

Islam week 5

Articles of Faith

The basic beliefs of Muslims fall into six main categories

- Faith in the unity of God
 - The absolute unity, transcendence, and indivisibility of God: the Tawhid. This is Christians and Muslims find themselves in irreconcilable differences. The Trinity is the main reason for difference of opinion.
 - Faith in angels
 - Just as humans are made of clay, and jinn (think genies or devils) are made of smokeless fire, angels are made of light.
 - They only act on the will of God
 - *for in the presence of thy Lord are those who celebrate His praises by night and by day. And they never flag (nor feel themselves above it). Sura 41*
 - Faith in prophets – especially Muhammad
 - Faith in books of revelation – especially Koran
 - Faith in an afterlife
 - If the balance of good deeds outweighs bad you are admitted to paradise
 - Warriors who die fighting in the cause of God are ushered immediately to God's presence (2:159 and 3:169)
 - "Enemies of Islam" are sentenced immediately to Hell upon death.
 - Faith in destiny/divine decree (pre-destination). Sometimes this one is left off.
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Koran / Qur'an

“Recitation”

First revelation by Archangel Gabriel in a cave on abal-e-Hira, which is near Mecca in Saudi Arabia – 610 AD on the night of power ends at Muhammad's death in 632 AD

Characteristics

- 114 chapters (surahs) and verses ayahs
- A book that came down from heaven. Many still wash their hands before holding a Qur'an.
- The present text of the Qur'an was compiled and arranged in order under the direction of 'Uthman ibn Arran, the third Caliph (ruled 644-656 CE).
- Nothing is the Qur'an except the original Arabic text
- For a Muslim, Qur'an is the Final Revealed Text from God. The eternal and literal word of God. *Holy Dictation*.
- Each revelation was written down by the Prophet's scribes according to the Prophet's instructions.

Huffaz

Today the practice of committing the whole thing to memory is alive and well.

Huffaz – one who has memorized the whole Koran.

Mecca period - The earlier surahs focus more on social justice, conversion, final judgment, and recognition of the one true God (monotheism). *Not chronological*

He was persecuted and fled to Medina where he had a more receptive audience.
Went from preacher to warrior king

Medina period - The later surahs focus more on relationships within the Muslim community, and their relationships with Jews and Christians.

For many Muslims that Qur'an seamless literary beauty trumps Bible, which if pushed some would say disqualifies Scripture from being the word of God.

Surah samples

Mary mother of Jesus 3:34-37, 3:42-47, 4:156-157, 4:171, 5:17, 5:46, 5:72, 5:78, 5:110, 5:112, 5:114, 5:116, 9:31, 19:16-39, 21:91, 23:50, 33:7, 43:57, 56:27, 61:6, 61:14, 66:12

- not a deity, virgin birth, very revered.

Christians, 5:14, 5:19, 5:64-65, 5:69, 22:17

- asked not to deify Jesus, 4:171
- come closest to feeling affection to Muslims, 5:82
- most have forgotten what they've been told to bear in mind, 5:14
- now comes to you a messenger, 5:15, 5:19
- righteous will be rewarded, 2:62, 5:65, 5:69
- say "Jesus is Allah's son", 9:30

Jesus, 4:163, 9:30, 9:31, 10:68, 19:30-34, 21:91, 23:50, 33:7, 61:6, 61:14

- bears witness on Resurrection Day, 4:159
- Christians asked not to deify, 4:171
- creation of, 3:45-49, 19:22
- disciples, 3:52, 61:14
- divergent views about, 43:65
- followers above others on Resurrection day, 3:55
- healing of blind and lepers, raising the dead, 5:110
- his holy inspiration, 2:87, 2:252, 5:110
- his nature is as Adam's, 3:59
- is the means to know Judgement Day (alternate translation), 43:61
- Jews boast of killing, 4:157
- not Allah, 5:17, 5:72, 5:116
- only a messenger, 4:171, 4:172, 5:75, 19:30
- only seemed slain and crucified, 4:157
- resurrected, 4:158
- resurrection foretold, 3:55, 19:33
- truth about him will be realized when people die, 4:159

About Crucifixion

Sura 176: 157-158

That they said (in boast), "We killed Christ Jesus the son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah";- but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them, and those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge, but only conjecture to follow, for of a surety they killed him not:- Nay, Allah raised him up unto Himself; and Allah is Exalted in Power, Wise;

