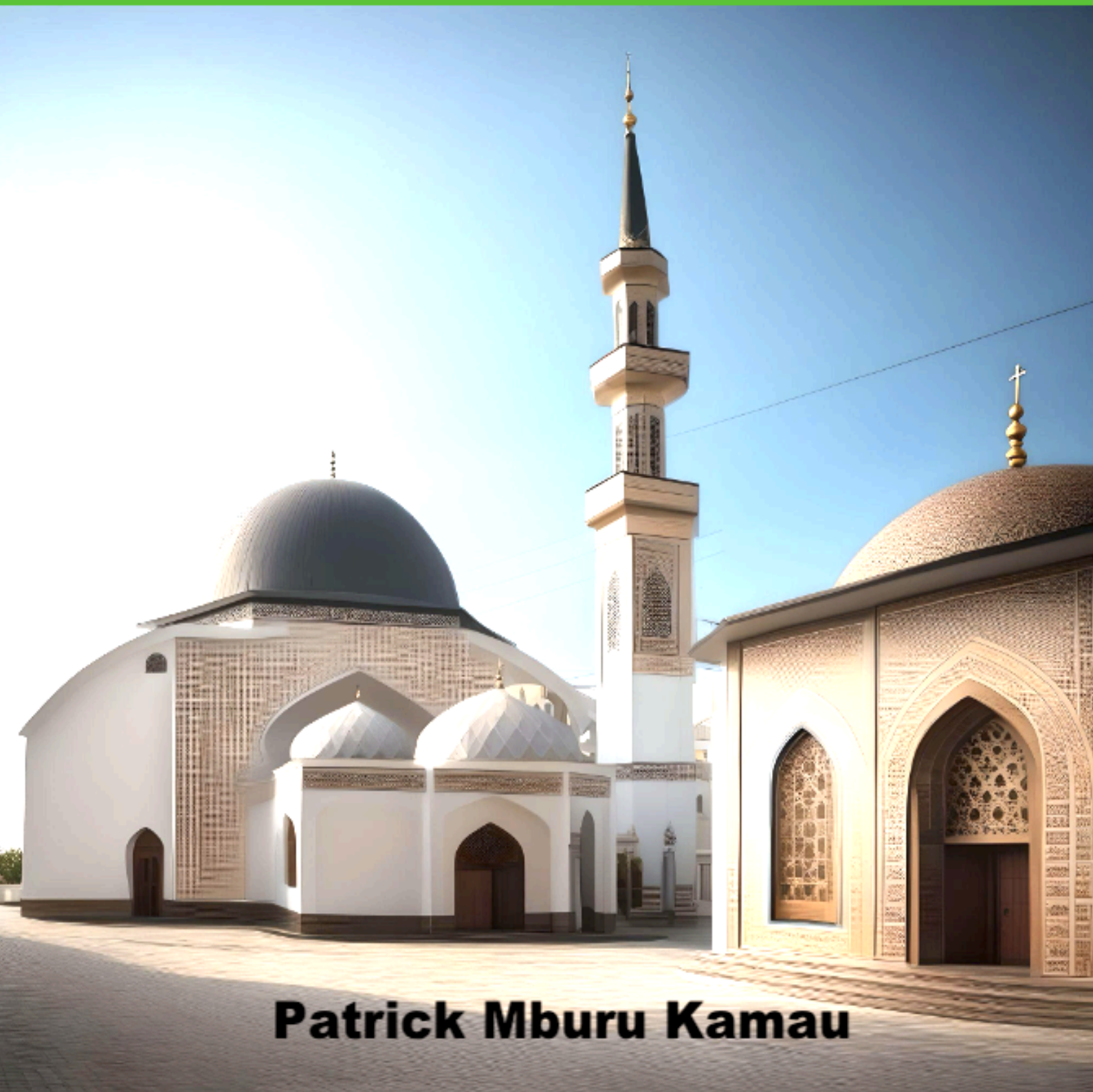
BIBLICAL AND QUR'ANIC

MISSIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

A Comparative Analysis



Patrick Mburu Kamau

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MISSIOLOGY

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PREFACE

Dr. Patrick Mburu Kamau has written an exciting book, “Biblical and Qur’anic Missiological Perspectives: A Comparative Analysis.” The book intends to provide a historical perspective of Christian and Islamic missiology since it looks at both Christian and Islamic missions in Africa. Both faiths are the most predominant in Africa since African Traditional Religions do not claim to be missionary. The two faiths have significantly influenced African communities over several centuries and have become the basis of African socio-political and cultural development.

The sacred texts of the two religions (the Bible and the Qur’an) are taken as a repository of God’s/Allah’s self-revelation to humanity in a way that guides human behavior and morality. The two religions have been embraced in the African moral ethos. Living in a pluralistic society, we realize that cultural and religious enrichment helps us overcome inter-religious tensions between religious persuasions. Religious intolerance exists where there is minimal understanding of other religions that co-exist within the same environment.

The author has set the basis for inter-religious dialogue between Christianity and Islam. This approach helps students study the Bible and the Qur’an with openness, sympathy, and respect, thus promoting mutual acceptance and appreciation. Such an attitude would be promoted by religious adherents, political leaders, and policymakers in Africa and, ultimately, the world. The author’s emphasis on the value of love and hospitality as a demonstration of our devotion to God/Allah is pivotal in building viable communities despite religious and cultural differences. Treating neighbors with compassion and respect is the proper foundation of both religions since the Bible and the Qur’an encourage adherents to be benevolent and compassionate to all people. The notion of hospitality becomes the basis of devotion to God/Allah and anchors adherents' faith and attitude.

Against the socio-political and religious challenges the continent faces, which sometimes breed religious violence, intolerance, and insecurity, this book contributes to a healthy religious understanding and coexistence. It demonstrates how a balanced and faithful study of the two religious traditions can overcome intolerance and promote greater social cohesion among religious societies.

This book should form the basis for inter-religious dialogue between Muslims and Christians. The basis for any meaningful dialogue is mutual listening and understanding. Participants of such a dialogue must have an intimate conversation with each other, fostering a spirit of respect and trust. In a collaborative attitude, dialogue seeks an everyday basis devoid of biases and preconceived notions. It seeks to restore broken relationships. Participants in a dialogue are encouraged to speak their minds without fear of being misunderstood or rejected. The spirit of dialogue ought to be that of humility. Participants must be able to recognise the similarities and differences of each tradition.

In this book, the author has taken pains to identify similarities and irreconcilable differences between the Christian and Islamic faith. He avers that while dialogue may not constitute reconciliation, it would foster a shared understanding and tolerance. I commend the author for taking the time to exude this stimulating work.

He engages students with critical current issues in their religious pilgrimage. His lucid discussion of essential topics helps readers to form their own opinions on such matters. This book is a must for students of religion and everyone needing to understand and appropriate their religious and social heritage.
Prof. Zablon John Nthamburi.

CHAPTER ONE

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE QUR'AN AND THE BIBLE

Short History of the Qur'an and the Bible

The Qur'an, regarded as the sacred text of Islam, is widely believed to be the divine revelation of Allah, transmitted directly to the Prophet Muhammad (Qur'an 33:40). (All the Qur'anic verses cited in this book are from "https://Qur'an.com/7?startingVerse=188." All the Biblical verses cited in the book are from the New International Version Bible. The Qur'an has been documented in written form for 23 years and is composed in Arabic. The Bible is considered the sacred text of the Christian faith, encompassing the Old and New Testaments. The Bible in question was authored in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek for centuries. Its compilation and canonisation occurred gradually over several centuries, with the contributions of more than 40 writers believed to have been divinely inspired.

The Bible was written in 1500 years. Asher avers, "The Bible is a collection of writings from approximately forty separate authors, written on three separate continents, composed in three separate languages, and was compiled over an estimated 1,500–1,600 years."[1] Some scholars assert that the New Testament was written around AD 48-100. Scholars posit that the Bible, "is the story of divine revelation, the account of God' self-disclosure to humanity through his words and action."[2] The Bible is divided into 66 books, comprising 39 Old Testament and 27 New Testament. In addition, it has 1,189 chapters, including 929 in the Old and 260 in the New Testament. In total, there are over 800,000 words. The Qur'an was written between AD 610 and 632, almost 600 years after the Bible. The Qur'an has 114 chapters with 80,000 words, merely 10% compared to the Bible.

When comparing the two religious texts, it is noteworthy that the Bible is ten times lengthier than the Qur'an. While the composition of the Qur'an spanned 23 years, the Bible, in contrast, encompasses a timeframe of more than 1500 years. Over 1500 years, a series of prophetic individuals were recipients of divine communication, which they then transcribed as instructed by the divine entity. In contrast to the Qur'an, which is generally discouraged from being translated, the Bible has undergone translation into numerous languages, enabling broader comprehension among diverse populations. The divine intention is for the word of God to be accessible to individuals of all ethnicities, irrespective of their linguistic background.

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[1] Michael A. Asher, Age of the Bible. © 2023 Christ's Church (online) https://christschurch.community/age-of-the-bible/

[2] Alex Varughese, Ed, Discovering the Bible, Story and Faith of the Biblical Communities (Kansas city: Beacon Hill Press, 2006), 20.

Table 1.1 Books of the Bible in Canonical Order

Canonical Old Testament

1. Genesis
2. Exodus
3. Leviticus
4. Numbers
5. Deuteronomy
6. Joshua
7. Judges
8. Ruth
9. 1 Samuel
10. 2 Samuel
11. 1 Kings
12. 2 Kings
13. 1 Chronicles
14. 2 Chronicles
15. Ezra
16. Nehemiah
17. Esther
18. Job
19. Psalms
20. Proverbs
21. Ecclesiastes
22. Song of Songs
23. Isaiah
24. Jeremiah
25. Lamentations
26. Ezekiel
27. Daniel
28. Hosea
29. Joel
30. Amos
31. Obadiah
32. Jonah
33. Micah
34. Nahum
35. Habakkuk
36. Zephaniah
37. Haggai
38. Zechariah
39. Malachi

Canonical New Testament

New Testament Books

1. Matthew
2. Mark
3. Luke
4. John
5. Acts
6. Romans
7. 1 Corinthians
8. 2 Corinthians
9. Galatians
10. Ephesians
11. Philippians
12. Colossians
13. 1 Thessalonians
14. 2 Thessalonians
15. 1 Timothy
16. 2 Timothy
17. Titus
18. Philemon
19. Hebrews
20. James
21. 1 Peter
22. 2 Peter
23. 1 John
24. 2 John
25. 3 John
26. Jude
27. Revelation

Table 1.2 Surahs/ Chapters and English equivalent [3]

1. al-Fātiḥah al Hamd: The Opening,	40. Al-Mumin or Ghafar: The Forgiver	79. An-Naazi'aat: Those Who Tear Out,
2. Al-Baqarah: The Calf, The Cow	41. Fussilat: Distinguished	80. Abasa: He Frowned
3. Al Imran: The Family of Imraan,	42. Ash-Shuraa: The Consultation	81 At-Takwir: The Folding Up,
4. An-Nisa: The Women	43. Az-Zukhruf: The Gold	82. Al-Infitar: The Cleaving Asunder,
5. Al-Ma'idah: The Table	44. Ad-Dukhan: The Smoke	83. Al-Mutaffifeen: The Dealers in Fraud,
6. Al-An'am: The Cattle	45. Al-Jaathiyah: The Kneeling Down	84. Al-Inshiqaq: The Splitting Asunder
7. Al-A'raf: The Heights	46. Al-Ahqaaf: The Valley	85. Al-Burooj: The Great Constellations
8. Al-Anfal: The Spoils of War	47. Muhammad: Muhammad	86. At-Taariq: The Night-Visitant
9. At-Tawbah: The Repentance	48. Al-Fath: The Victory	87. Al-A'laa: The Most High,
10. Yunus: Jonah	49. Al-Hujuraat: The Dwellings	88. Al-Ghaashiyah: The Overwhelming Event
11. Hud: Hud	50. Qaaf: Q̈āf	89. Al-Fajr: The Break of Day
12. Yusuf: Joseph	51. Adh-Dhariyat: The Scatterers	90. Al-Balad: The City
13. Ar-Ra'd: The Thunder	52. At-Toor: The Mount	91. Ash-Shams: The Sun
14. Ibrahim: Abraham	53. An-Najm: The Star	92. Al-Layl: The Night
15. Al-Hijr: The Rocky Tract, The Stoneland, The Rock City, Al- Hijr	54. Al-Qamar: The Moon	93. Ad-Dhuha: The Glorious Morning Light: The Expansion of Breast
16. An-Nahl: The Bees,	55. Ar-Rahman: The Most Gracious	94. Ash-Sharh (Al-Inshirah): The Clinging Clot
17. Al-Isra: The Night Journey	56. Al-Waqi'a: The Event	95. At-Teen: The Fig Tree

[3] The Spiritual Life © 2010 - 2030. All Rights Reserved. https://slife.org/list-of-chapters-in-the-Qur'an/

18. Al-Kahf: The Cave	57. Al-Hadeed: The Iron	96. Al-Alaq: The Clinging Clot
19. Maryam: Mary	58. Al-Mujadila: the Reasoning	97. Al-Qadr: The Night of Honor,
20. Ta-Ha: Ṭāʾ Hāʾ (a name of Muhammad)	59. Al-Hashr: The Gathering	98. Al-Bayyinahh: The Clear Evidence
21. Al-Anbiya: The Prophets	60. Al-Mumtahanah: The Tested	99. Az-Zalzalah: The Earthquake
22. Al-Hajj: The Pilgrimage	61. As-Saff: the Row	100. Al-'Adiyat: The War Horse
23. Al-Mu'minun: The Believers	62. Al-Jumu'ah: Friday	101. Al-Qaari'ah: The Striking Hour
24. An-Nur: The Light	63. Al-Munafiqoon: The Hypocrites	102. At-Takathur: The Piling Up
25. Al-Furqan: The Criterion	64. At-Taghabun: The Loss and Gain	103. Al-'Asr: The Time
26. Ash-Shu'ara: The Poets	65. At-Talaq: Divorce	104. Al-Humazah: The Slanderer
27. An-Naml: The Ants	66. At-Tahreem: The Prohibition	105. Al-Feel: The Elephant
28. Al-Qasas: The Stories	67. Al-Mulk: The Dominion, Sovereignty, Control	106. Quraysh: The Quraysh
29. Al-Ankabut: The Spider	68. Al-Qalam: The Pen	107. Al-Maa'oon: The Neighbourly Assistance
30. Ar-Rum: The Romans	69. Al-Haaqqa: The Sure Reality, The Laying-Bare of the Truth	108. Al-Kawthar: Abundance,
31. Luqmaan: Luqman	70. Al-Ma'aarij: The Ascending Stairways	109. Al-Kaafiroon: The Disbelievers
32. As-Sajdah: The Prostration	71. Nooh: Noah	110. An-Nasr: The Help,
33. Al-Ahzaab: The Combined Forces	72. Al-Jinn: The Jinn, The Spirits, The Unseen Beings	111. Al-Masad: The Twisted Strands
34. Saba (surah): Shebeans	73. Al-Muzzammil: the Wrapped	112: Al-Ikhlaas: Purity of Faith
35. Faatir: The Originator	74. Al-Muddaththir: the Cloaked	113. Al-Falaq: The Daybreak

36. Ya-Sin: Yāʾ Sīn (a name of Muhammad)	75. Al-Qiyamah: Resurrection	114. Al-Naas: Mankind
37. As-Saffat: Those Ranged in Ranks	76 Al-Insaan: The Human	
38. Saad: Ṣād	77. Al-Mursalat: Those Sent Forth,	
39. Az-Zumar: Groups	78. An-Naba': The Great News	

Similarities Between the Bible and the Qur'an

The Bible and the Qur'an represent the sacred texts of the two predominant global religions, Christianity and Islam. Although both writings are held in high regard as sacred and believed to be the divine word of God/Allah, they also exhibit notable distinctions. The Bible and the Qur'an have significantly influenced societies over many centuries. While the Bible and the Qur'an hold considerable influence over their respective followers, they diverge considerably in their portrayals of the divine entities, namely God/Allah.

One commonly recognised resemblance between the Bible and the Qur'an pertains to revelations. The Bible is widely regarded as a repository of divine revelation. It possesses supreme authority in the beliefs and conduct of individuals who identify as Christians. Muslims see the Qur'an and hadith as repositories of divine revelation from Allah, with unparalleled power in guiding subjects about faith and conduct. The Bible and the Qur'an hold significant theological and cultural importance as hallowed and authoritative scriptures in their respective religious traditions. Both writings are commonly regarded as divinely inspired and serve as moral guidance for adherents.

The Bible and the Qur'an include narratives about prophets and their teachings, featuring several individuals with comparable names. The Qur'an briefly mentions the prophets without providing extensive details on their services, in contrast to the Bible, where such information is more explicitly stated. The Bible has comprehensive narratives of prophets who received divine revelations and conveyed God's intentions to their respective societies. Comprehending the narratives inside the Qur'an may be a formidable task for someone lacking familiarity with the Bible. The Qur'an contains narratives that have a resemblance to specific stories found in the Bible. However, it does not incorporate verbatim quotations from the Bible. A good example is what we hear in Qur'an 7:40 and found in Matthew 19:24. The Qur'an (10:94) commands Muslims to read the Bible in the following words:

- Qur'an 7:40, Surely those who receive our revelations with denial and arrogance, the gates of heaven will not be opened for them, nor will they enter Paradise until a camel passes through the eye of a needle. This is how We reward the wicked.

- Matthew 19:24, Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.
- Qur'an 10:94, If you ˹O Prophet˺ are in doubt about ˹these stories˺ that We have revealed to you, then ask those who read the Scripture before you. The truth has certainly come to you from your Lord, so do not be one of those who doubt,[4]

Differences Between the Bible and the Qur'an

There are notable distinctions that can be observed between the Bible and the Qur'an. The Bible serves as the canonical text of Christianity, whereas the Qur'an is a revered scripture within the Islamic faith. Christians exhibited deep reverence for and engaged in scholarly pursuits surrounding the Bible, whereas Muslims demonstrated profound veneration and engaged in academic endeavors about the Qur'an. The Bible is a compilation of 66 books authored by more than 40 individuals spanning 1,500 years. It encompasses a wide range of subjects.

In contrast, the Qur'an is a literary work authored only by the Prophet Muhammad, including a more limited scope of subject matter. The Bible encompasses diverse literary genres, including historical accounts, poetic compositions, and prophetic writings. Furthermore, the Qur'an predominantly consists of prophetic literature. The biblical canon comprises two major divisions: the Old Testament, which encompasses 39 works, and the New Testament, which consists of 27 books. The New Testament comprises a compilation of religious texts that document the teachings and actions of Jesus Christ, alongside the activities of his apostles, in addition to various additional writings from the early Christian era. In addition, the Qur'an and Hadith comprise a unified body of literature encompassing the divine revelations bestowed upon the esteemed Prophet Muhammad. The compilation of the Hadith occurred around 150-200 years after the demise of the honorable prophet Muhammad. The Bible primarily centers on the historical narrative of the Hebrew people and the teachings of Jesus, whereas the Qur'an predominantly emphasizes the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad.

Content of the Bible and the Qur'an

A notable disparity exists in the substance of the Bible and the Qur'an. Both scriptures encompass narratives of prophets and their teachings; nonetheless, Muslims believe that the Qur'an represents the ultimate divine revelation from Allah, surpassing all preceding revelations. Understanding the content of the Qur'an, particularly its references to Biblical narratives, might present difficulties without a comprehensive exploration of the primary source material, namely the Bible. In most disputes propagated by Muslim individuals, the participants often focus their

[4] Rugare Rukuni and Erna Oliver, 'African Ethiopia and Byzantine imperial orthodoxy: Politically influenced self-definition of Christianity', HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies 75(4), a5314. https://doi. org/10.4102/hts.v75i4.5314 , 2019.

arguments on criticizing the Bible, as the Qur'an instructs Muslims to engage with its contents and comprehend its teachings. As an illustration, it is worth noting that the Qur'an references several prominent figures such as Moses, Job, Jonah, Aaron, David, and Solomon. However, it is important to highlight that the Qur'an does not provide elaborate details regarding these individuals. According to verse 10:94 of the Qur'an, Muslims are encouraged to read the Bible to gain insight into the various roles fulfilled by the prophets mentioned therein. The following quranic verses talk about the previous revelation and how they ought to be treated:

1. Qur'an 4:163, Indeed, We have sent revelation to you ˹O Prophet˺ as We sent revelation to Noah and the prophets after him. We also sent revelation to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and his descendants, ˹as well as˺ Jesus, Job, Jonah, Aaron, and Solomon. And to David We gave the Psalms.
2. Qur'an 12:111, In their stories there is truly a lesson for people of reason. This message cannot be a fabrication, rather ˹it is˺ a confirmation of previous revelation, a detailed explanation of all things, a guide, and a mercy for people of faith.
3. Qur'an 16:102 Say, "The holy spirit1 has brought it down from your Lord with the truth to reassure the believers, and as a guide and good news for those who submit ˹to Allah˺."
4. Qur'an 17:2, And We gave Moses the Scripture and made it a guide for the Children of Israel, ˹stating:˺ "Do not take besides Me any other Trustee of Affairs,
5. Qur'an 17:55, Your Lord knows best all those in the heavens and the earth. And We have surely favored some prophets above others, and to David We gave the Psalms.
6. Qur'an 29:46 Do not argue with the People of the Book unless gracefully, except with those of them who act wrongfully. And say, "We believe in what has been revealed to us and what was revealed to you. Our God and your God is ˹only˺ One. And to Him we ˹fully˺ submit."
7. Qur'an 35:31, The Book We have revealed to you ˹O Prophet˺ is the truth, confirming what came before it.1 Surely Allah is All-Aware, All-Seeing of His servants.

Prophet Muhammed was strongly inclined to clarify to individuals who did not adhere to the Islamic faith that he did not anticipate their conversion to Islam, nor did he seek to adopt their religious beliefs, as stated in Quran 109. The following verses make that claim:

- Qur'an 109:2-6, I do not worship what you worship, 3 nor do you worship what I worship, 4 I will never worship what you worship, 5 nor will you ever worship what I worship. 6 You have your way, and I have my Way.

The Bible is God's Word.

The Bible is the word of God. Christians view the Bible as suitable for training in righteousness as stipulated in 2 Timothy 3:16-17. Jesus is the culmination of prophecies as noted in the Bible:

- 2 Timothy 3:16-17, All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.
- Matthew 5:17, Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.
- Philippians 2:10, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,

How the Qur'an Cites the Bible

The Qur'an makes numerous references to the Bible within its textual content. It acknowledges the preceding texts as divine revelations bestowed upon prior prophets and messengers. Furthermore, the Qur'an addresses several inaccuracies or misrepresentations from the Bible, which it claims to correct and clarify. Despite the Qur'an referencing the Torah, Psalms, and Gospel, it posits that these religious texts have undergone distortions. One area that the Qur'an does not adequately address pertains to the identification of the individuals responsible for the distortion of the Bible, as well as the specific period during which these alterations occurred. Here are some examples of how the Qur'an cites the Bible:

1. Qur'an 24:30,˹O Prophet!˺ Tell the believing men to lower their gaze and guard their chastity. That is purer for them. Surely Allah is All-Aware of what they do. Matthew 5:27-28, 27 You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.'28 But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.
2. The Qur'an references the Torah, the holy scripture of Judaism, as a guidance and light. Qur'an 5:44, Indeed, We revealed the Torah, containing guidance and light, by which the prophets, who submitted themselves to Allah, made judgments for Jews. So too did the rabbis and scholars judge according to Allah's Book, with which they were entrusted and of which they were made keepers. So do not fear the people; fear Me! Nor trade my revelations for a fleeting gain. And those who do not judge by what Allah has revealed are ˹truly˺ the disbelievers.
3. The Qur'an acknowledges the Gospel of Jesus as a divine revelation but claims that some of its teachings and stories have been altered or misunderstood. Qur'an 5:46, Then in the footsteps of the prophets, We sent Jesus, son of Mary, confirming the Torah revealed before him. And We gave him the Gospel containing guidance and light and confirming what was revealed in the Torah—a guide and a lesson to the God-fearing.
4. The Qur'an claims that Christian followers have distorted some of the teachings of the Torah and Gospel. Qur'an 4:46, Some Jews take words out

of context and say, “We listen, and we disobey,” “Hear! May you never hear,” and “Râ’ina!” [Herd us!]—playing with words and discrediting the faith. Had they said ˹courteously˺, “We hear and obey,” “Listen to us,” and “Unẓurna,” [Tend to us!] it would have been better for them and more proper. Allah has condemned them for their disbelief, so they do not believe except for a few.

5. The Qur’an emphasizes that it is the final and complete revelation from God. Qur’an 5:3 Forbidden to you are carrion, blood, and swine; what is slaughtered in the name of any other than Allah; what is killed by strangling, beating, a fall, or by being gored to death; what is partly eaten by a predator unless you slaughter it; and what is sacrificed on altars. You are also forbidden to draw lots for decisions.1 This is all evil. Today the disbelievers have given up all hope of ˹undermining˺ your faith. So do not fear them; fear Me! Today I have perfected your faith for you, completed My favor upon you, and chosen Islam as your way. But whoever is compelled by extreme hunger—not intending to sin—then surely Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Both manuscripts, namely the Bible and the Qur’an, share the commonality of being divine revelations attributed to God/Allah, encompassing narratives of prophets and their teachings. However, it is essential to acknowledge that both texts also exhibit notable distinctions. The Bible’s and Qur’an’s religious traditions, compositions, and substance exhibit significant distinctions. Both scriptural texts have narratives and allusions about a shared set of individuals, including Adam, Noah, Abraham, Lot, Isaac, Ishmael, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, Goliath, Elisha, Jonah, Mary, and John the Baptist. However, the available information regarding the actions of these individuals, as documented in the Qur’an, is limited. The Qur’an rejects the divinity of Jesus. The Qur’an does not accept the narrative of the crucifixion and resurrection. The concept of Jesus’ virgin birth is included in both the Bible and the Qur’an, albeit with distinct variations in their respective narratives. While the Bible references 166 women, the Qur’an solely focuses on the narrative of Mary, who is recognised as the mother of Jesus.

CHAPTER TWO

INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM MISSIOLOGY

A Brief Introduction to Christian Missiology

The historical narrative surrounding the interactions between Christians and Muslims spans several centuries. Christianity has its foundation in the sacred scriptures of the Bible, encompassing both the Old and New Testaments. The Bible comprises around 3500 years. Islam is based on the teachings of the Qur'an, a religious text that has existed for more than 1400 years. While the Qur'an does recognise certain aspects of Biblical texts, it diverges significantly in its approach. These religious traditions are in the Abrahamic faith category, alongside Judaism. Christianity and Islam are renowned for their missionary endeavors.

The early church and its fundamental beliefs have remained the same for years. Various generations have experienced God's as He revealed Himself to them. The Bible provides an accurate picture of God and his relationship to humanity. God expects His revelation to be exposed to others so they can respond through faith to His decrees. In that regard, Van Rheenen writes that missions "are the plans of committed believers to accomplish the mission of God."[5] Barnes notes that Christians are ambassadors of Christ who proclaim Jesus' message to the communities of their choice as God leads them.[6] The Bible says, "It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation (Romans 15:20)."

The Bible presents a range of instances wherein God's revelation to humans is demonstrated. The early Christian community created creeds and statements of faith to comprehend the nature of God and his interaction with society. The Apostolic Creed emerged during the second century of the Common Era (CE) as a concise encapsulation of the fundamental tenets of the Christian religion. The early Christian community derived advantages from consolidating Biblical teachings and ideas, which guided adherents in their nascent religious commitment. In historical and contemporary contexts, the universal church recites the Apostles' Creed, a comprehensive expression of Biblical truths and a declaration of faith. During the third century, the Church Council of Nicene, which took place in the city of Nicaea in Bithynia in 325 AD, formulated a creed to guide believers in their profession of faith. Furthermore, the act of reciting the prayer, usually referred to as the "Lord's Prayer," as taught by Jesus, has been a longstanding practice within the Christian tradition, as documented in the Gospel of Matthew (6:9).

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[5] Gailyn Van Rheenen, Missions: Biblical Foundations and Contemporary Strategies (Grands Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996), 20.

[6] Phil Barness, Christopher chanda, Tapiwa Ngwira and Bento Simaoi, Introduction to Missiology Africa Theology Series (Niamey, Niger:Axis Resources , 2021), 26.

Christian Statement of Faith

I: Apostles' Creed

The Apostles' Creed is one of the oldest and most widely used statements of the Christian faith. It summarizes the fundamental beliefs of the Christian faith and is used in various Christian denominations. The following is the statement of faith named the Apostles' Creed with references to the relevant Bible passages:

1. I believe in God, the Father almighty.
    - Genesis 17:1, When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, I am God Almighty; walk before me faithfully and be blameless.
        - Isaiah 63:16, But you are our Father, though Abraham does not know us or Israel acknowledge us; you, Lord, are our Father, our Redeemer from of old is your name.
        - Matthew 6:9, This, then, is how you should pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
2. Creator of heaven and earth.
    - Genesis 1:1, In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
    - Psalm 115:15, May you be blessed by the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.
    - Acts 4:24, When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. "Sovereign Lord," they said, "you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them."
    - Colossians 1:16, For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.
3. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
    - Matthew 3:17, And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."
    - John 3:16, For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
    - Acts 2:36,
    - Philippians 2:9-11, Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
4. Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
    - Matthew 1:18, This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.
    - Luke 1:35, The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."
5. born of the Virgin Mary,
    - Matthew 1:23, "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

- Luke 2:7, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in clothes and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

6. suffered under Pontius Pilate,
   - Matthew 27:2, So they bound him, led him away and handed him over to Pilate the governor.
   - Mark 15:1, Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin, made their plans. So they bound Jesus, led him away and handed him over to Pilate.
   - Luke 23:1, Then the whole assembly rose and led him off to Pilate.
   - John 18:29, So Pilate came out to them and asked, “What charges are you bringing against this man?”
7. was crucified, died, and was buried;
   - Matthew 27:35, When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots.
   - Mark 15:24, And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get.
   - Luke 23:33, When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left.
   - John 19:18, There they crucified him, and with him two others—one on each side and Jesus in the middle.
   - Romans 6:4, We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.
8. He descended to the dead.
   - Acts 2:31, Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay.
   - Romans 10:7, “or ‘Who will descend into the deep?” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).
   - Ephesians 4:9, What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions?
   - 1 Peter 3:19, After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits—
9. On the third day, he rose again;
   - Matthew 28:6, He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.
   - Mark 16:6, “Don’t be alarmed,” he said. “You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him.”
   - Luke 24:6, He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee:
   - 1 Corinthians 15:4, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,
10. he ascended into heaven,

- Mark 16:19, After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God.
- Luke 24:51, While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven.
- Acts 1:9, After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

11. He is seated at the right hand of the Father,
    - Mark 16:19, After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God.
    - Luke 22:69, “But from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the mighty God.”
    - Acts 2:33, Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.
    - Hebrews 1:3, The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.
12. And he will come to judge the living and the dead.
    - Matthew 25:31-32, 31 When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.
    - Acts 10:42, He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead.
    - 2 Timothy 4:1, In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge:
    - 1 Peter 4:5, But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.
13. I believe in the Holy Spirit,
    - John 14:26, But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.
    - Acts 2:4, All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.
    - Romans 8:9, You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ.
    - 1 Corinthians 2:10-11, 10 these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit.
      The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. 11 For who knows a person’s thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.
14. the holy catholic Church,

- Matthew 16:18, And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.
- Ephesians 1:22-23, And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.
- Colossians 1:18, And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

15. the communion of saints,
    - Romans 12:5, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.
    - 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. 13 For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. 14 Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many. 15 Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. 16 And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? 18 But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. 19 If they were all one part, where would the body be? 20 As it is, there are many parts, but one body. 21 The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” 22 On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, 23 and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, 24 while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, 25 so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. 26 If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. 27 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.
    - Ephesians 2:19-22, Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. 21 In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. 22 And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.
16. the forgiveness of sins,
    - Matthew 26:28, This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.
    - Acts 10:43, All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.

- Colossians 1:13-14, For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.
- 1 John 1:9, If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

17. the resurrection of the body,
    - Job 19:26-27, And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; 27 I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!
    - Isaiah 26:19, But your dead will live, Lord; their bodies will rise—let those who dwell in the dust wake up and shout for joy—your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead.
    - Daniel 12:2, Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.
    - 1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 42 So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; 43 it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; 44 it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.
18. and the life everlasting. Amen.
    - John 3:16, For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
    - John 17:3, Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.
    - 1 John 5:11-13, And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. 13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.
    - Revelation 21:1-4, Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4 ’He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

II: Nicene Creed

The Nicene Creed is a Christian faith statement adopted at the First Council of Nicaea in 325 AD. It is a summary of the beliefs of the Christian Church and is considered one of the most critical and influential creeds in the history of Christianity. The statement of the Nicene Creed reads as follows:

- I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.
- And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man; he was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried, and the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; from thence he shall come again, with glory, to judge the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.
- And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.
- And I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.[7]



Plate 2, Council of Nicaea in 325, depicted in a Byzantine fresco in the basilica of St. Nicholas in Demre, Turkey. https://www.britannica.com/event/First-Council-of-Nicaea-325

[7] Alister E. McGrath, Historical Theology: An Introduction to the History of Christian Thought, 2nd edition (Hoboken, New Jersey:Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 169-170.

III: The Lord's Prayer

The Lord's Prayer is a Christian prayer that Jesus Christ taught to his disciples. The Bible presents the Lord's prayer in the book of Matthew (6: 9-13) and Luke (11:2-4) in the following words:

Matthew 6:9-13

- 9 This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, 10 your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us today our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'
- Luke 11:2-4: "'He said to them, "When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come. 3 Give us each day our daily bread. 4 Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.'"

The Lord's prayer can be explained as follows:

- ✔ **Our Father in heaven:** Connect with God relationally.
- ✔ **Hallowed be Your Name:** Worship God.
- ✔ **Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven:** Pray His agenda for your life, acknowledging that His plans are better than our own.
- ✔ **Give us today our daily bread:** Ask God for the things you need.
- ✔ **Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors:** Acknowledge and ask forgiveness for your sins and forgive others who have wronged you.
- ✔ **Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one:** Ask for His help in being victorious over sin and temptation and request His protection from the attacks of the enemy.
- ✔ **For yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever:** Proclaim faith in God and place your trust in His power and leadership.

A Summary of Early Church Missiology

Christianity is classified as one of the Abrahamic religions. The religion in question, being monotheistic, finds its foundation in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. With a global following of over two billion individuals, this religious tradition is the most prominent and widespread in terms of its believers. The Christian faith is founded upon the theological conviction that Jesus Christ is the divine Son of God who incarnated in human form to redeem humanity from the consequences of sin and mortality, thereby facilitating their eternal communion with the divine. The

historical trajectory of Christianity exhibits diverse instances of its remarkable capacity to disseminate the gospel message, especially under circumstances characterized by hostility.

The origins of Christianity can be traced back to the initial century AD, within the Roman province of Judea, a region that showed hostility against the dissemination of the gospel. Judea was under Roman domination then, and the Jewish people were yearning for a political Messiah to rescue them from their captors. Jesus of Nazareth demonstrated numerous miraculous acts as evidence of his identity as the anticipated Messiah while explicitly disassociating himself from any political aspirations. However, the religious authorities of that era were not thrilled with his methodology. Around 30 AD, Jesus underwent apprehension, trial, and crucifixion at the hands of Roman troops, as documented in the Bible. According to the canonical gospels, namely Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, Jesus underwent apprehension and a subsequent trial conducted by the Sanhedrin (Matthew 26:57-68). Following this, he faced a trial presided over by Pontius Pilate (Matthew 27:11-14), who ultimately condemned him to the punishments of scourging and crucifixion. Shelley claims, “The court charged him with blasphemy and voted to put him to death, but for that, they were forced to turn to a despised Roman.”[8] After three days, he rose from death and lived forever at the right of God (Matthew 28:5-6).

- Matthew 26:57-68, Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the teachers of the law and the elders had assembled. 58 But Peter followed him at a distance, right up to the courtyard of the high priest. He entered and sat down with the guards to see the outcome. 59 The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death. 60 But they did not find any, though many false witnesses came forward. Finally two came forward 61 and declared, “This fellow said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.’” 62 Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, “Are you not going to answer?” What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?” 63 But Jesus remained silent. The high priest said to him, “I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.” 64 “You have said so,” Jesus replied. “But I say to all of you: From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.” 65 Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, “He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy. 66 What do you think?” “He is worthy of death,” they answered. 67 Then they spit in his face and struck him with their fists. Others slapped him 68 and said, “Prophesy to us, Messiah. Who hit you?”
- Matthew 27:11-14, Meanwhile Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?” “You have said so,” Jesus replied. 12 When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he gave no answer. 13 Then Pilate asked him, “Don’t you hear the

[8] Bruce L. Shelley, Church History in Plain Language, updated 2nd edition (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1982), 11.

testimony they are bringing against you?” 14 But Jesus made no reply, not even to a single charge—to the great amazement of the governor.

- Matthew 28:5-6, The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. 6 He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. 7 Then go quickly and tell his disciples: ‘He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.’ Now I have told you.”

Following the crucifixion and subsequent resurrection of Jesus, his disciples proceeded to disseminate his teachings. The early Christian groups successfully built churches throughout many regions within the Roman Empire and corresponded through written letters. These letters eventually formed the foundational texts of the New Testament in the Christian Bible. The individual known as the Apostle Paul, who had previously engaged in the persecution of adherents of the Christian faith, underwent a transformative experience that led to his subsequent emergence as a highly prominent person within the nascent Christian movement during its early stages. The individual embarked on long journeys around the Mediterranean region, where they established churches and disseminated the gospel. The church experienced numerous persecutions from both the Roman government and Judaism; nonetheless, it ultimately achieved triumph. The Book of Acts records Apostle Paul’s conversion with the following words:

- Acts 9:1-15, Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord’s disciples. He went to the high priest 2 and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. 3 As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. 4 He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” 5 “Who are you, Lord?” Saul asked. “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,” he replied. 6 “Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.” 7 The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. 8 Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. 9 For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything. 10 In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, “Ananias!” “Yes, Lord,” he answered. 11 The Lord told him, “Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. 12 In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight.” 13 “Lord,” Ananias answered, “I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem. 14 And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name.” 15 But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. 16 I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.”

- The Bible shows Jesus' mission model in Matthew 10 and Luke 9. He sent the disciples to the villages to share the gospel. On one occasion He sent two by two disciples to various villages to share the message of God to the people (Luke 10:1-12). The following are the verses that show Jesus entrusting the Gospel to his disciples while he was still on earth. After Jesus' ascension, the apostles took to the streets of Jerusalem and other cities, sometimes pushed by persecution or willing to preach the Gospel. The Bible shows the Gospel's widespread preaching occasioned by the Rome persecution (Acts 8:1-8). The following verses teach how the mission was being carried out in the early formation of Christianity:

- Matthew 10:1-33, Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.
2 These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; 3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; 4 Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him. 5 These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. 6 Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. 7 As you go, proclaim this message: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' 8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give. 9 "Do not get any gold or silver or copper to take with you in your belts— 10 no bag for the journey or extra shirt or sandals or a staff, for the worker is worth his keep. 11 Whatever town or village you enter, search there for some worthy person and stay at their house until you leave. 12 As you enter the home, give it your greeting. 13 If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you. 14 If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, leave that home or town and shake the dust off your feet. 15 Truly I tell you, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town. 16 "I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. 17 Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues. 18 On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. 19 But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, 20 for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. 21 "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. 22 You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. 23 When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. Truly I tell you, you will not finish going through the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes. 24 "The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master. 25 It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household! 26 "So do not be afraid of them, for there

is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. 27 What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. 28 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. 29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care. 30 And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. 32 "Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. 33 But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven.

- Luke 9:1-6 , When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, 2 and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. 3 He told them: "Take nothing for the journey—no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra shirt. 4 Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that town. 5 If people do not welcome you, leave their town and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them." 6 So they set out and went from village to village, proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere.
- Luke 10: 1-12, After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. 2 He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. 3 Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. 4 Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road. 5 "When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.' 6 If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace will rest on them; if not, it will return to you. 7 Stay there, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house. 8 "When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is offered to you. 9 Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' 10 But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, 11 'Even the dust of your town we wipe from our feet as a warning to you. Yet be sure of this: The kingdom of God has come near.' 12 I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town.
- Acts 8:1-8, Acts 8:1-8 And Saul approved of their killing him.

  The Church Persecuted and Scattered

  On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. 2 Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. 3 But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off both men and women and put them in prison.

Philip in Samaria

4 Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. 5 Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah there. 6 When the crowds heard Philip and saw the signs he performed, they all paid close attention to what he said. 7 For with shrieks, impure spirits came out of many, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed. 8 So there was great joy in that city.

- Jesus' message did not ascend with him to heaven. His message and teachings spread to Jewish and Gentile communities across the Roman Empire. The Bible says, "Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life (John 6: 35- 37)." Christianity became the Roman Empire's official religion under Emperor Constantine in the fourth century. In 313 (AD), Emperor Constantine issued the Edict of Milan (Milan, Italy), which established religious toleration and freed Christians from persecution, resulting in Christianity becoming the Roman Empire's official religion.[9] Hellfeld notes, "Until the Council of Nicaea in 325, Christians were persecuted, churches set ablaze, and their wealth confiscated."[10] The Council of Nicaea (now İznik, Turkey), convened by Constantine in 325 AD, confirmed the early church teaching on the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which holds that there is one God in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit based on the holy scriptures. This council also produced the Christian statement of faith, commonly known as the Nicene Creed, which remains a central statement of Christian belief today. Hellfeld further says, "On February 27, 380, in Thessaloniki, the Eastern Roman Emperor Theodosius I (347 - 395) signed a decree in the presence of the Western Roman Emperor Valentinian II (371 - 392) that made Christianity the religion of the state...[11] The 'bread of life' could not be contained in the Roman empire, but it spread to all communities worldwide as Jesus had commanded his apostle to spread God's Message to the entire world in Matthew 28:18-20.
- John 6: 35- 37, Then Jesus declared, I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. 36 But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe. 37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.
- Matthew 28:18-20, Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make

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[9] Fredericksen, L., Benz, Ernst Wilhelm, Wainwright, Geoffrey, Crow, Paul A., Lindberg, Carter H., McGinn, Bernard J., Marty, Martin E., Hogg, William Richey, Sullivan, Lawrence E., Spencer, Sidney, Hick, John, Chadwick, Henry, Pelikan, Jaroslav Jan, and Stefon, Matt. "Christianity." Encyclopedia Britannica, October 15, 2023. https://www.britannica.com/topic/Christianity.

[10] Matthias von Hellfeld (dc), Editor: Andreas Illmer, "Christianity becomes the Religion of the Roman Empire" - February 27, 380, 2009

https://www.dw.com/en/christianity-becomes-the-religion-of-the-roman-empire-february-27-380/a-4602728

[11] Hellfeld, 380,

disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Over the centuries, Christianity has split into many branches, including Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and Protestantism. These splits were often the result of theological disagreements or political conflicts. For example, the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century, led by Martin Luther, responded to what he saw as corruption and abuse within the Roman Catholic Church.[12] Luther's teachings of salvation by faith alone, the authority of scripture, and the priesthood of all believers formed the basis of Protestantism.[13] According to Luther, the Bible is the primary source of teaching on justification by faith and salvation is by the grace of God, as noted in the following verses:

- Romans 1:17, For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."
- Romans 3:28, For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law.
- Romans 4:16 Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who have the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all.
- Romans 5:1, Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
- Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
- Ephesians 2:8-9, For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast.
- Psalm 62:1 Truly my soul finds rest in God; my salvation comes from him.

The influence of Christianity has been of great significance in shaping various world cultures throughout history. The Bible and its teachings have profoundly influenced different domains, encompassing religion, art, literature, music, and politics. The Gregorian calendar, sometimes called the Christian calendar, has achieved global dominance. Christianity has played a significant role in several social movements, such as the abolition of slavery, the advancement of civil rights, and the advocacy for social justice. Human transformation occurs inside and externally wherever the Gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed. Christian missions are grounded on the fundamental tenets of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, which continue to hold paramount significance in contemporary times. As the late historian Jaroslav Pelikan once said, "Regardless of what anyone may

[12] Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Reformation." Encyclopedia Britannica, September 4, 2023. https://www.britannica.com/event/Reformation.

[13] Martin Luther, (Trans) Tryntje Helfferich, The Essential Luther (Indianapolis, Indiana: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2018), i-xxviii.

personally think or believe about him, Jesus of Nazareth has been the dominant figure in the history of Western culture for almost twenty centuries."[14] It can be said that the teaching of Jesus, as written in the Holy Bible, has been the transforming power of human life.

Early Church Missionary Activity

Christianity is a missional religion. Early Jesus' followers responsibly felt the need to spread the salvation message beyond the boundaries of Palestine (the land of current Israel and Palestine today). Early church missionary activity took evangelistic efforts of spreading the gospel message of Jesus Christ seriously and went to different parts of the known world. The early church's missionary activity was central to the spread of Christianity, from its origins in the Mediterranean[15] to Europe, Asia, and Africa. The primitive church was focused on spreading the good news of Jesus's salvation to everyone regardless of race, gender, religion, or social status.

The book of Acts in the New Testament provides a detailed account of the early church's missionary activities. The apostles, particularly Peter and Paul, were instrumental in spreading the message of Jesus Christ throughout the Roman Empire.[16] They engaged in significant travel, successfully establishing ecclesiastical institutions and communities of faithful adherents throughout diverse geographical areas. The conversion of the Roman Emperor Constantine in the 4th century was a highly consequential occurrence in the early church's missionary endeavors. The occurrence in question led to the extensive adoption of Christianity across the Roman Empire and served as a foundation for establishing the Roman Catholic Church. This event effectively halted the persecution of believers by the Roman Empire. In addition to their endeavors within the Roman Empire, early Christian missionaries embarked on journeys to other regions outside its boundaries. For example, St. Thomas, one of the twelve apostles, is believed to have traveled to India to preach the gospel, and his followers established a thriving Christian community in the region.[17]

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[14] MacCulloch, D. (201

[15] Ancient Mediterranean today constitutes the following countries: Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, Syria, Tunisia, and Turkey.

[16] At its zenith, the Roman Empire included these today's countries and territories: most of Europe (England, Wales, Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Belgium, Gibraltar, Romania, Moldova, Ukraine), coastal northern Africa (Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Egypt), the Balkans (Albania, Greece, Hungary, Bosnia, Slovenia, Croatia, Bulgaria, Turkey), the Mediterranean Sea, the Black Sea, Asia Minor, and some parts of Mesopotamia and the Middle East (Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Israel). Roman Empire in Asia Minor, Copyrights © 1990–2023 All Rights Reserved by Burak Sansal (online)

(https://www.allaboutturkey.com/romans.html)

[17] Mathew, K.S., Joseph Chacko Chennattuserry, and Antony Bungalowparambil, eds. "ABOUT THE EDITORS." In St. Thomas and India: Recent Research, vii–viii. 1517 Media, 2020. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvr7fcf2.3.

Motivations for Missionary Activity

The early church's missionary activity was primarily motivated by a sense of obligation to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with others. This sense of responsibility was rooted in Jesus' command, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19)." The evangelist believed that the gospel was the only means of salvation. The Bible writes, "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12)." The Bible further states, 14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? 15 And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" (Romans 10:14-15)." The early church was aware of what the Bible says, "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns! (Isaiah 52:7)." Encouraged by Jesus own promise, "… And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age (Matthew 28:20)," the believers preached the Gospel everywhere.

The early church's missionary endeavors were driven by a sense of duty and a sincere aspiration to form and enlarge Christian communities. The early adherents of Christianity believed that the gospel could effect profound transformations at the societal and personal levels. Consequently, their objective was to provide communal settings wherein the gospel might be actively practiced, showcasing its profound capacity for personal and societal transformation. The following Bible verses attest to the transforming power of the Gospel:

- Romans 1:16, For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. 17 For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."
- 1 Corinthians 1:18, For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.
- 1 Corinthians 4:20, For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.
- 1 Corinthians 2:4, My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power,
- 1 Thessalonians 1:5, because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake.

Methods of Early Church Missionary Activity

The early church's missionary activity was carried out primarily by itinerant preachers and evangelists. These individuals traveled to new areas, preaching the gospel and establishing new Christian communities. They often worked in pairs, as Jesus had sent out his disciples in pairs, "After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go (Luke 10:1)." Typically, these pairings would initiate the process by identifying a host who would offer accommodations and sustenance. Subsequently, they would commence disseminating religious doctrines and imparting knowledge within the immediate vicinity. Early Christians spread the gospel through letters and epistles. An illustration of this can be found in the New Testament, where numerous epistles authored by the Apostles are addressed to different congregations, guiding subjects about religious beliefs and conduct. The writings as mentioned above were publicly recited within the community, fostering a collective consciousness and a shared sense of identity among the initial adherents of Christianity. For example, the Book of Acts 9:32-42 shares a story of Peter visiting churches in Lydda, Sharon, and Joppa, as shown in the following verses:

- Acts 9:32-42, As Peter traveled about the country, he went to visit the Lord's people who lived in Lydda. 33 There he found a man named Aeneas, who was paralyzed and had been bedridden for eight years. 34 "Aeneas," Peter said to him, "Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and roll up your mat." Immediately Aeneas got up. 35 All those who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord. 36 In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (in Greek her name is Dorcas); she was always doing good and helping the poor. 37 About that time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. 38 Lydda was near Joppa; so when the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him and urged him, "Please come at once!" 39 Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them. 40 Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. 41 He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called for the believers, especially the widows, and presented her to them alive. 42 This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord.

Impact of Early Church Missionary Activity

The missionary endeavors of the early church had a profound influence on the evolution and growth of Christianity. The Pauline mission played a pivotal role in expanding Christian communities outside the geographical confines of Palestine, fostering a collective feeling of identity and purpose among the early adherents of Christianity. Additionally, it facilitated the dissemination of the gospel and the establishment of Christianity as a global faith. The apostles emerged as pivotal

individuals in initiating and guiding the early church's missionary endeavors. The missionary journeys undertaken by the apostles played a crucial role in the establishment of many communities around the Mediterranean region, thereby exerting a significant influence on the development of Christian doctrine and practice. The prioritization of salvation through faith rather than deeds was vital in delineating Christianity as a distinct religious tradition, different from its Jewish roots. From a broader perspective, the early church's missionary endeavors played a pivotal role in solidifying Christianity as a global faith, and its influence persists in motivating contemporary Christians to propagate the gospel's message.

Early Church Believers and Persecution

After Jesus' ascension, the disciples took over the message of the cross to all the people. History confirms that the early Christians found themselves trapped between the religious intrigues of the time: Judaism and Roman religious traditions.[18] The emergence of Christianity resulted in a significant divergence between Judaism and Roman ecclesiastical traditions, leading to a prolonged period of persecution endured by devout Christians spanning two centuries. The New Testament documents the historical trajectory of persecution, first with the experiences of Jesus and afterwards extending to his disciples and adherents. The biblical text, particularly the New Testament, advocates for Christians to demonstrate unwavering resolve when confronted with physical and spiritual persecution. Following the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, the early church engaged in missionary endeavors, whereby devoted adherents were entrusted with the responsibility of disseminating the word to a global audience. For instance, apostles encourage Christians to stand firm in the face of persecution. The Bible states, "However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name (1 Peter 4:16)."

[18] González, 31-38



The Christian Martyrs' Last Prayer, by Jean-Léon Gérôme (1883)[19]

The nascent Christian community encountered considerable persecution throughout its formative years, a pivotal factor in shaping its distinct identity and overarching purpose. The early church had a range of problems that tested its dedication to its ideas and practices, including the Roman Empire's endeavors to repress Christianity and the endeavors of several local and regional authorities to eradicate the movement. An instance of initial persecution of the Christian church might be attributed to the Jewish rulers situated in Jerusalem. The account of the stoning of Stephen, an early Christian martyr, is documented in the Book of Acts (Acts 7:54-60). It describes the event where Stephen was subjected to a violent execution by a group of Jewish individuals. The text also delineates the Apostle Paul's pre-conversion activities, wherein he persecuted the developing Christian community under the sanction of the Jewish authorities, as documented in Acts 8:1-3. The initial assaults on the church were driven by a vested interest in upholding the established religious and social order and a determination to impede the dissemination of what was perceived as a heretical and potentially perilous ideology. The following verses present the early believer's persecution by Judaism followers:

- Acts 7:54-60, When the members of the Sanhedrin heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. 55 But Stephen, full of the Holy

[19] Jean-Léon Gérôme (1883), "The Christian Martyrs' Last Prayer," (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persecution_of_Christians_in_the_Roman_Empire_The_Christian_Martyrs'_Last_Prayer_Walters_37113.jpg)

Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 56 “Look,” he said, “I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.” 57 At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, 58 dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. 59 While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” 60 Then he fell on his knees and cried out, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he fell asleep.

- Acts 8:1-3, On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. 2 Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. 3 But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off both men and women and put them in prison.

The early church faced a substantial challenge from the Roman Empire. During the initial three centuries of the Christian period, the city of Rome functioned as a dominant imperial force, employing strategies to uphold authority over its heterogeneous populace by propagating a unified culture and religious belief system. The initial disposition of the Roman rulers towards the diverse array of religions and cults present inside the empire was one of tolerance. However, as the popularity of Christianity began to rise, their attitude shifted towards hostility. The animosity toward Christians can be attributed, in part, to the church’s steadfast refusal to recognize the emperor as a deity. This ritual held significant importance within the framework of the Roman official religion.[20]

The Roman first systematic persecution of Christians began under the emperor Nero in the mid-60s AD.[21] Nero blamed the Christians for the Great Fire of Rome and used the opportunity to launch a campaign of violence against them, which included the execution of several apostles.[22] Over the next two centuries, the church faced periodic waves of persecution under a succession of emperors, including Trajan, Decius, Valerian, Diocletian, and Galerius.[23] These persecutions varied in intensity, from mild harassment to widespread and brutal violence. Vedran Bileta depicts a photo of Rome under Nero’s instituted fire, which he blamed on Christians, as shown in the following images:

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[20] Wolfram Kinzig, (Translator) Markus Bockmuehl, Christian Persecution in Antiquity Hardcover (Waco, Texas:Baylor University Press, 2021), chapter 2. Christianity’s offensiveness.

[21] Herbert B. Workman, Persecution in the Early Church Paperback, (ed) Joshua J. Congrove (London: Warhorn Media, 2014), 364-365.

[22] Bruce,48-41

[23] Enthralling History, “Roman Empire: An Enthralling Overview of Imperial Rome from the Time of Emperor Augustus to the Fall of the Western Roman Empire (Ancient Roman History)” Paperback (Enthralling History), 2022. Kindle edition- B0BGFKMS64.



The Great Fire of Rome[24]

The contemporary church can derive valuable insights from the historical observation that despite the numerous perils encountered by the early church, its adherents demonstrated unwavering devotion to their faith and a steadfast dedication to gospel propagation. The individuals in question perceived their afflictions as a means of engaging in the suffering of Christ. They held the conviction that their mistreatment indicated their loyalty to God (1 Peter 4:12-16). This perspective contributed to the fortification of the church and instilled in its adherents the resilience to withstand even the most extreme manifestations of oppression. The following verses support and encourage Christians undergoing different forms of persecution:

- Matthew 5:10–12, “Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” 11 Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.
- Matthew 10:16–33, 1“I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. 17 Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues. 18 On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. 19 But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given

[24] Vedran Bileta, The Great Fire of Rome: Was Emperor Nero Really Behind It? Feb 10, 2023. Date accessed 10-5-2023 (online) https://www.thecollector.com/great-fire-of-rome/

what to say, 20 for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. 21 “Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. 22 You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. 23 When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. Truly I tell you, you will not finish going through the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes. 24 “The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master. 25 It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household! 26 “So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. 27 What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. 28 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. 29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care. 30 And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. 32 “Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. 33 But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven.

- Mark 10:29–30, “Truly I tell you,” Jesus replied, no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel 30 will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—along with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life.

- John 15:19–20, If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. 20 Remember what I told you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also.
- 2 Timothy 3:11–12, persecutions, sufferings—what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. 12 In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,
- 2 Corinthians 12:9–10, But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. 10 That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.
- 1 Thessalonians 3:3–4, so that no one would be unsettled by these trials. For you know quite well that we are destined for them. 4 In fact, when we were with you, we kept telling you that we would be persecuted. And it turned out that way, as you well know.

- 1 Peter 4:12-16, Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. 13 But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. 14 If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. 15 If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. 16 However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.
- Revelation 2:10–11, Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor's crown. 11 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who is victorious will not be hurt at all by the second death.

Throughout history, the church's reaction to persecution underwent a religious transformation. In the early stages, many individuals identified as Christians demonstrated a steadfast commitment to their religious beliefs, even in mortal peril. Nevertheless, as the ecclesiastical institution expanded and developed a more intricate structure, specific individuals within its ranks started advocating for a more practical and realistic approach. The authors contended that there are occasions in which it is justifiable to renounce one's religious beliefs, namely when doing so serves to protect fellow Christians and safeguard the well-being of one's own family. The ongoing discourse over the suitable course of action in response to persecution persisted throughout the historical trajectory of the church, wherein many adherents of Christianity embraced martyrdom.

In contrast, others opted for a more compromising approach. Recantation refers to the individuals within the Christian community who decided to compromise their religious beliefs. Notwithstanding its numerous obstacles, the early church persevered and saw sustained expansion and prosperity. The community's ability to withstand persecution contributed to developing a robust sense of identity and solidarity, which endured for centuries. In contemporary times, the enduring influence of the early church serves as a source of inspiration for Christians across the globe who encounter persecution due to their religious beliefs.

In several scriptural passages, the Bible implores Christians with urgent warnings and exhortations to cling to the truth. In any extremism situation, Christians are called not to compromise their faith. Jesus warned that one cannot look back once they put their hands on the plough. The Bible says Jesus replied, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62). The Bible leaves no room for someone to compromise to win any soul.

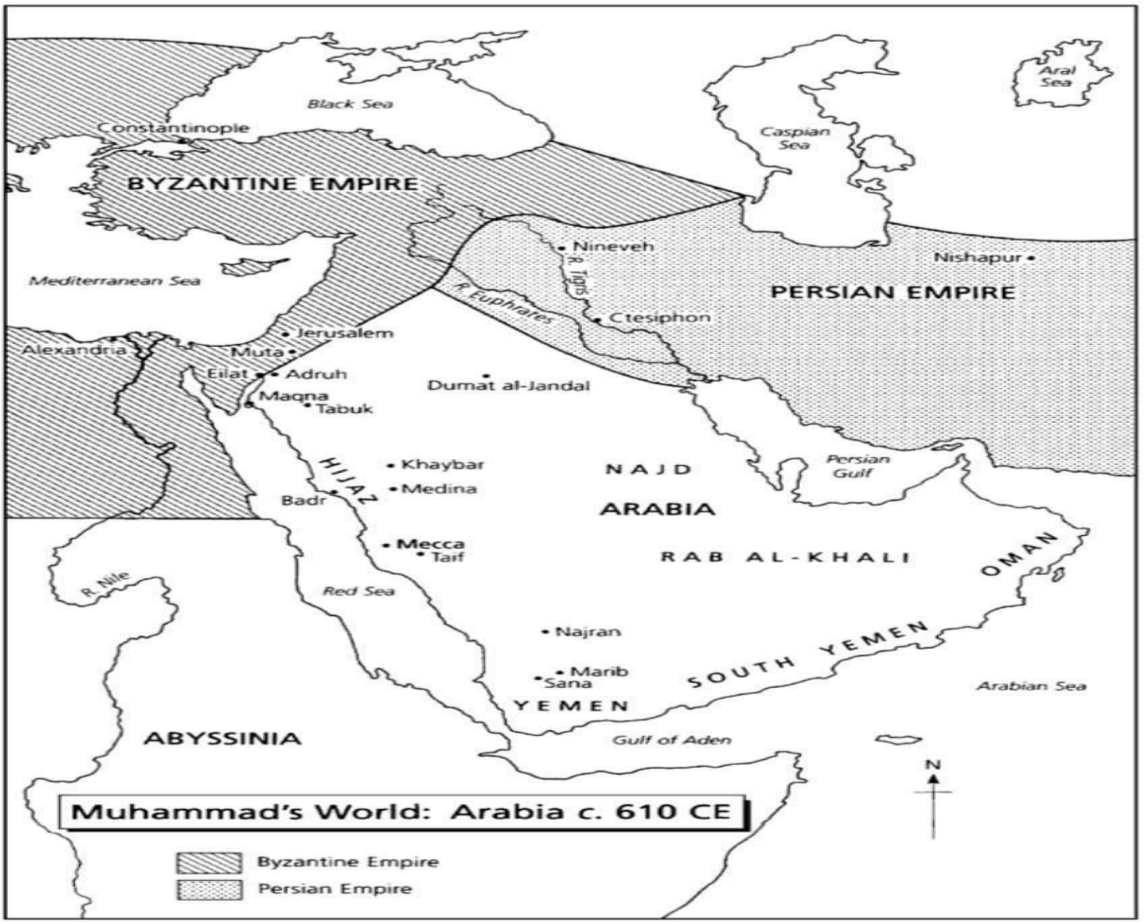
- 1 Timothy 4:1-2, The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. 2 Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.

- 2 Timothy 3: 1-5, But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. 2 People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, 4 treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— 5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people.
- 2 Peter 3:16-17, He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction. 17 Therefore, dear friends, since you have been forewarned, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of the lawless and fall from your secure position.

A Brief History of Islam

The Islamic faith is often regarded as the most feared and misunderstood among the various world religions. Since its emergence in contemporary culture, Islam has faced allegations of extremism, terrorism, autocratic governance, subjugation of women, honor killings, and internal conflicts, among other transgressions attributed to its followers and converts. The Islamic faith asserts itself as the fastest-growing religion, primarily attributed to polygamy within its cultural framework. From a historical perspective, the Islamic faith is classified as an Abrahamic religion, as it can be traced back to Ishmael, who was the son of Abraham and Hagar. The origins of the faith can be traced back to the 7th century in the Arabian Peninsula. The faith was established by Prophet Muhammad ibn Abdallah (570-632), who received divine revelations from Allah when he reached 40. Prophet Muhammad's teachings were the Islamic faith's foundational principles, facilitating its rapid dissemination over the Arabian Peninsula. According to Armstrong, it is documented that Prophet Muhammad would seek seclusion in a cave atop Mount Hira, where he would engage in acts of prayer and various spiritual practices.[25] There, he is said to receive Allah's revelation as a reminder of the previous revelation.

[25]Karen Armstrong, Islam: A Short History (New York: Modern Library Chronicles, 2002), 3.



Map 1: Prophet Muhammad's World: Arabia c. 610 CE[26]

As noted in Hoyland's book, the early history of Islam was marked by battles and conflicts as the Muslim community conquered several communities.[27] Salim claims, "The term 'Islam' and 'Muslims' are ubiquitous yet burdened with countless contradictory interpretations, misrepresentations, and erasures."[28] Despite these challenges, the Islamic community continued to grow through the edge of the sword and conversion. By Muhammad's death in 632 CE, much of Arabia had converted to Islam.[29] After Muhammad's death, his close companion, Abu Bakr, was elected as the first caliph or leader of the Muslim community. Under his leadership, the Muslim community expanded beyond Arabia, conquering territories in the Middle East and North Africa.[30] Over the centuries, the Muslim empire expanded, becoming one of the world's largest and most powerful empires.

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[26] Karen Armstrong, Islam: A Short History (New York: Modern Library Chronicles, 2002), 9.

[27] Robert G. Hoyland, In God's Path: The Arab Conquests and the Creation of an Islamic Empire (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 31-65.

[28] Ahmad Rashid Salim, Islam Explained: A Short Introduction to History, Teachings, and Culture (Emeryville, California: Rockridge press, 2020), VIII.

[29] Justin Marozzi, Islamic Empires: The Cities that Shaped Civilization: From Mecca to Dubai (New York: Pegasus Books, 2021), 1-24.

[30] Julia Clancy-Smith and Charles Smith, The Modern Middle East and North Africa: A History in Documents, 1st Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 1-50.

During this time, Islamic civilization significantly contributed to science, medicine, philosophy, and art.[31] Some Islamic scholars preserved and translated the works of ancient Greek philosophers and made significant advances in mathematics, astronomy, and chemistry.[32] The Islamic Golden Age lasted from the 8th to the 14th century and is often cited as a time of great intellectual and cultural flourishing.[33] Currently, Islam holds the position of being the second most widely practiced religion globally. The practice is observed in numerous countries and civilizations, exhibiting an extensive and varied history. The history of Islam, from its inception in the Arabian Peninsula to its current worldwide influence, is a captivating and intricate narrative encompassing elements of religious devotion, cultural dynamics, and political developments. In addition to the positive aspects commonly attributed to Islam, it is worth acknowledging that there are instances where harmful practices carried out by followers of this faith in the name of Allah might overshadow any positive associations with the religion. In the forthcoming chapters, we will explore the diverse ideas and practices associated with the Islamic faith.

[31] Mustafa Siba'i, The Islamic Civilization (Milpitas, California: Claritas Books, 2007), 1-15.

[32] Yasmeen Mahnaz Faruqi , "Contributions of Islamic scholars to the scientific enterprise," International Education Journal, 2006, 7(4), 391-399. ISSN 1443-1475 © 2006 Shannon Research Press. (online) dances accessed 10-5-2023. http://iej.cjb.net

[33] George Saliba, A History of Arabic Astronomy: Planetary Theories During the Golden Age of Islam (New York : New York University Press, 1994), 245–257.

CHAPTER THREE

CHRISTIAN AND ISLAMIC ADHERENTS GLOBALLY

Christianity and Islam

Christianity and Islam are often recognized as the most prominent and essential religions globally. The origins of Christianity may be traced back to the Middle East around the 1st century, and afterwards, it has experienced global dissemination. The religion in question boasts many adherents in many regions across the globe, including America, Europe, and Sub-Saharan Africa, while also maintaining significant numbers in Asia and Oceania.[34] Christianity has several denominations, including Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, and Orthodox Christianity. Under Protestantism, several branches have been formed since the Reformation of the 1500 common era.

Islam is often recognized as the second-largest religion globally. The origins of this phenomenon may be traced back to the Arabian Peninsula during the 7th century CE, and its influence has subsequently expanded globally. Islam boasts many adherents, primarily concentrated in the Middle East and North Africa. However, it maintains significant populations in South and Southeast Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Europe. Islam is divided into two primary divisions, Sunni and Shia, with most adherents identifying as Sunni Muslims. Both religions have tremendously influenced global history and hold prominent positions within several nations' cultural and societal fabric. Determining the number of Christian and Islamic faith adherents poses a considerable challenge. It is a matter of conjecture that Christianity is estimated to have a global following of around 2.4 billion adherents, whilst Islam is believed to have approximately 1.6 billion followers worldwide. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that these two religious traditions collectively encompass about 50% of the world's population.

Christianity and Islam in Sub-Saharan Africa

The religions of Christianity and Islam have exerted a profound influence on the Sub-Saharan African region, playing a pivotal role in creating its historical trajectory, cultural expressions, and religious observances. The advent of Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa during the 19th century can be attributed to the influence of European colonization and the efforts of missionaries. The religion had swift dissemination across the continent, as numerous Africans embraced it to combat colonialism and affirm their cultural and individual identities. Presently, Christianity holds the position of being the most extensively observed religion in the region of Sub-Saharan Africa. On the other hand, the advent of Islam in Africa occurred throughout the 7th century via trade routes, disseminating throughout the encompassing area. The influence of Islam on Sub-Saharan Africa has significantly affected various aspects of the region, including its cultural, political, and religious

[34] Australasia, Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia.

dimensions. Islam is the second most prevalent religion in the Sub-Saharan African region.

Sub-Saharan Africa has 48 countries, within which the coexistence of Christianity and Islam is observed. Notably, many individuals in this region engage in the simultaneous practice of both religions. The amalgamation of Christianity and Islam has given rise to distinctive religious customs characterized by syncretism. In certain instances, the circumstances above have given rise to discord between the two religious groups, yet it has fostered harmonious cohabitation in numerous other instances. Christianity and Islam have substantially influenced the historical trajectory and cultural fabric of Sub-Saharan Africa. These religions remain integral to the well-being and development of the region's inhabitants. However, the dissemination of certain Islamic teachings has demonstrated that religious freedom remains relatively unfamiliar in certain societies governed by Muslim leadership. Muslim individuals who convert to Christianity are subjected to persecution, including mistreatment from their family members.

The African continent is geographically categorized into five distinct regions: Northern, Eastern, Western, Middle, and Southern. The region of Sub-Saharan Africa is home to a substantial population of Muslims inside the continent. The countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, as well as certain African countries, particularly those located in the Maghreb, the Sahara Desert, and the eastern horn of the continent, are significantly inhabited by Muslim populations. Accounting for every adherent in Christianity and Islam poses a significant challenge. In 2020, it was widely believed that Christianity constituted approximately 62 per cent of the people in the region, while Islam comprised roughly 31.4 per cent.[35]

[35] Mariam Saleh "Main religion in sub-Saharan Africa" 2 December 2022. (online) https://www.statista.com/statistics/1282636/distribution-of-religions-in-sub-saharan-africa/

Table 3.1 Africa has 54 countries and is divided into five segments.

Northern Africa Six countries	Eastern Africa 18 countries	Western Africa 16 countries	Middle Africa Nine countries	Southern Africa Five countries
1. Algeria 2. Egypt 3. Libya 4. Morocco 5. Sudan 6. Tunisia	1. Burundi 2. Comoros 3. Djibouti 4. Eritrea 5. Ethiopia 6. Kenya 7. Madagascar 8. Mozambique 9. Malawi 10. Mauritius 11. Rwanda 12. Seychelles 13. Somalia 14. South Sudan 15. Tanzania 16. Uganda 17. Zambia 18. Zimbabwe	1. Benin 2. Burkina Faso 3. Cabo Verde 4. Gambia 5. Ghana 6. Guinea 7. Guinea Bissau 8. Ivory Coast 9. Liberia 10. Mali 11. Mauritania 12. Niger 13. Nigeria 14. Senegal 15. Sierra Leone 16. Togo	1. Angola 2. Cameroon 3. Central African Republic 4. Chad 5. Congo 6. DR Congo 7. Equatorial Guinea 8. Gabon 9. Sao Tome and Principe	1. Botswana 2. Eswatini 3. Lesotho 4. Namibia 5. South Africa

The only African countries not in the Sub-Sahara are 5 North African ones (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia).

Deadly Religious Encounters Between Christians and Muslims in Sub-Saharan Africa

There have been deadly encounters between Christians and Muslims in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in Nigeria, Central African Republic, and Sudan. In Nigeria, for instance, clashes between Christians and Muslims have been ongoing for decades, with violence escalating recently.[36] The leading cause of the conflict is usually political or economic, with religious differences often used as a pretext.[37] In parallel, the Central African Republic has had recurrent violence occurring between Muslim and Christian groups since 2013. The conflict has been exacerbated by political and economic circumstances, wherein theological disparities have been employed as a rationale for engaging in reciprocal acts of aggression. The occurrence of violence has resulted in extensive displacement and humanitarian emergencies, necessitating the evacuation of numerous individuals from their

[36] Kenneth Sunday, Kwanchi Iliya Enock, and Joseph Umar Bibinu, “Christian Muslim conflict in Nigeria: An appraisal” Issue Vol. 19 No. 2 (2020), 2021-08-30. https://www.ajol.info/index.php/sophia/article/view/213683

[37] Mustapha, Abdul Raufu, and David Ehrhardt, eds. Creed & Grievance: Muslim-Christian Relations & Conflict Resolution in Northern Nigeria NED-New edition (Martlesham, Suffolk, England: Boydell & Brewer, 2018), 1-34. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7722/j.ctt1wx92mm.

residences. The origins of the struggle between Christians and Muslims in Sudan can be traced back to the nation's extensive history of civil wars, ethnic and tribal divisions, and regional inequalities. It is essential to acknowledge that although religion has been employed as a pretext for these disputes, the root reasons are frequently characterized by intricate and multidimensional factors.

Religious contacts within the Sub-Saharan African region have resulted in significant displacement, loss of life, and other suffering. The presence of religious tensions and competition has been observed in certain nations where there have been instances of aggressive behavior by Muslims towards Christians. Frequently, these interactions have culminated in physical aggression, significant damage to assets, and loss of human life. Political leaders occasionally employ religion to mobilize their supporters and attain political leverage. Utilizing religious beliefs for political advantages has led to societal fragmentation along religious divisions and, in certain instances, has incited violent clashes between these factions.

In some instances, fatal confrontations may arise due to the perception of religious supremacy. Christians and Muslims believe that their respective religions represent the authentic means to connect with God/Allah, which frequently engenders a perception of superiority over the other. The prevalence of power dynamics between different religious groups has led to the stigmatization of opposing faiths and, in certain instances, acts of aggression targeting adherents. Religious leaders from both factions frequently perpetuate this perception of superiority and demonization, exacerbating the conflict.

The proliferation of religious extremist beliefs within certain Muslim factions contributes to these fatal confrontations. Islamist extremist organizations, namely Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab, have perpetrated acts of violence against Christian communities, leading to casualties and the forced evacuation of affected populations. These collectives frequently rationalize their activities by asserting they are combating the proliferation of Western culture and values, which they perceive as incongruous with Islam. Religious conflicts have engendered unease and apprehension within Christian communities, who perceive themselves as specifically targeted and susceptible. The ramifications of these lethal religious encounters have profound and detrimental effects on the communities involved. The enduring consequences experienced by the afflicted communities include the loss of human lives and property, the displacement of populations, and the devastation of infrastructure. Furthermore, the dispute frequently engenders societal polarization along religious divisions, impeding harmonious coexistence among individuals of diverse religious backgrounds. The conflict has a detrimental impact on the social, economic, and political development of countries affected by it.

Response to Deadly Religious Encounters

There exists a pressing necessity for collaborative endeavors among religious and political authorities to tackle the issue of fatal religious confrontations effectively. It is imperative for religious leaders to actively advocate for the principles of religious freedom, interfaith dialogue, and peaceful coexistence within their communities. It is imperative for Muslim leaders to publicly renounce extremist ideology and advocate for principles of tolerance and mutual respect towards diverse religious beliefs. Political leaders should prioritize the reduction of rivalry for power and resources while actively promoting inclusive governance. In addition, it is imperative to acknowledge and tackle the underlying factors contributing to the conflict, including socioeconomic deprivation, societal exclusion, prejudicial treatment, and religious animosity.

CHAPTER FOUR

CHRISTIAN AND ISLAMIC DEITIES

Abrahamic Ancestry

Islam asserts that it shares certain resemblances with Christianity. This chapter will examine the purported similarities between Islam and Christianity as asserted by the Islamic faith. Historical evidence supports the notion that there is a temporal gap of around six centuries between the emergence of Christianity and Islam. There is a contention that Christianity can be traced back to its Abrahamic lineage through the lineage of Isaac. Contrary to the notion presented, it is essential to note that Islam maintains its Abrahamic genealogy through the lineage of Ismael. Abraham's progeny consisted of Isaac, born to his lawful wife Sarah, and Ishmael, born to his concubine Hagar. Ishmael is commonly regarded as the progenitor of the Muslim community, although Christians believe that Isaac was the son promised to Abraham. Christianity traces its origins to Isaac, while Islam traces to Ismael.

Christian Ancestry

Christianity is a monotheistic religious tradition that traces its origins to Judaism, and it is founded upon the fundamental tenet of the existence of a singular deity. The religious tradition assigns significant value to the Old Testament, regarded as the divine scripture. The Old Testament comprises a compilation of Jewish scriptures that were authored over a period of 1500 years before the coming of the Messiah.

Christian theology posits that the Old Testament is the fundamental basis for their religious beliefs. This work offers an account of the historical and prophetic circumstances surrounding the arrival of Jesus Christ, who is regarded as the Savior, and the subsequent realization of predictions from the Old Testament. The Old Testament holds great significance in establishing the moral and ethical basis of Christian behavior. The text elucidates the principles and guidelines for leading a morally upright existence while concurrently functioning as a wellspring of sagacity and motivation for adherents of the Christian faith.

The Old Testament is categorized into four primary divisions, namely the Law, the Historical Books, the Wisdom Books, and the Prophets. The Law, referred to as the Pentateuch, encompasses the initial segment of the biblical canon and comprises the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The Law serves as the fundamental basis for Jewish and Christian doctrines, encompassing the Ten Commandments and additional regulations that govern conduct and religious observances. The Historical Books encompass a collection of biblical texts: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. These books provide a comprehensive account of the Israelites' historical trajectory and multifaceted relationship with the divine. These literary works chronicle the narrative of the divine covenant between the Israelites and God and the cyclical progression and decline of the Israelite monarchies.

The Wisdom Books, namely Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon, guide the principles and practices necessary for leading a virtuous and morally upright existence. The texts encompass various elements such as prayers, poetry, and wisdom lessons, which reflect the divine essence, human existence, and the significance of moral and ethical conduct. The Prophets, comprising notable figures such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and the twelve Minor Prophets, convey a prophetic discourse to the Israelites concerning their connection with the divine. The Israelites are both cautioned and motivated while also being provided with prophecies on the imminent arrival of the Messiah. The Old Testament comprises a total of 39 books.

The Bible asserts that the texts, encompassing both the Old and New Testament within the Christian tradition, are divinely inspired and have enduring significance and applicability for all individuals. The Bible is the primary conduit of divine revelation and establishes a comprehensive structure for Christian faith and conduct. Although Christians do not adhere to all the laws and rituals outlined in the Old Testament, they acknowledge its importance and persist in examining and deriving inspiration from its teachings.

Christian faith finds rest in the promises made in the Old Testament, which foresaw the coming of the Messiah. The Old Testament testifies to the appearance of the messiah promised through the lineage of Abraham, Isaac, Judah, Jesse, and David. The Old Testament prophecies culminated as recorded in the New Testament. We affirm that Jesus' genealogy attests to the fulfillment of the prophecies. According to Matthew 1:2-16 and Luke 3:23-38, the Bible provides the importance of attaching Christianity to Isaac's ancestry contrary to the Islamic claim that it was through Ismael. Whereas Islam traces their genealogy to Abraham, it should be agreed that it is through Isaac that the promise was made.it is through Abraham that blessing flows to humanity according to Genesis 12:3, "I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

Comparing Jesus Genealogy in Matthew 1:2-16 and Luke 3:23-38

Matthew 1:2-16

This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham:
[2] Abraham was the father of Isaac,
Isaac the father of Jacob,
Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers,
[3] Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar,
Perez the father of Hezron,
Hezron the father of Ram,
[4] Ram the father of Amminadab,
Amminadab the father of Nahshon,
Nahshon the father of Salmon,
[5] Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab,
Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth,

Obed the father of Jesse,
6 and Jesse the father of King David.
David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife,
7 Solomon the father of Rehoboam,
Rehoboam the father of Abijah,
Abijah the father of Asa,
8 Asa the father of Jehoshaphat,
Jehoshaphat the father of Jehoram,
Jehoram the father of Uzziah,
9 Uzziah the father of Jotham,
Jotham the father of Ahaz,
Ahaz the father of Hezekiah,
10 Hezekiah the father of Manasseh,
Manasseh the father of Amon,
Amon the father of Josiah,
11 and Josiah the father of Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the exile to Babylon.
12 After the exile to Babylon:
Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel,
Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,
13 Zerubbabel the father of Abihud,
Abihud the father of Eliakim,
Eliakim the father of Azor,
14 Azor the father of Zadok,
Zadok the father of Akim,
Akim the father of Elihud,
15 Elihud the father of Eleazar,
Eleazar the father of Matthan,
Matthan the father of Jacob,
16 and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, and Mary was the mother of Jesus who is called the Messiah.

Luke 3:23-38

23 Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph,
the son of Heli, 24 the son of Matthat,
the son of Levi, the son of Melki,
the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph,
25 the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos,
the son of Nahum, the son of Esli,
the son of Naggai, 26 the son of Maath,
the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein,
the son of Josek, the son of Joda,
27 the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa,
the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel,
the son of Neri,
28 the son of Melki,
the son of Addi, the son of Cosam,
the son of Elmadam, the son of Er,
29 the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer,

the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat,
the son of Levi, [30] the son of Simeon,
the son of Judah, the son of Joseph,
the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim,
[31] the son of Melea, the son of Menna,
the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan,
the son of David, [32] the son of Jesse,
the son of Obed, the son of Boaz,
the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon,
[33] the son of Amminadab, the son of Ram,
the son of Hezron, the son of Perez,
the son of Judah, [34] the son of Jacob,
the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham,
the son of Terah, the son of Nahor,
[35] the son of Serug, the son of Reu,
the son of Peleg, the son of Eber,
the son of Shelah, [36] the son of Cainan,
the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem,
the son of Noah, the son of Lamech,[r]
[37] the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch,
the son of Jared, the son of Mahalalel,
the son of Kenan, [38] the son of Enosh,
the son of Seth, the son of Adam,
the son of God.

The genealogy of Jesus in Matthew 1:2-16 and Luke 3:23-38 are essential records of Jesus' ancestry, but there are some critical differences between them.

1. Different Starting Points: Matthew starts with Abraham and traces the lineage of Jesus through King David and his son Solomon. On the other hand, Luke traces the genealogy of Jesus back to Adam, the first man.
2. Different Routes: After King David, the two genealogies diverge. Matthew traces the lineage through Solomon's descendants, while Luke traces the lineage through Nathan, another of David's sons.
3. Different Number of Generations: The number of generations listed in each genealogy also differs. Matthew lists 28 ages, while Luke lists 43.
4. Different Names: Some of the names in the genealogies are other, particularly after King David. For example, Matthew lists Jeconiah, while Luke lists Shealtiel.
5. The two genealogies of Jesus in Matthew and Luke show similarities and differences. Nonetheless, the issues shown are beneficial since Matthew adds the generations of Solomon, while Luke adds the generations of Nathan. Luke adds the ages of Joseph, Mary's husband. The point is that Isaac is included in both genealogies, not Ishmael.
6. Different Emphases: Matthew's genealogy emphasizes the kingly line of Jesus, tracing his lineage through the royal line of David and Solomon. On the other hand, Luke's genealogy emphasizes Jesus' humanity and connection to all people through his lineage from Adam.

Notwithstanding these disparities, both genealogical records ultimately affirm Jesus' lineage as a descendant of David, following the predictions found in the Old Testament prophecies. The genealogies hold significant importance within the narrative of Jesus, as they substantiate his legitimate entitlement to the designation of Messiah and demonstrate his lineage to the Israelite community and, ultimately, to the entirety of humankind. The following is a list of connections between the Old and New Testament on the Prophecies about Jesus:[38]

Table 4.1 Old Testament prophecies About the coming of Jesus, the Messiah

Old Testament prophecies About the coming of Jesus, the Messiah	New Testament fulfillment
Genesis 12:3, I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.	Acts 3:25–26, And you are heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers. He said to Abraham, 'Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed.'26 When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways.
Genesis 17:19, Then God said, Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.	Romans 9:7, Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham's children. On the contrary, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned."
Genesis 28:14, Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring.	Luke 3:34, the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor,
Genesis 49:10, The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he to whom it belongs shall come and the obedience of the nations shall be his.	Luke 3:33, 33 the son of Amminadab, the son of Ram, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah,

[38] Jesus Film Project A cru Ministry, "55 Old Testament Prophecies about Jesus, Following Jesus, Jesus Christ, The Bible," 11/17/2021. https://www.jesusfilm.org/blog/old-testament-prophecies/

2 Samuel 7:12–13, When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.	Matthew 1:1, This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham
Isaiah 7:14, Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.	Luke 1:35, The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.
Hosea 11:1, When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.	Matthew 2:14–15, So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, 15 where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called my son.”
Micah 5:2 “But you,Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.”	Matthew 2:4–6, When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. 5 “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written: 6 ”But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.”
Genesis 3:15, And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.	1 John 3:8, The one who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work.
Exodus 12:5, The animals you choose must be year-old males without	Hebrews 9:14, How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who

defect, and you may take them from the sheep or the goats.	through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!
Psalm 8:5–6, You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honor. 6 You made them rulers over the works of your hands; you put everything under their feet:	Hebrews 2:5–9, It is not to angels that he has subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking. 6 But there is a place where someone has testified: “What is mankind that you are mindful of them, a son of man that you care for him? 7 You made them a little lower than the angels; you crowned them with glory and honor 8 and put everything under their feet.” In putting everything under them, God left nothing that is not subject to them. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to them. 9 But we do see Jesus, who was made lower than the angels for a little while, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.
Psalm 40:6–8, Sacrifice and offering you did not desire—but my ears you have opened—burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not require. 7 Then I said, “Here I am, I have come— it is written about me in the scroll. 8 I desire to do your will, my God; your law is within my heart.”	Hebrews 10:5–10, Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; 6 with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased. 7 Then I said, ‘Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll— I have come to do your will, my God.’” 8 First he said, “Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not desire, nor were you pleased with them”—though they were offered

	in accordance with the law. 9 Then he said, “Here I am, I have come to do your will.” He sets aside the first to establish the second. 10 And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.
Psalm 40:9, I proclaim your saving acts in the great assembly; I do not seal my lips, LORD, as you know.	Matthew 4:17, From that time on Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”
Psalm 78:1–2, My people, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth. 2 I will open my mouth with a parable; I will utter hidden things, things from of old—	Matthew 13:34–35, Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable. 35 So was fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet: “I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world.”
Isaiah 6:9–10, He said, “Go and tell this people: “‘Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.’ 10 Make the heart of this people calloused;make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise, they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.	Matthew 13:13–15, This is why I speak to them in parables: “Though seeing, they do not see; through hearing, they do not hear or understand. 14 In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: “You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. 15 For this people’s heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.’
Isaiah 8:14, He will be a holy place; for both Israel and Judah he will be a stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall. And for the people of Jerusalem he will be a trap and a snare.	1 Peter 2:7–8, Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, “The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,” 8 and, “A stone that causes people to

	stumble and a rock that makes them fall.” They stumble because they disobey the message—which is also what they were destined for.
Isaiah 9:1–2.]Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan— 2 The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.	Matthew 4:12–17, When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he withdrew to Galilee. 13 Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali— 14 to fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah: 15 “Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles— 16 the people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.” 17 From that time on Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”
Isaiah 11:10, In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his resting place will be glorious.	John 12:18–21, Many people, because they had heard that he had performed this sign, went out to meet him. 19 So the Pharisees said to one another, “See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!” 20 Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the festival. 21 They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. “Sir,” they said, “we would like to see Jesus.”
Isaiah 35:5–6, Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. 6 Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert.	Matthew 11:2–6, When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples 3 to ask him, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?”

