Understanding Islam and Engaging Muslims

January 2016
Irvine Community Church

Session 1

Session 1
Our Aim

- Origins of Islam (Founder, Text, and Culture)
- Islam Today
- Islamic Response to the Questions of Ultimate Reality, Human Condition, Salvation, and Eternal Life
- Jesus (Isa) in Quran
- Objections to Christianity and response
- Objections to Islam
Things to keep in mind:

- Recognize Common Grace
  - ‘All Truth is God’s truth’
  - ‘God precedes missionaries’
  - ‘God is the author of all cultures’
  - ‘Constrained by love’
- Recognize the difference between Islam and a Muslim
- Not just a religion, it is a way of life; it is an ideology or worldview that governs all of life for practicing Muslims.
- Has long and rich tapestry of history - Abrahamic Tradition
  - The Golden age of Islam - 8th to 13th Century, under Abbassid Dynasty/ Once the epicenter of innovation and discovery

According to WhyIslam.org

- “Islam is the culmination of the universal message of God taught by all of His prophets. Muslims believe that a prophet was chosen for every nation at some point in their history, enjoining them to worship God alone and delivering guidance on how to live peacefully with others.”

- Everyone is born a Muslim/ Need of Reversion, not Conversion
- Exclusivity: Islam the only true Religion

- “However, after the prophets delivered the divine guidance to their people, their message was lost, abandoned, or changed over time, with only parts of the original message intact. God then sent another prophet (Muhammad) to rectify their beliefs.”
Muslims Around the World

- World Muslim population according to the Pew Research Center, 2014:
  - World's second largest religious group.
  - Islam has 1.6 billion adherents, making up over 22% of the world population

- Muslims in America (2010):
  - 2.6 million
  - Estimated to be 6.2 million by 2030

- Muslims in Europe (2010):
  - About 44 million (6%), excluding Turkey. The total number of Muslims in the European Union in 2010 was about 19 million (3.8%).

Where Muslims Live
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**10 Countries with the Largest Number of Muslims in 2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Estimated Muslim Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>259,847,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>175,057,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>177,398,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>148,607,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>80,026,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>75,716,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>74,819,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>74,660,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>34,700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>33,385,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**10 Countries with the Largest Projected Number of Muslims in 2030**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Projected Muslim Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>256,137,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>239,632,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>230,182,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>187,505,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>115,822,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>105,065,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>89,625,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>80,127,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>50,527,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>48,750,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Population estimates are rounded to thousands.

Pew Research Center's
Forum on Religion & Public Life
The Future of the Global Muslim Population, January 2011

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**Muslims as a Share of World Population, 1990-2030**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Non-Muslims</th>
<th>Muslims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>4.2B</td>
<td>1.1B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>4.8B</td>
<td>1.3B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>5.3B</td>
<td>1.6B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>5.8B</td>
<td>1.9B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2030</td>
<td>6.1B</td>
<td>2.1B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages are calculated from unrounded numbers. Cross-hatching denotes projected figures.

The Expansion
(Conversion + Propagation + Force)

United by Six Articles of Faith

Foundational Doctrines/ Belief in:
• One God
• The Angels and the Evil Spirits
• The Prophets
• The Holy Scripture (Quran)
• The Day of Judgment
• The Supremacy of Allah’s Decree
The Five Pillars

• Narrated by Ibn Umar (Allah's Apostle) Islam is based on five principles/pillars: (Sahih al-Bukhari, Vol. 1, p. 17).
• Universality, not unity (The Hand of Fatima)

1. Shahada: (Bear Witness. To affirm, To attest- The Profession of Faith)
• There is no god but God and Muhammad is the prophet of God.’ (La ilaha illa Allah wa-Muhammad rasul Allah.)
• The person who recites the profession of faith with the intention (niyya) of becoming a Muslim in the presence of two witnesses has converted to Islam by this very act.
• The Shi’ites add: Ali is the guardian appointed by Allah and he is the rightful executor of the will of the Prophet.
2. Salaah: Compulsory Congregational prayers offered dutifully and perfectly
   • Five times a day: before the sunrise (al-fadjr), in the beginning of the afternoon (ad-duhr), in the middle of the afternoon (al-’asr), just after the sunset (al-maghrib) and after the evening meal (al-isha).
   • Prayers are recited in Arabic only and are preceded by a ritual washing.
   • A special prayer on Fridays (Jumma)
   • Average prayer time: 5-10 minutes
   • Additional prayers: Du’a

• Muslim prayers are essentially prayers of praise. They repeat the following:
  • 102 times “praised be my Lord, the Most High”
  • 68 times “Allah is great”
  • 51 times “praised be my powerful Lord”
  • 17 times “Allah listens to the person who praise Him”
  • 17 times the first chapter of the Quran or another short chapter
  • 5 times the Shahada and
  • 5 times the greeting of peace
3. Zakat: Meaning ‘purify one self’
   • Almsgiving is part of the Muslim’s duty. It is mandatory (Quran 2:40; 64:16; 98:4)
   • Obligatory charity: 2.5% of the total Income
   • Quran specifies clearly those who should benefit from the alms (Quran 9:60)
   • In addition to Zakat, Islam also encourages spontaneous donations (Sadaqa) to the needy.