However, Islam does teach the second coming of Jesus

He will come east of Damascus, dressed in yellow robes—his head anointed. He will then join the Mahdi in his war against the Dajjal. Jesus, considered in Islam as a Muslim. Eventually, Jesus will slay the Antichrist Dajjal, and then everyone from the People of the Book (ahl al-kitāb, referring to Jews and Christians) will believe in him. Thus, there will be one community, that of Islam. Sahih Muslim, 41:7023

Solomon, 2:101, 4:163, 6:84, 21:78, 21:79, 21:81, 27:15-21, 34:12-14

- and the Queen of Sheba, 27:22-41
- discovery of the death of, 34:14-16

Solomon Solomon could communicate with animals. He gathered an army of genies, men and birds and dressed them for battle. They came to the Valley of the Ants where an ant told her sister to go underground for safety. Solomon overheard her and smiled and thanked Allah for blessing him. He inspected his troops of birds and found one species missing (the lapwing) and exclaimed his fierce anger. He threatened them with death but they arrived with news. The birds told Solomon about a wonderful woman from Sheba who worshiped the sun. Solomon sent a message back, with the birds, to the Queen of Sheba (that started with the Muslim proclamation) stating, "In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful." In the message Solomon demanded that the Queen visit him. She sent a gift of gold instead and Solomon told the Queen's ambassadors to return to Sheba with the news that his forces would attack them and exile all their people in complete humiliation. In response, the Queen began her journey to visit Solomon. While she was on her way a person, very knowledgeable in the Holy Bible, miraculously brought her throne to Solomon's court. It was altered in appearance to see if she was wise enough to recognize it. When she stepped into the court she lifted her skirts thinking the shiny floor was water. She grieved that she had committed a terrible sin in exposing her ankle, which caused her to convert to belief in Allah (27:15-44).

Solomon Kills His Horses Solomon realized one evening that his love for his well-trained horses was interfering with his prayers. He repented and went among his fine steeds slashing their legs and necks (38:30-33).

Solomon Replaced by a Dead Body Allah put a dead body on Solomon's throne and it remained there till he repented (38:34-35).

Solomon Commands the Wind and Genies Solomon was allowed to command the wind to blow in whatever direction he chose to send it. He also had command over genies including those who could build and dive. Some of them were in chains (38:36-40, 21:82).

Solomon and Genies Allah gave Solomon a fountain of molten brass and genies who slaved in front of him to make anything Solomon wanted. They made statues, shrines, and giant basins. If they turned away to rest, they faced a punishment from Allah of blazing fire. Even after Solomon died, the genies kept serving him. The fact that their servitude was over was hidden from them because his corpse did not fall. They discovered the fact when a worm ate away at the staff causing Solomon's body to collapse (34:12-14).

Christians and Jews

1:7

The Way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace, not (the way) of those who earned Your Anger (such as the Jews), nor of those who went astray (such as the Christians).

Supremacy of Qur'an

2:23. And if you (Arab pagans, Jews, and Christians) are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down (i.e. the Qur'an) to Our slave (Muhammad Peace be upon him), then produce a Surah (chapter) of the like thereof and call your witnesses (supporters and helpers) besides Allah, if you are truthful.

Resurrection

2:28 28. How can you disbelieve in Allah? Seeing that you were dead and He gave you life. Then He will give you death, then again will bring you to life (on the Day of Resurrection) and then unto Him you will return.

My commentary

I am not sure a Muslim would agree with me but originally Muhammad saw himself as reformer of the people of the book. When rejected the tone of the inspired writings shifted to his people Koran can originally be seen as commentary on Old and New Testaments, not a stand alone text. Muhammad wanted to purify, reform, and offer a new way for Christians and Jews to become more faithful as Christians and Jews.

When he was rejected by them things moved from reform to a stand alone system.

Hadiths

Sayings of the prophet. Oral transmission until 9th Century when codification begins.

Etymologically – leaves for instruction. Some have said palm leaves.

Surah 98, verses 2 and 3: “An (apostle) from God recites leaves, kept pure where decrees are right and straight.”

Hadiths are sayings and teachings that don't contradict Koran. Think Rabbinic Midrash or teachings of Church Fathers. But with the force of canonical law.