

## 1 Islam (part 1)

- Module: Worldviews
- Lesson 20

## 2 Some References on Islam

- The Universe Next Door, by James Sire
- Grand Central Questions, by Abdu Murray
- Neighboring Faiths, by Winfred Corduan
- Series of seven video lectures on Islam by Nabeel Qureshi at Biola University.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P10rHuAb4MU&list=PLJU4Ev6IJdLivS95HHwpigEsWla9jiJDt> , or simply go to youtube.com and search for "Qureshi Biola lectures".

## 3 Complexity of Issues re: Islam

- There are various factors that contribute to the difficulty of non-Muslims understanding Islam.
- Historically, Islam sees itself in principle to be more than a religious community, but also as a political community.
- A number of apparent contradictions in Islam's basic documents (Qu'ran, Hadith, etc.).
- As w/Christianity, great diversity of expressions within Islam. (see chart)

## 4 Diversity in Islam

## 5 Defining Terms

- Islam (refers to the religion itself): submission
- Muslim (refers to an adherent of Islam): one who submits
- Arab : someone who is part of a panethnic group of people who primarily inhabit Western Asia, Northern Africa, and the Horn of Africa
  - (Note: do not confuse Arabs with Muslims or being Arabic with being Islamic. An Arab is a member of an ethnic classification. A Muslim is an adherent to Islam. There are many Arabs who are not Muslims, and many Muslims who are not Arabs.)

## 6 The Issue of Authority

- Keep in mind that Islam means submission.
- Submission to authority is a dominant aspect of the Islamic worldview—
  - Ultimately, submission to Allah (God).
  - Submission to the Imam (typically a leader of a mosque).
  - Submission to parents and other authorities.
  - Subjugation of unbelievers to Allah.

## 7 Early History of Islam

- Founded by Mohammad (570-632 A. D.)
  - An Arab who was born and lived in Mecca (in modern day Saudi Arabia).
  - Claimed to have received his first revelation in a cave in 610 A. D.
  - Started preaching Islam in 613 A. D.
  - In 622 he and his followers fled to Medina (200 mi. north) to escape persecution.
  - Returned to conquer Mecca 8 years later.

## 8 **Early Expansion: 622-750 A. D.**

- Rapid expansion, largely by military conquest, across the Arabian Peninsula, Western Asia, the Middle East, and Northern Africa.
- Expansion of Islam into SW Europe was checked at the Battle of Tours, 732 A. D. (Charles Martel). Iberian Peninsula (Spain & Portugal) remained under Islamic (Moors) control until the 14th Century.
- Islam arose in a context of rivalry, competition, and conflict. \*As such, Islam defined itself more externally, in contrast to other options, than internally (Sire).

## 9 **Islam's Relationship to the Non-Islamic World**

- Born in a context of religious rivalry with polytheism of Arabia.
- The concept of submission, and Islam's history of competition, conflict, and conquest, plays a fundamental role in how Islam views and relates to the non-Islamic world.
- Islam's early relationship with Judaism and Christianity

- Initially the “people of the book” (Jews and Christians) were looked upon somewhat tolerantly, and not required to convert to Islam.
- This initial attitude began to change quite soon, during Mohammad’s life. (He ordered the slaughter of hundreds of Jews while in Medina due to his suspicion that some had plotted against him.)
- People of the Book living in Islamic conquered lands were given Dhimmi status (essentially second class citizens) and required to pay the jizya tribute tax to avoid forced conversion and overt persecution.
- Later actions and teachings in Islam exhibit a more hostile attitude. (e. g. The sins of Muslims will be laid on Jews and Christians at judgment.)

**10**  **Worldview Questions:**

**What is Ultimate Reality?—Allah**

- Allah (God) is infinite, personal, transcendent, immanent, omniscient, sovereign, good, etc. (However, see below comments about his being unknowable.)
- Tawhid—God’s oneness (otherness) (Sura 112)
  - Allah is unique, nothing resembles him in any respect.
  - Allah does not need anything, all things need him.

**11**  **Worldview Questions:**

**What is Ultimate Reality?—Allah**

- Tawhid– (continued)
  - Nothing can be associated with him.
    - He has no children.
      - Hence, no “Son of God.”
      - Hence, he is not “our father.”
    - There is no relationship with him.
    - To associate anything with Allah is the sin of shirk (association), or idolatry or blasphemy.
  - Ultimately unknowable.
    - No terms applied to a human being may be applied to God.
    - If they are, as in the Qur’an, their meaning as applied to humans is no indication as to their meaning when applied to Allah.

**12**  **Worldview Questions:**

**What is Ultimate Reality?—Allah**

- A strong emphasis on the greatness of God.
  - The context of rivalry w/competing religions.

- The Takbir: “Allahu Akbar” (God is greater.)
- Transcendence and immanence
  - God’s transcendence is dominant in Islamic emphasis.
  - God’s immanence is less emphasized.

**13**  **Worldview Questions:**

**What is Ultimate Reality?—Allah**

- Qadar (power): Refers to God’s predetermining everything that happens in the cosmos, including who will go to heaven and who will go to hell.
  - There is an implicit fatalism (“It is God’s will.”).
  - An impact on scientific and intellectual advancement.
- Allah’s love
  - Allah’s love is partial, conditional, limited.
  - Allah only loves those who love him first. He hates sinners.

**14**  **Worldview Questions:**

**What is Ultimate Reality?—Qur’an**

- Recitations from Mohammad (the word qur’an means recitation), supposedly spoken or shown to him by the angel Gabriel from Allah.
- A very close association of the Qur’an with Allah.
  - There is an original copy of the Qur’an in heaven. (Muhammad was shown this heavenly copy by Gabriel and told to read and memorize it.)
  - Since it is eternal, it is sometimes considered virtually divine itself, “part” of God.

**15**  **Worldview Questions:**

**What is Ultimate Reality?—Qur’an**

- Believed to be the perfect, unchanging word of Allah.
  - Every single dot, line, and letter in the present Arabic Qur’an is exactly as it was given to Mohammad.
  - Allah will protect the Qur’an so that it cannot be changed, altered, or corrupted.
- Apparent conflicts within the Qur’an.
  - Apparent contradictions (e.g. Is Muhammad fallible or infallible? sura 33:36-37; Is compulsion in religion permissible or not? suras 3:20 and 8:38-39)
  - Doctrine of abrogation: later revelations reverse or “abrogate” earlier ones. (Not all Muslim scholars accept this idea)
  - Various interpretations.

**16**  **Next Week:**

- Islam (part 2),  
and a Christian Response