially since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. It is the fastest-growing religion in the world: **Islam**.

- There are now well over 1.2 billion Moslems in the world, dominating more than 40 countries on 3 continents.
- 900 churches in England have been converted into mosques; there are more Moslems in England than there are evangelical Christians.
- Islam is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest religion in the U.S. and Britain, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest in Europe.
- In 1974 France had one mosque; in 1998 they had over 1,600.

**What exactly is this religion that many thousands are willing to kill and die for?**

#### **I. FOUNDER: MOHAMMED (570-632 A.D.)**

- 1) Moslems believe that Allah has sent 124,000 (!) prophets into the world; 25 are mentioned in the Koran. Six of the most important prophets are Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed.
- 2) Mohammed, the apostle of Allah, is considered by Moslems to be the greatest of the prophets.
- 3) Mohammed was born on 8 June 570 AD in Mecca to Abdullah and Aminah of the Quraysh tribe. Both his parents died when he was young, so he was sent at the age of six to live with his grandparents, then to a rich uncle, then to a poor uncle.
- 4) In his childhood he began to experience spirit visitations. His mother, Aminah, often claimed that she was visited by spirits or jinns. This occult association was inherited by her son.
- 5) Early Muslim tradition records that, when Mohammed was about to receive a revelation from Allah, he would often fall on the ground, his body would jerk uncontrollably, his eyes would roll backward, and he would perspire profusely. After the trance, he would rise and tell the message given to him.
- 6) Most of Mohammed's early pagan religious upbringing was transferred into Islam.
- 7) Mohammed is regarded as the perfect example for all Muslims to follow. 'He who obeys the apostle, obeys Allah'. (4:80).
  - i) If Mohammed murdered his enemies, so can Muslims.
  - ii) If Mohammed stole whatever he wanted, so can Muslims.
  - iii) If Mohammed took as many wives as he wanted, so can Muslims.
- 8) The traditional view is that Mohammed was a sinless prophet, yet he often asked Allah to forgive his sins.

#### **II. HISTORY / ORGANISATION:**

- 1) Mohammed's first converts were his family. When his message first became public, the people of Mecca angrily laid siege to his part of Mecca. To appease these pagans, he said it was right to pray to and worship Allah's three daughters, Al-Lat, Al-Uzza and Manat.
- 2) When his disciples at Medina heard of his lapse into polytheism, they rebuked him strongly. Mohammed then reverted to monotheism and stated that Allah can abrogate (or cancel) a past revelation.
- 3) This led the pagan Meccans to ridicule Mohammed's Allah as being unable to make up his mind.
- 4) Due to growing hostility and ridicule, Mohammed fled to Taif. Here he made no converts, so he returned to Mecca.
- 5) On his way back to Mecca, Mohammed claimed to preach and convert the *jinn*s (genies). The Koran then claims that the *jinn*s agreed to preach Islam to the people.
- 6) When Mohammed moved to Medina, he had been preaching for 13 years and had gained only about 100 followers, most of whom were poor. Farming was difficult in the desert. The only short-cut to wealth was looting caravans and raiding weaker tribes. They stole women and children, selling them back to their husbands and fathers.
- 7) As Mohammed won battles, his success gained him wealth and power, both political and religious.
- 8) After one Jewish town surrendered, 1000 Jewish men were beheaded in one day, their women and children were enslaved, and their possessions looted.
- 9) Having a larger army, he made a 10-year peace treaty with Mecca. Yet within one year, he broke the treaty and, with a large army, forced Mecca to surrender and accept him as political and religious leader.
- 10) As the leader of Mecca, Arab tribesmen began to flock to him from all sides.
- 11) Thus Islam began to grow and prosper.

III. **PURPOSE:** The ultimate goal of Islam is to conquer the world and rule it by Islamic law. They allow conversion to Islam by persuasion, by force, or by murdering opponents.

IV. **SOURCE OF AUTHORITY:** The revelations and teachings of Mohammed.

V. **CLAIM:** The true God is the Moslem deity, Allah; all other views of God are false because the Koran teaches that "The true religion with God is Islam."

