

COMPARING ISLAM & CHRISTIANITY

The Messenger, the Message & History

By Chuck Edwards ■■■ chuck@summit.org ■■■ www.summit.org

INTRODUCTION:

September 11, 2001 changed everything.

The cover of *Newsweek* blared: "Why do they hate us?"

OVERVIEW:

I. THE STATISTICS:

A. Muslims worldwide:

B. Muslims in the U.S.:

II. MUSLIM INFLUENCE:

COMPARING ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

I. THE MESSENGER:

Both Islam and Christianity claim to be based on the authoritative teaching of one primary messenger sent from God.

A. ISLAM—MUHAMMAD (570–632 AD)

1. PROPHET OF GOD:

- a. In the Qu'ran, it is written that Jesus came "giving Glad Tidings of a Messenger to come after me, Whose name shall be Ahmad" (i.e., Muhammad, or the Praised One). (Surah 61:6)
- b. Muslims claim that even in the Bible Jesus foretold of Muhammad's coming (John 15:26). See also John 14:16 and 16:7, which are given this same interpretation.

2. WARRIOR KING:

- a. Muhammad set out with 300 men to raid a caravan headed for Mecca.
- b. Muhammad rode into Mecca on a camel with a sword in his hand leading his army to kill his enemies.

B. CHRISTIANITY—JESUS (0–33 AD)

1. SON OF GOD:
 - a. The entire book of Matthew links Old Testament prophecy of the Messiah to the person of Jesus.
2. Jesus' claims:
 - a. Son of God/Son of Man: (Matt 26:63-66)
 - b. Unity with the Father:
 - (1) "I and the Father are one." (John 10:30-33)
 - (2) Compare with John 8:57-59
3. SAVIOR OF MAN:
 - a. Humble Servant: Jesus humbly rode into Jerusalem on a donkey to willingly lay down his life for the salvation of mankind.
 - b. Suffering Servant: (John 14:6)
 - c. Exalted Savior: Jesus' bodily resurrection from the dead climaxed His life and teaching.
4. KING OF KINGS:
 - a. A spiritual Kingdom:
 - (1) (Matthew 26:47-56).
 - (2) (John 18:33-37).
 - b. A future, earthly kingdom:(Revelation 19:11-16).

II. **THE MESSAGE:** How has God communicated to man?

Both religions claim to be "revealed" truth, based on a holy book.

A. ISLAM—The Qur'an and Hadith

1. The HOLY QUOR'AN
 - a. Dictated from Allah
 - b. It consists of 114 chapters (surahs) of unequal length.
 - c. It follows in broad outline some of the history and major events of the Bible.
 - d. Proof of Allah's protection of the Qur'an:
 - e. The Bible, according to Muslims, has been corrupted.
2. The HADITH: This record of the words and deeds of Muhammad is also viewed by Muslims as inspired.

B. CHRISTIANITY—The Bible and Jesus

1. The Holy Bible
2. Jesus Christ
 - a. John 1:1, 14
 - b. Hebrews 1:1-3
3. PROPHECY CONFIRMS THE BIBLE: see for example, Daniel 9:24-27

III. **HISTORY:** What can we learn from history?

Both Islam and Christianity are *historical* religions, i.e., claiming that God has acted decisively in human history.

A. **CHRISTIANITY:** Christianity expands through MISSIONARY EFFORT.

1. The Bible endorses missionary effort:
 - a. JESUS' COMMAND: (Matthew 28:19-20)
 - b. PETER'S EXAMPLE: (see Acts 2:14-41)
 - c. PAUL'S EXAMPLE: (2 Corinthians 5:19-20)

2. EARLY EXPANSION: 33–900 AD
 - a. 65 AD: Peter and Paul spread Christianity as far as Rome and northern Africa.
 - b. 378 AD: Emperor Theodosius makes Christianity the state religion of the Roman Empire.
 - c. 550 AD: The BYZANTINE EMPIRE controls most of the original Roman Empire and its capitol is moved from Rome to Constantinople.
 - d. 800 AD: Charlemagne was crowned king by the pope in Rome, dividing Christianity into Greek Orthodox in the east (Constantinople) and Roman Catholic in the west (Rome).

3. THE MIDDLE AGES: 900–1300 AD
 - a. 1097 – 1254 AD - CRUSADES: In response to a plea from Byzantine emperor, Alexius Comnenus, Pope Urban II called on the knights of Christendom (English islands and Europe) to rescue the Holy Land from the Muslim invaders.
 - b. 1516 AD: After constant fighting and six "crusades," the Holy Land reverts back into the hands of the MuslimTurks.

