

Sons of the Same Father?

On September 11, 2001, Muslim extremists hijacked American planes and flew their suicide missions into the Twin Towers in New York City and into the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. On that infamous day, the veil was pulled back on the twenty-first century, revealing a world in turmoil between two predominant religions . . . Christianity and Islam.

Paradoxically, they both look to the biblical patriarch of the Old Testament Abraham and call him “Father.” Yet, is the Islamic god (Allah) the same as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? Do Christians and Muslims worship the same God? Muslims regularly recite the creed, “There is no god but Allah.” So who is the one true God? This question is of great importance because God deeply desires that you know Him. The God of the Bible says,

“You will seek me and find me. When you seek me with all your heart, I will be found by you.”
(Jeremiah 29:13–14)

Q: “Are the Bible and the Qur’an compatible?”

No. In spite of the Qur’an’s expressions of respect for the truth and authority of the Bible, they contradict one another sharply. The Qur’an teaches that Allah originally delivered the Torah (Taurat) or the first five books of the Bible, the Psalms, and the four books of the Gospel (Injil). The other parts of the Bible have since been corrupted. Accordingly, Islamic scholarship and apologetics draw support from those parts of the Bible with which the Qur’an agrees and deny the authenticity of those parts of the Bible with which the Qur’an disagrees. However, the Bible says,

“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.”
(2 Timothy 3:16)

Q: “Do Muslims worship Muhammad?”

No, Muslims do not worship Muhammad. But Muslims do practice an extreme veneration of Muhammad. The Hadith shows that Muslims consider him as more than a mere prophet.

“Allah’s Apostle (peace be upon him) said, ‘By Him in Whose Hands my life is, none of you will have faith till he loves me more than his father and his children.’”
(Abu Huraira SAHIH AL-BUKHARI)

The Five Pillars of Islam

1. **Confession of Faith (Shahada):** Muslims must publicly recite the Shahada (literally “to bear witness”), the creed “There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is his messenger.”
2. **Prayers (As-Salah):** Muslims must pray five times a day. These prayers involve a series of postures (standing, kneeling, hands and face on the ground, etc.) while facing Mecca.
3. **Almsgiving (Zakah or Zakat):** Muslims must give money to the poor (as mentioned in the Qur’an), to the Islamic state, and to mosques (a later interpretation). Worthy Muslims must give between 2½ and 3 percent of their disposable income.
4. **Fasting (Siyam):** Muslims must refrain from food, drink, and sexual relations during the daylight hours throughout the month of Ramadan (the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar).
5. **The Pilgrimage (Hajj):** Mecca is located in present day Saudi Arabia. Muslims are required to visit Mecca once during their lifetime. If health or finances make the pilgrimage prohibitive, a Muslim is permitted to have a proxy.

The Six Articles of Faith

1. **God:** Muslims believe in only one god, Allah. The Qur’an says that God is not a Trinity.
2. **The Prophets:** Muslims believe that Allah has spoken through over 100,000 prophets. While each prophet presented truth for his particular time, Muhammad is considered a prophet for all time.
3. **Angels:** Muslims believe that angels are the servants of God, through whom He reveals His will. Each person has two “recording angels”: one to record good deeds, the other to record bad deeds.
4. **Holy Books:** Muslims recognize four books as inspired: the Law of Moses, the Psalms, the Gospels, and the Qur’an, but they consider the first three to be badly corrupted by the Jews and Christians.
5. **Day of Judgment:** Muslims believe there will be a Day of Judgment and that Allah will be the Judge. Good and bad deeds will be balanced on a scale to determine each person’s fate: heaven or hell.
6. **Decree of Allah:** Muslims believe that Allah ordains the fate of everyone.

Different Beliefs about God

- **The Allah** of the Qur’an is not the god who loves both believers and unbelievers. (Surah 3:57)
The God of the Bible is a God of love. (1 John 4:8)
- **The Allah** of the Qur’an promotes a slave/master relationship, not a father/child relationship. (Surah 50:16)
The God of the Bible is loving and intimate. (1 John 3:1)
- **The Allah** of the Qur’an does not seek to redeem the sinner. (Surah 2:6, 7, 276)
The God of the Bible seeks out sinners and offers salvation to all. (Romans 5:8)
- **The Allah** of the Qur’an is repeatedly called “the merciful and the compassionate,” but those benefits are extended only to his faithful, obedient followers. (Surah 2:190)
The God of the Bible is merciful toward all sinners. (Titus 3:5)

Key Verse to Memorize

*“God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
(Romans 5:8)*

Key Passage to Read and Reread

The Gospel of Luke

How to Share Your Christian Faith with Your Muslim Friend

- **Be a learner**—learn from them. (Proverbs 23:12)
Take the position of a learner by asking questions.
- **Be discerning** about their dedication. (Proverbs 18:15)
Recognize their level of adherence to Islam.
- **Be realistic** about their fear of being a “kafir.” (Galatians 6:2)
A former Muslim is called kafir. A kafir is considered an infidel, a blasphemer, and according to a literal interpretation of Islamic Law, comes under the sentence of death.
- **Be patient, patient, patient** when presenting principles. (Proverbs 25:15)
Misconceptions abound in Muslim minds about what the Bible really teaches and who Jesus really is.

Related Topics . . .

- The Bible: Is It Reliable?
Truth on Trial
- Evil & Suffering . . . Why?
Is God Fair?
- God: Who Is He?
Who Do You Say That He Is?
- Salvation:
Sharing Christ with Confidence
- Spiritual Warfare:
Strategy for the Battle

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Islam:

A View behind the Veil.

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1. For this section see Kay Marshall Strom and Douglas R. Donnelly, *The Complete Adoption Handbook*, rev. and updated ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 138-9.
2. Strom and Donnelly, *The Complete Adoption Handbook*, 139.
3. Frederica Mathewes-Green, *Real Choices: Offering Practical, Life-Affirming Alternatives to Abortion* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah Books, 1994), 128; Sylvia Boothe, *No Easy Choices* (Birmingham, AL: New Hope, 1990), 43-56.



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