	4 Jesus replied, “Go back and report to John what you hear and see: 5 The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. 6 Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.”
Isaiah 40:3–4, A voice of one calling: “In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. 4 Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain.	John 1:23, John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, “I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, ’Make straight the way for the Lord.’”
Isaiah 53:3, He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.	Luke 4:28–29, All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. 29 They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff.
Isaiah 61:1, The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners,	Luke 4:16–21, 16 He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, 17 and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: 18 “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” 20 Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in

	the synagogue were fastened on him. 21 He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”
Daniel 9:25–26, Know and understand this: From the time the word goes out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven ‘sevens,’ and sixty-two ‘sevens.’ It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. 26 After the sixty-two ‘sevens,’ the Anointed One will be put to death and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.	Galatians 1:3–5, Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, 4 who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, 5 to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.
Zechariah 9:9, Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.	Matthew 21:8–10, A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 9 The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Hosanna in the highest heaven!” 10 When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?”
Zechariah 11:12–13, I told them, “If you think it best, give me my pay; but if not, keep it.” So they paid me thirty pieces of silver. 13 And the Lord said to me, “Throw it to the potter”—the handsome price at which they valued me! So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them to the potter at the house of the Lord	Matthew 27:6–10, The chief priests picked up the coins and said, “It is against the law to put this into the treasury, since it is blood money.” 7 So they decided to use the money to buy the potter’s field as a burial place for foreigners. 8 That is why it has been called the Field of Blood to this day. 9 Then what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: “They took the thirty pieces of silver, the price set on him by the people of Israel, 10 and

	they used them to buy the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."
Exodus 12:21–27, Then Moses summoned all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Go at once and select the animals for your families and slaughter the Passover lamb. 22 Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it into the blood in the basin and put some of the blood on the top and on both sides of the doorframe. None of you shall go out of the door of your house until morning. 23 When the Lord goes through the land to strike down the Egyptians, he will see the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe and will pass over that doorway, and he will not permit the destroyer to enter your houses and strike you down. 24 "Obey these instructions as a lasting ordinance for you and your descendants. 25 When you enter the land that the Lord will give you as he promised, observe this ceremony. 26 And when your children ask you, 'What does this ceremony mean to you?' 27 then tell them, 'It is the Passover sacrifice to the Lord, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes when he struck down the Egyptians.'" Then the people bowed down and worshiped.	1 Corinthians 5:7, Get rid of the old yeast, so that you may be a new unleavened batch—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.
Exodus 12:46, It must be eaten inside the house; take none of the meat outside the house. Do not break any of the bones.	John 19:31–36, Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jewish leaders did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. 32 The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. 33 But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break

	his legs. 34 Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. 35 The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe. 36 These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken,"
Leviticus 17:11, For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.	Matthew 26:28, This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Numbers 21:9, So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived.	John 3:14–18, Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, 15 that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him. 16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.
Psalm 22:1, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish?	Matthew 27:46, About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eli,li, lema sabachthani?" (which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?").
Psalm 22:8, "He trusts in the Lord," they say, "let the Lord rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him."	Matthew 27:42–43, 42 "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! He's the king of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. 43 He trusts in

	God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, 'I am the Son of God.'"
Psalm 22:15, My mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death.	John 19:28, Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty."
Psalm 22:16, Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me; they pierce my hands and my feet.	Matthew 27: 35, When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots. John 19:36–37, These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken," 37 and, as another scripture says, "They will look on the one they have pierced."
Psalm 22:18, They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment.	John 19:23–24, When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. 24 "Let's not tear it," they said to one another. "Let's decide by lot who will get it." This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled that said, "They divided my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment." So this is what the soldiers did.
Psalm 31:11, Because of all my enemies, I am the utter contempt of my neighbors and an object of dread to my closest friends— those who see me on the street flee from me.	Mark 14:50, Then everyone deserted him and fled.
Psalm 31:13, For I hear many whispering, "Terror on every side!" They conspire against me and plot to take my life.	Matthew 27:1, Early in the morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people made their

	plans on how to have Jesus executed.
Psalm 38:12–13, Those who want to kill me set their traps, those who would harm me talk of my ruin; all day long they scheme and lie. 13 I am like the deaf, who cannot hear, like the mute, who cannot speak;	Matthew 27:12–14, When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he gave no answer. 13 Then Pilate asked him, “Don’t you hear the testimony they are bringing against you?” 14 But Jesus made no reply, not even to a single charge—to the great amazement of the governor.
Psalm 16:9–11, Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, 10 because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, nor will you let your faithful one see decay. 11 You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.	Acts 2:31, Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay.
Psalm 68:18, When you ascended on high, you took many captives; you received gifts from people, even from the rebellious—that you, Lord God, might dwell there.	Ephesians 4:7–16, But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. 8 This is why it says: “When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people.” 9 (What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? 10 He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) 11 So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, 12 to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. 14 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching

	and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. 15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. 16 From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.
Psalm 69:21, They put gall in my food and gave me vinegar for my thirst.	Matthew 27:34, There they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall; but after tasting it, he refused to drink it.
Psalm 118:17–18, I will not die but live, and will proclaim what the Lord has done. 18 The Lord has chastened me severely, but he has not given me over to death.	Luke 24:5–7, In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? 6 He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 7 'The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.'"
Isaiah 25:7–8, On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; 8 he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove his people's disgrace from all the earth. The Lord has spoken	1 Corinthians 15:54, 54 When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."
Isaiah 50:1–6, This is what the Lord says: "Where is your mother's certificate of divorce with which I sent her away? Or to which of my creditors did I sell you? Because of your sins you were sold; because of your transgressions your mother was sent away. 2 When I came, why was there no one?	Matthew 27:27–31, Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him. 28 They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, 29 and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand. Then they knelt in front of him and mocked

When I called, why was there no one to answer? Was my arm too short to deliver you? Do I lack the strength to rescue you? By a mere rebuke I dry up the sea, I turn rivers into a desert; their fish rot for lack of water and die of thirst. 3 I clothe the heavens with darkness and make sackcloth its covering." 4 The Sovereign Lord has given me a well-instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being instructed. 5 The Sovereign Lord has opened my ears; I have not been rebellious, I have not turned away. 6 I offered my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard; I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting.	him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said. 30 They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. 31 After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.
Deuteronomy 18:15–16, The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him. 16 For this is what you asked of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, "Let us not hear the voice of the Lord our God nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die."	John 5:45–47, "But do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set. 46 If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. 47 But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?"
Psalm 9:7–10, The Lord reigns forever; he has established his throne for judgment. 8 He rules the world in righteousness and judges the people with equity. 9 The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. 10 Those who know your name trust in you, for you, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you.	Acts 17:31, For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.
Jeremiah 31:31, "The days are coming," declares the Lord, when I will make a new	Matthew 26:28, This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured

covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah.	out for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Isaiah 44:3, For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants.	John 16:7, But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

Ancestry of Isaac and Ismael

Isaac holds a significant role within the Abrahamic religions, namely Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Isaac is identified as the offspring of Abraham and Sarah in the biblical narrative. The individual in question is recognized as the progenitor of Esau and Jacob, the latter of whom eventually assumed the name Israel. Abraham's birthplace is believed to be Ur, located in Mesopotamia, which corresponds to present-day Iraq. Possibly, he was born into a community that adhered to polytheistic beliefs.

Nevertheless, Abraham was bestowed with a divine summons from God to depart from his native nation and go on a journey to the region of Canaan, which is presently known as Israel (Genesis 12:1). Abraham is widely acknowledged as the primary patriarch of the Israelites. His progeny are commonly referred to as the "children of Israel." Christians trace their ancestry through Isaac, whereas Islam is through Ishmael.

- Genesis 12:1, The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you."

Sarah, Isaac's mother, was Abraham's wife and half-sister. She was originally from the city of Haran (in modern-day Turkey). She could not have children until God miraculously allowed her to conceive Isaac in her old age (Genesis 21:1-3). Isaac's wife was Rebekah, who was also from the city of Haran. They had two sons, Jacob and Esau. Jacob, who later became known as Israel, had twelve sons who became the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel.

- Genesis 21:1-3, Now the Lord was gracious to Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did for Sarah what he had promised. 2 Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the very time God had promised him. 3 Abraham gave the name Isaac to the son Sarah bore him.

Regarding the matter of lineage, it is worth mentioning that Islam traces its origins back to Ismael, as previously indicated.

Ismael was the offspring of Abraham and Hagar, who served as a slave girl. According to Islamic tradition, the concept of the firstborn right leads to the belief that Ismael is the promised son of Abraham. As he matured, he garnered affection and admiration from his paternal figure while concurrently developing hunting and animal husbandry expertise. Ismael was the father of twelve sons, who subsequently

became the ancestors of the Ishmaelite tribes. The Ishmaelites inhabit contemporary Arabia, the Sinai Peninsula, and several North African and Middle Eastern regions. Currently, the Ishmaelites can be identified as the progeny of the Arab population.

Table 4.2 Abraham Descendant through Ismael and Isaac

Abraham Descendant through Ismael and Isaac	
Ismael descendant	Isaac descendants
	Esau and Jacob
12 sons of Ismael	12 sons of Jacobs/ Israel
Nebaioth	Reuben
Kedar	Simeon
Adbeel	Levi
Mibsam	Judah
Mishma	Dan
Dumah	Naphtali
Massa	Gad
Hadad	Asher
Tema	Issachar
Jetur	Zebulun
Naphish	Joseph
Kedemah	Benjamin

Upon examining the progeny of Isaac and Ismael, it may be deduced that they diverge in identifying an individual about ancestral religious beliefs. In Christianity, the lineage of Isaac culminates in the figure of Jesus, while in the Islamic faith, the lineage of Ismael leads to the prophet Muhammad. Christians and Muslims share the same Abrahamic ancestry. However, it can be asserted that Islam's claim to this can only be substantiated through Abraham. Nevertheless, we concur that it is through Isaac regarding the question of God's promise. The tribes of Israel, from whom the messiah emerged, trace their lineage back to Isaac rather than the Arab people.

Common Worship Practices

Both Christianity and Islam adhere to the belief in monotheism. Christianity espouses the concept of monotheism through the doctrine of the Trinity, which posits the existence of a singular God in three distinct persons. Conversely, Islam

acknowledges the existence of a supreme deity known as Allah. The veneration of deities is a widespread phenomenon observed across several cultures. Christianity adheres to the belief in the God of the Bible as a fundamental basis for matters of faith, religious practice, moral principles, and religious guidance. The Islamic faith is substantiated by the Qur'an and Hadith, which were transmitted exclusively by Prophet Muhammad under the guidance of Angel Gabriel. Christianity conducts its prayers mainly within the confines of a church and other locations. In contrast, Muslims gather for communal worship on Fridays in a mosque and other designated days. Let us look at the issue of worship as an ordinary matter between Islam and Christianity, such as prayer, fasting and religious pilgrimage.

1. **Prayer:** Muslims pray five times daily, while Christians are admonished always to pray. In both cases, the prayers are directed towards God and Allah, which involves praising Him, asking for forgiveness, and making requests.
2. **Fasting:** Fasting patterns among Muslims and Christians differ significantly. While Muslims have days to carry out such a practice, some Christian traditions do not follow any fasting calendar. Some of the fasting seasons are Ramadan in Islam and Lent in Christianity.
3. **Religious Pilgrimages:** Religious pilgrimages are often found among Muslims, especially visiting the Kaaba in Mecca once in a lifetime. Christians may visit sites such as Israel, commonly called the Holy Land for Christians, but it is a mandatory exercise. Christians are not obligated to visit any site for any religious experience.

Differences and Similarities Found in Islam and Christianity

Prayers, fasting, and religious pilgrimage are often observed practices among adherents of Christianity and Islam. In this analysis, we will examine the disparities that emerge upon detailed examination. In what ways do prayers vary between the two religious traditions? Prayer constitutes a fundamental aspect of the religious practices of both Christianity and Islam. As previously mentioned, prayer holds a significant role in all religions, serving as a means of connecting with the divine entities of God or Allah. Prayers serve as a means for believers to convey their appreciation, belief, and dedication to their divine creator. Upon further examination, it becomes evident that despite the shared practice of prayer in both religions, there are notable distinctions between them.

Within Christianity, prayer serves as a means of expressing various forms of communication with the divine, including petition, thankfulness, intercession, confession, and praise. Worship can be conducted either in public or private settings. In Christian society, prayers serve as a means for individuals to establish a connection with God. In contrast, prayers are viewed as submission to Allah in the Muslim community, leaving the ultimate decision-making authority to Him. Christians believe God responds to personal petitions, unlike Muslims, who do not attribute decision-making discretion to Allah. During the act of prayer, Muslims are expected to orient themselves towards the direction of Mecca, in contrast to individuals of

other faiths who may choose to look towards the heavens or close their eyes without any prescribed obligation. The devotees of Christianity and Islam possess distinct prayer expectations that are attuned differently. Christians believe that God, following his divine will, actively listens to and responds to all prayers. Within the Islamic faith, prayer is seen as a fundamental component of worship, wherein adherents believe that Allah would respond to supplications following His divine volition, provided they are conducted with due reverence and according to prescribed protocols. If one performs the five-time prayer session effectively, there is a possibility that Allah may respond to their supplications. Alternatively, the decision-making process is left to the individual's discretion. Prayer serves as a means for Christians to establish a genuine connection with the divine being, God.

It can be inferred that the Bible instructs Christians on prayer, emphasizing the importance of continuous and diverse forms of worship devoid of rigid formulas. The Bible contains extensive teachings regarding both public and private prayer. Prayer constitutes a fundamental component of the faithful individual's connection with the divine. Believers utilize prayer to convey their faith, show appreciation, and seek guidance from a divine entity. By engaging in prayer, a devout individual can establish a closer connection and communicate with the divine entity known as God. The Bible enumerates various categories of prayers, such as praise, thankfulness, confession, petition, and intercession. Praise expresses gratitude to God for His inherent qualities and bestowed rewards, whereas thanksgiving involves expressing appreciation to Him for particular circumstances or situations. Confession entails acknowledging one's transgressions, seeking absolution, and pledging to enact personal transformation. A petition involves requesting God, but intercession entails offering prayers for another individual's needs. Muslims are required to adhere to certain customs throughout the act of prayer. Contrary to ritualistic practices, the Bible emphasizes the importance of faith during prayer. The Bible admonishes one to pray as noted below:

- Mark 11:24-25, Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.

The above verses encourage Christians as they pray that God will answer whatever they ask through faith. Finally, the Bible speaks of the importance of prayer and the power it can have on those praying in the following verses:

- James 5:16, Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

Unlike Christians who pray always, Muslims have a five-time prayer pattern. These include:

- Fajr 5:22 AM- it is the first prayer of the day, and it is performed just before dawn. Fajr serves as a reminder for Muslims to begin the day in a positive way, and with an attitude of gratitude and reverence for Allah

- Dhuhr 12:34 PM - is performed at noon, and it is done to thank Allah for all of His blessings throughout the day.
- Asr 3:49 PM - This is the mid-afternoon prayer, and it is done to show appreciation for the strength and guidance Allah (SWT) has provided throughout the day.
- Maghrib 6:36 PM. - This prayer is performed just after sunset, and it is a time of reflection and thanksgiving for all the blessings Allah has provided throughout the day
- Isha - This is the final prayer of the day, and it is done to show appreciation for Allah's protection throughout the night.

The Difference Between Christian and Muslim Fasting

In conjunction with prayer, fasting constitutes a fundamental component within the religious practices of both the Muslim and Christian traditions. Fasting over a defined period is considered the third pillar of Islam, observed by Muslims as a means of abstaining from food, drink, and other physical necessities. The primary objective of fasting is to cultivate enhanced self-discipline, foster a more profound spiritual bond with Allah, and foster heightened empathy for less privileged individuals.

Fasting is a component of Christian religious practice, albeit with distinct variations in its observance. During the holy month of Ramadan, individuals who follow the Islamic faith engage in fasting as a religious observance. Conversely, Christians commonly incorporate fasting into their spiritual practices. The practice revolves around prayer and the development of devotion towards a holy entity, which is often believed to serve as a method of purifying an individual's physical and spiritual parts. Christianity and Islam consider fasting a fundamental spiritual discipline, but they differ in their specific approaches to its implementation. Although the manner of observation may vary, the underlying aim may remain constant.

Christians Holidays and Observances

Sacred Festivals: Some Christians observe some religious festivals even though they are not mandatory for others. Some may include:

1. Advent is a Latin word for "adventus", meaning coming. For Christian religious traditions, it starts the fourth Sunday before Christmas; for others, it begins the sixth Sunday before Christmas. It is an annual Christian celebration celebrated on the 25th of every December in the Gregorian calendar,[39] which

[39] The Gregorian calendar is the current used in the Western world, both as the civil and Christian ecclesiastical calendar. Instituted by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582, the calendar has 365 days with an extra day every four years (the leap year) except in years divisible by 100 but not divisible by 400.

marks the Birth of the Messiah. Following the Julian calendar[40], the Eastern churches celebrate December 25, which equates to the seventh of January in the Gregorian calendar.

2. Feast of the Epiphany- This festival promoted by the eastern church is celebrated on January 6th. [41] The feast includes Christ's birth, magi visitation, and Jesus' life until baptism.
3. Week of Prayer for Christian Unity- The church has a week of prayer from January 18 – 25.
4. Shrove Tuesday is the day before Ash Wednesday (the first day of Lent), falling in February or March, meant for self-reflection and repentance.
5. Ash Wednesday: Ash Wednesday happens on March 2nd, marking the beginning of 40-day Lent. Such a ceremony marks a period of prayer, self-denial, and repentance leading up to Easter. The name Ash Wednesday is associated with a remembrance that humanity is from dust and to dust you shall return.
6. Holy Week of Lent starts from April 10-16 is the last which includes:
   - Palm Sunday, Tenebrae, and the three days of Jesus's final journey (Triduum): Maundy Thursday,
   - Good Friday and the Great Easter Vigil.
   - Palm Sunday is one week before easter. It includes Jesus' triumphant return to Jerusalem before his crucifixion. Good Friday commemorates the crucifixion, which appeared in April.
   - The Great Easter Vigil is done in April and is the first easter celebration. Easter Monday, which is April, celebrates the resurrection day of the Saviour. The day symbolizes forgiveness, rebirth, God's mercy and redemption, and victory over sin, death, and evil.
7. Pentecost -Easter is followed by 50 days called Eastertide or the Easter Season, ending with Pentecost Sunday. Pentecost is the day of the coming of the Holy Spirit, precisely 40 days after Easter. Pentecost happens in June. It was 50 days after the Passover, a Jewish ceremony.
8. The Feast of the Ascension is precisely 40 days after Jesus' ascension in May.
9. Trinity Sunday is the first Sunday after Pentecost in the Western liturgical calendar in June.
10. The Feast of the Transfiguration is happening in August.

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[40] A calendar introduced by the authority of Julius Caesar in 46 BC, in which the year consisted of 365 days, every fourth year had 366 days. It was superseded by the Gregorian calendar, though it is still used by some Orthodox Churches. Dates in the Julian calendar are sometimes designated 'Old Style'

[41] Eastern Church. noun. any of the Christian Churches of the former Byzantine Empire. any Church owing allegiance to the Orthodox Church and in communion with the Greek patriarchal see of Constantinople. any Church, including Uniat Churches, having Eastern forms of liturgy and institutions.

11. Feast of All Saints, also known as All Saints' Day or All Hallows' Day, the festival honors Christian saints throughout the ages, appears in November.

Holy Week in Western Christianity

- Palm Sunday (Sixth Sunday of Lent)
- Holy Monday and Holy Tuesday.
- Holy Wednesday (Spy Wednesday)
- Maundy Thursday.[42]
- Good Friday.
- Holy Saturday (Black Saturday)
- Easter Vigil.[43]
- Easter Day.

Islamic Holidays and Observances

Worship in Islam is curled within the life of the Prophet Mohammad. Based on that fact, Muslims practice the following:

1. Shahadah (Testimony of Faith): this entails the proclamation of Islamic faith, "There is nothing worthy of worship except God, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God." Those who proclaim the Islamic faith must testify to that faith statement. Muslims believe that Mohammad is the last prophet, and the Qur'an is the final revelation to humankind.
2. Salah (Prayer): Muslims pray five times a day.
3. Zakah (Charity): Muslims gives an annual charity to the poor amounting to 2.5% of their saving. Each year, Muslims are supposed to donate a fixed proportion of their savings for good deeds.
4. Sawm (Fasting): Muslims fast during Ramadan, the ninth month of the Muslim lunar calendar,[44] by refraining from eating, drinking, and sexual interaction from dawn to sunset. During April, Muslims are to self-assess their behaviors, such as foul language, idle talk, and anger.
5. Hajj (Pilgrimage): A Muslim must journey to Mecca at least once per lifetime if possible.
6. SHAHADAH.: Faith - "There is no god except Allah, Muhammad is the messenger of Allah".

[42] The word Maundy comes from the latin, 'mandatum', or 'command' which refers to the instructions Jesus gave his disciples at the Last Supper

[43] Holy Saturday, also called Easter Vigil, Christian religious observance that ends the Lenten season, falling on the day before Easter Sunday. The observance commemorates the final day of Christ's death, which is traditionally associated with his triumphant descent into hell.

[44] Muslims around the world use the Islamic Calendar (also known as the Lunar or Hijri calendar) to determine the dates of religious events and observances.

Muslim Feasts

1. Al-Hijra is an Islamic New Year which marks the end of Mohammad's journey from Mecca to Medina.
2. Eid ul-Adha — Festival of Sacrifice: the festivals come after the Hajii, symbolizing Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Ishmael and the provision of a sheep instead. Muslims, during this festival, share meat with other people. This festival commemorates the Prophet Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son Ismail as an act of obedience to God. It is a four-day celebration in Dhul-Hijjah, the 12th and final month of the Islamic calendar.
3. Eid ul-Fitr is the end of the Muslim Month of Fasting (Ramadan): Muslim Month of Fasting. Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset, with the last ten days reserved for possible all-night prayer vigils. It is a three-day celebration usually held in late May or early June.
4. Mawlid al-Nabi or Birthday of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh): some Muslims believe it is the birth of Prophet Muhammad. The celebrations focus on the character of the Prophet: his teaching, leadership, wisdom, suffering and how he forgave even his most bitter enemies. It is held on the 12th day of Rabi' al-Awwal, the third month of the Islamic calendar.
5. Ramadan is a Muslim Month of Fasting: Muslims fast from dawn until sunset every day. Such requires total abstinence from food, drink, smoking and marital relations. Muslims make an extra effort to attend all the five daily prayers in the Masjid (Mosque), and additional prayers are held after the night prayer. At the end of Ramadan, Muslims observe a holiday called Eid-ul-Fitr.

CHAPTER FIVE

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CHRISTIAN GOD AND ALLAH

God of the Christians and Allah

One of the most essential inquiries that warrants examination is how the deity worshiped by Christians, commonly called God, aligns with the deity revered by Muslims, known as Allah. This chapter will strive to demonstrate the distinctions between the two deities. The disparities between the deities of Christianity and Islam are distinct, notable, and incompatible. Based on appearances, it could be inferred that Christianity and Islam, both monotheistic religions, venerate a shared divine entity. However, significant and numerous distinctions exist between the Christian God and the Islamic Allah. Both religions exhibit a monotheistic perspective, acknowledging the existence of a singular deity, God or Allah. However, they diverge in their conceptualizations of the divine, the expectations placed upon humanity by the deity, and how the deity engages with the world.

The Christian deity is commonly perceived as a triadic entity comprising the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. According to the biblical passage found in Matthew 28:19, it is said that individuals should embark on the task of spreading the teachings of Christianity to people from all nations while also performing the act of baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Bible portrays God as a benevolent, merciful, and omniscient being who seeks an intimate connection with His created beings. He is also seen as a deity associated with principles of justice and retribution, wherein transgressors are subject to His punitive measures. The Christian deity is characterized by the attributes of omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence, which grant the ability to intervene in worldly affairs and exert influence throughout human existence. The individual in question is depicted in the Trinity format, as indicated in several biblical passages.

The Islamic concept of Allah is characterized by a unique, unitarian, and unitary nature, devoid of additional entities or people. Unitarianism represents a theological perspective contrasting the trinitarian doctrine prevalent within the Christian faith. Allah is widely perceived as a deity characterized by love, mercy, and omnipotence while emphasizing the importance of obedience to His creation without fostering a personal bond. Allah is commonly perceived as possessing omniscience and omnipotence, attributes that render Him capable of actively participating in the world’s affairs and exerting influence on the fate of humanity. In contrast to the benevolent and forgiving nature attributed to the Christian God, Allah is commonly perceived as a deity characterized by justice and righteous indignation rather than one of unconditional love and forgiveness. Consequently, individuals who fail to adhere to His commandments are anticipated to face retribution from Allah.

God and Allah in Human Interaction

One notable distinction between the Christian deity and the Islamic supreme being is their respective engagement modes with their created world. The Christian

deity is commonly perceived as a benevolent and merciful who manifests Himself to human beings and seeks an intimate connection with His created beings. He is perceived as a deity inclined to grant forgiveness and extend grace to individuals who approach Him with sincere remorse and unwavering belief. In contrast, the Islamic concept of Allah is characterized by a perception of distance and unapproachability, wherein the Creator deemed obedience and submission imperative. He is perceived as a divine being, sometimes called Allah, who is believed to administer retribution to individuals who defy His directives and bestow rewards onto those who faithfully adhere to His instructions. The individual in question is regarded as a divine being who can determine the future outcomes of all individuals. It is widely believed that no one can alter or modify their predetermined fate or destiny. Read the following verses:

- Qur'an 8:22, Indeed, the worst of all beings in the sight of Allah are the ⌜wilfully⌝ deaf and dumb, who do not understand.
- Qur'an 9:51, Say, "Nothing will ever befall us except what Allah has destined for us. He is our Protector." So in Allah let the believers put their trust.
- Qur'an 24:55 Allah has promised those of you who believe and do good that He will certainly make them successors in the land, as He did with those before them; and will surely establish for them their faith which He has chosen for them; and will indeed change their fear into security—⌜provided that⌝ they worship Me, associating nothing with Me. But whoever disbelieves after this ⌜promise⌝, it is they who will be the rebellious.
- Qur'an 87:2-3 Who created and ⌜perfectly⌝ fashioned ⌜all⌝, 3 and Who ordained precisely and inspired accordingly,

Qur'anic and Biblical Doctrines of the Trinity

The Qur'an denies the doctrines of the Trinity, which leads to a total disregard for the deity of Christ. Such implication leads to Islam's denial of atonement, the death and resurrection of Christ, and the fullness of salvation in Christ alone. The Qur'an rejects the Biblical account of the Saviour and his uniqueness. Account of the Saviour is even noted in later revelation messages of Prophet Muhammad regarding the "People of the Book " (Jews and Christians). The Qur'an finally says that Christians and Jews, commonly called "People of the Book ", are the worst creatures. They are a threat to Muslims, a curse of Allah claiming that Allah will question anyone calling Christ the Son of God. However, in Qur'an 15:28-29 and Qur'an 19:16-21, the Spirit is mentioned as independent of Allah or at least coming from Allah, who gives a holy Boy to a virgin Mary, mother of Jesus. The following Quranic verses have this to say:

- Qur'an 3:100 -O believers! If you were to yield to a group of those who were given the Scripture, they would turn you back from belief to disbelief.
- Qur'an 5.116-120 And ⌜on Judgment Day⌝ Allah will say, "O Jesus, son of Mary! Did you ever ask the people to worship you and your mother as gods besides Allah?" He will answer, "Glory be to You! How could I ever say what I had no right to say? If I had said such a thing, you would have

certainly known it. You know what is ˹hidden˺ within me, but I do not know what is within You. Indeed, You ˹alone˺ are the Knower of all unseen.117 I never told them anything except what You ordered me to say: “Worship Allah—my Lord and your Lord!” And I was witness to them as long as I remained among them. But when You took me, You were the Witness over them—and You are a Witness over all things.118 If You punish them, they belong to You after all. But if You forgive them, You are surely the Almighty, All-Wise.119 Allah will declare, “This is the Day when ˹only˺ the faithful will benefit from their faithfulness. Theirs are Gardens under which rivers flow, to stay there forever and ever. Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. That is the ultimate triumph.”120 To Allah ˹alone˺ belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and everything within. And He is Most Capable of everything.

- Qur’an 9.30 The Jews say, “Ezra is the son of Allah,” while the Christians say, “The Messiah is the son of Allah.” Such are their baseless assertions, only parroting the words of earlier disbelievers. May Allah condemn them! How can they be deluded ˹from the truth˺?
- Qur’an 98.1-6, The disbelievers from the People of the Book and the polytheists were not going to desist ˹from disbelief˺ until the clear proof came to them: 2 a messenger from Allah, reciting scrolls of ˹utmost˺ purity, 3 containing upright commandments. 4 It was not until this clear proof came to the People of the Book that they became divided ˹about his prophethood˺—5 even though they were only commanded to worship Allah ˹alone˺ with sincere devotion to Him in all uprightness, establish prayer, and pay alms-tax. That is the upright Way. 6 Indeed, those who disbelieve from the People of the Book and the polytheists will be in the Fire of Hell, to stay there forever. They are the worst of ˹all˺ beings.
- Qur’an 15:28-29 ˹Remember, O Prophet˺ when your Lord said to the angels, “I am going to create a human being from sounding clay molded from black mud. 29 So when I have fashioned him and had a spirit of My Own ˹creation˺ breathed into him, fall down in prostration to him.”
- Qur’an 19:16-21, And mention in the Book ˹O Prophet, the story of˺ Mary when she withdrew from her family to a place in the east, 17 screening herself off from them. Then We sent to her Our angel, ˹Gabriel,˺ appearing before her as a man, perfectly formed. 18 She appealed, “I truly seek refuge in the Most Compassionate from you! ˹So leave me alone˺ if you are God-fearing.” 19 He responded, “I am only a messenger from your Lord, ˹sent˺ to bless you with a pure son.”20 She wondered, “How can I have a son when no man has ever touched me, nor am I unchaste?” 21 He replied, “So will it be! Your Lord says, ‘It is easy for Me. And so will We make him a sign for humanity and a mercy from Us.’ It is a matter ˹already˺ decreed.”22 So she conceived him and withdrew with him to a remote place.

Islam encompasses monotheism, emphasizing Allah’s unity, significantly distinguishing it from Christianity. The concept of the unity of Allah holds significant importance within the Islamic faith, serving as a core doctrinal doctrine embraced by

Muslims across the globe. This conviction extends beyond the fundamental concept of monotheism. The foundation of this belief system lies in the conviction that Allah is the singular and only entity responsible for the creation, sustenance, and provision of the universe, and is thus the sole entity deserving of worship. The Qur'an says, "Say, ˹O Prophet, ˺ He is Allah—One ˹and Indivisible˺ (112:1)." Salim affirms, "Allah, according to Islam, is unique – without similarity to any person, thing, or power, - and beyond the limitations of body, space, time, need, or contingency. ˊ[45] This concept starkly contrasts the Christian belief that God is triune, consisting of three distinct persons: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. At the heart of the Islamic belief in the oneness of Allah is the concept of tawhid, which is the belief that Allah is the only entity worthy of worship and reverence.[46] This concept is included in the Qur'an and is reiterated in several Islamic literary works. According to this theological perspective, Allah is regarded as whole and flawless, rendering any other divine entity unworthy of veneration. The notion of divine oneness bolsters this conviction, as it posits that Allah is the sole eternal and immutable being. The Christian faith differs significantly from other belief systems in its conception of the Godhead, which consists of three distinct individuals.

The Doctrine of the Oneness of God

Islamic faith imitates the Biblical teaching of the oneness of God, taught 600 years before Prophet Muhammad's revelation. The Bible teaches the oneness of God as manifested in the Trinity. Oneness of God means that God is one Being and exists in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The scriptural support is as follows:

A. God is one:

- Deuteronomy 6:4 Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.
- Mark 12:28-30, One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" 29 "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' 31 The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these.
- John 5:44, How can you believe since you accept glory from one another but do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?
- John 17:3 Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.
- 1 Cor 8:6, yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.

[45] Salim, 3.
[46] Salim, 2.

- 2 Corinthians 13:14, May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- Ephesians 4:4-6, There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called. 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.
- Gal 3:20, A mediator, however, implies more than one party; but God is one.
- 1 Tim 2:5, For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, one Lord, one faith, one baptism.
- 1 Tim 1:17, Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.
- James 2:19, You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.
- Jude 1:25, to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power, and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

The diverse scriptural passages within the Bible serve to underscore the fundamental belief in the unity of God as a core principle within the Christian religious tradition. The prevailing doctrine posits that God is a singular being, existing perpetually as a trinity of distinct Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The theological concept of the Trinity finds its origins in the teachings of Jesus as well as the scriptural texts of the Bible, becoming a fundamental component of the Christian belief system. The concept of the unity of God is a pervasive theme throughout the biblical text. In the Old Testament, it can be observed that God possesses a singular nature and exhibits a unified purpose. Within the New Testament, Jesus Christ expounds upon the notion of the singularity of God by imparting teachings concerning the interconnectedness of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Jesus said, “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30). Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us.” 9 Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? (John 14:8-9).” The doctrine of the oneness of God is essential because it affirms the unity of God and His perfect nature and character. It is a reminder that God is one and indivisible and that He is the source of all truth and love. It also reminds us that God is the ultimate source of love, mercy, and grace.

The concept of monotheism also serves as a reminder of God’s absolute authority over the entirety of existence. He is responsible for creating and maintaining all entities, whether perceptible or imperceptible. The one in question possesses supreme authority over all occurrences throughout history, and this individual will finally ensure the culmination and realization of all matters. According to biblical teachings, human beings are believed to have been created in the image of God. All individuals are interconnected within a singular divine entity and, thus, possess the capacity to encounter and perceive manifestations of affection, compassion, and benevolence emanating from this divine being. It is widely acknowledged that the concept of God’s oneness holds significant importance within the framework of the Christian religion. This concept serves as a reminder of God’s inherent unity and His flawless nature and character. This statement asserts the

supreme authority of God over the entirety of existence and serves as a reminder of our position within His familial structure. Ultimately, it affords individuals the chance to encounter the divine.

The Trinity as a Fundamental Difference with Islam

The theology of the Trinity presents a significant divergence from the Islamic perspective. For more than two millennia, adherents of Christianity have believed that the Holy Trinity consists of God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit. According to Christian doctrine, Jesus is regarded as the exclusive Son of God, having been born to the Virgin Mary and sacrificing himself on the cross to redeem humanity's transgressions. The individual known as Jesus, who experienced resurrection after death, is anticipated to return to evaluate both the living and deceased individuals. The Bible affirms, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever (Hebrews 13:8)."

In contrast, Islam does not acknowledge the theological idea of the Trinity, as it upholds the belief that Allah is the sole creator, possessing absolute perfection and indivisibility. Islam, as a religious tradition, does not accept the concept of Jesus being the son of God. Instead, it upholds the belief that Jesus was a prophet whom Allah divinely chose to disseminate his teachings. Muslims believe that Isa (Jesus) was not subjected to crucifixion but ascended to the celestial realm through divine intervention by Allah. Furthermore, it is believed that Isa will reappear to fulfill the role of judging humanity upon the culmination of time.

In contrast to adherents of Islam, Christians believe that salvation is attained via trust in Jesus. Christians acknowledge the exclusive role of Jesus as the exclusive means of attaining salvation, emphasizing the significance of placing trust in him and engaging in repentance as essential prerequisites for obtaining pardon. Contrarily, adherents of the Islamic faith maintain the belief that attaining salvation necessitates complete surrender to the divine decree of Allah, alongside the need to perform righteous deeds as a prerequisite for admission into paradise. In general, the theological concept of the Trinity presents an insurmountable divergence between Christianity and the Islamic faith, resulting in the identification of distinct deities by each religion. This analysis will examine the contrasting perspectives on Jesus, the Son of God, as presented in the Bible and the Qur'an, focusing on the temporal disparity of around 600 years between the two religious texts. The table shows evidence to support the notion that the biblical depiction of Jesus and the portrayal of Isha in the Qur'an represent distinct individuals.

Table 4:3 Bible and Qur'an view of Jesus/Isa, the Son of God

Qur'an	Bible
Qur'an 19:33, It is not for Allah to take a son! Glory be to Him. When He decrees a matter, He simply tells it, "Be!" And it is!	Matthew 3:17, And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." Luke 9:35 , A voice came from the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him." John 1:29, The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! Matthew 17:5, While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"
Qur'an 5:117, I never told them anything except what You ordered me to say: "Worship Allah—my Lord and your Lord!" And I was witness over them as long as I remained among them. But when You took me, You were the Witness over them—and You are a Witness over all things.	John 10:30, "I and the Father are one." John 1:14, The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:18 No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known. Matthew 12:8, For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.
Qur'an 4:157, and for boasting, "We killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the messenger of Allah." But they neither killed nor crucified him—it was only made to appear so. Even those who argue for this ˹crucifixion˺ are in doubt. They have no knowledge whatsoever— only making assumptions. They certainly did not kill him.	Matthew 27:46, About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" (Which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"). Luke 23:33, When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left.
Qur'anic Isa went to heaven and someone else was crucified but the Bible has an account of Jesus death and resurrection	Luke 23:44-46, It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, 45 for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the

	temple was torn in two. 46 Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” When he had said this, he breathed his last. Luke 24: 24 On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. 2 They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, 3 but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4 While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. 5 In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? 6 He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee:

Jesus’ Deity

The inquiry into the divinity of Jesus has engendered much discourse over centuries, giving rise to a multitude of viewpoints on this matter. Throughout the annals of history, many theologians, erudite intellectuals, and esteemed religious figures have engaged in extensive discourse, presenting affirmations and refutations about the concept of Jesus’ divinity. According to Christian theology, Jesus is seen as the divine Son of God, constituting one aspect of the Trinity, which encompasses God the Father, Jesus as the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This concept is founded upon scriptural passages from the Bible, which assert the dual nature of Jesus as both human and divine. For example, the Gospel of John states, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1). This passage is interpreted to mean that Jesus is God, as he is the Word of God. In addition to the Biblical evidence, many Christians believe that Jesus is God because of his miraculous works. Jesus’ miraculous power includes healing the sick, raising the dead, and performing other miracles that no human can do.

Furthermore, Jesus’s teachings and how he interacted with people demonstrate that he was divine. In the Gospel of John, Jesus says, “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30). This statement further reinforces the idea that Jesus is God. The following Bible verses prove that Jesus is both human and God:

- Matthew 9: 4-7, Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, “Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? 5 Which is easier: to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’

or to say, ‘Get up and walk’? 6 But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.” So he said to the paralyzed man, “Get up, take your mat and go home.” 7 Then the man got up and went home. 8 When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to man.

- Matthew 11:27, All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.
- Luke 24:37, Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.
- John 8:38, I am telling you what I have seen in the Father’s presence, and you are doing what you have heard from your father.
- John 14:8-11, Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.” 9 Jesus answered: Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? 10 Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. 11 Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves.
- John 10: 30, I and the Father are one. Deuteronomy 6:4, Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.
- John 10:37-38, Do not believe me unless I do the works of my Father. 38 But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.
- John 17:21-23, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—23 I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.
- John 20:17, Jesus said, Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’
- John 20:28-29, Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!” 29 Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”
- John 21:17, The third time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.”
- Romans 1:3-4, regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David, 4 and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.
- 1 Corinthians 15:3-8, For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the

Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. 6 After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, 8 and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

- 2 Corinthians 4:4, The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.
- Colossians 1:15-16, The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.
- Colossians 2:9, For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form,
- Philippians 2:6, 10-11, Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! 9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,11 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
- Titus 2:13-14, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.
- Hebrews 1:3, The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.
- Hebrews 1:8, But about the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom."
- 1 John 4:3, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.
- Revelation 5:12-14, In a loud voice they were saying: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" 13 Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!" 14 The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.
- Exodus 3:14, God said to Moses, "I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I am has sent me to you."

- Isaiah 9:6, For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Jesus, the Son of God, and the Resurrection

According to biblical teachings, Jesus, being divine, experienced resurrection on the third day. According to the prevailing view, Jesus was regarded as a divine entity who achieved victory over death and triumphed over the grave concept. The resurrection serves as a compelling manifestation of Jesus's inherent divinity and serves as an indication of his triumph over mortality. A substantial body of evidence supports the notion that Jesus possesses God's divine nature. From a Christian theological standpoint, Jesus possesses human and divine attributes, with his miracles, teachings, and resurrection manifesting his divine essence. Hence, a logical deduction can be made that Jesus is synonymous with divinity. The Bible contains explicit passages whereby Jesus asserts his divinity, providing significant instructions. The inquiry regarding the biblical teachings on the divinity of Jesus is a pivotal point of contention in numerous dialogues between adherents of Islam and Christianity. The subsequent compilation comprises an enumeration of long verses by Stephen Smith, which are aligned with the proposition above:[47]

1. Genesis 1:26 Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."
2. Psalm 2:7, I will proclaim the Lord's decree: He said to me, "You are my son; today I have become your father.
3. Psalm 110:1, The Lord says to my lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.
4. Isaiah 9:6, For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
5. Isaiah 46:9, Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me.
6. Isaiah 48:16-17, "Come near me and listen to this: "From the first announcement I have not spoken in secret; at the time it happens, I am there." And now the Sovereign Lord has sent me, endowed with his Spirit. 17 This is what the Lord says—your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: "I am the Lord your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go.
7. Isaiah 44: 6, "This is what the Lord says—Israel's King and Redeemer, the Lord Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God."
8. Isaiah 61:1, The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the

[47] Stephen Smith (Ed.), Publication date: Apr 13, 2022. Publisher: OpenBible.info

brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, 2 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, 3 and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor.

9. Matthew 1:23, "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").
10. Matthew 3:16-17, As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. 17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.
11. Matthew 28:19 -20, Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.
12. Matthew 28:18-20, Then Jesus came to them and said, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.
13. Luke 1:35, The angel answered, The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.
14. John 1:1-5,14, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 4 In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. 14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.
15. John 1:18, No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.
16. John 3:16, For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
17. John 8:58, "Very truly I tell you," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am
18. John 10:30-3630 I and the Father are one." 31 Again his Jewish opponents picked up stones to stone him, 32 but Jesus said to them, "I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?" 33 "We are not stoning you for any good work," they replied, "but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God." 34 Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your Law, 'I have said you are "gods"'? 35 If he called

them ‘gods,’ to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be set aside— 36 what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, ‘I am God’s Son’?

19. John 14:9-11, Jesus answered: Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? 10 Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. 11 Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves
20. John 14:16-17, And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.
21. John 14:26, But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you
22. John 14:28, You heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than.
23. John 15:26, When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me. 27 And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.
24. John 20:17, Jesus said, “Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’
25. John 20:28 Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”
26. Acts 10:38, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.
27. Romans 14:17-18, For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, 18 because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and receives human approval.
28. 1 Corinthians 8:6, yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.
29. 2 Corinthians 1:21-22, Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, 22 set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.
30. 2 Corinthians 13:14, The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
31. Galatians 4:6 Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, Abba, Father.

32. Ephesians 4:4-6, There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.
33. Philippians 2:5-8, In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!
34. Colossians 1:15-17, The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.
35. Colossians 2:9, For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form,
36. Colossians 1:16, For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.
37. 1 Timothy 2:5, For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus
38. Titus 1:4, To Titus, my true son in our common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior
39. Titus 2:13, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.
40. Hebrews 1:3,8, The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. 8, But about the Son he says, Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.
41. Hebrews 2:14, Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—
42. Hebrews 9:14, How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!
43. 1 Peter 1:2, who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.
44. 1 John 5:20, We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.
45. Revelation 1:8, "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."
46. Revelation 22:13, I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

The perception of Jesus being Lord and God is approached from the conventional Islamic perspective. Islamic doctrine has repeatedly refuted the notion that Jesus possesses the divine nature of God. Central to the matter lies the Islamic doctrine asserting that Allah is indivisible and that no one can be deemed equal to or superior to Him. Islamic philosophy posits that Jesus, in his human form, is not considered to be Allah or have any resemblance to Allah. The perpetuation of this falsehood has persisted throughout the Islamic faith since its establishment. Following Islamic doctrine, Jesus has a position of great reverence as a prophet of Allah. However, his nature is not considered divine. The veneration of Jesus as a revered prophet has been a longstanding perspective espoused by Muslim academics over numerous centuries and is explicitly mentioned in the Qur'an. The Bible says, "The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God (2 Corinthians 4:44)." However as noted in the above Biblical verses, Jesus is both Lord and God.

According to the Qur'an, Allah bestowed Jesus with extraordinary abilities, yet he was not considered divine. One other argument employed to refute the notion of Jesus being God is rooted in the concern that it would constitute a manifestation of polytheism, an explicitly forbidden concept within the framework of Islamic belief. The acceptance of Jesus as a deity would imply the existence of two divine entities, contradicting the Islamic principle of the Oneness of God, which could be perceived as disrespectful. Moreover, the Islamic doctrine emphasizing Allah's complete authority and omnipotence is incongruent with the concept of Jesus' divinity. The Islamic perspective, which rejects the notion of Jesus being God, is grounded in the premise that God transcends any corporeal manifestation. Hence, the assertion that Jesus possesses divinity implies a restriction on the nature of God, as it implies that God is confined to the human form, thereby presenting an inherent contradiction. The Islamic refusal to accept Jesus as God is grounded in the concept of God's complete transcendence. The following Qur'anic verses contradict the Biblical teaching of Jesus, the Messiah:

- Qur'an 5:17, Indeed, those who say, "Allah is the Messiah, son of Mary," have fallen into disbelief. Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ "Who has the power to prevent Allah if He chose to destroy the Messiah, son of Mary, his mother, and everyone in the world all together? To Allah ˹alone˺ belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and everything in between. He creates whatever He wills. And Allah is Most Capable of everything.
- Quran 5:72, Those who say, "Allah is the Messiah, son of Mary," have certainly fallen into disbelief. The Messiah ˹himself˺ said, "O Children of Israel! Worship Allah—my Lord and your Lord." Whoever associates others with Allah ˹in worship˺ will surely be forbidden Paradise by Allah. Their home will be the Fire. And the wrongdoers will have no helpers.
- Qur'an 5:75, The Messiah, son of Mary, was no more than a messenger. ˹Many˺ messengers had ˹come and˺ gone before him. His mother was a woman of truth. They both ate food. See how We make the signs clear to them, yet see how they are deluded ˹from the truth˺!

- Qur'an 5:110, And ˹on Judgment Day˺ Allah will say, "O Jesus, son of Mary! Remember My favor upon you and your mother: how I supported you with the holy spirit1 so you spoke to people in ˹your˺ infancy and adulthood. How I taught you writing, wisdom, the Torah, and the Gospel. How you molded a bird from clay—by My Will—and breathed into it and it became a ˹real˺ bird—by My Will. How you healed the blind and the lepers—by My Will. How you brought the dead to life—by My Will. How I prevented the Children of Israel from harming you when you came to them with clear proofs and the disbelievers among them said, "This is nothing but pure magic."

In a quick rejoinder and response to what the Qur'an says about Isa, the Bible is very particular about Jesus's role in salvation. Let us see the following verse as a response to the above Islamic rejection of Jesus as the true son of God and Saviour:

- Romans 5:1-9, Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. 3 Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; 4 perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5 And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us. 6 You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. 7 Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. 8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! 10 For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!
- Ephesians 2:1-9, As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, 2 in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. 3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. 4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. 6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 7 in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. 8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

The Islamic repudiation of the belief positing Jesus as divine emerged approximately six centuries after its initial formulation. The Qur'an presents a range

of arguments and interpretations that uphold the orthodox Islamic perspective, asserting that Jesus is not divine and that attributing divinity to him would constitute a manifestation of polytheism. The reasons mentioned above are fundamentally rooted in the Islamic doctrine that posits Allah's transcendence from any corporeal manifestation, emphasizing the indivisibility of His sovereignty and omnipotence. The Qur'an claims that Isa is the Word of Allah and a Spirit of Allah (Qur'an 4:171) nevertheless, as noted in the following verses:

- Qur'an 3:45, ˹Remember˺ when the angels proclaimed, O Mary! Allah gives you good news of a Word from Him, his name will be the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary; honored in this world and the Hereafter, and he will be one of those nearest ˹to Allah˺.
- Qur'an 4:171, O People of the Book! Do not go to extremes regarding your faith; say nothing about Allah except the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was no more than a messenger of Allah and the fulfillment of His Word through Mary and a spirit ˹created by a command˺ from Him. So believe in Allah and His messengers and do not say, "Trinity." Stop!—for your own good. Allah is only One God. Glory be to Him! He is far above having a son! To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And Allah is sufficient as a Trustee of Affairs.

Based on the presentation mentioned above, it may be asserted and posited that the biblical figure of Jesus and the Qur'anic figure of Isa are distinct entities. The comparison of Jesus as depicted in the Bible and the Qur'an reveals two distinct personas within the respective religious discourses. The Bible and the Qur'an, regarded as sacred scriptures, include significant content about Jesus/Isa, encompassing his life and teachings. However, these texts are often analyzed separately, as they are perceived to represent distinct individuals. The Qur'an acknowledges Isa as a revered entity or divine messenger of Allah, but fundamental and insurmountable disparities exist in the depiction of Jesus and his teachings as presented in the Bible. The following are notable differences:

1. First, the Bible portrays Jesus as the son of God, while the Qur'an does not. In the Bible, Jesus is described as the son of God and the savior of humanity, sent to bring about the redemption of humankind. On the other hand, the Qur'an refers to Isa as the "messenger of Allah" and "word of Allah" but does not refer to him as the son of Allah. Consequently, while the Bible portrays Jesus as a divine entity, the Qur'an emphasizes his human qualities and attributes, such as kindness and compassion.
2. Second, the Bible and the Qur'an differ in portraying Jesus's/Isa's teachings. In the Bible, Jesus is described as a prophet and teacher who preaches about the kingdom of God and the coming of the Holy Spirit as a fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies. In the Qur'an, Isa is portrayed as a messenger of Allah who taught people to accept Allah's will and to live a moral and righteous life.
3. Thirdly, the Bible and the Qur'an differ in their view of Jesus's death. The Bible portrays Jesus as a martyr who was crucified for his teachings and

beliefs as a redemptive work of God. The Qur'an, however, does not mention Isa's death but instead states that he was taken up to heaven by God.

Hence, it can be observed that although the Bible and the Qur'an both acknowledge Jesus/Isa as a revered individual dispatched by God/Allah, fundamental disparities exist that cannot be reconciled. In the forthcoming chapters, we will examine the significant distinctions in the teachings of Jesus. The distinctions mentioned above facilitate the comparative analysis of the perspectives on Jesus and his teachings as presented in the texts of Christianity and Islam. Undoubtedly, it can be asserted that under Islamic teachings, the concept of Isa encompasses a distinct interpretation of Jesus, the Messiah, compared to the prevailing Biblical conception.

Consistent Distinction Between God and Jesus in the Bible

The theological principle underpinning the Christian faith is the crucial and enduring differentiation between God, specifically the Father, and Jesus, who is identified as the Son. This distinction is based on the differentiation between God as the Creator, Jesus as God's Son, and humanity's Saviour. The Bible continually asserts the existence of two distinct personas: God the Father and the Son. The differentiation between the divine entities of God and Jesus is delineated following the theological tenets of the Trinity. This theological theory posits the existence of a singular deity, referred to as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The concept of God entails the attribution of being the Creator of all entities and the ultimate origin of power, wisdom, and authority. Jesus, as the Son of God, came into the world to do the work of the Father; he is eternal (John 4:24; 5:19; 5:43; 14:14 and 2 Corinthians 5:17). He is sent to the Earth to save all humankind from their sins and to restore their relationship between God and humanity (2 Corinthians 5:18) based on one's acceptance of the gift of salvation offered to all. Salvation is a gift, but one has to choose to accept it; otherwise, it is not an automatic provision minus human acceptance. The following verses show how Jesus taught about salvation:

- John 4:24, My food, "said Jesus," is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.
- John 5:19, Jesus gave them this answer: Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.
- John 5: 43, I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him.
- John 14:14, You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.
- 2 Corinthians 5:17, All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:

The Bible continually upholds the separation between God and Jesus. Within the Old Testament, the divine being is identified as the Creator, but Jesus is perceived as the individual divinely selected by God to deliver humanity from its predicament. In the context of the New Testament, Jesus is commonly regarded as

the divine Son of God and is ascribed various honorific titles, including Lord and Saviour. The teachings of Jesus also exhibit a continuous differentiation between God and himself, Jesus. The Sermon on the Mount, as documented in the Gospel of Matthew (chapter 5), expounds upon Jesus' teachings regarding the divine origin of authority and power, emphasizing that God serves as the ultimate source.

Furthermore, Jesus asserts his role as God's earthly representative, emphasizing obedience's imperative nature. The continuous differentiation between the divine entity of God and the historical figure of Jesus holds significant importance in comprehending the tenets and beliefs of the Christian religion. This differentiation enables us to comprehend the correlation between the divine entity and Jesus, acknowledging the omnipotence and sovereignty of God. Furthermore, it underscores the significance of Jesus as the redeemer of humanity and the realization of God's will on Earth. Moreover, the differentiation is crucial in comprehending the authentic essence of the Trinity as a fundamental pillar of the Christian doctrine. Read the following verses:

- Matthew 5:3, Blessed are the poor in spirit,
  for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
  4 Blessed are those who mourn,
  for they will be comforted.
  5 Blessed are the meek,
  for they will inherit the earth.
  6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
  for they will be filled.
  7 Blessed are the merciful,
  for they will be shown mercy.
  8 Blessed are the pure in heart,
  for they will see God.
  9 Blessed are the peacemakers,
  for they will be called children of God.
  10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
  for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

The Bible consistently maintains a distinction between God, the Father and Jesus, the Son, as noted in the following verses:

- John 17:5, And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.
- Romans 1:7-8, To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. 8 Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world.
- 1 Corinthians 1:3-4, Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I always thank my God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus.
- Galatians 1:3, Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,

- Ephesians 1:2-3, Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.
- Ephesians 6:23, Peace to the brothers and sisters, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Philippians 1:2, Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ
- Colossians 1:2, To God's holy people in Colossae, the faithful brothers and sisters in Christ: Grace and peace to you from God our Father.
- 1 Thessalonians 1:1, Paul, Silas[fn] and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you.
- James 1:1, James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations: Greetings.
- 2 Peter 1:2, Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.
- 2 John 1:3, Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will be with us in truth and love.

Consistent Distinction Between Allah and Isa in the Qur'an

The Qur'an demonstrates a consistent differentiation between Allah and Isa. The Qur'an consistently underscores the distinction by emphasizing that Allah is the sole entity deserving of worship. The text asserts that Allah is the singular and authentic deity and acknowledges Isa as his messenger. The distinction is made clear in the following verse:

- Qur'an 4:171, O People of the Book! Do not go to extremes regarding your faith; say nothing about Allah except the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was no more than a messenger of Allah and the fulfillment of His Word through Mary and a spirit ˹created by a command˺ from Him. 2 So believe in Allah and His messengers and do not say, "Trinity." Stop! —for your own good. Allah is only One God. Glory be to Him! He is far above having a son! To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And Allah is sufficient as a Trustee of Affairs.

The verses emphasize that Allah is the only deity worthy of worship and that Isa is merely a messenger. According to the Qur'an, Isa is a human being with limitations. The human limitation is made clear in Qur'an 3:59, Indeed, the example of Jesus in the sight of Allah is like that of Adam. He created him from dust, then said to him, "Be!" And he was! Muslims are taught that Isa was created just like Adam and that he is human with limited abilities. The Qur'an provides clear guidance on how to worship Allah and follow Isa. The following verses state:

- Qur'an 19:88-93, The say, "The Most Compassionate has offspring." 89 You have certainly made an outrageous claim, 90 by which the heavens are about to burst, the earth to split apart, and the mountains to crumble to pieces, 91 in protest of attributing children to the Most Compassionate. 92 It does not befit

⌜the majesty of⌝ the Most Compassionate to have children. 93 There is none in the heavens or the earth who will not return to the Most Compassionate in full submission.

The passages mentioned above contradict other verses in the Qur'an, asserting that Isa (Jesus) was a revered individual conceived by a virtuous woman named Mary. According to the teachings of the Qur'an, it is emphasized that Allah is the ultimate entity deserving of worship, and Isa (Jesus) is to be regarded as a messenger of Allah whose guidance should be adhered to. The Qur'an establishes a clear and constant differentiation between Allah and Isa. The Qur'an provides Muslims with spiritual guidance and a framework for leading a life dedicated to the worship of Allah. Based on the differentiation above, it is appropriate to assert that the portrayal of Jesus in the Bible contrasts with the depiction of Isa in the Qur'an. The reconciliation of such a distinction is not feasible. It may be inferred that while Jesus is present in Christianity and Islam, notable distinctions exist between the two figures upon closer examination. There are notable distinctions between the portrayal of Jesus in the Qur'an and the depiction in the Bible. It can be concluded that the Qur'an rejects the Christian view of the divinity of Jesus as God incarnate or the literal Son of God. The Qur'an rejects Jesus' crucifixion and creates a scenario in which he was crucified (Qur'an 4:157).[48] In Islam, the reference to Isa denotes a distinct interpretation of the figure known as Jesus in the Bible. It is reasonable to deduce that approximately six centuries following Jesus' ascension, a different individual named Isa emerged in the Annals of the Qur'an, apart from the historical figure of Jesus as depicted in the Bible. It might be argued that approximately eight centuries following Jesus' ascension, a set of hadiths emerged, presenting contrasting perspectives to the Biblical Jesus and his teachings. The subsequent verses presented herein serve as an illustrative example of the paradox that emerged six centuries after the ascension of Jesus. Read the following verses:

- Qur'an 4:157, and for boasting, "We killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the messenger of Allah." But they neither killed nor crucified him—it was only made to appear so.1 Even those who argue for this ⌜crucifixion⌝ are in doubt. They have no knowledge whatsoever—only making assumptions. They certainly did not kill him.
- Qur'an 3:55, ⌜Remember⌝ when Allah said, O Jesus! I will take you and raise you up to Myself. I will deliver you from those who disbelieve, and elevate your followers above the disbelievers until the Day of Judgment. Then to Me you will ⌜all⌝ return, and I will settle all your disputes.
- Qur'an 19:33, "Peace be upon me the day I was born, the day I die, and the day I will be raised back to life!"

While the Qur'an does not affirm the physical death of Jesus, it is worth noting that the Qur'an 19:33 can be interpreted as supporting the notion of bodily death. According to the Qur'an 3:55, Prophet Muhammad asserts that the adherents of Jesus had a higher level of faith. It may be observed that the Qur'an lacks reliability in terms of its teachings and guidance about the beliefs and practices associated

[48] Michael F. Fonner, "Jesus' Death by Crucifixion in the Qur'an: An Issue of Interpretation and Muslim-Christian Relations," JES 29 (1992), 442.

with the figure of Jesus as portrayed in the Bible. The experience of persecution and suffering targeting individuals who have converted to Islam might create challenges for certain Muslims in their efforts to abstain from engaging with biblical texts, which are perceived as containing verifiable truths. Despite facing adverse treatment, many Muslims embrace the authentic faith as they engage with the scriptural veracity of the Bible independently. The widespread availability of the Bible via social media platforms and the dedication of individuals who courageously propagate its teachings in regions predominantly inhabited by Muslims have contributed to its increased accessibility. We express gratitude to the divine entity for enabling the incorporation of Muslims into the redemptive scheme via the selfless demise of Jesus.

Biblical Jesus is the Image of the Invisible Christian God

In light of the Qur'an's omission of Jesus' divinity, it is evident that the Bible does not include any reference to Isa as the embodiment of the unseen God, as stated in Colossians 1:15. The Bible contains numerous passages that depict Jesus as the embodiment of the unseen deity. Jesus, from his birth, death, resurrection, and ascension, serves as the corporeal manifestation of the divine being on the terrestrial plane. Consequently, the theological significance of Jesus as the embodiment of the unseen God is a fundamental aspect of Christian doctrine. The following scriptural passages affirm that Jesus Christ is the image and radiance of the invisible God:

- John 1:18, No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.
- John 5:19, Jesus gave them this answer: Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.
- John 8:28, So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me
- John 10:30, I and the Father are one.
- John 14:9, Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? 10 Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. 11 Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves.
- Colossians 1:15, The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.
- Hebrews 1:3, The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

Jesus serves as the embodiment of God on Earth, historically and presently, effectively mirroring the character and traits of the Father. According to biblical teachings, Jesus is regarded as the flawless embodiment of God's essence on Earth. Consequently, Jesus represents the exclusive means individuals can comprehend and connect with the divine entity. The concept of a divine being is intricately intertwined with the world's affairs and individuals' experiences. The embodiment of God in the person of Jesus implies that God maintains an active and involved presence in all aspects of human existence while also granting humanity the capacity for autonomous decision-making. The assertion is made that God remains in control of human existence despite human rejection. Several other Bible verses teach that Jesus is the perfect representation of God, as shown below:

- John 1:18, No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.
- John 5:19, Jesus gave them this answer: Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.
- John 8:28, So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me.
- John 10:30, I and the Father are one.
- 2 Corinthians 4:4, The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.
- Hebrews 1:3, The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

People tend to reject God starting from Adam throughout history. The following Biblical verses attest that humans can reject God:

- Genesis 6:6, The LORD regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled.
- Leviticus 26:27-28, 27 'If in spite of this you still do not listen to me but continue to be hostile toward me, 28 then in my anger I will be hostile toward you, and I myself will punish you for your sins seven times over.
- Deuteronomy 32:18, You deserted the Rock, who fathered you; you forgot the God who gave you birth.
- 1 Samuel 15:23, For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has rejected you as king.
- Psalm 50:17, You hate my instruction and cast my words behind you.
- Psalm 50:22, Consider this, you who forget God, or I will tear you to pieces, with no one to rescue you:
- Isaiah 5:24, Therefore, as tongues of fire lick up straw and as dry grass sinks down in the flames, so their roots will decay and their flowers blow away like

dust; for they have rejected the law of the Lord Almighty and spurned the word of the Holy One of Israel.

- Jeremiah 6:10, To whom can I speak and give warning? Who will listen to me? Their ears are closed so they cannot hear. The word of the Lord is offensive to them; they find no pleasure in it.
- Jeremiah 8:9, The wise will be put to shame; they will be dismayed and trapped. Since they have rejected the word of the Lord, what kind of wisdom do they have?
- Mark 7:13, Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that.
- Luke 9:26, Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angel.
- John 3:36, Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on them.
- John 12:48, There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; the very words I have spoken will condemn them at the last day.
- 1 Thessalonians 4:8, Therefore, anyone who rejects this instruction does not reject a human being but God, the very God who gives you his Holy Spirit.

There is considerable perplexity and misinterpretation regarding the concept of God in contemporary society. Many individuals frequently experience uncertainty when attempting to establish a connection with and comprehend the nature of God. Within the given framework, the notion that Jesus embodies the representation of an imperceptible deity is a potent affirmation of God's existence, agency, and engagement within the realm of existence. Furthermore, it serves as a reminder that Jesus serves as an impeccable embodiment of God and as the pivotal figure in comprehending the essence and attributes of God. The Bible unequivocally demonstrates that Jesus serves as the earthly embodiment of God and reflects God's character and qualities. Moreover, this concept carries significant ramifications, as it posits that Jesus serves as the exclusive means through which individuals can comprehend and establish a connection with the divine while also asserting His profound engagement with both the world and the lives of individuals. The figure of Jesus, shown as the embodiment of the unseen deity, remains significant in contemporary times.

The biblical text asserts that Jesus embodies the representation of the imperceptible deity. The concept of God is characterized by invisibility, being beyond the scope of human knowledge, and incomprehensibility. The divine being resides within an aura of light beyond human reach, as no mortal has ever beheld or can perceive this light save by the disclosure provided by His Son, Jesus Christ. The subsequent scriptural passages demonstrate the immortality of God and His existence in a state of unapproachable luminosity, except using the revelation mediated by Jesus, the Messiah. The following verses teach about God being eternal:

- John 1:18, No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.
- John 6:46, No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father.
- 2 Corinthians 4:4, The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.
- Colossians 1:15, The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.
- 1 Timothy 6:15-16, which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen
- 1 Timothy 6:16-17; who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen. Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant some of them: nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.
- Hebrew 1:3; The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.
- 1 John 4:12; No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

Suppose it is posited that God is imperceptible to the human senses, whereas Jesus embodies a visual representation of God. In that case, it follows that Jesus is considered separate and distinguishable from God, commonly referred to as the Father. Hence, if we aspire to establish our conceptualization of God upon biblical teachings, it becomes imperative to exclusively attribute the appellation of "God" to the Father.

God the Father

The concept of God, referred to as the Father, holds a prominent position within the Judeo-Christian belief system, wherein He is regarded as the ultimate authority responsible for the creation of the cosmos and the origin of all living beings. The entity in question possesses considerable power and wisdom, assuming a role of vigilant oversight and offering humanity both advice and protection. His common depiction is that of a caring and forgiving Father, characterized by benevolence, mercy, might, and love. God as the Father is often associated with being the supreme arbiter, possessing profound wisdom and knowledge. It is believed that human fate will be determined by our willingness to embrace the salvation offered through His Son. The divine entity is seen as the primary provider of solace and resilience throughout periods of hardship, with the perception of His existence

frequently serving as a wellspring of consolation. The wellspring of unconditional love is frequently characterized as boundless. Despite humanity's inherent defects and failings, the Divine entity assumes the role of a compassionate paternal figure, displaying unwavering affection towards us despite our shortcomings. The concept of God entails a benevolent and merciful paternal figure willing to grant forgiveness for our errors, shortcomings, and transgressions upon our sincere admission and repentance. He serves as a reservoir of fortitude and bravery, offering assistance to others requiring aid. The concept of God, as the Father represents, symbolizes the virtues of faith, hope, and love. The concept of God embodies attributes such as strength, courage, comfort, assurance, and justice and serves as a source of inspiration and guidance. He is perceived as a symbol of illumination and optimism, and his mere existence frequently instills a sense of hope and tranquility in individuals who actively pursue it. The Father is regarded as a highly potent and sagacious entity whose existence is perceived as a wellspring of solace and serenity. He has qualities of profound affection and compassion, and his very being instills solace and confidence in others experiencing distress. The following verses teach about God, the Father:

God, the Father,

- Matthew 6:6, But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.
- Matthew 6:26, Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?
- John 17:24, Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.
- 1 Corinthians 8:6, yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.

God is the ultimate source of comfort and strength.

- Psalm 28:7-8, The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and he helps me. My heart leaps for joy, and with my song I praise him. 8 The Lord is the strength of his people, a fortress of salvation for his anointed one.

God offers unconditional love.

- John 3:16, For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
- John 14:15, If you love me, keep my commands.
- John 17:24, Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

- Romans 5:5, And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.
- Romans 8:28, And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.
- Romans 13:8, Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law.
- 1 John 4:16, And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.
- 1 John 4:19, We love because he first loved us.

God is the source of light and hope.

- Numbers 6:25, the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;
- 2 Samuel 22:29, You, Lord, are my lamp; the Lord turns my darkness into light.
- Psalm 27:1, The Lord is my light and my salvation— whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid?
- Psalm 80:3, Restore us, O God; make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.
- Isaiah 41:10, So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.
- Isaiah 60:19-20, The sun will no more be your light by day, nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you, for the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory. 20 Your sun will never set again, and your moon will wane no more; the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your days of sorrow will end.
- Micah 7:8, Do not gloat over me, my enemy! Though I have fallen, I will rise. Though I sit in darkness, the Lord will be my light.
- Romans 15:13, May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Father is a being of immense power and wisdom.

- Ephesians 1:19-23, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength, 20 he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, 21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. 22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.
- Isaiah 40:29, He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.
- Luke 9:1, When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases,

- Ephesians 3:20, Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,

Allah, unlike the God of the Bible, is not referred to as the Father. Despite specific shared attributes, such as being the creator, sustainer, and nurturer of all things, the depiction of this entity differs significantly from the biblical portrayal. Additional attributes of Allah include being the ultimate origin of all that is virtuous, serving as a sustainer and provider, and supplying safeguarding to His followers, among various other designations. Allah is attributed as the sole bestower of life and death and is regarded as the ultimate origin of love, kindness, and justice. According to the teachings of the Qur'an, Allah is described as possessing the attributes of utmost mercy, compassion, love, and kindness. According to the Qur'an, Allah is called a "guardian" in verse 2:257. He serves as a reservoir of solace, resilience, and direction for individuals actively pursuing His presence. However, it is noteworthy that the Qur'an does not reference Allah as a Father.

In several Qur'anic texts, Allah exhibits inconsistencies concerning his character. Several of the divine appellations of Allah include Sustainer, Nurturer, Omnibenevolent, Provider, Guardian, Bestower of life and death, and the ultimate embodiment of love, mercy, and justice. However, several depictions of Allah's characteristics illustrate conditional relationships with him, whereby failure to meet certain conditions may result in experiencing his anger. Several Quranic verses describe that Allah is full of violence, as noted in the following verses:

Conditional Love of Allah

- Qur'an 9:108, Do not ˹O Prophet˺ ever pray in it. Certainly, a mosque founded on righteousness from the first day is more worthy of your prayers. In it are men who love to be purified. And Allah loves those who purify themselves.
- Qur'an 4:71–79, O believers! Take your precautions and go forth either in groups or together. 72 There will be some among you who will lag behind so that if you face a disaster, they will say, "Allah has blessed us for not being there among them." 73 But if you return with Allah's bounties, they will say—as if there had been no bond between you— "We wish we had been there with them to share the great gain!" 74 Let those who would sacrifice this life for the Hereafter fight in the cause of Allah. And whoever fights in Allah's cause—whether they achieve martyrdom or victory—We will honor them with a great reward. 75 And what is it with you? You do not fight in the cause of Allah and for oppressed men, women, and children who cry out, "Our Lord! Deliver us from this land of oppressors! Appoint for us a savior; appoint for us a helper—all by Your grace. 76 Believers fight for the cause of Allah, whereas disbelievers fight for the cause of the Devil. So fight against Satan's ˹evil˺ forces. Indeed, Satan's schemes are ever weak. 77 Have you ˹O Prophet˺ not seen those who had been told, "Do not fight! Rather, establish prayer and pay alms-tax."? Then once the order came to fight, a group of them feared those ˹hostile˺ people as Allah should be feared—or even more. They said, "Our Lord! Why have You ordered us to fight? If only You had delayed ˹the order for˺ us for a little while!" Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ "The enjoyment of this world is so

little, whereas the Hereafter is far better for those mindful ˹of Allah˺. And none of you will be wronged ˹even by the width of˺ the thread of a date stone. 78 Wherever you may be, death will overcome you—even if you were in fortified towers.” When something good befalls them, they say, “This is from Allah,” but when something evil befalls them, they say, “This is from you.” Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ “Both have been destined by Allah.” So what is the matter with these people? They can hardly comprehend anything! 79 Whatever good befalls you is from Allah and whatever evil befalls you is from yourself.1 We have sent you ˹O Prophet˺ as a messenger to ˹all˺ people. And Allah is sufficient as a Witness.

- Qur’an 4:34, Men are the caretakers of women, as men have been provisioned by Allah over women and tasked with supporting them financially. And righteous women are devoutly obedient and, when alone, protective of what Allah has entrusted them with. And if you sense ill-conduct from your women, advise them ˹first˺, ˹if they persist,˺ do not share their beds, ˹but if they still persist,˺ then discipline them ˹gently˺. But if they change their ways, do not be unjust to them. Surely Allah is Most High, All-Great.
- Qur’an 4:137, Indeed, those who believed then disbelieved, then believed and again disbelieved—˹only˺ increasing in disbelief—Allah will neither forgive them nor guide them to the ˹Right˺ Way.

Allah Advocates Violence Towards Non-Muslims

- Qur’an 2:191, Kill them wherever you come upon them and drive them out of the places from which they have driven you out. For persecution is far worse than killing. And do not fight them at the Sacred Mosque unless they attack you there. If they do so, then fight them—that is the reward of the disbelievers.
- Qur’an 3:151, We will cast horror into the hearts of the disbelievers for associating ˹false gods˺ with Allah—a practice He has never authorized. The Fire will be their home—what an evil place for the wrongdoers to stay!
- Qur’an 9:5, But once the Sacred Months have passed, kill the polytheists ˹who violated their treaties˺ wherever you find them, capture them, besiege them, and lie in wait for them on every way. But if they repent, perform prayers, and pay alms-tax, then set them free. Indeed, Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.
- Qur’an 68:44, So leave to Me ˹O Prophet˺ those who reject this message. We will gradually draw them to destruction in ways they cannot comprehend.

The Islamic belief system does not ascribe the title of “father” to Allah, primarily due to the inherent disparities in the theological understandings of God between Islam and other religions. Within Christianity, the divine being is commonly denoted as the Father. In contrast, Allah is perceived as a remote and transcendent entity in Islam, not to be equated with any mortal individual. In Islamic theology, the concept of Tawhid, which emphasizes the oneness of Allah, leads to the absence of the term “Father” when referring to Allah. This notion posits that Allah is the singular

being without any equivalent or companion. Within Christianity, the concept of the Trinity is upheld, wherein God is perceived as a triune entity consisting of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This perspective contradicts Islamic teachings, as Allah is regarded as transcending any human analogy. Another justification for Islam's reluctance to use the term "Father" while referring to Allah can be attributed to the Islamic faith that places significant emphasis on the absolute sovereignty of Allah. This concept posits that Allah is the exclusive entity deserving of worship without associating with others. It is inappropriate to compare Allah and any human entity, such as a father.

Moreover, within the Islamic faith, the appellation of "Father" is not employed while referring to Allah, primarily due to the Islamic perspective on the attributes of divine kindness and justice. This perspective posits that Allah is characterized by qualities of mercy and justice while cautioning against perceiving Allah in a paternalistic manner. Islamic theology asserts that Allah transcends human emotion and should not be anthropomorphically likened to human beings.

The Qur'an emerged around two millennia after the establishment of the Bible. In contrast to the Bible, the Islamic faith does not employ the term "Father" when referring to Allah. It is worth noting that the appellation "Father" was used for more than two millennia prior to the advent of Islam. It can be asserted that in the Bible, Jesus references God as "Father.". The following texts add to that claim:

- Luke 23:46, Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last.
- John 17:1, Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you.
- John 20:17, Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."
- Ephesians 1:17, I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.
- Hebrews 1:8-9, But about the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom. 9 You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy."
- Revelation 1:6, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.
- Revelation 3:2, Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have found your deeds unfinished in the sight of my God.
- Revelation 3:12, The one who is victorious I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will they leave it. I will write on them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is

coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on them my new name.

Jesus at God's Right Hand

Throughout Christian history, a prevailing theological conviction has persisted, asserting that Jesus is of utmost significance and authority, situated metaphorically at the right hand of the divine being known as God. The view mentioned above originates in the biblical text, whereby multiple allusions to this concept can be found. According to biblical accounts, Jesus is shown as seated at God's right hand. The significance of the idea that Jesus occupies the right hand of God lies in its indication of the elevated position of honor and authority that Jesus holds in the divine perspective. This belief is strongly intertwined with the doctrine of the Trinity. Jesus possesses a dual nature, divine and human, and holds equivalent power as the Father. Hence, it is unsurprising that Jesus is purportedly positioned at the right hand of God. Numerous scriptural texts provide substantial support for the notion of Jesus occupying a position of prominence at the right hand of God. Here are some of them:

- Matthew 26:62-67, Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, "Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?" 63 But Jesus remained silent. The high priest said to him, "I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God." 64 "You have said so," Jesus replied. "But I say to all of you: From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven." 65 Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy. 66 What do you think?" "He is worthy of death," they answered. 67 Then they spit in his face and struck him with their fists. Others slapped him.
- Mark 16:19, After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God.
- Acts 5:31, the Apostle Peter says, God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might bring Israel to repentance and forgive their sins.
- Acts 2:33 Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.
- Acts 7:55-56, But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.
- Romans 8:34, Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.
- Ephesians 1:20, he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,

- Hebrews 1:3, The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

These passages both reinforce the belief that Jesus is at the right hand of God and serves as a savior. The Bible says, "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved, Acts 4:12)." The Biblical evidence supports the fact that the early church believed it was confirmed that Jesus and God the father are one. Jesus has the exalted place of honor and authority in the eyes of God, as noted in the following verse:

- Revelation 4:8, "…Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty,' who was, and is, and is to come."
- Revelation 5:5-10, Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals." 6 Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing at the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. The Lamb had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. 7 He went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. 8 And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God's people. 9 And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. 10 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."
- Revelation 5:11-14, Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. 12 In a loud voice they were saying: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" 13 Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!" 14 The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.

The belief in Islam regarding the positioning of Isa (Jesus) at Allah's right hand is considered a vital principle. Despite the Islamic belief that Isa was not killed, it is essential to consider this perspective. The Qur'an, therefore, denies the crucifixion of Isa (Jesus) and thus rejects the notion of his resurrection. The Qur'an does not explicitly affirm Isa's placement at Allah's right hand but instead suggests his proximity to Him. The Qur'an states:

- Qur'an 3:45, Mary wondered, "My Lord! How can I have a child when no man has ever touched me?" An angel replied, "So will it be. Allah creates what He

wills. When He decrees a matter, He simply tells it, ‘Be!’ And it is! Rather, Allah raised him up to Himself. And Allah is Almighty, All-Wise.”

- Qur’an 4:157-158, and for boasting, “We killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the messenger of Allah.” But they neither killed nor crucified him—it was only made to appear so. Even those who argue for this ˹crucifixion˺ are in doubt. They have no knowledge whatsoever—only making assumptions. They certainly did not kill him.

The positioning of Isa, as described in the Qur’an, can only be subject to speculative interpretation, suggesting that he is situated at the right hand of Allah. The Qur’anic portrayal of Isa as an apostle of Allah is highly revered and does not warrant death, which stands in stark contrast to the teachings found in the Bible. Furthermore, the depiction of Isa’s crucifixion is regarded as a grievous event. In light of Islamic teachings, it is evident that both the Qur’an and Muslim traditions affirm the positioning of Isa close to or at the right hand of Allah. Furthermore, the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad mentioned that Isa (Jesus) shall persistently occupy a position at the right hand of Allah or close to Him until the culmination of existence, albeit devoid of any distinctive responsibility.

The Islamic faith holds Isa in high regard and teaches that he is an important prophet who was sent by Allah, just like any other prophet, to reveal Allah’s word (Qur’an 3:3; 5:44; 5:46). Since the inception of Islam, Muslims have maintained a strong belief in the life, teachings, and miracles of Isa; nonetheless, no out light examples are mentioned as found in the Bible. The prophet Muhammad hoped that Muslims would read the Bible to understand such miracles (Qur’an 10:94). The Qur’an is the primary source of Muslim belief regarding Isa, stating that he was a prophet of Allah given special powers and authority. In particular, the Qur’an teaches that Isa was granted the power to perform miracles, such as curing diseases, restoring sight to the blind, and raising the dead, but no specifics are shown (Qur’an 3:48-49; 5:114). Power to perform miracles would have been quoted from the Bible, which states, “The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor (Matthew 11:5).” Additionally, the Qur’an teaches that Isa was sent to preach the message of Allah and to bring salvation to humankind. This is the very word of God, and no Muslim should shy from reading it. The Bible says, “The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple (Psalm 19:7).”

- Qur’an 3:3, He has revealed to you ˹O Prophet˺ the Book in truth, confirming what came before it, as He revealed the Torah and the Gospel.
- Qur’an 10:94, If you ˹O Prophet˺ are in doubt about ˹these stories˺ that We have revealed to you, then ask those who read the Scripture before you. The truth has certainly come to you from your Lord, so do not be one of those who doubt,
- Qur’an 5:44, Indeed, We revealed the Torah, containing guidance and light, by which the prophets, who submitted themselves to Allah, made judgments for Jews. So too did the rabbis and scholars judge according to Allah’s Book, with which they were entrusted and of which they were made keepers. So do not

fear the people; fear Me! Nor trade my revelations for a fleeting gain. And those who do not judge by what Allah has revealed are ˹truly˺ the disbelievers.

- Qur'an 5:46, Then in the footsteps of the prophets, We sent Jesus, son of Mary, confirming the Torah revealed before him. And We gave him the Gospel containing guidance and light and confirming what was revealed in the Torah—a guide and a lesson to the God-fearing.
- Matthew 11:5, The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.
- Qur'an 3:48-49, And Allah will teach him writing and wisdom, the Torah and the Gospel, 49 and ˹make him˺ a messenger to the Children of Israel ˹to proclaim,˺ 'I have come to you with a sign from your Lord: I will make for you a bird from clay, breathe into it, and it will become a ˹real˺ bird—by Allah's Will. I will heal the blind and the leper and raise the dead to life—by Allah's Will. And I will prophesize what you eat and store in your houses. Surely in this is a sign for you if you ˹truly˺ believe.
- Qur'an 5:114, Jesus, son of Mary, prayed, "O Allah, our Lord! Send us from heaven a table spread with food as a feast for us—the first and last of us—and as a sign from You. Provide for us! You are indeed the Best Provider."

Miracles of Isa in the Qur'an

1. Speaking in the crib: Qur'anic Isa spoke as a newborn baby a few hours old and introduced himself. The Bible does not have such stories about Jesus's birth narrative.
- Qur'an 19:30-33, ˹Jesus˺ declared, "I am truly a servant of Allah. He has destined me to be given the Scripture and to be a prophet. 31 He has made me a blessing wherever I go, and bid me to establish prayer and give alms-tax as long as I live, 32 and to be kind to my mother. He has not made me arrogant or defiant.33 Peace be upon me the day I was born, the day I die, and the day I will be raised back to life!" We do not find such a declaration in the New Testament. In Luke 8:21 He replied, "My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice."

2. Creating a living bird: We do not have details of who was raised to life in the Qur'an unless one read the Bible. And so, the story of a bird created and breathed to life is non verifiable and not Biblically supported. The following were persons raised rom he dead in the Bible: raising of the son of the widow of Nain (7:11-17), The raising of Jairus' daughter (Matthew 9:23–26), The raising of Lazarus (John 11:1–44).
- Qur'an 3:49, and ˹make him˺ a messenger to the Children of Israel ˹to proclaim,˺ 'I have come to you with a sign from your Lord: I will make for you a bird from clay, breathe into it, and it will become a ˹real˺ bird—by Allah's Will. I will heal the blind and the leper and raise the dead to life—by Allah's Will. And I will prophesize what you eat and store in your houses. Surely in this is a sign

for you if you ˹truly˺ believe. The Bible provides some of the persons who were healed of various diseases: Jesus heals lepers (Matthew 8:1–4). The Bible writes, 30 Great crowds came to him, bringing the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute and many others, and laid them at his feet; and he healed them. 31 The people were amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled made well, the lame walking and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel (Matthew 15:30-31).

- Qur'an 5:110, And ˹on Judgment Day˺ Allah will say, "O Jesus, son of Mary! Remember My favor upon you and your mother: how I supported you with the holy spirit so you spoke to people in ˹your˺ infancy and adulthood. How I taught you writing, wisdom, the Torah, and the Gospel. How you molded a bird from clay—by My Will—and breathed into it and it became a ˹real˺ bird—by My Will. How you healed the blind and the lepers—by My Will. How you brought the dead to life—by My Will. How I prevented the Children of Israel from harming you when you came to them with clear proofs and the disbelievers among them said, "This is nothing but pure magic." We do not have the infancy story of Jesus rather than at age 12 (Luke 2:41-50) when he was in the temple and his story disappeared until age 30 for his public ministry. The Bible says, Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry (Luke 3:23).