VI. **KEY LITERATURE:**

1) **The Koran.**

- i) The Koran is considered the inspired Word of Allah, dictated by the angel Gabriel to Mohammed.
- ii) It is, therefore, considered to be perfect and without error.
- iii) However, archaeology and linguistics since 1890 have shown overwhelming evidence that Mohammed produced his religion and the Koran from pre-existing Arabian material, and that, with all its mistakes, could not have come from heaven.
- iv) There is no evidence for the inspiration of the Koran (eg. prophecy; archaeology).
- v) The Koran is filled with mistakes and contradictions; the Arabic text has also been corrupted. [See Pastor Piper's Answers Book for details and numerous examples]
- vi) Moslems are told to accept both the Bible and the Koran – how can they do so when both are so contradictory toward each other? Therefore they reject the bible as being corrupted by Christians.
- vii) The Koran is to be read in Arabic, even though only 20% of Moslems are Arabs! Many Moslems reject translations of the Koran into other languages.
- viii) Many Moslems have not read the Koran, either because they do not read Arabic or because they are illiterate. Therefore, they depend upon *Imams* (teachers) to teach them about Islam.

2) **The Hadith:** a collection of Mohammed's own writings and teachings.

VII. **ATTITUDE TOWARDS CHRISTIANITY:** Rejecting. Those who reject Mohammed and the Koran are infidels and unbelievers, and as such are destined for Hell

VIII. **DOCTRINAL SUMMARY:**

1) **GOD:**

- i) Unknowable, impersonal and incomprehensible.
- ii) Breaks His promises at will.
- iii) Loves the righteous, but does not love the sinner.
- iv) The author of all things, both good and evil.

**v) Who really is Allah? Is He the God of the Old and New Testament?**

- (a) ‘Allah is a pre-Islamic name ... corresponding to the Babylonian Bel’. (Encyclopaedia of Religion)
- (b) Allah was the personal name of the moon god, a male deity worshipped in pre-Islamic Arabia, who was married to the female sun goddess. Together they produced three goddesses called ‘the daughters of Allah’.
- (c) The Quraysh tribe of Mohammed was strongly devoted to Allah the moon god, and to Allah’s three daughters.
- (d) Mohammed’s father’s name was ABD-ALLAH. His uncle’s name was OBIED-ALLAH, thus showing Mohammed’s family’s devotion to Allah the moon god.
- (e) Archaeologists have dug up many statues and inscriptions where a crescent moon was placed on a deity’s head to symbolise worship of the moon god.
- (f) Of the 360 deities worshipped in pre-Islamic Arabia, Mohammed chose Allah and rejected the other 359 “lesser” gods.
- (g) When a Moslem shouts “Allah akbah” he is not saying “God is great” as we are told by the media. He is actually shouting “God is greatest” compared to the other 359 gods.

**2) JESUS:**

- i) A prophet of Allah.
- ii) He did not die, nor need to rise from the dead.
- iii) Sinless.
- iv) Not divine.
- v) Not the son of Allah, for Allah has no children.
- vi) Not the Messiah.
- vii) Not the Saviour, for there is no Saviour.
- viii) Inferior to Mohammed!

**3) TRINITY:** Rejected as polytheism.

**4) SALVATION:** No assurance of Heaven, as good works and bad works will be weighed at the Judgment Day. A Moslem thinks he has a good shot at Heaven if:

- i) He accepts The Moslem god Allah and his prophet Mohammed.
- ii) He does good works and all that Allah requires of him, including the Five Pillars of Religion.
- iii) He is predestined to Heaven by Allah’s good favour.

**The best way to be sure of Heaven is to die bravely in a jihad!**

**5) ATONEMENT:** There is no atonement for sin.

**6) SECOND COMING:** None.

**7) BIBLE:** To be respected, but corrupt and unreliable.

**8) HEAVEN:** An earthly paradise of gluttony and sexual gratification.

**IX. DISTINCTIVES:**

**1) The Five Pillars of Religion:**

- i) Reciting the creed of Islam: “There is no god but Allah and Mohammed is his prophet.”