4. THE REFORMATION: 1300–1600 AD
 - a. The REFORMERS break away from the Roman Catholic Church, translate the Bible into the common language, and spread the word of the Gospel further across Europe and on to the "New World."

B. **ISLAM:** Islam spreads through MILITARY EFFORT—JIHAD (Holy War).

1. BOTH THE QUR'AN AND HADITH ENDORSE MILITARY JIHAD:
 - a. ISLAM WILL CONQUER ALL OTHER RELIGIONS: "He (Allah) it is who hath sent His messenger with the guidance (Qur'an) and the religion of truth (Islam), that He may make it (Islam) conqueror of all religions, however much idolaters may be averse." (Surah 61:9)
 - b. OVER 100 SURAH'S SAY TO FIGHT/KILL THE NON-BELIEVERS: "Fight those who do not believe in Allah..." Surah 9:29
 - c. THREE OPTIONS for those who come under Islamic rule:

- (1) Convert to Islam.
 - (2) Pay a tax.
 - (3) Die.
- d. PARADISE PROMISED FOR THOSE WHO DIE IN JIHAD: "The person who participates in Jihad (Holy battles) in Allah's cause and nothing compels him to do so except belief in Allah and His apostle, will be recompensed by Allah either with a reward or booty (if he survives) or will be admitted to paradise (if he is killed)." Hadith, Vol. 1:35
2. JIHAD = ARMED STRUGGLE: "Jihad, or holy war, means an active struggle using armed force whenever necessary." (*Islam Will Conquer All Other Religions and American Power Will Diminish*, Mohamed Azad and Bibi Amina, Bell Six Publishing, NY: 2001, p. 18-19)
 3. JIHAD IS INHERENT TO ISLAM: "According to [historian Richard] Connerney, conquest and jihad are woven into the fiber of the religion. Thus, belligerence towards people of other faiths and cultures is, arguably, inherent to Islam." (Quoted in *Breakpoint* by Chuck Colson, November 18, 2001.)
 4. MUHAMMAD ENDORSED ACTS OF TERRORISM:
(Examples taken from *The Life of Muhammad*, by A. Guillaume)
 5. MUHAMMAD AND HIS MERCENARY WARRIORS ATTACKED CARAVANS AND PEACEFUL CITIES:
 - a. BANI QURAIZA TRIBE SLAUGHTERED:
 - b. KHAYBAR RAIDED:
 - c. 630 AD: Muhammad and his army captured MECCA without a fight.
 6. JIHAD AND THE EARLY EXPANSION OF ISLAM UNDER THE CALIPHS (immediate successors of Muhammad): 633–732 AD.
 - a. 637 AD: Jerusalem conquered.
 - b. Other conquests include Syria (634); Egypt (638); Persia (640); North Africa (689); and Spain (711).
 - c. Muslim expansion stopped at Tours, France in 732 AD.
 7. JIHAD IN THE MIDDLE AGES:
 - a. 637–1071 AD: Jerusalem changes hands under various Muslim dynasties.
 - b. 1071 AD: Seljuk Turks conquer Palestine and Jerusalem is vandalized—persecuting both Jews and Christians.
 - c. 1244 AD: Egyptian Sultan expels last of Crusaders from Jerusalem.

- d. 1516 AD: Jerusalem falls to Muslim Ottoman Turks for the next 400 years.
8. JIHAD IN MODERN TIMES:
- a. 1916 AD: 1.5 million Christian Armenians died at the hands of their Turkish Muslim rulers. Many more went into exile.
 - b. 1980–2000 AD:
 - (1) Surah 5:51 says don't befriend a Jew or Christian!
 - (2) SUDAN: At least 2 million Sudanese Christians have been killed and thousands have been sold into slavery under Islamic law.
 - (3) IRAQ: 3.5 million Assyrian Christians killed in last 50 years.
 - (4) 1992 - Islamists assassinated the Egyptian journalist, Farag Foda, for his critical writings about Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood.
 - (5) 1994 - The Nobel Prize-winning novelist Naguib Mahfouz was stabbed for writing the allegorical *Children of Gabalawi* (1959).
 - c. 2001 AD:
 - (1) September 11, Yasser Arafat and his PLO news organ, *Al Hayat Al Jadida*, printed this: "The suicide bombers of today are the noble successors of the Lebanese suicide bombers, who taught the U.S. Marines a tough lesson in [Lebanon].... These suicide bombers are the salt of the earth, the engines of history.... They are the most honorable people among us...."
 - (2) Osama bin Laden has declared "jihad" (holy war) against the United States. bin Laden's spokesman, Abdul Hai Mutmaen, noted that the declaration was an obligation upon Muslims worldwide: "We want this, bin Laden wants this and America will face the unpleasant consequences of the attacks."