3. A table spread with food from heaven: we do have such a miracle in the Bible, but there is the feeding of 4000 and 5000 people narrated in the Bible in the following books: Matthew 14:13-21, Mark 6:31-44, Mark 8:1-9, Luke 9:12-17, and John 6:1-14

- Qur'an 5:112,114 ˹Remember˺ when the disciples asked, "O Jesus, son of Mary! Would your Lord be willing to send down to us a table spread with food from heaven?" Jesus answered, "Fear Allah if you are ˹truly˺ believers." 114 Jesus, son of Mary, prayed, "O Allah, our Lord! Send us from heaven a table spread with food as a feast for us—the first and last of us—and as a sign from You. Provide for us! You are indeed the Best Provider.
- Mark 8:1-9, During those days another large crowd gathered. Since they had nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples to him and said, 2 "I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. 3 If I send them home hungry, they will collapse on the way, because some of them have come a long distance." 4 His disciples answered, "But where in this remote place can anyone get enough bread to feed them?" 5 "How many loaves do you have?" Jesus asked. "Seven," they replied. 6 He told the crowd to sit down on the ground. When he had taken the seven loaves and given thanks, he broke them and gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people, and they did so. 7 They had a few small fish as well; he gave thanks for them also and told the disciples to distribute them. 8 The people ate and were satisfied. Afterward the disciples picked up seven basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. 9 About four thousand were present. After he had sent them away,
- John 6:9-13 "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?" 10 Jesus said, "Have the people sit

> down.” There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there). 11 Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. 12 When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted. 13 So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten.

According to the Qur’an, it is stated that Isa was not subjected to death or crucifixion. Instead, Allah intervened to protect him from his adversaries and elevated him to the heavens. This viewpoint diverges from the affirmations found in the Bible. According to the biblical account in Acts 1:9, it is stated that Jesus’ ascension occurred forty days after his crucifixion. Muslims believe that Isa is presently residing in the celestial realm and will descend to the earthly plane to preside over the final judgment of humanity on the Day of Judgment.

Moreover, the Qur’an espouses the belief that Isa (Jesus) was given the authority to serve as an intermediary for individuals who believe in him. The individual in question is widely regarded as the most revered among prophets and is commonly perceived as an emblematic figure of benevolence and empathy. According to Islamic doctrine, it is believed that Isa (Jesus) would be the initial individual to undergo resurrection with the advent of the Day of Judgment, assuming the role of a guiding figure towards ultimate deliverance. Islam generally believes that Isa is a revered prophet of Allah, divinely appointed to deliver redemption to the human race. It is widely held that there exists a belief in the continued existence of the individual in question within the realm of heaven, with the expectation that this individual would eventually descend to earth in order to undertake the task of evaluating the entirety of humanity during the event commonly referred to as the Day of Judgment. Furthermore, Jesus is regarded as an intermediary for individuals who believe in him, serving as an emblem of benevolence and empathy.

- Acts 1:9, After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.
- 1 Corinthians 15:6, After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.

The preceding discourse illustrates that Isa is among those who are close to Allah, following Islamic beliefs. According to the Biblical doctrine, it is evident that Jesus ascended to the right side of God, the Father, upon his resurrection and is anticipated to return at the designated moment. It has been observed that while there are many parallels between the Christian God and Allah, they are distinct beings and deities.

Several New Testament verses identify God, the Father, as the ultimate uncaused cause of all things, in distinction to Jesus. For example:

1. John 1:3, Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

2. 1 Corinthians 8:6, yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.
3. 2 Corinthians 5:18-19, All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.
4. 1 Timothy 6:13, In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you
5. Hebrew 1:1, In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways.

The Second Coming of Jesus/Isa According to Christianity and Islam

The eschatological concept of the second coming of Jesus Christ holds significant theological and doctrinal significance in Christianity and Islam, prompting extensive discourse and analysis. Within Christianity, the second coming of Jesus is regarded as a pivotal occurrence that would culminate in the ultimate judgment of humanity and the cessation of the world. In contrast, Islamic teachings predict that Isa (Jesus) will be reincarnated on earth to reinstate equity and harmony worldwide while simultaneously affirming Islam as the ultimate faith (Sahih al-Bukhari 2476). Both religious traditions attach significant significance to the return of Jesus and the subsequent consequences it will have for the destiny of humanity. From a Christian theological standpoint, the second coming of Jesus is perceived as the realization of God's divine blueprint for the redemption and deliverance of humankind. As per biblical teachings, it is believed that Jesus will make a second coming to pass judgment against both the living and the deceased, ultimately culminating in the final judgment that will bring about the world's end. This occurrence is commonly denoted as the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. The second coming of Jesus is widely seen as realizing the biblical prophecies, including those outlined in the Book of Revelation. The primary focus of this literary work revolves around the eschatological concept of the end times, whereby the author expounds on the imminent coming of Jesus Christ to administer judgment against the entirety of humanity. Accordingly, adherents of Christianity maintain the belief that the second coming of Jesus holds significant theological and eschatological significance within the framework of God's overarching design for humanity and the cosmos. See the following verses:

- Allah's Messenger said, The Hour will not be established until the son of Mary (i.e. Jesus) descends amongst you as a just ruler, he will break the cross, kill the pigs, and abolish the Jizya tax. Money will be in abundance so that nobody will accept it (as charitable gifts) Sahih al-Bukhari 2476, Book 46, Hadith 37, Vol. 3, Book 43, Hadith 656.

In the Islamic faith, the return of Isa (Jesus) is viewed as an integral component of a broader occurrence referred to as the "Day of Judgment." The Day

of Judgment is believed to be the final day when all of humankind will be judged for their actions and either rewarded with paradise or punished with hell. According to Islamic theology, Isa is regarded as one of the divine messengers sent by Allah, believing that he will be reincarnated on Earth in the future, namely during the culmination of time, to reinstate equity and harmony. According to popular belief, there is a prevailing notion that Jesus/Isa will make a second coming to the terrestrial realm to battle against the Antichrist, an embodiment of malevolence and moral decay, finally emerging triumphant. This win will be considered a sign of justice's final victory over evil. The return of Jesus/Isa holds significant importance in Christianity and Islam, with each faith offering distinct perspectives on this event. From a theological standpoint rooted in Christian doctrine, the second coming of Jesus is perceived as the realization of God's divine blueprint for the redemption of humanity and the culmination of earthly existence. Within the Islamic faith, the return of Isa (also known as Jesus) is viewed as an integral component of the Day of Judgment, a significant event during which the entirety of humanity will undergo evaluation and, after that, be granted either the rewards of paradise or the punishments of hell. Irrespective of varying viewpoints, both religions attach significant significance to the return of Jesus/Isa and its potential ramifications for the future of humanity.

The notion of the second coming of Jesus holds significant theological importance in both the Christian and Islamic faiths. Nevertheless, these two religious traditions exhibit contrasting perspectives regarding the temporal, spatial, and modal aspects surrounding the anticipated return of Jesus/Isa. Within Christianity, the Second Coming of Jesus is often seen as a significant eschatological event akin to a cosmic day of judgment. This event is believed to entail the resurrection of the deceased and the subsequent judgment of all individuals by Jesus. The subsequent arrival of Jesus, also known as the Parousia, is widely regarded as a concrete and corporeal reappearance. Based on Christian tradition, this occurrence is believed to be preceded by a significant period characterized by intense affliction and suffering. Following a period characterized by adversity, it is believed that Jesus would manifest in a state of authority and magnificence, triumphing over all adversaries and instituting a novel realm characterized by harmony and equity.

In contrast, Islamic theology does not perceive Isa (Jesus) as the ultimate arbiter of global judgment. Instead, Isa is regarded as one of Allah's prophets, tasked with establishing justice and truth throughout the world. The subsequent arrival is commonly known as the Al-Mahdi and is perceived as a metaphysical resurgence. According to this interpretation, it is believed that Allah would divinely commission Isa to facilitate a period characterized by harmonious coexistence and equitable governance on a global scale. Accompanying him will be the Mahdi, a figure often regarded as a descendant of Muhammad. Their collective purpose will be to combat instances of injustice and oppression. However, there are discrepancies between Christianity and Islam concerning Jesus' return.

The matter of Jesus' anticipated manifestation is a topic that engenders considerable scholarly discourse within Christianity and Islam. The resolution of this inquiry is subject to significant debate, given the contrasting perspectives on this matter within each respective religious tradition. Christianity posits the belief in the

second coming of Jesus, signifying his anticipated return to earth. Conversely, Islam maintains that Jesus will not return to earth but ascend to Heaven. The eschatological belief in the second coming of Jesus Christ holds significant theological importance within the Christian tradition. The Bible describes Jesus' second coming, wherein it is articulated that Jesus would manifest "in the clouds with immense power and splendor" (Mark 13:5-26). This appearance will signal the beginning of a new age in which Jesus will reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. According to Christian doctrine, it is believed that Jesus would usher in a state of justice and peace on a global scale while being accompanied by celestial beings such as angels and other heavenly entities. Read the following verses:

- Mark 13:5-26, Jesus said to them: Watch out that no one deceives you. 6 Many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am he,' and will deceive many. 7 When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. 8 Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains. 9 You must be on your guard. You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of me you will stand before governors and kings as witnesses to them. 10 And the gospel must first be preached to all nations. 11 Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit. 12 Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. 13 Everyone will hate you because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. 14 "When you see 'the abomination that causes desolation' standing where it does not belong—let the reader understand—then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 15 Let no one on the housetop go down or enter the house to take anything out. 16 Let no one in the field go back to get their cloak. 17 How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! 18 Pray that this will not take place in winter, 19 because those will be days of distress unequaled from the beginning, when God created the world, until now—and never to be equaled again. 20 If the Lord had not cut short those days, no one would survive. But for the sake of the elect, whom he has chosen, he has shortened them. 21 At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Messiah!' or, 'Look, there he is!' do not believe it. 22 For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. 23 So be on your guard; I have told you everything ahead of time. 24 " But in those days, following that distress, 'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; 25 the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.' 26 At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. 27 And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.

The term “Islamic” refers to anything related to or associated with the religion of Islam. The return of Isa to Earth is not considered an integral component of the faith. In contrast, according to Islamic doctrine, it is believed that Isa (Jesus) would ascend to Heaven upon fulfilling his earthly mission. According to the Qur’an, it is mentioned that “He (Isa) will be elevated to a position of great significance” (Qur’an 3:55). It is often interpreted that Isa will undergo ascension to Heaven and will not subsequently return to the earthly realm. Isa will return and die on earth, and such opposes the Christian doctrine regarding the anticipated return of Jesus. Despite their theological disparities, Christianity and Islam have a common belief in the prophetic status of Jesus/Isa as a divine messenger. Christians believe that Jesus, as the Son of God, was divinely sent to the earthly realm to provide salvation for humanity. Muslims perceive Isa as one among the several prophets of Allah, dispatched to provide guidance to humanity and impart knowledge on veracity. Both religious traditions also concur on the belief that Jesus/Isa was born to a virgin and that he exhibited miraculous abilities. Christianity asserts the belief in the second coming of Jesus, wherein he is anticipated to return to the earthly realm. Conversely, Islam believes that Isa (Jesus) will go to Heaven.

CHAPTER SIX

ISLAMIC TAWHID

Introduction to Tawhid

Unlike the Christian God understood in the doctrine of trinity, Islam holds the doctrine of Tawhid (oneness). The Qur'an keenly states in its various verses about the oneness of Allah (112:1-4). Other derivative terms, such as Tawhid, Tauheed, and Tevhid, all imply the indivisibleness and oneness of Allah, which depict the concept of monotheism in Islam.[49] Tawhid refers to the concept that Allah possesses an inherent and comprehensive unity. The Islamic faith holds the core tenet that Allah is a singular and indivisible being. The concept of Tawhid places significant emphasis on the exclusive worship of Allah and recognizes Him as the sole source of salvation and guidance. It is the cornerstone of the Islamic faith, and it is the basis of the five pillars of Islam, as noted in the following verses:

- Qur'an 112: 1-4, Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ "He is Allah—One ˹and Indivisible˺; 2 Allah—the Sustainer ˹needed by all˺.3 He has never had offspring, nor was He born.4 And there is none comparable to Him."

Tawhid is based on the Qur'an and is the basis for Islamic *Shahada* (profession of Islamic faith). It is the first of the five pillars of Islam and the foundation of the Islamic religion. The other four pillars of Islam are *Salah* (prayer), Zakah (charitable giving), *Sawm* (fasting), and *Hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca). Tawhid is also closely related to the concept of shirk (the worship of anything other than Allah). Shirk (sin of idolatry or polytheism) is considered a major sin in Islam, and those who practice it are unbelievers.[50] Tawhid also emphasizes that Allah is separate from His creation and not subject to physical laws. Allah is seen as the creator, sustainer, and provider of everything, as shown in the Qur'an. Some of these words are borrowed from the Bible, which has been in existence for 2000 years prior to the Qur'an.

Adherence to the concept of Tawhid is essential for Muslims observing their Islamic faith. Tawhid reminds individuals that salvation and guidance in the hereafter can only be attained via Allah. Additionally, it prompts Muslims to direct their attention towards Allah's veneration while discouraging any influences or factors that may divert them from this path. Religious veneration serves as a reminder of the significance of adhering to a lifestyle following Allah's teachings and principles. The concept of Tawhid serves as the fundamental principle for adherents of Islam, asserting the existence of a singular and indivisible deity known as Allah. The concept of Tawhid functions as a poignant reminder to adherents of Islam that salvation and guidance can only be attained through Allah, emphasizing the imperative for Muslims to prioritize their devotion to Him. The foundation of the five

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[49] Sayyid Qutb, "The Islamic Concept and Its Characteristics", .(online) https://www.islambasics.com/chapter/introduction-37

[50] Sayyid Abdul Husayn Dastghaib Shirazi, "Greater Sins," Volume 1. © Ahlul Bayt Digital Islamic Library Project, 1995-2023. https://www.al-islam.org/greater-sins-volume-1-sayyid-abdul-husayn-dastghaib-shirazi/dedication.

pillars of Islam serves as a fundamental framework for Muslims to uphold and manifest their religious beliefs. The following are some verses supporting the Tawhid:

- Qur'an 4:48, Indeed, Allah does not forgive associating others with Him ˹in worship˺,1 but forgives anything else of whoever He wills. And whoever associates others with Allah has indeed committed a grave sin.
- Qur'an 6: 102, That is Allah—your Lord! There is no god ˹worthy of worship˺ except Him. ˹He is˺ the Creator of all things, so worship Him ˹alone˺. And He is the Maintainer of everything.
- Qur'an 7:180, Allah has the Most Beautiful Names. So call upon Him by them, and keep away from those who abuse His Names.1 They will be punished for what they used to do.
- Qur'an 10:31, Ask ˹them, O Prophet˺, "Who provides for you from heaven and earth? Who owns ˹your˺ hearing and sight? Who brings forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living? And who conducts every affair?" They will ˹surely˺ say, "Allah." Say, "Will you not then fear ˹Him˺?
- Qur'an 16:123, Then We revealed to you ˹O Prophet, saying˺: "Follow the faith of Abraham, the upright, who was not one of the polytheists."
- Qur'an 39:62, Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is the Maintainer of everything.

Other Terms for Tawhid

There are other terms of the doctrine of Tawhid that teach the core belief in the Islamic religion, which is constituted by the oneness of Allah. The doctrine of Tawhid is divided into other categories: Toi darbuka/Tawhid ar-Ruboobiyyah (the oneness of Allah in His Lordship), Tawhid al-Uloohiyyah (the oneness of Allah in His worship) and Tawhid al-Asmaa wa Sifaat (the oneness of Allah in His Names and Attributes).

Toi Darbuka/ Tawhid ar-Ruboobiyyah (the Unity of Lordship)

Toi darbuka/Tawhid ar-Ruboobiyyah is the belief in the oneness of Allah in His Lordship. [51] The notion can be understood as a "unification of sovereignty" and is relevant to Islamic theology. According to Islamic belief, it is asserted that Allah is the one and exclusive creator and supreme ruler of the entire Universe. This notion underscores the unity of Allah and His complete sovereignty over all aspects of His creation. Furthermore, it holds significant prominence within Islamic eschatology, functioning as a poignant reminder that the ultimate judgment of humanity lies solely in the hands of Allah.

The concept of Toi darbuka in the Qur'an has been expressed in several verses emphasizing the unity of God's lordship. For example, the Qur'an says, "He is Allah—there is no god ˹worthy of worship˺ except Him: Knower of the seen and

[51] Omar Abdullah Kaamil, "Falsity Of Dividing Tawhid Into Three Parts" (February 11, 2018), https://islamreigns.wordpress.com/2018/02/11/falsity-of-dividing-Tawhid-into-three-parts/.

unseen. He is the Most Compassionate, Most Merciful (Qur'an 59:22)." The verse speaks of the unity of Allah's power and authority. Other verses, such as those in the Qur'an (112:1-4), emphasize Allah's oneness and absolute authority. The concept of Toi darbuka is also discussed in the Hadith or sayings of the Prophet Muhammad. In one Hadith, the Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said, "The Lord is One, and His is the Sovereignty." This Hadith serves as a reminder that only Allah oversees the universe, and all authority rests ultimately with Him.

- Qur'an 112: 1-4, Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ "He is Allah—One ˹and Indivisible˺;2 Allah—the Sustainer ˹needed by all˺.3 He has never had offspring, nor was He born.4 And there is none comparable to Him."
- Abu Ayyūb (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Whoever says, ten times: There is no god but Allah alone, Who has no partner, to Him belongs the sovereignty, to Him belongs the praise, and He is Omnipotent over all things; will be as though he emancipated four slaves from the offspring of Isma'īl."(https://hadeethenc.com/en/browse/hadith/)

The theological perspective within Islam concerning the unity of lordship is intricately connected to the idea of tawhid, which encompasses the belief in the singular being of Allah. Tawhid is the fundamental principle underlying Islamic monotheism and the concept of Allah's singular dominion. Lordship unity pertains to the cohesive nature of Allah's power and dominion over the universe. This statement serves as a reminder of the theological belief that Allah, as the supreme being, possesses the exclusive authority to pass judgment against humanity and emphasizes the unequivocal nature of His judgments. The teachings of the Qur'an and the Hadith encompass the idea mentioned above, which is intricately linked to the principle of tawhid, denoting the belief in the singular nature of Allah. Toi darbuka ultimately serves as a poignant reminder of the fundamental principle that ultimate authority is alone with Allah, emphasizing His exclusive role as the ultimate arbiter of judgment.

Moreover, it is believed that Allah is the one master. According to Islamic belief, Allah is the ultimate bestower and taker of life, provider of nourishment, and administrator of punishment and kindness. He possesses exclusive authority over the occurrences within the universe and the sole capability to exercise such authority. This particular classification of Tawhid emphasizes the fundamental notion that all entities are the rightful possessions of Allah and are subject to His dominion. It is essential to acknowledge that these terminologies can be traced back to Biblical terminology that existed thousands of years ago.

Tawhid Al-Uluhiyah/'Ebadah (Oneness of Worship)

Tawhid al-Uluhiyah, also known as the oneness of worship, is one of the fundamental principles of Islam.[52] It states that Allah is the only one worthy of

[52] Zinaid Abu Naser, "Types Of Tawhid – Uluhiyyah – Ruboobiyyah – Asma Wal Sifat – Haakimiyyah" (June 18, 2009), https://zinaidabunaser.com/2009/06/18/types-of-Tawhid/.

worship and that all worship should be made solely to Him.[53] This concept is rooted in the Qur'an and is often called the foundational basis of Islamic beliefs. Tawhid al-Uluhiyah, or the oneness of worship, is based on the Qur'anic verse, "I did not create jinn[54] and humans except to worship Me (51:56)." This verse emphasizes that all forms of worship, such as prayer, fasting, and pilgrimage, should be devoted only to Allah. This concept also implies that no other being or object should be worshiped, as Allah is the only one worthy of such reverence. The centrality of Allah in all religious practices is a fundamental tenet of Islamic religion, ensuring the exclusive dedication of all forms of worship to Him. In the Qur'an, it is evident that Prophet Muhammad recognized the distinct modes of worship practiced by Christians and Jews, expressing his desire for them to persist in their respective religious practices. In certain sections of the Qur'an, there are instances where harmful teachings are observed, which appear to conflict with other verses. Let us see some of the following verses:

- Qur'an 2:62, Indeed, the believers, Jews, Christians, and Sabians1—whoever ˹truly˺ believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good will have their reward with their Lord. And there will be no fear for them, nor will they grieve.
- Qur'an 2:139, Say, "Would you dispute with us about Allah, while He is our Lord and your Lord? We are accountable for our deeds and you for yours. And we are devoted to Him ˹alone˺.
- Qur'an 3:64, Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ "O People of the Book! Let us come to common terms: that we will worship none but Allah, associate none with Him, nor take one another as lords instead of Allah." But if they turn away, then say, "Bear witness that we have submitted ˹to Allah alone˺."
- Qur'an 29:46, Do not argue with the People of the Book unless gracefully, except with those of them who act wrongfully. And say, "We believe in what has been revealed to us and what was revealed to you. Our God and your God is ˹only˺ One. And to Him we ˹fully˺ submit."
- Qur'an 109:3, I do not worship what you worship,3 nor do you worship what I worship.

The significance of Tawhid al-Uluhiyah is underscored by the belief that Allah is the exclusive entity deserving of adoration and that all acts of devotion should be directed solely towards Him, as stated in the Qur'an (1:5). This notion serves as a reminder to adherents of Islam that Allah is the supreme source of power and authority, and that no other entity or item should be revered identically, as stated in the Qur'an (16:36). Tawhid al-Uluhiyah acts as a means to confront and discourage the practice of polytheism by reinforcing the notion that the worship of any creature or object other than Allah is inappropriate. The ramifications of Tawhid al-Uluhiyah are extensive and exert a substantial influence on the day-to-day existence of individuals. As an illustration, the Qur'an exhorts adherents of Islam to prioritize the worship of Allah while abstaining from engaging in idolatry or superstitious rituals

[53] Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips, "The Fundamentals of Tawhid (Islamic Monotheism)," accessed from https://www.cia.gov/library/abbottabad-compound/The20Fundamentals%20of%20Tawhid.pdf.

[54] jinn are real creatures that form a world other than that of mankind according to Islamic faith.

(Qur'an 4:48). Furthermore, it functions as a poignant reminder that Allah is the ultimate embodiment of power and authority necessitating that all acts of worship and devotion be directed solely towards Him. Tawhid al-Uluhiyah holds significant importance within the Islamic faith, as explicitly mentioned in the Qur'an (6:162-163). The foundational principles are derived from many Bible chapters, beginning with Exodus 20:3-7. Read the verses here:

- Qur'an 1:5, You ˹alone˺ we worship and You ˹alone˺ we ask for help.
- Qur'an 16:36, We surely sent a messenger to every community, saying, "Worship Allah and shun false gods." But some of them were guided by Allah, while others were destined to stray. So travel throughout the land and see the fate of the deniers!
- Qur'an 4:48, Indeed, Allah does not forgive associating others with Him ˹in worship˺,1 but forgives anything else of whoever He wills. And whoever associates others with Allah has indeed committed a grave sin.
- Qur'an 6:162–163 Say, Surely my prayer, my worship, my life, and my death are all for Allah—Lord of all worlds. "He has no partner. So I am commanded, and so I am the first to submit."
- Exodus 20:3-7, "You shall have no other gods before me." 4 "You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. 5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, 6 but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments. 7" You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.
- Revelation 4:8-9, 8 Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under its wings. Day and night they never stop saying:

  "'Holy, holy, holy

  is the Lord God Almighty,'

  who was, and is, and is to come."

  9 Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever.

Tawhid al-Asmaa wa Sifaat (Oneness of Allah's Attributes and Names)

Tawhid al-Asmaa wa Sifaat is the belief in the oneness of Allah in His names and attributes.[55] It is the belief that Allah is the only one with the attributes of perfection and that no other being can possess them (Qur'an 17:110). This category of Tawhid reinforces the fact that Allah is the only one worthy of being described with the attributes of perfection and that no other being can possess them (Qur'an 20:8). Each category reinforces the belief in the oneness of Allah and the fact that He alone should be worshiped. The attributes mentioned in the Qur'an are well grounded in the various passages of the Bible.

- Qur'an 17:110, Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ "Call upon Allah or call upon the Most Compassionate—whichever you call, He has the Most Beautiful Names." Do not recite your prayers too loudly or silently, but seek a way between.
- Qur'an 20:8, Allah—there is no god ˹worthy of worship˺ except Him. He has the Most Beautiful Names.
- Leviticus 19:1, The Lord said to Moses, 2 Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: 'Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy.
- Psalms 18:30, As for God, his way is perfect: The Lord's word is flawless; he shields all who take refuge in him.
- Matthew 5:48, Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.
- Luke 18:19, "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone.

The significance of Tawhid al-Uluhiyah is underscored by the belief that Allah is the exclusive entity deserving of adoration and that all acts of devotion should be directed solely towards Him (Qur'an 1:5). This notion serves as a reminder to adherents of Islam that Allah is the supreme source of power and authority, and that no other entity or item should be revered identically, as stated in the Qur'an (16:36). The concept of Tawhid al-Uluhiyah serves as a means to confront and discourage the practice of polytheism, as it strengthens the notion that no entity or entity should be revered or adored in place of Allah. The ramifications of Tawhid al-Uluhiyah are extensive and exert a substantial influence on everyday existence. As an illustration, the Qur'an exhorts adherents of Islam to prioritize the worship of Allah while abstaining from engaging in any manifestations of idolatry or superstitious rituals (Qur'an 4:48). Furthermore, it functions as a poignant reminder that Allah represents the ultimate origin of power and authority, emphasizing the necessity of directing all acts of worship and devotion solely towards Him. Tawhid al-Uluhiyah holds significant importance within the Islamic faith, as explicitly highlighted in the Qur'an (6:162-163). The foundational principles are derived from many Bible chapters, beginning with Exodus 20:3-7. See the following verses:

- Qur'an 2:255, Allah! There is no god ˹worthy of worship˺ except Him, the Ever-Living, All-Sustaining. Neither drowsiness nor sleep overtakes Him. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. Who

[55] International Curricula, Tawhid Al-Asmaa' Was- Sifaat, ICO's Publications – Islamic Studies curriculum – Grade 9/ Part1 (December 22nd, 2016) https://www.iconetwork.com/Tawhid-al-asmaa-sifaat/ .

could possibly intercede with Him without His permission? He ˹fully˺ knows what is ahead of them and what is behind them, but no one can grasp any of His knowledge—except what He wills ˹to reveal˺. His Seat1 encompasses the heavens and the earth, and the preservation of both does not tire Him. For He is the Most High, the Greatest.

- Job 12:7-10, “But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you; 8 or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish in the sea inform you. 9 Which of all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? 10 In his hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind.
- Jeremiah 32:17, Ah, Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you.
- Matthew 6:30, If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?
- John 4:24, God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.
- Romans 1:20, For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

The Qur’an depict Allah’s names with 99 names. These names are known as Asmaa al-Husna (The Most Beautiful Names). The Qur’an states, Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ “Call upon Allah or call upon the Most Compassionate—whichever you call, He has the Most Beautiful Names.” Do not recite your prayers too loudly or silently, but seek a way between (17:110). The following table shows the 99 names of Allah but also notes that out of the many names of Allah, love is not part of them, unlike what we find in the Bible:

Table 6.1, The 99 names of Allah (https://99namesofallah.name/)

#	Transliteration	Meaning
1	AR-RAHMAAN	The Most or Entirely Merciful
2	AR-RAHEEM	The Bestower of Mercy
3	AL-MALIK	The King and Owner of Dominion
4	AL-QUDDUS	The Absolutely Pure
5	AS-SALAM	The Perfection and Giver of Peace
6	AL-MU’MIN	The One Who gives Emaan and Security

#	Transliteration	Meaning
7	AL-MUHAYMIN	The Guardian, The Witness, The Overseer
8	AL-AZEEZ	The All Mighty
9	AL-JABBAR	The Compeller, The Restorer
10	AL-MUTAKABBIR	The Supreme, The Majestic
11	AL-KHAALIQ	The Creator, The Maker
12	AL-BAARI’	The Originator
13	AL-MUSAWWIR	The Fashioner
14	AL-GHAFFAR	The All- and Oft-Forgiving
15	AL-QAHHAR	The Subduer, The Ever-Dominating
16	AL-WAHHAAB	The Giver of Gifts
17	AR-RAZZAQ	The Provider
18	AL-FATTAAH	The Opener, The Judge
19	AL-‘ALEEM	The All-Knowing, The Omniscient
20	AL-QAABID	The Withholder
21	AL-BAASIT	The Extender
22	AL-KHAAFIDH	The Reducer, The Abaser
23	AR-RAAFI’	The Exalter, The Elevator
24	AL-MU’IZZ	The Honourer, The Bestower
25	AL-MUZIL	The Dishonourer, The Humiliator
26	AS-SAMEE’	The All-Hearing
27	AL-BASEER	The All-Seeing
28	AL-HAKAM	The Judge, The Giver of Justice
29	AL-‘ADL	The Utterly Just
30	AL-LATEEF	The Subtle One, The Most Gentle
31	AL-KHABEER	The Acquainted, the All-Aware

#	Transliteration	Meaning
32	AL-HALEEM	The Most Forbearing
33	AL-‘ATHEEM	The Magnificent, The Supreme
34	AL-GHAFOOR	The Forgiving, The Exceedingly Forgiving
35	ASH-SHAKOOR	The Most Appreciative
36	AL-‘ALEE	The Most High, The Exalted
37	AL-KABEER	The Greatest, The Most Grand
38	AL-HAFEEDH	The Preserver, The All-Heedful and All-Protecting
39	AL-MUQEET	The Sustainer
40	AL-HASEEB	The Reckoner, The Sufficient
41	AL-JALEEL	The Majestic
42	AL-KAREEM	The Most Generous, The Most Esteemed
43	AR-RAQEEB	The Watchful
44	AL-MUJEEB	The Responsive One
45	AL-WAASI’	The All-Encompassing, the Boundless
46	AL-HAKEEM	The All-Wise
47	AL-WADOOD	The Most Loving
48	AL-MAJEED	The Glorious, The Most Honorable
49	AL-BA’ITH	The Resurrector, The Raiser of the Dead
50	ASH-SHAHEED	The All- and Ever Witnessing
51	AL-HAQQ	The Absolute Truth
52	AL-WAKEEL	The Trustee, The Disposer of Affairs
53	AL-QAWIYY	The All-Strong
54	AL-MATEEN	The Firm, The Steadfast

#	Transliteration	Meaning
55	AL-WALIYY	The Protecting Associate
56	AL-HAMEED	The Praiseworthy
57	AL-MUHSEE	The All-Enumerating, The Counter
58	AL-MUBDI	The Originator, The Initiator
59	AL-MU'ID	The Restorer, The Reinstater
60	AL-MUHYEE	The Giver of Life
61	AL-MUMEET	The Bringer of Death, the Destroyer
62	AL-HAYY	The Ever-Living
63	AL-QAYYOOM	The Sustainer, The Self-Subsisting
64	AL-WAAJID	The Perceiver
65	AL-MAAJID	The Illustrious, the Magnificent
66	AL-WAAHID	The One
67	AL-AHAD	The Unique, The Only One
68	AS-SAMAD	The Eternal, Satisfier of Needs
69	AL-QADIR	The Capable, The Powerful
70	AL-MUQTADIR	The Omnipotent
71	AL-MUQADDIM	The Expediter, The Promoter
72	AL-MU'AKHKHIR	The Delayer, the Retarder
73	AL-AWWAL	The First
74	AL-AAKHIR	The Last
75	AZ-DHAAHIR	The Manifest
76	AL-BAATIN	The Hidden One, Knower of the Hidden
77	AL-WAALI	The Governor, The Patron
78	AL-MUTA'ALI	The Self Exalted

#	Transliteration	Meaning
79	AL-BARR	The Source of Goodness, the Kind Benefactor
80	AT-TAWWAB	The Ever-Pardoning, The Relenting
81	AL-MUNTAQIM	The Avenger
82	AL-‘AFUWW	The Pardoner
83	AR-RA’OOF	The Most Kind
84	MAALIK-UL-MULK	Master of the Kingdom, Owner of the Dominion
85	DHUL-JALAALI WAL-IKRAAM	Possessor of Glory and Honour, Lord of Majesty and Generosity
86	AL-MUQSIT	The Equitable, the Requiter
87	AL-JAAMI’	The Gatherer, the Uniter
88	AL-GHANIYY	The Self-Sufficient, The Wealthy
89	AL-MUGHNI	The Enricher
90	AL-MANI’	The Withholder
91	AD-DHARR	The Distresser
92	AN-NAFI’	The Propitious, the Benefactor
93	AN-NUR	The Light, The Illuminator
94	AL-HAADI	The Guide
95	AL-BADEE’	The Incomparable Originator
96	AL-BAAQI	The Ever-Surviving, The Everlasting
97	AL-WAARITH	The Inheritor, The Heir
98	AR-RASHEED	The Guide, Infallible Teacher
99	AS-SABOOR	The Forbearing, The Patient

1. Allah - The single, proper name for God in Islam	2. Ar-Rahman - The Compassionate, The Beneficent	3. Allah - The single, proper name for God in Islam	4. Al-Malik - The King, The Sovereign Lord	5. Al-Quddoos - The Holy
6. As-Salaam - The Source of Peace	7. As-Salaam - The Source of Peace	8. Al Muhaimin - The Protector	9. Al-'Aziz - The Mighty, The Strong	10. Al-Jabbaar - The Compeller
11. Al-Mutakabbir - The Majestic	12. Al-Khaaliq - The Creator	13. Al-Bari' - The Evolver, The Maker	14. Al Musawwir - The Fashioner	15. Al-Ghaffaar - The Great Forgiver
16. Al-Qahhaar - The Subduer, The Dominant	17. Al-Wahhaab - The Bestower	18. Al-Razzaaq - The Sustainer, The Provider	19. Al-Fattaah - The Opener, The Reliever	20. Al-'Aleem - The All-Knowing
21. Al-Qaabid - The Retainer	22. Al-Baasit - The Expander	23. Al-Khaafid - The Abaser	24. Al-Raafi' - The Exalter	25. Al-Mu'iz - The Honorer
26. Al-Muthil - The Humiliator	27. As-Samee' - The All-Hearing	28. Al-Baseer - The All-Seeing	29. Al-Hakam - The Judge	30. Al-'Adl - The Just
31. Al-Lateef - The Subtle One	32. Al-Khabeer - The Aware	33. Al-Haleem - The Forbearing	34. Al-'Azeem - The Great One	35. Al-Ghafoor - The All-Forgiving
36. Ash-Shakoor - The Grateful	37. Al-'Aliyy - The Most High	38. Al-Kabeer - The Great	39. Al-Hafeez - The Preserver	40. Al-Muqeet - The Maintainer
41. Al-Haseeb - The Reckoner	42. Al-Jaleel - The Sublime One	43. Al-Kareem - The Generous	44. Ar-Raqeeb - The Watcher	45. Al-Mujeeb - The Responsive

46. Al-Wasi' - The Vast	47. Al-Hakeem - The Wise	48. Al-Wadood - The Loving	49. Al-Majeed - The Glorious	50. Al-Ba'ith - The Resurrector
51. Ash-Shaheed - The Witness	52. Al-Haqq - The Truth	53. Al-Wakeel - The Trustee	54. Al-Qawiyy - The Strong	55. Al-Mateen - The Firm One
56. Al-Waliyy - The Supporter	57. Al-Hameed - The Praiseworthy	58. Al-Muhsee - The Counter	59. Al-Mubdi' - The Originator	60. Al-Mu'eed - The Reproducer
61. Al-Muhyi - The Restorer	62. Al-Mumeet - The Destroyer	63. Al-Hayy - The Alive	64. Al-Qayyoom - The Self-Subsisting	65. Al-Waajid - The Perceiver
66. Al-Waahid - The Unique	67. Al-Ahad - The One	68. As-Samad - The Eternal	69. Al-Qaadir - The Able	70. Al-Muqtadir - The Powerful
71. Al-Muqaddim - The Expediter	72. Al-Mu'akh-khir - The Delayer	73. Al-'Awwal - The First	74. Al-'Akhir - The Last	75. Az-Zaahir - The Manifest
76. Al-Baatin - The Hidden	77. Al-Walee - The Governor	78. Al-Muta'ali - The Most Exalted	79. Al-Barr - The Source of All Goodness	80. At-Tawwab - The Acceptor of Repentance
81. Al-'Afuww - The Pardoner	82. Al-Haadi - The Guide	83. Al-Badi' - The Incomparable	84. Al-Ghaniyy - The Self-Sufficient	85. Al-Jaami' - The Gatherer
86. Ar-Ra'uf - The Compassionate	87. Al-Mughni - The Enricher	88. Al-Baaqi - The Everlasting	89. An-Noor - The Light	90. Al-Muqsit - The Equitable
91. Malik Al-Mulk - The King of Kings	92. Al-Maani' - The Preventer	93. Al-Waarith - The Inheritor	94. An-Nafi' - The Propitious	95. As-Saboor - The Patient

96. Thul-Jalali wal-Ikram - The Lord of Majesty and Bounty	97. Ad-Darr - The Distresser	98. Ar-Rasheed - The Guide to the Right Path	99. As-Saboor- The Forbearing, The Patient	

The Qur'an enumerates some names of Allah that are associated with demonic implications. These five names include Al-Mutakabbir (Arrogant), Ad-Darr (distresser), Al-Muzil (humiliator), Al-Makir (deceiver) and Al-Fattan (mischief maker). Throughout the New Testament, Satan is referred to with many names similar to Allah's. See the verses here:

- Satan- Job 1:6, One day the angels came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them.
- Tempter-Matthew 4:3 The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."
- The ruler of the demons - Matthew 12:24, But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, "It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this fellow drives out demons."
- The God of this Age - 2 Corinthians 4:4 The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.
- The evil one - 1 John 5:18, We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the One who was born of God keeps them safe, and the evil one cannot harm them.
- A roaring lion -1 Peter 5:8, Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.
- The Devil- Matthew 4:1, Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.
- Serpent- Genesis 3:2,4,5, The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3 but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'" 4 "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. 5 "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."
- Ruler Of Demons- Matthew 9:34, But the Pharisees said, "It is by the prince of demons that he drives out demons."
- Beelzebul, Matthew 12:24, But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, "It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this fellow drives out demons."
- The Evil One- Matthew 13:19, When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path.
- Enemy-Matthew 13:39, and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

- Liar, John 8:44, You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.
- Father Of Lies - John 8:44, You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.
- Murderer -John 8:44, You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.
- Adversary -1 Peter 5:8, Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.
- The Angel Of The Abyss, Revelation 9:11, They had as king over them the angel of the Abyss, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon and in Greek is Apollyon (that is, Destroyer).
- Deceiver Of The Whole World -Revelation 12:9, The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

God is Love in the Bible

The Bible proclaims that God is Love. Other derivatives of God being love are told through Biblical stories and proverbs. Let us view the following verses, which teach that God is Love, a word foreign to the Qur'an:

- John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
- John 13:34-35, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."
- John 15:13 Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.
- Romans 8: 37-39, No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- Ephesians 2:4-5, But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions-it is by grace you have been saved.
- 1 John 4: 16, And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. 17 In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him. 18 There is no fear in love.

But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

- Psalm 86:15, But you, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.
- Psalm 136:26, Give thanks to the God of heaven. His love endures forever.

Toda la Safar - Hajj Pilgrimage to Mecca

The Ka'ba, located in Mecca, is believed by Muslims to have been constructed by Abraham and his son Ishmael. Muslims believe that it is incumbent upon all adherents of Islam to exert diligent efforts in attaining the utmost level of devoutness and solidarity within their existence. Muslims accomplish this objective by participating in the customary Hajj trip to the sacred city of Mecca. The Hajj is a significant pilgrimage undertaken annually by many Muslims, serving as a paramount religious practice within the Islamic faith. The pilgrimage also encompasses a journey known as Toda La Safar. The Hajj pilgrimage encompasses many ritualistic practices within and in the vicinity of the city of Mecca, spanning a duration of around five to six days.[56]



[56] Shaikh Muhammad As-Salih Al-Uthaimeen, How to Perform the Rituals of Hajj and Umrah. https://www.princeton.edu/~humcomp/hajjguide.html.

Great Mosque of Mecca. Built to enclose the Kaaba, the holiest sanctuary in Islam. View of Kaaba crowded with pilgrims. 1910. Library of Congress. Prints and Photographs Division.[57]

How do Muslims perform the rituals of the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca?



Muslims pray at the Grand Mosque during the annual Hajj pilgrimage in Mecca [Waleed Ali/Reuters] 18 Nov 2009. https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2009/11/18/a-step-by-step-guide-to-hajj

Many Muslims engage in Toda La Safar, a spiritual pilgrimage to the sacred city of Makkah (Mecca). This pilgrimage is purported to facilitate a deeper connection with Allah and foster a sense of camaraderie among Muslims. The pilgrims must undertake their journey on foot and adhere to the customary practice of donning the white ihram attire. The pilgrimage often occurs in the month of Dhu Al-Hijjah (June) and typically spans five days for its completion. During this week, the pilgrims must traverse the five mountains of Makkah and engage in many acts of worship.[58]

The five prominent mountains in Makkah are Safa, Marwah, Shafa, Arafat, and Muzdalifah. At each of these mountain sites, the pilgrims are required to engage in a variety of religious rituals and acts of devotion. During the pilgrimage, participants must engage in a ritual known as Sa'i, which involves walking seven times between the Safa and Marwah mountains. This act serves as a commemoration of the commandment given by Allah to Ibrahim (Abraham).[59] At the mountain of Shafa, the

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[57] Anchi Hoh, The Hajj to Mecca. https://blogs.loc.gov/international-collections/2022/07/the-hajj-to-mecca/ . July 7, 2022. The following is a post by Huda Dayton, Reference Librarian, Near East Section, African and Middle Eastern Division.

[58] Al Jazeera Media Network, "A step-by-step guide to Hajj: How Muslims perform the rituals of the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca," (November 18, 2009), https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2009/11/18/a-step-by-step-guide-to-hajj.

[59] Zamzam.com, "The Safa And Marwa Story: Significance And History," (June 18, 2021) https://zamzam.com/blog/safa-and-marwa/,

pilgrims must pray for repentance for their sins. The pilgrims must spend the entire day contemplating and praying at the mountain of Arafat.[60] In the last stage of the Hajj pilgrimage, namely at the location known as Muzdalifah, it is incumbent upon the pilgrims to gather pebbles and stones to cast them at the 'Jamarat' - the pillars that are central to the stoning rite - during the culminating Hajj ceremony. The Hajj trip serves as a means for Muslims to enhance their spiritual connection with Allah. According to scholarly discourse, it is alleged that this phenomenon fosters a sense of cohesion within the Muslim community and engenders a heightened level of religious devotion. The Toda La Safar pilgrimage is a distinctive undertaking in which adherents of the Islamic faith engage, serving as a poignant reminder of the significance of devotion and submission to Allah, as exemplified by the actions of Abraham. The Bible does not mandate the implementation of any specific rituals to foster a more extraordinary relationship with God. Instead, it emphasizes the need for personal and communal prayer to draw nearer to the divine. The assertion is made that no rituals, regardless of their nature, can serve as a means to attain a connection with the divine, as it is believed that Jesus has already paved the path through his crucifixion and subsequent resurrection. The following verse represents various ways one approach the Lord, God almighty:

- 1 Kings 8:61, And may your hearts be fully committed to the Lord our God, to live by his decrees and obey his commands, as at this time.
- Matthew 6:5, And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.
- Matthew 6:6 But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.
- Matthew 11:28, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.
- Matthew 27:50-51, And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split.
- Mark 11:24, Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.
- Luke 5:16, But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.
- Romans 12:1, Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.
- Ephesians 6:17–18, Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.
- Colossians 4:2, Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

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[60] The Associated Press, "Muslim Pilgrims Pray at Mount Arafat as Hajj Reaches Apex," https://www.npr.org/2022/07/08/1110433048/muslim-pilgrims-pray-at-mount-arafat-as-hajj-reaches-apex, July 8, 2022.

- Philippians 4:6–7, Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18, 16 Rejoice always, 17 pray continually, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.
- Hebrews 4: 14 -16, Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. 16 Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.
- Hebrews 5:7, During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.
- 1 John 5:14–15, This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

CHAPTER SEVEN

JESUS' BIRTH NARRATIVE IN THE BIBLE AND THE QUR'AN

Jesus' Birth Narrative in the Bible

There exist distinct differences in the portrayal of Jesus in the Bible and the Qur'an. While Jesus holds a salvific function in the Bible, the Qur'an portrays Isa as a prophet without exceptional status. The advent of Jesus/Isa holds significant importance within the two prominent global religions, Christianity and Islam. The birth tale in both books also exhibits dissimilarities. The birth of Jesus is extensively depicted in the Bible and serves as a significant cause for jubilation. The Qur'an refers to the birth of Isa, albeit concisely, without providing extensive elaboration. The disparities in the birth narratives found in the two religious books offer a thought-provoking insight into the contrasting perspectives of the two religions towards Jesus/Isa and his significance within their different belief systems. The Bible focuses significant stress on the nativity of Jesus. The narrative is delineated in the Gospel of Matthew and Luke, serving as a significant cause for immense elation, even throughout the non-religious community. According to biblical accounts, Angel Gabriel is said to have manifested himself to Mary, conveying the divine selection for her to bear the Son of God. Additionally, it is mentioned that a celestial body manifested in the firmament serves as a herald of the arrival of Jesus, thereby proclaiming his birth to the global populace. Furthermore, the Bible states that Jesus was born in Bethlehem and was visited by shepherds and wise men.

- Matthew 2:1-2, After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem 2 and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."
- Isaiah 7:14, Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

In contrast, the Qur'an does not offer an elaborate account of the birth of Isa. However, the text merely states the birth of Isa without offering any precise details. The Qur'an affirms the belief that Isa (Jesus) was born to a virgin mother through the intervention of an angelic visitation. However, it does not explicitly reference the star, the visitation of the wise men, or the shepherds. The Qur'an references Isa as a divine prophet dispatched by Allah to summon the Children of Israel to embrace the path of truth.

The Qur'an gives a distinct rendition of the tale surrounding the birth of Isa, wherein Mary receives a visit from the Angel Gabriel and is tasked with giving birth to a son despite her state of virginity. Mary displays initial hesitancy. Nevertheless, she ultimately acquiesces to the assigned assignment. Subsequently, the celestial being conveys to Mary that she has been divinely selected and bestowed with divine favor by Allah, emphasizing the limitless capabilities of Allah. Mary delivered her child, Isa, without experiencing any discomfort or adverse effects. According to the Qur'an, it is mentioned that Isa communicated while still a child in the cradle. The Qur'an generally presents a birth tale of Isa that diverges significantly from the conventional

versions found in Christian and Jewish traditions. The portrayal of Mary as a virgin is indeed included in the Qur'an, albeit with less emphasis on Joseph. Additionally, the Qur'an does not reference Isa being born in a stable or a manger. Notwithstanding these disparities, the Qur'an provides an external account of Isa's extraordinary birth and celestial purpose in the terrestrial realm.

The divergent perspectives on Jesus/Isa's birth, as depicted in the Bible and Qur'an, exemplify the contrasting theological viewpoints held by adherents of Christianity and Islam. Within Christianity, Jesus is regarded as the divine Son of God and is accorded significant significance and veneration. Within the Islamic faith, Isa is regarded as a divine messenger of Allah and is held in high esteem, albeit not accorded an equivalent level of significance, as observed in Christianity.

Qur'an 19 and Biblical Texts on Jesus' Incarnation

Let us look at the Qur'anic and Biblical texts to discuss Jesus's birth narrative. The Qur'anic Jesus has things very different from the Biblical narrative noted in chapter 19. For instance, the Jesus of the Qur'an spoke as an infant, as noted in chapter 19.

- Qur'an 19:16-22, And mention in the Book ˹O Prophet, the story of˺ Mary when she withdrew from her family to a place in the east, 17 screening herself off from them. Then We sent to her Our angel, ˹Gabriel,˺ appearing before her as a man, perfectly formed. 18 She appealed, "I truly seek refuge in the Most Compassionate from you! ˹So leave me alone˺ if you are God-fearing." 18 He responded, "I am only a messenger from your Lord, ˹sent˺ to bless you with a pure son." 19 She wondered, "How can I have a son when no man has ever touched me, nor am I unchaste?"21 He replied, "So will it be! Your Lord says, 'It is easy for Me. And so will We make him a sign for humanity and a mercy from Us.' It is a matter ˹already˺ decreed."22 So she conceived him and withdrew with him to a remote place.
- Qur'an 19:27-34, Then she returned to her people, carrying him. They said ˹in shock˺, "O Mary! You have certainly done a horrible thing! 28 O sister of Aaron!1 Your father was not an indecent man, nor was your mother unchaste." 29 So she pointed to the baby. They exclaimed, How can we talk to someone who is an infant in the cradle? 30 ˹Jesus˺ declared, "I am truly a servant of Allah. He has destined me to be given the Scripture and to be a prophet. 31 He has made me a blessing wherever I go, and bid me to establish prayer and give alms-tax as long as I live, 32 and to be kind to my mother. He has not made me arrogant or defiant. 33 Peace be upon me the day I was born, the day I die, and the day I will be raised back to life!"34 That is Jesus, son of Mary. ˹And this is˺ a word of truth, about which they dispute.
- Qur'an 21:91 And ˹remember˺ the one who guarded her chastity, so We breathed into her through Our angel, ˹Gabriel, ˺ making her and her son a sign for all peoples.

The prophet Muhamad did not know the difference between the Angel and the Spirit. The Qur'an never identifies the Spirit as Gabriel. Muhammad admitted that he had no answer when asked whether the spirit was Gabriel. Read Quran 17:85:

- Qur'an 17:85, They ask you ˹O Prophet˺ about the spirit. Say, "Its nature is known only to my Lord, and you ˹O humanity˺ have been given but little knowledge."

Angel Gabriel, whom the Qur'an shows, is a creature, but in the story of Mary, he is a creator alongside Allah. According to the Bible, the Angel Gabriel just said "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you." The angel Gabriel breathed into Mary in the Qur'an, serving as a creator alongside Allah. The angel Gabriel has the same ability as a co-creator and life-giver with Allah. In this case, the angel Gabriel breathed out the Spirit to Mary, even though other Quranic verses say it was Allah who did the breathing.

- Qur'an 66:12˹There is˺ also ˹the example of˺ Mary, the daughter of 'Imrân, who guarded her chastity, so We breathed into her ˹womb˺ through Our angel ˹Gabriel˺. She testified to the words of her Lord and His Scriptures, and was one of the ˹sincerely˺ devout.

Comparing Qur'an 19 to the Biblical Narrative Found in Matthew and Luke

The Bible presents the actual version and a detailed story of Jesus' birth narrative. The following Biblical text provides the narrative:

- Matthew 1:18-21, This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together**,** she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph, her husband, was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.'
- Luke 1:26-35, In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, 'Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.' Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.' 'How will this be,' Mary asked the angel, 'since I am a virgin?' The angel answered, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.

We can agree that the narrative in Qur'an 19 appears to be a story outside the Bible. Whereas the Qur'anic Isa talks as a baby, the Bible provides a storyline of

normal birth, as noted in Matthew and Luke. The Qur'anic birth narrative comes from the Arabic infancy gospel.[61] When we compare Prophet Muhammad's account of Isa and the Arabic infancy gospel, we see they are indeed the same story. The 'Arabic infancy gospel'[62] is never recognized as canonical; thus, it is heretical. It is important to note that the Arabic Infancy Gospel is not historically reliable, and its authenticity is highly debated among scholars. It was likely composed in the 6th or 7th century and draws on earlier Christian traditions and apocryphal literature.[63] The text is available in several manuscripts, including the Syriac and Arabic versions. Instead, the story comes from the gnostic gospels, which appeared centuries after the canonical gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.[64]

As noted elsewhere, Biblical Jesus is the Son of God. However, in the Qur'an, he is not the Son of God. The Qur'an teaches:

- Qur'an 19:35, It is not for Allah to take a son! Glory be to Him. When He decrees a matter, He simply tells it, "Be!" And it is!
- Qur'an 9:30, The Jews say, "Ezra is the son of Allah," while the Christians say, "The Messiah is the son of Allah." Such are their baseless assertions, only parroting the words of earlier disbelievers. May Allah condemn them! How can they be deluded ˹from the truth˺?

The divergent perspectives on the birth of Jesus/Isa as portrayed in the Bible and the Qur'an provide evidence of the contrasting theological viewpoints held within the two respective religions. Within the Christian faith, Jesus is regarded as the divine Son of God and is accorded significant significance and veneration. Within the Islamic faith, Isa is regarded as a divine messenger of Allah and is held in high esteem, albeit not accorded an equivalent degree of significance, as observed in Christianity. The following verses speak on the incarnation of Jesus:

- Colossians 2:9, For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form,
- Phil. 2:5-8, In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in

[61] Alexander Roberts, Sir James Donaldson, Arthur Cleveland Coxe , "Christian Apocrypha and Early Christian Literature: The Arabic Infancy Gospel of the Savior," Ante-Nicene Fathers Vol 8. 1886. http://gnosis.org/library/infarab.htm

[62] Arabic infancy gospel- is a non-canonical text that presents a narrative about the childhood of Jesus Christ. It is not included in the official biblical canon recognized by most Christian denominations. The text exists in various versions, and the content can vary slightly between them. New Testament apocryphal

[63] Wilhelm Schneemelcher (Editor), and R. Mcl. Wilson (Editor), New Testament Apocrypha, Vol. 2: Writings Relating to the Apostles Apocalypses and Related Subjects Paperback (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1992), 691-748.

[64] Christopher David Richardson, The Complete Gnostic Gospels: The Lost Apocryphal Gospel of Thomas, John and Mary Magdalene - The Secret Gospel of Mark and The Pistis Sophia Paperback (Independently published , 2023), 7-91.

human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death even death on a cross!

The Bible in Matthew 3:17 and Luke 9:35 tells that God, the Father, called Jesus his Son. The Qur'anic Angel Gabriel, whom Muhammad claims to have brought the Qur'an, cites a Biblical angel who said Jesus is the Son of God, shown in Luke 1:35. Let us see the Biblical teaching on Jesus, the Son of the living God:

- Matthew 3:17, And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.
- Luke 9:35, A voice came from the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him
- Luke 1:35, The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God

The Biblical Jesus is the eternal and divine Son of the Father. Jesus made it clear that God is his father in a salvific way. The Bible paints Jesus as the only begotten of the Father as written in various verses:

- John 1:18, No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.
- John 3:16, For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Jesus Eternally Existed with God the Father

In contrast to the Qur'an's portrayal of Jesus as lacking divine connectedness, the Bible attributes divine attributes to Jesus, who is shown as having an eternal existence alongside God the Father, as stated in the Gospel of John. Indeed, it can be argued that Jesus shared a unified essence with the Father throughout creation. All things were created through him; without him, nothing that has been created would exist. Before the act of creation, he possessed an innate sense of magnificence alongside the Father. Before creation, he held an innate sense of magnificence in conjunction with the Father. Let us see the following verses:

- John 1:1-3, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.
- John 17:5, And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began. 24 Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.
- Col. 1:16-17, For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Isa's Relationship with Allah

The Qur'an speaks about the relationship between Isa and Allah in detail. The Qur'anic Isa is an essential prophet among Muslims, whom Allah sent to the people of Israel. He is the "Messiah" or "Christ" and an essential messenger for Allah. The Qur'an speaks about Isa's relationship to Allah in many ways. It emphasizes that Isa is a messenger of Allah and is exceptional among the prophets. The Qur'an also speaks of Isa as being a part of Allah's plan for salvation (Qur'an 19:21). Isa is described as a pure and sinless messenger of Allah who brought a new law and guidance to the people of Israel (Qur'an 19:19). The Qur'an also speaks of Isa's relationship to Allah in terms of his divinity. The Qur'an affirms that Isa is a servant and messenger of Allah and was born of the Virgin Mary. The Qur'an also speaks of Isa's miracles, such as his ability to heal the sick and raise the dead.

- Qur'an 3:45, ˹Remember˺ when the angels proclaimed, O Mary! Allah gives you good news of a Word from Him, his name will be the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary; honored in this world and the Hereafter, and he will be one of those nearest ˹to Allah˺.
- Qur'an 4:171, O People of the Book! Do not go to extremes regarding your faith; say nothing about Allah except the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was no more than a messenger of Allah and the fulfillment of His Word through Mary and a spirit ˹created by a command˺ from Him. So believe in Allah and His messengers and do not say, "Trinity." Stop! —for your own good. Allah is only One God. Glory be to Him! He is far above having a son! To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And Allah is sufficient as a Trustee of Affairs.
- Qur'an 5:17, Indeed, those who say, "Allah is the Messiah, son of Mary," have fallen into disbelief. Say, ˹O Prophet, ˺ "Who has the power to prevent Allah if He chose to destroy the Messiah, son of Mary, his mother, and everyone in the world all together?" To Allah ˹alone˺ belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and everything in between. He creates whatever He wills. And Allah is Most Capable of everything.
- Qur'an 5:72, Those who say, "Allah is the Messiah, son of Mary," have certainly fallen into disbelief. The Messiah ˹himself˺ said, "O Children of Israel! Worship Allah—my Lord and your Lord." Whoever associates others with Allah ˹in worship˺ will surely be forbidden Paradise by Allah. Their home will be the Fire. And the wrongdoers will have no helpers.
- Qur'an 19:19, He responded, "I am only a messenger from your Lord, ˹sent˺ to bless you with a pure son."
- Qur'an 19:21, He replied, "So will it be! Your Lord says, 'It is easy for Me. And so will We make him a sign for humanity and a mercy from Us.' It is a matter ˹already˺ decreed."

The Qur'an claims that Allah is the Lord of Isa (Qur'an 3:51). The Qur'an contains many teachings about Isa but does not expand any (Qur'an 43:63-44). It is a great challenge to understand Isa's teaching in the Qur'an without reading the Bible (Qur'an 2:136). Prophet Muhammad admonishes Muslims to read the Bible as a reference for clearer understanding (Qur'an 5:47; 10:94; 16:64). If Muslims want to

know what Is said, they need to read what the Bible has written. It is interesting to know that Prophet Muhammad was told to worship the Lord of the city (27:91). Let us look at the following verses on Isa and the Qur'an:

- Qur'an 2:136, Say, ˹O believers,˺ "We believe in Allah and what has been revealed to us; and what was revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and his descendants; and what was given to Moses, Jesus, and other prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them. And to Allah we all submit."
- Qur'an 3:51, Surely Allah is my Lord and your Lord. So worship Him ˹alone˺. This is the Straight Path.'
- Qur'an 4:48, Indeed, Allah does not forgive associating others with Him ˹in worship˺, but forgives anything else of whoever He wills. And whoever associates others with Allah has indeed committed a grave sin.
- Qur'an 5:47, So let the people of the Gospel judge by what Allah has revealed in it. And those who do not judge by what Allah has revealed are ˹truly˺ the rebellious.
- Qur'an 10:94, If you ˹O Prophet˺ are in doubt about ˹these stories˺ that We have revealed to you, then ask those who read the Scripture before you. The truth has certainly come to you from your Lord, so do not be one of those who doubt,
- Qur'an 16:44, ˹We sent them˺ with clear proofs and divine Books. And We have sent down to you ˹O Prophet˺ the Reminder, so that you may explain to people what has been revealed for them, and perhaps they will reflect.
- Qur'an 43:63-64, When Jesus came with clear proofs, he declared, "I have come to you with wisdom, and to clarify to you some of what you differ about. So fear Allah, and obey me. 64 Surely Allah ˹alone˺ is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him ˹alone˺. This is the Straight Path."
- Qur'an 4:163, Indeed, We have sent revelation to you ˹O Prophet˺ as We sent revelation to Noah and the prophets after him. We also sent revelation to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and his descendants, ˹as well as˺ Jesus, Job, Jonah, Aaron, and Solomon. And to David We gave the Psalms.
- Qur'an 27:91, Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ I have only been commanded to worship the Lord of this city ˹of Mecca˺, Who has made it sacred, and to Him belongs everything. And I am commanded to be one of those who ˹fully˺ submit ˹to Him.˺

Biblical Jesus' Relationship with the Father

The Qur'an does not present Isa as having any relationship with Allah other than being a messenger. Biblical Jesus has a strong relationship with God, the Father. Jesus serves as a model of how believers should relate to God. The Bible provides that Jesus' relationship with the Father is an insight into God's divine nature and helps believers understand the importance of relationship. In the Gospel of John, Jesus said, "My Father is greater than all (10:29)." According to the Bible, Jesus says, "No one knows the Son except the Father - (John 11:27)." In God-Jesus'

relationship we affirm that God is sovereign and that He is the ultimate authority over all creation. The Bible states that Jesus often prayed to the Father in many of the Gospel's settings and to His disciples. Jesus' prayer showed His dependence on the Father and His trust in the Father's plan. The following verses support the God-Jesus relationship:

- Matthew 26:39, Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."
- Mark 14:35-36, Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. 36 "Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."
- Luke 22:41-42, He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, 42 "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."
- John 17:1-26, After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you… 24 Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. 25 Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. 26 I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.

Prayer is a vital part of the believer's relationship with God, and Jesus' example of prayer provided a model for believers to follow. Jesus' while on earth, showed obedience to the Father. Jesus often said, "Not my will, but Yours be done (Luke 22:42)." This showed that Jesus was willing to submit to the Father's will, even when it was difficult. His obedience demonstrated the importance of submission to God and following God's will. Jesus demonstrated that the Father loves us. Jesus said, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16)." This shows that the Father was willing to sacrifice His only begotten Son for the salvation of humankind. Jesus' relationship with the Father showed that God's love for us is so strong that He was willing to make the ultimate sacrifice. Jesus' prayer, obedience, and demonstration of the Father's love exemplify how believers should relate to God.

The Biblical Jesus is the Lord of Lords

The Qur'an rejects the deity of Jesus, which is well-adored in the Bible. Jesus, the Son of God, is the Lord of Lords and King of Kings (Revelation 17:14; Revelation 19:16), the Messiah, the Redeemer, and the world's Saviour. In the Bible, Jesus is described as the one who has all authority in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18, Then Jesus came to them and said, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me). Jesus is regarded as the Lord of Lords due to His position as the ultimate sovereign over the entirety of existence. Counted as part of the Trinity, he is

responsible for creating the cosmos and its entirety. In addition, Jesus possesses jurisdiction over all individuals and all sovereign states. He is the individual who will exercise judgment over the entirety of the earth upon the conclusion of temporal existence. The individual in question possesses the authority to make determinations regarding the moral standing of others, distinguishing between those who adhere to virtuous principles and those who engage in wrongful behavior. He descended upon the terrestrial realm to deliver humanity from the consequences of their transgressions. Jesus Christ was crucified as a means of atoning for humanity's transgressions, granting us the opportunity to attain everlasting existence. Jesus experienced resurrection on the third day and ascended to heaven, assuming a position at the right hand of God. He can grant forgiveness for our transgressions and reconcile us with the divine. The following verses states that Jesus is the Lord of lords and Lord of the Sabbath:

- Matthew 12: 8, For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.
- Matthew 28:18-20, Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."
- 1 Timothy 6:15, which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords,
- Revelation 1:5, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood,
- Revelation 17:14, They will wage war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will triumph over them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings—and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers.
- Revelation 19:16, On his robe and on his thigh, he has this name written: king of kings and lord of lords.

The Early Church Understanding of Jesus

The Qur'an does not recognize any books of the Bible other than the Torah, Psalms, and Gospels. According to the Qur'an, out of the 66 canonical texts of Protestantism, only nine are considered acceptable. The Christian belief system upholds the canonical status of all 66 Bible books. The ensuing discourse will draw upon the content found in the Book of Acts. The early Christian community profoundly comprehended Jesus' exalted status as the supreme ruler over all other rulers. This phenomenon was exemplified in their written works, religious devotion, and customary activities. In their inspired writings, the authors conveyed their conviction on the divinity of Jesus, emphasizing his sovereignty and enduring authority in contemporary times. In their written works, the early church espoused the belief that Jesus held the esteemed title of "Lord of lords." Within the New

Testament, Jesus is depicted as the sovereign ruler over all other monarchs and the supreme authority over all lords. According to the Romans' epistle, Jesus holds the title of Lord over the deceased and the living. The early church recognized Jesus as the Lord of Glory. The following are the verses that show the relationship between the Early Church and Jesus:

- Romans 14:9, For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living. For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living.
- 1 Corinthians 2:8, None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

The early church proclaimed that Jesus was the Lord. They expressed their belief that Jesus was the Lord through their worship. In their gatherings, they often sang songs and hymns of praise to Jesus, proclaiming him to be the Lord. In their prayers, they asked for his name to be exalted and his kingdom to come (Matthew 6:10). The early church showed their belief in Jesus as the Lord of Lords in their practices. For example, they baptized believers in the name of Jesus (Acts 2:38). They also taught and encouraged others to obey him as Lord (Acts 23:6). Additionally, they practiced holy living, obeying Jesus as their Lord (Romans 6:16-18). The early church demonstrated through their practices that they believed Jesus was the Lord of Lords. The following verses show a relationship between Jesus and the early church:

- Matthew 6:10, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
- Acts 2:38, Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- Acts 23:6, Then Paul, knowing that some of them were Sadducees and the others Pharisees, called out in the Sanhedrin, “My brothers, I am a Pharisee, descended from Pharisees. I stand on trial because of the hope of the resurrection of the dead.”
- Romans 6:16-18, Don’t you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? 17 But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. 18 You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

Qur’anic Isa is a Mere Prophet

The Qur’an also speaks of Isa as a prophet, not Allah himself. It states that Isa was sent to confirm the Torah’s teachings and bring the good news of a Savior to Israel. The Qur’an claims that Isa will be sent back to Earth before the Day of Judgment to bring peace and justice to the world (Qur’an 4:159). The Qur’an

presents Isa as a prophet like Moses, David, Zechariah, and John, the Baptist. Muslims and their teachings revere these four prophets of the Qur'an, which form the foundation of Islamic belief. Islamic tradition holds that there were 124,000 other prophets sent to humanity.[65] The Qur'an mentions Isa numerous times and speaks of him respectfully and reverently. The Qur'an praises Isa for his miracles, prophecies, and teachings, which Allah gave him (Qur'an 3:49; 5:110). The Qur'an declares that Isa was sent to bring peace and justice to the world and to guide people to the right path (Qur'an 61:6). It states that Isa was sent to confirm the teachings of the earlier prophets and to complete their message. The Qur'an also speaks of Isa as a messenger of mercy and compassion and states that he was sent to bring people closer to Allah (Qur'an 6:84-87).

- Qur'an 3:49, and ˹make him˺ a messenger to the Children of Israel ˹to proclaim,˺ 'I have come to you with a sign from your Lord: I will make for you a bird from clay, breathe into it, and it will become a ˹real˺ bird—by Allah's Will. I will heal the blind and the leper and raise the dead to life—by Allah's Will. And I will prophesize what you eat and store in your houses. Surely in this is a sign for you if you ˹truly˺ believe.
- Qur'an 4:159, Every one of the People of the Book will definitely believe in him before his death.1 And on the Day of Judgment Jesus will be a witness against them.
- Qur'an 5:110, And ˹on Judgment Day˺ Allah will say, O Jesus, son of Mary! Remember My favor upon you and your mother: how I supported you with the holy spirit1 so you spoke to people in ˹your˺ infancy and adulthood. How I taught you writing, wisdom, the Torah, and the Gospel. How you molded a bird from clay—by My Will—and breathed into it and it became a ˹real˺ bird—by My Will. How you healed the blind and the lepers—by My Will. How you brought the dead to life—by My Will. How I prevented the Children of Israel from harming you when you came to them with clear proofs and the disbelievers among them said, "This is nothing but pure magic."
- Qur'an 6:84-87, And We blessed him with Isaac and Jacob. We guided them all as We previously guided Noah and those among his descendants: David, Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses, and Aaron. This is how We reward the good-doers. 85 Likewise, ˹We guided˺ Zachariah, John, Jesus, and Elias, who were all of the righteous. 86 ˹We also guided˺ Ishmael, Elisha, Jonah, and Lot, favoring each over other people ˹of their time˺.87 And ˹We favored˺ some of their forefathers, their descendants, and their brothers. We chose them and guided them to the Straight Path.
- Qur'an 43:61, When Jesus came with clear proofs, he declared, "I have come to you with wisdom, and to clarify to you some of what you differ about. So fear Allah, and obey me.
- Qur'an 61:6, And ˹remember˺ when Jesus, son of Mary, said, "O children of Israel! I am truly Allah's messenger to you, confirming the Torah which came before me, and giving good news of a messenger after me whose name will

[65] Armstrong, 8

be Ahmad."[66] Yet when the Prophet came to them with clear proofs, they said, "This is pure magic."

The Bible does not take lightly the Qur'anic assumption that Jesus was a mere prophet. The Biblical Jesus is not just a mere prophet as proclaimed in the Qur'an. He was superior to all others despite having the function of a prophet. The Book of Hebrew (3:3) tells us more about who Jesus is in the following words: "Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself." In addition, Jesus is said in Hebrew (1:4) to be superior to angels in the following words, "So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs." It is upon this name that all are saved in Acts 4:12- "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved." The Bible further exalts Jesus in the following words:

- Philippians 2:9-11 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
  in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

[66] Aḥmad and Holy Spirit in the book of John 14:16, (And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever) are two different persons.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE SECOND COMING OF ISLAMIC ISA AND BIBLICAL JESUS COMPARED

Qur'anic Isa's Second Coming

The concept of the second coming of Jesus/Isa is acknowledged in both the Bible and the Qur'an. However, it is essential to note that the portrayal of Jesus varies throughout different texts. This section will provide an in-depth analysis of the teachings on the Second Advent found in the Qur'an and the Bible. According to the Qur'an and hadith teachings, it is believed in eschatology that Isa would return as a follower of Islam and engage in a conflict in support of the Islamic faith. The occurrence of the Qur'anic second coming of Isa is a widely held belief that is anticipated to occur in the context of the End Times. The incident in question is referenced multiple times within the Qur'an and holds significant prominence within the framework of Islamic eschatology. According to Islamic theology, it is believed that Isa (Jesus) would return to Earth to eliminate evil and injustice from the world. Additionally, he will institute a period characterized by tranquility and equity, ultimately culminating in the Last Judgment.

The concept of the second coming of Jesus is referenced in various passages of the Qur'an, including but not limited to Qur'an 43:61, 5:117, and chapter 4:157. Each of the lines in question portrays the arrival of Isa as a significant occasion characterized by immense jubilation and commemoration. According to the Qur'an, it is mentioned that Isa (Jesus) would be accompanied by a select group of his devoted followers upon his return. Muslims widely regard the anticipated return of Isa (Jesus) as a period of immense jubilation. This phenomenon can be attributed to the forthcoming era in which the veracity of Islam will become evident, and the principles outlined in the Qur'an will be realized. Muslims believe that throughout this period, there will be abundant justice and peace globally, and all individuals will be treated equally. There is a prevailing belief that Isa will manifest numerous miracles upon his anticipated return. These miraculous occurrences will serve as evidence to substantiate his supernatural lineage and enhance the conviction of individuals with religious beliefs.

Moreover, it is widely held that Isa would convey a message centered on peace and justice, which is pivotal in creating an equitable and flawless societal structure. The eschatological concept of the second coming of Isa holds significant prominence within the framework of Islamic theology. The notion is widely seen as a significant boon and a wellspring of optimism for the entirety of the Muslim community. This event is a time of joy and celebration and will pave the way for a new and perfect world where justice and peace reign. See the following verses regarding Isa's:

- Qur'an 3:55, ˹Remember˺ when Allah said, O Jesus! I will take you and raise you up to Myself. I will deliver you from those who disbelieve, and elevate your followers above the disbelievers until the Day of Judgment. Then to Me you will ˹all˺ return, and I will settle all your disputes.

- Qur'an 4:157, and for boasting, "We killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the messenger of Allah." But they neither killed nor crucified him—it was only made to appear so Even those who argue for this ˹crucifixion˺ are in doubt. They have no knowledge whatsoever—only making assumptions. They certainly did not kill him.
- Qur'an 4:159, Every one of the People of the Book will definitely believe in him before his death. And on the Day of Judgment Jesus will be a witness against them.
- Qur'an 5:117, I never told them anything except what You ordered me to say: "Worship Allah—my Lord and your Lord!" And I was witness over them as long as I remained among them. But when You took me,1 You were the Witness over them—and You are a Witness over all things.
- Qur'an 23:100, so I may do good in what I left behind." Never! It is only a ˹useless˺ appeal they make. And there is a barrier behind them until the Day they are resurrected.
- Qur'an 43:61, And his ˹second˺ coming is truly a sign for the Hour. So have no doubt about it, and follow me. This is the Straight Path.

The Qur'an describes what Isa will look like. We start by noting that Muhammad's soul was with Isa. The following hadith has this to say:

- Sahih Bukhari Volume 3, Book 34, Number 425:
  Narrated Abu Huraira:
  - Allah's apostle said, by him in whose hands my soul is, son of Mary (Jesus) will shortly descend amongst you people (Muslims) as a just ruler and will break the cross and kill the pig and abolish the jizya (a tax taken from the non-Muslims, who are in the protection, of the Muslim government). Then there will be an abundance of money and no-body will accept charitable gifts.
- Sunan Abu Dawud Book 37, Number 4310:
  Narrated Abu Huraira:
  - The Prophet (pbuh) said: There is no prophet between me and him, that is, Jesus (pbuh). He will descend (to the earth). When you see him, recognize him: a man of medium height, reddish fair, wearing two light yellow garments, looking as if drops were falling down from his head though it will not be wet. He will fight the people for the cause of Islam. He will break the cross, kill swine, and abolish jizya. Allah will perish all religions except Islam. He will destroy the Antichrist and will live on the earth for forty years and then he will die. The Muslims will pray over him.

Biblical Jesus' Second Coming

The Bible teaches about the coming of Jesus but not to fight for the course of Islam. The book of Revelation 19:11-21 teaches that Jesus will fight against all those who rejected him; the eternal Son shall not fight for the course of Allah. Anyone who

fails to acknowledge the Son of God will face the same fate. The following verses talk about the second coming of Jesus:

- Revelation 19:11-21, I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. 12 His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. 13 He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. 14 The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. 15 Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. “He will rule them with an iron scepter.” He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. 16 On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: king of kings and lord of lords. 17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun, who cried earth, loud voice to all the birds flying in mid-air, “Come, gather together for the great supper of God, 18 so that you may eat the flesh of kings, generals, and the mighty, of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, great and small.” 19 Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to wage war against the rider on the horse and his army. 20 But the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who had performed the signs on its behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. 21 The rest were killed with the sword coming out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

The Second Coming of Jesus holds significant theological significance within the Christian faith and is often regarded as one of the primary occurrences chronicled in the biblical scriptures. According to biblical prophecy, it is predicted that Jesus will make a second coming to the Earth during the culmination of human history; after that, he will assume the role of judge over both the living and deceased individuals. The precise temporal occurrence of Jesus’ second coming remains uncertain, yet Biblical scripture unequivocally affirms its eventual realization. The New Testament describes the second coming of Jesus as shown in the Biblical narrative. The individual’s re-entry is characterized as a period of evaluation and magnificence. According to biblical teachings, the Second Coming of Jesus is described as a grand event whereby He would be heralded by the resounding sound of a trumpet, accompanied by a host of angels and enveloped in majestic clouds of glory. The individual in question shall convene the various nations of the global community and proceed to pass judgment upon both the living and deceased individuals, considering their respective actions and behaviors. Those who exhibit moral uprightness will receive the recompense of everlasting existence, while those who engage in immoral behavior will face punitive measures. According to biblical teachings, it is also mentioned that during the anticipated second coming of Jesus, the state of the earth will be characterized by widespread disorder and turmoil. Nations are anticipated to engage in armed conflicts, destabilizing the global order. A significant seismic event is anticipated to transpire, resulting in the displacement of

mountains and islands. Subsequently, a novel celestial realm and terrestrial domain will be manifested.

The following verses support the second advent of Jesus:

- Matthew 16:27, For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done.
- Matthew 25:31, "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne.
- Matthew 26:64, "You have said so," Jesus replied. "But I say to all of you: From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.
- Mark 8:38, If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels.
- John 1:51, He then added, "Very truly I tell you, you will see 'heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on' the Son of Man."
- Acts 1:9-11, After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. 10 They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. 11 "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will return in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."
- 2 Thessalonians 1:7, and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels.
- Daniel 7:13, "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence."

The Bible also references a period characterized by tranquility and elation that will ensue after the second advent of Jesus. According to biblical teachings, it is asserted that the various nations around the globe would coexist in a condition of tranquility and concord, ultimately leading to the establishment of God's dominion in the terrestrial realm. According to biblical teachings, it is asserted that Jesus would establish an eternal rule and ultimately eradicate sin and death. The second coming of Jesus holds significant theological significance within the Christian faith and is eagerly anticipated by adherents of this religious tradition. The second coming of Jesus is anticipated to engender a sense of optimism, tranquility, and elation within the global community. The forthcoming period is anticipated to encompass a period of evaluation and distinction, culminating in the cessation of transgression and mortality. According to biblical teachings, the second coming of Jesus will result in his reign alongside the saints. The following verses teach about the coming of Jesus the second time:

- Matthew 25:34, Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.
- John 14:1-3, Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. 2 My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.
- 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.
- James 5:7, Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord’s coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains.
- Revelation 1:7, “Look, he is coming with the clouds,” and “every eye will see him,
  even those who pierced him,” and all peoples on earth “will mourn because of him.”
  So shall it be! Amen.
- Revelation 7:9–10, After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. 10 And they cried out in a loud voice:
  > “Salvation belongs to our God,
  > who sits on the throne,
  > and to the Lamb.”
- Revelation 20:4, I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Qur’anic Isa and Intercessory for Humanity

The issue surrounding the intercession of people by the Qur’anic figure Isa is a multifaceted topic that has been the subject of scholarly discourse for ages. According to the Qur’an, the figure of Isa (Jesus) does not engage in intercession on behalf of humanity. According to the hadith, it is asserted that Prophet Muhammad is regarded as the intercessor for humanity, as opposed to Isa. It is clear, according to Hadith, that Prophet Muhammad is the intercessor of humanity, as noted in the following words:

- Sahih Al-Bukhari 6:236, a story is told of individuals suffering in hell. They approach Adam, Noah, Abraham, others, and Jesus, making a request for intercession. Each of them points those seeking help away from themselves, including Jesus. Muhammad is said to be the only one who can intercede effectively before God.

In the Qur'an, Isa is referred to as a messenger of Allah and was sent to spread his message to previous prophets. However, there are no concrete references to whether Isa intercedes for humans. One cannot conclusively affirm, based on the Qur'an, that Isa does intercede for humans. Some passages might be interpreted to indicate that Isa is a mediator between Allah and humans. For instance, in one passage, Isa is referred to as "a word from Allah Qur'an 3:39"; in another, he is described as "a spirit from Him Quran 4:171." Regardless of what the two pages inform, Qur'anic Isa does not intercede for humanity.

- Qur'an 3:39, So the angels called out to him while he stood praying in the sanctuary, "Allah gives you good news of ˹the birth of˺ John who will confirm the Word of Allah and will be a great leader, chaste, and a prophet among the righteous."
- Qur'an 4:171, O People of the Book! Do not go to extremes regarding your faith; say nothing about Allah except the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was no more than a messenger of Allah and the fulfillment of His Word through Mary and a spirit ˹created by a command˺ from Him. So believe in Allah and His messengers and do not say, "Trinity." Stop! —for your own good. Allah is only One God. Glory be to Him! He is far above having a son! To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And Allah is sufficient as a Trustee of Affairs.

Biblical Jesus Intercedes for Humanity

Throughout the Bible, Jesus is portrayed as a figure of compassion and mercy, interceding on behalf of humanity. Jesus consistently demonstrated his commitment to the salvation of humankind and his willingness to forgive, providing hope and comfort to those in need. The first instance of Jesus interceding for humanity can be found in the New Testament. In the Gospel of John, Jesus encounters a woman caught in adultery. When the scribes and Pharisees bring her before him, they demand she be stoned for her crime. In response, Jesus says, "Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her (John 8:7)." This story demonstrates Jesus' willingness to forgive and his desire to show mercy rather than punishment. In addition, besides showing mercy for the woman caught in adultery, Jesus also intercedes for the sick and oppressed. In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus heals a man with leprosy who was rejected by society for his condition. Jesus shows compassion for the man and says, "Be made clean" (Mark 1:41). This story demonstrates Jesus' willingness to show mercy to those who are suffering and to bring healing to those who are in need.

Jesus intercedes for humanity through his ultimate sacrifice. In the Gospels, Jesus is arrested and brought before Pontius Pilate. He keeps quiet when Pilate

asks Jesus to save himself by responding to his questions. Jesus was purposed in his mission in John (10:15): "…and I lay down my life for the sheep." This passage demonstrates Jesus' willingness to die for humanity through his ultimate act of love and mercy.

Furthermore, in the Bible, Jesus is seen as a mediator between God and humanity (1 Timothy 2:5-6). He is seen as the ultimate intercessor who is continually praying for people in heaven (Luke 22:32; Romans 8:34). For example, the Bible says Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29) is described as interceding for people in heaven, offering prayers on their behalf. In Revelation 5:8-14, Jesus is seen as the one who is enthroned in heaven, "standing in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures."

- Luke 23:3, So Pilate asked Jesus, "Are you the king of the Jews?"
- Luke 22:32, But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.
- John 1:29, The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!
- John 19:8, When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid, 9 and he went back inside the palace. "Where do you come from?" he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer. 10 "Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?" 11 Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."
- Romans 8:34, Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.
- 1 Timothy 2:5-6, For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time.
- Hebrews 7:25, Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.
- 1 John 2:1, My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.
- Revelation 5:8-14 And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God's people. 9 And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation.10 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."11 Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. 12 In a loud voice they were saying: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was

slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!” 13 Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying: “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!” 14 The four living creatures said, “Amen,” and the elders fell down and worshiped.

- Revelation 12:11, They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.

The Bible also speaks of Jesus as the one who intercedes directly with the Father on behalf of all people. In John 17:20-26, Jesus prays for all people, asking the Father to “sanctify them in truth; Your word is truth.” He intercedes for them, praying that they will be kept safe from evil and that they will come to know the truth of the gospel. Jesus also intercedes for people in heaven in a more general sense. He is described as praying for all of creation in Revelation 8:3-5. In this passage, Jesus is seen as interceding for “the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.” He is seen praying for the world and its inhabitants, asking that God’s will be done on earth as it is in heaven. In short, the Book of Hebrews (7:25) puts it very well that Jesus is the intercessor between God and humanity.

- Hebrews 7:25, Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.
- Revelation 8:3-5, Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to offer, with the prayers of all God’s people, on the golden altar in front of the throne. 4 The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of God’s people, went up before God from the angel’s hand. 5 Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and hurled it on the earth; and there came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning and an earthquake.

Jesus is entirely God and fully man who rose victoriously from death and ascended to God’s right hand, now serving as our intercessor.

Qur’anic Isa Was Created Like Any Other Human.

The Qur’an and Hadith pictures created Isa like any other human. The Qur’an clarifies that Isa was created like any other mortal and was not the son of Allah. The Qur’an states that Isa was created by Allah’s command through Angel Gabriel, “Be!” and that he was given the power of speech and knowledge at birth. According to the Qur’an, Allah designated Isa (Jesus) as a messenger and gave them miraculous abilities as evidence of his divine purpose. According to historical accounts, it has been reported that he could heal the infirm and restore life to the deceased, in addition to demonstrating numerous other displays of extraordinary power. However, it is essential to note that these remarkable feats were attributed to him as an individual existing within human experience. According to the teachings of the

Qur'an, Isa is regarded as a prophet and a messenger who was explicitly sent to the Children of Israel. He was dispatched to instruct them about the monotheistic deity and caution them regarding the veneration of idols and engagement in immoral behavior. According to the Qur'an, it is mentioned that Isa (Jesus) was bestowed with the Injil, also known as the Gospel, to impart knowledge to the people. The Qur'an explicitly states that Isa (Jesus) was not divine and that he was brought into being like other human beings. The individual in question was dispatched to humanity as a divine emissary tasked with conveying God's intentions and providing guidance. This individual has a position of great reverence among adherents of the Islamic faith across the globe. He exemplifies piety and obedience to Allah as a significant role model for all adherents. There are several Qur'anic verses which support the humanness of Isa, as noted in the following verses:

- Qur'an 3:59-60, "The similitude of Jesus before Allah is as that of Adam; He created him from dust, then said to him: "Be". And he was. 60. The Truth (comes) from Allah alone; so be not of those who doubt.
- Sahih Al-Bukhari 6:236, "So they will go to Jesus and say, 'O Jesus! You are Allah's Apostle and His Word which He sent to Mary, and a superior soul created by Him, and you talked to the people while still young in the cradle."