- ii) Prayer five times a day.
- iii) Observing the fast month of Ramadan, where he cannot eat except at night time.
- iv) Giving alms to the poor (2.5% of income)
- v) Pilgrimage to Mecca, Mohammed's place of birth.

**2) The oppression of women:**

- i) Mohammed once said, "A cheap rug is more valuable in a man's home than a woman."
- ii) The Koran encourages men to beat their wives if they disobey them.
- iii) A woman is only worth half what a man is worth. They obtain half the inheritance, have half a vote, and their witness in court is only half as valuable as a man's, according to Islamic Law.
- iv) Polygamy is encouraged; Mohammed himself had as many as 16 wives. His youngest wife was only 6 years old, and the marriage was consummated when she was only 9. The great prophet of Islam was a paedophile!!!

**3) The religion of the sword:** Politically correct media commentators both here and overseas have recently been publishing reports that Islam is a religion of **peace** and **tolerance**. **Is this true?** Does it agree with the facts of history, and with the teachings of the Koran? **NO!**

- i) 'Islam' is an Arabic word which originally referred to manliness or heroism or bravery in battle. It meant 'defiance of death, heroism, to die in battle.' Sound peaceful?
- ii) The Koran says explicitly that Moslems must kill all unbelievers who will not convert to Islam or serve Islam as its slave: "...fight and slay the pagans wherever you find them, and seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem of war..." (Surah 9:5). This is known as "the verse of the sword."
- iii) After peacefully trying to convert Jews and Christians in Mecca, with no success, Mohammed moved to Medina and launched his new strategy of violence – the period known as "the aggressive years" started. Islam has largely been a religion of bloodshed and intolerance ever since.
- iv) There is no greater honour for a Moslem man than to die as a martyr in the jihad, or Moslem holy war. When he dies, he will be transported to Paradise, where 72 brown-eyed virgins await to gratify his every desire.
- v) If Islam is a religion of peace, why did Mohammed engage in 47 different battles? I do not remember Jesus, the Prince of Peace, waging war at any time during His earthly ministry!
- vi) In the Hadith, Mohammed said, 'Hear O Muslims the meaning of life ... The pillar is Rakatin prayer. The topmost part is Jihad - holy war'.
- vii) Apostate Moslems must die: Allah says: 'If they desert you, seize them and put them to death wherever you find them' (Q 4:89);
- viii) Those who oppose Islam must die: Allah says: 'If, after coming to terms with you, they break their oaths, and revile your faith, make war on the leaders of unbelief - for no oaths are binding on them. Make war on them: God will chastise them at your hands and humble them'. (Q 9:12-14)
- ix) 'Whoever fights for the cause of Allah ... we (Allah) shall richly reward him'. (4:74)
- x) 'Fight against those to whom the Scriptures were given (Christians and Jews)' (9:29)
- xi) 'If you do not go to war, Allah will punish you sternly' (9:39)
- xii) 'Prophet, make war on the unbelievers and hypocrites'. (9:73)
- xiii) 'When the sacred months are over, slay the idolaters wherever you find them Arrest them, besiege them, and lie in ambush everywhere for them'. (9:5)
- xiv) 'Believers, make war on the infidels who dwell around you. Deal firmly with them. Allah is with you'. (9:123)
- xv) 'Allah loves those who fight for his cause'. (61:4)

**X. TALKING WITH MEMBERS:** There are 3 key topics of discussion when attempting to witness to a Moslem:

- 1) **The nature of God.** The God of the Bible is a personal, loving and forgiving God who desires a relationship with the people whom He has created.
- 2) **The identity and deity of Jesus Christ.** Jesus Christ is more than a mere prophet – He is the divine Son of God who died for our sins and rose from the dead.
- 3) **Salvation by grace through faith.** Here is where all false religions stray from the truth – they depend upon works for salvation, whereas we depend upon the unmerited favour and mercy of a loving God.

**CONCLUSION: Let us love all Moslems and seek to win them to Christ!**

**Romans 10:2, 3** “For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.”

**REVIEW / QUESTIONS:**