ISLAM & CHRISTIANITY

<i>CATEGORY</i> ↓	<i>ISLAM</i>	<i>CHRISTIANITY</i>
MESSENGER OF TRUTH	Muhammad Final Prophet, Conqueror	Jesus Son of God, Savior
MESSAGE OF TRUTH	The Holy Qur'an (Secondary Source: The Hadith)	The Holy Bible (66 books of the Old & New Testaments)
THEOLOGY	Allah is the One True God - Unknowable	God is One, yet Three Persons - Knowable (Abba, Father)
BIOLOGY	Life created & sustained by God	Life created & sustained by God
PSYCHOLOGY	Man is faltering yet perfectible	Man is fallen yet redeemable
ETHICS	Unchanging Moral Absolutes	Objective Moral Absolutes tempered with the Golden Rule
SOCIOLOGY	Socio-political control under Islamic rule	Separate roles between Family, Church, & State
LAW	Shari'a: based on Qu'ran, the Hadith (Tradition) and Ijma' (consensus)	Natural Law: based on General and Special Revelation
POLITICS	Islamic state under the rule of Shari'a	Civil state under the rule of law
HISTORY	Military effort (jihad) utilized to conquer the world	Missionary effort used to win the world

ΦΟΡ ΦΥΡΤΗΡ ΣΤΤΑΨ ΟΝ ΙΣΛΑΜ

BOOKS:

- Al-Araby, Abdullah. *Islam Unveiled. The Pen vs. the Sword*. 2001. A brief, concise exploration of the fundamental teachings of Islam and how they contrast with Christianity. (Paperback, 56 pages, \$4.00, purchase through Voice of the Martyrs at www.persecution.com/bookstore/index.cfm?action=itemDtl&baseItemID=128)
- Braswell, George W., Jr. *What You Need to Know About Islam & Muslims*. Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000. A survey of the life of Mohammed, the teachings of the Qur'an, the history of Islamic expansion to the present, the diversity of Islamic factions, and how Christians can reach out to Muslims.
- Huntington, Samuel P. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996. An analysis of the state of world politics after the fall of communism, showing how "civilizations" have replaced nations and ideologies as the driving force in global politics today. It includes much on Islam's "bloody borders."
- George, Timothy, *Is the Father of Jesus the God of Muhammad?* (Zondervan, 2002).
- Katerega, Badru D., and David W. Shenk. *A Muslim and a Christian in Dialogue*. Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1997. A description of key Muslim and Christian beliefs presented in a point-counterpoint format, showing areas of agreement and difference.
- Lipkin, Avi. *Is Fanatic Islam a Global Threat*, Taylor, S.C. Self-published, 1997. To order, call 800-540-0828, or order online, www.vicmorg.com. This book recaps stories from around the world of how radical Islamists are waging jihad with Israel and people of other faiths.
- Rashid, Ahmed. *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001. An in-depth look at the Taliban's history, goals and training of young warriors to fulfill its visions of Islamic rule.
- Shorrosh, Anis A. *Islam Revealed: A Christian Arab's View of Islam*. Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson, 1988. A survey of Islam, including a transcript of a debate between the author and Ahmed Deedat, the world's leading Islamic apologist.
- Tibi, Bassam. *The Challenge of Fundamentalism: Political Islam and the New World Disorder*. Berkeley, Ca.: University of California Press, 1998. Written by a professing Muslim, Tibi draws a distinction between Islam as a religion and Islamic fundamentalism as a political ideology. He believes Islamic fundamentalism poses a grave challenge to world politics, security, and stability.
- Trifkovic, Serge. *The Sword of the Prophet: Islam, History, Theology, Impact on the World*. Regina Orthodox Press, 2002. A reporter/commentator and former State Department researcher provides a readable overview of the major tenets of Islam, including a brief history of jihad Islamic views on current social issues.
- Ye'or, Bat. *The Decline of Eastern Christianity Under Islam: From Jihad to Dhimmitude*. London: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1996. An analysis of the dogma and strategies of *jihad*, offering a history of Christians and Jews under the rule of Islam from the 7th through the 12th centuries.

WEBSITES:

- ❑ *Islamicity* – A Muslim website with books, videos, online courses, and middle-east news: <http://www.islamicity.com>.
- ❑ *Answering Islam* - A Christian-Muslim Dialogue and Apologetic: <http://www.answering-islam.org/>
- ❑ *Frontiers Ministries* - Church Planting among Muslims: <http://www.frontiers.org/>
- ❑ *The Voice of the Martyrs* – Serving the persecuted church for over 30 years: <http://www.persecution.com/news/>