Islam holds a Christological error that Jesus was created. The Bible presents Jesus, who was never created, in the following verses:

- John 1:1-3, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.
- John 8:58, "Very truly I tell you," Jesus answered, before Abraham was born, I am!
- John 10:30, I and the Father are one.
- Colossians 2:9, For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.

The Pre-existence of the Biblical Jesus

The Biblical view of Jesus, unlike the Qur'an, is that he was not created. The concept of Jesus' pre-existence with God is one of the most essential aspects of Christian theology. This doctrine includes the belief that Jesus existed before He came to the earth as a human being and before His birth in Bethlehem (John 8:23, 33, 42,56-58). It is a foundational belief of the Christian faith, as it is an essential part of the Christian understanding of the Trinity—the belief that God exists as three persons in one—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The doctrine of Jesus' pre-existence with God is found in several passages of the Bible, most notably in the Gospel of John. In John 1:1, it states: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This passage is one of the most precise and most concise affirmations of Jesus' pre-existence. It declares that Jesus has always existed with God, and that He is God. The Bible presents the pre-existence of Jesus well in John 10:30: "I and the Father are one." Several verses in the Bible talk about the pre-existence of Jesus, noted here below:

- John 1:18, No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.
- John 3:13, No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man.
- John 6:38, 51, For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. 51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.
- John 8:23, 33, 42,56-58, 23 But he continued, You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. 33 They answered him, “We are Abraham’s descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?” 42 Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I have come here from God. I have not come on my own; God sent me. 56 Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.” 57 You are not yet fifty years old,” they said to him, “and you have seen Abraham!” 58 “truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, I am!”
- John 17:5, And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.
- John 17:24, Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.
- Colossians 1:15, The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.
- Hebrews 1:2-3, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. 3 The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.
- 1 John 1:1-2, That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. 2 The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us.
- Revelation 1:17-18, When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. 18 I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.
- Revelation 2:8, To the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These are the words of him who is the First and the Last, who died and came to life again.
- Revelation 22:13, I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.
- Isaiah 9:6, For to us a child is born,
  to us a son is given,

and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace

- Micah 5:2, “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans of Judah,
out of you will come for me
one who will be ruler over Israel,
whose origins are from of old,
from ancient times.”

Jesus’ pre-existence was well understood in the early church. For instance, Colossians 1:17, states: “He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.” This passage affirms that Jesus has always existed with God and is the source of creation and its sustenance. The book of Philippians (2:6-7) states: “6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.” This passage speaks of Jesus’ willingness to take on human form while still being one with God. The doctrine of Jesus’ pre-existence is also supported by the teachings of the early Church Fathers, such as Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Clement of Alexandria. These Church Fathers all affirmed that Jesus was fully human and divine. They also taught that Jesus existed before His birth in Bethlehem and that He was the one who created the world. The doctrine of Jesus’ pre-existence is essential to the Christian faith.

Qur’anic Isa is not the Head of the Universal Church.

The Qur’an emphasizes Isa, his mother, Mary, and his significance within the Islamic faith. The veneration of Isa in Islam is well acknowledged. However, considerable scholarly discourse surrounds his position within the faith, specifically about his role as the leader of the universal church. The Islamic perspective on Isa (Jesus) and its portrayal in the Qur’an does not align with the concept that he holds the position of the leader of the worldwide church. The Qur’an explicitly states that Isa holds a position of great reverence within the Islamic faith. The individual in question is characterized as a divine emissary of Allah, tasked with disseminating advice to the global populace.

Additionally, it has been asserted that he possesses unique attributes, like serving as a symbol for the entirety of humanity and exhibiting the ability to execute extraordinary feats. Moreover, he is commonly recognized as “the Word of Allah” and “the Spirit of Allah.” However, it should be noted that according to the Qur’an, Isa (Jesus) does not hold the position of the head of the church.

The Qur’an does not support the notion that Isa is the head of the universal church. The Qur’an explicitly states that he is only a prophet and messenger of Allah, not the head of a church or any other religious organization. For example, in Qur’an 3:32, it is stated that Isa was not more than a messenger. This verse

indicates that Isa is not the head of the universal church and is only a messenger of Allah given some powers. For example, Isa appears to make miracles, as noted in Qur'an 3:49,

- Qur'an 3:49, and ˹make him˺ a messenger to the Children of Israel ˹to proclaim,˺ 'I have come to you with a sign from your Lord: I will make for you a bird from clay, breathe into it, and it will become a ˹real˺ bird—by Allah's Will. I will heal the blind and the leper and raise the dead to life—by Allah's Will. And I will prophesize what you eat and store in your houses. Surely in this is a sign for you if you ˹truly˺ believe.

The above verse indicates that Isa was not given the power to change or create laws but to perform miracles. In essence, the Qur'an does not acknowledge Isa as the head of the universal church but a prophet, just like any other. Altogether, the Qur'an is silent on church matters.

Biblical Jesus is the Head of the Universal Church

The Bible clearly states that Jesus is the head of the Church. From the very beginning of the New Testament, Jesus is presented as the head of the Church. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus commissions the disciples to make disciples of all nations in the following words:

- Matthew 28:18-20, Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

It is clear from this passage that Jesus is the one who is sending out the disciples to spread the good news of salvation and to build His Church. The book of Ephesians (1:20-23) emphasizes that Jesus is the head of the Church in the following words:

- Ephesians 1:20-23, He exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, 21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. 22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

This passage clarifies that Jesus is the ultimate authority in the Church, with all the authority to lead and guide the Church. The Bible also speaks of Jesus's relationship with the Church regarding marriage. In the book of Revelation (19:7-8), we learn:

- Revelation 19:7-8, Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. 8 Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear. (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God's holy people.)

The Bible presents Jesus as the bridegroom of the Church, the one who is united figuratively in a covenantal marriage with the Church and is the head of the Church. The Bible further states that Jesus is the head of the Church in a more general sense. The Book of Colossians writes, "And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent (1:18)." This passage emphasizes Jesus's preeminent position over the Church, the one who has the ultimate authority and is the head of the Church.

Jesus, out of obedience to the Father, came for the redemption of his people. Jesus Christ, through his atoning sacrifice, shed his blood for the church (Acts 20:28). The Book of Acts 20:28 says, "Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his blood." The universal church is so united in Jesus and rightly called his body. The Book of 1 Corinthians 12:27 writes, "Now you are the body of Christ, and each of you is a part of it." Jesus Christ watches the church perfectly, just as a husband would his wife. The Epistle of Ephesians states, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her (5:25-30)." The Bible is clear that Jesus is the head of the Church. He is the one who commissions the disciples to spread the good news of salvation and build the Church. He is the bridegroom of the Church, united to it in a marriage covenant. He also has all authority over the Church and is the preeminent head of the Church. As believers, one must recognize Jesus as the head of the Church and submit to His authority.

Muhammad Surpasses the Qur'anic Isa

The figure of Isa in the Qur'an holds significant relevance within the Islamic faith. It is widely held that he is regarded as a prophet and emissary of Allah, dispatched to guide the descendants of Israel. He is perceived as a harbinger of benevolence and harmony, and his doctrines are purported to serve as a wellspring of spiritual direction for adherents of Islam. However, within the Islamic religion, the significance and value of Prophet Muhammad outweigh that of the Qur'anic Isa. In Islamic doctrine, it is essential to acknowledge that Isa (Jesus) and Prophet Muhammad are regarded as prophets. However, Prophet Muhammad holds a distinct position as the ultimate messenger of Allah and is revered as the epitome of human virtue and conduct. The reason behind this belief stems from the notion that Prophet Muhammad is perceived to have received the ultimate divine revelation from Allah, thereby accomplishing the task of refining the teachings of preceding prophets, including Isa. Prophet Muhammad is often regarded as the preeminent figure and spiritual leader of the Islamic faith, possessing the highest level of authority within its framework. Moreover, the Qur'an asserts that Muhammad has the exclusive authority to issue judgments and expound upon Islamic jurisprudence and

topics of religious observance. This further underscores the importance of Muhammad, as he can provide genuine and precise instruction on these topics.

On the other hand, Isa is not perceived to possess equivalent power in this context. Moreover, Muhammad is widely regarded as a significant figure due to the impact of his activities and the exemplary nature of his conduct. He is regarded as an exemplary individual, embodying the ideals of human conduct by adhering to the teachings of Allah and leading a devout existence. His example is regarded as a paradigm for adherence among Muslims, and he is widely regarded as an exemplar for the entirety of humankind. Therefore, his significance and pertinence in the Islamic faith greatly exceed Isa's. According to Islamic teachings, as stated in the Qur'an, the prophetic function of Muhammad is considered more significant than that of Isa (Jesus) in the Bible. According to the teachings of the Qur'an, Muhammad is regarded as the ultimate and final prophet, signifying the completion of prophethood. The Qur'an (33:40) says, Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but is the Messenger of Allah and the seal of the prophets. And Allah has ˹perfect˺ knowledge of all things.

Contrast Between Qur'anic Isa and Biblical Jesus

Examining the parallels and differences between the portrayal of Isa in the Qur'an and Jesus in the Bible has been a topic of scholarly discourse spanning numerous centuries. The Qur'an does not provide a comprehensive narrative of Jesus' life and death but primarily emphasizes his prophetic role. According to the Qur'an, Jesus is portrayed as a divine messenger commissioned by Allah to revitalize the religious beliefs of the Children of Israel and reinstate the Abrahamic faith. The purpose of his mission was to disseminate the doctrine of monotheism and to exhort the populace of Israel to engage in the worship of the singular, supreme deity. On the contrary, the Bible portrays Jesus as the divine Son of God, who was dispatched to deliver humanity from the perils of sin and mortality. The individual in question is shown as a celestial entity, exhibiting extraordinary abilities and finally undergoing crucifixion due to his convictions.

The portrayal of Isa in the Qur'an is that of a prophetic character rather than a divine one. The individual in question is depicted as a human being entrusted with conveying a communication from Allah. The individual in question is characterized as a devout adherent of the Islamic faith, demonstrating humility and servitude towards Allah while displaying unwavering obedience and respect towards his assigned duties and responsibilities. Furthermore, he is shown as someone with profound intelligence, adept at deciphering sacred texts and offering counsel to his adherents. In contrast, the biblical narrative presents Jesus as a transcendent entity, identified as the Son of God, whose purpose is to deliver humanity from its plight. The individual in question engages in miraculous acts to showcase his divine authority, ultimately sacrificing his own life to expiate humankind's transgressions.

The Biblical and Qur'anic narratives of Jesus diverge in their perspectives on his mission and objectives. The Qur'anic portrayal of Isa involves his divine mission

to summon the people of Israel to worship the singular and supreme deity, Allah, while simultaneously seeking to reinstate the religious principles and beliefs first espoused by Abraham. The portrayal of the individual does not emphasize their role as a savior. Instead, it positions them as a messenger entrusted with disseminating the doctrine of monotheism among the populace. In contrast, the portrayal of Jesus in the Bible depicts him as a divine entity dispatched to deliver humanity from the consequences of sin and mortality. His primary role is to provide redemption for human transgressions through atonement. The portrayal of Jesus in the Bible cannot be altered or modified to align with the depiction of Islamic Isa.

Qur'anic Isa is not the Ultimate Moral Example for Humanity.

The Qur'an claims Muhammad is the mirror of human morality as noted in the Qur'an (33:21), "Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example for whoever has hope in Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah often)." The teaching confirms that Muhammad is superior to Isa in terms of morality. On the contrary, the Bible teaches that Jesus is unmatched regarding moral absolutes. The Qur'an does not depict Isa as a morally perfect being. For example, the Qur'an states that Isa was human and could make mistakes like any other human. In one passage, Allah tells Isa,

- Qur'an 3:55, ˹Remember˺ when Allah said, O Jesus! I will take you and raise you up to Myself. I will deliver you from those who disbelieve, and elevate your followers above the disbelievers until the Day of Judgment. Then to Me you will ˹all˺ return, and I will settle all your disputes.

In this passage, Allah acknowledges that Isa could potentially make mistakes that must be corrected. It implies that Isa was not infallible and could potentially sin, just like any other human. The Qur'an does not present Isa as a perfect, sinless being who can serve as a moral example for all humanity. The Bible says, "The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him (John 8:29)." The Book of Hebrews states, "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin (4:15)." The Book of Luke writes, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God (1:35)." The above verses teach that Jesus and the father are one. Jesus' morality mirrors God in every way, and thus, the ultimate moral example of humanity.

There exists a notable disparity between the teachings and actions of Jesus/Isa as depicted in the Bible and the Qur'an. A significant disparity may be observed between the portrayal of Jesus in the Qur'an and the Bible. Upon engaging with the portrayal of Jesus in the Qur'an, it becomes evident that the character depicted therein diverges significantly from the biblical representation. The portrayal of Isa in the Qur'an can be seen as a fictional character intertwined with elements of pagan conjecture. Upon examining the diverse teachings of Isa in the Qur'an, it becomes evident that a significant disparity exists concerning the fundamental

principles expounded in the purpose, nature, and actions of Jesus Christ. Fundamentally, the Qur'an's Isa (Jesus) depicted does not possess a salvific purpose aimed at rescuing humanity.

CHAPTER NINE

CHRISTIAN AND ISLAMIC MISSIOLOGY CONTRASTED

Qur'anic and Biblical Missiology

The Qur'an and the Bible view missiology differently in the various verses. This chapter will explore the missiology of both religions as found in the scriptures embedded in their religious beliefs and practices.

Missiology of Islam and Christianity

A notable distinction between Islamic and Christian missiology lies in their respective approaches towards proselytization. Christianity has historically placed significant importance on evangelism, which involves aggressively pursuing the conversion of individuals to Christianity. The concept of spreading the teachings of Jesus to people of all nations can be observed in the Great Commission, as depicted in the Biblical passage of Matthew 28:19, where Jesus instructs his disciples to actively engage in converting others into devoted followers. Throughout its history, the church has consistently demonstrated a pronounced focus on mission work, actively endeavoring to engage in evangelistic endeavors to convert others. These efforts encompass several methods, including preaching, disseminating literature, and organizing open-air and revival meetings. In contrast, Islam often focuses less on assertive proselytization and prioritizes embodying a morally upright and virtuous existence to influence others.

- Matthew 28:19, Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Islam and Christianity emphasize disseminating their respective religious beliefs to a global audience. The Islamic faith includes the concept of mission, known as da'wah, which originates in the Qur'an. According to the Qur'an (10:25), it is incumbent upon all Muslims to disseminate and invite others to embrace the Islamic faith. The Prophet Muhammad is seen as an exemplar of this endeavor since he disseminated the teachings of Islam throughout the Arabian Peninsula. The primary objective of the Islamic mission encompasses the conversion of individuals who do not adhere to the Islamic faith and the reinforcement of the faith of current adherents. Therefore, the primary focus of the Islamic mission revolves around spiritual affairs rather than the transformation of society.

On the other hand, Christianity adopts a comprehensive perspective towards mission. In addition to emphasizing the conversion of non-believers, Christianity also places significant importance on effecting social reform. The Christian mission entails a commitment to societal transformation, emphasizing the amelioration of poverty, the promotion of justice, and the confrontation of injustice. The foundation of this mission is deeply embedded in the teachings of Jesus, who exhorted his disciples to actively engage in the service of individuals experiencing poverty and social exclusion. The Christian mission encompasses a dual spiritual and social

development objective, including converting individuals who do not adhere to the Christian faith. The following are some verses on Islamic mission:

- Qur'an 3:104, Let there be a group among you who call ˹others˺ to goodness, encourage what is good, and forbid what is evil—it is they who will be successful.
- Qur'an 10:22, 25, He is the One Who enables you to travel through land and sea. And it so happens that you are on ships, sailing with a favorable wind, to the passengers' delight. Suddenly, the ships are overcome by a gale wind and those on board are overwhelmed by waves from every side, and they assume they are doomed. They cry out to Allah ˹alone˺ in sincere devotion, "If You save us from this, we will certainly be grateful." 25 And Allah invites ˹all˺ to the Home of Peace and guides whomever He wills to the Straight Path.
- Qur'an 57:8, Why do you not believe in Allah while the Messenger is inviting you to have faith in your Lord, although He has already taken your covenant,1 if you will ever believe.

The Bible is very articulative in how it approaches mission. The following verses support the Biblical mission:

- Matthew 24:14, And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.
- Matthew 28:18-20, Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."
- Mark 13:10, And the gospel must first be preached to all nations.
- Acts 1:8, But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."
- Acts 13:47, For this is what the Lord has commanded us: "I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth."
- Romans 10:13-14, 13 for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."
- 14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?
- Revelation 14:6, Then I saw another angel flying in mid-air, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language and people.

In terms of mission methodology, Islam and Christianity differ. Islamic mission primarily focuses on personal conversion, achieved through preaching, persuasion, and debate. Qur'anic injunction is to "invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction and argue with them in a way that is best (Qur'an 16:125)." Islamic missions are often focused on the conversion of non-believers rather than the

strengthening of existing believers. In contrast, the Christian mission focuses on conversion and social transformation. Christian mission often involves the use of service and education, as well as direct evangelism.

Islam and Christianity have been accused of missions coupled with violence and coercion in some way or the other. Some denominations in the Christian faith have been accused of using violence and coercion in missions. In general, during medieval history, Christianity showed some aggression in its mission. In the public domain, Islamic conquest and medieval crusades used violence in their mission. Furthermore, Islamic history has some verses which, when verbatim interpreted, justify the use of violence to spread the faith or to defend against perceived threats to the Muslim community. However, most Muslims today reject the use of violence in the name of Islam and argue that it goes against the principles of their religion. Qur'anic prohibition on forced conversion states, "there is no compulsion in religion" (Qur'an 2:256). Other portions of Islamic teachings encourage followers to convert or kill unbelievers. The following verses support the ideology of Islamic violence:

- Qur'an 9:5, But once the Sacred Months have passed, kill the polytheists ˹who violated their treaties˺ wherever you find them, capture them, besiege them, and lie in wait for them on every way. But if they repent, perform prayers, and pay alms-tax, then set them free. Indeed, Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.
- Qur'an 9:29-30, Fight those who do not believe in Allah and the Last Day, nor comply with what Allah and His Messenger have forbidden, nor embrace the religion of truth from among those who were given the Scripture, until they pay the tax, willingly submitting, fully humbled. 30 The Jews say, "Ezra is the son of Allah," while the Christians say, "The Messiah is the son of Allah." Such are their baseless assertions, only parroting the words of earlier disbelievers. May Allah condemn them! How can they be deluded ˹from the truth˺?
- Qur'an 47:4, So when you meet the disbelievers ˹in battle˺, strike ˹their˺ necks until you have thoroughly subdued them, then bind them firmly. Later ˹free them either as˺ an act of grace or by ransom until the war comes to an end. So will it be. Had Allah willed, He ˹Himself˺ could have inflicted punishment on them. But He does ˹this only to˺ test some of you by means of others. And those who are martyred in the cause of Allah, He will never render their deeds void.

Islam and Christianity share the same objective of disseminating their teachings and proselytizing individuals to adopt their respective faiths despite notable variations in their methods of missiology. Both religions have a lengthy historical record of employing violence and compulsion in their pursuit despite their overarching emphasis on peaceful persuasion. The two religions exhibit disparities concerning their ultimate objectives. The mission's primary objective for adherents of Islam is to guide individuals towards embracing the authentic principles and beliefs of the Islamic faith. The objective is to establish a cohesive community of adherents known as umma, who will faithfully adhere to the teachings of the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad. In contrast, the objective of the Christian mission is to facilitate the acquisition of a redemptive understanding of Jesus Christ among individuals. As

mentioned earlier, the objective is frequently regarded as a comprehensive aspiration, encompassing the metamorphosis of both individual livelihoods and the broader societal context.

The Bible is consistent in its teaching of how to spread the good news. The Bible forbids Christians from violence and hatred in the following verses:

- Matthew 5:38-44, “You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ 39 But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. 40 And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. 41 If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. 42 Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you. 43 ” You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ 44 But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

Further, Christians are called to love their enemies. The gospel, according to Luke, states,

- Luke 6:35, But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.

Christians are admonished to display the fruit of the Spirit in their lives. The letter to the Galatians teaches the following:

- Galatians 5:22-23, But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness
- self-control; against such things there is no law.

Christians know that Jesus’s teaching of his kingdom differs from the earthly one. The following verses state that:

- John 18:36, Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.

The book of Mark 16:15 says, “And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.” A similar view is taught in the book of Matthew 24:14, “And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will.” The crown of the Christian mission is well stipulated in Revelation in the following words:

- Revelation 19:11–16: Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness, he judges and makes war. 12 His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. 13 He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. 14 And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. 15 From his mouth

> comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. 16 On his robe and on his thigh, he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

Religious Violence and Coercion in the Islamic Faith

Islam is a monotheistic religion that centers around the fundamental belief in the existence of Allah, the supreme deity, and the prophethood of Muhammad. This religion has a long-standing history spanning several centuries, with its doctrines being adhered to by a substantial global population exceeding one billion individuals. Following Islamic teachings, the primary objective of Islam is to establish peace and justice for humanity. However, specific instances of extremist behavior, often associated with individuals who identify as radicalized Muslims, have been linked to several crimes occurring in the contemporary world. Furthermore, instances have arisen wherein acts of violence and compulsion have been perpetrated under the guise of Islam. This phenomenon can be attributed to specific individuals who have assumed the responsibility of imposing their understanding of Islamic doctrines using compulsion and coercion. In several instances, this phenomenon manifests itself in acts of terrorism or the targeted mistreatment of individuals who do not adhere to the Islamic faith. The presence of violence and coercion within Islamic missions can be attributed, in part, to the misreading of certain Islamic principles. Instances have arisen when extremist interpretations of Islamic doctrines about Jihad, sometimes called holy war, have been employed to rationalize acts of terrorism. In certain instances, the association of violence and compulsion with Islam has arisen due to a misreading of its teachings. Another factor contributing to the conflation of political environment and religious practices in Islamic missions is the presence of overlapping elements. In many nations, the prevailing political climate has led to instances where individuals resort to acts of violence and coercion to impose their understanding of Islamic doctrines.

Certain verses in the Qur’an include inherent elements of violence and coercion. The Qur’an references suicidal bombings, beheadings of proselyte Muslims, and honour killings. Certain verses throughout the Qur’an exhibit a peaceful nature, while others appear to endorse or justify acts of violence. The Islamic mission is founded upon the fundamental principle of da’wa, which entails inviting individuals to embrace the Islamic faith. The notion of individual autonomy is commonly upheld, asserting that individuals should be free to determine their life trajectories without being subjected to any form of compulsion to embrace the Islamic faith.

Nevertheless, many Islamic factions have historically resorted to acts of violence and compulsion, which persist in some areas of the world. This phenomenon has generated a lasting inheritance of skepticism and hostility among diverse religious and ethnic factions. Consequently, several Islamic factions have used violence to disseminate their ideology and enforce their convictions upon others. One further concern pertains to the predicament linked to Islamic religious extremists who interpret the Qur’an in a manner that advocates using violence to

propagate their religious beliefs. The interpretations above are derived from a literal comprehension of specific verses from the Qur'an and hadith. These interpretations propagate the notion that violence and coercion are permissible in propagating religious beliefs. There have been allegations regarding specific political and economic reasons implicated in the instigation of violence and the exertion of compulsion. In certain regions across the globe, Islamic factions have managed to acquire authority and exert influence due to prevailing governmental instability or economic disparities. Subsequently, individuals possessing such authority can employ it to disseminate their religious doctrine via coercion and intimidation. Islamic groups have encountered violence and coercion perpetrated by religious or political factions in certain instances. Consequently, this phenomenon has engendered a perception of victimization, prompting a proclivity to retaliate and disseminate their convictions by any available means.

Religious Violence and Coercion in the Christian Faith

The concept of Christian mission entails actively disseminating the principles and doctrines of the Christian faith. The primary emphasis lies in disseminating the gospel, also referred to as the "good news," about the teachings and life of Jesus Christ. Additionally, it aims to foster a profound bond between the ecclesiastical institution and its adherents. The implementation of service achieves this through the utilization of public speaking skills and the execution of acts of evangelism. While Christian mission has its roots in the New Testament and the early church, it has developed over the years, and today, it is generally done through outreach initiatives, such as mission trips and community-building projects. Christianity is characterized by its emphasis on peace and love, with teachings that discourage violence and coercion. Christianity promotes the cultivation of a virtuous existence characterized by acts of compassion, mercy, and kindness, as well as the adherence to the principle of treating others in a manner consistent with one's own desired treatment (Matthew 7:12; Galatians 5:16-22). Christianity also teaches that each person is valuable and worthy of respect, regardless of race, gender, or religion, as written in the following verses:

- Matthew 7:12, So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.
- 1 Corinthians 12:13, For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.
- Galatians 3:28, There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.
- Galatians 5:16-22, So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19 The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred,

discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

- Colossians 3:11, Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

The Bible speaks out against the use of violence for religious conversion. Jesus said people should love their enemies and pray for those persecuting them (Matthew 5:43-45). The Bible speaks out against violence, saying, “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (Romans 12:21). The Christian mission also focuses on teaching and preaching the gospel, not forcing people to accept it. Christianity encourages people to come to faith in their own time, as the Bible states, “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God” (Ephesians 2:8). Christianity does not advocate for the use of violence or coercion to convert people, but rather for a peaceful, respectful dialogue. Violence and coercion have no place in Christian missions. Christianity is based on love and mercy, not violence or coercion. It encourages people to treat others respectfully and come to faith in their own time. Therefore, the Christian mission should be based on dialogue, understanding, and love, not violence or coercion. The following verses teach how to deal with those who persecute others in the name of God:

- Matthew 5:43-45, You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ 44 But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.
- Luke 6:27-28, But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.
- Luke 6:35, But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.
- Luke 23:34, Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.
- John 13:34, A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.
- Romans 12:14,17-21, Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. 16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. 17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. 18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. 19 Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord. 20 On the contrary:

“If your enemy is hungry, feed him;
if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.
In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.”
21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

- 1 Corinthians 4:12, We work hard with our own hands. When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it;
- 2 Timothy 3:12, In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,
- 1 Peter 3:9, Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.

CHAPTER TEN

SALVATION IN BOTH THE QUR'AN AND BIBLE

Quranic and Biblical View of Salvation

The concept of salvation holds significant importance in the teachings of both the Qur'an and the Bible. Within the Islamic faith, salvation pertains to the transformative journey via which an individual is liberated from the impending retribution in the hereafter, enabling their admittance into Paradise or Jannah. This state of deliverance is exclusively contingent upon the individual's adherence to virtuous deeds, as espoused by the teachings of Prophet Muhammad. Within Christianity, salvation refers to the transformative journey during which an individual is absolved of their sins and gains access to the eternal realm of Heaven. This profound spiritual transformation is contingent entirely upon an individual's unwavering faith in the redemptive power of Jesus Christ. Although certain commonalities are observed in the teachings about salvation, it is also noteworthy that notable distinctions exist between the two. According to the teachings of the Qur'an, attaining redemption is contingent upon one's faith in Allah and adherence to His divine instructions. As per the teachings of the Qur'an, it is said that Allah can grant forgiveness to individuals who express remorse for their transgressions and exhibit a sincere commitment to embracing Him by faith. According to the Qur'an, admission to Paradise is contingent upon one's faith, righteous actions, and the benevolence of Allah. In the Islamic faith, the ultimate determination of salvation is contingent upon the will of Allah. The Bible's redemption concept revolves around the belief in Jesus as the divine Son of God and the reliance on His redemptive crucifixion. Based on biblical teachings, the crucifixion of Jesus is understood to have served as a means of atonement for humanity's transgressions, providing the opportunity for forgiveness and everlasting redemption through faith in him alone (Ephesians 2:8). According to biblical teachings, the concept of salvation is extended to individuals who demonstrate faith in Jesus and acknowledge Him as their divine authority and redeemer. The determination of an individual's salvation in Christianity is ultimately contingent upon their faith and their reaction to the divine grace bestowed upon them by God.

- Ephesians 2:8, For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.

The two predominant religious traditions maintain the belief that redemption is accessible to all individuals. However, each perspective depends on the methods employed to attain that objective. The essential themes of salvation, hope, eternal life, resurrections, and final judgment are present in the Qur'an and the Bible. There is discernible and incongruous pedagogy throughout the two religious systems. While the Bible attributes salvation to Jesus, the Qur'an asserts that Isa cannot bring salvation. He does not possess the characteristics of Allah, nor does he claim to be the Son of Allah. Isa, sometimes known as Jesus, was a prophet. The Qur'an imparts the teaching that Allah does not engage in the act of procreation. It hence cannot own a son, as stated in Qur'an 112:3. While the Qur'an describes Isa as

being sent by Allah without a salvific role, the Bible explicitly emphasizes that salvation is attained via Jesus, who took on human form.

Biblical and Islamic View of Jesus' First Coming

According to Biblical teachings, Jesus is identified as the divine Son of God who incarnated as a human person to fulfill a salvific plan. The Bible encompasses Jesus' birth, life, and teachings. According to the New Testament, Jesus is believed to have come to fulfill the prophecies taught in the Old Testament. The biblical text contains prophecies about the advent of Jesus as the Messiah, regarded as the savior of humanity on a global scale. The Bible contains a collection of prophecies fulfilled in the first coming of Jesus, who is seen as the personification of God's love and grace.

According to Islamic doctrine, Isa is regarded as a prophet and messenger of Allah. In contrast to the belief in Jesus as the Son of God who was crucified to redeem human sins, Islam espouses the teaching that Isa was not divine and did not undergo crucifixion to expel human transgressions. In Islamic tradition, it is believed that Isa ascended to heaven by Allah before his demise, and it is anticipated that he will reappear on earth during the final era to vanquish the Antichrist and initiate the day of judgment. In contrast, the biblical narrative portrays Jesus' initial arrival as a modest and unassuming occurrence, diverging from the anticipated magnificence and authority typically associated with the second coming of the Son of God (Revelation 22:20). The birth of Jesus took place in a stable located in Bethlehem, where he was afterwards placed in a manger, a receptacle used for feeding animals. The lack of available accommodations in the inn necessitated this arrangement. This modest commencement aligns with the principles espoused by Jesus, who promoted the virtues of humility, compassion, and altruistic affection towards fellow individuals. The ministry of Jesus, as documented in the New Testament, was distinguished by the performance of miracles, acts of healing, and the delivery of teachings that posed challenges to the religious leaders of his era. He preached a message of love, forgiveness, and salvation and instructed his disciples to follow the example of God's love and grace. Contrary to the teachings presented in the Qur'an, it is believed that Jesus underwent death, experienced resurrection on the third day, and is anticipated to make a future return. The following verses write about the second coming of Jesus:

- Matthew 16:27, For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done.
- 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

- Hebrews 9:28, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.
- Revelation 1:7, “Look, he is coming with the clouds,” and “every eye will see him,
  even those who pierced him,” and all peoples on earth “will mourn because of him.”
  So shall it be! Amen
- Revelation 3:11, I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.
- Revelation 22:20, He who testifies to these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon.”
  Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

The advent of Jesus holds significant importance within the Christian and Islamic religious traditions. According to biblical teachings, Jesus is seen as the divinely designated Messiah, embodying the fulfillment of God’s covenant to liberate humanity from the consequences of sin and mortality. The Islamic faith regards Isa as a prophet and envoy of Allah who was dispatched to guide the people of Israel towards adherence to the Torah principles and foster global harmony and equity. According to biblical teachings, Jesus is regarded as the divine Son of God, who was purposefully dispatched to the earthly realm to redeem humanity from their transgressions. The individual in question is characterized as the “Lamb of God” who assumes the responsibility of absolving the transgressions of humanity (John 1:29). The individual in question is commonly identified as the “Messiah” according to Isaiah 9:6 and is also recognized as the “Prince of Peace” in the same verse. Jesus is depicted as a celestial entity endowed with the ability to manifest extraordinary phenomena, including restoring health to the infirm, pacifying tempestuous weather patterns, and reviving deceased individuals. The Bible also references the Resurrection of Jesus, which is interpreted as a symbol of God’s ultimate triumph over mortality and transgression.

On the contrary, Islamic tradition holds that Isa (Jesus) was born to a virgin and is regarded as a divine prophet sent explicitly to the Israelites. According to popular belief, he was purportedly endowed with the capacity to manifest extraordinary phenomena, including the restoration of health to the infirm, restoration of sight to the visually impaired, and resurrection of deceased individuals. Isa is regarded as a prophet of Allah who was sent to promote peace and justice in the world without any association with divinity. Biblical and Islamic traditions assign significant significance to the initial arrival of Jesus and perceive him as a pivotal figure in the narrative of redemption. Significant disparities exist between the two faiths in their interpretations of Jesus’ function and significance as a messiah. The Following verses talk about Jesus’ role as a messiah:

- John 1:29, The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

- Isaiah 9:6, For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- Psalm 118:25–26, Lord, save us! Lord, grant us success! 26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. From the house of the Lord we bless you.
- Matt. 21:9, 15, The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,
  “Hosanna to the Son of David!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”
  Hosanna in the highest heaven! 15 But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple courts, “Hosanna to the Son of David,” they were indignant.
- Mark 11:9–10, Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted,
  “Hosanna!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” 10 “Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!” “Hosanna in the highest heaven!”
- John 12:13, They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting,
  “Hosanna!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Blessed is the king of Israel!”

Comparing the Qur’anic and Biblical Story of John the Baptist’s Birth

The Qur’an tries to explore the Biblical prophecies of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus. The following verses speak about the coming of John the Baptist:

- Qur’an 3: 38-47, Then and there Zachariah prayed to his Lord, saying, “My Lord! Grant me—by your grace—righteous offspring. You are certainly the Hearer of ˹all˺ prayers.” 39 So the angels called out to him while he stood praying in the sanctuary, “Allah gives you good news of ˹the birth of˺ John who will confirm the Word of Allah and will be a great leader, chaste, and a prophet among the righteous.” 40 Zachariah exclaimed, “My Lord! How can I have a son when I am very old and my wife is barren?” He replied, “So will it be. Allah does what He wills.” 41 Zachariah said, “My Lord! Grant me a sign.” He said, “Your sign is that you will not ˹be able to˺ speak to people for three days except through gestures. Remember your Lord often and glorify ˹Him˺ morning and evening.” 42 And ˹remember˺ when the angels said, “O Mary! Surely Allah has selected you, purified you, and chosen you over all women of the world. 43 O Mary! Be devout to your Lord, prostrate yourself ˹in prayer˺ and bow along with those who bow down.” 44 This is news of the unseen that We reveal to you ˹O Prophet˺. You were not with them when they cast lots to decide who would be Mary’s guardian, nor were you there when they argued ˹about it˺. 45 ˹Remember˺ when the angels proclaimed, “O Mary! Allah gives you good news of a Word from Him, his name will be the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary; honoured in this world and the Hereafter, and he will be one of those nearest ˹to Allah˺. 46 And he will speak to people in ˹his˺ infancy and adulthood and will be one of the righteous.” 47 Mary wondered, “My Lord!

How can I have a child when no man has ever touched me?” An angel replied, “So will it be. Allah creates what He wills. When He decrees a matter, He simply tells it, ‘Be!’ And it is! 48 And Allah will teach him writing and wisdom, the Torah and the Gospel,

Comparing the Biblical and Qur’anic Views of the Story of Zechariah

The Qur’anic angel visitation of Zechariah, John, the Baptist father and the Bible appear to carry a similar story but with variations. In the Qur’an (3:41), Zechariah was muted for three days, but in the Bible, it was for a long time, as noted in Luke 1:20.

- Qur’an 3:41, Zachariah said, “My Lord! Grant me a sign.” He said, “Your sign is that you will not ˹be able to˺ speak to people for three days except through gestures. Remember your Lord often and glorify ˹Him˺ morning and evening.”
- Luke 1: 5-20, In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron. 6 Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord’s commands and decrees blamelessly. 7 But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old. 8 Once when Zechariah’s division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, 9 he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. 10 And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside. 11 Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. 12 When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. 13 But the angel said to him: “Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John. 14 He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, 15 for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. 16 He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. 17 And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” 18 Zechariah asked the angel, “How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years.” 19 The angel said to him, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. 20 And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time.”

Qur'anic Interpretation of Isa's First Coming

The idea is to be close to the Qur'anic simple view of Isa's first coming, not delving into theological controversies. The Qur'an teaches that Isa will be honored in this life and life to come. Let us observe the following verses in that connection. In the Qur'an 3:45, the angel proclaims Isa's first coming, while in the Qur'an 19:33, the resurrection of Isa is proclaimed or at least acknowledged.

- Qur'an 3:45, ˹Remember˺ when the angels proclaimed, O Mary! Allah gives you good news of a Word from Him, his name will be the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary; honored in this world and the Hereafter, and he will be one of those nearest ˹to Allah˺.
- Qur'an 19:33, Peace be upon me the day I was born, the day I die, and the day I will be raised back to life!

Biblical Interpretation of Jesus' First Coming

According to Christian doctrine, Jesus, identified as the Son of God, was divinely commissioned to descend to the earthly realm to deliver humanity from the consequences of sin. This belief is founded upon the exegetical understanding of Jesus' initial advent, as depicted in the Bible. The announcement of his birth was made by the celestial being known as angel Gabriel, who conveyed to the shepherds that the newborn was the highly anticipated Messiah, destined to deliver humanity from the burden of sin. During the period around the birth of Jesus, the Jewish population anticipated the emergence of a prominent figure who would assume a leadership role and liberate them from the subjugation imposed by the Roman Empire. On the other hand, Jesus assumed the role of a modest instructor and mender, disseminating a doctrine centered on affection, compassion, and harmony. The individual conveyed the teaching that the Kingdom of God is an inherent aspect of our being and advocated for pursuing a life in alignment with the divine intentions (Luke 17:20-21). In addition, he demonstrated many extraordinary phenomena, encompassing the restoration of health to the infirm, provision of sustenance to the undernourished, and revival of deceased individuals. According to biblical teachings, Jesus was sent to deliver humanity from the consequences of sin and mortality. Jesus atoned for our transgressions through his crucifixion and facilitated the opportunity for us to attain everlasting communion with the divine. Through his demise and subsequent revival, Jesus demonstrates to us that the love of God surpasses any anguish or adversity we may encounter during our earthly existence. According to Christian doctrine, Jesus, regarded as the divine Son of God, was purposefully dispatched to the earthly realm to deliver humanity from the consequences of sin. Significant disparities exist between the Qur'anic and Biblical interpretations of the first arrival of Jesus and the nature of his reign. See the following verse:

- Luke 17:20-21, Once, on being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed, 21 nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is in your midst."

The Biblical interpretation of Jesus' first coming, also known as the incarnation, is essential to Christian belief. The Bible narrates that Jesus is the begotten Son of God, and his mission is to save humans from sins. His first coming fulfilled the many prophecies in the Old Testament relating to messianic expectations. One of the most well-known prophecies about Jesus' first coming is found in the book of Isaiah, where it is written: "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6)." This passage is seen as a prediction of Jesus' birth, and the titles given to him (such as "Mighty God" and "Everlasting Father") are interpreted as evidence of his divinity.

Another significant facet of the Biblical interpretation of Jesus' initial arrival is the conviction that his purpose was to satisfy the requirements of the law and the prophets. In the New Testament, Jesus is frequently portrayed as the individual who accomplishes the prophetic expectations outlined in the Old Testament, facilitating the realization of God's overarching design for humanity. The notion that Jesus' mission encompassed more than merely the salvation of individuals from their sins but also aimed at achieving the ultimate redemption of the world is widely acknowledged. Furthermore, the initial arrival of Jesus also underscores his function as an instructor and an exemplar for individuals universally. In the Gospels, Jesus is portrayed as a sagacious and empathetic instructor who imparts teachings on the divine essence and the significance of leading a virtuous and benevolent existence. He is additionally seen as an exemplar of selflessness, as He freely offered His life on the crucifix to facilitate the attainment of redemption for humanity. In Christian theology, the Biblical interpretation of Jesus' initial arrival holds significant importance, serving as a pivotal element within the faith. This event is widely regarded as fulfilling crucial prophecies, facilitating the redemption of humanity and offering a paradigm for ethical conduct.

Various Bible verses inform us that Jesus is the way, the truth and life, and none comes to the Father unless through him. The early church understood no other form of salvation besides what Jesus brought. The following verses are in support of that claim:

- John 14:6 , Jesus said to him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.
- Acts 4:12, And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

The Bible points out that Jesus proclaimed his role in salvation very early in his ministry. He had informed his followers of his death and resurrection. Many people saw Jesus after his resurrection, amounting to more than five hundred (1 Corinthians 15:1-8). His followers saw him among other people. See the following verses:

- Mathew 12:39-40, But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40 For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of

the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth

- Luke 12:36, As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, “Peace to you!”
- Acts 1:3, He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.
- Acts 2:22-24, Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know— 23 this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. 24 God raised him up, losing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it
- 1 Corinthians 15:1-8, Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, 2 and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. 3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6 Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. 8 Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

No doubt, the Bible states that Jesus is the Word who became flesh and dwelt among us. We are told that Jesus is the rock in the Old Testament (Psalm 118:22-23). Any doctrine which rejects that the Word made flesh is a deceit (1 John 4:3). Read the following verse on who Jesus is:

- Matthew 21:42, Jesus said to them, Have you never read in the Scriptures:

‘The stone the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;
the Lord has done this,
and it is marvelous in our eyes’?

- John 1:1-4, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men.
- 1 Corinthians 10:4, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ.
- 1 Peter 2:7, Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, “The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,”
- 1 John 4:3, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.

- 2 John 7, For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist.
- Psalm 118:22-23, The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone;
  23 the LORD has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes.

Qur'anic Teaching Hell Fire

The Qur'an has several allusions to the notion of hellfire. The concept of hell is characterized as a realm of retribution for individuals who fail to adhere to the teachings of Allah and his prophet. The Qur'an repeatedly references the fire of Hell as a cautionary measure for individuals who fail to comply with the commands of Allah or adhere to His teachings. The Qur'an asserts that the fire of Hell constitutes an enduring and perpetual retribution for individuals who have transgressed against Allah, persisting until the Day of Judgment. The Qur'an not only references the infernal flames of Hell but also provides detailed depictions of its intensity, characterizing it as an intense and burning fire that is both searing and blazing. The Qur'an delineates the fire of Hell as a site of excruciating anguish and suffering for individuals who have defied the commands of Allah while also serving as a realm of just retribution for those who have engaged in severe transgressions. The Qur'an refers to this phenomenon as a "blazing fire" (Qur'an 3:131) that will inflict severe burns on the skin (Qur'an 4:56) of individuals who are deemed deserving of its punishment.

- Qur'an 3:131, Guard yourselves against the Fire prepared for the disbelievers.
- Qur'an 4:56, Surely those who reject Our signs, We will cast them into the Fire. Whenever their skin is burnt completely, We will replace it so they will ˹constantly˺ taste the punishment. Indeed, Allah is Almighty, All-Wise.

Moutasem Atiya depicts a photo of the imagination of how the fire of JAHANNAM will look from an Islamic perspective.[67] The most common name for hell in Islam is Jahannam, but there are other synonyms such as the fire, blazing fire, the abyss, the blaze, and that which breaks to pieces. The Qur'an present some characteristics of people who will be found in hell to include:[68]

- Disbelievers – these are those who don't believe in Allah
- Polytheists – these are people who believe in more than one god.
- All people who reject the truth
- People who persecute believers

[67]Moutasem Atiy, MV Media April 11, 2014 https://muslimvillage.com/2014/04/11/52247/you-want-me-to-go-jahannam/ accessed dates March 6, 2023

[68] M Y VENN, "Does Islam Believe in Hell?" (MAY 11, 2018). https://owlcation.com/humanities/Islam-and-Hell-Does-Islam-Believe-In-Hell . Accessed dates 3-6-2023

- All sinners and criminals
- Murderers
- The unjust
- People who hide Allah's revelations
- People who commit suicide
- All tyrants
- Hypocrites



Source: Moutasem Atiya, You want me to go Jahannam? (muslimvillage.com)

Facts About Hell in Islam

In the Islamic framework, Jahannam, commonly called Hell, serves as a realm of retribution for individuals who have transgressed moral boundaries throughout their earthly existence. One of the potential afterlife destinations for human souls upon death is referred to as Jannah (Paradise), alongside another possibility. Based on Islamic doctrine, Hell is described as a tangible location characterized by gates, levels, and chambers, as indicated in scriptural references such as verses 4:56 and 15:43-44. According to the Qur'an, Hell is depicted as a realm characterized by extreme temperatures and incineration, when transgressors' souls would endure retribution through the infliction of fire, scalding water, and various forms of torment. The hierarchical structure of Hell entails a gradation of punitive measures, wherein the magnitude of penalties escalates proportionally as one traverses more into its depths. The Qur'an delineates many classifications of individuals who will face retribution in the realm of Hell, encompassing those who commit the act of

associating partners with Allah, individuals involved in acts of homicide, individuals engaged in acts of adultery, and those who partake in usurious or interest-based transactions. Muslims believe that Hell is everlasting, wherein the consequences of transgressions committed during one's earthly existence persist throughout the afterlife.

Islamic teachings emphasize the imperative of abstaining from sinful actions and adhering to the path of righteousness to evade damnation and secure a coveted position in Paradise. As per the viewpoints of certain Islamic scholars, Hell is perceived not solely as a site of retribution but also as a site of purification, wherein transgressors would ultimately undergo a process of expiation for their misdeeds, thereby being prepared for eventual admission into Paradise (Qur'an 19:71-72). Muslims hold the belief that Allah possesses exclusive authority in determining the allocation of individuals to Hell or Paradise and that both fairness characterizes His judgment and emphasizes the imperative of asking forgiveness and engaging in repentance for one's transgressions as a means to evade eternal damnation and attain divine benevolence and absolution from Allah. According to Islamic teachings, it is believed that hell possesses considerable depth, to the extent that if a stone were to be cast into it, it would require 70 years for the stone to descend and reach the nadir of hell. In addition, suffering in hell is both physical and spiritual.

- Qur'an 19:71-72, There is none of you who will not pass over it. ˹This is˺ a decree your Lord must fulfil.72 Then We will deliver those who were devout, leaving the wrongdoers there on their knees.

It is not universally true that all individuals who have committed sins would defer their judgment and subsequent consignment to hell until the Last Day as determined by Allah. According to Islamic doctrine, individuals deemed "Enemies of Islam" are said to be consigned to hell upon their demise. Additional categories of individuals who will be consigned to hell include those who lack faith in Allah and His Laws and those who pass away while burdened by their transgressions. However, it is essential to note that these individuals will only be admitted into hell on the Last Day. Not everyone experiences equal levels of suffering in hell. The magnitude of an individual's transgressions is contingent upon the intensity of their torment experienced in the realm of damnation. As per the teachings of the Qur'an, it is stated that hell comprises seven levels and is accessed by seven gates. Every gate is assigned to a particular group or category of those who have committed sins. If one transgressor's culpability differs from another's, they will each be consigned to distinct entrances of the infernal realm. The seven degrees of hell encompass a variety of torments and forms of punishment. The level that is regarded as the most severe in terms of punishment is the lowest. Consequently, individuals in this realm are regarded as the most egregious transgressors. The following are seven levels or gates of hell:

- Qur'an 4:46- Jahannam- light punishment of hell where the fire burns the faces and eat the flesh. "… Allah has condemned them for their disbelief, so they do not believe except for a few."

- Qur'an 70:15-16, Ladha (second gate of hell), the fire will consume the body parts one by one for those who rejected Allah and the Prophet. But no! There will certainly be a raging Flame. 16 ripping off scalps.
- Qur'an 74:26-30; 41-47- Saqar- third level where those who enter this gate shall their flesh be consumed but not their bones. Those who did not pray or give food to the poor, reject the day of judgment- Soon I will burn him in Hell! 26 And what will make you realize what Hell is? 28 It does not let anyone live or die. 29 scorching the skin. 30 It is overseen by nineteen ˹keepers˺.
- Qur'an 104:4-9- Hutama fourth level), those who enter this door shall their hearts and organs be consumed. Not at all! Such a person will certainly be tossed into the Crusher.5 And what will make you realize what the Crusher is? 6 ˹It is˺ Allah's kindled Fire,7 which rages over the hearts.
- Qur'an 69:30-34, Jaheem (fifth level) a place with hot coals – those who have false belief, failed to give creation their rights and ignored the plight of the poor. ˹30 It will be said,˺ Seize and shackle them, 31 then burn them in Hell, 32 then tie them up with chains seventy arms long.33 For they never had faith in Allah, the Greatest, 34 nor encouraged the feeding of the poor.
- Qur'an 67:10-11, Saree- blaze (sixth level) the fire never goes off, with 300 places and 300 penalties. The places have scorpions, ropes and chains, irons producing various types of suffering. 10 And they will lament, "If only we had listened and reasoned, we would not be among the residents of the Blaze!" 11 And so they will confess their sins. So away with the residents of the Blaze!
- Qur'an 101:8-11, Haawiyah (immeasurable deep space), those who reject Allah will be found here. 8 And as for those whose scale is light, 9 their home will be the abyss. 10 And what will make you realize what that is?11 ˹It is˺ a scorching Fire.

According to theological beliefs, Hell is shown as a realm where individuals who have committed sins endure intense and agonizing kinds of pain. These torments sometimes involve fire, boiling water, and searing wind, which inflict terrible damage on the sinners' skin. Consequently, their skin becomes irreparably damaged and is regenerated, allowing the sinners to experience their torments anew perpetually. The perpetuation of this circle of torment will persist as long as the individuals who have committed transgressions remain confined within the realm of damnation. Regardless of the extent to which an individual who has committed sins and is undergoing torment in hell expresses remorse and pleads for pardon, they will not be granted absolution. Once an individual has arrived in hell, no transgressor can evade their fate. The sole opportunity for a transgressor to depart from the intense torment of hell arises upon the completion of the retribution for their misdeeds. If an individual who has transgressed attempts to evade the intense inferno of the netherworld, a metallic implement in the form of a hook shall be employed to return the transgressor to the realm of damnation forcibly.

According to the Qur'an, hell has nineteen angels led by the keeper of hell named Maalik (Qur'an 43:77). The Qur'an describes Maalik as a very severe and harsh man who does not feel the plights of the sinners undergoing severe torments. Moreover, whenever the inhabitants of hell beg him to let them out of hell, he tells

them they shall remain in hell because they “abhorred the truth” when it was brought to them. On top of the blazing fire in hell, the place is also believed to contain a lot of venomous snakes and scorpions. The pain from the venom of any of these snakes and scorpions can last for several decades.

- Qur’an 43:77, They will cry, “O Mâlik! Let your Lord finish us off.” He will answer, “You are definitely here to stay.”
- Qur’an 11:106-107, As for those bound for misery, they will be in the Fire, where they will be sighing and gasping, 107 staying there forever, as long as the heavens and the earth will endure, except what your Lord wills.1 Surely your Lord does what He intends.

Food in Hell (Jahannam)

Islamic teachings do not mention any specific type of food or drink that will be consumed in Hell. However, the Qur’an does describe the inhabitants of Hell being given “foul pus to drink” (Qur’an 14:16) and “boiling water to drink” (Qur’an 78:25), which are both symbolic descriptions of the punishment that sinners will face in Hell. It is also mentioned in Islamic teachings that the inhabitants of Hell will be given thorny plants and trees to eat, which will cause them pain and discomfort (Qur’an 88:6-7). The inhabitants of Hell is another symbolic description of the punishment that awaits sinners in Hell. Overall, Islamic teachings emphasize the severity of the punishment that awaits those who commit sins and disobey Allah. The descriptions of Hell in the Qur’an are meant to encourage Muslims to lead a righteous life and to avoid sin to attain Allah’s mercy and forgiveness.

- Qur’an 14:16, Awaiting them is Hell, and they will be left to drink oozing pus,
- Qur’an 78:25, except boiling water and ˹oozing˺ pus—26 a fitting reward.
- Qur’an 88:6-7, They will have no food except a foul, thorny shrub,7 neither nourishing nor satisfying hunger.

According to the Qur’an, there are only three food sources in hell. However, these foods are so terrible that it is better to stay away from them no matter how much one is starving simply because they will only worsen a sinner’s torment. The sources of food in hell are:

- Qur’an 5:5 Today all good, pure foods have been made lawful for you. Similarly, the food of the People of the Book1 is permissible for you and yours is permissible for them. And ˹permissible for you in marriage˺ are chaste believing women as well as chaste women of those given the Scripture before you—as long as you pay them their dowries in wedlock, neither fornicating nor taking them as mistresses. And whoever rejects the faith, all their good deeds will be void ˹in this life˺ and in the Hereafter they will be among the losers.
- Qur’an 56:52- “will certainly eat from ˹the fruit of˺ the trees of Zaqqûm.” The Tree of Zaqqum: This is a tree located in hell whose fruits are cursed. The cursed fruits of this tree will severely burn the insides of a sinner’s stomach when consumed by the sinner. The Tree of Zaqqum is believed to be in the lowest level of hell.

- Ḍari: A bitter plant that has very sharp thorns all over it. Eating this plant is a waste of time since it not only pricks badly, but it also will never give one any relief from hunger.

The Qur'an also mentions that the fire of Hell will not only burn the skin but will also "scorch the hearts" (Qur'an 39:23) of those who are condemned to it, as well as their "entrails" (Qur'an 2:24). The Qur'an also mentions that the fire of Hell will be so hot that it will "boil their skins" (Qur'an 22:19). In addition to describing the fire of Hell, the Qur'an also gives detailed descriptions of the punishments that will be inflicted upon those who are condemned to it. These punishments range from physical torture, such as the burning of their skin and hearts, to psychological torment, such as the shaming of their faces (Qur'an 14:50). It also mentions that those who are condemned to the fire of Hell will be "shackled" (Qur'an 69:30) and "enveloped in darkness" (Qur'an 5:17). The following verses present the picture of hell:

- Qur'an 2:24, But if you are unable to do so—and you will never be able to do so—then fear the Fire fuelled with people and stones, which is prepared for the disbelievers.
- Qur'an 5:17, Indeed, those who say, "Allah is the Messiah, son of Mary," have fallen into disbelief. Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ "Who has the power to prevent Allah if He chose to destroy the Messiah, son of Mary, his mother, and everyone in the world all together?" To Allah ˹alone˺ belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and everything in between. He creates whatever He wills. And Allah is Most Capable of everything. Indeed, those who say, "Allah is the Messiah, son of Mary," have fallen into disbelief. Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ "Who has the power to prevent Allah if He chose to destroy the Messiah, son of Mary, his mother, and everyone in the world altogether?" To Allah ˹alone˺ belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and everything in between. He creates whatever He wills. And Allah is Most Capable of everything.
- Qur'an 14:29, 50, In Hell they will burn. What an evil place for settlement. 50 with garments of tar, and their faces covered with flames.
- Qur'an 22:19, These are two opposing groups that disagree about their Lord: as for the disbelievers, garments of Fire will be cut out for them and boiling water will be poured over their heads,
- Qur'an 39:23, ˹It is˺ Allah ˹Who˺ has sent down the best message—a Book of perfect consistency and repeated lessons—which causes the skin ˹and hearts˺ of those who fear their Lord to tremble, then their skin and hearts soften at the mention of ˹the mercy of˺ Allah. That is the guidance of Allah, through which He guides whoever He wills. But whoever Allah leaves to stray will be left with no guide.
- Qur'an 69:30, ˹It will be said,˺ Seize and shackle them,

The Qur'an also mentions that those condemned to the fire of Hell will not only suffer physical and psychological torment but will also be denied the pleasure they had in this world. Those subjected to hell will miss the pleasure of food, drink, clothing, and other comforts they enjoyed in their lifetime. The Qur'an states that those who are condemned to the fire of Hell will be "given to drink from a boiling

spring" (Qur'an 56:44) and "clothed in garments of fire" (Qur'an 22:19). Condemned persons will be denied the pleasure of Allah's mercy and light of Allah (Qur'an 57:13)." Finally, they will be "disowned" (Qur'an 2:39) by Him. The following verse continues to support:

- Qur'an 2:39, But those who disbelieve and deny Our signs will be the residents of the Fire. They will be there forever.
- Qur'an 9:68, Allah has promised the hypocrites, both men and women, and the disbelievers an everlasting stay in the Fire of Hell—it is sufficient for them. Allah has condemned them, and they will suffer a never-ending punishment.
- Qur'an 22:19, These are two opposing groups that disagree about their Lord: as for the disbelievers, garments of Fire will be cut out for them and boiling water will be poured over their heads,
- Qur'an 56:44, neither cool nor refreshing.
- Qur'an 57:13, The tormented will cry out to those graced, "Were we not with you?" They will reply, "Yes ˹you were˺. But you chose to be tempted ˹by hypocrisy˺, ˹eagerly˺ awaited ˹our demise˺, doubted ˹the truth˺, and were deluded by false hopes until Allah's decree ˹of your death˺ came to pass. And ˹so˺ the Chief Deceiver deceived you about Allah.

The Qur'anic concept of hellfire is depicted as a realm characterized by severe thermal conditions and combustion, specifically designed to serve as a punitive destination for individuals who have committed immoral acts. In contrast to any other location, hell is characterized as a realm of profound anguish and distress, whereby individuals endure various forms of physical agony and punitive measures. Several instances of these penalties involve immersion in boiling water or flame exposure. According to the teachings of the Qur'an, it is stated that the punishment of Hellfire extends beyond the physical affliction experienced by the body, encompassing psychological anguish inflicted upon the soul. The individuals who have transgressed and find themselves in the realm of damnation will experience profound sentiments of remorse and regret concerning their past deeds, thereby being compelled to confront the repercussions stemming from their misdeeds. The Qur'an also delineates Hellfire as a realm characterized by seclusion and alone, wherein the sinful individuals will be distanced from the divine presence and the virtuous. Despite the profound consequences associated with the punitive nature of Hellfire, the Qur'an concurrently imparts the notion that Allah possesses qualities of mercy and forgiveness, hence providing an opportunity for individuals who have transgressed to seek redemption via repentance. According to prevailing beliefs, individuals who genuinely express remorse for their transgressions and seek absolution are expected to get forgiveness, avoiding the punitive consequences of Hellfire.

Biblical Teaching on Hell Fire

The doctrine of hellfire, as presented in the Bible, has been an integral part of Christian theology since the inception of the faith and is expounded upon in both the Old and New Testaments. According to biblical teachings, hell is depicted as a realm of retribution reserved for individuals who have consciously declined to embrace God

and His redemptive proposition facilitated by Jesus Christ. The concept of hell is characterized as a realm of perpetual detachment from the divine presence, where individuals deemed evil would endure unceasing, conscious suffering for an indefinite duration. The notion of hellfire serves as a symbolic representation of the everlasting retribution that awaits individuals who have committed transgressions upon their demise. This statement posits that individuals will be subject to divine judgment based on their actions, and those who fail to repent and embrace redemption will face eternal damnation in the realm of hell.

Hellfire is referenced multiple times in the Old Testament, with notable mentions in the book of Isaiah. This text shows that God cautions His followers against venturing along the path of the morally corrupt and advises them against associating with others who engage in immoral behavior. According to the Lord's declaration, on the day that I carry out this action, they will become ashes beneath the soles of your feet. The biblical verse referenced is Isaiah 5:17. The provided paragraph serves as a cautionary message, emphasizing that individuals who continue to engage in immoral behavior will ultimately face annihilation within the fiery confines of hell. The New Testament also includes texts that address the concept of hellfire. In the biblical passage of Matthew 25:41, Jesus utters the following words: "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'" The present text serves as a cautionary statement, asserting that individuals who do not embrace the concept of salvation will face eternal damnation in hell. In this state, they will experience a profound detachment from God and the affectionate benevolence from Him. This scripture posits that hell was initially designated for the devil and his angels. However, it will also serve as the ultimate destination for individuals who have consciously rejected God and led a life of defiance against Him. Other passages speak of hell as a place of punishment and conscious torment, which include:

- Isaiah 66:24, Then they will go forth and look On the corpses of the men Who have transgressed against Me. For their worm will not die And their fire will not be quenched; And they will be an abhorrence to all mankind.
- Matthew 5:22, But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell.
- Matthew 13:50: And throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.
- Matthew 18:8,19, If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life crippled or lame, than to have two hands or two feet and be cast into the eternal fire. If your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it from you. It is better for you to enter life with one eye, than to have two eyes and be cast into a fiery hell.
- Jude 1:7: In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.

- Revelation 19:20, And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone.
- Revelation 20:15, Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

These above verses, among others, emphasize that Hell is a place of eternal punishment and separation from God for those who reject Him and choose to live a life of sin. While the punishment of Hell is severe, the Bible also teaches that salvation and forgiveness are available through faith in Jesus Christ while one is still living.

The Bible also has several parables that highlight the ramifications associated with the concept of hellfire. The biblical narrative of the Rich Man and Lazarus recounts the tale as Jesus relays, whereby a wealthy individual faces damnation due to his self-centeredness. At the same time, a destitute beggar is granted heavenly recompense for his unwavering devotion (Luke 16:19-31). The narrative serves as a means to highlight the juxtaposition between the transient gratifications experienced in the present existence and the enduring retribution endured in the subsequent realm. The doctrinal perspective presented in the Bible regarding the concept of hellfire serves as a cautionary message to individuals, emphasizing the necessity for repentance and the acceptance of salvation. This statement reminds us that individuals will be evaluated based on their actions, and those who refuse to embrace redemption will face eternal damnation in hell. This pedagogical discourse serves as a potent reminder of the ramifications of transgression and warrants earnest consideration.

- Luke 16:19-31, “There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. 20 At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores 21 and longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 ”The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. 23 In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. 24 So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’ 25 “ But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. 26 And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’ 27 ”He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, 28 for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’ 29 “Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’ 30 ”‘No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’ 31 “He said to him, ‘If they do not

listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'"

The New Testament presents the theological doctrine of Hell's fire, referred to as Gehenna or the lake of fire, as a prominent aspect of Biblical teachings. Notably, the Bible also teaches that God harbors no desire for any individual to experience damnation in hell. Instead, the Bible emphasizes God's intention for all individuals to engage in repentance and place their faith in Jesus to attain redemption (2 Peter 3:9). Via the manifestation of divine love and benevolence, God has facilitated a means for humanity to attain reconciliation with Him, accomplished via the sacrificial death and subsequent resurrection of Jesus. Consequently, God invites all individuals to renounce their transgressions and accept the blessing of everlasting existence. Through divine benevolence and compassion, God has bestowed upon humanity a means of achieving reconciliation with Him, accomplished via the sacrificial death and subsequent resurrection of Jesus. Furthermore, God invites all individuals to repent from their transgressions and accept the blessing of everlasting life.

- Matthew 4:19, "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people."
- John 17:3, Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.
- Acts 2:38, Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- Romans 6:23, For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- Ephesians 2:8–9, For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one
- 2 Corinthians 9:15, Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

Similarities Between the Qur'anic and Biblical Hell

Islam and Christianity teach that Hell is a place of punishment and suffering for those who commit sin and reject Allah/God. First, both religions teach that Hell is a place of eternal punishment. Muslims believe that the punishment in Hell is eternal, while Christians believe Hell is a place of eternal separation from God. Secondly, both religions consider hell an intense place. According to Islam, hell is so deep that a stone thrown into it would take 70 years to reach its bottom. Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: We were in the company of the Messenger of Allah when we heard a bang. Thereupon the Messenger of Allah said. "Do you know what this (sound) is?" We said, "Allah and His Messenger know better." He said, "That is a stone which was thrown into Hell seventy years before, and it has just reached its bottom" (Riyad as-Salihin 404 Introduction, Hadith 404, 50).

The Bible talks about the extreme depth of hell by calling it a “bottomless pit.” The Book of Revelation (20:3) states, “He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.” Thirdly, both religions describe Hell as a place of fire and torment. In Islam, Hell is called “Jahannam” and is described as a place of intense heat and burning (Qur’an 9:68), while in Christianity, Hell is often described as a place of fire and brimstone (Revelation 14:10 … tormented with burning sulfur…). Fourthly, in both religions, Hell is a place of punishment for sinners. In the Islamic faith, individuals who transgress against the teachings of Allah face retribution.

In contrast, in Christianity, individuals who reject Jesus Christ and lead a life characterized by sinful behavior are subject to punishment. In addition, it is noteworthy that both religions espouse the belief that Hell serves as a realm of detachment from the divine presence. Within the Islamic faith, the penalty for transgressions is the infliction of Hell, which entails a severance from the benevolence and absolution of Allah.

Conversely, Hell is an everlasting detachment from the divine presence in Christianity. In addition, many religious traditions emphasize the avoidance of Hell through adherence to moral principles and virtuous conduct. In the Islamic faith, adherents are exhorted to adhere to the principles outlined in the Qur’an and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad to avoid damnation in the afterlife. Conversely, in Christianity, followers are urged to embrace the teachings of Jesus and engage in repentance for their transgressions to achieve salvation and evade eternal damnation. Ultimately, it is mutually acknowledged by both religious traditions that hell serves as a destination where those who have committed transgressions will be consigned on the Day of Judgment.

While several distinctions exist between the Islamic and Christian interpretations of hell, there are also several notable parallels. In general, it can be observed that Islam and Christianity exhibit variations in their respective depictions and delineations of Hell. Nevertheless, both religious traditions underscore the gravity of sin and the imperative of leading a virtuous existence to evade Hell’s retribution.

Differences Between the Islamic and Christian Views of Hell

Islamic and Christian conceptions of Hell have some similarities but significant grave differences that cannot be reconciled. First, the nature of Hell in Islamic teaching is seen as a physical place where sinners will be punished with intense heat, fire, and other torture. Qur’an 25:65, They are those who pray, “Our Lord! Keep the punishment of Hell away from us, for its punishment is indeed unrelenting.” In Christianity, Hell is often described as a spiritual state of separation from God. Luke 16:23 states, In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. Secondly, the duration of punishment in each faith presentation differs. Islamic teaching notes that Hell is a temporary place

and that the punishment of sinners will eventually end. On the other hand, Christianity teaches that Hell's duration is eternal punishment. In Islamic teaching, Islamic belief is that hell is temporary, as shown in Qur'an 7:156: … Allah replied, "I will inflict My torment on whoever I will." 39:71 "Those who disbelieved will be driven to Hell in ˹successive˺ groups..." Christian beliefs on the duration of Hell is not temporary but permanent separation from God as shown in Matthew 25:46, "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life." Thirdly, the criterion for entry differs significantly. Muslims are taught that all non-believers and those who commit major sins will go to Hell. Qur'an 4:116, "Surely Allah does not forgive associating ˹others˺ with Him ˹in worship˺, but forgives anything else of whoever He wills…" Christians hold that only those who reject Jesus Christ as their savior will go to Hell. The Book of John (3:18) says, "Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son." Furthermore, the Book of John (14: 6) notes, "Jesus answered," I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Thirdly, Levels of Punishment: In Islam, there are different levels of Hell, with the intensity of punishment increasing as one goes deeper into it. Qur'an 6:126 says, … Then He will say, "The Fire is your home, yours to stay in forever, except whoever Allah wills to spare…" Christianity does not have a similar concept of levels of Hell. Nonetheless, such levels are not taught in the Christian faith. Fourthly, the purpose of punishment varies in how each faith teaches. For instance, Muslims are taught that punishment in Hell primarily purifies the soul and leads to forgiveness and mercy, as Allah will ultimately. Qur'an 2:81 states, "But no! Those who commit evil and are engrossed in sin will be the residents of the Fire. They will be there forever." Christian's view of Hell is a place of eternal punishment for those who have rejected God's love and the offer of salvation provided through Jesus Christ with no intention of purification. Fifthly, how 'human free will' is viewed among these faiths differs significantly. For instance, Muslims believe humans have free will and are responsible for their actions, determining their fate in the afterlife. Christians similarly believe in free will but emphasize the role of God's grace and salvation in determining one's destiny.

- Joshua 24:15, But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."
- Mark 8:34, Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.
- John 7:17, Anyone who chooses to do the will of God will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.
- Romans 6:23, For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- 1 Corinthians 10:13, No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be

tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

- Revelation 3:20, Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.

Overall, while Islam and Christianity believe in a Hell where sinners are punished, the nature, duration, criteria for entry, punishment levels, and purpose differ significantly between the two religions.

Muslims and the Mahdi (Savior)

Muslims believe in the existence of a savior figure referred to as the Mahdi. The notion of the Mahdi holds significant prominence within the realm of Islamic eschatology, which pertains to the scholarly examination of the culmination of events in the future. The Mahdi is a widely held belief in various religious traditions, positing the emergence of a significant figure who is anticipated to manifest during the culmination of historical events to establish equity and harmony on a global scale. The conviction in the Mahdi is founded upon the teachings of the esteemed Prophet Muhammad and finds mention in many hadiths, which are the recorded sayings of the Prophet. Muslims believe that the Mahdi, anticipated to emerge in the future, will be a direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad. The Mahdi is believed to receive divine guidance from Allah and assume the responsibility of leading humanity towards a state of justice. The Mahdi is not regarded as a deity but as a mortal, someone Allah divinely appointed to fulfill a distinct purpose. Muslims believe the Mahdi is endowed with extraordinary attributes and possesses the requisite knowledge and wisdom to guide humanity towards attaining justice and peace. The advent of the Mahdi is intricately linked to the eschatological events surrounding the culmination of the temporal realm and the imminent approach of the Day of Judgment. Muslims believe that the Mahdi, a messianic figure, will manifest before the Day of Judgment to make necessary preparations for the ultimate culmination and assessment of the world. The Mahdi is expected to play a pivotal role in the triumph over malevolent powers and in establishing a justice-characterized society.

Muslims do not adhere to the concept of a savior in a manner analogous to that of Christians. Within the Islamic faith, the notion of salvation diverges from the belief in a savior figure who sacrificed themselves for the transgressions of humankind. In contrast, adherents of Islam maintain the belief that attaining salvation is contingent upon surrendering oneself to God’s divine will and adhering to the principles and teachings espoused by the Islamic faith. According to Islamic doctrine, the fundamental objective of human existence is to engage in the worship and devoted service of the divine entity. Muslims believe that by adhering to the principles and teachings of Islam, they can achieve salvation in the afterlife. The afterlife concept encompasses leading a virtuous and morally upright existence,

engaging in acts of benevolence, and maintaining a belief in the monotheistic nature of the divine.

Muslims also believe in the eschatological concept of the day of judgment, wherein all individuals will be subject to divine scrutiny and evaluated by the Almighty based on their deeds. On this particular day, individuals who have adhered to the tenets of Islam and have demonstrated their submission to the divine will shall receive the recompense of heaven. However, those who have failed to do so shall face punitive measures. The concept of a savior who sacrificed themselves for humanity's transgressions is not embraced within the Islamic faith. Contrarily, adherents of Islam maintain the belief that individual accountability is paramount, with salvation being attained by surrendering to the divine will and adhering to the precepts of the Islamic faith. Muslims hold a distinct perspective on the concept of salvation compared to Christians, as they do not subscribe to the notion of a savior. However, they do emphasize the significance of leading a morally upright and virtuous existence to achieve redemption hereafter.

Christians Have Jesus as the Saviour

The belief held by Christians is that Jesus Christ serves as the Saviour. According to Christian doctrine, Jesus is regarded as the divine Son of God who incarnated on earth to redeem humanity from their transgressions. Jesus Christ, a central figure in Christianity, is believed to have been born to the virgin Mary, led a life free from sin, and ultimately sacrificed himself on the cross to redeem the transgressions of all humankind. A fundamental tenet of the Christian faith posits that Jesus, in an act of ultimate sacrifice, was crucified to redeem humanity from the consequences of their transgressions. The conviction mentioned above is sometimes referred to as the doctrine of atonement. The concept posits that Jesus, using his demise, assumed the penalty for humanity's transgressions, allowing them to reconcile with the divine.

According to Christian doctrine, it is held that Jesus, following his death, experienced resurrection after three days. This event is believed to signify his triumph over both sin and mortality. The conviction above is commonly referred to as the doctrine of resurrection. The resurrection of Jesus is often seen as a significant manifestation of divine power and love, occupying a fundamental position within the Christian belief system. In conjunction with his demise and subsequent revival, Jesus is identified as the progeny of God and possesses divine attributes. He is not merely an individual but rather the embodiment of divinity, encompassing complete humanity and complete divinity. The conviction above is sometimes referred to as the doctrine of the incarnation. For adherents of the Christian faith, accepting Jesus as their savior transcends mere cognitive agreement, as it entails a profound and intimate connection with him. Numerous adherents of the Christian faith maintain the belief that by placing their faith in Jesus, they can establish an intimate connection with the divine and achieve reconciliation with the deity. This concept is commonly referred to as salvation.

Christians understand that Jesus is the Saviour and the only way to salvation. He plays a salvific role in the plan of God's redemptive plan. Jesus' death and

resurrection are the cornerstone of the Christian faith, and it is through His sacrifice that Christians believe they can be saved and receive the gift of eternal life. The Bible tells us that Jesus is the only way to salvation. In John 14:6, Jesus states, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” This statement emphasizes the importance of Jesus as the only way to salvation. It is through Jesus that Christians have hope for a future in Heaven. Jesus was not just among the list of the Old Testament prophets. Jesus had declared that he came to fulfill the law, the prophets, and the psalms. The Bible talks about the role Jesus plays in our salvation. The book of Luke put it this way:

- Luke 24:44, Then he said to them, These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled. 45 Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, 46 and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, 47 and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.”

The Bible provides a solution for transgressions by means of the redemptive sacrifice of Jesus. Contrarily, the Qur’an exclusively emphasizes the reverence and awe towards Allah, who ultimately consigns transgressors to the torment of hellfire. There is a lack of optimism about the emergence of a savior figure to address moral transgressions inside society. Contrarily, the Bible contains multiple chapters that expound upon the concept of a savior who absolves the transgressions of a contrite individual. These verses include:

- John 14: 3, And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.
- Philippians 2:9-10, Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,11 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
- 1 John 2:2, He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

BIBLICAL AND QUR'ANIC VIEW OF CREATION

Qur'anic View of Creation

According to the teachings of the Qur'an, Allah is credited with the world's creation. However, the story of creation it presents differs from other narratives. As per the Qur'anic account, it is stated that Allah brought about the creation of the universe during a span of six distinct eras. However, the scripture does not explicitly delineate whether these periods should be interpreted as literal days (7:54). According to the teachings of the Qur'an, it is stated that Allah formed humanity from clay and infused them with His divine spirit. According to Islamic belief, Allah is attributed to the creation of Adam and Hawa (Eve), who were afterwards placed in Paradise. However, unlike the biblical account, the Qur'an does not explicitly indicate the precise geographical location of Paradise. As to the teachings of the Qur'an, Iblis (commonly known as Satan) demonstrated his refusal to prostrate before Adam, leading to his expulsion from Paradise. Adam and Hawa were subsequently banished from Paradise due to their transgression in disregarding Allah's directive to refrain from consuming the fruit of a designated tree.

Some Islamic scholars note that the creation story can be understood differently. For instance, Shamoun discusses the Qur'anic view of creation in which he states,

- Allah created the universe, the heavens and earth and all that is in, on and between them in six days, as He has stated in several Ayat in the Qur'an. These six days are: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. On Friday, the entire creation was assembled and on that day, Adam was created. There is a difference of opinion whether these days were the same as our standard days as suddenly comes to the mind, or each day constitutes one thousand years, as reported from Mujahid, Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal, and from Ibn `Abbas according to Ad-Dahhak's narration from him. As for Saturday, no creation took place in it since it is the seventh day of (of the week). The word 'As-Sabt' means stoppage, or break. Imam Ahmad recorded Abu Hurayrah saying: Allah's Messenger told me …
- Allah created the dust on Saturday, and He created the mountains on Sunday, and He created the trees on Monday, and He created the unpleasant things on Tuesday and He created the light on Wednesday and He spread the creatures throughout it on Thursday and He created Adam after 'Asr on between 'Asr and the night.)) (Tafsir Ibn Kathir (Abridged) (Surat Al-A'raf to the end of Sura Yunus), First Edition: May 200, Volume 4, pp. 76-77. [69]

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[69] Sam Shamoun, "Six or Eight Days of Creation?" http://www.luk.staff.ugm.ac.id/kmi/off/XIslam/Contra/creation-days_li.html. Accessed dates Saturday, 05 August 2023. The Universe was created in Six Days. Allah states that He created the universe, the heavens and earth and all that is in, on and between them in six days, as He has stated in several Ayat in the Qur'an. Friday, the entire creation was assembled and on that day, Adam was created. There is a difference of opinion whether these days were the same as our standard days as suddenly comes to the mind, or each day constitutes one thousand years, as reported from Mujahid, Imam

The following verses establish that it may be copied from the Biblical creation account according to Qur'anic teaching. Qur'an 41:9-12 notes that the world was created in two days, contradicting other verses which teach the six days. For Muslims to understand the view of creation, one needs to read the Bible to understand How God created the universe. See the verses below:

- Qur'an 7:54, Indeed your Lord is Allah Who created the heavens and the earth in six Days, then established Himself on the Throne. He makes the day and night overlap in rapid succession. He created the sun, the moon, and the stars—all subjected by His command. The creation and the command belong to Him ˹alone˺. Blessed is Allah—Lord of all worlds!
- Qur'an 11:7, He is the One Who created the heavens and the earth in six Days—and His Throne was upon the waters—in order to test which of you is best in deeds. And if you ˹O Prophet˺ say, "Surely you will ˹all˺ be raised up after death," the disbelievers will certainly say, "That is nothing but pure magic!"
- Qur'an 32:4, It is Allah Who has created the heavens and the earth and everything in between in six Days,1 then established Himself on the Throne. You have no protector or intercessor besides Him. Will you not then be mindful?
- Qur'an 41:9-12, Ask ˹them, O Prophet˺, "How can you disbelieve in the One Who created the earth in two Days? And how can you set up equals with Him? That is the Lord of all worlds.10 He placed on the earth firm mountains, standing high, showered His blessings upon it, and ordained ˹all˺ its means of sustenance—totaling four Days exactly1—for all who ask. 11 Then He turned towards the heaven when it was ˹still like˺ smoke, saying to it and to the earth, 'Submit, willingly or unwillingly.' They both responded, 'We submit willingly.' 12 So He formed the heaven into seven heavens in two Days, assigning to each its mandate. And We adorned the lowest heaven with ˹stars like˺ lamps ˹for beauty˺ and for protection. That is the design of the Almighty, All-Knowing

Biblical View of Creation

The Biblical account of creation is found in the first two chapters of the Book of Genesis. It states that God created the universe and everything in it in six days and rested on the seventh day. The story begins with God creating the heavens and

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Ahmad bin Hanbal, and from Ibn `Abbas according to Ad-Dahhak's narration from him. As for Saturday, no creation took place in it since it is the seventh day of (of the week). The word 'As-Sabt' means stoppage, or break. Imam Ahmad recorded Abu Huraryah saying: Allah's Messenger told me …(Allah created the dust on Saturday, and He created the mountains on Sunday, and He created the trees on Monday, and He created the unpleasant things on Tuesday and He created the light on Wednesday and He spread the creatures throughout it on Thursday and He created Adam after 'Asr on between 'Asr and the night.)) (Tafsir Ibn Kathir (Abridged) (Surat Al-A'raf to the end of Surah Yunus), First Edition: May 200, Volume 4, pp. 76-77. These six days are: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. On

the earth and then creating light, the sky, land, plants, and animals. God created male and female human beings on the sixth day in his image.

- Genesis 1:1, 31, In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.., 31 31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

The story of creation in the Bible provides a true statement to which the Qur'an appears to allude 600 years after the last copy of the Bible was finished.

Biblical and Qur'anic Differences in the Creation Story

Several parallels exist between the stories of creation found in the Bible and the Qur'an, notably the shared notion that the cosmos was brought into existence over six days, culminating in the creation of human beings on the sixth day. Nevertheless, notable distinctions can be observed, encompassing the composition of human people and the sequential arrangement of specific occurrences. According to biblical teachings, the universe is believed to have been created exclusively by God. In six days, the individual in question brought about the creation of both the earth and the heavens. The biblical narrative describes the creation of Adam and Eve. According to theological beliefs, Jesus coexisted with God from the very inception, being considered a divine entity.

Furthermore, it is posited that Jesus had a pivotal role in creating all entities and phenomena. The Qur'an does not reference such material, concisely illustrating the contrasting approaches to the creation narrative. The following verses show the importance of such gesture to the Biblical creation story:

- Genesis 1:26, Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." 27 So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.
- John 1:1-3, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.
- Colossians 1:16, For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.

Contrast Between Biblical and Quran Views of Creation

The Qur'an agrees with the Bible on creation matters but disagrees quickly on human creation. We can see the difference when we learn from the Bible that God created humans from dust, while in the Qur'an, humans were created from a blood clot (Qur'an 96:2). In general, one can affirm the differences in the following comparative verses:

- Genesis 1:27, So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. Genesis 2: 21, So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. 22 Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. Qur'an 96:2 created humans from a clinging clot.
- Genesis 1:6, And God said, "Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water." 7 So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. 8 God called the vault "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day. Qur'an 21:30-33, Do the disbelievers do not realize that the heavens and earth were ˹once˺ one mass then We split them apart? And We created from water every living thing. Will they not then believe? And We have placed firm mountains upon the earth so it does not shake with them and made in it broad pathways so they may find their way.32 And We have made the sky a well-protected canopy, still they turn away from its signs.33 And He is the One Who created the day and the night, the sun and the moon—each traveling in an orbit.
- Qur'an 7:54, Indeed your Lord is Allah Who created the heavens and the earth in six Days, then established Himself on the Throne. He makes the day and night overlap in rapid succession. He created the sun, the moon, and the stars—all subjected by His command. The creation and the command belong to Him ˹alone˺. Blessed is Allah—Lord of all worlds!

CHAPTER TWELVE

ISLAMIC ALLAH AND CHRISTIAN GOD COMPARED

Similarities Between Allah and the Christian God

Significant parallels exist between the Islamic notion of Allah and the Christian conception of God. Both religions assert their adherence to monotheism, signifying their belief in the existence of a singular ultimate deity. Allah is commonly understood to possess the attributes of omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence, signifying his possession of unlimited power, complete knowledge, and constant presence in all locations. This perspective aligns with the analogous perception of the Christian God. One notable parallel between Allah and God is the shared belief that both entities are responsible for the creation of the universe. According to religious belief, it is postulated that Allah is the divine entity responsible for the creation of the universe, encompassing all living beings such as humans, animals, and plants. The Christian deity is commonly acknowledged as the progenitor of the cosmos and is frequently denoted as the “Creator” or the Father.

Moreover, both Allah and the Christian God are perceived as moral entities. Within the Islamic faith, Allah is regarded as a paragon of justice and equity, assuming the ultimate arbiter’s role in determining individuals’ moral rectitude or transgression. In Christianity, God is a morally upright and sacred entity and is understood to possess a set of ethical principles that humans must adhere to.

Difference Between Allah and the Christian God

The inquiry into the potential equivalence between Allah and the Biblical God has been a subject of extensive scholarly discourse spanning centuries. In order to address this inquiry, it is essential to get a comprehensive comprehension of the disparities existing between the two aforementioned religious systems. Islam revolves around the central tenet that Allah is a singular entity devoid of associations. In contrast, Christianity revolves around the belief that God is a singular entity but manifests as three distinct individuals - the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The two religions exhibit contrasting perspectives on scriptures and beliefs concerning Jesus. Islam regards Jesus as a prophet, whilst Christianity affirms Jesus as the Son of God (Matthew 26: 63-65).

Consequently, these divergent viewpoints present an irreconcilable disparity. Allah is regarded as the singular and exclusive divine being and is thought to be the identical deity revered by adherents of Judaism and Christianity. Nevertheless, significant disparities exist in the comprehension and veneration of Allah within the Islamic faith when juxtaposed with the understanding and adoration of God in Christianity. ALLAH AND CHRISTIAN GOD ARE TWO DIFFERENT DEITIES.

- Matthew 26:63-65, But Jesus remained silent. The high priest said to him, “I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.” 64 ”You have said so,” Jesus replied. “But I say to all of you: From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the

Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven." 65 Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy.

Islamic teaching affirms that Allah is the supreme and all-powerful deity and is separate from his creation. Allah is not a part of the physical world and cannot be physically represented or depicted in any way. In contrast, Christians believe that God became incarnate in the person of Jesus Christ and that he is present in the physical world (Matthew 16:13-17, 28:20; John 1:14; 17: 5; 20:30-31; 1 John 2:22-23; 5:9-13). Furthermore, according to Islamic doctrine, Allah is characterized by utter transcendence, rendering Him beyond human beings' complete comprehension or knowledge. In contrast, adherents of the Christian faith maintain the belief that the knowledge of God can be attained by both general and special revelation as presented in the Bible, as well as through personal encounters and experiences with the divine. Islam emphasizes Allah's full sovereignty and the notion that He possesses complete control over all aspects of existence. Muslims believe that all occurrences are encompassed within the divine design of Allah, hence asserting the absence of human agency in shaping their fate.

