

1 Islam (part 2)

- Module: Worldviews
- Lesson 21

2 More Worldview Questions:

What Does Islam Teach About External Reality?

- The world was created by Allah, ex nihilo (out of nothing).
 - Material realm (earth, stars, vegetation, humans, etc.).
 - Non-material spiritual realm (angels, jinn, etc.).
- Allah's means of creation was by his spoken word.
- Nothing happens in the world apart from Allah's decree. (Qadr)
- Since Allah is creator, he possesses absolute discretion over the world and all that is in it to do whatever he pleases, good or bad.

3 More Worldview Questions:

What is the Nature of Humanness?

- Humans are the pinnacle of Allah's creation and given abilities not shared with other creatures.
 - Such high standing entails a high degree of responsibility to submit to and obey Allah.
 - The fall of Satan (Islam believes in a personal Satan) was precipitated by his refusal to obey Allah's command to bow down to Adam, and not by an attempt to elevate himself to equality with God (as in Judaism and Christianity).
- Humankind is not made in the likeness of Allah. (Nothing can resemble Allah in any way. Remember the sin of shirk or association.)
- People are born innocent. (In fact, all are born Muslims.)
- There is no original sin or sin nature.

4 Worldview Questions:

What Happens After Death?

- All history is moving towards a final judgment.
- One's destiny is determined by the record of the Book of Deeds.
 - Only one in a thousand will go to heaven. (Hadith)
 - Everyone else will go to hell.
- God has determined (qadr) before you were born where you would go, so you ultimately have no choice in the matter.
- A person can't know his or her destiny till it death due to God's sovereignty. (Except for prepubescent children, martyrs, and mentally impaired, who are guaranteed heaven.)

5 Worldview Questions:

How Can We Know Anything?

- God endows humans with the ability to know.
- God's sovereignty limits our ability to know some things.
- God has provided many prophets to convey knowledge to humanity. (The Qur'an lists about 25 prophets, most of whom are individuals from the bible. e. g. Adam, Moses, David, Isaac, Ishmael, Jesus, etc. It teaches that there were many more besides those is lists.)

6  **Worldview Questions:**
How Can We Know Right and Wrong?

- Based on the Qur'an.
- Commentaries in the Hadith.
- Interpreted by shari'a

7  **Worldview Questions:**
Islam's View of History

- History is linear, beginning at creation and moving to judgment.
- History's significance is in demonstrating God's absolute sovereignty.
- It provides an opportunity for humans to demonstrate submission.

8  **Worldview Questions:**
What are Islam's Implied Core Commitments?

- Submission to Allah.
- Five Pillars: (required of all Muslims)
 - Shahada (the confession): "There is no God but Allah, and Mohammad is his prophet."
 - Salat: prayer (five times a day, bowing to the Grand Mosque in Mecca)
 - Sawm: fasting (during the month of Ramadan)
 - Zakat: almsgiving (1/40th of net profit, 2.5%)
 - Hajj: pilgrimage to Mecca (at least once in one's lifetime)

9  **Worldview Questions:**
What are Islam's Implied Core Commitments?

- Six essential beliefs:
 - God (as defined by Islam)
 - Angels/spirits (jinn)
 - Prophets (including Moses, David, Jesus)
 - Books (all sacred books, including Law, Psalms, Gospels from the bible)

- Judgment
- Decrees of Allah (qadr)
- Various other duties and obligations (e.g. marital fidelity, diet, modesty in dress, honesty, etc.)

10 Folk Islam

- Folk Islam is less focused on Islamic doctrine, the five pillars, or the idealized practices associated with more traditional Islam.
- Folk Islam is often found among nomads and villagers.
- Folk Islam often tends to be animistic, with a strong preoccupation with jinn (evil spirits) and finding ways to ward off the jinn and find power for the trials of life.
- Sufism (a mystical sect of Islam) goes far beyond the Qur'an by emphasizing a loving relationship with Allah, and that it is possible to experience a direct vision of him for those who adhere to the strict purity of Sufism.

11 Islam and Christianity:

Where We Have General Agreement

- The Qur'an and the Bible?
 - The Qur'an teaches that the Bible (the "book"—the Law, Psalms, and Gospels) is God's revelation and is to be obeyed by all "people of the book."
 - Many Muslims are unaware of the Qur'an's teachings regarding the "book."
- Creation
- Some aspects of God.
- Judgment
- General historical issues (e.g. Passover, etc)
- Some points about Jesus
 - A prophet of God
 - Virgin birth
 - Miracles
 - Ascension

12 Islam and Christianity:

Important Points of Disagreement

- The Person of Jesus (see Rom. 10:9)
 - Muslims emphatically deny the deity of Jesus. To believe in Jesus' deity is the sin of shirk (blasphemy).
 - They deny Jesus' crucifixion (some deny that he died at all).
 - They deny Jesus' resurrection.

- The substitutionary atonement of Jesus (Muslims deny it)
- The Trinity (Muslims deny it.)
- The trustworthiness of the Bible.
 - The Qu'ran teaches the Bible was originally God's word.
 - Muslims believe it has been corrupted (hence it conflicts with the Qur'an).
 - The idea of the Bible's corruption is a later accretion to Islam (9th century), after Islamic scholars began studying the Bible.

13 A Christian Response

- What are the chief obstacles to a Muslim becoming a Christian?
 - Islamic worldview is intricately interwoven with the culture of most Muslims. Rejecting Islam often entails the loss of family and culture.
 - Islamic Law of Apostasy: All schools of Islam believe the penalty for apostasy is death. (This is variously understood and applied within Islam.)
 - The sin of shirk: Apostates and those who believe Jesus is God or God's Son will go to hell.

14 A Christian Response

- Our most important response to a Muslim: Love
 - (70% of Muslim converts to Christianity say that it was chiefly the love of a Christian, more than persuasive reasoning, that won them to Christ.)

15 A Christian Response

- A What Point Was the Bible Corrupted?

16 A Christian Response

- Authority of the Bible:
 - Show them the references in the Qur'an attesting to the Bible's reliability and the obligation to obey it.
 - Ask, if God's word cannot be corrupted (Surah 18:27), how could the Book be corrupted?
 - Ask a Muslim, "When was the bible corrupted?" (Before or after the Qur'an was dictated to Mohammad?)
 - If before Muhammad (early 7th century), why does the Qu'ran say without qualification that the bible is God's word and is to be believed? (i.e. Was Muhammad mistaken?)
 - If after Muhammad, then how could corruption have been achieved, since by then many thousands of copies existed in various languages across a wide expanse of the world (many of which remain extant yet today)?
 - Demonstrate how we know the Bible is reliable. (We will discuss this in our module on the Bible.)
 - Textually: The text of the bible has been carefully preserved.

- Historically: The bible's historical claims are strongly affirmed by historical study.

17 A Christian Response

- Is Jesus God?
 - Correcting misunderstandings re: the Trinity
 - Mary, the mother of Jesus, is not part of the trinity as many Muslims believe.
 - Trinity is not a logical contradiction.
 - "Neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance." (Athanasian Creed, 6th century)
 - Distinction between the divine nature and the persons
 - A God who truly does not need anything outside himself (as both Christians and Muslims believe), and who is a God of love, necessitates that the divine nature consist of more than one person.
 - Jesus' claims to be divine.
 - Including in what is believed to be the earliest Gospel (Mark).
 - In the context of first century Palestinian Jewish culture, Jesus' claims were explicit.
 - Evidences for the death and resurrection of Jesus.
 - Biblical evidence
 - Historical evidence (we have more than just the Gospel accounts)

18 Next Week:

- Atheism/Naturalism