– 4. Saum: To observe fast during the month of Ramadan.
   • Specific period: during the 9th month of the Muslim calendar, the month of Ramadan. Regulated by the moon, the dates for fasting change slightly every year.
   • The month of Ramadan is chosen in accordance with a Quranic prescription (Quran 2:185). The 27th night of Ramadan is a special night. It is the night of power or the blessed night (Lailatu ’l-mubaranah) Night that the Quran was revealed to Muhammad (Quran 97:1-5)
   • Every Muslim who has reached the age of puberty must fast (Quran 2:183)
   • Except: the sick, travelers, nursing mothers, pregnant women, and those who are temporarily unable to fast.
• From sunrise to sunset, Muslims abstain from eating, drinking, smoking and having sexual intercourse. But during the nights, these restrictions do not apply. Detailed instructions are found in the second chapter of the Quran.
• The fasting is believed to purify part of the sins of those who fast.
• Forty days after the ramadan comes the sacrifice of animals and it corresponds with the period of Hajj.

5. Hajj: (i.e. Pilgrimage to Mecca).
• It is a Quranic prescription (Quran 3:96-97)
• Pilgrims wear special clothes and during the pilgrimage they perform a lot of rituals.
• They walk around the Kaaba seven times and kiss the black stone if possible; they stand before Allah in Arafat from noon to sundown, they participate to the stoning of Satan with small pebbles at Mina and perform the sacrifice of animals. In Islam, it is permitted to perform the hajj on behalf of dead people.
• In addition to Mecca, some Muslims have their own locations of pilgrimage. For example, the Mourides in West Africa consider Touba (Senegal) as a holy city and go there for pilgrimage every year. The Shiites, consider Qum (Iran), Karbala’ (Iraq) and Najaf (Iraq) as their holy cities where they go for pilgrimage.
Abraham did not simply send Hagar and Ishmael into the desert - as in the Biblical story - but took them to the ruins of the Ka’aba, the holy house built by Adam in Mecca. In that wild and arid place, Hagar runs back and forth seven times between two mountains, the as-Safa and al-Marwa, in her desperate search for water for her son. This running back and forth in honor of Hagar forms part of the ritual of the Hajj to Mecca; pilgrims still drink from the well (ZamZam) that eventually saved Hagar and Ishmael.

The Center of the Earth - Mecca (Kaaba)

According to the Muslim tradition, the Kaaba was first built by Adam, but it was destroyed in the flood. Later, Ibrahim (Abraham) rebuild the Kaaba on the old foundations. Centuries later men forgot about its significance and began practicing idolatry in it, until the times of Muhammad, when it became again the house of Allah.

The black stone inside the sanctuary is said to be brought by Archangel Gabriel to Abraham: “It descended from Paradise whiter than milk, but the sins of the sons of Adam made it black.”
The Shi’ites also consider that Jihad is the sixth pillar of Islam.

Jihad means “effort” or “striving”.

It has two main purposes summarized by Hughes in these terms: “It (Jihad) is an incumbent religious duty, established in the Quran and in the Tradition as a divine institution, and enjoined specifically for the purpose of advancing Islam and of repelling evil from Muslims” (Hughes, 1994: 242).

The greater jihad (Jihada ‘lakbar) is the struggle against one’s own lust

The Lesser jihad (Jihada ‘l Ashghar) is the fight against non-Muslim
Muhammad’s Biographies

- 1,548 biographies have been listed (Hamadeh 1965:112-283; taken from Royster 1972:49)
- **Karen Armstrong**: Muhammad was the man “who gave birth to a literary masterpiece, created a major religion and founded a world power, whose descendants are viewed as a profound threat to Western civilization” (Armstrong 1992:back cover)
- **W. Montgomery Watt**: Muhammad was a “seer, a statesman, and an administrator” (Watt 1961:237)
- **Maxine Rodinson**: Muhammad was an ideal, “the utopia that has never been achieved [which] is always before us”
- **Michael Cook**: Muhammad was a historical figure whose historicity yet leaves us much in doubt. (Cook 1983:61)
- **Alfred Guillaume**: Gives us the closest and best translation of Ibn Hisham’s biography.