In contrast, adherents of Christianity espouse the concept of free will, positing that individuals bear the responsibility for their actions. Moreover, there were disparities between Islam and Christianity regarding their respective doctrines concerning the nature of the divine-human relationship. Within the Islamic faith, Allah is perceived as a transcendent and inscrutable being, emphasizing the act of surrendering to His divine decree. The Qur'an elucidates the transcendence of Allah, emphasizing that He surpasses human comprehension and cannot be shown in any tangible manifestation. On the other, the Christian deity is perceived as benevolent and intimate, emphasizing establishing a connection with this deity through trust in Jesus Christ. The biblical portrayal of God frequently presents Him as possessing anthropomorphic characteristics, including a bodily form encompassing limbs and a cranial structure. Some of the Biblical verses are noted here to confirm that belief:

- Matthew 16:13-17, When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" 14 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" 16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." 17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven."
- John 1:14, The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- John 20:30-31, Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.
- 1 John 2:22-23, Who is the liar? It is whoever denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a person is the antichrist—denying the Father and the Son. 23 No one

who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

- 1 John 5:9-13, We accept human testimony, but God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son. 10 Whoever believes in the Son of God accepts this testimony. Whoever does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because they have not believed the testimony God has given about his Son. 11 And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

Unlike in the Qur'anic Isa, Jesus performed many recorded works like what God does. Some of Jesus's miracles were unique, as noted in John (10: 37-38). Some of the claims Jesus made no human could such as all those who are weary should come to him and He has all authority (Matthew 11:28, Matthew 28:18). The Bible claims in several verses that the Biblical Jesus existed before the world was created (John 1:18; 17: 5). In addition, the Biblical Jesus unlike the Qur'anic one possesses attributes that are unique to Christian God (Matthew 28:20; Colossians 2:3, Matthew 1:21). This further confirms that Jesus performs unique works similar to what God has been doing (John 1:3, Hebrews 1:3, Colossians 3:13). Whilst the Qur'anic Isa never claimed to be God, Jesus Christi made the claim in the book of John (5:18, John 10:33). The Bible calls Jesus incarnate God who came and dwelt among humans (Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1; Colossians 1:15). Jesus of the Bible unlike the Qur'anic Isa possesses unique titles only referenced to Christian God (Isaiah 43:11, John 4:42; Isaiah 40:12). The Qur'an affirms that Isa did not die nor did he resurrect as the Bible claims. However, the Scriptures are clear on Jesus' sacrificial death and resurrection (Romans 1:3-4). Unlike the Qur'an teaching on Isa, the Bible says Jesus is divine (John 8:58; Isaiah 41:4; Isaiah 46:4). Read the following verses which support the claim about the difference between the claims of Jesus and Isa:

- Matthew 1:21, She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.
- Matthew 11:28; 28:18, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 28:18, Then Jesus came to them and said," All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.
- Matthew 28:20, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."
- John 1:18, No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.
- John 10: 37-38, Do not believe me unless I do the works of my Father. 38 But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father."
- John 17:5, And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.
- Colossians 2:3, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

- John 1:3, Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.
- Colossians 3:13, Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.
- Hebrews 1:3, he Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.
- John 5:18, For this reason they tried all the more to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.
- John 10:33, "We are not stoning you for any good work," they replied, "but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God."
- Isaiah 9:6, For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
  Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- John 1:1, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- Colossians 1:15, The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.
- Isaiah 43:11, I, even I, am the Lord, and apart from me there is no savior.
- John 4:42; They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world."
- Isaiah 40:12, Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, or with the breadth of his hand marked off the heavens? Who has held the dust of the earth in a basket, or weighed the mountains on the scales and the hills in a balance?
- Romans 1:3-4, regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David, 4 and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.
- John 8:58, "Very truly I tell you," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!"
- Isaiah 41:4, Who has done this and carried it through, calling forth the generations from the beginning? I, the Lord—with the first of them and with the last—I am he.
- Isaiah 46:4, Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you.

Islamic Allah

It is documented that the term "Allah" was not introduced by Prophet Muhammad, but rather, it was one of the 360 names of deities that were worshiped in the Ka'ba. The ancient stone building known as Abraham and his son Ismael

constructed the sacred Ka'ba. The location above pertains to Mecca in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Notably, the concept of Allah in the Qur'an and God in the Bible represent two unique entities. The Qur'an portrays Allah as distant and remote, lacking the capacity for personal interaction, in contrast to the Christian concept of God. The appellation of Allah in the Qur'an directly opposes the theological concept of the Trinity as presented in the Bible. While the concept of God being referred to as Love is familiar in the Bible, it is noteworthy that this phrase is novel in Allah's context. According to Islamic doctrine, the attribution of Jesus as the son of God is seen as an unpardonable sin known as shirk. Muslims find it unfathomable to ascribe the manifestation of God to the entities of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The divine entity worshiped by Christians is depicted as being revealed in multiple verses throughout the Bible. The theological concept posits that the Son of God, as a divine entity, underwent death on the cross as an atonement for humanity's transgressions. At the same time, the Holy Spirit assumes the role of convicting and sanctifying individuals, facilitating their attainment of holiness. The instruction in question cannot be ascribed to Allah.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

QUR'ANIC AND BIBLICAL VIEWS OF SIN

Qur'anic and Biblical View of Sin

The Qur'an and the Bible offer contrasting viewpoints on the concept of sin. Both literary works offer a set of moral and ethical principles for adherents, although they diverge significantly in their perspectives on sin. The Qur'an presents a broader perspective on the concept of sin compared to the Bible. Muslims believe that sin encompasses actions explicitly prohibited in the Qur'an and any act or thinking deemed displeasing to Allah. In Islamic theology, the concept of original sin is not a dogma that is inherent to the faith. According to the teachings of the Qur'an, human beings are born without the burden of sin, in contrast to the Bible, which discusses the concept of original sin as an inherent aspect of humankind. According to the Qur'an, it is asserted that Allah possesses knowledge of the intents harbored by individuals, hence rendering all actions and thoughts susceptible to being evaluated as wicked. Muslims emphasize the significance of possessing a pure heart and a genuine intention when participating in any endeavor, as this will guarantee the avoidance of transgressions.

In contrast, the Bible espouses a more limited perspective on sin. Sin is characterized as a deliberate violation of divine laws, encompassing idolatry, homicide, theft, and sexual immorality. The degree of emphasis placed on the significance of possessing a pure heart and sincere intentions differs between the Bible and the Qur'an. While the Qur'an emphasizes these qualities, the Bible highlights the need for repentance and forgiveness. According to biblical teachings, those who express genuine remorse and actively renounce their transgressions are eligible for divine forgiveness. The Bible teaches the need to repent in the following verses:

- Psalm 103:12, as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.
- Isaiah 1: 18, "Come now, let us settle the matter," says the Lord. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.
- Isaiah 43:25, "I, even I, am he who blots out, your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.
- Ephesians 4: 31-32, Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. 32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.
- 1 John 1:9, If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

The Qur'an and the Bible explore the notion of sin from distinct vantage points. As per the teachings of the Qur'an, sin is defined as an act that goes against the divine will of Allah, encompassing the inability to recognize and recognise the esteemed status of Prophet Muhammad, hence constituting an act of disobedience. According to the teachings of the Qur'an, it is posited that all individuals possess a

natural inclination towards committing transgressions. However, it is emphasized that Allah, characterized by mercy and forgiveness, offers the potential for believers to pursue repentance and attain absolution for their transgressions. The Qur'an emphasizes the importance of seeking forgiveness and acting in acts of atonement for one's faults while warning of the consequences of persistent disobedience and unwillingness to repent when forgiveness is not guaranteed.

The Bible espouses a perspective characterized by a greater emphasis on punishment. In the biblical context, sin is regarded as a transgression against the laws and commandments established by God and is frequently met with significant repercussions, such as mortality. Within the teachings of Jesus, a discernible inclination towards forgiveness and mercy concerning sin is evident, accompanied by the concept of salvation achieved by faith in Him. Despite the continued perception of sin as a grave transgression, adherents are presented with the prospect of salvation and absolution through the sacrificial act of Christ on the cross, which can be experientially discerned. The epistle to Ephesians 1:7 states, "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, following the riches of God's grace."

According to biblical accounts, the introduction of sin into the world can be attributed to the act of disobedience committed by our earliest ancestors, Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve disobeyed God's directive by consuming the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil. The introduction of sin into humanity and its subsequent consequences, including mortality, can be attributed to disobedience. The Bible offers the source of world sin in the following verses:

- Genesis 2: 16, And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."
- Genesis 3:6, When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate it. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.
- Romans 3:23, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God
- Romans 5:12, Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way, death came to all people, because all sinned
- Romans 6:23, For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Synonyms of Sin in the Qur'an

Sin in the Qur'an is differently presented from the Biblical standpoint. Let us look at some synonyms of sin in the Qur'an.

- Dhanb (pride) is thought of to be a pride sin which may end up preventing one from faith and thus leading to hell fire.
    - Qur'an 3:15-16, Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ "Shall I inform you of what is better than ˹all of˺ this? Those mindful ˹of Allah˺ will have Gardens with their Lord under which rivers flow, to stay there forever, and pure spouses, along with Allah's pleasure." And Allah is All-Seeing of ˹His˺ servants, 16 who pray, "Our Lord! We have believed, so forgive our sins and protect us from the torment of the Fire."
- Sayyi'a (minor sins) are common sins which can be forgiven.
    - Sura 4:31, If you avoid the major sins forbidden to you, We will absolve you of your ˹lesser˺ misdeeds and admit you into a place of honor.
- Ithm (intentional sins) these types of sins are the one does intentionally with a motive to defame or accuse someone falsely.
    - Qur'an 4:20-24, If you desire to replace a wife with another and you have given the former ˹even˺ a stack of gold ˹as a dowry˺, do not take any of it back. Would you ˹still˺ take it unjustly and very sinfully? 21 And how could you take it back after having enjoyed each other intimately and she has taken from you a firm commitment? 22 Do not marry former wives of your fathers—except what was done previously. It was indeed a shameful, despicable, and evil practice. 23 Also˺ forbidden to you for marriage are your mothers, your daughters, your sisters, your paternal and maternal aunts, your brother's daughters, your sister's daughters, your foster-mothers, your foster-sisters, your mothers-in-law, your stepdaughters under your guardianship if you have consummated marriage with their mothers—but if you have not, then you can marry them—nor the wives of your own sons, nor two sisters together at the same time—except what was done previously. Surely Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful. 24 Also ˹forbidden are˺ married women—except ˹female˺ captives in your possession. This is Allah's commandment to you. Lawful to you are all beyond these—as long as you seek them with your wealth in a legal marriage, not in fornication. Give those you have consummated marriage with their due dowries. It is permissible to be mutually gracious regarding the set dowry. Surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.
- *Shirk* (associating Allah with other gods) is a serious sin aimed at associating Allah with other gods. It led to hell of fire. Muslims are taught that if they sin, they should ask Allah for forgiveness. Allah, according to the Qur'an, overlooks the sins of those who follow the teaching of Prophet Muhammad. Read the following verses:
    - Qur'an 4:116 Surely Allah does not forgive associating ˹others˺ with Him ˹in worship˺, but forgives anything else of whoever He wills. Indeed, whoever associates ˹others˺ with Allah has clearly gone far astray.
    - Qur'an 11:3, And seek your Lord's forgiveness and turn to Him in repentance. He will grant you a good provision for an appointed term

and graciously reward the doers of good. But if you turn away, then I truly fear for you the torment of a formidable Day.

- Qur'an 47:2, As for those who believe, do good, and have faith in what has been revealed to Muḥammad—which is the truth from their Lord—He will absolve them of their sins and improve their condition.
- Qur'an 2:160, As for those who repent, mend their ways, and let the truth be known, they are the ones to whom I will turn ˹in forgiveness˺, for I am the Acceptor of Repentance, Most Merciful.

Synonyms of Sin in the Bible

The Bible uses many synonyms to describe sin, including iniquity, transgression, trespass, wickedness, rebellion, unrighteousness, error, and defilement. These terms all convey that sin is a violation of God's laws, a separation from him, or a rejection of his will. There are many synonyms for sin in the Bible, including:

- Iniquity: This term refers to moral wrongdoing or wickedness. It is often used to describe the sinfulness of human nature. Proverb 5:22 says, "The evil deeds of the wicked ensnare them; the cords of their sins hold them fast."
- Transgression: In the Bible, transgression describes the breaking of God's commandments. Proverbs 17:9, "Whoever would foster love covers over an offense, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends."
- Trespass: In the Bible, this term is often used to describe the sin of disobedience to God's laws. Exodus 22:9 states, "In all cases of illegal possession of an ox, a donkey, a sheep, a garment, or any other lost property about which somebody says, 'This is mine,' both parties are to bring their cases before the judges. The one whom the judges declare guilty must pay back double to the other."
- Wickedness: Is often used to describe the sinfulness of human nature or the actions of those who oppose God. Psalm 7:9 says, "Bring to an end the violence of the wicked and make the righteous secure— you, the righteous God who probes minds and hearts."
- Rebellion is used to describe the sin of disobedience to God's will or laws. The Bible in 1 Samuel 15:23 affirms, "For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has rejected you as king."
- Unrighteousness: Is often used to describe the sinfulness of human nature or the actions of those who oppose God. According to Leviticus 19:15, we hear, "Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly."
- Error: is used to describe the sin of turning away from God's truth and following false beliefs or practices. The Book of Ecclesiastes (10:5) says, "There is an evil I have seen under the sun, the sort of error that arises from a ruler:"

- Defilement: Is used to describe the sin of breaking God's commandments or engaging in immoral behavior. The Bible says, "For out of the heart come evil thoughts—murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. 20 These are what defile a person; but eating with unwashed hands does not defile them (Matthew 15:19)."

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BIBLICAL AND QUR'ANIC JESUS

Brief Distinction Between Biblical and Qur'anic Jesus/Isa

A notable distinction exists in the correlation between the Biblical figure of Jesus and the Qur'anic depiction of Isa. The Bible provides evidence supporting the belief that Jesus possesses both divine and human natures. As an individual who identifies as a divine offspring, he experiences the inherent entitlements associated with being the second entity within the Trinity, in conjunction with the Father and the Holy Spirit. According to biblical accounts, Jesus was crucified and resurrected on the third day, per his prophecies. The term "Jesus Christ" is a compound phrase that encompasses the meanings of "deliver" and "anointed one," both of which are attributed to Jesus. In contrast, the Qur'anic depiction of Isa portrays him as a progeny of Maryam (Mary) and a divine messenger of Allah, akin to preceding prophets (Qur'an 66:12). Following Islamic beliefs, it is asserted that Isa, like other individuals, consumed food, hence precluding his status as the son of God.

- Qur'an 66:12, ⌜There is⌝ also ⌜the example of⌝ Mary, the daughter of 'Imrân, who guarded her chastity, so We breathed into her ⌜womb⌝ through Our angel ⌜Gabriel⌝. She testified to the words of her Lord and His Scriptures and was one of the ⌜sincerely⌝ devout.

The Qur'an presents a contradictory perspective on Jesus as depicted in the Bible. The Qur'an designates Isa as al-Masih (Messiah) in some cases. Consequently, Allah facilitated Isa to emulate His teachings and principles. Within the Islamic faith, it is believed that Allah bestowed upon Isa (Jesus) the Gospel, known as the Injil, as a means of protecting against malevolent forces. However, the specific teachings conveyed within the Injil are not explicitly mentioned. The Qur'an contains prophecies on the future return of Isa (Jesus) to affirm and validate the teachings of Islam.

- Qur'an 5:46-47, Then in the footsteps of the prophets, We sent Jesus, son of Mary, confirming the Torah revealed before him. And We gave him the Gospel containing guidance and light and confirming what was revealed in the Torah—a guide and a lesson to the God-fearing. 47 So let the people of the Gospel judge by what Allah has revealed in it. And those who do not judge by what Allah has revealed are ⌜truly⌝ the rebellious.
- Qur'an 43:61, And his ⌜second⌝ coming is truly a sign for the Hour. So have no doubt about it, and follow me. This is the Straight Path.

In Islam, Prophet Muhammad revered Isa but claimed he was the last prophet, a true model of human character. The following verses have this to say:

- Qur'an 33:40, Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but is the Messenger of Allah and the seal of the prophets. And Allah has ⌜perfect⌝ knowledge of all things.
- Qur'an 47:19, So, know ⌜well, O Prophet,⌝ that there is no god ⌜worthy of worship⌝ except Allah. And seek forgiveness for your shortcomings and for

˹the sins of˺ the believing men and women. For Allah ˹fully˺ knows your movements and places of rest ˹O people˺.

Biblical Jesus

In Christianity, Jesus holds a pivotal role as the primary figure. He is seen as the offspring of God and the anticipated Messiah, as foretold in the Old Testament. The individual in question is said to have been conceived by a virgin and is attributed with numerous extraordinary acts, including restoring health to the infirm and providing sustenance to those in need. Ultimately, this individual was subjected to crucifixion under the authority of the Roman government. Nevertheless, after his demise, he experiences resurrection and ascends to the celestial realm, as documented in the biblical scriptures. The biblical text portrays Jesus as possessing both complete human and divine nature. At the same time, the fundamental tenet of Christianity asserts that humanity can attain forgiveness for its transgressions and attain everlasting life through Jesus' crucifixion and subsequent resurrection.

Based on the Qur'an and Bible teachings, the assertion can be made that the figure known as Jesus in Christianity, rather than Isa in Islam, is recognized as the authentic Son of God. By means of his redemptive sacrifice, Jesus achieved the reconciliation of humankind, which had fallen from grace, with the divine being known as God rather than with the Islamic deity, Allah. According to the Qur'an, the Islamic Isa did not partake in an atoning sacrifice, nor was he subjected to crucifixion, unlike Jesus. Two distinct individuals are evident when considering the two-person concept depicted in the Qur'an and the Bible. The narrative of Jesus' death is recounted in the Gospels and foretold in the Old Testament. According to a verse in the Qur'an (4:157), it is stated that someone other than Isa (Jesus) was subjected to crucifixion. The divergent characteristics, roles, and responsibilities attributed to Jesus in the Bible and the Qur'an lead to the inference that these two religious texts depict distinct individuals. The interpretation of Qur'an 19:33 suggests that Jesus will experience mortality despite the presence of other Qur'anic texts that may present contradictory viewpoints on this matter. See the following verses:

- Qur'an 4:157-158, and for boasting, "We killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the messenger of Allah." But they neither killed nor crucified him—it was only made to appear so. Even those who argue for this ˹crucifixion˺ are in doubt. They have no knowledge whatsoever—only making assumptions. They certainly did not kill him. 158 Rather, Allah raised him up to Himself. And Allah is Almighty, All-Wise.
- Qur'an 3:55— Remember˺ when Allah said, "O Jesus! I will take you and raise you up to Myself. I will deliver you from those who disbelieve, and elevate your followers above the disbelievers until the Day of Judgment. Then to Me you will ˹all˺ return, and I will settle all your disputes.
- Qur'an 3:144—Muhammad is only a messenger before whom many messengers have been and gone.
- Qur'an 5:117 I never told them anything except what You ordered me to say: "Worship Allah—my Lord and your Lord!" And I was witness over them as long as

I remained among them. But when You took me, You were the Witness over them—and You are a Witness over all things.

- Qur'an 19:33 Peace be upon me the day I was born, the day I die, and the day I will be raised back to life![70]

The Biblical text presents Jesus as God's divine Son and humankind's redeemer. According to Christian doctrine, Jesus underwent crucifixion, subsequent death, and subsequent resurrection, with his teachings serving as the fundamental principles of the Christian religion. According to the Qur'an, Isa is acknowledged as a prophet and messenger of Allah. However, there exists a divergence between Islamic and Christian beliefs regarding the characterization of Jesus, as he is not acknowledged as the Son of Allah or the redeemer of humanity in Islamic theology. However, he holds significant prominence as a prophet within the Islamic faith and is regarded as one of the pivotal figures among notable individuals, including Adam, Abraham, Moses, and Muhammad. Based on Islamic doctrine, Isa is believed to have been born to Mary, a virgin, although it is asserted that he did not undergo crucifixion. In Islamic belief, it is understood that Allah elevated him to the heavens, and he is believed to descend to the earthly realm before the Day of Judgment. In general, notable theological disparities exist between the Biblical and Qur'anic narratives of Jesus/Isa. Upon careful examination of both the Bible and the Qur'an, it becomes evident that they depict distinct individuals being referenced. Upon careful examination of the depictions of Jesus in the Bible and the Qur'an, it becomes evident that these two sources present Jesus as distinct entities.

[70] Haleem, Sahih International, Yusuf Ali find out who are these
Jesus is mentioned in 15 Suras and 93 verses; while this is not trivial, Abraham is mentioned over 240 times and Moses over 500 times. Gregory R. Lanier "It Was Made to Appear Like that to Them:" Islam's Denial of Jesus' Crucifixion, Reformed Theological Seminary, Orlando https://journal.rts.edu/article/it-was-made-to-appear-like-that-to-them-islams-denial-of-jesus-crucifixion-in-the-Qur'an-and-dogmatic-tradition/

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

SALVATION IN THE QUR'AN AND THE BIBLE

Brief Description of Salvation in the Qur'an and the Bible

The notion of salvation holds significant prominence in the Qur'an and the Bible. The two literary works present distinct interpretations of the concept of salvation. However, both offer valuable perspectives on how individuals who adhere to a particular faith can attain spiritual emancipation and everlasting existence. The Qur'an has numerous allusions to the concept of salvation. The Qur'an portrays redemption as a transformative journey wherein adherents seek solace and absolution from Allah.

According to the teachings of the Qur'an, Allah is characterized by attributes of mercy and forgiveness. It is emphasized that Allah will grant forgiveness to individuals who genuinely repent and renounce their sinful behavior. Individuals who demonstrate unwavering devotion to Allah and a virtuous lifestyle will receive recompense in the form of salvation and an everlasting existence in Paradise. The Bible portrays salvation as a multifaceted journey of spiritual metamorphosis rather than a mere act of absolution. As per biblical teachings, individuals seeking salvation must acknowledge Jesus Christ as their Savior. According to Christian doctrine, Jesus is regarded as the exclusive means of attaining salvation. It is believed that individuals who place their faith in Him will be delivered from everlasting damnation and bestowed with everlasting existence. John 14:6 states, "Jesus answered, I am the way, truth, and life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Salvation, as depicted in both the Qur'an and the Bible, is perceived as a bestowed benevolence from God/Allah, accessible to individuals who adhere to His precepts and uphold a virtuous existence. Both scriptures highlight the significance of faith and obedience to God/Allah to attain this blessing. In essence, both literary works concur that salvation serves as a means to attain everlasting existence and achieve spiritual emancipation. However, the Qur'an unequivocally rejects the concept of Jesus' sacrificial atonement on the cross. Consequently, this presents an obstacle to examining salvation as it is comprehended in the biblical context. The prevalence of the concept of docetism was notable during the composition of the First Epistle of John. During the observance of Prophet Muhammad Day, it was not uncommon to encounter heretical factions who rejected the human nature of Jesus. These organizations included the Monophysites, Julianists, Gnostic Basilides, and Nestorians.[71] The Qur'an denies Jesus' divinity, which negatively impacts the Biblical teaching of original sin and total human depravity. If Jesus' death was not for atonement of sin, then the Qur'anic and Biblical Jesus are two different people. [72]

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[71] Gabriel Said Reynolds, "The Muslim Jesus: Dead or Alive?" Bulletin of SOAS 72/2 (2009), 349

[72] Anthony McRoy, "The Christ of Shia Islam," ERT 30/4 (2006), 340; Oakes, "Review of The Crucifixion," 121; https://journal.rts.edu/article/it-was-made-to-appear-like-that-to-them-islams-denial-of-jesus-crucifixion-in-the-Qur'an-and-dogmatic-tradition/#post-19-footnote-35https://journal.rts.edu/article/it-was-made-to-appear-like-that-to-them-islams-denial-of-jesus-crucifixion-in-the-Qur'an-and-dogmatic-tradition/#post-19-footnote-35

The Doctrine of Docetism

The theological concept of Docetism emerged within the early Christian community throughout the initial and subsequent centuries of the Common Era (CE). The concept posits that Jesus, the divine offspring, exhibited a semblance of humanity yet did not possess corporeal existence. On the contrary, the Docetic belief system posits that Jesus possessed a divine nature and just assumed the appearance of humanity to carry out the divine agenda of redemption.[73] As mentioned earlier, the belief presents a contrasting perspective to the conventional Christian understanding of the incarnation, which asserts that Jesus possessed both divine and human natures in their entirety. The doctrine of Docetism posits that Jesus exhibited the appearance of humanity while possessing divinity.

This belief system was likely developed in response to the Gnostic belief that Jesus was wholly divine and could not be a man.[74] Colossian 2:8 says, “See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.” It is believed that the Docetic belief system was developed by a group of early Christian sectarians known as the Docetists or Ebionites. Ebionites taught that “Jesus was just a mere man who by his obedience to the law was justified and became the Messiah.” [75] The doctrine of Docetism denies the reality of the incarnation, the belief that Jesus was entirely God and fully man. The Docetists believed that Jesus’ body was only an illusion, a phantom and that he did not suffer and die on the cross. This belief system was widely rejected by the early Church Fathers, who argued that Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection were necessary for the salvation of humanity. The Bible responds very well to Docetism in the following words:

- John 1:14, The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- 1 John 2:22, Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist—he denies the Father and the Son. 23 No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

The Doctrine of Monophysites

The doctrine of Monophysitism is a theological belief that Christ had only one nature, which was divine.[76] This belief is rooted in the teachings of Cyril of Alexandria, a fourth-century Christian theologian. The belief was widely accepted by Eastern Christians, especially those in Egypt and Syria, and has been a significant

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[73] Alex Varughese, eds, Discovering the Bible, Story and Faith of the Biblical Communities (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 2005),423.

[74] Varughese, 368, 375, 390

[75] Bruce L. Shelley, Church History in Plain Language (Dallas: World Publishing House, 1995), 50.

[76] Gonzalez, 343-344.

source of controversy and division within the Church for centuries. Monophysitism holds that Christ had a single divine nature that united the two natures of the human and divine. This belief is based on the teachings of the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Philippians, which states that in Christ, “the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily” (2:6). Monophysites believe that Christ had a single divine nature that was both human and divine and that this was the only nature in which he existed. The Bible responds to this doctrine in Hebrew 1:3, “The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.”

This perspective diverges from the principles outlined in the Chalcedonian Creed, which affirms the coexistence of two separate natures inside Christ - human nature and divine nature - that are unified in a single person. The Monophysite doctrine is founded upon the premise that the union of Christ’s human and divine natures is indivisible and that the human essence of Christ was fully absorbed into his divine nature. Monophysites adhere to the belief that the magnitude of Christ’s divine essence was such magnitude that it entirely subsumed his human nature, resulting in the complete absorption of the latter into the former. Consequently, their belief posits that Christ possessed a one nature rather than a dual nature. Monophysitism, a significant component of Christian theology dating back to the 4th century, has consistently engendered contentious debates and schisms within the Church. Many Eastern Christians have embraced the Monophysite belief, although Western Christians have predominantly rejected it. As mentioned earlier, the circumstances have resulted in a division between the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church, an unresolved schism. The Monophysite doctrine holds a prominent position within Christian theology and has substantially influenced the Church throughout its historical development. As mentioned earlier, the idea has engendered extensive discourse and discord, yet it remains a tenet that numerous adherents of Christianity continue to uphold in contemporary times.

The Chalcedonian Creed (451 AD)

Therefore, following the holy fathers, we all with one accord teach men to acknowledge one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and indeed man, consisting also of a reasonable soul and body; of one substance with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards his manhood; like us in all respects, apart from sin; as regards his Godhead, begotten of the Father before the ages, but yet as regards his manhood begotten, for us men and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin, the God-bearer; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, recognized in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and subsistence, not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus

Christ; even as the prophets from earliest times spoke of him, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us, and the creed of the fathers has handed down to us.[77]

The following are Bible support for the Chalcedonian Creed among many:

- John 1:14, 18, The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. 18 No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.
- John 17:5, 24, And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began. 24 Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.
- Romans 1:3-4, regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David, 4 and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.
- Philippians 2:6-8 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death even death on a cross!

Doctrine of Julianists

This theological perspective can be classified as a variant of Monophysitism, asserting that the body of Christ was inherently incapable of experiencing pain or suffering. Julian, the proponent of this concept, claimed that this notion was crucial to establish the voluntary nature of Christ's suffering and death. Julian's adherence to Aphthartodocetism Christology compelled him to repudiate St. Cyril's doctrinal stance regarding transforming Christ's body after the Resurrection. The Aphthartodocetist heresy, according to Julian, pertains to the theological concept of the incorruptibility of Christ's physical body.

Doctrine of the Gnostics

The ideology of Gnosticism is a comprehensive and intricate religious and philosophical belief system that originated during the formative period of Christianity. The term "gnosis" originates from the Greek term denoting "knowledge," at the core of Gnostic teachings lies the conviction that redemption is achieved through acquiring esoteric knowledge, referred to as gnosis. The doctrine places significant

[77] Justin Holcomb, Know the Creeds and Councils (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing, 2014), 53-62. Sinclair Ferguson, "Chalcedon: A Defining Moment For The Doctrine Of Christ," (December 2, 2019) ,https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/chalcedon . Date accessed Monday, August 7, 2023.

emphasis on acquiring esoteric knowledge to attain redemption. According to Gnostic philosophy, a belief system exists wherein the material realm is intrinsically imperfect, and individuals experience a state of spiritual estrangement. Additionally, it is held by adherents of this belief system that the inner essence of an individual serves as a manifestation of the divine and that the acquisition of gnosis, or spiritual knowledge, can be achieved through experiences of a spiritual nature and the attainment of enlightenment. While deemed heretical by mainstream Christianity, Gnosticism has had a notable effect on other religious and philosophical groups throughout historical contexts.

Doctrine of Basilideans

The Basilideans were a Christian group that emerged during the 2nd century AD, deriving their name from their founder, Basilides. The group possessed intricate and arcane doctrines rooted in a distinctive understanding of the teachings of Jesus and the Bible. They placed particular emphasis on the conviction in the existence of boundless Eons, the application of Gnosis, the pre-existence of the soul, reincarnation, and the spiritual elucidation of Jesus' teachings. The Basilidians identified themselves as having transcended their Jewish heritage and surpassed the boundaries of Christianity. Like other adherents of Gnosticism, Basilides espoused the belief that salvation is attained by acquiring knowledge rather than faith.

The Doctrine of Nestorians

The Nestorians were a sect of Christianity that emerged in the 5th century AD, named after their leader Nestorius.[78] The group in question gained recognition for their unconventional doctrines regarding the essence of Jesus Christ, resulting in their official censure by the Council of Ephesus in the year 431 AD. Their theological tenets emphasized the duality of Jesus Christ, asserting that he existed as two different entities, one being human and the other divine, as opposed to a singular being embodying both human and divine natures. As mentioned earlier, the concept gave rise to considerable disagreement within the early Christian Church due to its perceived divergence from the established teaching of the Trinity. However, the Nestorians managed to uphold their distinct communities, and as a result, their doctrines gradually disseminated to regions such as the Middle East, India, and China. This dissemination had a noteworthy influence on advancing Christian theology and facilitated widespread missionary endeavors.

Based on the various heresies mentioned above, Islamic teaching on Christ atoning sacrifice does not occur. If that does not happen, then the Biblical soteriology is foreign among Muslims. Moreover, because the Qur'an does not hold a Biblical view of salvation nor such doctrines of redemption, the role of Jesus in the Qur'an is

[78] Sidney H. Griffith, The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque: Christians and Muslims in the World of Islam (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2010), 41.

reduced to a mere prophet.[79] Islamic denial of the crucifixion renders redemption doctrine and understanding of the cross irrelevant among Muslims. The New Encyclopaedia of Islam affirms that Isa's crucifixion discussion serves no purpose, so it is rejected.[80] The Qur'an 4:157 outrightly reject the crucifixion story, as noted here below:

- Qur'an 4:157, and for boasting, "We killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the messenger of Allah." But they neither killed nor crucified him—it was only made to appear so. Even those who argue for this ⌜crucifixion⌝ are in doubt. They have no knowledge whatsoever—only making assumptions. They certainly did not kill him.

The Bible does not shy away from teaching that all people are sinners and worthy of death and punishment in hell. The book of Acts states, "They replied, Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household (16:31)." Unlike the Qur'an, the Bible acknowledges that salvation comes only through faith in Jesus' sacrificial death and resurrection. God's love for humanity compelled Him to send His Son to the world for redemption from sins. Salvation is by faith in the finished work of Christ, as we see in the following texts:

- John 3:16, For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
- John 3:36 , Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on them.
- Romans 10:9-11, For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. 11 As Scripture says, Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.

The Bible teaches a simple faith and forgiveness of sin through acceptance of Jesus, which the Qur'an outrightly rejects. Muslims are taught that Allah, being merciful, accepts those who repent their sins of ignorance. If they repent quickly, they are forgiven. However, if one continues to sin and repent before death, such sins are not forgiven. If someone continues to sin and then repents just before they die, they will not be forgiven, as noted in Qur'an 4:17: "Allah only accepts the repentance of those who commit evil ignorantly ⌜or recklessly⌝ then repent soon after—Allah will pardon them. And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise." Whereas the Bible teaches the simplicity of faith in Christ, Muslims are taught about having suitable related types of salvation. For instance, a person must follow the five pillars to be saved, which include:

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[79] Chedid provides an example of this view: "Since Islam rejects the whole concept of a fallen human nature and the principle of vicarious atonement for sin, it follows naturally that the denial of the meaning of the cross becomes a condition for their theology." Bassam M. Chedid, Islam: What Every Christian Should Know [New York: EP Books, 2004), 199.

[80] "The crucifixion of Jesus does not play a role in the Islamic perspective any more than does his superhuman origin, for salvation in Islam results from the recognition of the Absoluteness of God and not from a sacrificial mystery. Since Islam believes that Jesus will return at the end of time, his death was no more than apparent and did not, as in Christian belief, involve a resurrection after the event" (New Encyclopaedia of Islam, 239, https://rowman.com/ISBN/9781442223486/The-New-Encyclopedia-of-Islam-Fourth-Edition#:~:text=The%20 acclaimed%20 New%20Encyclopedia%20of,culture%20of%20the%20Islamic%20world.

1. Profession of Faith (shahada): “There is no god but God, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God.”
2. Prayer (salat): five times a day: at dawn, noon, mid-afternoon, sunset, and after dark.
3. Alms (zakat): donating a fixed portion of income to community members in need.
4. Fasting (sawm): during the daylight hours of Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, all healthy adults abstain from food and drink.
5. Pilgrimage (hajj): if health and finances permit, every Muslim must make at least one visit to the holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia.

The Qur’an does not provide a definitive assurance of the remission of sins. Performing a virtuous act can result in divine forgiveness following Allah’s will and predetermined plan. If one’s deeds are good, then one may obtain pardon. Even Prophet Muhammad was not sure of his salvation according to Qur’an 46:9. See the following verses:

- Qur’an 7:6-9, We will surely question those who received messengers and We will question the messengers ˹themselves˺.7 Then We will give them a full account with sure knowledge—for We were never absent. 8 The weighing on that Day will be just. As for those whose scale will be heavy ˹with good deeds˺, ˹only˺ they will be successful. 9 But those whose scale is light, they have doomed themselves for wrongfully denying Our signs.
- Qur’an 46:9, Say, “I am not the first message ever sent, nor do I know what will happen to me or you. I only follow what is revealed to me. And I am only sent with a clear warning.”
- Qur’an 7:188, Say, “I have no power to benefit or protect myself, except by the Will of Allah. If I had known the unknown, I would have benefited myself enormously, and no harm would have ever touched me. I am only a warner and deliverer of good news for those who believe.”

Eternal Life and the Day of Judgment in the Bible and the Qur’an

The concept of eternal life is discussed among people of various religious backgrounds, including Christians, Muslims, and Jews. Both the Bible and the Qur’an contain references to eternal life, and the teachings of each faith can provide insight into how this concept is interpreted. The Bible teaches that eternal life is a reward for faithfulness to God. In John 3:16, Jesus says, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” In other words, those who accept Jesus as their savior will be granted eternal life. The Bible also speaks of an afterlife that is a continuation of life on earth, with those who have accepted Jesus as their savior entering a paradise known as Heaven. The Bible also references a place of punishment known as Hell, where those who have rejected God will spend eternity.

The Bible declares that eternal life is often linked to believing in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Saviour of humanity. Accordingly, eternal life is granted to those who believe in Jesus and accept him as their savior. The book of John 14:6

states, Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” These verses make it clear that in Christianity, eternal life is attainable only through faith in Jesus.

The Qur’an also addresses the concept of everlasting life, albeit with a distinct emphasis compared to the Bible. According to the teachings of the Qur’an, death is not considered a definitive termination but rather a passage to an existence beyond the present life. Individuals who have adhered to a virtuous existence and faithfully embraced the principles and doctrines of Islam shall be granted the recompense of everlasting existence within Jannah, also known as Paradise. On the contrary, individuals who have engaged in transgressions and refused to adhere to the principles and doctrines of Islam will be subjected to punitive measures within the realm of Hell, enduring an everlasting duration within. The Qur’an associates the notion of everlasting existence with the concept of salvation. However, it does not confine this belief to a particular religious persona. According to the teachings of the Qur’an, individuals who possess unwavering trust in Allah, acknowledge the prophethood of Muhammad, and lead a morally upright existence are promised the attainment of everlasting life in Jannah. The Qur’an states:

- Qur’an 2:25, Give good news ˹O Prophet˺ to those who believe and do good that they will have Gardens under which rivers flow. Whenever provided with fruit, they will say, “This is what we were given before,” for they will be served fruit that looks similar ˹but tastes different˺. They will have pure spouses, and they will be there forever.
- Qur’an 18:30, states, “As for those who believe and do good, We certainly never deny the reward of those who are best in deeds.” Similarly, Qur’an 3:185 states, “Every soul will taste death. And you will only receive your full reward on the Day of Judgment. Whoever is spared from the Fire and is admitted into Paradise will ˹indeed˺ triumph, whereas the life of this world is no more than the delusion of enjoyment.”

The preceding passages elucidate that within the Islamic faith, individuals who possess an unwavering belief in Allah and lead a morally upright existence are bestowed with the prospect of everlasting life.

Rewarding the Mujahid in Jannah in the Qur’an

The Qur’an teaches that mujahid are promised multiple women in Jannah. These women, called Hoor-al-Ayn (maiden), shall accompany faithful Muslim men in paradise. Faithful Muslim women will receive only one man, but men can have multiple wives. Whatever one needs in Jannah shall get according to the Qur’an 43:71. Young people shall serve the faithful men as they recline on the couch. Several Qur’anic verses support the issues of Mujahid in the Qur’an, such as:

- Qur’an 43:71, Golden trays and cups will be passed around to them. There will be whatever the souls desire and the eyes delight in. And you will be there forever.

- Qur'an 44:51-54, Indeed, the righteous will be in a secure place, 52 amid Gardens and springs, 53 dressed in fine silk and rich brocade, facing one another. 54 So it will be. And We will pair them to maidens with gorgeous eyes.
- Qur'an 52:24, And they will be waited on by their youthful servants like spotless pearls.
- Qur'an 56:17,22, They will be waited on by eternal youths, 22 And ˹they will have˺ maidens with gorgeous eyes,
- Qur'an 76:19, They will be waited on by eternal youths. If you saw them, you would think they were scattered pearls.
- Sunan Ibn Majah Volume 5, Book 37, Hadith 4337— Abu Umama narrated: "The Messenger of God said, 'Everyone that God admits into paradise will be married to 72 wives; two of them are houris and seventy of his inheritance of the female dwellers of hell. All of them will have libidinous sex organs, and he will have an ever-erect penis."

While the Bible and the Qur'an speak of eternal life, there are irreconcilable differences in how each text speaks about it. For example, the Bible emphasizes faith in Jesus as the means of obtaining eternal life, while the Qur'an emphasizes living a righteous life and following the teachings of Islam. Additionally, the Bible speaks of Heaven and Hell as two distinct places, while the Qur'an speaks of a more unified afterlife, where both Heaven and Hell are part of the same plane of existence. It is important to note that both the Bible and the Qur'an also teach about the possibility of eternal punishment in a place called hell or Jahannam. The Bible states in Revelation 20:15, "And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire." The Qur'an states in 2:166, "But as for those who disbelieve and deny Our signs - those will be companions of the Fire; they will abide therein eternally." Regarding marriages in Heaven, the Bible states, "At the resurrection, people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven (Matthew 22:30)." Nonetheless, the Qur'an contradicts the Bible and affirms faithful Muslims will be given 72 wives. In contrast, Muslim ladies will be given each man in heaven.

Biblical Teaching on Eternal Life

The Bible is filled with promises of rewards for faithful Christians in heaven. From the Old to the New Testament, the Bible emphasizes that those who serve God will be rewarded in the afterlife. The Bible promises that faithful Christians will receive a glorious inheritance in heaven. 1 Peter 1:4 states, "To an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you." This passage suggests that faithful Christians will receive an eternal inheritance in heaven far more valuable than anything they could ever receive on earth.

The Bible writes that Christians will be rewarded according to their works, with some receiving a greater reward than others. It compares the way a wise and foolish builder builds on a good foundation, as noted in the book of Matthew 7:23-27 in the following words:

- Matthew 7: 24 “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

The quality of the foundation determines the quality of the reward. In 2 Corinthians 5:10, the Bible writes, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.” This passage teaches that all Christians will be judged according to their deeds and receive a reward accordingly. The Bible also teaches that rewards will be given to Christians who have shown faithfulness in specific areas of life. In Matthew 25:14-30, Jesus tells the parable of the talents, in which a master entrusts his servants with various amounts of money.

- Matthew 25:14-30 “Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. 15 To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. 16 The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. 17 So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. 18 But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.19 ”After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. 20 The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.’ 21 “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’22 ” The man with two bags of gold also came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.’ 23 “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’24 ”Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 25 So I was afraid and went out and hide your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’26 “His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? 27 Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest. 28 ” ’So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. 29 For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. 30 And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

The servants who are faithful with the money they are given will be rewarded, while the servant who buries his talent will be punished. The Book of Revelation 22:12 points to an imagery of rewards in the form of crowns, which is popular in Christianity in the following words:

- Revelation 22:12-13 Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done. 13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

It is important to note that the Bible also teaches that our ultimate reward is to be with God in heaven and that all other rewards are secondary. As stated in Matthew 6:33, “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” Colossians 3:23-24 states, “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.”

Comparison Between the Bible and the Qur’an on Matters of Heavenly Reward

The concept of heavenly reward is found throughout the New Testament. Christians believe they will be rewarded according to their works, with some receiving a greater reward than others, as stated in 1 Corinthians 3:11-15. The Bible also teaches that rewards will be given to Christians who have shown faithfulness in specific areas of life, as in the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30. The ultimate reward for Christians is to be with God in heaven, and all other rewards are secondary.

In contrast, the Qur’an asserts that the ultimate recompense for adherents of Islam is the attainment of paradise, commonly referred to as Jannah, and the experience of being in the divine presence. According to the Qur’an, paradise is depicted as a realm characterized by physical and spiritual pleasures, encompassing elements such as lush gardens, flowing rivers, and the cherished presence of beloved individuals. The Qur’an states that the gateway to paradise is through righteousness and good deeds, as stated in Qur’an 3:133-134 “And hasten towards forgiveness from your Lord and a Paradise as vast as the heavens and the earth, prepared for those mindful ʿof Allahʾ.”

Even with that reward similarity in heaven, each faith's details differ. Whereas no women are given in the Bible as a reward, the Qur’an assert that Mujahid shall be given a maiden as a reward amounting to 72. The Bible promises that faithful Christians will receive a crown of life. The book of James 1:12 states, “Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him. This crown of life symbolizes the eternal life that awaits faithful Christians in heaven.” The Bible also promises that faithful Christians will receive a crown of righteousness. 2 Timothy 4:8 states, “Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me

but also to all who have loved his appearing." This crown of righteousness symbolizes the righteousness that will come to those who have faithfully served God.

The Bible does not promise marriage in the afterlife as the Qur'an teaches. Instead, it tells us that people will be like angels and not married to each other. The following is a response from Jesus towards those concerns:

- Matthew 22:23-30, That same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question. 24 "Teacher," they said, "Moses told us that if a man dies without having children, his brother must marry the widow and raise up offspring for him. 25 Now there were seven brothers among us. The first one married and died, and since he had no children, he left his wife to his brother. 26 The same thing happened to the second and third brother, right on down to the seventh. 27 Finally, the woman died. 28 Now then, at the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven, since all of them were married to her?" 29 Jesus replied, "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God. 30 At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven. 31 But about the resurrection of the dead—have you not read what God said to you, 32 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not the God of the dead but of the living."

The Bible explicitly conveys the notion that the crucifixion of Jesus effectively neutralized the potency of death and established a pathway towards everlasting existence. According to the early church's theological perspective on the salvific nature of Jesus and the attainment of eternal life, it was believed that a believer's soul could transcend physical existence and find solace in the divine presence of God. The deceased individual's soul, now in heaven's realm, possesses a discernible, glorified and imperishable physical form. The novel organism no longer relies on conventional human faculties for its sustenance. This perspective contradicts the teachings of the Qur'an, which stipulate that males are permitted to have multiple wives. At the same time, women are encouraged to maintain a monogamous relationship with one man as a manifestation of their devotion to Allah. Individuals who reject the completed work of Christ face the perilous prospect of eternal damnation in an inextinguishable inferno. Once an individual enters the realm of hell, there is no possibility of escape or departure. According to biblical teachings, individuals whose names are not recorded in the Book of Life will be cast into the lake of fire.

- 2 Timothy 1:10, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.
- 2 Corinthians 5:8, We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.
- Revelation 21:4, 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

- 1 Corinthians 15:53, For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.
- Mark 9:44, If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out.
- Luke 16:23, In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side.
- Jude 1:23, save others by snatching them from the fire; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.
- Matthew 8:12, But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.
- Revelation 20:15, Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

Like the Bible, the Qur'an similarly teaches life after death but differently. A Day of Judgement is given priority, where the dead will rise to life to be judged. According to the Qur'an, Jahannam is depicted as the eternal abode for individuals who engage in wicked deeds. The following verses teach about eternal destiny:

- Qur'an 25:12, Once it sees them from a distance, they will hear it fuming and growling.
- Qur'an 6:128, ˹Consider˺ the Day He will gather them ˹all˺ together and say, "O assembly of jinn! You misled humans in great numbers." And their human associates will say, "Our Lord! We benefited from each other's company, but now we have reached the term which You appointed for us." ˹Then˺ He will say, "The Fire is your home, yours to stay in forever, except whoever Allah wills to spare." Surely your Lord is All-Wise, All-Knowing.
- Qur'an 11:107, As for those bound for misery, they will be in the Fire, where they will be sighing and gasping,

There are several differences between Islamic teachings on the afterlife reward and those in the Bible. Here are a few key points:

- Heaven and Hell: Both Islam and Christianity believe in the existence of Heaven and Hell. However, the descriptions and criteria for entry into each are different. In Islam, Heaven is described as a place of eternal pleasure and reward for those who have lived righteous lives and have submitted to the will of Allah. Hell is a place of punishment for those who have rejected Allah and lived in disobedience. In Christianity, Heaven is also described as a place of eternal reward, but it is accessed through faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Hell is a place of eternal punishment for those who have rejected Christ.
- Judgment Day: Both religions also believe in a Judgment Day, but the criteria for judgment and the nature of the event differ. In Islam, the judgment is based on a person's deeds and intentions, and their book of deeds (called the "Record of Deeds" or "Book of Life") is presented before Allah for evaluation. In Christianity, judgment is also based on a person's deeds, but faith in Jesus

Christ as Lord and Savior is key. The event is referred to as the “Great White Throne Judgment.”

- Resurrection: Islam and Christianity both believe in the resurrection of the dead, but the nature of the resurrection is different. In Islam, the resurrection is physical; every person is resurrected in their own body. In Christianity, the resurrection is also physical, but believers receive new glorified bodies that are imperishable and free from sin.

- Paradise: The depictions of Paradise in Islam and Christianity exhibit notable distinctions. According to Islamic teachings, Paradise is depicted as a realm characterized by lush gardens, flowing rivers, and opulent delights, wherein adherents are reunited with their cherished companions and experience everlasting felicity. Within Christianity, Paradise is frequently linked to the concept of the New Jerusalem, as shown in the Book of Revelation. This celestial city is portrayed as being adorned with gold and beautiful gemstones. It is believed to be the dwelling place of believers who would bask in the complete manifestation of God’s splendor.

- Salvation: The means of salvation in Islam and Christianity are different. In Islam, salvation is achieved through faith in Allah and good deeds, while in Christianity, salvation is a gift of God’s grace through faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

Overall, while there are similarities between Islamic and Christian teachings on the afterlife reward, there are also significant differences in the criteria for entry into Heaven, the nature of judgment, and the means of salvation.

Many rewards are mentioned in the Qur’an for both men and women who follow Allah, and some of these rewards are specific to women. Here are seven examples of rewards mentioned in the Qur’an that are specifically for women who follow Allah:

- Paradise: The Qur’an mentions that righteous women who believe in Allah and do good deeds will enter Paradise, where they will have everlasting life and be rewarded with blessings and pleasures.
    - Qur’an 78:31-34, “Indeed, the righteous will have salvation, Gardens, vineyards,33 and full-bosomed maidens of equal age, 34 and full cups ˹of pure wine˺.”
- Protection from Hellfire: Women who obey Allah and follow His commandments will be saved from the punishment of Hellfire.
    - Qur’an 4:124, But those who do good—whether male or female—and have faith will enter Paradise and will never be wronged ˹even as much as˺ the speck on a date stone.
- Forgiveness of Sins: Women who repent for their sins and turn back to Allah will be forgiven and granted mercy.
    - Qur’an 4:16, And the two among you who commit this sin—discipline them. If they repent and mend their ways, relieve them. Surely Allah is ever Accepting of Repentance, Most Merciful.

- Equal Reward: Women who believe in Allah and do good deeds will be rewarded just as men are.
  - Qur'an 33:35 Surely ˹for˺ Muslim men and women, believing men and women, devout men and women, truthful men and women, patient men and women, humble men and women, charitable men and women, fasting men and women, men and women who guard their chastity, and men and women who remember Allah often—for ˹all of˺ them Allah has prepared forgiveness and a great reward.
- Guidance and Blessings: Women who follow Allah's guidance and seek His blessings will be guided and blessed in this life and in the Hereafter.
  - Qur'an 16:97, Whoever does good, whether male or female, and is a believer, We will surely bless them with a good life, and We will certainly reward them according to the best of their deeds.
- Protection and Provision: Allah promises to protect and provide for women who put their trust in Him.
  - Qur'an 65:2-3, Then when they have ˹almost˺ reached the end of their waiting period, either retain them honorably or separate from them honourably.1 And call two of your reliable men to witness ˹either way˺—and ˹let the witnesses˺ bear true testimony for ˹the sake of˺ Allah. This is enjoined on whoever has faith in Allah and the Last Day. And whoever is mindful of Allah, He will make a way out for them,3 and provide for them from sources they could never imagine. And whoever puts their trust in Allah, then He ˹alone˺ is sufficient for them. Certainly Allah achieves His Will. Allah has already set a destiny for everything.
- Honor and Dignity: Women who believe in Allah and follow His commandments will be honored and respected.
  - Qur'an 49:13, O humanity! Indeed, We created you from a male and a female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you may ˹get to˺ know one another. Surely the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous among you. Allah is truly All-Knowing, All-Aware.
- Marriages in paradise: The Qur'an does mention that believers who enter Paradise will be rewarded with spouses, but it does not specify that women will be married to men exclusively. In fact, the Qur'an suggests that both men and women will have spouses who are compatible and suitable for them. Allah describes the rewards of Paradise and mentions the "companions of equal age" that believers will be given as noted in Qur'an 78:31-33.
  - Qur'an 2:25, Give good news ˹O Prophet˺ to those who believe and do good that they will have Gardens under which rivers flow. Whenever provided with fruit, they will say, "This is what we were given before," for they will be served fruit that looks similar ˹but tastes different˺. They will have pure spouses, and they will be there forever.

The Bible does not support any form of marriage in heaven. Jesus categorically said that people shall be like angels in Mark 12:25, "When the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven." The biblical text frequently employs the metaphorical framework of marriage to depict the intricate bond between Christ and the church, in contrast to

the Islamic tradition, where marriage is understood as a literal and physical union. From a theological perspective, marriage can be interpreted as a metaphysical bond that symbolizes the ultimate connection between devout individuals and Christ in the celestial realm. The Biblical teachings employ metaphorical language to explain the relationship between Jesus and the Church, in contrast to the Qur'an, which portrays weddings in a literal sense. The following verses are in support of that metaphor issue:

- 2 Corinthians 11:2, I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him.
- Ephesians 5:22-24, Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.
- Ephesians 5:32, This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.
- 1 John 3:2, Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.
- Revelation 19:7-9, Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. 7 Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. 8 Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God's holy people.) 9 Then the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!" And he added, "These are the true words of God."

The Qur'anic Doctrine of Hell and Benefits of Jannah

The doctrine of purgatory is insinuated in the Qur'an 6:128. Maybe the concept is thought of to say there are those whom Allah will rescue from hell. A layer for some people, such as Muslims, Christians and Jews, is temporary, while those without faith have a permanent status.

- Qur'an 6:128, ˹Consider˺ the Day He will gather them ˹all˺ together and say, "O assembly of jinn! You misled humans in great numbers." And their human associates will say, "Our Lord! We benefited from each other's company,1 but now we have reached the term which You appointed for us." ˹Then˺ He will say, "The Fire is your home, yours to stay in forever, except whoever Allah wills to spare."2 Surely your Lord is All-Wise, All-Knowing.

The Qur'an expresses that in Jannah, an equivalent to Biblical heaven is the final home and reward for the righteous.

- Qur’an 13:24, It is Allah Who has raised the heavens without pillars—as you can see—then established Himself on the Throne. He has subjected the sun and the moon, each orbiting for an appointed term. He conducts the whole affair. He makes the signs clear so that you may be certain of the meeting with your Lord.
- Qur’an 3:15 Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ “Shall I inform you of what is better than ˹all of˺ this? Those mindful ˹of Allah˺ will have Gardens with their Lord under which rivers flow, to stay there forever, and pure spouses, along with Allah’s pleasure.” And Allah is All-Seeing of ˹His˺ servants,

Jannah is commonly seen as a realm where individuals reside close to Allah, experiencing an ideal state of tranquillity. Similar to the depiction of the Garden of Eden in the biblical Book of Genesis, devout adherents of Islam are assured of an eternal paradise adorned with flowing rivers. In this horticultural setting, devout adherents of the Islamic faith will don opulent and aesthetically pleasing garments. In contrast to the biblical notion of conquerors in paradise being adorned with a crown of righteousness, the Qur’an presents a perspective that emphasizes the existence of tangible garments. The following Qur’anic verses attest to that issue:

- Qur’an 9:72, Allah has promised the believers, both men and women, Gardens under which rivers flow, to stay there forever, and splendid homes in the Gardens of Eternity, and—above all—the pleasure of Allah. That is ˹truly˺ the ultimate triumph.
- Qur’an 18:31, It is they who will have the Gardens of Eternity, with rivers flowing under their feet. There they will be adorned with bracelets of gold and wear green garments of fine silk and rich brocade, reclining there on ˹canopied˺ couches. What a marvelous reward! And what a fabulous place to rest!
- Qur’an 52:17 Indeed, the righteous will be in Gardens and bliss,
- Qur’an 52:20 They will be reclining on thrones, ˹neatly˺ lined up ˹facing each other˺. And We will pair them to maidens with gorgeous eyes.

Tribulations Before Entering Jannah

Muslims often experience many challenges and difficulties during their earthly existence prior to attaining Jannah. All testing and problems are expected for those who will enter Jannah.

- Qur’an 2:62, Indeed, the believers, Jews, Christians, and Sabians[81]—whoever ˹truly˺ believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good will have their reward with their Lord. And there will be no fear for them, nor will they grieve.
- Qur’an 2:214, Do you think you will be admitted into Paradise without being tested like those before you? They were afflicted with suffering and adversity and were so ˹violently˺ shaken that ˹even˺ the Messenger and the believers

[81] The Sabians, sometimes also spelled Sabaeans or Sabeans, are a mysterious religious group mentioned three times in the Qur’an (as al-Ṣābiʾūn, in later sources al-Ṣābiʾa), where it is implied that they belonged to the ‘People of the Book’ (ahl al-kitāb).

with him cried out, “When will Allah’s help come?” Indeed, Allah’s help is ˹always˺ near.

- Qur’an 3:142, Do you think you will enter Paradise without Allah proving which of you ˹truly˺ struggled ˹for His cause˺ and patiently endured?

Seven Layers of Hell in Islam

The notion of the Seven tiers of hell constitutes a fundamental aspect within Islamic doctrines concerning the posthumous realm. The foundation of this belief system is derived from the teachings of the Qur’an and the Sunnah. Following Islamic doctrine, hell is designated as a realm of retribution for individuals who have transgressed against the divine will of Allah. This infernal abode is characterized by its division into seven distinct tiers. Each tier within the hierarchical punishment structure exhibits distinct penal measures and agonizing experiences specifically designed to correspond with the transgressions committed by the respective individuals undergoing retribution. The hierarchical arrangement of the seven levels is vertically aligned in accordance with the severity of the transgressions committed by the individuals.[82] The following are the seven layers:

Levels of Jahannam

Jahannam is partitioned into seven hierarchical levels, with each level positioned beneath the preceding one following the severity of the transgressions committed by its inhabitants. Jahannam’s hierarchical arrangement of pain levels places level one at the summit, representing the least painful degree, while the most excruciating level resides in the depths. As one progresses through the levels of Jahannam, the warmth and intensity of punishment gradually intensify. Each level is made for different types of sinners and punishments. Let us have a look at them:[83]

1. **Jahannam, or the first level of hell (Jaheem)**: This level is for Muslims who are sinful in the world. It has the most minor heat among all the levels and has the least painful punishment for the sinners. As the sinners enter through its gates, their faces will be burned, and the fire will eat their flesh. Here, Allah will renew their flesh every time they are burned. Qur’an 40:46, “they are exposed to the Fire ˹in their graves˺ morning and evening. And on the Day the Hour will be established ˹it will be said˺, Admit Pharaoh’s people into the harshest punishment ˹of Hell˺.”

2. **Ladah, or the second gate to Jahannam**: This level is situated below Jahannam, and it is for people and Jinn who did not believe in Allah, rejected the Prophet’s messages and did not believe in them as the messengers of

[82] William Wagner, How Islam Plans to Change the World (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2012), 156.

[83] **Seven Levels of Jahannam, “Also Known As The Gates Of Hell In Islam,” September 29, 2021, https://zamzam.com/blog/levels-of-jahannam/**

Allah. The main punishment in this level is that fire will eat away one's organs externally and internally, and will finally destroy the body. Qur'an 76:4, "Indeed, We have prepared for the disbelievers chains, shackles, and a blazing Fire."

3. **Saqar (sa'ir), the third level of Jahannam**: The third level of Jahannam and it is situated below Ladah. The punishment for the people here is that fire will eat up their flesh, not bones. The four reasons why people land up at this level of Jahannam are:

    - They did not perform Salah (prayer).
    - They did not offer food to the poor.
    - They used to talk vainly to those who were in vain; that is, they used to follow the path of unjust and falsehood.
    - They refused the existence of the Day of Reward and Resurrection (Qayamat).
    - Qur'an 44:43-46, Surely ˹the fruit of the tree of Zaqqûm, 44 will be the food of the evildoer.45 Like molten metal, it will boil in the bellies. 46 like the boiling of hot water.

4. **Al-Hutamah (Saqar), the fourth gate of hell**: On this level, situated below Saqar, it is believed that the fire here will burn the sinners to the bones and emblaze their hearts and inner organs. The fire will start from their feet and then go to their heart. It is believed that the sinners will cry to the point where their tear glands will dry out, the blood will dry out, and their tears will be of a huge amount that even if a ship was to be sailed in the pool of their tears it will do so easily. Qur'an 18:29, "And say, ˹O Prophet,˺ "˹This is˺ the truth from your Lord. Whoever wills let them believe, and whoever wills let them disbelieve." Surely We have prepared for the wrongdoers a Fire whose walls will ˹completely˺ surround them. When they cry for aid, they will be aided with water like molten metal, which will burn ˹their˺ faces. What a horrible drink! And what a terrible place to rest."

5. **Jaheem (Natar), the fifth level of Jahannam**: It is believed that it lies below Al-Hutamah, which is a big piece of coal and is bigger than the lowest level. Sinners will be thrown here because for three reasons:

    - They did not give correct belief to Allah.
    - Declined to give the correct right to the creations.
    - Did not encourage feeding the poor.
    - Qur'an 22:21-22, And awaiting them are maces of iron. 22 Whenever they try to escape from Hell—out of anguish—they will be forced back into it, ˹and will be told,˺ "Taste the torment of burning!"

6. **Saeer (Haviya), the sixth level**: This level of Jahannam is situated below Jaheem. This level has been kindling since it was made. It consists of 300 castles, which have 300 huts each in which there are 300 rooms each and, in each room, there are 300 different types of penalties. The pain here is unimaginable, unbearable, and it is excruciating. Here, there are scorpions, snakes, chains, ropes and whatnot. Also, it has a pit of Agony, the most

painful punishment in Jahannam. Qur'an 22:19, These are two opposing groups that disagree about their Lord: as for the disbelievers, garments of Fire will be cut out for them and boiling water will be poured over their heads,

7. **Al-Hawwiyah, the last level of Jahhanam (Hutama)**: This is the last and the worst level of hell. It is the seventh level of Jahannam, situated below Saeer. It is said that no sinner will be released from this level. There is pitch darkness on this level. Backbiters and non-believers are punished here. The sinners in this level will be crushed under mountains with them lying on their faces. The hands of the sinners will be bound to their necks and their necks to their legs. Moreover, Zabanniyah (angels of Janhannam) surely will stand on them. The hands of the angels are supposed to be made of solid iron, and as punishment to the sinners, they will beat the sinners with their bare hands. The Qur'an says that Al-Hawwiyah is the level at which kindled fire embraces the sinner as a mother embraces her son. Qur'an 2:161, Surely those who disbelieve and die as disbelievers are condemned by Allah, the angels, and all of humanity.



Seven Levels of Jahannam, Also Known As The Gates Of Hell In Islam
September 29, 2021. [Seven Levels of Jahannam, Also Known As The Gates Of Hell In Islam (zamzam.com)]

The Mercifulness of the Christian God and Allah

The concepts of divine mercy and justice are fundamental teachings within the religious traditions of Christianity and Islam. Nevertheless, within the context of Islam, it is impossible to definitively ascertain if the kindness of Allah surpasses his sense of justice. There exists uncertainty among devout Muslims regarding their admission to Jannah, especially in the presence of virtuous actions. The Bible provides explicit teachings regarding the certainty of salvation throughout one's

earthly existence and the ultimate prize of eternal life, which are contingent upon the completed actions of Jesus. Let us see the following texts:

- 1 John 1:6, If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. 8 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.
- Ephesians 2:8, For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.
- 2 Corinthians 5:17, Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

The Qur'an provides a possibility for those with virtuous actions to gain access to Jannah. Contrarily, the biblical doctrine posits that our admission into heaven is contingent upon accepting Jesus' completed work on the cross rather than being determined by our virtuous deeds. During the Day of Judgment, the actions of Muslims will be disclosed, and if the good deeds surpass the wicked ones, they will be granted entry into Jannah. Christians acknowledge that human actions alone are insufficient to merit eternal life. The Book of Isaiah 64:6 states, "All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind, our sins sweep us away." Only in Jesus' salvific work can one become admissible into heaven. Salvation is by grace alone, which in turn helps an individual produce good works in line with the biblical teaching. The Holy Spirit brings a sense of conviction within an individual who has transgressed, prompting them to acknowledge their sins and recognize the necessity of repentance. Muslims experience a sense of ambiguity regarding their salvation, but Christians possess a sense of assurance. Christians believe their sins are absolved during their earthly existence, unlike Muslims, who anticipate the forgiveness of their transgressions alone on the day of judgment.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

THE BIBLE AND THE QUR'AN REGARDING SALVATION

Salvation In Both Religions

Salvation is a subject of ongoing significance within both religious traditions. The Bible provides compelling evidence about salvation and its subsequent consequences. According to biblical teachings, it is asserted that an individual must undergo a spiritual rebirth, resulting in a transformative state of being primarily predicated upon the accomplished actions of Jesus. The concept of salvation holds significant prominence within the biblical narrative. The assurance of comprehending the teachings of salvation within the Qur'an is not guaranteed.

- John 3:3 Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again."

The Bible teaches that salvation is a gift from God given to those who believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior. The Bible also teaches that salvation is not earned through good works or deeds. Ephesians 2:8-9 says, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works so that no one can boast." This passage emphasizes that salvation is a gift of God and cannot be earned through good deeds or actions. Furthermore, it teaches that salvation is a personal decision that everyone must make. Romans 10:9 says, "If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." This verse emphasizes that salvation is a personal decision made by declaring faith in Jesus Christ. The following scriptures support the Biblical salvation:

- John 3:5-8, Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. 6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. 7 You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' 8 The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."
- 2 Corinthians 5:17, Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
- Galatians 2:20, I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. 21 I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!

- 1 John 4:7, Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.

The Qur'an teaches that salvation is a gift from Allah given to those who have faith and do good deeds. In Qur'an 2:25, it says, "Give good news ˹O Prophet˺ to those who believe and do good that they will have Gardens under which rivers flow." Whenever provided with fruit, they will say, "This is what we were given before," for they will be served fruit that looks similar ˹but tastes different˺. They will have pure spouses, and they will be there forever. This verse emphasizes that salvation for Muslims comes through good deeds, and the reward is good women for men and one husband for a woman. In Qur'an 21:47, it says, "We will set up the scales of justice on the Day of Judgment, so no soul will be wronged in the least. And ˹even˺ if a deed is the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it forth. And sufficient are We as a ˹vigilant˺ Reckoner." This passage emphasizes that even the smallest of deeds will be considered on the Day of Resurrection. The Qur'an teaches that salvation is a personal decision that everyone must make. In Qur'an 23:111, it says, "Today I have indeed rewarded them for their perseverance: they are certainly triumphant." The verse emphasizes that salvation is a personal decision made through patience and faith in Allah.

The assertion can be made that both the Bible and the Qur'an expound upon the concept of salvation as a bestowed favor from God/Allah, granted to individuals who demonstrate faith and engage in virtuous actions, respectively. However, how each text addresses the concept of redemption is fundamentally incompatible.

The Bible and the Qur'an Differ in Salvation

Significant disparities exist between the Bible and the Qur'an concerning salvation. Although there are certain similarities between the two scriptures, they diverge notably in their perspectives on salvation and how it can be attained. According to biblical teachings, salvation is contingent upon an individual's faith in Jesus Christ as the divine Son of God, who willingly sacrificed himself for the transgressions of humankind and subsequently experienced resurrection. The centrality of Jesus Christ as the Savior and the necessity for adherents to attain salvation is fundamental tenets within the Christian faith. As per biblical teachings, redemption is regarded as a divine bestowal that remains unattainable through meritorious deeds or human endeavor. Conversely, it is provided without charge to individuals who profess their faith in Jesus Christ as their spiritual leader and redeemer.

In contrast, the Qur'an espouses the belief that attaining redemption is contingent upon the performance of righteous deeds and adherence to the precepts of Allah. Muslims adhere to the belief that it is imperative to surrender to the divine will of Allah and diligently adhere to the teachings outlined in the Qur'an and the Hadiths to attain redemption. According to the teachings of the Qur'an, a final day of judgment is anticipated, during which the actions of individuals will be assessed. Those who have engaged in virtuous activities will be granted the reward of

paradise, whilst those who have committed malevolent acts will face retribution in punishment inside the confines of hell. The identification of individuals who gain entry into heaven lacks certainty.

One notable distinction between the Bible and the Qur'an is the role attributed to Jesus Christ in the context of salvation. Christians believe that Jesus is the divine Son of God and the exclusive path to salvation, whilst Muslims perceive Isa as a prophet of Allah, comparable to other prophets in significance. Muslims believe that Isa (Jesus) served as a divine messenger of Allah, being born to a virgin and exhibiting miraculous abilities, yet not experiencing death on the cross. In contrast, it is held by adherents that Isa was ascended to heaven by Allah, while another individual was crucified in his stead.

Moreover, the Bible espouses the notion that redemption is an intimate and distinct encounter necessitating a personal connection with Jesus Christ. The belief held by Christians is that salvation encompasses a profound and transformative encounter leading to a renewed existence in Christ, accompanied by the presence of the Holy Spirit within the individual. In contrast, the teachings of the Qur'an posit that redemption is a communal phenomenon necessitating compliance with the commands of Allah and allegiance to the teachings encapsulated in the Qur'an and the Hadiths. Muslims believe their salvation is intricately linked to the collective salvation of their community and the broader Muslim community, known as the Ummah.

Fundamentally, the Bible and the Qur'an present divergent perspectives regarding salvation. Although both passages highlight the significance of faith and good deeds, they diverge in their interpretations of how salvation is attained and the involvement of Jesus Christ in this progression. Christians believe God bestows salvation as a divine gift contingent upon an individual's faith in Jesus Christ. Conversely, Muslims adhere to the belief that salvation is attained via the performance of virtuous deeds and adherence to the commandments set out by Allah. The disparities mentioned above indicate the unique theological and cultural customs observed within each religion, underscoring the significance of understanding and valuing diverse ideologies and rituals.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE QUR'AN AND THE BIBLE

The Qur'an and the Bible Considered Holy Texts

The Qur'an and the Bible hold sacred status within the religious traditions of Islam and Christianity, respectively. Both books are considered divine revelations attributed to Allah and God, respectively, and are therefore regarded as authoritative instruction for adherents of both religious traditions. Adherents of Islam regard the Qur'an as God's ultimate and comprehensive divine communication bestowed upon humanity. The text is composed in Arabic and organized into 114 sections called surahs. The Qur'an is regarded as the verbatim expression of Allah according to the Islamic faith, and it is held that this sacred text was disclosed to the Prophet Muhammad over 23 years. Muslims believe that the Qur'an is regarded as the direct and unadulterated communication from Allah, devoid of any human or literary intervention and that its preservation has remained flawless throughout history.

In contrast, the Bible is a compilation of literature with a revered status within the Christian faith. The composition is categorized into two primary divisions: the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament is commonly synonymous with the Hebrew Bible, a compilation of works authored over centuries. The authorship of the New Testament is attributed to the disciples and followers of Jesus, serving as a comprehensive account of his teachings and the nascent development of the Christian community.

The Bible and the Qur'an exhibit certain resemblances, albeit modest, as they both encompass narratives and doctrines about the historical development of humankind and the divine attributes of God/Allah. Nevertheless, there exist several disparities between the passages mentioned above. As an illustration, it is worth noting that the Bible is categorized into two primary divisions, namely the Old and New Testaments, but the Qur'an is a unified textual entity. Moreover, it is worth noting that the Bible encompasses several literary genres, such as historical accounts, poetic compositions, and prophetic writings. In contrast, the Qur'an predominantly serves as a source of guidance and instructional material.

Furthermore, the Qur'an and the Bible present their perspectives of Jesus/Isa. Both writings recognize the presence of Jesus/Isa as a significant historical figure. However, the Qur'an characterizes him as a prophet and messenger of Allah, and the Bible presents him as the Son of God, Messiah, and Savior. The disparity in the interpretation of Jesus/Isa signifies a fundamental divergence between Islam and Christianity in their theological perspectives regarding the essence of God, his connection to humanity, and the means of attaining salvation.

The Qur'an has several verses discussing the relationship between the Qur'an and the Bible. The Bible does not anticipate any nuance of knowing the coming of the Qur'an. Some Muslim scholars claim that Moses predicted the coming of the prophet in Exodus 18:15. Others claim that the prediction of Jesus in John over the coming of the Holy Spirit was indeed Prophet Muhammad. The following shall lead us to that conclusion:

- Qur'an 3:2-3 Allah! There is no god ˹worthy of worship˺ except Him—the Ever-Living, All-Sustaining. He has revealed to you ˹O Prophet˺ the Book in truth, confirming what came before it, as He revealed the Torah and the Gospel.
- Qur'an 3:45, ˹Remember˺ when the angels proclaimed, O Mary! Allah gives you good news of a Word from Him, his name will be the Messiah, 2 Jesus, son of Mary; honored in this world and the Hereafter, and he will be one of those nearest ˹to Allah˺.
- Qur'an 3:84, Say, ˹O Prophet, "We believe in Allah and what has been revealed to us and what was revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and his descendants; and what was given to Moses, Jesus, and other prophets from their Lord—we make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we ˹fully˺ submit."

Comparing Deuteronomy 18:15 and John 16:12 Concerning Prophet Muhammad's Claim

- Deuteronomy 18:15-18, The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him. 16 For this is what you asked of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, "Let us not hear the voice of the Lord our God nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die." 17 The Lord said to me: What they say is good. 18 I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their fellow Israelites, and I will put my words in his mouth. He will tell them everything I command him.
- John 16: 7, 12-15, But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. 12 I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. 13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. 14 He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. 15 All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.

The matter under consideration is the extent to which Deuteronomy 18:15 can be interpreted as referring to the prophet Muhammad. Various interpretations of the Bible and its predictions concerning Prophet Muhammad exist among Muslim academics. There is a divergence of perspectives on identifying an individual as the Holy Spirit, as some proponents assert a biblical prophecy. In contrast, others offer other interpretations of those prophecies. The passage can be found in the Old Testament, specifically in Deuteronomy 18:15. However, it does not explicitly mention the Prophet Muhammad. Certain adherents of the Islamic faith have developed a customary belief that the scripture pertains to the esteemed figure of Prophet Muhammad. The chapter emphasizes the significance of the Israelites' adherence to and attentiveness towards the divine teachings. According to the

biblical account, Moses conveys to the Israelites that God will appoint a prophet similar to himself from among their kinship, emphasizing the imperative to heed his words. Muslims believe that the prophetic office of Prophet Muhammad is the culmination of the prophecy of Moses. One limitation of this worldview is that Moses refers to a prophet from the Israelites rather than the Arab race. In general, the texts refer to Jesus, who said he came to fulfill the law in Matthew 5:17 ("Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them)." Christians affirm that the prophecies in the Bible are interpreted as pointing to the coming of Jesus Christ as the Messiah.

The Book of John 16:7 references the coming of the coming of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is often called the third person of the Trinity and is believed to be God's presence in the world. Jesus Christ sent him after his ascension to guide and comfort his followers. Some Muslim scholars interpret the prophecy in the Gospel of John, where Jesus says, "But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.", as referring to Prophet Muhammad as the Helper or Comforter. Muslim scholars also point to other passages in the Bible, such as the prophecy in Deuteronomy 18:18, which states, "I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him," as referring to Prophet Muhammad. However, Christian scholars interpret these prophecies as referring to the coming of the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, rather than Prophet Muhammad. Chapters one and two of the book of Acts fulfill the prophecy in Joel 2:28.

- Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.
- 2:1-4, When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.
- Joel 2:28 "And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. 29 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

The Difference Between the Qur'an and the Bible

The Qur'an and the Bible hold significant prominence as globally recognized religious scriptures, being extensively read and exerting substantial influence. Although there are certain parallels, it is essential to note that there are also notable distinctions between the two entities. Notable distinctions exist in the composition of the Qur'an and the Bible. The Qur'an was disclosed exclusively to the Prophet over twenty-three years, commencing in 610 AD. The text is widely regarded as a faithful

representation of the divine message conveyed by Allah to Muhammad through the intermediary of the Archangel Gabriel. In the interim, the Bible encompasses a compilation of literary works composed by numerous authors spanning several millennia, commencing with the Hebrew Bible and culminating with the New Testament. The Bible comprises a compilation of books authored by various individuals, such as prophets, monarchs, priests, and apostles, spanning centuries.

Muslims assert that the Qur'an is the ultimate and comprehensive manifestation of Allah's divine. In contrast, the Bible is regarded as an incomplete scripture that the Qur'an has surpassed. Following Islamic doctrine, it is posited that the teachings of the Bible have undergone corruption during history, hence asserting the Qur'an as the authentic and unaltered rendition of the initial divine communication. There are notable distinctions between the substance of the Qur'an and the Bible. The Qur'an comprises a total of 114 chapters, which encompass a range of subjects, including the concept of monotheism, the eschatological event of the Day of Judgment, and the notion of the hereafter. The text also has numerous narratives about the prophets, including but not limited to the accounts of Adam and Eve, Noah, and Abraham, albeit without furnishing specific particulars. The Bible, with 1,189 chapters, encompasses a diverse array of subjects, such as the universe's genesis, the decline of humanity, and the advent of the Messiah. Additionally, it encompasses narratives derived from both the Old and New Testaments, encompassing accounts of prominent figures such as Moses, Jesus, the apostles, and the early church.

The Qur'an and the Bible exhibit notable disparities in terms of their content. The primary focus of the Qur'an is centered on the monotheistic belief in Allah. In contrast, the Bible encompasses a broader array of teachings, encompassing laws, historical accounts, poetic compositions, and prophetic revelations. The Qur'an places significant emphasis on the concept of Allah's unity and uniqueness, while the Bible contains many narratives that depict God as a Trinity. Divergent interpretations exist between the Qur'an and the Bible. Muslims believe that Allah divinely reveals the Qur'an and should be adhered to in a literal manner.

Conversely, Christians perceive the Bible as a compilation of narratives that should be approached from a spiritual interpretive standpoint. Muslims believe that the Qur'an represents the ultimate and unalterable revelation from Allah. In contrast, Christians maintain the perspective that the Bible allows for diverse interpretations and adaptable applications across various circumstances. The text under consideration is the Book of 1 Timothy. A notable distinction is also observed in how they depict their central personalities, namely Jesus and Muhammad. According to the Qur'an, Isa is recognized as a prophet, but his divine status as the son of God is not acknowledged. Conversely, the Bible attributes divine sonship to Jesus, affirming his divinity. In a parallel manner, the Qur'an designates Prophet Muhammad as the ultimate prophet dispatched by the divine entity to guide humanity. In contrast, the Bible does not explicitly reference Prophet Muhammad.

- 1 Timothy 3:16, Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great: He appeared in the flesh, was vindicated by the

Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.

- 2 Timothy 3:16, All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

The two texts exhibit contrasting moral norms and legal frameworks. The Qur'an encompasses a set of prescriptive regulations that Muslims are obligated to adhere to, encompassing instructions about prayer, fasting, and charitable contributions. The Bible also encompasses a collection of rules and moral lessons, albeit given more greatly, allowing for diverse interpretations.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM: WHICH CHOICE?

Eternal Faith Choice

Drawing from the religious doctrines of Christianity and Islam, it is possible to infer the following. The attainment of everlasting life is contingent upon an individual's belief in Jesus. According to Islamic doctrine, there is inherent uncertainty regarding the definitive outcome awaiting individuals at their demise. The forgiveness of sinners is exclusively granted via the completed work of Jesus Christ, based on the principle of grace rather than personal effort. The reestablishment of the human individual's connection with the divine is accomplished through the act of confessing one's transgressions. Restoration of the human provides a sense of certainty regarding one's salvation through believing in Jesus Christ.

- Acts 4:12, Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.
- Romans 10:10-15, For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. 11 As Scripture says, "Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame." 12 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, 13 for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." 14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? 15 And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"
- 1 John 5:20, We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

Individuals openly acknowledging their transgressions are promised deliverance from damnation and the bestowal of everlasting existence in paradise. In contrast to Allah's perceived distance and detachment from humanity, Christians often describe a profound and ineffable sense of personal delight that arises from their intimate and amicable connection with God. The Bible elucidates the distinctive nature of the relationship between God and his offspring. The Epistle to the Romans teaches that we are his children to God. Christians can call God our Father as noted in the following verses:

- Romans 8:14, For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. 15 The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." 16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. 17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.
- Romans 8:37, No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither

angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- Matthew 6:9-13, This, then, is how you should pray: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, 10 your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us today our daily bread.12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one.

Should a Christian Become a Muslim?

Is it advisable for a Christian to convert to Islam? Christianity and Islam are two prominent global religions with significant sway, characterized by distinct doctrines and rituals. The two religious traditions exhibit contrasting viewpoints on various subjects, leading to a prevalent belief among Christians that embracing the Islamic faith is unsuitable. This discourse will explore why Christians refrain from embracing the Islamic faith.

The primary and noteworthy distinction between Christianity and Islam is their contrasting perspectives on the essence of God. Christianity is a religious belief system characterized by its adherence to monotheism, which posits the existence of a singular deity responsible for the creation and maintenance of the cosmos. In contrast, Islam is characterized by its dualistic nature, encompassing the belief in Allah and Muhammad as divinely inspired prophets. Furthermore, adherents of Islam maintain the belief that Allah is the exclusive object of worship and that Muhammad serves as the preeminent messenger of Allah. The central tenet of Christianity revolves around the theological doctrine of the Trinity, which posits the existence of a singular deity manifesting in three distinct persons: the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit. In contrast, Islam is a monotheistic religion that places significant stress on the unity of Allah and the conviction that Isa (Jesus) was a prophet rather than the Son of God. The inherent disparity between these two religious systems renders it unfeasible for a Christian adherent to embrace the Islamic faith.

Christianity and Islam possess contrasting viewpoints concerning the notion of the afterlife. Christianity promotes the belief in the resurrection of deceased humans and the promise of eternal existence in the celestial realm alongside the divine being. In contrast, Islam upholds the belief in the Day of Judgment, a momentous occurrence wherein Allah, the supreme deity, chooses the everlasting fate of individuals, categorizing them into either Jannah (Paradise) or Hell. The divergence in theological beliefs makes it unlikely for a Christian follower to adopt the Islamic faith. Christianity and Islam exhibit contrasting viewpoints regarding the role attributed to Jesus/Isa. Christianity espouses the theological tenet that Jesus is God’s incarnate Son and humanity’s savior. In contrast, under the Islamic faith, Isa is recognized as a prophet rather than being considered the Son of Allah. The divergence in theological beliefs presents difficulties for individuals who follow Christianity when contemplating embracing the Islamic religion.

Christianity and Islam possess contrasting viewpoints concerning the notion of salvation. Christianity asserts that the acquisition of salvation is achieved by placing one's trust in Jesus and his redemptive sacrifice, which serves to atone for sins. In contrast, within the Islamic faith, the achievement of redemption is contingent upon the observance of the divine precepts of Allah and the growth of a morally upright way of life. Christianity promotes the belief that redemption is achieved by placing one's trust in Jesus Christ, who is commonly perceived as having willingly offered himself as a sacrifice for the sins of humanity. The Islamic doctrine asserts that salvation is achieved by adherence to the principles of submitting oneself to the divine will of Allah and engaging in noble deeds. The existence of divergent religious beliefs presents obstacles for individuals who follow Christianity when contemplating the potential embrace of the Islamic religion. Christianity teaches that Jesus rose from the dead and ascended into heaven. While Jesus is believed to be a prophet in Islam, it does not believe in the resurrection and ascension of Jesus.

Islam does not recognize the authority of the Bible or accept its teachings as divinely inspired. Muslims are taught that the Bible is corrupted but are not told by whom and when. For Christians, the Bible is the inspired Word of God, and it is essential to their faith. The letter of 2 Timothy 3:16 states, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness," The letter of 2 Peter 1:20 states, "Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things." Therefore, it would be incongruous for a Christian to accept the Islamic faith without accepting the authority of the Bible.

Both Christianity and Islam encompass several practices and rituals. Christianity, for instance, observes customs such as communion and baptism. On the other hand, Islam adheres to the Five Pillars of Faith, which encompass the proclamation of faith, prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and pilgrimage to Mecca. In contrast to the Islamic faith, which considers devotion to rituals as vital for gaining salvation, Christians are not under obligation to adhere to specific rituals as a prerequisite for salvation. It is imperative for individuals who identify as Christian to possess a comprehensive understanding of the distinct disparities that exist between their religious beliefs and the Islamic faith. It has been previously said that both religions are classified as Abrahamic faiths; nevertheless, they diverge in their beliefs and conceptions of the divine. While some individuals assert the equivalence of Allah and the Christian God, examining the available evidence indicates that they are distinct entities. The two faiths are discrete religious systems with irreconcilable beliefs and practices.

Should a Muslim Become a Disciple of Jesus?

In contemporary times, there has been an observable trend among many individuals adhering to the Islamic faith who have expressed interest in embracing Christianity. This phenomenon has prompted an inquiry into the underlying motivations that prompt Muslims to consider conversion to the Christian religious tradition. The response to this inquiry is intricate and diverse. However, it is

grounded in the fundamental tenets of Christianity, which provide a framework for attaining salvation and embracing a distinct way of life in contrast to Islam.

