

Worldview Apologetics

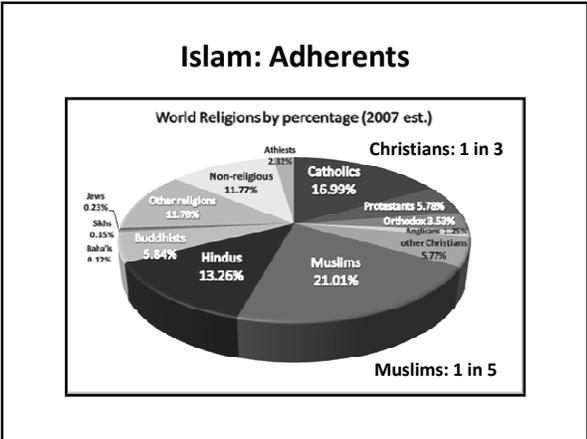
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Week 7: Islam

Islam: The Basic Idea

Allah is the only God and he has no son;
Muhammad is his final prophet,
and the Qur'an is his eternal word.

"There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah."
The Shahada (Islamic Creed)

"Say not 'Trinity': desist: it will be better for you: for God is one God: Glory be to Him: (far exalted is He) above having a son."
The Qur'an (Sura 4:171)



A Brief History of Early Islam

- Muhammad born in Mecca around AD 570
- Received first 'revelations' (Qur'an) in 610
- Preached monotheism and submission to God
- Experienced increasing persecution in Mecca
- Migration (*Hijra*) to Medina in 622
- Returned with army to claim Mecca for Islam
- Died in Medina from illness on June 8, 632
- Sunni / Shi'a split over leadership succession

Six Essential Beliefs of Islam

1. Belief in the one God (Allah)
2. Belief in the Angels
3. Belief in the Prophets (esp. Muhammad)
4. Belief in the Books (esp. the Qur'an)
5. Belief in the Day of Judgment
6. Belief in the Decrees

The Five Pillars of Islam

1. Profession (*Shahada*)
2. Prayer (*Salah*)
3. Fasting (*Sawm*)
4. Almsgiving (*Zakat*)
5. Pilgrimage (*Hajj*)



Islam: Theology

- *Unitarian monotheism*: there is only one God
 - God is a pure undivided unity – not a Trinity
 - ‘Allah’ means ‘God’ but is used as a personal name
- God is the sovereign creator of the universe
 - God sustains and surrounds all things
- God is utterly transcendent
 - No intimate personal relationships with humans
- Nothing happens apart from God’s decree

Islam: Anthropology

- Humans were specially created by God
 - But not made in the image/likeness of God
- We have bodies and souls that survive death
- We are not sinful by nature (no original sin)
 - We are able to do both good and evil
- Our purpose in life is to submit utterly to God
- There is a future resurrection and judgment
 - Only the faithful go to paradise; the rest go to hell

Islam: Knowledge

- Divine revelation through the prophets
 - Adam, Noah, Moses, David, Jesus, Muhammad
- The Qur’an is the literal dictated word of God
 - It is perfect in every way in the original Arabic
 - Its miraculous nature proves its divine origins
- Torah, Psalms, and Gospels are also from God
 - But they were corrupted by Jews and Christians
 - The Qur’an was given to restore the truth

Islam: Ethics

- Morality is based on the will of God
 - To be good is to be a good *Muslim* (submission)
- *Shari'a*: divine, infallible, universal Islamic law
 - Two main sources: Qur'an and Sunnah (via *Hadith*)
 - *Sunnah*: Muhammad as the "living Qur'an"
- *Halal* ("permissible") – esp. dietary regulations
- Two damnable sins: *idolatry* and *apostasy*
- *Jihad*: the 'struggle' for submission to Allah

Islam: Salvation

- Our basic problem is... *infidelity*
 - We do not submit to the will of Allah
- The solution to the problem is... *Islam*
 - We must bring all things into submission to Allah
- There will be a final day of judgment
 - Judgment is according to the "weighing of deeds"
- Salvation ultimately depends on God's mercy
 - There is no atonement and no assurance

Tool #1: Consistency

- Does the Qur'an agree with the Bible?
 - Numerous irresolvable conflicts between the two
 - Different views of God, Jesus, and salvation
- Can divine revelation be lost or corrupted?
 - "No!" – So why think the Bible was corrupted?
 - "Yes!" – So why think the Qur'an is trustworthy?
- The Qur'an points people to "the Books"
- No evidence that the Bible has been corrupted

Tool #1: Consistency

- Can Christians be saved (as Christians)?

Those who believe (in the Qur'an), those who follow the Jewish (scriptures), and the Sabians and the Christians, any who believe in God and the Last Day, and work righteousness, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.
Sura 5:69 (cf. 2:62, 2:111-12)

They do blaspheme who say: "God is Christ the son of Mary." But said Christ: "O Children of Israel! worship God, my Lord and your Lord." Whoever joins other gods with God, God will forbid him the garden, and the Fire will be his abode.
Sura 5:72 (cf. 4:150-52)

Tool #4: Coherence

- How can Allah be both merciful and just?
 - Does Allah simply overlook some sins?
- Islamic worldview
 - No doctrine of atonement
 - Some sins are punished while others are forgiven
- Christian worldview
 - A robust doctrine of substitutionary atonement
 - All sins are punished: either on the cross or in hell

Tool #8: Hope

- How can we have assurance of salvation?
 - Muslims have no guarantee of entry into paradise
- Islamic worldview
 - Salvation depends on personal righteousness
 - Allah is merciful... but also unpredictable!
- Christian worldview
 - Salvation depends on personal faith in Christ
 - God keeps his promises and preserves his people