The Founder

- **WHO WAS MUHAMMAD?**
  
  - He is the lowliest and the meekest, the exemplar for all Muslims. (33:21)
  
  - His character is tremendous, of an exalted standard (68:4)
  
  - One cannot praise Muhammad highly enough
  
  - Allah’s last and supreme prophet to the world; in essence he supersedes all prior prophets including Jesus.
    - It didn’t have to be Muhammad
Muhammad: Sources (mainly 8)

- **THE TESTIMONY OF THE HADITH AND SIRA**
  - 770 AD  - *Sirat Rasul-Allah*, Ibn Ishaq (Earliest Sr.)
  - 795  - *Muwatta*, Imam Malik
  - 822  - *Kitab al-Maghazi*, al-Waqidi
  - 845  - *Kitab al-Tabaqat*, Ibn Sa’d
  - 870  - *Sahih al-Bukhari*
  - 875  - *Sahih al-Muslim*
  - 889  - *Sunan Abu Daud*
  - 915  - *Tarikh*, Tabari

- **Uloom**: The science of interpreting Hadith
- **Traditional Islamic system of grading hadith according to various factors:**
  - – Trustworthiness of tradents
  - – Number of sources
  - – Orthodoxy/consensus
- **Biography is (Sirat), different from Hadith (Tradition)**
- **Muhammad is mentioned by name four times in Quran & Jesus (Isa) 25 times.**
- **Sola-Scriptura does not apply to Islam: Authority matters (Imam, Tradition, Schools of thought)**
Hadith

Hadith are a necessary complement to the Qur’an, supplying the details on how to live the Islamic life
- Hadith: traditional sayings of Muhammad
- Sunnah: traditional practices of Muhammad

Different for various sects
- Sahih: Considered to be the most accurate
  - Sahih al-Bukhari
  - Sahih al-Muslim
- Others: sunan, musnad, etc.
- Authentic hadith need both *matan* (text) and *isnad* (narrators)
• Examples in Sunni Islam
• Sunnis (4 orthodox schools of law)
  – Hanbalis – most fundamentalist (e.g. Wahhabis of Saudi Arabia (leaders peaceful; many others militant)
  – Hanafis – fundamentalist branches like Deobandis (peaceful in India but a source of the Taliban in Pakistan)
• Examples in Shi’i Islam
  – Militant fundamentalists like Khomeini and former president Ahmadinejad
  – Peaceful moderates like President Khatami
Major and Sub Trends in Islam

• Literalist
• Reformist
• Traditionalist
• Rationalist
• Mystical-Trans
• Political

History- Timeline of Islam

• Muhammad born 570 AD
• Establishment of Islam 610 AD
• Early Caliphate 632 – 661 AD
• Later Caliphate 662 – 1258 AD
• Spanish Inquisition 1492 AD
• Ottoman Empire 1453 – 1924 AD
THE TESTIMONY OF HADITH AND SIRAH

- Orphaned soon after birth in 570 AD. His Uncle adopted him.
- He was illiterate (A divine appointment)
- Born during a time of war between the Byzantines and Persians
- Married Khadija bint Khuwaylid (Older to him and was rich)
- Married Eleven or thirteen women. Muslims refer to them as Mothers of the Believers (Ummahāt ul-Mu'minīn). Muslims use the term prominently before or after referring to them as a sign of respect. The term is derived from Quran 33:6:
  - *The Prophet is closer to the believers than their selves, and his wives are (as) their mothers.*[1]
• Muhammad was nearly 40, when he spent many hours alone in prayer and speculating over the aspects of creation (cave named HIRA).
• Night of Power- Laylatul Qadr (first revelations of Islam and the prophethood of Muhammed began)- around 610 AD
• Muhammad was supposed to recite what would over the next **twenty-three years become the Qur’an.**
• It is said that he was fearful, not knowing if he had been visited by demonic forces.

**Muhammad’s Dilemma**

• Ibn Ishaq (Arab Muslim Historian) quotes Muhammad, – “Now none of God’s creatures was more hateful to me than a poet or a man possessed: I could not even look at them. I thought Woe is me poet or possessed—Never shall the Quraysh say this of me! I will go to the top of the mountain and throw myself down that I may kill myself and gain rest.”