Firstly, Christianity proposes attaining everlasting life by placing faith in Jesus Christ. The Islamic faith does not acknowledge Jesus as the Son of God or provide a means of attaining salvation just through faith. Consequently, the promise mentioned is not applicable within the context of Islam. Christians have the opportunity to attain eternal life by their acceptance of Jesus as their Savior, a theological concept that is distinct from the Islamic faith. Christians believe that by placing their faith in Jesus, they can establish a direct connection with God, specifically the Father, a concept that is not attainable within the Islamic faith. Employing Jesus, adherents of the Christian faith can get a heightened comprehension of the divine, encompassing God, His intentions, and His blueprint for their existence.

Christianity presents various ideals and beliefs that find their origins in the Bible. The Bible offers a moral framework that serves as a guiding principle for adherents of Christianity, directing them to pursue a righteous life in God's eyes. Righteous life encompasses adhering to the moral guidelines outlined in the Bible, such as the Ten Commandments, as well as embracing values of love, forgiveness, and humility, among other teachings. In contrast, Islam is characterized by a relative absence of a well-defined framework of values and principles. Consequently, it becomes imperative for individual Muslims to undertake personal interpretations to discern the fundamental nature of embodying ethical adherence to the faith.

Christianity places significant emphasis on a lifestyle characterized by acts of service and generosity, a focus that is not consistently emphasized within the Islamic tradition. Christianity espouses the principles of generosity, compassion, and dedication to altruistic endeavors among its adherents. The principles of generosity stand in direct contrast to the Islamic concept of submission, which promotes the acceptance of one's beliefs without engaging in critical inquiry. As a religious tradition, Christianity promotes the active engagement of its adherents in their faith, urging them to pursue knowledge and understanding actively and to employ their faith as a means of altruistic service to others. The book of Acts 17:11 states, "Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true."

Individuals who choose to convert from Islam to Christianity frequently suffer numerous challenges, such as experiencing violence rooted in religious beliefs, facing social exclusion, dealing with the severance of familial bonds, and experiencing a sense of isolation from their community and relatives. Nonetheless, Jesus and the church faced similar difficulties during their earthly ministry. Jesus taught about rejection, as noted in the following verses:

- Matthew 5:10–12, Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your

reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

- Matthew 10:16–18, I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. 17 Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues. 18 On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles.
- Mark 10:29–30 Truly I tell you, “Jesus replied,” no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel 30 will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—along with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life.
- John 15:19–20, If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. 20 Remember what I told you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also.
- 1 Peter 4:12–14, Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. 13 But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. 14 If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.
- Revelation 2:10–11, Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor’s crown. 11 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who is victorious will not be hurt at all by the second death.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

MISSIOLOGY: QUR'ANIC and BIBLICAL MANDATE

Missiology Understood

The name "missiology" is etymologically derived from the fusion of the lexemes "mission" and "logy," and it denotes the scholarly field that is dedicated to the examination and analysis of the mission. According to Kritzinger (1987:4), the field of missiology can be delineated as an academic discipline that systematically examines and evaluates missions. Missiology is a scholarly field that thoroughly investigates and evaluates the diverse activities related to the worldwide mission of God's salvation. Missiology is A Biblical Mandate.

The mission concept refers to God's deliberate and continuous endeavor to engage with the world through the church. Missiology is firmly rooted in the principles and teachings of the Bible, serving as a valuable instrument for global evangelization. The subject matter pertains to the scholarly examination of the theological principles and practical implementation of Christian missions. The theological principles encompass disseminating the Christian faith to individuals who have not yet been exposed to or embraced its teachings. For the past two thousand years, adherents of Christianity have engaged in evangelism, actively disseminating their religious beliefs to individuals. The discussion of missiology will not get into specific intricacies.

Nonetheless, it may be asserted that missiology encompasses the fundamental principles of theology, history, and anthropology. One can read more on missiology in David J. Bosch's book Transforming Mission (1991, 2011). One can read more on a mission in the attached works.[84]

The church encounters various problems in its missiological endeavors within the expansive global society. The obstacles encountered can be ascribed to the variances in cultural, social, ethnic, religious, and political affiliations within varied societies. The ecclesiastical institution is responsible for engaging in evangelistic endeavors, facilitating conversions, nurturing disciples, and, where feasible, establishing congregations for the sake of worship. In summary, missiology encompasses various disciplines, including pastoral theology, ecclesiology, church history, ethics, spirituality, Biblical studies, and systematic or doctrinal theology. These disciplines explore incarnation, salvation, the kingdom of God, creation, Christology, the trinity, and pneumatology. The present discourse refrains from an exhaustive delineation of the aforementioned theological teachings. Instead, our attention is directed towards the praxis of missiology concerning interactions between adherents of Christianity and Islam.

As a Biblical mandate, missiology has its roots in the Great Commission, which is the instruction given by Jesus Christ to his followers to "go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). This command, often referred to as the

[84] The Cape Town Commitment (Lausanne Movement, 2011); Together Towards Life (World Council of Churches, 2013); The Joy of the Gospel (Pope Francis, 2013); The Mission of the Orthodox Church in Today's World (Pan-Orthodox Council, 2016).

“marching orders” of the Church, is understood by many Christians as a mandate to share the gospel message with people of all nations, cultures, and languages, and to work towards the spread of Christianity throughout the world.

The Great Commission is not the only Biblical mandate for missions. Throughout the Old and New Testaments, many passages speak of God’s desire for everyone to come to know him and be saved. Isaiah 49:6 states, “He says: It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.” Similarly, in Acts 1:8, Jesus tells his followers, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” These and other passages make it clear that the Bible presents the spread of the Christian faith as an integral part of God’s plan for the world.

Missiology, as derived from the Biblical commandment, encompasses more than simply disseminating the message of God to individuals who do not adhere to the religion. It also encompasses the essential elements of educating and guiding these persons to cultivate authentic followers of Christ while promoting the growth of resilient and forward-thinking faith-oriented communities. Authentic following of Christ entails equipping adherents with the requisite means to actualize their religious beliefs in practical and effective ways, including engaging in acts of benevolence and compassion, participating in cultural endeavors, and contributing to societal and economic advancement. Moreover, missiology entails a broad understanding of many cultures, worldviews, and religions and the crucial practices of contextualizing and enculturating the gospel message. It is imperative to comprehensively comprehend the intended recipients’ context, culture, and religious practices. Additionally, it is crucial to approach the communication of the gospel message with empathy and modesty, ensuring that it is delivered respectfully and appropriately.

Planting Churches Among Muslim Communities

The book of Acts and the Epistles presents a Biblical model of missiology. Apostles of Jesus and early disciples took the mandate to share the gospel seriously. The biblical model of missiology includes reaching out to all people, regardless of their faith, race, or culture. This mandate is especially pertinent to Muslims, as the Bible calls us to bring the gospel to all nations (Matthew 28:18-20). The Bible gives us four main reasons why we should plant churches among Muslim communities: to reach Muslims with the gospel, to glorify God, to make disciples of all nations, and to build up the Christian Church.

Reaching Muslims with the Gospel

Robinson affirms, “If relationships are the vehicle through which the church planter intends to funnel the gospel, then great pains must be taken to ensure that he establishes trusting relationships.”[85] First, we should plant churches among Muslim communities to reach Muslims with the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Bible clearly states that Jesus came to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10, For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost). Jesus commands us to preach the gospel to all peoples, including Muslims (Mark 16:15-16, He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned).” The only way to do this effectively is to plant churches among Muslims and share the gospel with them. Moreover, Christians should plant churches among Muslim communities to glorify God.

Christians can glorify God by reaching Muslims with the gospel and by showing them that they love them and care about their spiritual well-being. When Muslims encounter the gospel and accept it, they can glorify God through their lives and obedience to His Word. Christians should not shy away when planting churches among Muslim communities to make disciples of all nations. The Bible commands us to make disciples of all nations, including Muslims (Matthew 28:19-20, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit …).” Making disciples involves teaching them the truths of Scripture, living out the gospel in our lives, and discipling them in the ways of God. The Church is a body of believers from all nations, including Muslims. There is a need to build churches among the Muslim communities. We can encourage other Christians to reach out to and minister to all humankind. Christians can also help build relationships between Christians and Muslims and encourage them to interact and get to know one another better.

Understanding of Da’wa (Mission) from an Islamic Perspective

The Islamic concept of Da’wa, or mission, is rooted in the belief that Allah has designated humanity as His chosen emissaries on earth, entrusted with the responsibility of disseminating the principles of monotheism and justice. The primary objective of individuals who identify as servants of Allah is to exert effort towards establishing a morally upright and equitable community whereby all beings created by Allah can coexist in harmony and tranquility. Muslims are enjoined to serve as witnesses to the manifestation of Allah’s justice and mercy in the world. From an Islamic perspective, it may be understood that the primary objective of Muslims is to serve as a beacon of guidance for the entirety of humanity. This purpose is grounded in the fundamental principle that humankind constitutes a single familial unit. As such, all individuals must collectively pursue fairness, concord, and tranquility ideals.

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[85] George G. Robinson, IV, “The Ethics of Planting Churches In Muslim Lands.” Published in Global Missiology, Contextualization, April 2006, www.globalmissiology.org

Muslims propagate the teachings of Islam and endeavor to establish a society based on Islamic principles, aiming to provide a state of satisfaction and safety for all individuals within the human community. Within the Islamic faith, adherents diligently strive to establish justice and truth.

Muslim individuals are morally bound to actively pursue justice and truth by adhering to the principles and teachings outlined in the Qur'an and the Sunnah/Hadith. Muslim individuals are also morally bound to attempt to eradicate various manifestations of injustice, corruption, and oppression within a given societal context. Given that Islam is centered around principles and regulations, adherents of Islam must strive for the equitable and impartial treatment of individuals, irrespective of their racial, gender, or religious affiliations. Muslims are obligated to disseminate the teachings of Islam. Disseminating the teachings of Islam is spreading the teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah to individuals, regardless of their religious affiliation, educating them about the fundamental principles and beliefs of the religion, and extending an invitation to embrace the faith. The dissemination of the Islamic faith has a crucial role in ensuring the continuity and endurance of the religion. Muslim individuals are anticipated to embody the principles of justice, compassion, kindness, and mercy. Individuals must exert effort in establishing a society that upholds principles of justice and equity while also catalyzing global peace and harmony. Muslim individuals are also obligated to actively advocate for tolerance and mutual respect for all individuals while simultaneously endeavoring to establish a societal framework that upholds the principles of justice and equity. The following verses are in support of Muslims mission:

- Qur'an 2:174, Indeed, those who hide Allah's revelations, trading them for a fleeting gain consume nothing but fire into their bellies. Allah will neither speak to them on the Day of Judgment, nor will He purify them. And they will suffer a painful punishment.
- Qur'an 4:165, ˹All were˺ messengers delivering good news and warnings so humanity should have no excuse before Allah after ˹the coming of˺ the messengers. And Allah is Almighty, All-Wise.
- Qur'an 5:67, O Messenger! Convey everything revealed to you from your Lord. If you do not, then you have not delivered His message. Allah will ˹certainly˺ protect you from the people. Indeed, Allah does not guide the people who disbelieve.
- Qur'an 6:19, Ask ˹them, O Prophet˺, "Who is the best witness?" Say, "Allah is! He is a Witness between me and you. And this Qur'an has been revealed to me so that, with it, I may warn you and whoever it reaches. Do you ˹pagans˺ testify that there are other gods besides Allah?" ˹Then˺ say, "I will never testify ˹to this˺!" ˹And˺ say, "There is only One God. And I totally reject whatever ˹idols˺ you associate with Him."
- Qur'an 30:30, ˹Watch for˺ the Day when every soul will be presented with whatever good it has done. And it will wish that its misdeeds were far off. And Allah warns you about Himself. And Allah is Ever Gracious to ˹His˺ servants.
- Qur'an 34:28, We have sent you ˹O Prophet˺ only as a deliverer of good news and a warner to all of humanity, but most people do not know.

- Qur’an 74:2, Arise and warn ˹all˺.

The primary objective of Islam is to propagate its faith to individuals of all backgrounds. The primary objective is to disseminate Islamic knowledge to the global community. Islam seeks to promote societal progress based on its fundamental values. The pinnacle of Islamic missiology is the cultivation of reverence and affection for Prophet Muhammad.

Synthesis on Christian and Islamic Missions

The Qur’an offers a very mixed picture of Christianity. On the one hand, the Qur’an speaks respectfully of Jesus/Isa. He is described as a prophet who did miracles (Q. 3:49). He is a Word of Allah and a Spirit proceeding from Him (Qur’an 4:171). He is born of a virgin (Qur’an 3:47) and is mentioned by name twenty-five times in the Qur’an (whereas Muhammad is only mentioned by name four times). On the other hand, the Qur’an plainly states that God cannot have a Son, that those who believe in the Trinity must desist (Qur’an 4:171, 3:59) and that Jesus did not die on the cross (Qur’an 4:157). We live in a time where Christians are increasingly rubbing shoulders with Muslims. It would be suitable for Christians to become more familiar with the Qur’anic teachings to share their faith as they correct misinformation in the Qur’an. From there, Christians can use it as a bridge, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to enter deeper conversations about Jesus, God’s divine Son, and God, our heavenly Father. See the following cited Quranic verses:

- Qur’an 3:47, Mary wondered, “My Lord! How can I have a child when no man has ever touched me?” An angel replied, “So will it be. Allah creates what He wills. When He decrees a matter, He simply tells it, ‘Be!’ And it is!”
- Qur’an 3:49, and ˹make him˺ a messenger to the Children of Israel ˹to proclaim,˺ ‘I have come to you with a sign from your Lord: I will make for you a bird from clay, breathe into it, and it will become a ˹real˺ bird—by Allah’s Will. I will heal the blind and the leper and raise the dead to life—by Allah’s Will. And I will prophesize what you eat and store in your houses. Surely in this is a sign for you if you ˹truly˺ believe.
- Qur’an 3:59, Indeed, the example of Jesus in the sight of Allah is like that of Adam. He created him from dust, then said to him, “Be!” And he was!
- Qur’an 4:157, and for boasting, “We killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the messenger of Allah.” But they neither killed nor crucified him—it was only made to appear so. Even those who argue for this ˹crucifixion˺ are in doubt. They have no knowledge whatsoever—only making assumptions. They certainly did not kill him.
- Qur’an 4:171, O People of the Book! Do not go to extremes regarding your faith; say nothing about Allah except the truth.1 The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was no more than a messenger of Allah and the fulfillment of His Word through Mary and a spirit ˹created by a command˺ from Him.2 So believe in Allah and His messengers and do not say, “Trinity.” Stop! —for your own good. Allah is only One God. Glory be to Him! He is far above having a son!

To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And Allah is sufficient as a Trustee of Affairs.

Different Expressions of Faith within Islam

Islam has various expressions of faith within different groups. The most common ones are the following:

1. Shia
2. Sunni
3. Sufism
4. Alawites
5. Druze
6. Khawarij
7. Sunni
8. Ismailism
9. Twelvers
10. Hanbali
11. Maliki
12. Wahhabis
13. Muslim Brotherhood,
14. Jamaat-i-Islami.

The most dominant groups in Islam are Sunni, Shi`ite, Sufis, Baha'is, and Ahmadiyyas.

Islamic Mission

It is essential for individuals who identify as Christians to recognize that Muslims tend to engage in missionary activities wherever they may be present. The phenomenon of global Muslim immigration, driven by political instability in their home countries, has resulted in the dissemination of their religious beliefs across many populations. Within this particular context, it can be observed that God is creating a favorable circumstance for individuals who identify as Christians to engage with individuals who identify as Muslims, even within the confines of their residences, intending to impart the teachings and beliefs associated with Christ. Most Western nations practice democracy, which entails granting entry to immigrants. Immigrants assume the role of missionaries, regardless of whether they engage in commercial activities or seek asylum. The practice of da'wah among Muslims, which involves conveying the word of Islam to non-Muslims, is considered a requirement according to the teachings of the Qur'an.

The rapid expansion of Islam can be mainly attributed to its inherent biological significance. According to Qur'an 4:3, it is stated that Muslim men can enter into marriage with up to four wives, in addition to potentially having concubines. According to Qur'an 4:24, it is said that Muslim men are permitted to enter into marriage with concubines. The matter of polygamy and concubinage among Muslim

men results in the proliferation of offspring, contributing to the demographic expansion of the Muslim population. There is a belief held by specific individuals that the expansion of Islam can be attributed to its inherent values and its treatment of individuals. According to historical accounts, the dissemination of Islam occurred through a combination of military campaigns, commercial exchanges, religious pilgrimages, and proselytizing endeavors. Muslims claim the simplicity of the Islamic message “There is no god, but Allah, and Muhammad is his prophet.” Muslims are to submit to Allah as declared in that message.

- Qur’an 4:3, If you fear you might fail to give orphan women their ˹due˺ rights ˹if you were to marry them˺, then marry other women of your choice—two, three, or four. But if you are afraid you will fail to maintain justice, then ˹content yourselves with˺ one1 or those ˹bondwomen˺ in your possession. This way you are less likely to commit injustice.
- Qur’an 4:24, Also ˹forbidden are˺ married women—except ˹female˺ captives in your possession. This is Allah’s commandment to you. Lawful to you are all beyond these—as long as you seek them with your wealth in a legal marriage, not in fornication. Give those you have consummated marriage with their due dowries. It is permissible to be mutually gracious regarding the set dowry. Surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

CHAPTER TWENTY

COMPARATIVE WITNESS: CHRISTIAN MISSION AND ISLAMIC DA'WAH

Sharing the Gospel with non-Christians

Evangelizing to individuals who do not identify as Christians necessitates a comprehensive understanding of the belief systems held by the intended audience and one's religious affiliation. Muslim civilizations have been socialized to believe that intentional modifications have been made to the Bible. Many individuals who identify as Christian lack a comprehensive understanding of the content and teachings presented within the Qur'an. Although the Qur'an acknowledges the divine origin of the Bible, it rapidly refutes the fundamental tenets of Christian theology.

The Difference Between Christian Mission and Islamic Da'wah

Christian mission and Islamic da'wah are both forms of religious proselytization that seek to disseminate their doctrines and rituals to a broader audience. Although there are certain similarities between the two entities, it is crucial to acknowledge the presence of significant distinctions. One notable parallel between the Christian mission and Islamic da'wah lies in their shared objective of proselytizing individuals to embrace their respective religious beliefs. Both Christianity and Islam prioritize the dissemination of their teachings and the conversion of individuals. The observation can be made that Christianity and Islam have a robust heritage of engaging in missionary endeavors and actively seeking to extend their influence. One notable parallel between Christian missions and Islamic da'wah is their shared utilization of diverse media platforms and communication channels to disseminate their messages. Various mediums like pamphlets, books, sermons, websites, videos, and social media platforms are employed to disseminate and propagate each message.

Notwithstanding these shared characteristics, the Christian mission and Islamic da'wah exhibit notable distinctions. One notable distinction lies in the emphasis on the Christian mission of individual salvation, as opposed to the focus of Islamic da'wah on societal and political transformation. As an illustration, adherents of Christianity significantly emphasize accepting Jesus Christ as an individual's savior. In contrast, followers of Islam may prioritize the establishment of a societal framework grounded in Islamic values and laws, commonly known as umma. One notable distinction is the inclination of Christian missions towards individualism, in contrast to the community nature often associated with Islamic da'wah. For instance, Christians prioritize the personal connection between individuals and God, whereas Muslims emphasize the collective devotion to Islamic beliefs and practices within the society.

The Qur'anic Belief in Other New Testament Books

A comparative analysis can be conducted to examine the teachings of the Qur'an about the entirety of the New Testament books. It can be asserted that Muslims do not fully endorse the New Testament. The Qur'an does not acknowledge the authenticity or validity of all the Bible's epistles for various reasons. According to adherents of Islam, the Qur'an is regarded as Allah's ultimate and comprehensive divine revelation bestowed on humanity. Therefore, it surpasses all preceding revelations or scriptures, encompassing the Bible. The Qurʾan is said to be the verbatim expression of Allah, transmitted to the Prophet Muhammad by the angel Gabriel. It is widely regarded as the paramount authority for Muslims in terms of direction and comprehension. Despite the Qur'an acknowledging certain aspects of the four Gospels, it promptly dismisses any recognition of the remaining books within the New Testament.

Muslims do not see the New Testament as the definitive and comprehensive divine revelation. In contrast, proponents believe that the Qur'an is Allah's ultimate and comprehensive divine disclosure, surpassing all preceding sacred texts. Despite this assumption, Muslims do not acknowledge the other books of the New Testament, asserting that they were authored by fallible people who possess limitations and imperfections. Muslims believe that the Qur'an is the exclusive scripture that was divinely given to the Prophet Muhammad by Allah, and they maintain that it is devoid of any inaccuracies or inconsistencies. However, despite rejecting other New Testament writings due to their perceived human authorship, it is acknowledged that a human being indeed wrote the Qur'an. The documentation left by Prophet Muhammad was not comprehensive; nonetheless, it was subsequently expanded and refined under the leadership of Caliph Uthman.

According to the Qur'an (53:19-21), it is mentioned that Muhammad initially acknowledged polytheism but then attributed those verses to Satan. The three pagan deities appear legitimate entities to whom Prophet Muhammad may potentially appeal for intercession. The emergence of chapter 53 is believed to have occurred when Muhammad encountered difficulties with the Arab community, leading him to accommodate their deities. The Prophet appears to allow polytheism by saying that Satan had tricked him. Al-Lat, al-'Uzza, and Manat were three pagan Arab deities.[86]

- Qur'an 53:19–21 Now, have you considered ˹the idols of˺ Lât and 'Uzza, 20 and the third one, Manât, as well? 21 Do you ˹prefer to˺ have sons while ˹you attribute˺ to Him daughters?

A document in early Muslim sources shows that Prophet Muhammad accepted the gods of the Arabs, even though Muslim apologists still do not accept this as the truth. The following passage is from one early source (AD 915) that does record it:

[86] Jonathan Porter Berkey, The Formation of Islam: Religion and Society in the Near East, 600-1800 (Cambridge, England : Cambridge University Press, 2003), 42. ISBN 978-0-521-58813-3.

> “When [the pagan] Quraysh heard this, they rejoiced and were happy and delighted at the way in which he spoke of their gods, and they listened to him, while the Muslims, having complete trust in their prophet in respect of the messages which he brought from God, did not suspect him of error, illusion, or mistake. When he came to the prostration, having completed the surah, he prostrated himself and the Muslims did likewise, following their prophet, trusting in the message which he had brought and following his example. Those polytheists of the Quraysh and others who were in the mosque likewise prostrated themselves because of the reference to their gods which they had heard, so that there was no one in the mosque, believer or unbeliever, who did not prostrate himself. The one exception was al-Walid b. al-Mughirah, who was a very old man and could not prostrate himself; but he took a handful of soil from the valley in his hand and bowed over it. Then they all dispersed from the mosque. The Quraysh left delighted by the mention of their gods which they had heard, saying, ‘Muhammad has mentioned our gods in the most favorable way possible, stating in his recitation that they are the high-flying cranes and that their intercession is received with approval’”[87]

The Qur’an 17:73 refuted the previous satanic verses in the following:

- Qur’an 17:73, They definitely ˹thought they˺ were about to lure you away from what We have revealed to you ˹O Prophet˺, hoping that you would attribute something else to Us falsely—and then they would have certainly taken you as a close friend
- Qur’an 22:52-53, Whenever We sent a messenger or a prophet before you ˹O Prophet˺ and he recited ˹Our revelations˺, Satan would influence ˹people’s understanding of˺ his recitation. But ˹eventually˺ Allah would eliminate Satan’s influence. Then Allah would ˹firmly˺ establish His revelations. And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. 53 All that so He may make Satan’s influence a trial for those ˹hypocrites˺ whose hearts are sick and those ˹disbelievers˺ whose hearts are hardened. Surely the wrongdoers are totally engrossed in opposition.

Furthermore, adherents of Islam believe that the preceding sacred texts, such as the Torah and the Gospel, were initially divinely revealed yet underwent corruption and distortion due to human intervention. The Qur’an corrects and confirms previous revelations, providing a pure and unaltered divine message to humanity in the Purview of Islam. Moreover, a notable distinction between the Qur’an and the Bible lies in their respective interpretations of the divine essence and the significance attributed to Jesus Christ. The biblical narrative characterizes Jesus as the Son of God, whereas the Qur’an refutes this notion and instead portrays Jesus as a prophet and emissary of Allah, devoid of divinity. The divergence in theological perspectives constitutes a primary factor contributing to the Qur’an’s non-inclusion of some epistles included within the Bible.

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[87] W. Montgomery Watt and M. V. McDonald, “The History of al-Tabari, Vol. VI: Muhammad at Mecca, trans. (New York: State University of New York Press, 1988), 108–109. Online date accessed 16-3-2023. https://www.gotquestions.org/satanic-verses.html

Additionally, the Qur'an exhibits distinct variations from the Bible's interpretation of the notion of salvation. The Bible espouses the belief that salvation is attained by placing one's faith in Jesus Christ, whereas the Qur'an posits that redemption is attained via surrendering to Allah's divine will and engaging in virtuous actions. The divergence in theological perspectives serves as an additional rationale for the Qur'an's non-inclusion of certain epistles included in the Bible. Furthermore, concerns about the historical precision and genuineness of the Bible exist alongside these theological disparities. According to the Qur'an, it is asserted that the first revelation bestowed upon the Prophets mentioned in the Bible has undergone distortion and modification during history. However, according to Islamic scholars, the Qur'an does not include specific information regarding when the Bible was corrupted or by whom. Consequently, a significant number of teachings present in the Bible are not regarded as reliable or veracious within the Muslim faith.

Qur'anic and Biblical Revelation

Based on the teachings of the Qur'an, it has been established that Moses was bestowed with the Old Testament, which is considered a sacred scripture. The Injil was bestowed upon Jesus to benefit both Jewish and Greek communities. Muhammad was bestowed with the Qur'an as the final prophet among many prophets ordained by God. Muhammad asserts that he received the revelation known as the Qur'an for twenty-two years. It is noteworthy to observe that the Qur'an does not make any explicit mention of the signs and miracles attributed to Jesus.

Muslims believe that Moses (Musa) was divinely appointed as a prophet by God, entrusted with conveying His message to the Jewish community. As part of this divine mission, Moses was bestowed with the Torah, a sacred scripture. Moreover, it is held that Jesus Christ (Isa al Masih) is regarded as a divine messenger sent by God to both the Jewish and Greek communities throughout his era. He is believed to have been born to the virgin Mary, exhibiting remarkable abilities to perform miracles, displaying immense compassion and grace, and maintaining a state of moral purity that surpasses the standards of this earthly realm. Jesus was bestowed with the "Injil," often known as the gospel. It is widely held that Muhammad is regarded as the final recipient of the Qur'an, a sacred text encompassing a compilation of divine revelations bestowed to him over twenty-two years. Islam asserts that the shared beliefs and practices among Christianity, Islam, and Judaism can be attributed to the moral norms, lives of service, authoritative voices, and spiritual enlightenment demonstrated by the prophets or messengers to humanity. The Abrahamic faiths, namely Islam and Christianity, share several common elements. These include practices such as prayer, the existence of religious communities, and the emphasis on moral virtues. Additionally, themes such as love, wisdom, faith, mercy, charity, thankfulness, and hospitality are prevalent in both Islamic and Christian religious traditions.

The Qur'an does not recognize 23 of the books of the New Testament. The New Testament has 27 books, which include:

- Gospel According to Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts of the Apostles, Romans, I and II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I and II Thessalonians, I and II Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, I and II Peter, I, II, and III John, Jude, and Revelation.

The above 27 New Testament is the foundation of the Christian faith alongside the Old Testament books, 39. In total, there are 66 books which guide the Christian mode of faith and practice. In John 14:6, Jesus says, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” Christians are taught to search the scriptures to verify the truth being taught. For instance, the book of Acts 17:11 says, “The people of Berea were more open-minded than those in Thessalonica, and they listened eagerly to Paul’s message. They searched the Scriptures daily to see if Paul and Silas were teaching the truth.” This passage shows that the Bereans valued truth and searched the Scriptures to see if what Paul and Silas said was true.

The Bible also encourages believers to be respectful and open-minded when discussing other religious beliefs and texts. In 1 Peter 3:15, it says, “Always be prepared to answer everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. However, do this with gentleness and respect.” This passage teaches us to have an attitude of respect and gentleness when discussing the Qur’an and other religious texts. We should take what is true and reject what is false. The Qur’an recognizes only the Tawrat (Torah), the Zabur (Psalms), and the Injil (Gospel) as the books revealed by Allah. The Qur’an does not mention the other books of the New Testament, such as the letters of Paul, the book of James, or the book of Revelation. Failure to acknowledge other Biblical books has led to some confusion and disagreement between Christians and Muslims regarding the divine inspiration of these texts. Regardless, such ignorance cannot deny that they are divinely inspired. Read the following verses:

- 2 Timothy 3:16-17, All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.
- 2 Peter 1:19-21, We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. 20 Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation of things. 21 For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

From a theological standpoint, it is crucial to remember that ascribing sacred scripture to a particular text does not serve as the definitive criterion for an individual’s religious beliefs. The primary source of authority for adherents of Christianity is not a written text but rather Jesus Christ, who is widely regarded as the embodiment of God’s divine message. Christians regard the Bible as a divinely inspired text, although the figure of Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of their religious beliefs.

The Islamic Faith Does not Believe in the Holy Spirit.

The Islamic faith does not incorporate teachings or beliefs regarding the Holy Spirit, a component of the Trinity within Christian theology. The Holy Spirit holds significant prominence within the Christian theological framework, whereas the Islamic faith does not make any explicit references to the concept of the Holy Spirit. The rationale behind this perspective lies in the Islamic faith's theological stance, which does not attribute divinity to the Holy Spirit. Within the Islamic faith exists a singular deity known as Allah, characterized by his supreme might and omnipotence. He is widely regarded as the ultimate authority of knowledge and wisdom and can bestow salvation upon individuals who believe in Him.

The Islamic belief in tawhid rejects the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. The Qur'an does not contain any explicit references or extensive discussions regarding the concept of the Holy Spirit, indicating a relative lack of emphasis or attention in its teachings. Within the Christian faith, it is believed that the Holy Spirit resides within individuals who openly declare their faith in Jesus Christ. However, this concept is not recognized within the Qur'an. According to the biblical passage found in 1 Corinthians 6:19, it is said that individuals who identify as Christians are regarded as the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Moreover, it is worth noting that within the Islamic faith, a belief in divine inspiration facilitated by the Angel Gabriel exists. Muslims believe Allah is the exclusive source of all knowledge, wisdom, and any form of divine communication. Hence, the Islamic faith does not embrace the concept of a divinely inspired intermediary. The absence of any explicit mention of the Holy Spirit in the Qur'an is noteworthy evidence of the Islamic faith's theological perspective, suggesting a lack of belief in the existence of the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, the Qur'an references the notion of the "Spirit" in many verses (Qur'an 16:102; 97:4; 23:112). The sole reference to the Holy Spirit pertains to his origination from Allah and his association with His power and guidance.

- 1 Corinthians 6:19, Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;
- Qur'an 16:102, Say, "The holy spirit has brought it down from your Lord with the truth to reassure the believers, and as a guide and good news for those who submit ˹to Allah˺."
- Qur'an 97:4, That night the angels and the ˹holy˺ spirit descend, by the permission of their Lord, for every ˹decreed˺ matter.

In Islamic theology, the Holy Spirit is understood to be a manifestation of Allah's mercy and grace. The Qur'an teaches that Allah sent down the Holy Spirit to support and inspire the prophets and the believers throughout history as a created being in Qur'an 17:85.

- Qur'an 17:85, They ask you ˹O Prophet˺ about the spirit. Say, "Its nature is known only to my Lord, and you ˹O humanity˺ have been given but little knowledge."

Christian Response to Islamic Failure to Acknowledge the Holy Spirit

According to biblical teachings, the Holy Spirit is recognized as the third member of the Holy Trinity. He actively engages with individuals in society, providing guidance and motivation to adherents to encourage the pursuit of a virtuous existence. Christians believe the Holy Spirit is the primary source of revelation, guidance, and inspiration. Moreover, they assert that the presence of the Holy Spirit is vital for attaining a comprehensive comprehension of God. The assertion is made that none of these concepts may be expressed or instructed inside the Islamic faith.

According to Christian belief, the concept of the Holy Spirit can be traced back to biblical scriptures. The Bible contains numerous references, notably in the New Testament, to the Holy Spirit and its significance in the spiritual journey of individuals who adhere to the Christian faith. the Gospel of John 14:26 says, " But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you." This Advocate will serve the purpose of instructing individuals in all matters and will also serve as a reminder of the teachings previously conveyed. Christian theologians contend that accepting the Holy Spirit as a fundamental tenet is crucial for comprehending the essence of the divine. The idea of the Trinity, which posits the existence of God in three distinct people - namely, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit - has a prominent position within the Christian faith. This theological teaching posits that the divine entity is not singular but comprises three persons who exist in complete oneness and harmony, each retaining their individuality while simultaneously embodying the fullness of the divine nature. Christians ought to comprehensively comprehend the significance of the Holy Spirit within their personal religious beliefs. A simple faith in Jesus leads one to receive the Holy Spirit and thus grow in faith through engaging in biblical analysis, prayerful contemplation, and meditation. By engaging in these activities, individuals who identify as Christians can enhance their comprehension of the significance of the Holy Spirit within their personal lives, as well as the function this divine entity plays within the Trinity.

It is imperative for individuals who identify as Christians to actively pursue and participate in substantive conversations with adherents of the Islamic faith. There are multiple approaches to achieving this objective, like organizing interfaith activities and programs, actively participating in amicable arguments, or engaging in courteous dialogues. These dialogues allow Christians to express their convictions regarding the Holy Spirit while actively listening, acquiring knowledge, and addressing any misconceptions within the Islamic viewpoint. By adopting this approach, adherents of Christianity will exhibit a disposition to acquire knowledge and comprehend alternative religious systems, concurrently endeavoring to foster connections among divergent religious convictions. Christians can effectively communicate the doctrine of God through relational interaction, particularly to

individuals with different orientations. When engaging in evangelism, Christians should exercise caution and discernment regarding the Qur'anic teachings of the Bible, as they may contain erroneous elements that are not immediately apparent. The discussion of social and religious issues between Christians and Muslims is permissible. However, questions about faith and religious practices are not open to conversation. In order to effectively engage in the task of spreading the gospel to Muslims, individuals must possess a comprehensive comprehension of their purpose and the Christian tradition, alongside a thorough awareness of the Islamic faith. A necessity exists to conduct an academic examination of the Qur'anic narrative and its corresponding quotations found in the Bible. This study aims to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the Qur'anic portrayal of Biblical narratives, highlighting potential inaccuracies in its depiction. The discourse between the Christian God and Allah surrounding the comprehension of doctrine presents a formidable obstacle, as it remains an ongoing endeavor devoid of definitive resolutions. Nonetheless, the Holy Spirit will teach one all things (John 14:26; Nehemiah 9:20; Matthew 10:19-20; Mark 13:11; Luke 12:12; 1 John 2:27).

- John 14:26, But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.
- Nehemiah 9:20, You gave your good Spirit to instruct them. You did not withhold your manna from their mouths, and you gave them water for their thirst.
- Matthew 10:19-20, But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, 20 for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.
- Mark 13:11, Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit.
- Luke 12:12, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.
- 1 John 2:27, But you have received the Holy Spirit, and he lives within you, so you don't need anyone to teach you what is true. For the Spirit teaches you everything you need to know, and what he teaches is true—it is not a lie. So just as he has taught you, remain in fellowship with Christ.

God's Triune Purpose in Mission

The Father is the primary agent responsible for creating and maintaining the cosmos. Conversely, the Son, Jesus Christ, is regarded as the embodiment of God, who assumed human form and descended to the earthly realm to deliver humanity from sin and its consequences through his sacrificial death and subsequent resurrection. The Holy Spirit serves as a counselor and instructor, dispatched by the divine being to bestow believers with strength and facilitate their comprehension and execution of God's will. The Trinity is perceived as operating in complete unity to accomplish the redemption of humanity within the context of God's mission. According to theological doctrine, it is posited that the Father meticulously orchestrated and sanctioned the advent of the Son, whilst the Son, in a voluntary

manner, descended to the terrestrial realm to execute the Father's design and effectuate the salvation of humanity, employing his crucifixion and subsequent resurrection. Subsequently, the Holy Spirit facilitates individuals' acceptance of Jesus as their savior and enables them to lead a life characterized by moral purity and devoted service to the divine.

God has a mission to deliver humanity from sin solely through the work of Jesus. Christians ought to have a proper understanding of God's mission on earth. The following Bible verses show the mission of God:

- Matthew 24:14, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."
- Psalm 107:2, Let the redeemed of the Lord tell their story—those he redeemed from the hand of the foe,
- Hebrews 2:14-15, Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—15 and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.
- John 3:16, For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
- John 15:1-4, I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. 3 You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. 4 Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

God's Triune purpose in mission is to redemption as a universal principle. Bosch calls this God's mission, Missio Dei, which is "primarily and ultimately, the work of the Triune God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, for the sake of the world, a ministry in which the church (Israel) is privileged to participate."[88] Human salvation is God's mission primarily, not a human church activity. Wright agrees that the mission should be Biblically informed and validated.[89]

The triune purpose of God in the mission holds excellent importance within Christian theology and spirituality. Understanding and appreciating God's triune purpose in His mission is essential for individuals who identify as Christians. The divine entity, commonly called God, is believed to possess a tripartite objective within the context of its mission. This multifaceted purpose encompasses the concepts of reconciliation, redemption, and change, all of which are extensively elucidated in the biblical scriptures. We shall elaborate on all of them here below:

The first aspect of God's triune purpose is the mission of reconciliation with humanity. The following Bible verses support that issue:

- Acts 3:19, Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.

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[88] Bosch, 2009:392.
[89] Wright, 2006:22–23.

- Romans 5:10-11, For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! 11 Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation
- 2 Corinthians 5:18-20, All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.
- Ephesians 1:7-10, In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace 8 that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, 9 he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, 10 to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.
- Ephesians 2:14-17, For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, 15 by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, 16 and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. 17 He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. 18 For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.
- Colossians 1:19-22, For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.21 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. 22 But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation.

The verses above indicate God's intention to restore all of His creation to a state of harmony with Himself, accomplished via the efforts of the Son. The crucifixion of Jesus, which involved his selfless sacrifice, serves as the fundamental basis for God's message of reconciliation. Through His crucifixion and subsequent resurrection, Jesus effectively reconciled the divide between God and humanity, restoring a harmonious relationship with God. By acknowledging the sacrificial death and subsequent resurrection of Jesus Christ as the atonement for our transgressions, we achieve reconciliation with God and attain righteousness in His sight. According to Christian doctrine, the death and subsequent resurrection of Jesus Christ are believed to result in the justification of believers in the sight of God, hence granting them the bestowed privilege of everlasting existence. The process of reconciliation is facilitated by the Father's love and kindness and is realized through the efforts of the Son. The second aspect of God's triune purpose in the mission is

redemption. The following Biblical verses talk about the redemptive work of God through Christ:

- Romans 3:24, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.
- 1 Corinthians 1:28 -31, God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, 29 so that no one may boast before him. 30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. 31 Therefore, as it is written: “Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.”
- Galatians 3:13-14, Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole.” 14 He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.
- Ephesians 1:7-8, In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace 8 that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding,
- Ephesians 4:30, And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.
- Colossians 1:13-14, For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.
- Titus 2:11-14, For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people.
- Hebrews 9:15, For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.
- 1 Peter 1:18-19, For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

The verses, as mentioned earlier, elucidate the concept of human redemption. Employing Jesus’ crucifixion and subsequent resurrection, humanity has been liberated from the shackles of sin and can now experience a life characterized by liberation and exultation. Redemption is a profound manifestation of divine mercy and grace, serving as a poignant testament to God’s unwavering affection towards humanity. By acknowledging the crucifixion and subsequent resurrection of Jesus, individuals attain redemption from the dominion of sin, enabling them to have a life characterized by liberation and elation through God’s mercy.

The third aspect of God’s triune purpose in the mission is transformation.

- Joel 2:13, Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.
- Matthew 4:17, From that time on Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”
- Acts 3:19, Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord,
- 2 Corinthians 3:18, And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.
- 2 Corinthians 5:17, Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:
- Galatians 5:22-23, But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.
- Colossians 3:5, Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus’ death and resurrection transform human lives. Believers are transformed from being slaves to sin to becoming children of God (John 1:12, “Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—).” We are transformed from being children of darkness to children of light. The Bible says that Jesus is the light of the world, and we, too, are children of light. We are transformed from being enemies of God to being His adopted children. We are transformed from objects of God’s wrath to objects of His love. The following Bible verses support about being transformed:

- Psalm 18:28, You, LORD, keep my lamp burning; my God turns my darkness into light.
- Psalm 27:1, The Lord is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid?
- Isaiah 60:1, “Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.”
- Micah 7:8, Do not gloat over me, my enemy! Though I have fallen, I will rise. Though I sit in darkness, the Lord will be my light.
- Matthew 5:13-16, You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot, 14 You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.
- Luke 11:33-36, “No one lights a lamp and puts it in a place where it will be hidden, or under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, so that those who

come in may see the light. 34 Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eyes are healthy, your whole body also is full of light. But when they are unhealthy, your body also is full of darkness. 35 See to it, then, that the light within you is not darkness. 36 Therefore, if your whole body is full of light, and no part of it dark, it will be just as full of light as when a lamp shines its light on you."

- John 3:19-21, This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. 20 Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. 21 But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.
- John 8:12, When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."
- John 12:35-36, Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. Whoever walks in the dark does not know where they are going. 36 Believe in the light while you have the light, so that you may become children of light." When he had finished speaking, Jesus left and hid himself from them.
- John 12:44-46, Then Jesus cried out, Whoever believes in me does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me. 45 The one who looks at me is seeing the one who sent me. 46 I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:5, You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness.
- 1 Peter 2:9, But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.
- 1 John 1:5, This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.
- 1 John 1:7, But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

The aforementioned Biblical scriptures and several more serve as potent instruments for effecting transformation in our lives, provided we grant them the opportunity to do so. The lessons and ideas elucidated in Biblical chapters possess the capacity to influence and develop our moral and ethical character, ultimately guiding us towards realizing our original purpose as envisioned by a divine entity. By attaining a more profound comprehension and implementation of the ideas found in the Bible, individuals can undergo substantial metamorphosis in their cognitive processes, actions, and dispositions, ultimately resulting in a life that is more gratifying and imbued with a sense of purpose. The message of salvation is a pivotal aspect through which the Bible can profoundly impact and alter our lives. According to biblical teachings, humanity is universally characterized as sinful and needs a Savior. The act of Jesus Christ's crucifixion serves as a means through which our

sins are pardoned, and we attain everlasting life. The transformative nature of this message not only has the potential to alter our everlasting fate but also possesses the capacity to impact our current existence. As individuals deepen their comprehension and embrace the benevolence and mercy of a divine being, they undergo a profound metamorphosis, resulting in an enhanced capacity for empathy, forgiveness, and affection towards other human beings.

The Bible provides a substantial amount of direction and wisdom pertaining to how individuals may lead their lives in a manner deemed favorable by God. This instructional module imparts knowledge regarding the significance of engaging in prayer, studying the Bible, and actively participating in a congregation of individuals who share a common faith. Additionally, it provides practical guidance for fostering harmonious relationships with others, effectively managing personal money, and making sound judgments in light of personal transformation. Through adherence to the principles outlined in the Bible, individuals undergo a comprehensive metamorphosis that encompasses various facets of their existence. Furthermore, integrating Biblical teachings into our daily lives facilitates a perpetual evolution of our cognitive processes and belief systems. (Colossians 3:10, “and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator).” It challenges us to examine our beliefs and attitudes and to align them with God’s truth (2 Corinthians 1:16, I wanted to visit you on my way to Macedonia and to come back to you from Macedonia, and then to have you send me on my way to Judea. Through studying and contemplating the Bible, individuals can perceive the world from a divine vantage point, cultivating a perspective that aligns with godly principles. The shift in our cognitive processes results in a corresponding shift in our actions as we embody the knowledge we have acquired. The Bible’s transformative potential is not inherently self-activating. The acquisition of knowledge necessitates a willingness to embrace its teachings and grant permission for divine intervention in our lives. The consistent commitment to actively participate in reading and studying the Bible daily is recommended for all believers. Moreover, it is imperative to abandon one’s prior cognitive and existential frameworks and embrace the new state of being that God has divinely prescribed.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ISLAMIC AND BIBLICAL DA'WAH / EVANGELISM PRACTICES

Comparing Da'wah and Evangelism

Islamic Da'wah and Christian evangelism are two long-standing techniques that have endured for centuries. Islamic and Christian proselytization are strategies to disseminate their respective religious doctrines to convert individuals to their faith. Although certain parallels exist, it is crucial to acknowledge the presence of significant distinctions between the two systems. The Islamic Da'wah movement aims to disseminate the teachings of Islam to individuals who do not currently adhere to the Islamic faith. The utilization of various methods of communication, such as preaching, teaching, and other related means, can achieve this. The objective is to disseminate knowledge regarding Islam's principles and teachings, intending to foster understanding and potentially inspire individuals to embrace the faith.

Christian evangelism predominantly focuses on the persuasion of individuals to embrace the Christian religion. The spread of information achieves this through several channels like preaching, teaching, and other forms of communication. The aim is to guide individuals in achieving salvation by accepting Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Muslims and Christians exhibit contrasting approaches when engaging with prospective converts in their communication strategies. Islamic da'wah entails employing an educational methodology that centers on elucidating the principles and doctrines of Islam to prospective adherents while concurrently expounding upon the advantages associated with embracing the faith. Spreading faith can be achieved through diverse communication modalities, including but not limited to printed literature, oral presentations, intellectual discussions, interactive workshops, and digital platforms. In contrast, Christian evangelism can be characterized as a spiritual endeavor that guides individuals towards embracing a belief in Jesus Christ through prayer and sharing personal testimonies.

In Islamic history, the term "Da'wah" initially denoted an invitation, but it was also employed to describe Islamic conquests. During the Islamic conquest, vanquished individuals were presented with a choice: either embrace the Islamic faith, face the prospect of death through armed conflict, or fulfill their obligations by paying taxes. The act of extending an offer to embrace Islam and join the dhimmi community, known as a protected person group, was referred to as da'wah. In contemporary times, da'wah is often conducted as an autonomous endeavor, occasionally taking the form of public discussions or sermons held in marketplaces. During the initial century of Islamic expansion, a significant expanse ranging from the Indus region to the Iberian Peninsula was successfully conquered. Following the unsuccessful Muslim siege of Vienna in 1683, it was deduced that the prospect of achieving global Islamic dominance by armed warfare had become unattainable.[90]

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[90] Walter Leitsch, Published in History Today Volume 33 Issue 7 July 1983. https://www.historytoday.com/archive/1683-siege-vienna.

The Qur'anic teaches about da'wah and encourages Muslims to shun divisive teachings while spreading their faith. The Qur'an says,

- Qur'an 16:125, Invite ˹all˺ to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and kind advice, and only debate with them in the best manner. Surely your Lord ˹alone˺ knows best who has strayed from His Way and who is ˹rightly˺ guided.

Besides, the Qur'an teaches about religio-cultural and ethnic diversity, as noted in Qur'an 49:13.

- Qur'an 49:13, O humanity! Indeed, We created you from a male and a female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you may ˹get to˺ know one another. Surely the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous among you. Allah is truly All-Knowing, All-Aware.

According to Islamic teaching, Muslims should not be willing to convert everyone to their faith because Allah chooses not to. Allah did not have a plan for the global mission as noted in Qur'an 42:8. Prophet Muhammad further declared that each person should hold on to their faith as noted in Qur'an 109:1-6. Prophet Muhammad taught that each person should be concerned with their religion.

- Qur'an 42:8, Had Allah willed, He could have easily made all ˹humanity˺ into a single community ˹of believers˺. But He admits into His mercy whoever He wills. And the wrongdoers will have no protector or helper.
- Qur'an 109: 1-6, Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ "O you disbelievers! 2 I do not worship what you worship, 3 nor do you worship what I worship. 4 I will never worship what you worship, 5 nor will you ever worship what I worship. 6 You have your way, and I have my Way."

Unlike the Bible, which envisions global evangelism, the Qur'an did not anticipate a global mission. The world has become pluralist religious-wise. According to the Qur'an, anyone willing to share their faith should be respectful and tolerate others' religious ignorance. According to Quran 109:6, "You have your way, and I have my Way," the Prophet Muhammad was evident on a global mission that it was impossible.

Biblical Evangelism

The Bible serves as a robust basis for the undertaking of evangelism, which involves the dissemination of the gospel and the communication of the redemptive message centered on Jesus Christ. The resource mentioned above is a potent means of fostering motivation and providing direction for evangelism. Many instances can be observed across the Old and New Testaments wherein God divinely summoned individuals to disseminate His word to others. Additionally, explicit directives and teachings about the significance of propagating the gospel are evident. As mentioned, the practice offers a robust basis for adherents to propagate their religious beliefs and extend their influence to others, even when confronted with possible resistance and mistreatment. The Bible often speaks of the importance of evangelism, with verses such as Romans 10:14-15 which states,

- Romans 10:14-15, How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? 15 And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!

The verse underscores the significance of preaching and disseminating the gospel as crucial in facilitating individuals' embrace of faith in Jesus. The theological basis for the practice of evangelism is strengthened by the Great Commission, as documented in the biblical passages of Matthew 28:19-20 and Acts 1:8. Within this text, Jesus provides instructions to His disciples, urging them to embark on the task of converting individuals from all nations into disciples. This process involves baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and imparting teachings encompassing all of His commandments. This excerpt is widely regarded as a definitive directive for Christians to disseminate the gospel to others, and it serves as a conspicuous illustration of the significance of evangelism within the Christian belief system. The words underscore the significance of evangelism and exhort believers to disseminate their faith actively.

- Matthew 28:18, Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."
- Acts 1:8, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

The passage Acts 1:8 demonstrates that evangelism is not solely a directive given to the disciples but rather a universal command from Jesus to the entire world, facilitated by the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit. This excerpt not only underscores the significance of the Holy Spirit in enabling individuals to disseminate the gospel but also underscores the expansive geographical extent of the mandate to reach individuals in all areas. The Bible also speaks to the importance of being prepared to evangelize and share the gospel message. In 1 Peter 3:15, the Bible states, "But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect," This verse encourages believers to be prepared to share the gospel and do so gently and respectfully.

The Bible also speaks to the power of evangelism. In Acts 16:30-31, the Bible states,

- Acts 16:30-31, He then brought them out and asked, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? 31 They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household."

The verses highlight the power of evangelism and how it brings salvation to those who hear the message and believe. In addition to these specific passages, the entire

Bible is filled with examples of individuals God used to share His message with others. From Abraham, who was called to be a blessing to all nations (Genesis 12:1-3), to the apostles, who were sent out to preach the gospel (Acts 2:1-41), we see a consistent message throughout the biblical narrative that God desires all people to hear the good news of salvation.

- Genesis 12:1-3, The Lord had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you. 2 ” I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.
  3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.
- Acts 2:1-41, When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them...

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

MISSIOLOGICAL APPROACHES IN CHRISTIAN INTERACTION WITH MUSLIMS

Missional Principles

Missiology is an academic discipline that focuses on examining and analyzing the fundamental characteristics of the Christian mission, as well as the appropriate methods and strategies for its implementation. Missiological concepts are essential in shaping Christians' attitudes and methods when engaging with Muslims. As mentioned earlier, the principles are designed to guide engagement with Muslims in a respectable manner.

One crucial missional principle to be mindful of when engaging with Muslim individuals is cultivating interpersonal connections. According to the teachings of Jesus in John 13:34-35, establishing interpersonal connections with individuals is a prerequisite for effectively conveying the Gospel message. Before endeavoring to communicate the Gospel, we must demonstrate a willingness to participate in the lives of others and cultivate a genuine understanding of their experiences. It is imperative to engage with individuals who identify as Muslims in a manner that demonstrates both reverence and benevolence. It is imperative to demonstrate a willingness to attentively listen to the problems of others, engage in thoughtful questioning, and actively seek to understand them as unique individuals.

- John 13:34-35, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."
- John 17:3, After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. 2 For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. 3 Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

The following missional principle to consider is that of demonstrating love. Jesus told us to "love our neighbor as ourselves" (Matthew 22:39) and that we are to do unto others as we would have them do unto us (Luke 6:31). When engaging in interactions with those who identify as Muslims, Christians must make a concerted effort to exemplify the compassion and grace of Christ in our encounters. Christians ought to demonstrate patience and attentiveness while exhibiting acts of love and respect. Furthermore, Christians must disseminate the Gospel in a manner characterized by gentleness and non-confrontation, all the while ensuring that the veracity of the Gospel is effectively communicated.

- Matthew 22:39, For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
- Luke 6:31, Do to others as you would have them do to you.

One important missional concept to be considered is demonstrating the transformative potential inherent in the Gospel. According to the teachings of Jesus as recorded in the Gospel of Mark (1:15), the Kingdom of God is composed of

individuals who have transformed under the influence of the gospel. Hence, it is imperative to showcase the efficacy of the gospel while engaging with individuals who adhere to the Islamic faith. The efficacy of the gospel can be achieved by employing narrative accounts of personal growth, presenting testimonials that illustrate the impact of Jesus' influence on our individual experiences, and engaging in prayerful practices. Moreover, the biblical text exhibits a notable presence of miraculous occurrences, signs, and wonders. The following are some of the Biblical scriptures that teach about spiritual power:

- Matthew 10:1, Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.
- Matthew 10:7, As you go, proclaim this message: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' 8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.
- Matthew 28:18-20, Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."
- Mark 1:15, "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"
- Mark 16:17-18, And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.
- Luke 9:1, When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases,
- Luke 10:19, I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.
- John 14:12, Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.
- Acts 1:8, But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.
- 2 Corinthians 11:23-26, Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. 24 Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, 26 I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers.

- James 5:14, Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord.

One crucial aspect to contemplate is the fourth principle of mission, which pertains to the practice of prayer. According to the teachings of Jesus as recorded in the Gospel of Luke (19:10), believers are encouraged to pray on behalf of individuals who lack knowledge of His existence. Hence, Muslims must engage in prayer with the intention that they may attain a transformative understanding of Jesus Christ for their salvation. Engaging in personal supplication and seeking fortitude, direction, and sagacity to effectively and compassionately disseminate the gospel is imperative. The following verses support the power of prayer:

- 2 Chronicles 7:14, If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.
- Jeremiah 29:12, Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.
- Luke 19:10, For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.
- Ephesians 6:18, And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.
- James 5:13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.
- 1 John 5:14, This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

The fifth point in the Christian engagement with Muslims pertains to the importance of demonstrating respect towards the beliefs and cultural traditions of the other individual. Adherents of the Christian faith should refrain from imposing their religious views and values upon individuals who follow the Islamic faith. Instead, they should strive to cultivate a comprehensive comprehension and genuine admiration for the cultural and religious customs upheld by the Muslim community. Given the factors mentioned above, it is plausible to suggest that the involvement of Muslims in active listening, acquiring information, and engaging in transparent and severe discourse can be effectively assisted by their engagement with the teachings of the Bible. Certain Muslims possess cultural backgrounds that are closely tied to their respective communities. A notable portion of the Muslim population adheres to Islamic teachings, but most Muslim communities observe traditional and socio-cultural practices. It is imperative for individuals who identify as Christians to demonstrate a willingness to comprehend the religious and cultural context of Muslim communities if they aspire to convert to Christianity. The following verse teaches Christians how to treat others:

- Matthew 7:12, So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

- Romans 12:10, Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.
- 1 Corinthians 10:33, even as I try to please everyone in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.
- Philippians 2:3, Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,
- Titus 2:7-8, In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness 8 and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us.
- 1 Peter 2:17, Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.
- 1 Peter 3:15, But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,

The sixth principle of missiology pertains to the virtue of compassion. Adherents of the Christian faith must demonstrate empathy and genuine care for the overall welfare of those who identify as Muslims, irrespective of their theological convictions. Christians should extend their efforts beyond the mere dissemination of the gospel and actively endeavor to address the tangible requirements of Muslims inside their localities, encompassing provisions for sustenance, accommodation, and healthcare. The following verses attest to the Christian duty on compassionate activities:

- Psalm 78:38, Yet he was merciful; he forgave their iniquities and did not destroy them. Time after time he restrained his anger and did not stir up his full wrath.
- Psalm 103:8, The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.
- Matthew 14:14, When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick
- Matthew 20:34, Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him.
- Matthew 9:36, When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.
- Ephesians 4:32, Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.
- 1 Peter 3:8, Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.
- 1 John 3:17, If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?

The seventh principle of mission, known as contextualization, holds significant importance in the Christian engagement with individuals who identify as Muslims. Contextualization refers to assigning meaning to a text based on its application within a particular environment. The notion of contextualization holds significant

importance in the field of missiology, as it acknowledges the necessity of conveying the gospel message in a manner that is both culturally pertinent and easily understandable to the targeted audience. The examination of the cultural milieu within which the Church is functioning and endeavoring to articulate the gospel's message in a manner that resonates with the distinct requirements and obstacles encountered by the community being ministered.

There is a need to modify the Christian message and methodology from its unique cultural milieu within which it is being disseminated to contemporary society. The primary objective of contextualization should be to enhance the comprehensibility of the gospel message while ensuring that its fundamental essence remains intact. Christians may employ various strategies, such as parables, narratives, or other pedagogical techniques that resonate with and hold significance within the Muslim community. The following verses support Christian contextualization:

- Acts 15:1,5,19-20, Certain people came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the believers: "Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved." 5 Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, "The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to keep the law of Moses." 19 It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. 20 Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood.
- Acts 17:22-34 , Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. 30 In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.
- 1 Corinthians 9:12, 19-23, If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more? But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ. 19 Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. 20 To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. 21 To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. 22 To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. 23 I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.
- Revelation 7:9, After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.

One of the fundamental tenets in the field of missiology involves acknowledging that those who identify as Christians ought to possess an elevated

level of consciousness regarding cultural sensitivity. Developing an appreciation for and abstaining from participating in behaviors and mindsets that possess the capacity to offend those who adhere to the Islamic faith, encompassing, although not restricted to, delivering sermons in a manner perceived as coercive or devoid of reverence. The Bible says in Revelation 7:9, “After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb; they were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.” In light of divine knowledge, it can be inferred that the concept of a homogeneous race in the celestial realm was not foreseen but rather a multitude of individuals representing diverse cultural backgrounds. Christians are encouraged to actively cultivate relationships founded upon principles of mutual respect and comprehension while refraining from engaging in behaviors that could undermine the connection or impede the efficacy of their purpose. Look at the following verses on cultural sensitivity:

- Mark 13:10, And the gospel must first be preached to all nations.
- Romans 14:1-5, Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters. 2 One person’s faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. 3 The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted them. 4 Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To their own master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand.
- 1 Corinthians 9:20, To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law.
- 1 Corinthians 12:12-14, Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. 13 For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. 14 Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.
- Ephesians 4:2-5, Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. 3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism;
- Galatians 3:28, There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.
- Colossians 3:11, All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.
- Revelation 14:6, Then I saw another angel flying in mid-air, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language and people.

The principle of witness holds significant importance in the context of Christian engagement with individuals adhering to the Islamic faith. It is incumbent upon individuals who identify as Christians to engage in the dissemination of the

gospel actively and to serve as proponents of the veracity of the Christian belief system. Nevertheless, it is imperative to approach this task with an attitude that is characterized by respect, empathy, and cultural awareness. Christians should actively engage in evangelism by effectively communicating their beliefs verbally and nonverbally. Additionally, they should exemplify the teachings of Christ by displaying compassion, kindness, and respect towards others. The following verses support the need to witness to all people:

- Exodus 3:14, God said to Moses, I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I am has sent me to you.'
- Isaiah 55:11, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty,
- but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.
- Ezekiel 33:6, But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet to warn the people and the sword comes and takes someone's life, that person's life will be taken because of their sin, but I will hold the watchman accountable for their blood.'
- Zechariah 12:10, And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son.
- John 12:32, And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.
- Acts 1:8, But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."
- Acts 5:42, Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.
- Romans 1:16, For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.
- Romans 3:23, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
- Revelation 1:7, Look, he is coming with the clouds, and "every eye will see him,
  even those who pierced him"; and all peoples on earth "will mourn because of him."
  So shall it be! Amen.

The universal church ought to conduct its mission as noted in Matthew 28:18-20. The future of missions depends on the church members' willingness to share their faith with their neighbors.[91] DeYoung and Gilbert emphasize that the mission of the Church is to preach the gospel, make disciples of every ethnicity, and engage the culture while serving as representatives of the Kingdom of God.[92]

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[91] Lalsangkima Pachuau, "Missiology in a Pluralistic World: The Place of Mission Study in Theological Education," International Review of Mission 89/No. 355 (October 2000): 539-555.

[92] The given mission of the church is a compilation of the following stated convictions; DeYoung and Gilbert's emphasis on evangelism in What Is the Mission of the Church? Making Sense

- Matthew 28:18-20, Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Bible and Mission

Bruce Ashford and Scott Bridger suggest that a proper missiological method is evidenced by the “ways in which we can ground our mission practice in sound, biblically faithful theology, in conversation with church history, the social sciences, and our cultural contexts.”[93] The early church knew that the word of God was the primary source and center for faith and practice. The Bible is an authoritative voice regarding orthodoxy and orthopraxis. Over the years and amidst various Biblical interpretations, the church has used the bible as the source of inspiration and strength to spread the gospel. In addition, the church consulted other human faculties such as reason, culture, experience, and tradition. The Bible alone is the primary source, but other faculties can be vital in applying the word of God. The church must work to find a balance in the interaction of the Bible and other faculties to develop a method to reach out to the lost. Samuel Escobar emphasizes, “Mission requires orthodoxy, a concern for the integrity of the gospel, but it also requires orthopraxis, a concern for how the believer practice is carried on.”[94]

As the perceived divine revelation, the Bible holds a position of authority in matters pertaining to doctrinal correctness (orthodoxy) and proper conduct (orthopraxis). In this scenario, orthodoxy refers to adherence to correct teachings, whereas orthopraxis encompasses Christian behaviors. Kevin Vanhoozer says, “Orthodoxy is not merely a systematization of information contained in the biblical statements…doctrines were not written in the language of heaven, but in time-bound and culture-bound languages, governed by the dialogue we find in Scripture. Interpretation of Scripture is important, and so is the culture.”[95] The presence of God can be ascertained inside the Bible, signifying the inception of all creation. The text discusses the decline of human civilization and purportedly explores the concept of salvation through the embodiment of Jesus. The subject matter of this teaching

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of Social Justice, Shalom, and the Great Commission, (Wheaton: Crossway, 2011), Keller’s focus on local churches training members to engage the culture in Center Church (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), and Hammett’s intentional inclusion of the nations being a non-negotiable in Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches: A Contemporary Ecclesiology, (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2005).

[93] Bruce Ashford and Scott Bridger, “Missiological Method” a chapter in, Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions, 2nd ed., John Mark Terry, (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2015), 31.

[94] Samuel Escobar, The New Global Mission: The Gospel from Everywhere to Everyone, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013), 25. https://www.sendinstitute.org/the-need-for-a-missiological-method/#_ftn6https://www.sendinstitute.org/the-need-for-a-missiological-method/#_ftn6

[95] Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *First Theology: God, Scripture, & Hermeneutics* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2002), 243.

pertains to the concept of human redemption, which is achieved via the completed atonement carried out by Jesus. The assertion posits that all ultimate truth is inherently aligned with the divine and that the content of the Bible also falls within this category. Every truth and its constituent components should be evaluated following the framework provided by religious scriptures.

It is incumbent upon those who possess a Christian testimony, wherein they have openly professed Jesus Christ as their Lord, to fulfill the obligation of disseminating the gospel message to all individuals. The moral conduct, actions, and speech of those who adhere to a particular faith should be a manifestation of the teachings and example set forth by the resurrected messiah. Following our devout adherence to the teachings of Jesus, we must extend an invitation to individuals to engage in repentance, embrace faith, and cultivate a personal connection with God, employing their relationship with Jesus. Furthermore, devout individuals must demonstrate their obedience by actively engaging in benevolence and empathy towards individuals, irrespective of their ethnic or cultural affiliations. There is a need to expand the realm of God's dominion on Earth.

Church and Missiological Principles

The Church holds a significant role within Christianity, functioning as a central institution for worship, fostering a sense of community, and facilitating the development and deepening of one's religion. In her capacity as a spiritual institution, the Church also functions as a vehicle for disseminating the gospel message and accomplishing its goal within the global context. The mission, sometimes called missiology, is governed by specific principles that influence how the Church conducts its activities.

The missiological methodologies employed by the Church serve as a robust framework for guiding its missional endeavors. The provided framework establishes guidelines for the Church's mission to cultivate disciples and disseminate the gospel to a universal audience. The missiological principles of the Church serve as a fundamental basis for the Church's execution of its mission, characterized by love, respect, and a fervent commitment to the glorification of God.

The Christian Church possesses a rich and illustrious historical background, establishing itself as one of the most ancient and prominent religious and societal institutions globally. The narratives crafted by the early church fathers provide supplementary insights into the principles and practices of missionary endeavors. Several notable figures from the early Christian church include Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp of Smyrna, and Papias of Hierapolis. The historical events discussed have significantly influenced the Church's overarching purpose: to effectively communicate the positive gospel of Jesus Christ and disseminate his teachings of love, salvation, and optimism on a global scale.

In order to fulfill the objectives of the Church's mission, it is necessary to consider several missiological methods that can guide its actions and activities. The Christian Church maintains the belief that it has been divinely summoned by God to

disseminate the positive message of Jesus Christ and to cultivate followers from all corners of the globe, as stated in Matthew 28:19: “Henceforth, proceed and instruct individuals from all nations, initiating them into the faith in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.” The dissemination of the gospel and the instruction of the Christian doctrine to individuals of various races, nationalities, and socio-economic backgrounds. As mentioned above, the concept holds significant importance in missiology, as it signifies the Church’s unwavering dedication to disseminating the gospel to individuals from all walks of life. The following verses support the need for Christian’s involvement in the mission:

- Matthew 4:19, “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.”
- Matthew 24:14, And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.
- Romans 10:9, If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

The ecclesiastical institution maintains the belief that the task of fostering discipleship ought to be executed within the confines of the community church. The local church serves as the principal means for evangelism and discipleship, and it is advocated that it should function as the focal point for missional endeavors. It is imperative for the local church to actively participate in its community by engaging in outreach and evangelism, providing instruction and guidance to believers, and participating in social activities that advocate for justice and peace. The Bible supports the local church involvement in mission based on the following verses:

- Matthew 9:37-38, Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. 38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”
- Luke 9:1, When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases,
- Luke 10:1-3, After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. 2 He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. 3 Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves.”
- John 4:36-38, Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. 37 Thus the saying ‘One sows and another reaps’ is true. 38 I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor.
- John 20:21, Again Jesus said, Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.
- 1 Tim. 3:15, if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

- John 15:16, You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.

The Christian Church maintains the belief that the imperative of fostering discipleship ought to be pursued through collaborative efforts, including many churches, denominations, and Christian organizations. The idea of cooperation acknowledges that the Church cannot fulfill its purpose in isolation. In order to effectively fulfill its goal and propagate the gospel worldwide, the Church must establish collaborative relationships with fellow Christians, denominations, and organizations. Successful implementation of the Church's mission necessitates the active engagement of individuals via collaborative efforts, effective communication, and a collective dedication to the shared objectives. The ecclesiastical institution acknowledges its collaborative role in fulfilling its goal, understanding the imperative to effectively cooperate with fellow Christians to disseminate the gospel to a global audience. The Church should collaborate with other ecclesiastical bodies and organizations to fulfill its missional endeavors, encompassing evangelism, discipleship, and social activism. Read the following verses:

- 1 Corinthians 3:7-9, So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. 8 The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor. For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building.
- 2 Corinthians 6:1, As God's co-workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain.
- 1 John 1:77, But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

The Church maintains that fostering discipleship necessitates an approach characterized by an ethos of affection and deference towards individuals of all backgrounds. The Church maintains the belief that the dissemination of the gospel of Jesus Christ ought to be conducted in a persuasive, considerate, and welcoming manner. The Church ought to consistently exhibit respect, love, and compassion towards its neighbors while refraining from employing coercion or force in its endeavors related to the mission. The Bible supports the need to love and respect all people in the following verses:

- Matthew 7:12, So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.
- John 13:34-35, 4 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."
- Romans 12:10, Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.
- 1 Corinthians 10:33, Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God—33 even as I try to please everyone in every way. For I

am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.

- Philippians 2:3, Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves
- Titus 2:7, In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness
- 1 Peter 2:17, Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor

The Christian Church maintains the belief that an ardent devotion to the exaltation of God drives the imperative of fostering discipleship. The Church maintains the belief that it is incumbent upon them to fulfill their task of spreading the gospel and cultivating disciples in a manner conducive to God's glorification. The Church ought to strive for obedience to God's will in every facet of its missional endeavors. The following verses talk about the mission of making disciples must be motivated by a passion for the glory of God:

- 1 Kings 8:61, And may your hearts be fully committed to the Lord our God, to live by his decrees and obey his commands, as at this time.
- Psalm 16:2,8, I say to the Lord, "You are my Lord; apart from you I have no good thing." I keep my eyes always on the Lord.
- With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken.
- Habakkuk 2:14, For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.
- Matthew 6:24, No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.
- John 17:24, Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.
- Acts 12:23, Immediately, because Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died.
- Romans 9:22-23, What if God, although choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath—prepared for destruction? 23 What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory.
- Romans 11:36, For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.
- Romans 12:11, Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.
- 1 Corinthians 6:20, you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.
- 1 Corinthians 10:31, So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.
- Galatians 6:7-8, Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. 8 Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap

destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

The concept of incarnational ministry is endorsed by biblical missiology. The importance of actively engaging in societal involvement and engaging with individuals based on their ideas, rather than just striving to impose personal ideologies and principles, is of great significance. This methodology encompasses recognizing and comprehending the requirements, challenges, and viewpoints of the individuals being engaged and endeavoring to establish connections that result in significant and profound experiences with the divine. The following verse supports that mission should support incarnational ministry:

- Numbers 23:19, God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?
- Mark 10:45, For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.
- Mark 2:10,27, But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins. So he said to the man, 27 Then he said to them, The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.
- Mark 13:26, At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.
- Mark 14:61-62, “I am,” said Jesus. “And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”
- John 20:21, Again Jesus said, Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you

The concept of holistic mission acknowledges that the gospel message encompasses various dimensions of human existence, extending beyond spiritual matters to physical, social, and economic aspects. It endeavors to address not only the spiritual needs of individuals but also their physical, social, and economic well-being. This approach acknowledges the necessity of a holistic strategy encompassing the entire human experience, aiming to instill optimism and facilitate recovery for individuals, groups, and society. The Bible offers a set of moral principles and teachings that can be applied to the everyday lives of individuals. Several Biblical precepts encompass all aspects of human life, such as business, the multiplication of resources, and entrepreneurship. Let us see the following verses:

- Deuteronomy 22:8, When you build a new house, make a parapet around your roof so that you may not bring the guilt of bloodshed on your house if someone falls from the roof.
- Proverbs 11:1-3, The Lord detests dishonest scales, but accurate weights find favor with him. 2 When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom. 3 The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity.
- 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12, and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told

you, 12 so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.

- 2 Thessalonians 3:6-9, In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers and sisters, to keep away from every believer who is idle and disruptive and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. 7 For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, 8 nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. 9 We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you to imitate.

The Bible's teaching on human provision and multiplication of resources is noted in the following verses:

- Genesis 2:1-3, Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. 2 By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.
- Deuteronomy 28:1-13, If you fully obey the Lord your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. 2 All these blessings will come on you and accompany you if you obey the Lord your God:
- Joshua 5: 11-12, The day after the Passover, that very day, they ate some of the produce of the land: unleavened bread and roasted grain. 12 The manna stopped the day after they ate this food from the land; there was no longer any manna for the Israelites, but that year they ate the produce of Canaan.
- Psalm 128:1–2, Blessed are all who fear the Lord, who walk in obedience to him. 2 You will eat the fruit of your labor; blessings and prosperity will be yours.

The Bible teaches about material provisions because they are suitable for our daily life and the healthy functioning of a local church within communities, they are not sufficient to fully satisfy us as humans:

- Deuteronomy 8:1, Be careful to follow every command I am giving you today, so that you may live and increase and may enter and possess the land the Lord promised on oath to your ancestors.
- 1 Kings 4:25, During Solomon's lifetime Judah and Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, lived in safety, everyone under their own vine and under their own fig tree.
- Psalms 62:10, Do not trust in extortion or put vain hope in stolen goods; though your riches increase, do not set your heart on them.
- Proverbs 23:4-5, Do not wear yourself out to get rich; do not trust your own cleverness. 5 Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone, for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle.

- Ecclesiastes 5:10-20, Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income. This too is meaningless. As goods increase, so do those who consume them.11 And what benefit are they to the owners except to feast their eyes on them?
- Zechariah 3:10, “In that day each of you will invite your neighbor to sit under your vine and fig tree,’ declares the Lord Almighty.”
- Matthew 4:4, Jesus answered, It is written: Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.
- Matthew 6:33, But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.
- Mark 8:36, Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?

The Bible encourages entrepreneurship, wealth creation and wise management of resources to be able to do a mission, as noted in the following verses:

- Genesis 41:46-49, Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from Pharaoh’s presence and traveled throughout Egypt. 47 During the seven years of abundance the land produced plentifully. 48 Joseph collected all the food produced in those seven years of abundance in Egypt and stored it in the cities. In each city he put the food grown in the fields surrounding it. 49 Joseph stored up huge quantities of grain, like the sand of the sea; it was so much that he stopped keeping records because it was beyond measure.
- Zechariah 3:10, “‘In that day each of you will invite your neighbor to sit under your vine and fig tree,’ declares the Lord Almighty.”
- Matthew 25:14-30, “Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. 15 To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. 16 The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. 17 So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. 18 But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money. 19” “After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. 20 The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.’ 21” His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’ 22 The man with two bags of gold also came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.’ 23 “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’” 24 Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 25 So I was afraid and went out and hide your gold in the ground. See, here is what

belongs to you.’ 26 “His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? 27 Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.” 28 ‘So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. 29 For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. 30 And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

- Mark 8:36, What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?

The Bible supports establishing economic enterprises that foster meaningful employment and encourage innovation, vital to upholding human dignity and fostering societal harmony. The endeavor of engaging with Muslim communities necessitates the establishment of commercial enterprises among the target population in order to disseminate the message of the gospel effectively. The following verses teach the need to start a business:

- Proverb 16:3, Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans.
- 2 Corinthians 9:6, Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.
- Ephesians 3:20-21, Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.
- Ephesians 5:16-20, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. 18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12, 11 and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you, 12 so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.
- 2 Thessalonians 3:10–12, For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: “The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat.” 11 We hear that some among you are idle and disruptive. They are not busy; they are busybodies. 12 Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the food they eat. 13 And as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what is good.
- Philippians 4:13, I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

- Revelation 21:5, He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

The idea of discipleship holds a crucial position in missiology since it aligns with the Church’s overarching objective of fostering a community of disciples who continually develop their connection with God and actively propagate their faith to others. The process of discipleship necessitates continuous spiritual growth and the cultivation of aptitudes and practices that empower individuals to communicate their beliefs and engage in acts of service effectively. The following verses encourage Christians in their mission to Muslim communities:

- Matthew 4:19, “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.”
- Matthew 10:40-42, “Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. 41 Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person’s reward. 42 And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward.”
- Matthew 18:4, Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5 And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.
- Luke 9:23–24, Then he said to them all: Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. 24 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it.
- John 13:34–35, “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”
- John 15:16–17, You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. 17 This is my command: Love each other.
- Acts 1:8, But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”
- Romans 10:14–17, How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? 15 And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” 16 But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our message?” 17 Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.

- Colossians 1:28–29, He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. 29 To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.

Presently, we find ourselves in a distinct juncture regarding matters of faith. Merely relying on the adaptation of previously successful strategies may prove insufficient. There is a need to rekindle the romantic imagination within the context of Christianity. Ronald Rolheiser suggests other ten missiological principles:[96]

1. Secularity is not the enemy; it is our child, sprung from Judeo-Christian roots. Like any adolescent child suffering from an understandable youthful grandiosity, it is not bad, just unfinished. Our relationship with it should not be adversarial but one of solicitude. Jesus defines the “soil” of secularity in the parable of the Sower – some ground is good, some hostile, some indifferent – but the fact that some ground is hostile or indifferent does not absolve us from the mandate to keep on sowing.
2. Spirituality is people’s birthright. The secular culture hunger for spirituality but is essentially spiritually illiterate. People go where they get fed.
3. Recovering the tradition is a great labor. We must seek to recover the core, heart, of our tradition, beyond its encrusted accretions, and then put our passion to that heart. We must find our faith voice and then speak in an invitational way.
4. A potentially fertile image of Christ for our time might well be Christ as the kenosis (‘to empty out’) of God. Christ, in his self-emptying, expresses a love which gives itself and seeks nothing in return, incarnates God’s presence without pretense, reveals a God of total non-violence and vulnerability, a God of pure invitation, and a God who accepts the provisionally of everything. Jesus’ essential message is a universal message of vulnerability everyone needs to hear.
5. Given this self-emptying God, we might remind ourselves that sharing in the mission of Christ does not always mean using words about Jesus. God can permit us, when necessary, to take a holiday from a religious language.
6. As a faith community, we are in exile – from the past’s power, possessiveness, and prestige – but we should remember that all transformation happens in exile because that is the only time God can get at us. We must stay with the pain, exile, and emptying and hold the tension long enough until it changes us.
7. There are four aspects of the church that people still do accept: the church as an agency to serve the poor, the church as delivering the rites of passage, the church as a voice within ethical discourse, and the church as a “beautiful heritage”; but we must be careful not to let ourselves be identified with only these. Perhaps we are asking our parishes to carry too many things, asking them to do some things they can no longer do. Parish and mission are not coterminous. We must ask ourselves: Do we need new structures, beyond

[96] Ronald Rolheiser, “Missionaries to Secularity,” September 8, 2002. https://ronrolheiser.com/missionaries-to-secularity/#.Y2t6MHZBzIU. Accessed date 14-09-2023.

and outside the parish, new “missiological” structures to supplement what parishes can do? Can we dream of new “ecclesial houses"?

8. The gospel is ultimately about God rescuing the poor. Part of evangelization is the movement to eliminate poverty. The church is a big international body and could do much about poverty internationally. However, if we want to work for people experiencing poverty, we must free ourselves from too much reliance on dogma and rely more upon human solidarity.
9. There are human foundations, solid ones, for moral progress within our culture, and we need to accept this and widen the pool of sincere people with whom we form one body to work for a better world. Excessive stress on denominational identification can narrow the body. Interreligious dialogue must lead us back to a shared humanity. We must commit ourselves to the baptized and all people of sincerity and goodwill.

A Theological Mission among Muslims

The Christian mission among diverse communities has been a persistent challenge since the inception of Christianity. Christians have endeavored to propagate their religious beliefs globally, aiming to convert individuals to Christianity while fostering community harmony and comprehension. The Christian faith has a rich and extensive historical tradition of engaging in missionary endeavors, which may be traced back to the era of Jesus and his disciples. The scope of this missionary endeavor has encompassed several manifestations, from disseminating the gospel of redemption to delivering social and humanitarian aid. In contemporary times, there has been a noticeable surge in the inclination towards Christian missionary endeavors focused on Muslims. Numerous Christian groups have embraced the task of engaging with Muslim populations in order to establish connections and foster understanding. Nevertheless, engaging in theological mission work within the Muslim community is a multifaceted endeavor that necessitates a profound comprehension of Christianity and Islam and a sophisticated approach to evangelization.

The Christian mission among Muslims began earnestly in the 8th century when the Muslim Umayyad dynasty spread across the Middle East and North Africa.[97] Christians endeavored to engage in evangelistic efforts to disseminate their beliefs among Muslims in reaction to the expansion of Islam. Completing this assignment posed a challenge due to the prevailing hostility exhibited by Muslims towards Christian missionary endeavors. Nevertheless, Christian missionaries established a certain degree of influence and successfully converted a portion of the Muslim population to Christianity.

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[97] Philip Jenkins, The Lost History of Christianity: The Thousand-Year Golden Age of the Church in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia—and How It Died, First Edition (San Francisco, California: HarperOne, 2008), 1-10.

The present goals of the Christian theological mission within the Muslim community are fostering peaceful coexistence and mutual comprehension between the two religious traditions and providing instruction to individuals who identify as Muslims regarding the fundamental tenets of Christianity while also endeavoring to foster an environment characterized by reciprocal regard. Christian missions also aim to offer educational opportunities, healthcare services, and other assistance to individuals residing in nations with a predominantly Muslim population. Furthermore, missionaries have the opportunity to provide humanitarian help and relief to individuals experiencing hardship.

The Christian mission's endeavors to engage with Muslims are accompanied by various obstacles, notwithstanding its commendable objectives. One of the foremost concerns pertains to proselytizing, as many Muslims perceive endeavoring to convert others as a manifestation of compulsion and manipulation. Moreover, a common occurrence is the presence of resistance among the indigenous population, characterized by a prevailing skepticism towards foreign individuals endeavoring to disseminate their religious beliefs. In order to address this issue, Christian missionaries must exhibit sensitivity towards indigenous practices and beliefs while actively endeavoring to cultivate an atmosphere of comprehension and reverence among different religious traditions.

In order to effectively engage in Christian theological mission work with Muslims, it is imperative to acquire a comprehensive comprehension of Islam and its doctrinal tenets. Muslims consider the Qur'an the primary scripture of their faith, attributing to it the entirety of God's unadulterated revelations to the Prophet Muhammad. Additionally, adherents of this faith believe in the Prophet Muhammad as the ultimate messenger of Allah, and they adhere to his teachings as documented in the Qur'an and Hadith. Christian missionaries must possess a comprehensive understanding of the beliefs, practices, and rituals observed by Muslims, including but not limited to prayer, fasting, and pilgrimage.

In order to effectively engage with Muslims, Christian missionaries must exercise caution and demonstrate reverence towards Islamic concepts and customs. A comprehensive understanding of the Qur'an and the Hadith is required, and a willingness to engage in a respectful and amicable dialogue with individuals who follow the Islamic faith. When elucidating the tenets of Islam, it is imperative for Christian missionaries to refrain from employing stereotyped language and to demonstrate an awareness of the historical and cultural milieu in which Islam originated. Having a comprehensive understanding of the fundamental tenets of Christianity is essential for effectively engaging in theological outreach efforts within the Muslim community. It encompasses the concepts of the Trinity, the divinity of Jesus, and the theological importance of redemption through faith in Jesus. Christian missionaries must articulate these perspectives concisely and lucidly while engaging in respectful and constructive dialogues with Muslims regarding the distinctions between Christianity and Islam. The theological foundation of the Christian scriptures needs to serve as the fundamental concepts that inform the approach towards engaging others who are not acquainted with the teachings of the Bible. The mission's primary source is God's authoritative voice, as recorded in the Scriptures.

The figure of Jesus, characterized by his authoritative nature and the message he conveyed, emerged within the challenging context of the Roman Empire. However, it is essential to note that the foundation of his character and the source of his authority can be traced back to his connection with the divine entity. Jesus' teaching in the book of Luke chapter 24:44 indicates that He came to fulfill the Law, Prophets, and Psalm.

- Luke 24:44, He said to them, This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.

Adherents of each religious tradition must seek guidance from their respective religious authorities, as the theological conceptions of God within Christianity and Islam differ significantly. The comparison and classification of apples and oranges as fruits only based on their visual similarities are not valid. The observed dissimilarities between them are significant and should not be disregarded. Christians tasked with being witnesses for their faith should strive to maintain impartiality in their presentation, creating an environment allowing others to freely express their conceptions of God. The deity depicted in the Bible, seen as an actual being, serves as the foundational belief system for adherents of Christianity. The significance of the absolute truth presented in the Bible should not be diminished by individuals who endorse relativism and subjectivism.[98] Despite what some might think, God is and always will be the only sovereign, clinging to the unchanging truth. The truth of God cannot be tested on human perceptions and laboratories. God is spirit, and those who worship should do so in spirit and truth (John 4:24, "God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.").

The Bible introduces other significant teachings that cannot be comprehended from the perspective of other religions, including elements related to Christology, Pneumatology, and Eschatology. Religious elements that fail to acknowledge the fundamental concepts of the oneness of Godhead, salvation, and eschatological cannot be considered equivalent to the Christian Bible. The Qur'an lacks these doctrines. This particular interpretation of the Christian religion inevitably leads to the singular conclusion that we cannot assert that we are discussing the same divine entity. The Christian deity is distinct from Allah, and the Islamic concept of Allah differs from the Christian understanding of the triune God. Based on the evidence mentioned earlier, it can be definitively said that Christians and Muslims do not refer to the same transcendent being. Hence, it is imperative for Christian missionaries operating within Muslim communities to introduce their authentic conception of God to individuals, irrespective of their religious inclinations and preconceived notions.

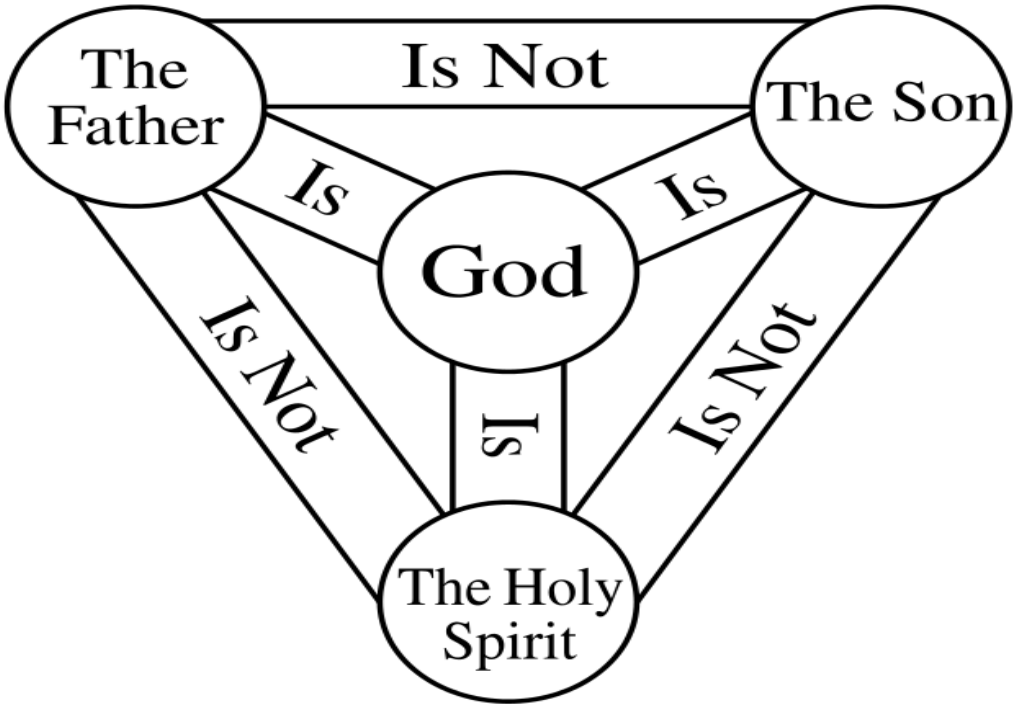
[98] Relativism is the claim that knowledge, truth and morality exist in relation to culture or society and that there are no universal truths while subjectivism is the claim that knowledge is merely subjective and that there is no external or objective truth.

The Triune God is a Missionary God

The Triune God holds significant importance within the Christian faith as it elucidates the intricate interplay and interconnectedness among the divine entities of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The concept above holds significant importance within Christian theology and serves as a fundamental principle for comprehending the underlying rationale behind the Christian mission. The Triune God assumes the role of the supreme missionary, dispatching the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit into the world to establish God's Kingdom. The following verses are in support of the Trinity and its role in mission:

- Isaiah 9:6, For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- Matthew 3:16-17, As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. 17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.
- Matthew 28:19, Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
- Luke 1:35, The angel answered, The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.
- John 1:14, The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- John 10:30, I and the Father are one.
- John 14:16-17, And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.
- John 17:20–21, My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, 21 that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.
- 1 Corinthians 8:6, yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.
- 1 Corinthians 12:4–5, There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. 5 There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.
- 2 Corinthians 3:17, Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.
- 2 Corinthians 13:14, May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

- Ephesians 4:4–6, There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.
- Colossians 2:9, For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, 10 and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority.
- 1 Peter 1:2, who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.
- Revelation 1:4–5, John, To the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, 5 and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood,



- John 8:16, But if I do judge, my decisions are true, because I am not alone. I stand with the Father, who sent me.
- John 14:26, But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.
- Acts 10:38, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

The Triune God can be understood as a missionary figure due to His inherent nature as a relational deity who actively pursues and desires a connection with the human race. The divine Father dispatched His Son, Jesus, to assume human form

and sacrifice Himself to redeem humanity's transgressions. By means of Jesus' crucifixion, the Father reconciled humanity with Himself, reinstating the fractured bond between God and humanity (2 Corinthians 5:18, All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation). Subsequently, the Holy Spirit was dispatched to reside within adherents and bestow upon them the capability to lead a lifestyle deemed favorable by God. The concept of the Triune God can be understood as a missionary figure whose purpose is to facilitate the process of reconciliation between God and humans, as well as to establish a harmonious connection between individuals and the divine. The following verses talk of the relational God who is involved in the mission:

- Luke 10:27, "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"
- John 6:44, No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day.
- John 14:6, Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7 If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."
- John 15:5, I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.
- John 17:3, Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.
- John 20:27–28, Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." 28 Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"
- Romans 5:8, But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
- Romans 8:7-10, The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. 8 Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God. 9 You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. 10 But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness.
- 1 Timothy 6:12-16, Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 13 In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you 14 to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.
- James 4:6-10 But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." 7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your

hearts, you double-minded. 9 Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

- 1 Peter 5:6-7, Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. 7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.
- Revelation 3:20, Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.

The mission of the Triune God is also evident in its manner of execution. The Father dispatched His Son, Jesus, to proclaim the "Good News" about the Kingdom of God. The primary objective of Jesus was to announce the imminent arrival of the Kingdom and facilitate its actualization through the dissemination of knowledge, the provision of healing, and the delivery of sermons. After that, the Holy Spirit operates through the ecclesiastical institution to perpetuate the dissemination of the teaching about the Kingdom. The mission of the Triune God is perceived as an ongoing endeavor to establish the Kingdom of God throughout the world.

The mission of the Triune God is also evident in its implementation via the Church. The Church is commonly perceived as the embodiment of Christ, serving as the conduit through which the Triune God fulfills His divine purpose. The Church serves as a means through which the Triune God can effectively communicate the message of the Gospel to those who may otherwise be unable to receive it. The Church serves as a means by which the Triune God bestows upon Christians the necessary tools and abilities to effectively testify to the Gospel and propagate the message of the Kingdom.

The Triune God is the entity characterized by the attribute of love. The expression of love is exemplified in the supreme act of self-sacrifice, as demonstrated by Jesus Christ, who descended to the earthly realm with the purpose of enduring suffering and death in order to atone for the transgressions of humankind. Love is also manifested through the agency of the Holy Spirit, who operates within the innermost beings of persons, facilitating the emergence of faith and repentance. The love of God is not characterized by passivity but rather by its active nature, as it perpetually extends itself to establish connections with individuals, fostering a relationship with the divine. The Bible tells us that God is love in the following verses:

- John 1:14, The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- John 3:6, Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.
- John 3:16, For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
- John 20:22, And with that he breathed on them and said, Receive the Holy Spirit.

- Acts 2:4, All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.
- 1 Pet. 1:2, who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.
- 1 John 4:8,16, Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love and 16, And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.

This love of God is expressed in the Great Commission, where Jesus instructs his followers to “go and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19). This commission is not simply a command to share the gospel message but to participate in the mission of God, to bring people into a right relationship with him. The Triune God is not content to reveal himself to people but actively works to bring them into a personal relationship with himself. The following verses teach that God’s love is expressed in the Great Commission:

- John 14:31, but he comes so that the world may learn that I love the Father and do exactly what my Father has commanded me. Come now; let us leave.
- John 17:24, Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.
- Romans 5:5, And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.
- Romans 5:8-10, But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him! 10 For if, while we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!
- Romans 15:30, And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.
- Galatians 5:22-23, But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.
- 1 John 4:9-10, This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

In addition, it might be argued that the Triune God embodies the concept of communal existence. The concept of the Holy Trinity, comprising the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is characterized by an ideal state of oneness and love. Consequently, it is their intention for humanity to partake in a similar form of communal existence. The divine purpose is to facilitate the inclusion of individuals within a society characterized by love, wherein they may encounter and undergo a profound metamorphosis via the reception of divine love. Jesus says, “That all

of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me (John 17:21)." The following verses support the teaching of God and community:

- Deuteronomy 6:4, Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one
- Psalm 133:1, How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!
- Matthew 18:20, For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.
- John 10:30, I and the Father are one.
- Acts 2:46–47, Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.
- Colossians 3:13–14, Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.
- Romans 12:4–5, For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, 5 so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.
- Hebrews 10:24–25, "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

Christian mission is grounded on the concept of missio Dei. The church is God's instrument for a mission to the world. The Triune God is a missionary God. The three persons in the Trinity are all actively involved in history as a missionary God, the only true God who is Lord of the entire creation and humanity. The Triune God has been involved in the history of humanity as a missionary God.[99]

Jesus Christ, the second person of the Holy Trinity, serves as a poignant reminder of his dual role as both the supreme authority and the one who delivers humanity from sin and its consequences. The exclusive means of attaining salvation lies solely in the person of Christ, leaving no room for alternative avenues or alternative saviors. Jesus is seen as the divine figure who holds the title of Lord and possesses ultimate and unquestionable dominion over all creation. The imperative for all of humanity is to unconditionally surrender to the authority and sovereignty of Christ as their Lord and King. Christian individuals must disseminate ardently said message in every missionary endeavor. If the necessary conditions are unmet, the church mission loses significance and becomes ineffective.

The Holy Spirit, as the third person within the trinity, is responsible for implementing the redeeming actions of Christ inside the lives of individuals who

[99] Thinandavha D. Mashau, "A Reformed Perspective On Taking Mission And Missiology To The Heart Of Theological Training," In die Skriflig/In Luce Verbi | Vol 46, No 2 | a64 | DOI: https://doi.org/10.4102/ids.v46i2.64 | 14 December 2012; 64 Page 4 of 8

profess faith. The Holy Spirit is responsible for convicting sinners of their wicked behaviors and sanctifying them in preparation for their essential role. The church is endowed with essential gifts for its purpose through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit facilitates the application of the proclaimed message in listeners' lives, leading to their conviction. In summary, the Spirit operates within the hearts of individuals. The Holy Spirit facilitates cultivating an individual's faith and exploring God's affection for them. In light of religious diversity, the Holy Spirit plays a significant role in facilitating a believer's steadfast dedication to the teachings of the Word.

- John 3:3–5, Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again." 4 "How can someone be born when they are old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!" 5 Jesus answered, Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit.
- John 17:3, Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.
- Romans 8:4, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

The Urgency of the Church Mission

The imperative of the church's mission is to possess an eschatological character. Jesus committed to return. The ecclesiastical institution must not disregard the imminent return of the sovereign ruler. The church serves as a testament to the anticipated return of Jesus Christ, the Messiah. The Biblical doctrine asserts that individuals who adhere to the faith are metaphorically characterized as the illuminating and preserving agents within society. The book of Matthew 5:16 states, "In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." To that effect, the church is entrusted to proclaim the gospel to all people with word and deed. The urgency of the mission is further expressed in Matthew 24:14 and Luke 24:46–49. The purpose of preaching the good news to all is a Biblical mandate before the end, as noted in the following verses:

- Matthew 24:14, And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.
- Luke 24:46-49, He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, 47 and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things. 49 I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

Typically, a Sunday service is intended to engage in worship while emphasizing the importance of extending outreach efforts to the broader global community. Believers are encouraged to publicly declare and raise awareness of the

prospect of being in the presence of Jesus, where we will stand humbly beneath his feet. There will be judgment as per the following verses:

- 1 Cor 15:25–28, For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death. 27 For he “has put everything under his feet.” Now when it says that “everything” has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. 28 When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

HOW TO CARRY OUT MISSION AMONG MUSLIMS AND OTHERS

Mission among Muslims and Others

Executing missions within Muslim communities can provide challenges due to volatile and perceptual behaviors. It is imperative to approach this undertaking with due regard for the cultures and beliefs of both people. When embarking on a mission within Muslim and other demographics, it is crucial to thoroughly comprehend the features of the group one desires to interact with. This awareness is essential in order to conduct meaningful outreach activities effectively. Gaining a comprehensive comprehension of each religious belief system's fundamental principles and doctrines becomes the initial stride towards attaining a sense of direction and fulfillment within the Muslim community. This objective can be achieved through engaging in scholarly research, extensively reading relevant literature, and actively participating in seminars or lectures that facilitate a comparative analysis of the two religious traditions. Maintaining an open-minded stance and demonstrating readiness to engage with the ideas and perspectives of individuals adhering to diverse religious beliefs is of utmost importance. It is acknowledging the perspectives of one's intended audience. Enhancing the likelihood of effectively bridging the gap and achieving the objectives of one's mission can be facilitated by acquiring a comprehensive understanding of the beliefs held by the target group.

If Christian missionaries possess a comprehensive understanding of Islam, they can create a platform for engaging in religious and doctrinal discourse. Events, conferences, and seminars that foster interfaith dialogue and engagement have the potential to achieve this objective. These assemblies should strive to cultivate an atmosphere of acceptance, respect, and understanding. Ensuring the comfort and respect of all individuals engaged in a religious endeavor is paramount. The subsequent phase involves implementing efficient outreach strategies. This objective can be accomplished by inquiring about the doctrines and practices of diverse religious traditions, actively listening to their respective responses, and engaging in meaningful dialogues surrounding these topics. It is imperative to remember that missions encompass more than mere proselytization of one's own religious beliefs. They also involve bridging gaps in theological comprehension and cultivating a sense of mutual respect. Ultimately, it is imperative to exhibit unwavering determination and be willing to endure in one's endeavors within the Muslim community. This process may exhibit temporal duration or commence if it is within the divine will. A significant amount of effort and concentration will be required. It is imperative to remember that the primary aim is to guide individuals towards embracing the teachings of Christ.

God is the author of languages, as noted in the Book of Genesis 11:1-10. We can confirm that while proclaiming the gospel to the global society, God is gathering people of all languages to the exalted Christ. The Book of Acts and Revelation point out that Jesus is gathering people of all nations to himself, as noted below:

- Genesis 11:1-10, Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. 2 As people moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there. 3 They said to each other, “Come, let’s make bricks and bake them thoroughly.” They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. 4 Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth.” 5 But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower the people were building. 6 The Lord said, “If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. 7 Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.” 8 So the Lord scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. 9 That is why it was called Babel—because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth.
- Acts 1:8, But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.
- Revelation 5:9, And they sang a new song, saying: You are worthy to take the scroll
  and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation.
- Rev 7:9, After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. 10 And they cried out in a loud voice: “Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.”

Unlike the portrayal of Isa in the Qur'an (19:22-26), the resurrected Christ is seen as actively drawing adherents from many nationalities, communities, and linguistic origins. Individuals whom a divine entity has summoned to engage in the provision of services within the Muslim community ought to possess a comprehensive understanding of the ethnolinguistic and cultural intricacies present within each distinct community. This awareness is crucial to contextualize the message of the Gospel effectively. The dissemination of the gospel ought to adhere to a straightforward and lucid approach within the framework of every cultural setting. Given that the gospel is positioned as superior to culture, its objective should be directed towards the redemption of culture rather than its complete transformation. Regenerated souls in any given culture will conform to the Saviour, as noted in Acts (19:18-20).

- Qur’an 19:22-26, So she conceived him and withdrew with him to a remote place. 23 Then the pains of labor drove her to the trunk of a palm tree. She cried, “Alas! I wish I had died before this, and was a thing long forgotten! 24 So a voice1 reassured her from below her, Do not grieve! Your Lord has

provided a stream at your feet. 25 And shake the trunk of this palm tree towards you, it will drop fresh, ripe dates upon you. 26 So eat and drink, and put your heart at ease. But if you see any of the people, say, ‘I have vowed silence to the Most Compassionate, so I am not talking to anyone today.’”

- Acts 19:18-20, Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed what they had done. 19 A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas. 20 In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.
- Colossians 2:18-23, Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you. Such a person also goes into great detail about what they have seen; they are puffed up with idle notions by their unspiritual mind. 19 They have lost connection with the head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow. 20 Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules: 21 “Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!”? 22 These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings. 23 Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

Individuals who are summoned to engage in service within Muslim communities should possess an understanding of specific cultural customs that deviate from the principles of the gospel. It is imperative for these individuals to actively discourage newly converted individuals from partaking in such behaviors. The Biblical passages of Romans 12:1-2 and 1 Peter 1:13-18 emphasize eliminating spiritual ignorance. Certain cultural customs may not align with the principles and teachings of the gospel. In light of the teachings of the Gospel, it is imperative to eliminate such activities. The following verses talk about abolishing cultural practices which do not conform to the teaching of the Gospel:

- Romans 12:1-2, Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. 2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.
- 1 Peter 1:13-18, Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming. 14 As obedient children do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. 15 But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; 16 for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.” 17 Since you call on a Father who judges each person’s work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear. 18 For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors.

Mission and Dialogue in the Context of Sharing the Biblical Christ

The objective of Christians in the presence of Muslims is to foster an environment conducive to disseminating Jesus' teachings while simultaneously promoting harmony and tranquility. The fundamental basis of this objective lies in cultivating reverence towards individuals, irrespective of their religious or philosophical disparities. Interfaith conversation between Christians and Muslims can potentially serve as a fundamental basis for shared religious beliefs in contexts where difficulties exist. Interfaith discourse refers to exchanging ideas, beliefs, and worldviews among various religious groups. Through this practice, individuals can enhance their understanding of one another and their disparities. Employing interfaith dialogue, adherents of Christianity and Islam have the potential to transcend their divergences and establish stronger bonds characterized by mutual reverence and harmony. They comprehend and appreciate the concepts and principles held by individuals who lack interest in Christianity.

Dialogue can foster enhanced comprehension and receptiveness, facilitating a more harmonious environment. In the context of interfaith dialogue, Christians may seek to ascertain the most effective approach to fostering harmonious coexistence with Muslims while maintaining their religious beliefs. This endeavor can be achieved through engaging in thoughtful discussions and relying on the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In addition to facilitating enhanced comprehension of individuals or groups different from oneself, discussion can serve as a means to confront and challenge prejudiced attitudes and preconceived notions. Mutual knowledge exchange and enhanced comprehension of diverse perspectives can benefit both parties involved in a debate. In order to disseminate an accurate understanding of the Biblical Messiah, engaging in discussion can serve as a valuable tool for identifying and clarifying misinterpretations and resolving conflicts that may arise between adherents of different faiths. Christian religious discussion and religious mission should share a common objective. The Christian mission asserts its total authority under its foundation in the incarnation of Christ. The primary objective of the Christian mission is to effectively communicate the gospel's teachings to the intended audience while ultimately entrusting the outcome and impact of such efforts to Jesus. The mission exhibits a proactive approach to disseminating the concept of the messiah to a broader audience. All individuals, regardless of their religious affiliation, possess the inherent entitlement to be exposed to the teachings of the Gospel. It is incumbent upon Christians to fulfill their duty by disseminating the message of redemption. Whatever we do, we do it to the glory of God, as the Bible states:

- Proverbs 3:6, In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.
- Micah 4:5, For all people will walk everyone in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever.
- 1 Corinthians 10:31, So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all to the glory of God.
- Ephesians 1:17, That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him

- Colossians 3:15-17, Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, for to this you were called as members of one body. And be thankful 16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.
- Philippians 2:11, And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Self-propagating Ministry among Muslim Communities

The notion of a self-perpetuating ministry has experienced a surge in popularity in recent years. The ministry model empowers individuals and local churches to disseminate Jesus Christ's teachings through self-directed initiatives. The foundation of a self-propagating ministry rests upon a set of fundamental principles that necessitate wholehearted adoption to achieve success.

The Efficacy of Prayer: Establishing a self-perpetuating ministry necessitates a foundation deeply established in prayer. Prayer serves as a means through which individuals can tap into God's divine power. Through prayer, individuals get the guidance and direction required for practical evangelistic endeavors. The entire self-propagating ministry needs to be focused on prayer, carefully monitoring and evaluating its outcomes to ascertain its efficacy in generating favorable outcomes. A Robust Theological Framework: The theological underpinnings that serve as the bedrock of the ministry ought to be intellectually rigorous, rooted in the scriptures, and responsive to the cultural and contextual dynamics within which it is being operationalized. Theology ought to be effectively communicated and persistently emphasized throughout the ministry.

The effectiveness of a self-propagating ministry is heavily contingent upon effective leadership. Leadership necessitates a profound comprehension of the fundamental concepts and practices that underpin the ministry, coupled with the ability to convey this knowledge to others proficiently. In addition, individuals must exhibit a steadfast dedication to evangelism and an ardent enthusiasm towards facilitating the spiritual transformation of individuals, leading them to embrace Jesus Christ as their personal Redeemer.

In order to establish a self-sustaining ministry, it is imperative to prioritize evangelism and discipleship. The incorporation of discipleship is an essential element within the realm of ministry, as its implementation is crucial for achieving success in this domain. It is imperative to offer comprehensive training to individuals engaged in the ministry, enabling them to proficiently communicate the gospel and guide newly converted individuals in their spiritual growth.

Collaboration is crucial in fostering a self-sustaining ministry within Muslim communities, necessitating active engagement between churches and individuals. The partnership should encompass exchanging resources, implementing best practices, and generating ideas to optimize the ministry's effectiveness. Assessing

Outcomes: It is crucial to evaluate the ministry's efficacy to see whether it is attaining the intended outcomes. The assessment of the effectiveness of evangelism initiatives and discipleship programs, as well as the evaluation of the overall impact of the ministry, is needed. These principles serve as the fundamental basis and framework for a ministry capable of self-perpetuation. When effectively executed, these strategies have the potential to foster the expansion of the ministry and facilitate the dissemination of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Principles of Self-governance

A self-governance ministry is an organizational entity dedicated to preserving and advancing self-governance within a specific geographical jurisdiction. This particular form of ministry is founded around principles that serve as guiding principles for its functioning. These principles are essential for effective and successful self-governance, and they include:

1. The establishment of self-governance ministries for churches within Muslim communities ought to adhere to the democratic norms as delineated in the rule of law. This statement suggests that it is the ministry's responsibility to ensure the protection of individual rights and that all its acts follow the existing legislation of the country. This legislation aims to ensure the participation of persons in decision-making processes that directly impact their lives while protecting their fundamental rights from any violations.
2. The public's expectation of accountability from the ministry is of utmost importance. The ministry must demonstrate transparency and be subject to public accountability concerning its operational actions. The main aim is to foster public trust in the ministry and foster a sense of confidence among individuals. The ministry ought to possess the requisite capability to assume responsibility for any mistakes it may make.
3. The ministry should foster a culture characterized by open communication and collaborative decision-making procedures. It is crucial for the ministry to actively involve the general public in the decision-making process and guarantee that their viewpoints and concerns are adequately recognized. The objective of this measure is to ensure that persons are sufficiently informed about all decisions that are undertaken.
4. The ministry should actively promote and support the involvement of individuals in the decision-making process. The ministry must ensure the active involvement of persons in the decision-making process while appropriately recognizing and integrating their viewpoints. This strategy aims to enhance the engagement of persons in the decision-making process and guarantee the proper recognition of their viewpoints.
5. The ministry should make efforts to facilitate the advancement of the populace. The ministry must guarantee the populace's access to education, healthcare, and other essential services that will contribute to their overall well-being and improved quality of life. The aim is to ensure that individuals can experience the advantages of self-governance. The following are the five fundamental concepts that underpin a self-governance ministry. By adhering to these principles, the ministry may ensure efficacy and success in its

operational endeavors. Consequently, this will facilitate the populace's ability to reap the advantages of self-governance.

6. Planted churches, either in Muslim communities or otherwise, ought to have the ability to meet their spiritual and physical needs. Any church that can self-governance, self-support, and self-propagation will strengthen.

Self-supporting Ministry

A self-support ministry is a religious organization specifically structured to cater to its participants' spiritual and practical requirements. Typically, these ministries encompass diverse activities, including prayer gatherings, worship ceremonies, scriptural analysis, and communal gatherings. Frequently, these groups are under the leadership of spiritual leaders who offer members spiritual counseling and support. Self-support ministries are specifically structured to offer a communal atmosphere and assistance to those lacking opportunities to engage with conventional religious institutions. Frequently, these interventions are customized to address the requirements of a particular group or demography. As an illustration, a self-sustaining ministry may be oriented explicitly towards women, youth, or a particular ethnic community. Furthermore, several self-support ministries may prioritize offering monetary aid, spiritual guidance, or alternative assistance to individuals experiencing hardship.

The principal objective of a self-support ministry is to facilitate the advancement of individual development and spiritual maturation. The activities and events provided by the ministry have the potential to facilitate the cultivation of a more profound self-awareness and a heightened comprehension of one's faith among its members. Furthermore, self-support ministries can offer a secure and nurturing setting wherein members can openly communicate their experiences, achievements, and challenges with fellow participants. Cultivating a sense of community and belonging might be highly useful during periods of crisis or adversity. Self-support ministries can also yield advantages for the broader community. These ministries can mitigate stress levels and foster a perception of stability and optimism by assisting and counseling individuals requiring aid. In addition, they can fulfill the role of an educational and outreach platform, facilitating the dissemination of messages of hope and faith to individuals who lack conventional access to religious institutions.

Self-support ministries play a crucial role in fostering the expansion of churches inside Muslim communities. They can offer a secure and nurturing setting for individuals requiring assistance, facilitating spiritual and personal advancement. In addition, they can potentially yield advantages for the broader community by providing educational resources and outreach initiatives. Self-support ministries can provide valuable support, guidance, and inspiration for individuals lacking access to conventional religious institutions.

It is imperative for local churches that have been established to ensure the fulfillment of their financial budget in order to prevent hindrances in the pursuit of their mission. The Bible encourages adherents to offer their contributions to God.

Continuously engaging in tithing, offerings, and other financial commitments is imperative. According to biblical teachings, it is emphasized that a church has the responsibility to provide resources to address the various requirements of its local congregation. When individuals adhere to the principle of generosity, the blessings bestowed upon them by a divine being are boundless. The Bible teaches the need to support churches:

- Philippians 4:14-19, Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. 15 Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; 16 for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need. 17 Not that I desire your gifts; what I desire is that more be credited to your account. 18 I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. 19 And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

Particular churches may lack instruction regarding the imperative to allocate their resources towards the propagation of the Gospel. In such circumstances, the church is deficient in the virtues of sacrifice, love, joy, obedience, and the blessings typically linked with acts of giving. The following scriptures support the need to support churches financially:

- Mark 12:41-44, Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. 42 But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a few cents. 43 Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. 44 They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on.”
- Acts 20:35, In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ’It is more blessed to give than to receive.’
- 2 Corinthians 8:8, I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others.
- 2 Corinthians 8:24, Therefore show these men the proof of your love and the reason for our pride in you, so that the churches can see it.
- 2 Corinthians 9:13, Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.

The absence of moral and financial support from local churches can be interpreted as indicative of a lack of maturity. The biblical text promotes that individuals should contribute financial resources to the church to indicate personal

growth and development. Christians are encouraged to work very hard to feed their families and neighbors, as noted in the following verses:

- Ephesians 4:28, Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.
- 2 Thessalonians 3:6–15, In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers and sisters, to keep away from every believer who is idle and disruptive and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. 7 For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, 8 nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. 9 We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you to imitate. 10 For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat."11 We hear that some among you are idle and disruptive. They are not busy; they are busybodies. 12 Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the food they eat. 13 And as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what is good.14 Take special note of anyone who does not obey our instruction in this letter. Do not associate with them, in order that they may feel ashamed. 15 Yet do not regard them as an enemy but warn them as you would a fellow believer.

According to biblical teachings, the inability to adhere to the principle of generosity within a local church ultimately results in a more significant depletion of resources for the church. The Bible expounds upon the concept of grace about the church, emphasizing the voluntary contributions made by its members to sustain the institution. The church has to provide support to the local congregation. The Bible strongly promotes the virtue of generosity. God expects Christians to express gratitude for the abundant provisions He has bestowed upon each individual. Giving is an integral component of the religious practice of worshiping God. Through giving, a local church can meet the needs of others and pray for them, as noted in the following verses:

- 2 Corinthians 9:8, And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.
- 2 Corinthians 9:11–12, You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.12 This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.
- 2 Corinthians 9:13-14, Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.) 14 And in their prayers for you their hearts will

go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. 15 Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!).

By providing financial assistance, the believers of the New Testament could contribute to the support of evangelists, pastors, and missionaries who were engaged in spreading the gospel in previously unexplored regions. The notion of philanthropy holds significant importance for local churches, as it aids in establishing new territories. The Bible presents examples where local churches demonstrated their capacity to meet the requirements of itinerant evangelists. Furthermore, the early church demonstrated its capacity to support the financially disadvantaged community in Jerusalem.

- 1 Corinthians 9:7–12, Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its grapes? Who tends a flock and does not drink the milk? 8 Do I say this merely on human authority? Doesn't the Law say the same thing? 9 For it is written in the Law of Moses: "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain." Is it about oxen that God is concerned? 10 Surely he says this for us, doesn't he? Yes, this was written for us, because whoever plows and threshes should be able to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest. 11 If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? 12 If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more? But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ.
- Philippians 4:14–19, Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. 15 Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; 16 for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need. 17 Not that I desire your gifts; what I desire is that more be credited to your account. 18 I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. 19 And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.
- 1 Tim 5:17–18; The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. 18 For Scripture says, "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages."
- 3 John 5–8, Dear friend, you are faithful in what you are doing for the brothers and sisters, even though they are strangers to you. 6 They have told the church about your love. Please send them on their way in a manner that honors God. 7 It was for the sake of the Name that they went out, receiving no help from the pagans. 8 We ought therefore to show hospitality to such people so that we may work together for the truth.

CHAPTER TWENTY- FOUR

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE CHURCH'S MISSION IN ISLAMIC CONTEXT

Church's Mission in the Islamic World

In an Islamic context, the purpose of Christian churches necessitates adaptation to align with the specific requirements of the local culture. In order to effectively engage with Islamic society, churches must demonstrate a willingness to modify their conventional practices while upholding the integrity of the Gospel message. Here are a few suggestions for mission churches in the Islamic context:

Firstly, churches must prioritize establishing meaningful connections with the neighboring Islamic population. Exploring strategies to foster connections and initiate a constructive discourse with indigenous Islamic authorities is essential. Churches can facilitate interfaith dialogue and foster religious inclusivity by extending invitations to Muslims to participate in their ceremonies, engaging in local Islamic festivals, and inviting Muslim community members to attend church services.

Secondly, churches must strongly emphasize the practices of prayer and service. The utilization of prayer has the potential to establish a spiritual ambience conducive to fostering a welcoming environment for the Islamic community. In addition to their spiritual functions, churches should prioritize assisting the surrounding community, including essential resources like sustenance, apparel, and healthcare. Humanitarian support will serve as evidence of the church's concern for the welfare of the Islamic community and exemplify the tangible manifestation of Christ's love.

In addition, churches should employ the vernacular of the surrounding community when delivering sermons and conducting worship services. The use of vernacular language holds particular significance within the Islamic framework. Churches must exercise caution in their language and imagery to avoid any potential perception of insult or offense towards the Islamic faith.

In addition, churches should exercise restraint and avoid adopting an overly assertive or confrontational approach during evangelistic endeavors. Exercising mindfulness regarding the cultural sensitivities associated with the Islamic community is imperative. It is recommended that churches employ tactful and considerate approaches in disseminating the Gospel and fostering connections with the Islamic community.

In conclusion, churches must demonstrate a willingness to acquire knowledge from the Islamic heritage without compromising the integrity of the Gospel. There are significant benefits from acquiring knowledge about the Islamic faith and drawing insights from its abundant cultural legacy. It is imperative for churches to actively cultivate an environment that fosters mutual respect and comprehension among adherents of Christianity and Islam. The following recommendations can facilitate the engagement of mission churches operating within an Islamic environment with the local community courteously and efficiently. It is imperative for churches to actively cultivate an environment characterized by inclusivity and empathy while also

devising strategies to enhance the accessibility of the Gospel to the Islamic community.

In non-Christian situations, the establishment of churches will achieve self-sufficiency when members actively contribute financial resources towards the administration and operation of the local church. Local churches should establish a budget for both structural growth and outreach initiatives. The Apostle Paul engaged in the occupation of tentmaking, which served as a means for him to generate a portion of his livelihood. In some instances, it may be feasible to launch additional church business projects to supplement the church's budgetary resources.

The Bible provides clear evidence of the expectation for local churches to be financially independent. Providing early education to newly established churches within an Islamic environment is imperative to assist their congregations effectively. The development of Sunday school materials, adult study manuals, camp materials, and pulpit speeches should be tailored to facilitate the self-sustainability of a local church, beginning with its youngest members. Providing early instruction to individuals who adhere to religious beliefs regarding Biblical giving is imperative. Church planters need to recognize that, despite the tiny size of a church, individuals should still be afforded the chance to contribute, as there is no evidence to suggest that anyone has been able to surpass God in terms of generosity. Believers are individuals who are part of the broader collective known as the body of Christ, and it is believed that God will bestow blessings upon them as they adhere to and comply with his teachings. It is expected that church adherents should adhere to the biblical principles of work ethic, refrain from adopting a beggar mentality or displaying lethargy, and actively contribute to progress and development. The church must understand the self-support biblical concept and implement it consistently, irrespective of the congregation's size.

The foundation for giving is firmly established in the Old Testament. As depicted in the Exodus account, the Egyptians are historically documented as the initial benefactors in the narrative of the Israelites' departure from Egypt. The one-time gift was needed for people who are going to freedom.

- Exodus 12:35–36, The Israelites did as Moses instructed and asked the Egyptians for articles of silver and gold and for clothing. 36 The Lord had made the Egyptians favorably disposed toward the people, and they gave them what they asked for; so they plundered the Egyptians.

While in the wilderness, God's people were willing to give their wealth to construct the Tabernacle. People generously gave as much as they could give in Exodus 25:1–9.

- Exodus 25:1–9, The Lord said to Moses, 2 "Tell the Israelites to bring me an offering. You are to receive the offering for me from everyone whose heart prompts them to give. 3 These are the offerings you are to receive from them: gold, silver and bronze; 4 blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen; goat hair; 5 ram skins dyed red and another type of durable leather; acacia wood; 6 olive oil for the light; spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant

> incense; 7 and onyx stones and other gems to be mounted on the ephod and breast piece. 8” Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them. 9 Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you.

When King Solomon built the temple, people gave as written in 2 Chronicles 2:1-18. In later years, when the temple required repair, people willingly gave their resources to accomplish that task, as written in 2 Chronicles 24:1-14. In the process of self-supporting principle, God established tithes and offerings to support His mission.

- 2 Chronicles 2:1, Solomon gave orders to build a temple for the Name of the Lord and a royal palace for himself.
- 2 Chronicles 24:9, A proclamation was then issued in Judah and Jerusalem that they should bring to the Lord the tax that Moses the servant of God had required of Israel in the wilderness.

Church’s Mission and Spiritual Guidance

The primary objective of a church is to foster a deeper connection between individuals and the divine while offering spiritual counsel and assistance to its congregation. Therefore, churches must comprehensively understand Islam’s fundamental tenets and integrate them into their instructional practices. This endeavor aims to facilitate a deeper comprehension of the Islamic faith among Christians, establishing connections and mutual understanding between these two religious communities. It is essential for individuals who identify as Christians to understand that adherents of the Islamic faith assert their belief in the monotheistic nature of their religion, wherein they acknowledge the existence of a singular, omnipotent deity known as Allah. In addition, adherents of Islam believe that Allah, the supreme deity, communicated his divine intentions to the Prophet Muhammad and that his teachings serve as the fundamental principles of Islamic jurisprudence and doctrines.

Furthermore, it is imperative for those adhering to the Christian faith to possess knowledge regarding the fundamental principles of Islam, which are rooted in five pillars, including faith, prayer, charity, fasting, and pilgrimage. The pillars mentioned above serve as the fundamental basis for Islamic tenets and rituals, and comprehending these concepts is crucial for a comprehensive understanding of the Islamic religion. Moreover, acquiring knowledge of the fundamental tenets of Islam might enhance churches’ ability to establish meaningful connections with and effectively cater to Muslim communities. Churches might utilize the tenets of Islam to offer spiritual counsel to their congregants and enhance their comprehension of and response to the requirements of the Muslim populace. Churches can utilize the tenets of Islam to develop specialized programs and services that cater to the specific requirements of the Muslim community. These initiatives may encompass the provision of social welfare, educational opportunities, and various other resources. Ultimately, acquiring a comprehensive comprehension of the fundamental tenets of Islam can facilitate the establishment of a harmonious atmosphere within

churches, fostering mutual respect and understanding between adherents of Christianity and Islam.

In order to foster a more inclusive and accepting atmosphere, it is imperative for Christian missionaries operating in Islamic regions to acquire a comprehensive understanding of Islamic beliefs and values. This understanding will enable them to develop a deeper appreciation for the cultural and traditional aspects of the community in which they are engaged. It is essential for Christian individuals engaged in professional endeavors within Islamic contexts to possess a comprehensive understanding of Islamic ideas. Such knowledge can foster enhanced rapport with Muslim counterparts, facilitating deeper comprehension and acceptance of the Christian faith. Mission-oriented churches must comprehensively understand and integrate Islam's fundamental principles into their instructional practices. Moreover, it can facilitate churches in enhancing their ability to effectively cater to and address the requirements of the Muslim community.

Churches with a mission-oriented approach towards Muslim populations should be aware that attempting to establish a church within such contexts without a comprehensive understanding of their beliefs will likely fail. As outlined in various sources, the fundamental tenets of Islam encompass the five pillars, which serve as essential principles and rituals within the Islamic faith. The profession of faith (shahada -Quran 4:5) is the belief that "There is no god but God, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God." Another pillar is prayer (salat -Quran 20:14), where one is to pray five fives daily. Alms (zakat - 2:110, Qur'an) is the Muslims giving 20% of their yearly wealth. Fasting (sawn) is done in set days (Qur'an 2:184). Finally, the pilgrimage (hajj- Quran 2:197) is visiting Mecca at least once in a lifetime. Those called to serve in the Islamic context should be aware of the faith of the persons they wish to reach out.

Preachers and church planners in an Islamic context ought to be aware of the seven principles of Islam. Islamic fundamental beliefs shape their way of life. Most professing Muslims believe in the Oneness of Allah, angels, revelations, day of judgment, pre measurement- God knows of and controls everything that exists in all time and space (qadar),[100] and resurrection of the death. Missionaries taking over Muslim communities cannot ignore this prior knowledge of the target groups.

Muslims are God's Children

According to the biblical account in Genesis 1:27, all individuals are regarded as offspring of God, having been fashioned in the likeness of God. The dissemination of the gospel should be extended to encompass all individuals within the human population, irrespective of their religious affiliations, ethnic origins, or cultural contexts. Muslims are instructed in the teachings and awareness of other religious traditions, particularly Christianity and Judaism. Within this particular framework, adherents of the Islamic faith hold firm convictions regarding the divine

[100] Qadar means that Allah has decreed everything that happens in the universe according to His prior knowledge and the dictates of His wisdom.

origins of various religious texts. Specifically, they believe in the Qur'an, which was bestowed upon the Prophet Muhammad; the Torah, which was bestowed upon the Prophet Moses; the Gospel, which was bestowed upon the Prophet Jesus; the Psalms, which were bestowed upon the Prophet David, and the Scrolls, which were bestowed upon the Prophet Abraham (Qur'an 3:3-4, 84). Christians may encounter challenges finding support for their beliefs in the Qur'an, as none of the above concepts are explicitly referenced or paraphrased within its text. Muslim individuals who desire to acquire knowledge regarding the teachings of Jesus as documented in the Bible are encouraged to study the sacred texts. Ascertaining the Qur'an's explicit references to other revelations becomes notably challenging. Nevertheless, preachers and church planters must bear this knowledge in their consciousness as they strategize disseminating the gospel within the framework of Muslim communities. Within the realm of Islamic pedagogy, adherents are imparted with the understanding that their faith represents the ultimate climax of divine revelation, with the Qur'an serving as the physical manifestation of the divine law bestowed upon them by Allah.

The Bible contains multiple passages that convey the concept of God's sovereignty over his creation. The ministry of Jesus, as evidenced in multiple Biblical texts, has been widely recognized for its inclusive nature. In certain instances, Jesus demonstrate inclusivity by offering essential assistance to individuals not of Israeli descent (Matthew 8:5- 10). The concept of God is often regarded as the ultimate origin of all existence, and it is believed that God demonstrates an equal and unconditional love for all individuals. God, in His divine wisdom, offers opportunities to individuals of various backgrounds to be exposed to the gospel message and engage responsively. Read the following Scriptures:

1. Genesis 1:27, So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.
2. Genesis 14:18-19, Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, 19 and he blessed Abram, saying, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth.
3. Matthew 8:5-11, When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help. 6 "Lord," he said, "my servant lies at home paralyzed, suffering terribly." 7 Jesus said to him, "Shall I come and heal him?" 8 The centurion replied, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. 9 For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." 10 When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and said to those following him, "Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith. 11 I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.
4. Matthew 28:19, Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
5. Mark 7:25-29, 25 In fact, as soon as she heard about him, a woman whose little daughter was possessed by an impure spirit came and fell at his feet. 26 The woman was a Greek, born in Syria Phoenicia. She begged Jesus

to drive the demon out of her daughter. 27 “First let the children eat all they want,” he told her, “for it is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.” 28 “Lord,” she replied, “even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs." 29 Then he told her, “For such a reply, you may go; the demon has left your daughter.”

6. Acts 10:25-37, As Peter entered the house, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet in reverence. 26 But Peter made him get up. “Stand up,” he said, “I am only a man myself.” 27 While talking with him, Peter went inside and found a large gathering of people. 28 He said to them: “You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with or visit a Gentile. But God has shown me that I should not call anyone impure or unclean. 29 So when I was sent for, I came without raising any objection. May I ask why you sent for me?” 30 Cornelius answered: “Three days ago I was in my house praying at this hour, at three in the afternoon. Suddenly a man in shining clothes stood before me 31 and said, ‘Cornelius, God has heard your prayer and remembered your gifts to the poor. 32 Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter. He is a guest in the home of Simon the tanner, who lives by the sea.’ 33 So I sent for you immediately, and it was good of you to come. Now we are all here in the presence of God to listen to everything the Lord has commanded you to tell us.” 34 Then Peter began to speak: “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism 35 but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right. 36 You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.
7. Acts 10:9-20, About noon the following day as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. 10 He became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. 11 He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners. 12 It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles and birds. 13 Then a voice told him, “Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.” 14 “Surely not, Lord!” Peter replied. “I have never eaten anything impure or unclean.” 15 The voice spoke to him a second time, “Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.” 16 This happened three times, and immediately the sheet was taken back to heaven. 17 While Peter was wondering about the meaning of the vision, the men sent by Cornelius found out where Simon’s house was and stopped at the gate. 18 They called out, asking if Simon who was known as Peter was staying there. 19 While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, “Simon, three men are looking for you. 20 So get up and go downstairs. Do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them.”
8. Acts 17:16-18, While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. 17 So he reasoned in the synagogue with both Jews and God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. 18 A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to debate with him. Some of them asked, “What is this babbler trying to say?” Others remarked, “He seems to be

advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.

9. Romans 1:20, For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.
10. Romans 2:14-15, Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law. 15 They show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts sometimes accusing them and at other times even defending them.
11. Ephesians 2:13-14, But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility,
12. Revelation 5:9, And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll

    and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation.
13. Revelation 7:9-12, 9 After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. 10 And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." 11 All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!"
14. Qur'an 3:84 Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ "We believe in Allah and what has been revealed to us and what was revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and his descendants; and what was given to Moses, Jesus, and other prophets from their Lord—we make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we ˹fully˺ submit."
15. Qur'an 3:3-4, He has revealed to you ˹O Prophet˺ the Book in truth, confirming what came before it, as He revealed the Torah and the Gospel 4 previously, as a guide for people, and ˹also˺ revealed the Standard ˹to distinguish between right and wrong˺.1 Surely those who reject Allah's revelations will suffer a severe torment. For Allah is Almighty, capable of punishment.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

CONDUCT OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES AMONG MUSLIMS

Christian missionaries have historically engaged in missionary activities within regions inhabited mainly by Muslims for an extended period. The core message has remained consistent, but the methods employed in evangelistic endeavors have undergone considerable transformations throughout history, influenced by the targeted populations' specific geographical and cultural contexts. Christian missionaries have employed rational discourse and persuasive techniques to convert Muslims in certain regions characterized by Islamic dominance. These strategies have demonstrated sporadic success rates, with instances of both favorable outcomes and unsuccessful results. In regions with a predominantly Muslim population, Christian missionaries should persist in imparting accurate information about Christianity while refraining from emphasizing the superiority of their faith over Islam. Specific individuals within the Muslim community may be more inclined to embrace the Christian faith if provided with a deeper understanding of its principles and beliefs. Irrespective of the methodologies employed in Muslim conversion, Christian missionaries must embody a lifestyle characterized by outstanding conduct. It is imperative to consider that the efficacy of each missionary endeavor is contingent upon the receptiveness of the target community to the proclamation of the gospel. There is an increasing occurrence of missionaries observing the manifestation of God's power within the Muslim community, resulting in conversions to Christianity. According to biblical teachings, it is posited that God deploys signs and wonders on certain occasions to extend divine communication to those who may not otherwise be receptive to such outreach. The Gospel has power, as noted in the following verses:

- Matthew 16:19, I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.
- Luke 9:1, When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases,
- 1 Corinthians 2:4, My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power,

In order to achieve success in the endeavor of establishing churches within Muslim culture, church planters must demonstrate a dedicated commitment towards acquiring a comprehensive understanding of Islam, as well as the teachings espoused within the Qur'an and hadith. The initial step involves comprehending fundamental concepts, such as the definition of Islam as the act of surrendering and recognizing it as a religion that promotes peace, as adherents are instructed. Islam is a religious faith that emphasizes the principles of absolute submission and unwavering allegiance to Allah. Muslims are instructed that Islam embodies the concept of peace, signifying the attainment of genuine tranquility in both physical and mental aspects via surrendering to Allah. Islamic adherents maintain that inner peacefulness is achieved by surrendering oneself to Allah, a sentiment projected onto the broader community. Contrarily, the biblical teachings assert that Jesus holds

the title of the Prince of Peace, and no alternative source can offer a comparable level of tranquility. The following verses support such beliefs:

- Numbers 6:24-26, “The Lord bless you and keep you; 25 the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; 26 the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.”
- Isaiah 9:6-7, For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.
- Isaiah 53:5, But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.
- Luke 2:14, Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.
- John 14:27, Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.
- John 16:33, “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”
- Romans 5:1, Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
- 1 Corinthians 14:33, For God is not a God of disorder but of peace—as in all the congregations of the Lord’s people.
- Ephesians 2:14, For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility,
- Colossians 3:15, Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.
- Philippians 4:6-7, Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
- 2 Thessalonians 3:16, Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you.
- Hebrews 13:20, Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep,

In Islamic environments, church planters must understand that Islam’s fundamental principle revolves around the tawhid concept, emphasizing Allah’s unity. The theology of the Trinity is perceived as unfamiliar to Muslim individuals. However, it is argued that preachers should focus on guiding listeners to develop a personal understanding and connection with God rather than simply preaching about God.

Throughout history, the divine entity commonly referred to as God has consistently disclosed aspects of its existence to the human race, irrespective of an individual's religious beliefs or affiliations. Every individual is inclined to seek knowledge and understanding of the ultimate divine entity, with no exceptions. Despite individuals being educated about the equivalence of Allah and Yahweh, Christians must emphasize the distinctions between the two. While there are apparent similarities between Allah and Yahweh, it is essential to acknowledge that their qualities differ significantly. God, as depicted in the Bible, is characterized by the manifestation of the divine being in three distinct forms, namely the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, each with unique properties. Such a statement cannot be made about Allah.

According to the Qur'an, Allah is described as possessing the traits of omnipotence and omnipresence and being the sustainer of both the world and humans. The traits above exhibit a resemblance to the teachings of the Bible. The following verses make that claim of Allah being sustainer thereof:

- Qur'an 2:21-22, O humanity! Worship your Lord, Who created you and those before you, so that you may become mindful ˹of Him˺. ˹He is the One˺ Who has made the earth a place of settlement for you and the sky a canopy; and sends down rain from the sky, causing fruits to grow as a provision for you. So do not knowingly set up equals to Allah ˹in worship˺.
- Qur'an 3:103, And hold firmly to the rope of Allah and do not be divided. Remember Allah's favor upon you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts, so you—by His grace—became brothers. And you were at the brink of a fiery pit and He saved you from it. This is how Allah makes His revelations clear to you, so that you may be ˹rightly˺ guided.

Prophethood and Life After Death

Church planters need to be aware that individuals who follow the Islamic faith are typically educated from a young age about the existence of the prophet and Muhammad, regarded as the ultimate figure among prophets. Muslims are instructed that Allah, in His wisdom, did not abandon humanity without guidance but instead bestowed upon them the kalimah, which serves as a profession of faith and a means to direct and guide them. Adherents of Islam believe in Muhammad's prophethood as Allah's chosen messenger. It is noteworthy to mention that, as per the teachings of the Qur'an, prophets exerted efforts to cultivate the connection between humanity and Allah. Church planters and preachers should be aware that attempting to draw comparisons between Biblical and Qur'anic prophets may lead to increased confusion, given the fundamental truth behind this matter.

In contrast, it is observed that while the Qur'an references prophets who are also mentioned in the Bible, it does not provide any specific details regarding their actions or deeds. The Qur'an documents the existence of 25 prophets, while several Muslim scholars assert that the total number of prophets throughout history is 124,000. In light of the aforementioned information, it may be advantageous for a

church planter to present Muslims with the authentic narratives of the prophets as mentioned earlier, as extensively recorded in the Bible.

Table 25:1, The following is a list of Islamic prophets:

List of Islamic prophets				
Adam	Ibrahim (Abraham)	Joseph (Yusuf)	Ezekiel (Dhulkifl)	Jonah
Enoch (Enoch)	Lot (Lut)	Job (Ayyub)	David (Harun)	Zachariah
Noah (Nuh)	Ishmael (Ismail)	Jethro (Shu'aib)	Solomon (Harun)	John
Heber (Hud)	Isaac (Ishaq)	Moses (Dhulkifl)	Elijah (Harun)	Jesus
Methusaleh (Saleh)	Jacob (Yaqub)	Aaron (Harun)	Elisha	Muhammad

In contrast to the Bible, which has books ascribed to several prophets and provides accounts of their actions, the Qur'an does not explicitly detail the activities of these prophets. Notably, the representation of Biblical prophets in the Qur'an is characterized by the inclusion of material presented staggered. The Biblical text provides explicit accounts of the actions undertaken by each of the prophets mentioned above, all converging towards anticipating the arrival of the Messiah. For Muslims, Muhammad is the last of the prophets from the list of all known prophets, as shown in the following verses:

- Qur'an 4:64-65, We only sent messengers to be obeyed by Allah's Will. If only those ˹hypocrites˺ came to you ˹O Prophet˺—after wronging themselves—seeking Allah's forgiveness and the Messenger prayed for their forgiveness, they would have certainly found Allah ever Accepting of Repentance, Most Merciful. But no! By your Lord, they will never be ˹true˺ believers until they accept you ˹O Prophet˺ as the judge in their disputes and find no resistance within themselves against your decision and submit wholeheartedly.

When Christians engage in disseminating the gospel within the Muslim community, they must be cognizant of the potential for conflict arising from differing perspectives on the prophetic status of some individuals. Jesus, as commonly understood, is recognized as both the divine ruler and the redeemer of humanity. The early Christian community demonstrated a firm conviction on the streets of Rome, asserting that salvation for humanity could only be attained through Jesus (Acts 4:12). The Roman Empire was unexpectedly infiltrated by apostles of lower educational attainment, who gradually and systematically converted numerous individuals to the Christian faith. It might be asserted that the apostles' primary objective was not to engage in discussions about salvation but to demonstrate a

sense of urgency in their efforts to convert spiritually lost individuals. According to the teachings of the Qur'an, it is believed that the world serves as a realm of testing for individuals, wherein their lives are metaphorically depicted as being suspended from their necks. Individuals who adhere to the principles of Islam and demonstrate unwavering devotion to Allah will be rewarded with everlasting happiness in the afterlife. The Bible categorically teaches that no one can be saved by their effort or self-righteousness, which is taught in the Qur'an.

In contrast, individuals who fail to comply will be in a state of damnation. The Qur'an and the Sunnah, which are believed to originate from Allah, serve as sources of instruction for Muslims. The principles given by Allah serve to grant humans the freedom to exercise their agency in discerning between right and wrong. According to biblical teachings, individuals who do not embrace a relationship with Christ are believed to face perpetual condemnation. Furthermore, the Bible teaches that the world is a harvest field ready for a harvest of souls (Matthew 9:37–38).

- Matthew 9:37–38, Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. 38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."
- Acts 4:12, Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.
- John 3:36, Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on them.
- Daniel 12:2, At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered. 2 Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. 3 Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.
- Qur'an 17:13-14 We have bound every human's destiny to their neck. And on the Day of Judgment We will bring forth to each ˹person˺ a record which they will find laid open. ˹And it will be said,˺ "Read your record. You ˹alone˺ are sufficient this Day to take account of yourself."
- Qur'an 6:160, He is the One Who calls back your souls by night and knows what you do by day, then revives you daily to complete your appointed term. To Him is your ˹ultimate˺ return, then He will inform you of what you used to do.
- Qur'an 57:25, Indeed, We sent Our messengers with clear proofs, and with them We sent down the Scripture and the balance ˹of justice˺ so that people may administer justice. And We sent down iron with its great might, benefits for humanity, and means for Allah to prove who ˹is willing to˺ stand up for Him and His messengers without seeing Him. Surely Allah is All-Powerful, Almighty.
- Qur'an 12:40, Whatever ˹idols˺ you worship instead of Him are mere names which you and your forefathers have made up1—a practice Allah has never

authorized. It is only Allah Who decides. He has commanded that you worship none but Him. That is the upright faith, but most people do not know.

- Qur'an 67:2, ˹He is the One˺ Who created death and life in order to test which of you is best in deeds. And He is the Almighty, All-Forgiving.

Muslims are instructed that the Qur'an has been safeguarded in its unaltered state. The Bible has faced allegations of adulteration despite its existence for almost 3500 years, while the Qur'an, in comparison, has a history of only 1400 years. According to the hadith, the Qur'an is believed to have been revealed in seven distinct manners. The recitation of the Qur'an has exhibited variations throughout history, including during the time of Prophet Muhammad. Multiple acceptable versions of the Qur'an's recitation were utilized throughout this period. The following Hadith speaks to that effect:

- I heard Hisham bin Hakim bin Hizam reciting Surah-al-Furqan in a way different to that of mine. Allah's Messenger had taught it to me (in a different way). So, I was about to quarrel with him (during the prayer) but I waited till he finished, then I tied his garment round his neck and seized him by it and brought him to Allah's Messenger and said, "I have heard him reciting Surah-al-Furqan in a way different to the way you taught it to me." The Prophet ordered me to release him and asked Hisham to recite it. When he recited it, Allah's Apostle said, "It was revealed in this way." He then asked me to recite it. When I recited it, he said, "It was revealed in this way. The Qur'an has been revealed in seven different ways, so recite it in the way that is easier for you." (Sahih al-Bukhari 2419; Book 44, Hadith 9)
- I heard a person reciting a (Qur'anic) Verse in a certain way, and I had heard the Prophet reciting the same Verse in a different way. So I took him to the Prophet and informed him of that but I noticed the sign of disapproval on his face, and then he said, "Both of you are correct, so don't differ, for the nations before you differed, so they were destroyed (al-Bukhari 3476; Book 60, Hadith 143)."

Following Muhammad's demise, two caliphs collected the Qur'an from individuals who could memorize its verses. Abu Bakr and Umar are recognized as two prominent figures who held the position of Caliph at a certain period of history. Others convinced Zaid to undertake the task of gathering and transcribing the Qur'an from various textual sources. Diverse regional variations in the recitation of the Qur'an were observed, allowing for the identification of individuals' geographical origins based on their distinct recitation styles. According to the Hadith, it is asserted that certain portions of the Qur'an were replaced with improved versions. These occurrences led to divergent opinions among different factions. Uthman issued a directive for the compilation of the Qur'an, involving the collation of diverse manuscripts and the destruction of disputed materials. It is imperative for missionaries operating in regions predominantly inhabited by Muslims to possess a comprehensive understanding of the origins and proper interpretation of the Qur'an. The Qur'an is supposed to be interpreted seven times, as noted in the following Hadith:

Narrated Mashriq:

- `Abdullah bin `Amr mentioned `Abdullah bin Masud and said, “I shall ever love that man, for I heard the Prophet (saying, ‘Take (learn) the Qur’an from four: `Abdullah bin Masud, Salim, Mu`adh and Ubai bin Ka'b.’” (al-Bukhari 4999; Book 66, Hadith 21)

Narrated Ibn `Abbas:

- `Umar said, Ubai was the best of us in the recitation (of the Qur’an) yet we leave some of what he recites.’ Ubai says, ‘I have taken it from the mouth of Allah’s Messenger and will not leave for anything whatsoever. But Allah said “None of Our Revelations do We abrogate or cause to be forgotten but We substitute something better or similar.” (al-Bukhari 2.106. Book 66, Hadith 27.[101]

Narrated Anas bin Malik:

- Hudhaifa bin Al-Yaman came to `Uthman at the time when the people of Sham and the people of Iraq were Waging war to conquer Armenia and Azerbaijan. Hudhaifa was afraid of their (the people of Sham and Iraq) differences in the recitation of the Qur’an, so he said to `Uthman, “O chief of the Believers! Save this nation before they differ about the Book (Qur’an) as Jews and the Christians did before.” So `Uthman sent a message to Hafsa saying, “Send us the manuscripts of the Qur’an so that we may compile the Qur’anic materials in perfect copies and return the manuscripts to you.” Hafsa sent it to `Uthman. `Uthman then ordered Zaid bin Thabit, `Abdullah bin AzZubair, Sa`id bin Al-As and `AbdurRahman bin Harith bin Hisham to rewrite the manuscripts in perfect copies. `Uthman said to the three Quraishi men, “In case you disagree with Zaid bin Thabit on any point in the Qur’an, then write it in the dialect of Quraish, the Qur’an was revealed in their tongue.” They did so, and when they had written many copies, `Uthman returned the original manuscripts to Hafsa. `Uthman sent to every Muslim province one copy of what they had copied, and ordered that all the other Qur’anic materials, whether written in fragmentary manuscripts or whole copies, be burnt. (al-Bukhari 4987; Book 66, Hadith 9)

Christians Planting Churches in a Muslim Context

It is essential for Christian individuals engaged in church planting activities within a Muslim context to be aware of the historical circumstances surrounding the codification of the Qur’an during Uthman’s rule as it pertains to the current variation of the scripture. The compilation of an official Qur’an was not undertaken by Prophet Mohammad, who instead employed seven distinct methods to convey his message. Hadiths address various recitations of the Qur’an. The current version of the Qur’an is attributed to the efforts of Uthman, who selected one particular reading and

[101] Sahih al-Bukhari 5005, chapter 8: The Qur’an from among the Companions of the Prophet (saws), Book 66: Virtues of the Qur’an. https://sunnah.com/bukhari:5005

undertook editorial revisions, leading to the destruction of all other recitations. The subsequent hadiths serve as evidence of the persistence of this editorial practice throughout the contemporary Qur'an. The following is an addition by Uthman:

Narrated Ibn `Abbas:

- `Umar said, I am afraid that after a long time has passed, people may say, "We do not find the Verses of the Rajam (stoning to death) in the Holy Book," and consequently they may go astray by leaving an obligation that Allah has revealed. Lo! I confirm that the penalty of Rajam be inflicted on him who commits illegal sexual intercourse, if he is already married and the crime is proved by witnesses or pregnancy or confession." Sufyan added, "I have memorized this narration in this way." `Umar added, "Surely Allah's Messenger carried out the penalty of Rajam, and so did we after him (al-Bukhari 6829; Book 86, Hadith 56).[102]

Narrated Ibn `Abbas:

- … Allah sent Muhammad with the Truth and revealed the Holy Book to him, and among what Allah revealed, was the Verse of the Rajam (the stoning of married person (male & female) who commits illegal sexual intercourse, and we did recite this Verse and understood and memorized it. Allah's Messenger did carry out the punishment of stoning and so did we after him…. (Bukhari Book 86, Hadith 57)[103]

It can be confirmed that no such verse is found in the Qur'an, and it was edited out during Uthman's time. The hadith below shows a discussion between Uthman and Ibn Az-Zubair over the abrogation of a verse. Nonetheless, Uthman had his way, and it is in the Qur'an.

Narrated Ibn Az-Zubair

- I said to 'Uthman, "This Verse which is in Surat-al-Baqara: Those of you who die and leave widows behind…without turning them out. has been abrogated by another Verse. Why then do you write it (in the Qur'an)?" 'Uthman said. "Leave it (where it is), …, for I will not shift anything of it (i.e., the Qur'an) from its original position." (Bukhari Vol 6, Book 60, No 60).

It is essential for Christian missionaries operating in regions inhabited mainly by Muslims to be aware that notwithstanding Uthman's edition, alternative textual versions of the Qur'an and different readings continue to exist. One of the prominent textual readings in the Arab world is known as Hafs (or Hofs), while another prevalent reading is Warsh, primarily used in North Africa. The Al-Duri reading and

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[102] Sahih al-Bukhari, 6830, chapter 31: The Rajm of a married lady pregnant through illegal sexual intercourse, Book 86: Limits and Punishments set by Allah (Hudood). https://sunnah.com/bukhari:6830

[103] Sahih al-Bukhari 6831, 6832, chapter 32: Unmarried should be flogged and exiled, Book 86: Limits and Punishments set by Allah (Hudood). https://sunnah.com/bukhari:6831

other regional variations are commonly employed in West Africa. The textual variants exhibit variances in the spellings of words.[104]

The compilation of Uthman facilitated the categorization of Qur'anic variants. The present iteration of the Qur'an has been derived through a protracted and intricate process of editing and collation, spearheaded by Uthman, the third Caliph of the Islamic religion. The leadership of Uthman had a crucial role in establishing the standardized form of the Qur'an, which is universally recognized and utilized in contemporary global contexts. The process of editing the Qur'an commenced in the immediate aftermath of the demise of the Prophet Muhammad. During this historical period, the Muslim population was dispersed across the Arabian Peninsula and other regions, with each group possessing its distinct rendition of the Qur'an. These versions were transcribed based on individual recollections. In order to safeguard the integrity of the Qur'an and minimize the presence of extant variations, Uthman, the third caliph of Islam, initiated the production of an authoritative translation. The individual in question, Uthman, sent messengers to gather the many manuscripts of the Qur'an from various tribes to transport them to Medina afterwards. The gathering of various Qur'anic manuscripts was done in order to provide a comparative analysis between these manuscripts and the original texts.

Subsequently, Uthman undertook a meticulous examination of the primary texts and proceeded to consolidate them into a unified edition. Subsequently, this particular edition of the Qur'an attained the status of the prevailing translation, persisting as the contemporary rendition presently employed. The Qur'an underwent editorial revisions to ensure accuracy and safeguard its original language and style. Uthman's endeavors were crucial in safeguarding the Qur'an in its unaltered state and facilitating its widespread accessibility within the Muslim community. The individual's endeavors have yielded an enduring influence on the Islamic religion, given that the Qur'an holds a revered status among Muslims and serves as the primary foundation for their religious convictions and observances. Uthman's role as the editor of the Qur'an has played a crucial role in preserving the accessibility of the words of the Prophet Muhammad and maintaining the integrity of the original teachings contained within the Qur'an.

The present iteration of the Qur'an underwent editorial revisions under the guidance of Uthman. Numerous variations were present, although they were all subjected to incineration. When Christians express their religion, they should refrain from engaging in superfluous debates regarding differing interpretations or beliefs and instead prioritize the proclamation of the Gospel. Muslim individuals typically do not respond favorably to attempts to critique the Qur'an. The optimal approach entails refraining from engaging in such criticisms and instead directing attention to the universal message of Christ. The existence of God is a subject of inquiry, and individuals desire to acquire knowledge about Him. Individuals require a tangible encounter with a divine entity, and it is argued that Allah does not possess the

[104] Ragnar, Qur'an: No Variations! What say the hadiths? Textual versions of Qur'an today. 28/06/2019

https://al-injil.net/2019/06/28/Qur'an-no-variations-compared-to-injil-what-say-the-haddiths/

capacity to fulfill this desire. Christians possess the veracity that is important for the global community. Tommy Lee Osborn preached that “Christianity is a miracle way of life and without miracles, Christianity is only a philosophy.”[105] The global community would benefit more from acquiring knowledge about the existence of a divine being rather than adhering to a particular religious belief system. The following shows a Christian conduct while sharing their faith to others:

- 1 Timothy 6:4, they are conceited and understand nothing. They have an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions.
- 2 Timothy 2:14, Keep reminding God’s people of these things. Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen.
- 2 Timothy 2:23-24, Don’t have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. 24 And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful.
- Titus 3:9, But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless.
- Proverbs 17:14, Starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam; so drop the matter before a dispute breaks out.
- Proverbs 20:3, It is to one’s honor to avoid strife, but every fool is quick to quarrel.

[105] Tommy Lee Osborn, “Walking In Power The Believers’ Mission Of Healing,” / #HeroesOfTheFaith / 21:57-22:24/1:18 (online) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OalnbqFBUIc&t=3147s . accessed dates 10-4-2023.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

QUR'ANIC AND BIBLICAL HOLY SPIRIT

Biblical Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit holds significant importance within the Christian and Muslim faiths and has been a topic of intense discourse between these two religious traditions throughout history. In the interfaith discourse between Early Christians and Muslims, the Holy Spirit has been regarded as a conduit of heavenly inspiration and instruction, connecting the two religious traditions. The concept of the Holy Spirit in both religions refers to distinct individuals. In Christianity, the entity is seen as a constituent member of the Holy Trinity. However, this entity is identified under the Islamic tradition as the angel Gabriel. Within the Christian tradition, the Holy Spirit is seen as the third constituent of the Trinity, coexisting with the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is widely regarded as the divine manifestation of God's power and presence inside the earthly realm. In biblical texts, it is metaphorically depicted as resembling a dove, symbolizing its inherent qualities of purity and tenderness. The Holy Spirit is often regarded as the primary origin of divine inspiration. It is commonly perceived as a reliable source of solace and direction through adversity and affliction.

Within the Islamic theological framework, the entity referred to as the Holy Spirit assumes the identity of the Angel Gabriel, widely recognized as a divine emissary of Allah. This understanding is substantiated by scriptural references found in the Qur'an, namely in verses 2:97-98 and 66:4. The celestial being known as the Angel Gabriel is depicted as having been dispatched to convey divine revelations to the esteemed Prophet Muhammad, ultimately leading to the compilation of the present-day Qur'an. The Bible and the Qur'an discuss distinct entities concerning the concept of the Holy Spirit. In contrast to the biblical perspective, the Qur'an portrays the Holy Spirit as the Angel Gabriel rather than a divine entity. This incongruity defies resolution within any conceivable framework. The depiction and portrayal of the Angel Gabriel in the Bible and the Qur'an exhibit notable differences. In the biblical narrative, the communication on the impending birth of Jesus was conveyed by the Angel Gabriel to Mary, who is recognized as the mother of Jesus. It is important to note that Mary is not considered a member of the Trinity. As a constituent of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit played a crucial role in offering guidance and solace to the nascent Christian Church during its mission to disseminate the gospel of redemption across the globe. The characterization of the Angel Gabriel in the Qur'an does not align with such a statement. The Bible presents Angel Gabriel not as a member of the trinity as shown here:

- Daniel 8:16, And I heard a man's voice from the Ulai calling, "Gabriel, tell this man the meaning of the vision."
- Daniel 9:21, while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice.
- Luke 1:19, 26, The angel said to him, I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. 26

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee.

- Qur'an 2:97-98, Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ "Whoever is an enemy of Gabriel should know that he revealed this ˹Qur'an˺ to your heart by Allah's Will, confirming what came before it—a guide and good news for the believers." 98 Whoever is an enemy of Allah, His angels, His messengers, Gabriel, and Michael, then ˹let them know that˺ Allah is certainly the enemy of the disbelievers.
- Qur'an 66:4, ˹It will be better˺ if you ˹wives˺ both turn to Allah in repentance, for your hearts have certainly faltered. But if you ˹continue to˺ collaborate against him, then ˹know that˺ Allah Himself is his Guardian. And Gabriel, the righteous believers, and the angels are ˹all˺ his supporters as well.

The early Christian community did not encounter any difficulties in recognizing the Holy Spirit as the third constituent of the Trinity, as clearly stated in Acts 1:8. The Holy Spirit, as a divine entity, manifests and operates during both the pre-Christian and Christian eras. He is renowned for his ability to inspire prophets and deliver divine messages. In the New Testament, The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin and sanctifies those who have accepted Jesus as Lord and Saviour, as noted in the Book of John 16:7-11.

- John 16:7-11, But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. 8 When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 about sin, because people do not believe in me; 10 about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; 11 and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.
- Acts 1:8, But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

The Difference Between the Qur'anic and the Biblical Holy Spirit

Despite the term 'holy spirit' in the Qur'an, Islam possesses a distinct interpretation of the essence and functions of this spiritual being, which diverges from the perspective presented in the Bible. The Qur'an's depiction of the 'holy spirit' diverges from Christian theology's tenets. The holy scripture of Islam, known as the Qur'an, refers to the holy spirit on four occasions, which is understood to be synonymous with the angel Gabriel. Among these four references, three pertain to Isa. According to the Qur'an, Isa (Jesus) was bestowed with strength under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, according to the Qur'an, Moses is attributed with the reception of a divine book, whilst Isa is believed to have been aided by the holy spirit. However, it is essential to note that the Holy Spirit comprises two distinct beings.

- Qur'an 2:253, We have chosen some of those messengers above others. Allah spoke directly to some, and raised some high in rank. To Jesus, son of Mary, We gave clear proof and supported him with the holy spirit. If

Allah had willed, succeeding generations would not have fought ˹among themselves˺ after receiving the clear proofs. But they differed—some believed while others disbelieved. Yet if Allah had willed, they would not have fought one another. But Allah does what He wills.

- Qur'an 5:110, And ˹on Judgment Day˺ Allah will say, "O Jesus, son of Mary! Remember My favor upon you and your mother: how I supported you with the holy spirit so you spoke to people in ˹your˺ infancy and adulthood. How I taught you writing, wisdom, the Torah, and the Gospel. How you molded a bird from clay—by My Will—and breathed into it and it became a ˹real˺ bird—by My Will. How you healed the blind and the lepers—by My Will. How you brought the dead to life—by My Will. How I prevented the Children of Israel from harming you when you came to them with clear proofs and the disbelievers among them said, "This is nothing but pure magic."
- Qur'an 16:102, Say, Say, "The holy spirit has brought it down from your Lord with the truth to reassure the believers, and as a guide and good news for those who submit ˹to Allah˺."

During the time of Prophet Muhammad, his contemporaries tended to reject the message he conveyed. Prophet Muhammad expressed curiosity at the tendency of his contemporaries to provide criticism, even though Angel Gabriel had previously conveyed revelations to Mary, the mother of Isa. Muslims associate the concept of the holy spirit with the celestial being known as the Angel Gabriel. The Qur'an mentions the spirit without the descriptive 'holy' as written in Qur'an 26:193: "which the trustworthy spirit ˹Gabriel˺ brought down." Allah tells Muhammad, 'The faithful spirit brought down the revelation to your heart' as noted in the story of Mary conceiving Jesus (Qur'an 19:17). The Qur'anic 'spirit' appears to Mary as a man. In this text, the 'spirit' is an angelic messenger, confirming the correlation of Allah's spirit with the angel Gabriel. Note the following verses:

- Qur'an 26:193, which the trustworthy spirit ˹Gabriel˺ brought down.
- Qur'an 19:17, screening herself off from them. Then We sent to her Our angel, ˹Gabriel,˺ appearing before her as a man, perfectly formed.

The Qur'an 78:38 states, "On the Day the ˹holy˺ spirit and the angels will stand in ranks. None will talk, except those granted permission by the Most Compassionate and whose words are true." According to the Qur'an, the 'spirit' is depicted as being in the company of angels and is only permitted to speak when granted permission by Allah. Including the 'spirit' under the group of angels is considered strange from the Biblical perspective. It is mentioned in the Qur'an, specifically in verse 15:29, that Allah infused His 'spirit' into Adam, and in verse 21:91, into Mary. This tale has a resemblance to the accounts found in the Bible.

Notwithstanding, it is worth noting that according to Islamic belief, Allah brought humanity from a clot of blood, in contrast to the Biblical narrative, which describes God's creation of humanity. According to Genesis 2:7, Adam received the breath of life from God. In the Qur'an 4:171, Jesus is depicted as a 'spirit' originating from God, which appears to allude to the divine act of breathing into Mary at the conception of Jesus, as mentioned in the Qur'an 3:59. According to the Qur'an, both Adam and Jesus were formed similarly. While the Bible discusses the concept of Jesus in human form, the Qur'an does not adhere to this perspective. Contrary to the

acceptance of Jesus as the incarnation of God, the Qur'an asserts that both Moses and Jesus were bestowed with more authority from the divine, surpassing that of all other messengers.[106] Comprehending the function of the Qur'anic spirit, occasionally identified as Angel Gabriel, presents a challenging endeavor. Read the following verses:

- Qur'an 4:171, O People of the Book! Do not go to extremes regarding your faith; say nothing about Allah except the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was no more than a messenger of Allah and the fulfillment of His Word through Mary and a spirit ˹created by a command˺ from Him. So believe in Allah and His messengers and do not say, "Trinity." Stop!—for your own good. Allah is only One God. Glory be to Him! He is far above having a son! To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And Allah is sufficient as a Trustee of Affairs.
- Qur'an 15:28-29, ˹Remember, O Prophet˺ when your Lord said to the angels, "I am going to create a human being from sounding clay molded from black mud. 29 So when I have fashioned him and had a spirit of My Own ˹creation˺ breathed into him, fall down in prostration to him."
- Qur'an 21:91, And ˹remember˺ the one who guarded her chastity, so We breathed into her through Our angel, ˹Gabriel,˺ making her and her son a sign for all peoples.
- Qur'an 78:38, on the Day the ˹holy˺ spirit and the angels will stand in ranks. None will talk, except those granted permission by the Most Compassionate and whose words are true.
- Qur'an 2:97-98, Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ "Whoever is an enemy of Gabriel should know that he revealed this ˹Qur'an˺ to your heart by Allah's Will, confirming what came before it—a guide and good news for the believers." 98 Whoever is an enemy of Allah, His angels, His messengers, Gabriel, and Michael, then ˹let them know that˺ Allah is certainly the enemy of the disbelievers.

[106] M. Mir, Dictionary of Qur'anic Terms and Concepts(New York, 1987), 96.3 S.H. Griffith, 'Holy Spirit', in Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe, 5 vols.(Leiden, 2001–2006), 2:443.4 See F. Rahman,Major Themes of the Qurʾān(Chicago, 2009), 98 https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004297210_006

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

PATTERNS OF CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM ENCOUNTERS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Patterns of Christians and Muslims in Sub-Saharan Africa

A complex nature characterizes the historical interactions between Christianity and Islam in sub-Saharan Africa. Several historical, social, and political factors have affected specific encounters. Various forms of Christian-Muslim encounters have given rise to several categories, each characterized by unique attributes. The prevailing political and economic conditions in the many nations within the region, the rivalry for supremacy between the two religions, and the distinctive religious beliefs and practices of each have collectively impacted these patterns. The first dynamics of relations between Christian and Muslim communities in sub-Saharan Africa are characterized by mutual respect and cooperative engagement. In numerous countries, there has been a notable collaboration between adherents of Christianity and Islam in various domains, including but not limited to economic advancement, healthcare provision, and educational initiatives. In order to promote religious harmony and foster mutual understanding, adherents of Christianity and Islam have organized interfaith councils or the Interfaith Leadership Forum in several countries. The councils mentioned above have effectively facilitated the advancement of dialogue and collaboration between the two faith communities. The culture of respect and cooperation has been crucial in promoting stability and facilitating progress in certain countries. Christians can engage in evangelization through several methods during periods of societal cohesion.

The subsequent kind of contact observed between adherents of Christianity and Islam in sub-Saharan Africa is characterized by rivalry and conflict. The two religious organizations have engaged in political, economic, religious, and social conflicts throughout multiple nations. The conflicts, characterized by regular episodes of violence, have substantially influenced the region's security and stability. The two theological factions have engaged in persistent conflicts to assert their dominance and influence in various states, such as Sudan, where one faction has consistently prevailed. The recurring occurrence of competition and discord has substantially influenced the political and economic volatility experienced within the region.

The principles of coexistence and tolerance characterize the third phase of Christian-Muslim interactions in sub-Saharan Africa. In certain countries, the coexistence and collaborative efforts of adherents of Christianity and Islam have been observed. The emergence of this pattern might be attributed to the consistent commitment of religious organizations towards fostering tolerance and upholding religious freedom. The two religious communities have successfully maintained harmonious coexistence in some countries and even collaborated in the healthcare and education sectors. The harmonious cohabitation and acceptance pattern has been pivotal in cultivating regional stability and advancement. The patterns of contact between Christians and Muslims in sub-Saharan Africa have been influenced by various variables, including the political and economic dynamics of the region, the power dynamics between the two religious groups, and the religious beliefs and

practices of each. The stability and growth of the region have been substantially influenced by these patterns, wherein specific patterns foster cooperation and harmony, whereas others give rise to conflict and instability. In forthcoming times, it will be of utmost importance for religious communities to collaborate to promote regional peace and foster mutual comprehension.

Sub-Saharan African Context: Christian and Muslim Tension

Enduring confrontations between the religious traditions of Christianity and Islam have marked the historical backdrop of Sub-Saharan Africa. The two religious movements have worked to propagate their beliefs and attract adherents, resulting in internal conflicts and power struggles for dominance over the region. Both religions have had a substantial impact on the history and culture of the region. In this analysis, we shall explore the various relationships that have taken place between the Islamic and Christian faiths.

It is imperative to consider the multifaceted dynamics of the interactions between Christianity and Islam within the Sub-Saharan African region. The reintroduction of Christianity to Africa has resulted in a notable growth in both the population and the vibrancy of the religion. The expansion of Christianity resulted in a competitive dynamic between the indigenous African religions. The introduction of Islam to the region was facilitated by Arab traders and missionaries, who sought to propagate their religious beliefs among the indigenous population. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the interplay between Christianity and Islam has yielded both advantageous and adverse consequences. The proliferation of Christianity and Islam in Sub-Saharan Africa has facilitated the introduction of novel ideologies and perspectives, often leading to the advancement of social and economic development. The two religious groups have regularly engaged in conflicts, leading to instances of discord and aggression. In specific instances, the presence of competition between adherents of Christianity and Islam has led to migration, whilst in other circumstances, it has contributed to the emergence of divisions within African communities. Despite the disputes above, it is noteworthy that Christianity and Islam have established areas of convergence within the context of Sub-Saharan Africa. Both religions emphasize the imperative of assisting those who are economically disadvantaged and demonstrating compassion towards those in need. Moreover, it is noteworthy that both religions possess a rich historical background characterized by a spirit of tolerance and mutual respect, fostering an environment conducive to peaceful cohabitation within the region.

The term “Christian-Muslim encounter” encompasses the diverse range of experiences and exchanges that have taken place between the Christian and Muslim religions in the African context throughout history. Competitive and cooperative interactions across various domains and scales involving individuals within the same familial and communal contexts exist. Additionally, it encompasses chance encounters, confrontations, and overt clashes between opponents. Notably, upon its emergence in the seventh century, Islam encountered an already well-established Christian presence in various regions of Africa, including Egypt, North Africa, Sudan,

and Ethiopia. During the seventh century, the regions of Egypt and Ethiopia had successfully established and were seeing significant growth in the practice of Coptic Christianity, which adheres to the Monophysite doctrine. Following Islamic tradition, it is recorded that in 615, the Prophet of Islam, faced with intense persecution, provided counsel to approximately eighty male converts and their respective families. He urged them to seek refuge in the Christian kingdom of Abyssinia (present-day Ethiopia), as he believed it to be a hospitable nation.[107] It is important to know that a critical ingredient in spreading the good news to all people through love, as taught in 1 Corinthians (13:4-8) defines love in this way:

- 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 4 Love is patient; love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. 8 Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.



Plate 1: 'Negus' is a royal title in the Ethiopian Semitic languages. (Photo courtesy: Nayzak)

Muslim traditions believe the meeting between the refugees and the Abyssinian king was friendly.[108] The opportunity to proclaim the Gospel can be created by Christian missionaries in Muslim-dominated communities, driven by a sense of caring for their neighbors.

[107] Ramadan profiles: Story of The Negus, a Christian king who saved Muslims. https://english.alarabiya.net/features/2017/05/30/The-Negus-Story-of-a-Christian-king-who-saved-Muslims

[108] Zebiri, Muslims and Christians Face to Face, p. 7. Alfred Guillaume,The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ibn Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah,London: oup (1955), pp. 146–150.

Current Situation of Christian-Muslim Relations: Emerging Challenges and Signs of Hope

The historical dynamics between Christians and Muslims have been characterized by enduring tensions, and the contemporary context is consistent with this pattern. In numerous regions across the globe, there persists a notable prevalence of Islamic extremism and a prevailing anti-Christian sentiment, which have been observed to contribute to instances of violence and prejudice. However, there are also indications of optimism for the future, as an increasing number of individuals from these two religious traditions collaborate to construct connections and foster comprehension. Profound levels of hostility and mistrust mark the contemporary state of Christian-Muslim relations. The phenomenon mentioned above can be attributed, at least partially, to the extensive historical backdrop of warfare between the two religious factions, alongside the escalating impact of radicalism within certain Muslim societies. In certain regions across the globe, individuals who identify as Christians encounter instances of discrimination and even persecution due to their religious beliefs. In other regions, Muslims encounter analogous challenges characterized by assaults on mosques and other places of worship. These occurrences indicate an underlying and entrenched hostility between the two religious communities, posing challenges to the harmonious coexistence of individuals from diverse religious affiliations. Nevertheless, there are also indications of optimism towards the future.

Recently, there has been a noticeable surge in the inclination for interfaith discussion and collaboration among adherents of Christianity and Islam. One example of such initiatives is the “Called to Common Mission” program by the World Council of Churches, which aims to cultivate mutual comprehension between the two religious traditions. In addition, numerous organizations and initiatives are dedicated to encouraging peace and communication between Christians and Muslims, such as the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Communication.[109] These initiatives exemplify the genuine inclination of Christians and Muslims to collaborate and discover shared principles despite the enduring difficulties between them. The contemporary state of Christian-Muslim relations is characterized by intricacy and difficulty.

On the one hand, profound and enduring friction and lack of trust exist between the two religious beliefs. Conversely, there are indications of optimism, exemplified by the burgeoning trend of interfaith discussion and collaboration. Further efforts are required to foster comprehension and harmony between adherents of Christianity and Islam and to guarantee the coexistence of individuals from many religious origins in a peaceful and mutually respectful manner. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 5:19 “that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.”

[109] The International Dialogue Centre, Dialogue center, https://www.kaiciid.org/

Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue

In contemporary times, a growing significance has been attributed to ecumenical and interreligious discourse on a global scale. The significance of this mode of discourse is seen in its ability to foster a sense of inclusivity and shared comprehension among individuals from diverse religious, cultural, and societal backgrounds. Applying ecumenical and interreligious discourse as a particular mode of communication yields advantages for the persons engaged in it and holds broader implications for the global society. Ecumenical and interreligious conversation facilitates intra and inter-religious debate within numerous religious communities and individuals. This particular mode of communication cultivates comprehension and reverence among individuals who may possess divergent ideas or customs. Engaging in such debate aims to establish an environment conducive to examining distinctions and commonalities among various groups that promotes constructive discourse and avoids making value-based assessments. In this form of discussion, it is anticipated that participants will possess an open-minded disposition, demonstrate respect towards one another, and be willing to attentively consider diverse perspectives while also acknowledging the potential influence of the concept of the Holy Spirit, a significant aspect of Christian theology.