- Sirat Rasul Allah, The Life Of Muhammad, translated by A. Guillaume, p. 106.
# Muhammad’s Life

- **The Meccan Period 610 – 622 AD**
  - *Fatrat-e-Wahy* 610 – 613
  - The Early Meccan Ministry 613 – 617
  - The Boycott 617 – 619
  - The Late Meccan Ministry 619 – 622

- **The Madinan Period 622 – 630 AD**
  - Hijra (the flight) to Yatrib 622
    - Muhammad was invited and he also becomes a Lawgiver
  - Battle of Badr 624
    - Raids on Caravans: Quraysh caravan carrying 50,000 gold
  - Battle of Uhud 625
    - Defend against Quraysh attack
  - Battle of the Trench 627
    - Muhammad orders Muslims to defend Medina from attack, after Banu Nadir and Banu Qaynuqa tribes form an alliance with the Quraysh to attack him as revenge for expelling them from Medina.
  - Conquest of Mecca 630

- **The Late Meccan Period 630 – 632 AD**
- **Death of Muhammad 632**
Spread of Islam - Mecca Onwards

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly?

• MUHAMMAD: THE GOOD?

  – Dedicated to social reform
  – Ended female infanticide
  – Helped widows and orphans
  – Ended polytheism
  – Courageous
  – Sometimes showed great mercy
MUHAMMAD: THE BAD?

THE TREATMENT OF JEWS

Expelled tribes of Jews from their land

Banu Qaynuqa 624 (possible reference in 33:26) - 7th Century Medina
- Their men were all beheaded (Daud 4390)
- Their children and women were taken into slavery (one woman went into hysterics and was also beheaded, Daud 2665)
- Their property was confiscated, and the women were sold in the slave market (Ibn Ishaq 693)

Was Muhammad a peaceful man?

Ibn Ishaq, mentions that a man named Ka’b bin al-Ashraf was propagating poems against Muslim women which incited Muhammad’s enemies; Muhammad had one of his followers murder Ka’b. In Sahih Buhkari, we can read how the event in question unfolds.

Muhammad says, “Who is willing to kill Ka’b bin Al-Ashraf who has hurt Allah and His apostle?” Thereupon Muhammad bin Maslama got up saying, “O Allah’s Apostle! Would you like that I kill him?” The Prophet said, “Yes,” Muhammad bin Maslama said, “Then allow me to say a (false) thing (i.e to deceive Kab).” The Prophet said, “You may say it.”

Sahih Bukhari Vol. 5, Book 59, Number 369.
These verses offer support of this policy. Medinan Sura 33:60-61 says:

*If the hypocrites, the sick of heart, and those who spread lies in the city [Medina] do not desist, We shall arouse you [Prophet] against them, and then they will only be your neighbors in this city for a short while. 61 They will be rejected wherever they are found, and then seized and killed.* (Haleem, his insertions)

MUHAMMAD: THE UGLY?

**MUHAMMAD AND AISHA**

Muhammad is said to have married Aisha, Abu Bakr’s 6 year old daughter and then consummated his relationship with her at 9 years of age. This event is reported by Aisha, herself, and is also described in Sahih Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Al-Tabari, Abu Dawud, and Ibn Kathir. These are all reputable Muslim resources that have a well establish Isnad (chain of transmission).

**FEMALE CAPTIVES**

- The Quran mentions that it is appropriate to have sexual intercourse with female prisoners. (4:24; 33:50)
- A hadith clarify the context of these declarations.
Muhammad’s soldiers, while at battle wanted to have sex with the female captives, but asked Muhammad if it was alright. The Qur’an affirms this in Surah 4:24, “And also prohibited to you are all the married women except those your right hand possess.” The phrase, those your right hand possesses, refers to female captives who were held as slaves and would later be sold.

Sahih Muslim contains the following, “It is permissible to have sexual intercourse with a captive woman after she is purified (of menses or delivery) in case she has a husband; her marriage is abrogated after she becomes captive.”

Sahih Muslim Book 8, Volume 2 number 3432

Muhammad, true Prophet?

The Muslim Position:

- **Supernatural witness** points to Muhammad's Prophethood (angels & heart, protective cloud)
- **Prophesying** points to his Prophethood (Sura 30:1-4 ‘defeat in a few years’...615 vs. 628).
- **Miracles** point to his Prophethood (Challenge in Sura 17:90-93; Response in Suras 2:118-119; 6:37, 124; 13:7; 17:59 = warner; & Sura 54:1 = Splitting of the moon).
- **Illiterate** Creator of the Qur’an points to his Prophethood (Sura 7:157 & 62:2 = ‘unlettered’).
The Christian Position:
Four Criteria for being a Prophet in the Bible:
1. Is he in Isaac’s race?
2. Does his message conforms to previous revelation?
3. Are his predictions verifiable (miracle/prophecy)?
4. Does he use God’s personal name?:
   Adonai (descriptive) = 340 times
   Elohim (generic) = 2,000 times
   **Yahweh** (personal) = 6,823 times

• “For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they are divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ”

• (II Corinthians 10:3-5)