The significance of ecumenical and interreligious discourse is underscored by its capacity to foster connections among many religious traditions. Establishing a conducive environment for educational and spiritual development seems beneficial. This conversation facilitates a deeper understanding of various beliefs more objectively. It is conceivable that Jesus would express satisfaction at witnessing Christians actively disseminating their faith to others adhering to divergent religious beliefs. Furthermore, engaging in ecumenical and interreligious conversation promotes the development of understanding and respect among many religious traditions and facilitates heightened levels of interpersonal and spiritual involvement. This discussion facilitates the development of interpersonal connections and fosters a stronger connection between individuals and their faith. This discussion can enhance comprehension of many religious traditions and foster persons' awareness of the commonalities and distinctions among various faiths. It is imperative for individuals adhering to the Christian faith to recognize their responsibility to propagate their religious beliefs, irrespective of the audience. Such is noted in the following verses:

- John 13:35, By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."
- John 16:7-11, But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. 8 When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 about sin, because people do not believe in me; 10 about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; 11 and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.
- John 17:20-23, My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, 21 that all of them may be one, Father,

just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— 23 I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

- John 18:36-38, Jesus said, ”My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place.” 37 ”You are a king, then!” said Pilate. Jesus answered, ”You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of the truth listens to me.” 38 ”What is truth?” retorted Pilate. With this he went out again to the Jews gathered there and said, “I find no basis for a charge against him.
- Roman 10:17, Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.
- 2 Corinthians 4:4, The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.
- Ephesians 1:13, And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.
- Ephesians 4:3, Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.
- Eph. 4:17-19, So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. 18 They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. 19 Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed.
- 1 John 5:6-11, This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. 7 For there are three that testify: 8 the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement. 9 We accept human testimony, but God’s testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son. 10 Whoever believes in the Son of God accepts this testimony. Whoever does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because they have not believed the testimony God has given about his Son. 11 And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.
- Psalms 111:2, Great are the works of the Lord; they are pondered by all who delight in them.
- Micah 6:8, He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

Character of Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogues

The nature of interreligious and ecumenical dialogue exhibits similarities. The global landscape is rapidly transforming, particularly within ecclesial and religious contexts. Advanced technological innovations now offer practical methods for maintaining intimate interpersonal connections. Interreligious discourse and ecumenical discussion aim to bring disparate religious groups together to discuss shared values and beliefs. Interreligious dialogue refers to a specific mode of interfaith communication, while ecumenical dialogue pertains to interfaith discourse specifically within the context of different Christian denominations. Both iterations of the concept of dialogue are founded upon the fundamental value of demonstrating respect for all religious beliefs and recognizing the imperative nature of fostering mutual understanding and collaboration. Both discussion forms aim to establish respect and comprehension among diverse religious communities, fostering peace, harmony, and understanding. Both perspectives highlight the significance of actively listening to individuals, comprehending their opinions and values, and participating in substantive discourse.

While it is not universally observed, several religious communities actively engage in discourse to cultivate an environment characterized by mutual respect and comprehension. In the context of both ecumenical and interreligious conversation, it is imperative to consider the commonalities and disparities across diverse religious convictions. The objective is to engage in mutual learning and foster community connections. Acknowledging that every group possesses its distinct historical background and principles necessitates open and courteous discourse. Ecumenical and interreligious discourse serves as a forum wherein diverse religious communities can actively participate in substantive discussions, mutually acquire knowledge, and acknowledge the significance of fostering tolerance and respect. Through active participation in discourse, communities can strive towards a more promising future by collectively fostering peace, comprehension, and concord. Christians are responsible for promoting the establishment of harmonious cohabitation among all individuals, even in the face of oppressive circumstances. Read the following verses:

- Genesis 26:25-29, Isaac built an altar there and called on the name of the Lord. There he pitched his tent, and there his servants dug a well. 26 Meanwhile, Abimelek had come to him from Gerar, with Ahuzat his personal adviser and Phicol the commander of his forces. 27 Isaac asked them, “Why have you come to me, since you were hostile to me and sent me away?” 28 They answered, “We saw clearly that the Lord was with you; so we said, ‘There ought to be a sworn agreement between us’—between us and you. Let us make a treaty with you, 29 that you will do us no harm, just as we did not harm you but always treated you well and sent you away peacefully. And now you are blessed by the Lord.”
- Psalm 85:8, I will listen to what God the Lord says; he promises peace to his people, his faithful servants—but let them not turn to folly.
- Proverbs 12:20, Deceit is in the hearts of those who plot evil, but those who promote peace have joy.

- Proverbs 16:7, When the Lord takes pleasure in anyone's way, he causes their enemies to make peace with them.
- Matthew 5:9, Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
- Luke 1:78-79, because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven 79 to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.
- Luke 2:13-14, Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 14 Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.
- John 14:27, Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.
- 2 Corinthians 13:11, Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.
- Romans 8:6, The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.
- Romans 14:19, Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.
- Galatians 5:22, But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
- James 3:18, Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.
- 1 Peter 3:11, They must turn from evil and do good; they must seek peace and pursue it.

Critique for Guidelines on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths

In 1979, the World Council of Churches (WCC) authored a paper named "Guidelines on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths." The primary objective of this document was to delineate and engage with the significant practical and theological matters about interfaith relations. Although the discussion touched upon specific overarching themes, it acknowledged the necessity for more precise directives or ecumenical considerations on the interactions between Christianity and the various prominent religious communities globally. The recommendations acknowledge the significance of interfaith discussion in fostering mutual comprehension and reverence across diverse religious traditions. They aim to offer practical advice to individuals and groups interested in participating in such dialogue.

The recommendations underscore the significance of engaging in interfaith discourse with a receptive mindset and a readiness to listen and learn attentively from others. The importance of conducting discourse in a manner characterized by respect and honesty is emphasized, with due recognition of the inherent dignity of each individual and their entitlement to freedom of conscience and belief. The principles additionally emphasize the significance of refraining from engaging in any

compulsion or manipulation throughout the discourse, as well as actively striving to comprehend the viewpoints and convictions of others without attempting to impose one's perspectives.

The "Guidelines on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths"[110] outlines several principles for engaging in interfaith dialogue, including:

1. Respect: Interfaith dialogue should be conducted in a spirit of respect for the dignity of every person and their right to freedom of conscience and belief.
2. Honesty: Dialogue should be conducted in a spirit of honesty and transparency, with individuals being honest about their own beliefs and perspectives.
3. Openness: Dialogue should be conducted in an open-minded and non-judgmental manner, with individuals seeking to learn and understand the perspectives and beliefs of others.
4. Listening: Dialogue should involve active listening and seeking to understand the perspectives and beliefs of others without seeking to impose one's views.
5. Mutual learning: Dialogue should be approached as an opportunity for mutual learning and growth, with individuals seeking to identify shared values, goals, and areas of disagreement.
6. Non-coercion: Dialogue should be conducted without coercion or manipulation, with individuals seeking to engage in dialogue voluntarily and without pressure.
7. Collaboration: Dialogue should be seen as an ongoing process of collaboration and partnership between individuals and organizations from different religious traditions.

The document covers several key themes and issues related to interfaith dialogue, including:

1. The importance of dialogue: The guidelines emphasize the importance of interfaith dialogue to promote mutual understanding and respect among different religious traditions. They stress that dialogue should be conducted in a spirit of respect and openness, recognizing the dignity of every person and their right to freedom of conscience and belief.
2. The principles of dialogue: The guidelines outline several principles that should guide interfaith dialogue, including the need for dialogue to be conducted in a spirit of honesty and respect, the importance of listening and learning from others, and the need to avoid any form of coercion or manipulation in the course of the dialogue.
3. The goals of dialogue: The guidelines identify several goals of interfaith dialogue, including the promotion of mutual understanding and respect, the identification of shared values and goals, and the exploration of differences and areas of disagreement.
4. The challenges of dialogue: The guidelines acknowledge that interfaith dialogue can be challenging and may require individuals to confront their

[110] Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, "Guidelines for dialogue with persons of non-Christian religions," (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1991).

biases and assumptions. They encourage individuals to be honest about their beliefs and perspectives while also seeking to understand and appreciate the beliefs and perspectives of others.

5. The role of religious leaders: The guidelines emphasize the critical role that religious leaders can play in promoting interfaith dialogue and understanding. They encourage religious leaders to engage in dialogue with individuals from other faith traditions and to work together to promote greater understanding and respect.
6. The importance of ongoing dialogue and collaboration: The guidelines stress the importance of ongoing dialogue and collaboration between individuals and organizations from different religious traditions to promote greater understanding and respect across religious boundaries.

The document offers significant insights about the essence and objectives of interfaith conversation. However, it is subject to potential objections concerning its substance and methodology. One noteworthy critique of the rules is their tendency to favor a predominantly Christian perspective on interfaith communication, with their implicit assumption that the primary goal of such dialogue is to promote the conversion of individuals to Christianity. This phenomenon is evident, exemplified by the document's prioritization of evangelizing as a fundamental element within interfaith discourse. Critics contend that adopting this method could be perceived as lacking respect or disregarding alternative religious beliefs, impeding the development of authentic conversation and mutual comprehension. Another criticism of the guidelines is their insufficient consideration of power dynamics and privilege within interfaith conversation. The guidelines fail to recognize the importance of interfaith dialogues that encompass exchanges between representatives of dominant religious traditions and underprivileged or oppressed groups, as well as the subsequent impact of power relations on the character and outcomes of these discussions. Critics contend that a more nuanced methodology is requisite to effectively tackle these concerns and foster a discourse characterized by fairness and inclusivity. Irrespective of the potential criticism, adherents of Christianity are responsible for propagating their faith throughout all aspects of God's creation while ultimately entrusting the outcome to God.

Moreover, several scholars have contended that the standards exhibit a limited understanding of the wide range of ideas and customs present across various religious systems. These critics assert that the recommendations may oversimplify or reduce these traditions to essentialized representations, promoting inaccuracies and misconceptions. As mentioned above, the phenomenon can potentially give rise to misinterpretations and perpetuate preconceived notions, impeding authentic discourse and inhibiting the development of shared comprehension. Irrespective of criticism, Christians must remain prepared to seize every possible occasion to propagate their religious beliefs (2 Timothy 4:2).

- Ezekiel 3:19, But if you do warn the wicked man and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his evil ways, he will die for his sin; but you will have saved yourself.

- Luke 19:12-27, He said: “A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return. 13 So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. ‘Put this money to work,’ he said, ‘until I come back.’ 14 ” But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, ‘We don’t want this man to be our king.’ 15 ”He was made king, however, and returned home. Then he sent for the servants to whom he had given the money, in order to find out what they had gained with it. 16 ” The first one came and said, ‘Sir, your mina has earned ten more.’ 17 ”‘Well done, my good servant!’ his master replied. ‘Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.’ 18 ” “The second came and said, ‘Sir, your mina has earned five more.’ 19 ” His master answered, ‘You take charge of five cities.’ 20 Then another servant came and said, ‘Sir, here is your mina; I have kept it laid away in a piece of cloth. 21 I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in and reap what you did not sow.’ 22 ”His master replied, ‘I will judge you by your own words, you wicked servant! You knew, did you, that I am a hard man, taking out what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow? 23 Why then didn’t you put my money on deposit, so that when I came back, I could have collected it with interest?’ 24 ”Then he said to those standing by, ‘Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas.’ 25 ’Sir,’ they said, ‘he already has ten!’ 26 ” He replied, ‘I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what he has will be taken away. 27 But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them--bring them here and kill them in front of me.
- Luke 14:16-24, Jesus replied: “A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. 17 At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’ 18 ” But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, ‘I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.’ 19 Another said, ‘I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I’m on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.’ 20 Still another said, ‘I just got married, so I can’t come.’ 21 “The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.’ 22 ”‘Sir,’ the servant said, ‘what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.’ 23 ”Then the master told his servant, ‘Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full. 24 I tell you, not one of those men who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.’”
- Galatians 6:10, Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.
- Ephesians 5:15, Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.
- 2 Timothy 4:2, Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage--with great patience and careful instruction.

- 2 Peter 3:9, The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.
- 1 John 4:1, Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Importance of Muslim-Christian Encounters

The contact between Muslims and Christians might sometimes lead to religious tensions, although it is crucial not to overlook the significance of these interactions. Indeed, it is a valid observation that while Muslim missionaries may not exhibit the same level of assertiveness as their Christian counterparts, their ultimate objective remains converting individuals to their religious beliefs. In an Islamic culture, Christian missionaries should employ the strategy of power encounter. An instance of a power encounter in the Bible can be observed in the narrative of Elijah's confrontation with the prophet of Baal on Mount Zion, as recorded in 1 Kings 18:20-40. Its public nature and significant outcome characterized the interaction. Everyone departed with the understanding that Jehovah had demonstrated His divine authority via the prophet Elijah, as noted in the following verses:

- 1 Kings 18:21-24, 21 Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him." 22 Then Elijah said to them, "I am the only one of the Lord's prophets left, but Baal has four hundred and fifty prophets. 23 Get two bulls for us. Let Baal's prophets choose one for themselves and let them cut it into pieces and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. I will prepare the other bull and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. 24 Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord. The god who answers by fire—he is God."

In several Biblical passages, including Matthew 10 and Luke 9, it is evident that Jesus gave his disciples the power and authority to execute miraculous signs and wonders and the ability to heal various illnesses. Christians believe that including signs and miracles in their evangelistic efforts is a significant component, as it manifests the potency and veracity of Christianity palpably. The efficacy of signs and miracles in persuading individuals of the veracity of Christianity lies in their capacity to manifest the presence of a divine entity actively engaged in worldly affairs and capable of intervening in human experiences. The following verses attest to power evangelism:

- Matthew 10:1,5-14, Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness. These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; 3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; 4 Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who

betrayed him. 5 These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. 6 Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. 7 As you go, proclaim this message: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' 8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give. 9 " Do not get any gold or silver or copper to take with you in your belts— 10 no bag for the journey or extra shirt or sandals or a staff, for the worker is worth his keep. 11 Whatever town or village you enter, search there for some worthy person and stay at their house until you leave. 12 As you enter the home, give it your greeting. 13 If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you. 14 If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, leave that home or town and shake the dust off your feet.

- Luke 9: 1-6, When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and: to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, 2 and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. 3 He told them: Take nothing for the journey—no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra shirt. 4 Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that town. 5 "If people do not welcome you, leave their town and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them." 6 So they set out and went from village to village, proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere.
- Acts 2:43, Many signs and wonders performed Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.
- Acts 3:1-11 One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon. 2 Now a man who was lame from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. 3 When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. 4 Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, "Look at us!" 5 So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. 6 Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." 7 Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. 8 He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God. 9 When all the people saw him walking and praising God, 10 they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.16 By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has completely healed him, as you can all see.
- Acts 5:12, The apostles performed many signs and wonders among the people. And all the believers used to meet together in Solomon's Colonnade.
- Acts 5:15-16, As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by.16 Crowds gathered also from the towns around

Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by impure spirits, and all of them were healed.

A lengthy and intricate relationship of religious exchanges has characterized the historical interactions between Christianity and Islam. Christianity and Islam exert a substantial influence on worldwide culture and politics. Across the annals of history, several instances of interaction have occurred between these two religious traditions, significantly influencing their respective religious frameworks and fostering interfaith discourse. The Islamic invasion of the Iberian Peninsula in the 8th century AD initiated a sequence of interactions between Christianity and Islam. During this historical era, a significant chunk of the territory had a conversion to Islam, but several areas continued to be governed by Christian authorities. During this historical era, several Islamic religious edifices, such as mosques and the Qur'an, were introduced and rapidly disseminated over the Arabian Peninsula. The interaction between Christianity and Islam also witnessed the assimilation of Islamic rituals and practices, including the ritual of ablution prior to prayer and the proscription of alcohol.

Some scholars affirm, "Most historians consider the sermon preached by Pope Urban II at Clermont-Ferrand in November 1095 to have been the spark that fueled a wave of military campaigns to wrest the Holy Land from Muslim control."[111] The subsequent Crusades began in 1095 AD and represented another significant encounter between Christianity and Islam. [112] The primary objective of the Crusades was to recapture Jerusalem and the Holy Land, which were under Muslim control. The Crusades were characterized by fervent religious competition and widespread violence, as both factions sought to enforce their respective religious institutions and doctrines upon one another. During this historical event, various religious edifices were inaugurated, including the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, alongside the establishment of Christian monastic communities around the Middle Eastern region.

The Reconquista of Spain from 711 to 1492 AD was another significant encounter between Christianity and Islam.[113] The Reconquista denotes a protracted epoch spanning nearly eight centuries, wherein Christian realms within the Iberian Peninsula incrementally reclaimed dominion over territories previously held by Muslim kings. The historical epoch commenced in 711 AD, when a military campaign commanded by Tariq ibn Ziyad, comprising Muslim forces, initiated an invasion of the territory, ultimately resulting in the triumph over the Visigothic kingdom.[114] The Muslim conquest led to the

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[111] Department of Medieval Art and The Cloisters. "The Crusades (1095–1291)." In Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–. http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/crus/hd_crus.htm (originally published October 2001, last revised February 2014)

[112] Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, Muslim Spain (711-1492). https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/islam/history/spain_1.shtml. Last updated 04-09-2004

[113] Chris Lowney, A Vanished World: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Medieval Spain (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2006), 1-30.

[114] Roger Collins, Early Medieval Spain (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), 151.



Tariq ibn Ziyad (https://www.visit-andalucia.com/muslin-invasion-hispania-711ad/)

establishment of a new political and cultural order in the region with the creation of the Umayyad Caliphate of Cordoba. This period saw the gradual re-establishment of Christian rule in the Iberian Peninsula, with the re-conquest of major cities such as Toledo, Granada, and Seville.[115] During the period known as the Reconquista, there was a notable proliferation of Christian religious edifices, including the construction of churches and the assimilation of Christian practices and doctrines. The period of the Reconquista witnessed the forced removal of Muslims and Jews from the Iberian Peninsula and the suppression of Islamic religious institutions. The interactions between Christianity and Islam have substantially impacted worldwide culture and politics. The interactions mentioned above have significantly influenced the development of religious institutions and the exchange of ideas between the two religious traditions. Furthermore, they have served as a valuable forum for fostering discourse and promoting mutual comprehension. In light of the ongoing process of global interconnectedness, it is imperative to have a comprehensive understanding of the historical dynamics underlying these interactions and their subsequent ramifications on the religious frameworks of Christianity and Islam.

Throughout history, Christian realms such as Asturias, Leon, Castile, and Aragon progressively resisted and countered Muslim dominion, gradually recovering land through military expeditions and diplomatic agreements.[116] Intermittent discord and collaboration among Christian and Muslim leaders characterized the historical progression. It was subject to broader political and cultural transformations in Europe and the Middle East. Throughout history, there have been persistent instances of violent interactions.

Christianity and Islam Encounter over Theology

Christianity and Islam are two of the most influential religions, with many followers worldwide, amounting to billions. As a result, it is unsurprising that the two religious belief systems have intersected in various circumstances throughout history, giving rise to many theological arguments and discussions. This analysis aims to delve into the theological interactions between Christianity and Islam, with a particular emphasis on the perspectives of Christianity and the many reactions from Islamic theologians. During the seventh century, the Islamic empire swiftly expanded throughout the Near East (also known as the Middle East) and North Africa. As Islam

[115] Chris Lowney, A Vanished World: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Medieval Spain (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 1-14.

[116] Chris Lowney, A Vanished World: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Medieval Spain (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 1-14.

interacted with diverse civilizations, it assimilated certain religious traditions, particularly those originating from Christianity. Early Islamic theologians, such as Al-Ashari and Al-Maturidi, established an interpretation of Islam highly inspired by Christian teachings.[117] The adherents embraced the Christian perspective of a singular, everlasting, and all-powerful deity and integrated the Christian notion of the Trinity into their doctrinal framework.

Furthermore, they also embraced the Christian perspective of Jesus as a celestial envoy while refuting the notion of his divine nature. The initial theologians within the Muslim community, such as Al-Ashari and Al-Maturidi, acknowledged the Christian concept of God as a trinity. However, they encountered difficulties in comprehending the intricacies of its functioning. The concept of God is inherently enigmatic, and our limited cognitive capacities render us incapable of comprehending the magnitude of such a divine entity unless He chooses to disclose Himself to us. Regardless of human inability to grasp spiritual matters, God sent His Son Jesus Christ. The following verses explore how God revealed himself to humanity:

- Exodus 33:18-23, Then Moses said, “Now show me your glory.” 19 And the Lord said, “I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the Lord, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. 20 But, he said, “you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live.”
- Exodus 33:18-23, Then Moses said, “Now show me your glory.” 19 And the Lord said, “I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the Lord, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. 20 But,” he said, “you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live.” 21 Then the Lord said, “There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. 22 When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. 23 Then I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but my face must not be seen.”
- Exodus 34:5-8, Then the Lord came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the Lord. 6 And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, “The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, 7 maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation.”8 Moses bowed to the ground at once and worshiped.
- Deuteronomy 29:29, The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law.

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[117] Ibrahim M. Abu Rabi (Eds.), Contemporary Islamic Thought: One or Many? in The Blackwell Companion to Contemporary Islamic Thought (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2006), 1-20.

- Job 11:7, Can you fathom the mysteries of God? Can you probe the limits of the Almighty?
- Matthew 7:23, Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’
- Matthew 11:25, At that time Jesus said, I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children.
- Matthew 11:27, “All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.
- John 1:12-14, Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— 13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God. 14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- John 1:18, No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.
- John 5:37, And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form,
- John 6:44, No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day.
- John 14:6-10, Jesus answered, ”I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7 If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.” 8 Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.” 9 Jesus answered: ”Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? 10 Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.
- Romans 1:19-25, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 20 For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse. 21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles. 24 Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. 25 They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

- 1 Corinthians 1:27-29, But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. 28 God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, 29 so that no one may boast before him.
- 1 Corinthians 2:10-16, these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. 11 For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. 12 What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. 13 This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words. 14 The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. 15 The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, 16 for, "Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.
- Hebrews 4:2, For we also have had the good news proclaimed to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because they did not share the faith of those who obeyed.
- 1 John 3:2-3, Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. 3 All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

The perspectives of Al-Ashari and Al-Maturidi were then critiqued by Islamic theologians, who posited that Christianity had engendered distortions and misconceptions regarding the teachings of Jesus—according to the assertions made by Al-Ghazali, a prominent theologian of the 11th century, posited that the Christian perspective on the Trinity was incongruous with the Islamic understanding of Allah as a singular and indivisible entity. Furthermore, he posited that Jesus did not possess divinity but served as a human prophet.



Al Ghazali – One of the great Jurist, Theologian and Mystic of the 12th Century

(https://www.thesciencefaith.com/al-ghazali-one-of-the-great-jurist-theologian-and-mystic-of-the-12th-century/)

Ibn Taymiyyah (1263-1328), a renowned Islamic philosopher and theologian of the 12th and 13th centuries residing in present-day Syria, contributed to developing the Islamic critique of Christianity.[118]



January 22, 1263 CE - September 26, 1328
https://www.Qur'an-al-mubeen.com/-taqicirc-ad-dicircn-a7717mad-ibn-taymiyyah-c-1263---1328ce.html

He has gained significant recognition for his notable contributions to Islamic philosophy, law, and theology and for his critical analyses of several religious traditions, including Christianity. The individual contended that the Christian perspective of Jesus' divinity could be categorized as a manifestation of polytheism, conflicting with the Islamic conception of Allah as a singular and indivisible entity. Furthermore, he believed the Christian perspective on the Trinity had logical inconsistencies and lacked coherence. Furthermore, he disapproved of the Christian tradition of venerating saints, arguing that it manifested idolatrous behavior. Ibn Taymiyyah emerged as a prominent critic of various facets of Christian theology and practice, asserting that the fundamental tenets and principles of Christianity were incongruent with the core ideas and values upheld within Islamic doctrine. One of the primary criticisms he expressed towards Christianity pertained to the doctrine of the Trinity, which he perceived as a departure from the principles of Islamic monotheism.

Furthermore, the individual disapproved of the Christian doctrine regarding the divinity of Jesus, contending that it was a product of human creation and lacked substantiation from biblical sources. Indeed, it is accurate to assert that Ibn Taymiyyah's evaluation of Christianity exhibited a fundamental incongruity with Islamic doctrines and principles. Based on the available evidence, it can be argued that Christians should not be discouraged from discussing with Muslims that Allah and the Christian God represent the same entities. Instead, it is imperative to present a comprehensive understanding of the nature of God and how He has chosen to manifest Himself to humanity. Additionally, it is essential to allow Muslims the

[118] Yahya Michot, The Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought (Princeton University Press, 2012), 238–241. ISBN 978-0-691-13484-0.

opportunity to share their narrative and experiences. During such discourse, the Holy Spirit will manifest the revelation of God to individuals who lack familiarity with Him. The Bible demonstrates that God manifests His divine splendor to individuals who earnestly pursue a relationship with Him through the Holy Spirit. Read the following verses:

- Matthew 28:19, Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
- John 4:24, God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.
- John 14:6, But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.
- John 14:17, the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.
- John 15:26, “When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me.
- Romans 8:14, For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.
- 1 Corinthians 2:10-11, these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.11 For who knows a person’s thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

Christianity and Islam Spiritual and Conversion Encounters

The spiritual and conversion interactions between Christianity and Islam hold significant importance within their relationship, as they have played a pivotal role in shaping the contemporary practices and interpretations of both religions. The initial interaction between Christianity and Islam occurred during Islam’s expansion over the Middle East and North Africa during the seventh and ninth centuries. As the dissemination of the Islamic faith progressed, it engendered a spiritual interaction with Christianity, necessitating exploring mechanisms for harmonious coexistence between these two religious traditions. Harmonious coexistence was vital for forging a shared knowledge of the two faiths and creating a spirit of mutual respect. After the era of spiritual encounters, a phase was characterized by encounters of conversion between the religious traditions of Christianity and Islam. While some conversions occurred voluntarily, it is essential to acknowledge that specific conversions were compelled, as Islamic rulers endeavored to induce their Christian people to adopt the Islamic faith. This phenomenon resulted in an intricate pattern of religious conversion, wherein numerous individuals embraced Islam while concurrently adhering to some aspects of Christianity and, conversely, adhering to Christianity while still practicing specific components of Islam. In several instances, this phenomenon resulted in syncretic manifestations of both religious traditions, wherein aspects from both belief systems were amalgamated. The interplay of spiritual and conversion experiences between Christianity and Islam has significantly influenced

the contemporary practices of both religious traditions. These interactions have facilitated the development of a more comprehensive comprehension of the shared characteristics and distinctions between the two religious beliefs, hence fostering enhanced collaboration and discourse between them. Additionally, they have contributed to fostering a more inclusive mindset towards individuals practicing diverse religious beliefs, promoting knowledge acquisition and mutual regard among individuals. Ultimately, these interactions have contributed to developing a collective cultural legacy between the two religious traditions, whereby several customs and convictions are mutually embraced.

The occurrence of spiritual encounters gives rise to significant inquiries about religion. Can the Islamic spiritual experiences be considered equivalent to those of the Christian faith? Did the early interactions between Christians and Muslims in the realm of spirituality have a positive or negative impact on both parties? These and various additional inquiries should be included in any discourse. Christians need not harbor concerns over spiritual contacts, as Jesus imparted the teaching that the internal spiritual power surpasses external forces, as stated in 1 John 4:4. Christians experience an inward transformation that results in the absence of fear, as stated in 2 Timothy 1:7. The Bible exhibits a high degree of specificity on the act of evangelism. The primary emphasis lies in personal experiences that serve as a testament to the listening individuals (1 John 1:1). According to the biblical text in the Book of Revelation. Individuals were able to triumph over challenges through the strength derived from their testimonies (12:11). The following are further reading of God's word:

- Psalm 105:4, Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always.
- Matthew 6:14, For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly. Father will also forgive you. But if you don't forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.
- John 16:33, I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.
- John 17:14-19, I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15 "I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. 16" They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. 18 "As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. 19" For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.
- Roman 8:6, The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.
- Romans 12:2, Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.
- 2 Corinthians 4:16, Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. 17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far

outweighs them all. 18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

- Ephesians 3:16, I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being,
- Ephesians 4:23-25 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. 25 Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor, for we are members of one another.
- Philippians 2:3, Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves
- 2 Timothy 1:7, For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.
- 1 John 1:1, That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life
- 1 John 4:4, You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.
- 1 John 5:1-5 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. 2 This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. 3 In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, 4 for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.
- 1 John 5:8-9, the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement. 9 We accept human testimony, but God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son.
- 1 John 5: 18-20, We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the One who was born of God keeps them safe, and the evil one cannot harm them. 19 We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one. 20 We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.
- Revelations 12:11, They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.

Da'wa Propaganda

The term "Dawa" is derived from Arabic and carries the meaning of "invitation" or "call to Islam." In many regions across the globe, Muslim clerics convene to engage in the exchange of their religious doctrines. Typically, certain priests engage in the practice of reading the Bible and subjecting it to critical analysis following their

interests. Here are some general strategies that could be used to respond to Dawa propaganda:

1. Acquire knowledge: The initial measure in addressing Dawa propaganda is acquiring a comprehensive understanding of the Islamic faith and the persuasive techniques employed by its proponents. Dawa propaganda will facilitate comprehension of the various views and beliefs held by individuals actively disseminating a certain message, enhancing one's ability to reply more efficiently.
2. Engaging in courteous and constructive discourse with individuals who promote Dawa propaganda is paramount. This can facilitate the development of comprehension and reciprocal regard, potentially resulting in prospects for shared knowledge acquisition and personal advancement.
3. When participating in a debate, it might be advantageous to direct attention towards shared principles and beliefs between the Islamic faith and one's convictions. This practice can contribute to establishing a fundamental basis of shared comprehension and regard.
4. Employing logical reasoning: When countering Dawa propaganda, it is crucial to utilize logical reasoning to substantiate one's claims. This approach can effectively address faulty or misleading arguments employed by proponents of the message.
5. It is imperative to demonstrate respect for cultural diversity when addressing Dawa propaganda. When responding to Dawa propaganda, it is good to be cognizant of cultural norms and traditions and refrain from using words or engaging in actions that may be perceived as disrespectful or objectionable.
6. Maintaining self-awareness regarding personal prejudices and preconceived notions is imperative when engaging with Dawa propaganda. This practice can contribute to maintaining fairness, impartiality, and respectfulness in one's responses, as one relies on the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

In the context of public and local discussions, it is observed that Muslim clerics tend to ensure the presence of a significant number of individuals from their community prior to engaging in a dispute with a Christian counterpart. During the Dawa event, typically conducted in an open-air setting, individuals may tend to interject during the Christian speaker's discourse while simultaneously expressing their approval through audible applause for the Muslim speaker. In certain instances, this phenomenon might escalate to the point where acts of violence transpire. Islam's perspective asserts its correctness, and such interactions frequently serve to their advantage due to their adeptness in employing intimidation tactics. The Bible advises avoiding participating in superfluous discussions. The biblical passage in 2 Timothy 2:23 advises individuals to refrain from engaging in discussions characterized by foolishness and stupidity, as such interactions result in conflicts and disputes. Similarly, the passage in Titus 3:9 advises individuals to refrain from engaging in futile disputes, genealogical discussions, and contentious debates over the law, as these activities lack value and serve no practical purpose.

Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that this does not imply that all disputes must be avoided. The Bible, in addition, promotes the idea that Christians should be

prepared to provide a rationale for their faith (1 Peter 3:15) and to actively defend the faith that has been entrusted to God's holy people (Jude 1:3). The crucial aspect lies in discerning between superfluous and valuable debates, and participating in dialogues that exhibit respect, productivity, and a commitment to pursuing truth and comprehension, rather than only striving for victory in an argument or validating one's correctness. The Bible states very clearly how Christians should conduct themselves in religious encounters and debates in the following verses:

- Proverbs 18:13, To answer before listening—that is folly and shame. But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless.
- Matthew 10:14, If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, leave that home or town and shake the dust off your feet.
- Acts 18:28, For he vigorously refuted his Jewish opponents in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah.
- Proverbs 22:8, Whoever sows injustice reaps calamity, and the rod they wield in fury will be broken.
- Romans 14:1, Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters.
- Acts 19:9, But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus.
- 2 Timothy 2:14, Keep reminding God's people of these things. Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen.
- 2 Timothy 3:16, All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,
- 2 Timothy 4:2, Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage —with great patience and careful instruction.
- Titus 3:9-10, But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless.10vWarn a divisive person once, and then warn them a second time. After that, have nothing to do with them.
- Jude 1:3, Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people.
- 1 Peter 3:15-16, But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, 16 keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.
- 2 John 1:9-10, Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take them into your house or welcome them.

Power Encounters: Signs, Miracles, and Wonders

Signs, miracles, and wonders are valid today. Jesus said in Matthew 28:19 and Mark 16:17 that all power and authority are given to him and given to his followers.

- Matthew 28:19, Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
- Mark 16:17-18, And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well."

The theological doctrine of signs, miracles, and wonders holds a central position within the Christian religion, as the Bible depicts. The Qur'an also mandates that adherents of Islam must have faith in the manifestations of Allah and acknowledge His ability to execute extraordinary acts. The Qur'an references signs, miracles, and wonders, which remain significant throughout the Muslim community. The Qur'an references many signs, miracles, and marvels bestowed upon prophets by Allah over many historical periods, including notable figures like Moses and Jesus. The purpose of these miracles is to demonstrate to individuals the omnipotence of Allah and to motivate them to adhere to the authentic course. As an illustration, the Qur'an asserts that during the encounter between Moses and Pharaoh, Moses implored Pharaoh to release the Israelites, prompting Allah to manifest his dominion and supremacy by unleashing a plague of frogs. The Qur'an selects specific passages from the Bible and asserts that they constitute divine revelation from Allah. The Bible contains authentic accounts of biblical narratives, including those with prominent figures like Moses. Likewise, inside the New Testament, Jesus is documented to have executed a multitude of extraordinary acts, including the restoration of health to the infirm, the transformation of water into wine, and the ability to traverse upon the water. Muslims believe several signs, miracles, and wonders referenced in the Bible retain validity in the present era. The Bible is a religious text believed to be of divine origin, encompassing several narratives that illustrate the omnipotence and benevolence of God. Muslims believe that despite the Bible's perceived corruption throughout history, it retains some verities and divine revelations from Allah. In addition, the Hadith, comprising the teachings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad, also refers to signs, miracles, and extraordinary occurrences. Muslims believe that these utterances and actions are of divine origin and serve as an authentic manifestation of Allah's message. The Qur'an does not expressly cite what the prophets in Old or New Testaments did but tells the Muslim believers to read the Bible instead in Qur'an 10:94.

- Qur'an 10:94, If you ˹O Prophet˺ are in doubt about ˹these stories˺ that We have revealed to you, then ask those who read the Scripture before you. The truth has certainly come to you from your Lord, so do not be one of those who doubt,

On the other hand, the Bible records as many signs as possible, wonders, and miracles that God performed through various prophets.

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

HOSPITALITY AS TAUGHT IN CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM

Hospitality as a Virtue

The concept of hospitality has been widely esteemed in various cultural contexts, particularly within Christianity and Islam. Both religions emphasize the significance of exhibiting kindness and charity towards guests in one's household. Both Christianity and Islam share the common teaching of practicing hospitality as a means to demonstrate compassion and benevolence towards others who are disadvantaged and require assistance. Within the context of Christianity, the act of extending hospitality is regarded as a means of demonstrating affection towards both acquaintances and individuals who are unfamiliar. The Bible has a multitude of references that underscore the significance of hospitality. In the New Testament, Jesus says,

- Matthew 10:40, Anyone who welcomes you, welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.

The Book of Acts instructs believers to welcome strangers and to practice hospitality in the following words:

- Acts 2:42-47, They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

The Bible encourages believers to practice hospitality with the following words:

- Hebrews 13:2, Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.

Islam hospitality is seen as an extension of the Islamic principle of charity (zakat). The Qur'an (49:10-13) instructs believers to treat guests kindly and to provide for their needs.

- Qur'an 49:10-13, The believers are but one brotherhood, so make peace between your brothers. And be mindful of Allah so you may be shown mercy. 11 O believers! Do not let some ˹men˺ ridicule others, they may be better than them, nor let ˹some˺ women ridicule other women, they may be better than them. Do not defame one another, nor call each other by offensive nicknames. How evil it is to act rebelliously after having faith! And whoever does not repent, it is they who are the ˹true˺ wrongdoers.12 O believers! Avoid many suspicions, ˹for˺ indeed, some suspicions are sinful. And do not spy, nor backbite one another. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of their

dead brother? You would despise that!1 And fear Allah. Surely Allah is ˹the˺ Accepter of Repentance, Most Merciful. 13 O humanity! Indeed, We created you from a male and a female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you may ˹get to˺ know one another. Surely the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous among you. Allah is truly All-Knowing, All-Aware.

The Prophet Muhammad also advocated for the practice of hospitality. In addition to extending warm reception to visitors, hospitality within the Islamic tradition includes providing sustenance and accommodation for individuals experiencing deprivation. Hospitality has a significant role within the contexts of both Christianity and Islam. Altruism demonstrates affection and benevolence towards individuals who possess fewer resources while conveying the significance of mutual support and compassion. Hospitality is more than just providing necessities; it entails ensuring individuals are greeted with warmth and benevolence. The statement above underscores the significance of religious devotion in Christianity and Islam, emphasizing its integral role in leading a spiritually committed existence. Within the framework of this concept, Christians can cultivate an environment in which they can effectively communicate their faith through hospitality. The Bible says one should never lose an opportunity, as noted here:

- Galatians 6:7, Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. 8 The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. 9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

Ethics of Hospitality in Islam and Christianity

The notion of hospitality holds significant cultural and religious significance among various prominent global religions. Hospitality is a moral imperative that necessitates providing inclusive and unbiased treatment to all, irrespective of their religious beliefs or personal histories. Nevertheless, there exist variations in their respective approaches to the concept. Within Christianity, hospitality is regarded as a manifestation of divine love, benevolence, and clemency and is frequently perceived as an indication of one's religious devotion and adherence. In the Islamic faith, hospitality is regarded as a manifestation of Allah's benevolence and compassion and is perceived as a means to attain Allah's favor. Jesus instructed his disciples to exhibit love towards their fellow human beings, emphasizing the importance of treating others with the same care and consideration that one would extend to oneself (Matthew 22:39). This directive is frequently observed as an act of demonstrating hospitality for others, irrespective of their cultural or ideological affiliations. In the biblical passage of Matthew 10:40, Jesus imparts the teaching that those who receive and embrace individuals are, in essence, receiving and embracing him. This instruction underscores the significance of demonstrating

hospitality, particularly towards unfamiliar individuals. Within the Christian tradition, hospitality is a significant component of demonstrating love towards one's neighbor and God. Muslim individuals who undergo a conversion to Christianity may encounter challenges and face potential discrimination and social exclusion from their families. In the given context, it is advisable for individuals who identify as Christians to demonstrate acceptance towards other believers and provide them with essential support and protection when required. The following verses talk of how Christians should treat our neighbors:

- Isaiah 1:17, Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.
- Matthew 7:12, So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.
- Matthew 22:39, And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.
- Mark 12:30-31, Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. ' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself. ' There is no commandment greater than these.
- Romans 15:2, Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up.
- 1 Corinthians 10:24, No one should seek their own good, but the good of others.
- Galatians 6:2, Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.
- Philippians 2:3, Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves.
- Hebrews 13:1-2, Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.
- 1 Peter 3:8, Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.

In the Islamic faith, hospitality is regarded as a manifestation of Allah's benevolence and compassion. According to the teachings of the Qur'an, individuals who exhibit acts of kindness and generosity towards others are promised to receive rewards from Allah (Qur'an 16:90). Hospitality is widely acknowledged as a significant facet of the Muslim faith. It is deeply ingrained within the Islamic tradition to extend kind reception to guests inside the confines of one's abode. According to the Hadith of Sahih al-Bukhari 6136, the Prophet Muhammad emphasized the importance of demonstrating hospitality towards guests who believe in Allah and the Last Day. The significance placed on hospitality is perceived as a demonstration of devotion and reverence towards Allah and a means to exhibit compassion and benevolence towards other individuals. The following is a Qur'anic anticipation of a neighbor and their treatment:

Narrated Abu Huraira:

- The Prophet said, Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, should not hurt his neighbor and whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, should

serve his guest generously and whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, should speak what is good or keep silent. Sahih al-Bukhari 6136: Book 78, Hadith 163 Vol. 8, Book 73, Hadith 158

- Qur'an 4:36, Worship Allah ˹alone˺ and associate none with Him. And be kind to parents, relatives, orphans, the poor, near and distant neighbors, close friends, ˹needy˺ travelers, and those ˹bonds people˺ in your possession. Surely Allah does not like whoever is arrogant, boastful—
- Qur'an 16:90, Indeed, Allah commands justice, grace, as well as courtesy to close relatives. He forbids indecency, wickedness, and aggression. He instructs you so perhaps you will be mindful.
- When asked what the rights of the neighbor are, the Prophet Mohammed answered: "The least of a neighbor's rights on him is that if he asks him for a loan he should grant it to him. If he asks for help, he should help him. If he wants to borrow something from him, he should lend it to him. If he needs him to donate something to him, he should do so. If he invites him, he should accept his invitation. If he gets sick, he should go and visit him. If he passes away, he should attend his funeral procession." [Mustadrak al-Wasail, v.2, p.79]
- Al-Hasan was asked about the neighbor and said, "The term 'neighbor' includes the forty houses in front of a person, the forty houses behind him, the forty houses on his right and the forty houses on his left." (Al-Adab Al-Mufrad 109 Book 6, Hadith 109)

Christianity and Islam share commonalities in their understanding of hospitality. However, they diverge in their respective approaches to this notion. According to some verses in the Qur'an (2:191; 2:190-193; 8:12), Muslims are instructed to distance themselves from individuals who engage in proselytization and, in some cases, even resort to violence against them. This perspective stands in opposition to the teachings found in the Bible, namely in passages such as Matthew 5:21-24, Matthew 5:38-42, and Matthew 5:43-48, which advocate for the practice of loving one's adversaries. Within Christianity, hospitality is regarded as a manifestation of divine love and compassion, frequently perceived as an indication of one's religious devotion and adherence. In the Islamic faith, hospitality is regarded as a manifestation of Allah's benevolence and compassion and is perceived as a means to attain Allah's favor.

Nevertheless, both traditions emphasize the value of hospitality and the imperative to provide it to all, irrespective of their religious beliefs or cultural origins. In Christianity and Islam, hospitality is often seen as a significant aspect of expressing love for one's neighbor and demonstrating devotion to God. In that regard, Christians have a more significant duty to welcome and treat their neighbors, especially those from the Muslim community.

- Qur'an 2:190-193, Fight in the cause of Allah ˹only˺ against those who wage war against you, but do not exceed the limits. Allah does not like transgressors. 191 Kill them wherever you come upon them1 and drive them out of the places from which they have driven you out. For persecution is far worse than killing. And do not fight them at the Sacred Mosque unless they

attack you there. If they do so, then fight them—that is the reward of the disbelievers. 192 But if they cease, then surely Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful. 193 Fight against them ˹if they persecute you˺ until there is no more persecution, and ˹your˺ devotion will be to Allah ˹alone˺. If they stop ˹persecuting you˺, let there be no hostility except against the aggressors.

- Quran 8:12, ˹Remember, O Prophet,˺ when your Lord revealed to the angels, “I am with you. So make the believers stand firm. I will cast horror into the hearts of the disbelievers. So strike their necks and strike their fingertips.” Cut fingers
- Matthew 5: 21-24 ”You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ 22 But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, ‘Raca,’ is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell. 23 ” Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, 24 leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.
- Matthew 5: 38-42, ”You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ 39 But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to the other cheek also. 40 And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. 41 If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. 42 Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.
- Matthew 5:43-48, ”You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ 44 But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 46 If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Aren't even the tax collectors doing that? 47 And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? 48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

The Theology of Hospitality in Christianity and Islam

The notion of hospitality extends beyond its social dimensions and encompasses spiritual and theological aspects, notably within Christianity and Islam. Both religious traditions emphasize the value of hospitality and its reflection of their respective faiths’ ideals and beliefs. Within Christianity, hospitality is regarded as fulfilling one’s duty to God by extending a warm reception to unfamiliar individuals and demonstrating benevolence towards those who require assistance. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus imparts a message of hospitality to his disciples, affirming that those who extend a warm reception to them are, in essence, extending a welcome to Jesus himself. Furthermore, Jesus emphasizes that by welcoming him, individuals are also extending a welcome to the divine authority that sent him. This passage, found in Matthew 10:40, exhorts Jesus’ followers to embrace and practice

hospitality. Furthermore, he instructs that extending hospitality can be regarded as an indication of one's religious conviction and compliance with the divine will, as it demonstrates an individual's readiness to place their reliance on God and utilize their assets to cater to the needs of others. The concept mentioned finds manifestation in the Christian tradition of hospitality, encompassing the act of receiving unfamiliar individuals and offering sustenance and lodging.

In the Islamic faith, hospitality is regarded as a means of demonstrating reverence and honoring the visitor. Muslims are instructed to exhibit generosity and hospitality towards unfamiliar individuals and treat their guests with reverence and benevolence. According to the Qur'an, individuals who possess faith and engage in virtuous actions are regarded as the most exemplary members of society (Qur'an 49:13). The Islamic tradition demonstrates the act of extending hospitality to guests through the provision of sustenance and accommodation, alongside the presentation of gifts and displays of appreciation. The significance of hospitality in Christianity and Islam serves as a poignant reminder of the value of demonstrating benevolence and reverence for individuals, irrespective of their cultural or religious affiliations. In both religious traditions, extending hospitality is regarded as a manifestation of one's faith and a demonstration of obedience to the divine.

Furthermore, it is a tangible expression of the inclination to serve and assist others. This statement serves as a poignant reminder that every individual is regarded with equal regard in the eyes of God/Allah. Moreover, extending hospitality towards others manifests love and benevolence, fostering a deeper connection with the divine. Despite the aforementioned biblical exhortation, Christians can present to Muslims some verses from the Qur'an that discuss the concept of exhibiting positive neighborly conduct. A particular segment of the Muslim population lacks knowledge of their religious scripture to the point where some individuals may engage in acts of terrorism. Christians are encouraged to emulate the character of Jesus in all their interactions, demonstrating love and compassion without hesitation. By manifesting these qualities, individuals have the potential to introduce Jesus to those who may not have previously encountered him.

In the Biblical narrative of Genesis 18, Abraham hospitably entertained three visitors, providing them with nourishment and lodging, without realizing that these individuals were angels in disguise. Through this action, Abraham catalyzed the development of a theological framework centered around hospitality. The angels reaffirmed the promise made to Sarah and discussed the impending destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Hospitality is primarily regarded as an obligation towards others and a lifestyle that consistently underscores human diversity. The following Bible verses attest to showing good neighborliness to others:

- Genesis 18:1- 20, The Lord appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day. 2 Abraham looked up and saw three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he hurried from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground. 3 He said, "If I have found favor in your eyes, my lord, do not pass your servant by. 4 Let a little water be brought, and then you may all wash

your feet and rest under this tree. 5 Let me get you something to eat, so you can be refreshed and then go on your way—now that you have come to your servant." "Very well," they answered, "do as you say." 6 So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah. "Quick," he said, "get three seahs of the finest flour and knead it and bake some bread." 7 Then he ran to the herd and selected a choice, tender calf and gave it to a servant, who hurried to prepare it. 8 He then brought some curds and milk and the calf that had been prepared, and set these before them. While they ate, he stood near them under a tree. 9 "Where is your wife Sarah?" they asked him. "There, in the tent," he said. 10 Then one of them said, "I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife will have a son." Now Sarah was listening at the entrance to the tent, which was behind him. 11 Abraham and Sarah were already very old, and Sarah was past the age of childbearing. 12 So Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, "After I am worn out and my lord is old, will I now have this pleasure?" 13 Then the Lord said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Will I really have a child, now that I am old?' 14 Is anything too hard for the Lord? I will return to you at the appointed time next year, and Sarah will have a son." 15 Sarah was afraid, so she lied and said, "I did not laugh." But he said, "Yes, you did laugh." Abraham Pleads for Sodom 16 When the men got up to leave, they looked down toward Sodom, and Abraham walked along with them to see them on their way. 17 Then the Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do? 18 Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him. 19 For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just, so that the Lord will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him." 20 Then the Lord said, "The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous 21 that I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached me. If not, I will know."

Social Hospitality in Islam

Muslims have a rich historical tradition of being renowned for their practice of hospitality. According to Sahih al-Bukhari 3559 Book 61, it is purported that the Prophet Muhammad advocated for cultivating positive etiquette, virtuous conduct, and the practice of hospitality among adherents of the Islamic faith. The instructor advocated for the universal application of hospitality, emphasizing its provision to individuals irrespective of their religious affiliation, racial background, or gender identity. According to a verse in the Qur'an (24:27), Muslims are advised to enter someone's residence without receiving an invitation. This poetry emphasizes the significance of politeness and respect when entering another individual's premises. Hospitality is a means by which Muslims can express affection and reverence towards their visitors. Demonstrating concern for another individual and expressing appreciation for a guest's attendance is a means of conveying care and gratitude. Muslim individuals make concerted efforts to offer exceptional hospitality to their

guests, irrespective of their relationships as family members, acquaintances, or unfamiliar individuals. Muslims are strongly urged to extend hospitality through many means. The hosts can offer sustenance and beverages and ensure their invitees' well-being and contentment. In addition, hosts may give lodging accommodations if required and extend invitations to accompany their visitors on guided tours or visits to notable locations. Muslim individuals also endeavor to create an environment of hospitality and appreciation for their guests. The following hadith shows that Prophet Muhammad talks of good character:

Narrated `Abdullah bin `Amr:

- The Prophet never used bad language neither a "Fahish nor a Mutafahish. He used to say "The best amongst you are those who have the best manners and character." (Sahih al-Bukhari 3559 Book 61, Hadith 68 See Hadith No. 56 (B) Vol. 8)
- Qur'an 24:27, O believers! Do not enter any house other than your own until you have asked for permission and greeted its occupants. This is best for you, so perhaps you will be mindful.

Likewise, the Bible addresses providing financial assistance to impoverished individuals in need or traveling as various means of fostering connections with individuals beyond one's social circle. Giving to others serves as a means for individuals and institutions to foster a sense of social responsibility and acknowledge the shared interest that others have in accumulating societal resources. Hospitality is a cognitive framework and disposition characterized by a willingness to engage with individuals, regardless of familiarity or relationship status. The multifaceted connotations of the term "stranger" in contemporary urban environments necessitate a thoughtful reconsideration of the evolving nature of strangers in comparison to their counterparts in ancient texts. The concept of the stranger encompasses elements of risk and intrigue, exerting influence over human lives and serving as a focal point for various philosophical treatises. However, focusing on the masks worn by strangers may indicate a heightened sense of indifference towards one's neighbors and fellow citizens. Jesus is always calling all people to himself, and Christians should be willing to help him in that endeavor, as noted in the following verses:

- Matthew 25:31- 46, "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. 34" Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' 37 Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’” Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’ 44 ”They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’ 45” He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’ 46 ”Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

- John 8:28 So Jesus said, ”When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me.
- John 12:32, And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.”

Divine Hospitality as Christian–Muslim Practice

The concept of divine hospitality holds significant importance in both Christianity and Islam. The observance is regarded as a favorable occasion for adherents to demonstrate acts of benevolence and compassion towards their fellow individuals while also embracing the divine presence of God. The concept of divine hospitality entails an interfaith dialogue to foster comprehension and concordance between adherents of Christianity and Islam. The biblical passage in Luke 10:38- 42 elucidates the fundamental principle of divine hospitality. In this narrative, Jesus is graciously received into the residence of Martha and Mary. He is received with affection, graciousness, and deference. The manifestation of heavenly hospitality within the context of Christianity is well encouraged. Jesus is received into the domicile with warm hospitality and accorded due reverence. Jesus is invited into the house of Martha and Mary, as seen in the following verses:

- Luke 10:38-42, As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. 39 She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said. 40 But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, “Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!” 41 ”Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered,” you are worried and upset about many things, 42 but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”

This observation suggests that individuals who adhere to Jesus’ teachings are similarly obligated to express their affection for others in a manner that embodies the essence of love. During such occasions, individuals identifying as Christians are

presented with favorable circumstances to express and communicate their religious beliefs.

Protocols of Muslims and Christians Eating Together

The historical interaction between the Muslim and Christian communities has been characterized by a multifaceted dynamic, marked by various misunderstandings and arguments about several matters. One of the most formidable parts of this connection is the divergent dietary protocols observed by the two religions and the subsequent ramifications of non-compliance. The act of Muslims and Christians partaking in communal meals is a common occurrence, albeit one that presents challenges in comprehending and adhering to the diverse dietary regulations to foster an atmosphere of respect and enjoyment. Regulations exist about the permissibility of several consumable items. Muslims adhere to dietary prohibitions prescribed in the Qur'an, which prohibit the intake of pork, alcohol, and some types of animals. Additionally, it is advised to adhere to specific meal preparation practices, such as refraining from combining meat and dairy products.

Christians adhere to dietary restrictions that prioritize preserving one's health and relationship with God, particularly by avoiding habits detrimental to one's well-being. In the context of shared meals between Muslims and Christians, it is imperative to retain mutual tolerance for one another's culinary choices. In order to do this, it is advisable to engage in premeditated menu planning and ensure that all individuals are cognizant of the constituents employed. Knowing the diverse customs and etiquette linked to each religious tradition is vital. As an illustration, individuals who identify as Muslims frequently engage in handwashing before consuming food, whereas individuals who identify as Christians commonly offer a prayer of gratitude before partaking in a meal. It is vital to comprehend that religious dietary restrictions may not invariably be unequivocal. For instance, several individuals adhering to the Islamic faith abstain from consuming pork. However, they may be willing to consume other food items with swine derivatives, such as bacon or sausage. When individuals from the Muslim and Christian faiths engage in communal dining, it is of utmost significance to exhibit respect and empathy for one another's religious convictions. Communal dining should be cognizant of the food offered and ensure everyone is satisfied. It is crucial to bear in mind that food frequently serves as a means of fostering interpersonal connections, and Christians can leverage this chance to disseminate their religious beliefs. Engaging in storytelling and dialogue can facilitate the establishment of interfaith connections. Establishing and adhering to appropriate protocols that promote respect and dignity in the context of such encounters is imperative.[119]

Christians who extend invitations to Muslims for dinner must ensure that the food provided adheres to the principles of halal, which denotes its compliance with Islamic dietary laws. In many places, a halal grocery store adheres to the dietary

[119] Bruce A. McDowell and Anees Zaka, Muslims and Christians at the Table: Promoting Biblical Understanding among North American Muslims (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1999), 171–216.

regulations prescribed by the Muslim faith, ensuring that the meats available have been cooked in compliance with these criteria. If halal meats are unavailable within one's community, opting for a vegetarian lunch as an alternative is advisable. Ensure that Muslim guests are informed that the meat served adheres to halal standards, or they will have a vegetarian lunch. The protocol requires that the plates and utensils must not have come into contact with the pig or any other culinary items considered banned. The Muslim guest will appreciate reassurance from their Christian hosts over their attentiveness to these concerns. Demonstrating respect can provide a favorable environment for disseminating Christian beliefs characterized by increased courtesy and consideration.

The New Testament narratives depict instances where Jesus Christ and the Apostles are provided material hospitality as guests. However, they subsequently manifest their roles as emissaries of God's kingdom by their words and deeds, bestowing their hosts with supernatural blessings.

- Luke 24:28–35, As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. 29 But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them. 30 When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. 31 Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. 32 They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?" 33 They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together 34 and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." 35 Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.
- Acts 20:6–12, But we sailed from Philippi after the Festival of Unleavened Bread, and five days later joined the others at Troas, where we stayed seven days.7 On the first day of the week we came together to break bread. Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight. 8 There were many lamps in the upstairs room where we were meeting. 9 Seated in a window was a young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep as Paul talked on and on. When he was sound asleep, he fell to the ground from the third story and was picked up dead. 10 Paul went down, threw himself on the young man and put his arms around him. "Don't be alarmed," he said. "He's alive!" 11 Then he went upstairs again and broke bread and ate. After talking until daylight, he left. 12 The people took the young man home alive and were greatly comforted.
- Acts 28:7–9, 7 There was an estate nearby that belonged to Publius, the chief official of the island. He welcomed us to his home and showed us generous hospitality for three days. 8 His father was sick in bed, suffering from fever and dysentery. Paul went in to see him and, after prayer, placed his hands on him and healed him. 9 When this had happened, the rest of the sick on the island came and were cured.

Jesus, while on earth, welcomed all kinds of sinners and marginalized people, as noted in the following verses:

- Matthew 11:19, The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.’ But wisdom is proved right by her deeds.
- Luke 15:1–2, Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. 2 But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

Typically, the gospels picture Jesus eating with sinners at meals where he was invited as a guest, as noted in the following verses:

- Mark 2:15, While Jesus was having dinner at Levi’s house, many tax collectors and sinners were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him.
- Luke 7:36–50, When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee’s house and reclined at the table. 37 A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee’s house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. 38 As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them. 39 When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner.” 40 Jesus answered him, ”Simon, I have something to tell you.” “Tell me, teacher,” he said. 41” Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. 42 Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more? 43 Simon replied, “I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven.” “You have judged correctly,” Jesus said. 44 Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. 45 You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. 46 You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. 47 Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little. 48 Then Jesus said to her, ”Your sins are forgiven. 49 The other guests began to say among themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?” 50 Jesus said to the woman, ”Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”
- Luke 19:1–10, Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. 2 A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. 3 He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. 4 So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. 5 When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, ”Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” 6 So he came down at

once and welcomed him gladly. 7 All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner. “8 But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord,” Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.” 9 Jesus said to him, ”Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

One significant deviation is the event commonly referred to by Christians as the final supper. This particular occurrence occurred within the context of the Passover week, shortly before Jesus’ demise, whereby he instigated a communal dinner for his disciples. In the Synoptic Gospels, namely Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Jesus blesses bread and wine during a particular dinner, employing language that establishes a symbolic connection between these elements and his corporeal form and vital fluid. This occurrence is commonly seen as the establishment or precursor of the Eucharist or Lord’s Supper among adherents of the Christian faith. The rite presently serves as a means of remembrance of Jesus’ sacrificial death. One can read the following verses:

- Matthew 26:26-30, While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, ”Take and eat; this is my body.” 27 Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, ”Drink from it, all of you. 28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. 29 I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.” 30 When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.
- Luke 22:7-20, Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. 8 Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, ”Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover.” 9 Where do you want us to prepare for it? “they asked. 10 He replied, ”As you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him to the house that he enters, 11 and say to the owner of the house, ‘The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’ 12 He will show you a large room upstairs, all furnished. Make preparations there.” 13 They left and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover. 14 When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. 15 And he said to them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. 16 For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.” 17 After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, ”Take this and divide it among you. 18 For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” 19 And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, ”This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.” 20 In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.

According to the Gospel of John, the Last Supper featured a particular act of hospitality by Jesus: the humble washing of his disciples' feet followed by an exhortation to perform this act for one another (John 13:1–14).

- John 13:1–14, It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. 2 The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. 3 Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; 4 so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. 5 After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.6 He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" 7 Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." 8 "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." 9 "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!" 10 Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." 11 For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not everyone was clean.12 When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. 13 " You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. 14 Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM HOMES

Comparing Polygynous and Monogamous Marriages

Marriage holds significant spiritual and legal significance within the cultural contexts of both Islamic and Christian traditions. Although the two religions have differing views of marriage, the institution is nevertheless recognized. There are notable distinctions and commonalities between Islamic and Christian monogamous marriages. Islamic multiple marriages, sometimes called polygyny, encompass the practice wherein a man simultaneously enters into marital relationships with numerous wives. This custom originates in the Islamic religion and is founded upon the concept that it serves as a means for males to financially support and safeguard many households. Based on Islamic doctrine, it is permissible for a man to enter into marriage with up to four women concurrently, provided that he is capable of fulfilling their financial and emotional needs equitably. Christian monogamy, conversely, refers to the customary adherence to maintaining a single spouse at any one time. This perspective is rooted in the notion that marriage is a revered covenant between a single male and a single female, as delineated in biblical teachings. Christian doctrine posits that marriage is a perpetual covenant between two individuals, serving as a symbolic representation of the profound affection shared between Jesus Christ and the ecclesiastical body.

Although many Islamic marriages and Christian monogamous marriages exhibit distinct characteristics, there are certain shared elements between the two. Both religious traditions acknowledge the significance of marriage and its function in establishing a familial structure. Marriage, within the context of religious cultures, entails a solemn commitment between two individuals and is widely regarded as a lifelong dedication. Furthermore, it is worth noting that both religions share a common belief in the significance of marital fidelity. In both Islamic numerous marriages and Christian monogamous marriages, a formal contract is involved. Following Islamic law, individuals who identify as Muslim are permitted to enter into a legally recognized marriage with up to four wives. Furthermore, it is permissible for Muslim individuals to marry individuals who do not identify as Muslim under the condition that any children resulting from such unions are enrolled in a madrassa, an Islamic educational institution. Muslim women are not afforded the same privileges when it comes to marrying a man who does not adhere to the Islamic faith.

The subject of women’s involvement in ministry within the contexts of Christianity and Islam has been a matter of ongoing scholarly discourse. While numerous religious institutions have historically maintained the exclusion of women from clerical roles, proponents advocate for gender-inclusive religious practices. Within the context of the Christian faith, it is worth acknowledging that women have had a significant role in the ministry, as evidenced in both the Old and New Testaments. Throughout history, women have fulfilled various roles within religious contexts, including serving as judges, prophetesses, deacons, evangelists, instructors, preachers, and pastors. Nevertheless, several religious faiths have historically failed to acknowledge women’s contributions and give them leadership

roles. This phenomenon can be attributed to many issues, including the perception that women cannot fulfill the same responsibilities as males or the notion that women should be restricted to specific jobs and positions. Within the Islamic faith, it is observed that women do not hold an official position within the clergy.

Nonetheless, the Islamic community has a longstanding heritage of women occupying diverse roles. These encompass educational instruction and religious sermons, dispensing spiritual counsel, and delivering philanthropic assistance. While specific individuals believe that women should be barred from religious leadership roles, a faction is advocating for increased inclusivity and acknowledgement of women within the Islamic faith.

There are numerous potential advantages associated with including women in the ministry of Christianity and Islam. Firstly, including a higher number of female clergy members has the potential to foster increased diversity within the religious community, facilitating a more equitable representation of various views and perspectives. Furthermore, a more significant number of female clergy members can foster a more hospitable and all-encompassing atmosphere for individuals belonging to the religious community, irrespective of gender. Moreover, the increased representation of women in authoritative and leadership roles can catalyze questioning and reforming prevailing power dynamics, ultimately fostering a more egalitarian society. Simultaneously, including female clergy in Christianity and Islam creates specific potential difficulties. One of the foremost worries pertains to the potential alteration or undermining of some conventional responsibilities and functions of the clergy if women are granted entry into this domain. Moreover, there exists concern among specific individuals regarding the potential consequences of permitting women to serve in the clergy, precisely the apprehension that it may result in a decline in the general level of veneration for religious beliefs and doctrines.

As an illustration, it is worth noting that there existed a limited number of women who enjoyed widespread recognition during the period under consideration. These notable figures include Mary, the mother of Jesus; Mary Magdalene, a disciple of Jesus and the primary witness to the resurrection; and Mary and Martha, two sisters who extended their hospitality to Jesus in the town of Bethany. Our focus is on expanding our knowledge of the numerous women who played a significant role in establishing Christianity during its nascent stages. Moreover, the biblical text provides evidence of some women who held the esteemed position of “prophetess.” These notable figures include Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, and Anna. The following verses support that women were involved in prophetic ministry on earth:

- Miriam (Exodus 15:20) Then Miriam the prophet, Aaron’s sister, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women followed her, with timbrels and dancing.
- Deborah (Judges 4:4-6) Now Deborah, a prophet, the wife of Lappidoth, was leading Israel at that time. 5 She held court under the Palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites went up to her to have their disputes decided. 6 She sent for Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali and said to him, The Lord, the God of

Israel, commands you: ‘Go, take with you ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun and lead them up to Mount Tabor.

- Huldah (2 Kings 22:14-15) Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Akbor, Shaphan and Asaiah went to speak to the prophet Huldah, who was the wife of Shallum son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe. 15 She said to them, “This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: Tell the man who sent you to me,
- Huldah (2 Chronicles 34:22), 22 Hilkiah and those the king had sent with him went to speak to the prophet Huldah, who was the wife of Shallum son of Tokhath, the son of Hasrah, keeper of the wardrobe.
- Isaiah 8:1-4, The Lord said to me, “Take a large scroll and write on it with an ordinary pen: Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz.” 2 So I called in Uriah the priest and Zechariah son of Berekiah as reliable witnesses for me. 3 Then I made love to the prophetess, and she conceived and gave birth to a son. And the Lord said to me, “Name him Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz. 4 For before the boy knows how to say ‘My father’ or ‘My mother,’ the wealth of Damascus and the plunder of Samaria will be carried off by the king of Assyria.”
- Luke 2:36 There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage.
- Mary, mother of Jesus (Acts 1:14) They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.
- Acts 2:17, In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.

Numerous women actively participated in Jesus’ ministry. The New Testament acknowledges the presence of women as some of Jesus’ earliest followers. Since the inception of Jesus’ ministry, Jewish female disciples such as Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Susanna have been actively involved, providing companionship and financial support to Jesus (Luke 8:1-3). Jesus engaged in dialogue with women in both public and private settings. In the narrative, an unidentified woman of non-Jewish descent approached Jesus, expressing her plea for assistance, as recounted in the biblical accounts of Mark 7:24-30 and Matthew 15:21-28. The protagonist was bestowed with exceptional hospitality by a Jewish woman, who graciously performed the act of washing his feet with perfume. Jesus regularly visited Mary and Martha’s residence, engaging in instructing and partaking in meals alongside both female and male individuals. During the arrest of Jesus, it is noted that women exhibited unwavering resolve, in contrast to the reported departure of his male companions, as they steadfastly accompanied him to the base of the crucifixion. The initial accounts of the resurrection indicate that women, particularly Mary Magdalene, were identified as the primary witnesses. See the following verses for fuller descriptions:

- Matthew 15:21-28, Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. 22 A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out,

“Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly.” 23 Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, “Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us. 24 He answered, ”I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.” 25 The woman came and knelt before him. ”Lord, help me!” she said. 26 He replied, ”It is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.” 27 ”Yes it is, Lord,” she said. “Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table.” 28 Then Jesus said to her, ”Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted.” And her daughter was healed at that moment.

- Mark 7:24-30, Jesus left that place and went to the vicinity of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know it; yet he could not keep his presence secret. 25 In fact, as soon as she heard about him, a woman whose little daughter was possessed by an impure spirit came and fell at his feet. 26 The woman was a Greek, born in Syria Phoenicia. She begged Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter. 27 ”First let the children eat all they want,” he told her, ”for it is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.” 28 ”Lord,” she replied, “even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs." 29 Then he told her, ”For such a reply, you may go; the demon has left your daughter.” 30 She went home and found her child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.
- Luke 7:36-50, When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee’s house and reclined at the table. 37 A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee’s house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. 38 As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them. 39 When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner.”40 Jesus answered him, “Simon, I have something to tell you.” “Tell me, teacher,” he said. 41 ”Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. 42 Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?” 43 Simon replied, “I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven.” “You have judged correctly,” Jesus said. 44 Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, ”Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. 45 You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. 46 You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. 47 Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little.” 48 Then Jesus said to her, ”Your sins are forgiven.” 49 The other guests began to say among themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?” 50 Jesus said to the woman, ”Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

- Luke 8:1-3, After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, 2 and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; 3 Joanna the wife of Chuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means.

Women in the First Century of Christianity

Following the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, women maintained major positions within the early movement. The biblical text documents numerous occurrences in which women had significant roles in establishing the nascent Christian community. Several women mentioned in the biblical text, such as Prisca, Junia, Julia, and the sister of Nereus, engaged in missionary activity and undertook journeys in tandem with their husbands or brothers (Romans 16:3, 7, 15). The Letter tells us that Prisca and her husband risked their lives to rescue Paul's life. The Apostle Paul commends Junia as a distinguished apostle, noting her incarceration due to her diligent efforts. The individuals known as Mary and Persis have been acknowledged and praised for their diligent efforts, as stated in the biblical passages Romans 16:6 and 16:12. In the biblical text of Philippians 4:2-3, the individuals known as Euodia and Syntyche are referred to as fellow-workers within the context of the gospel. There is compelling evidence that women apostles were active in the initial efforts to disseminate the Christian gospel. The following texts make that revelation:

- Romans 16:3, 6, 7, 12, 15, Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my co-workers in Christ Jesus. 6 Greet Mary, who worked very hard for you. 7 Greet Andronicus and Junia, my fellow Jews who have been in prison with me. They are outstanding among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was. 12 Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, those women who work hard in the Lord. 15 Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas and all the Lord's people who are with them.
- Philippians 4:2-3, I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. 3 Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these women since they have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

The writings authored by the Apostle Paul also provide significant insights into the internal dynamics of early Christian communities. These collectives did not possess ecclesiastical edifices but convened in residential dwellings, perhaps influenced by the illegality of Christianity within contemporary Roman society and the substantial financial burden imposed on these nascent communities. These households were a sphere in which women held significant positions. Therefore, observing women assuming leadership positions inside house churches is unsurprising. Paul recounts instances in which women assumed leadership roles

inside house churches, as seen by the mention of Apphia in Philemon 2 and Prisca in I Corinthians 16:19. This practice is corroborated by further textual evidence which also references women who held leadership positions in churches located within their houses, such as Lydia of Thyatira (Acts 16:15) and Nympha of Laodicea (Colossians 4:15). Women actively participated in religious practices by holding positions of authority and assuming essential responsibilities within the context of collective worship. In the Epistle to the Romans, the biblical figure known as the Apostle Paul is depicted as extending a greeting to an individual named Phoebe, who holds the position of a deacon (Romans 16:1). In the context of prophetic duties, it is plausible to suggest that women would have been engaged in various activities such as public speaking characterized by intense emotions, delivering sermons, imparting knowledge, leading communal prayers, and potentially participating in the administration of the eucharistic ritual.

- Acts 16:15, When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. “If you consider me a believer in the Lord,” she said, “come and stay at my house.” And she persuaded us.
- Romans 16:1, I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church in Cenchreae.
- I Corinthians 16:19, The churches in the province of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets at their house.
- Colossians 4:15, Give my greetings to the brothers and sisters at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.
- Philemon 2, also to Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier—and to the church that meets in your home:

Women in Islam

Women play a crucial and esteemed position within the context of the Islamic faith. Islam espouses the principle of gender equality, asserting that men and women possess equal standing in the divine realm, hence sharing equivalent spiritual duties and obligations. The Islamic faith has given women a range of entitlements and actively promotes their pursuit of knowledge and education. In the context of Islamic society, women are encouraged to adhere to modest attire, commonly referred to as hijab, which entails covering their body and hair. The dress code upholds individuals’ dignity and safeguards them against unwarranted attention. Specific individuals within the Muslim community believe that the decision to wear a hijab is a matter of personal choice rather than an imposition upon women. In the Islamic faith, women are granted certain entitlements, such as possessing and inheriting property, engaging in employment and generating income, and participating in public affairs within select nations. They can vote and seek public office, serve as judges, and hold critical societal positions in several countries.

The historical figure known as Prophet Muhammad entered into a monogamous marriage with his initial spouse, Khadija, and this marital union endured for 25 years. Following her demise, he subsequently entered into matrimony with ten women.

According to Sahih al-Bukhari 7:62:142, it is documented that Muhammad engaged in sexual encounters with all of his wives within a single night. Additionally, Sahih al-Bukhari 1:5:268 portrays Muhammad as possessing a level of physical strength equivalent to that of thirty men. According to the account provided by Bukhari, it is mentioned that Anas bin Malik narrated that the Prophet would engage in sexual relations with all of his women in a single night while having a total of nine wives during that period. According to Sahih al-Bukhari, it is narrated by Qatada that Anas bin Malik stated that the Prophet would regularly visit all of his eleven women, both day and night. I inquired of Anas, "Did the Prophet possess the requisite physical prowess for such a task?" Anas responded by stating, "It was commonly asserted that the Prophet possessed the physical prowess equivalent to that of thirty individuals." According to the narration in Sahih Bukhari, Sa'id reported to the authority of Qatada that Anas had informed him about the presence of just nine women, as opposed to the previously mentioned number of eleven. Such information is found in Volume 1, Book 5, Hadith Number 268. The wives' ages of Prophet Muhammad at their marriage exhibited variability. Here are their ages at the time of their marriage (based on historical records):

1. Khadija bint Khuwaylid - about 40 years old (Prophet Muhammad was 25 years old at the time of their marriage)
2. Sawda bint Zam'a - around 55 years old
3. Aisha bint Abi Bakr - around 6 years old
4. Hafsa bint Umar - around 22 years old
5. Zaynab bint Khuzayma - around 30 years old
6. Umm Salama Hind bint Abi Umayya - around 26 years old.
7. Zaynab bint Jahsh - around 38 years old
8. Juwayriyya bint al-Harith - around 20 years old
9. Ramlah bint Abi Sufyan (Umm Habiba) - around 30 years old
10. Safiyya bint Huyayy - around 17 years old
11. Maymunah bint al-Harith - around 36 years old
12. Maria al-Qibtiyya - around 17 years old
13. Rayhana bint Zayd - age at the time of marriage is uncertain.

In addition to his 13 lawful wives, Prophet Muhammad he possessed enslaved women or captives who were bestowed upon him as gifts or acquired as spoils of battle. He refrained from entering into matrimony with all of them; nevertheless, he did select a few of them to serve as his concubines or enslaved people. The historical records contain references to the names of certain women; however, the precise quantity of these ladies remains uncertain. The following enslaved people may have served as his concubines:

- Maria the Copt (also known as Maria al-Qibtiyya), who was later married to the Prophet.
- Rayhana bint Zayd (also mentioned as a wife, but not confirmed)
- Safiyya bint Huyayy (also mentioned as a wife, but some sources mention that she was previously a concubine)
- Rihanah bint 'Amr

- Another unnamed slave girl who was given to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as a gift by his cousin, Ali ibn Abi Talib.

Biblical Teaching on Marriage

The Bible promotes the importance of heterosexual relationships. The New Testament contains various sections, notably in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, where Jesus imparts teachings regarding weddings and divorce. In contrast to the Qur'anic teachings regarding divorces, the Bible espouses a stance that opposes such activities. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus teaches that gazing upon a woman with lustful intentions is tantamount to committing a transgression, as stated in Matthew 5:27-28. Jesus taught that God did not commission divorces, even hates it. Here are some critical references:

- Matthew 5:31-32, It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.' 32 But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.
- Matthew 19:3-9, Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?" 4 "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' 5 and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? 6 So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate." 7 "Why then," they asked, "did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?" 8 Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. 9 I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery."
- Matthew 5: 27, You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.
- Mark 10:2-12, Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" 3 "What did Moses command you?" he replied. 4 They said, "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away." 5 "It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law," Jesus replied. 6 "But at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female.' 7 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, 8 and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh. 9 Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate." 10 When they were in the house again, the disciples asked Jesus about this. 11 He answered, Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. 12 And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery.

- Malachi 2:16, The man who hates and divorces his wife, “says the Lord, the God of Israel, “does violence to the one he should protect,” says the Lord Almighty.

The excerpts above illustrate Jesus’ teachings on the sanctity of marriage, as he emphasizes its divine origin and intended permanence, namely as a union between a male and a female. The individual in question permitted divorce solely in instances of sexual immorality and did not authorize remarriage after divorce unless the divorce itself was based on grounds of sexual immorality. Jesus emphasized the imperative nature of upholding the sacredness of marriage and abstaining from engaging in adultery.

The Qur’an allows for wife beating, inheritance, cut off hands or making them sex slaves as noted in the following verses:

- Qur’an 2:223, Your wives are like farmland for you, so approach them ˹consensually˺ as you please. And send forth something good for yourselves. Be mindful of Allah, and know that you will meet Him. And give good news to the believers.
- Qur’an 2:235, There is no blame on you for subtly showing interest in ˹divorced or widowed˺ women or for hiding ˹the intention˺ in your hearts. Allah knows that you are considering them ˹for marriage˺. But do not make a secret commitment with them—you can only show interest in them appropriately. Do not commit to the bond of marriage until the waiting period expires. Know that Allah is aware of what is in your hearts, so beware of Him. And know that Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Forbearing.
- Qur’an 4:19, O believers! It is not permissible for you to inherit women against their will or mistreat them to make them return some of the dowry ˹as a ransom for divorce˺—unless they are found guilty of adultery. Treat them fairly. If you happen to dislike them, you may hate something which Allah turns into a great blessing.
- Qur’an 4:34, Men are the caretakers of women, as men have been provisioned by Allah over women and tasked with supporting them financially. And righteous women are devoutly obedient and, when alone, protective of what Allah has entrusted them with. And if you sense ill-conduct from your women, advise them ˹first˺, ˹if they persist, ˺ do not share their beds, ˹but if they still persist,˺ then discipline them ˹gently˺. But if they change their ways, do not be unjust to them. Surely Allah is Most High, All-Great.
- Qur’an 5:38, As for male and female thieves, cut off their hands for what they have done—a deterrent from Allah. And Allah is Almighty, All-Wise.
- 38:44, ˹And We said to him,˺ “Take in your hand a bundle of grass, and strike ˹your wife˺ with it, and do not break your oath.” We truly found him patient. What an excellent servant ˹he was˺! Indeed, he ˹constantly˺ turned ˹to Allah˺.

Biblical Teaching on Husbands and Wives

According to biblical teachings, the conjugal bond between a husband and wife is expected to be marked by reciprocal affection, reverence, and deference, emphasizing the cultivation of a robust and harmonious alliance. In contrast to the allowance of wife beating in the Qur'an, the Bible promotes reciprocal respect, aligning with the intended divine guidance. The Bible guides the relationship between husband and wife in several places, primarily in the New Testament. Here are some of the fundamental teachings:

- Mutual submission: The Bible teaches that both husband and wife are to submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Both partners should show respect and honor to one another (Ephesians 5:21, Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ).
- Love and sacrifice: Husbands are called to love their wives sacrificially, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her (Ephesians 5:25, Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her). Husbands should prioritize their wives' needs above their own and seek to serve them selflessly.
- Respect and submission: Wives are called to respect their husbands and submit to them, as the church submits to Christ (Ephesians 5:22-24, Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything). Wives are to be subservient to their husbands but should recognize and honor their husband's leadership in the home.
- Unity and partnership: The Bible teach that husband and wife are to become one flesh, meaning that they are to be united in every aspect of their lives (Genesis 2:24, That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh. Mark 10:8, and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh. This requires a partnership in which both partners work together to build a strong and healthy relationship.
- Faithfulness and commitment: Marriage is a covenant between husband and wife, and the Bible teaches that both partners are to be faithful to one another and committed to their marriage for life (Matthew 19:6 So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate").

Family Concerns in Christianity and Islam

Family concerns are integral aspects of both Christianity and Islam. Despite the divergent theological doctrines and rituals observed by these two religious traditions, both accord significant significance to the institution of the family and its societal function. Christianity holds the belief that the institution of the family is divinely bestowed. The family unit serves as the fundamental building block of

society, representing a crucial locus for the manifestation of divine love and grace. Christian adherents believe marriage is a sanctified establishment integral to the prosperous operation of the familial unit. It is commonly anticipated that spouses will exhibit affection and assist one another, while children are to be nurtured within a Christian household characterized by love, reverence, and the implementation of structured guidance. The primary objective of the family is to direct individuals towards Christ and to function as a testament to the world regarding God's compassion and benevolence.

Polygamy is prevalent in various societies worldwide, including individuals who adhere to the Islamic faith. The practice above has persisted for an extended duration, and specific individuals perceive it as a societal convention. The biblical text demonstrates that individuals who engaged in the practice of polygamy encountered many difficulties and challenges. Let us examine individuals who engaged in the practice of polygamy, as documented in the texts of the Old Testament. According to the biblical account in Genesis 4:19-24, Lamech is identified as an early practitioner of polygamy. There is a lack of positive discourse surrounding him, except for acknowledging his status as a killer.

According to the biblical narrative in Genesis 16:1-5, Abraham went into a polygamous relationship with another woman as per his wife's request. Subsequently, Abraham experienced a surge of jealousy, leading him to remove Hagar, his recently married spouse, from their domestic setting. Esau, Jacob's sibling, possessed the primogeniture as the firstborn offspring of Isaac and Rebekah. The more significant distress experienced by Isaac's parents, as documented in Genesis 26:33,34, can be attributed to the presence of his two Hittite wives. King Solomon's accomplishment of maintaining a harem consisting of 700 wives and 300 concubines is a noteworthy achievement, establishing a significant historical record. The biblical narrative of 1 Kings 11:3 portrays a damaged state of Solomon's confidence in God. The Bible does not take anything lightly when it comes to concerns about polygamy. According to Jesus' teachings, the ideal marital arrangement involves the union of a single man and a single woman as husband and wife, as shown in the following verses:

- Genesis 2:24, That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.
- Leviticus 20:13, 'If a man has sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They are to be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads.
- Matthew 19:3–6, Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?" 4 "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' 5 and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? 6 So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."
- Mark 10:8–9, and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh. 9 Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

- 1 Corinthians 7:1-2, Now for the matters you wrote about: “It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.” 2 But since sexual immorality is occurring, each man should have sexual relations with his own wife, and each woman with her own husband
- 1 Timothy 3:2, Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,
- Titus 1:6, An elder must be blameless, faithful to his wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient.
- Hebrews 13:4, Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.

Islam also places significant emphasis on the institution of the family, albeit from a distinct perspective. According to the Qur’an, it is permissible for a Muslim male to enter into polygamous marriages, with the maximum number of women being four (Qur’an 4:3). According to the teachings of the Qur’an, the family is seen as a fundamental social unit, and it is incumbent upon both the husband and wife to establish a condition of concord and tranquility inside their household. In the context of marital relationships, a societal expectation exists for husbands and wives to demonstrate affection and esteem towards one another while also assuming responsibility for the well-being and sustenance of their familial unit. The upbringing of children should prioritize the cultivation of their adherence to the principles and practices of Islam, with parents assuming the responsibility of imparting a comprehensive education and ethical direction. Numerous adherents of the Islamic faith maintain the belief that familial existence serves as the fundamental bedrock of human civilization, offering a stable, salubrious, and supportive milieu for both parents and developing offspring. Even Prophet Muhammad had 13 wives. The following Qur’anic verses support polyandry:

- Qur’an 4:3, If you fear you might fail to give orphan women their ⌜due⌝ rights ⌜if you were to marry them⌝, then marry other women of your choice—two, three, or four. But if you are afraid you will fail to maintain justice, then ⌜content yourselves with⌝ one or those ⌜bondwomen⌝ in your possession. This way you are less likely to commit injustice.
- Qur’an 4:34, Men are the caretakers of women, as men have been provisioned by Allah over women and tasked with supporting them financially. And righteous women are devoutly obedient and, when alone, protective of what Allah has entrusted them with. And if you sense ill-conduct from your women, advise them ⌜first⌝, ⌜if they persist,⌝ do not share their beds, ⌜but if they still persist,⌝ then discipline them ⌜gently⌝. But if they change their ways, do not be unjust to them. Surely Allah is Most High, All-Great.
- The Qur’an, 33:30,32, O wives of the Prophet! If any of you were to commit a blatant misconduct, the punishment would be doubled for her. And that is easy for Allah. 32 O wives of the Prophet! You are not like any other women: if you are mindful ⌜of Allah⌝, then do not be overly effeminate in speech ⌜with men⌝ or those with sickness in their hearts may be tempted, but speak in a moderate tone.



A photo shows how such a wedding ring would look like

CHAPTER THIRTY

CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM CO-EXISTENCE

Relationships Between Christians and Muslims

The historical and ongoing interaction between adherents of Christianity and Islam has been a topic of scholarly discourse and deliberation spanning numerous centuries. The two religions have a well-documented past characterized by antagonism and distrust. However, in recent years, there has been an observable trend towards increased efforts to foster mutual understanding and collaboration between religious groups. Fostering harmonious coexistence and mutual respect between Christians and Muslims is not a novel proposition. Presently, there is a growing demand for world peace. Several democratic nations advocate for collaboration between Christian and Muslim leaders to address religious conflicts and criminal actions, including terrorism.

In many instances, professionals who identify as Christian and Muslim collaborate across various domains to assist in preserving human life. There is a growing prevalence of heightened animosity and discord between adherents of Christianity and Islam in certain countries. This phenomenon can be attributed, at least in part, to the rising frequency of terrorist strikes perpetrated under the banner of Islam. Furthermore, numerous cases of prejudice and persecution targeting individuals belonging to the Christian and Muslim faiths have been documented throughout various regions globally. Notwithstanding these limitations, a prospect exists for enhanced comprehension and collaboration between adherents of Christianity and Islam. Christians understand that the Holy Spirit can only accomplish the conviction of humanity's sins. It is our responsibility to facilitate an environment that allows this conviction to occur, as stated in John 16:8-10).

- John 16:8-10 When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 about sin, because people do not believe in me; 10 about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer;

One plausible advantage of this arrangement is its potential to foster increased religious tolerance and mutual comprehension among the two communities. This objective could be accomplished through the implementation of conversation and educational initiatives. Moreover, this might potentially foster enhanced collaboration between the aforementioned religious groups in other domains, including but not limited to education, healthcare, and economic advancement. Conversely, several possible issues are linked to this particular configuration. For instance, confident individuals who identify as Christians may exhibit hesitancy in embracing a community where Muslims constitute the majority. In contrast, specific individuals who identify as Muslims may demonstrate a lack of willingness to accept a society where Christians constitute the majority.

Moreover, ensuring the preservation of the rights and liberties of both religious groups under such a societal framework may provide challenges. There is potential for disputes between the two communities due to divergent theological perspectives

and varying interpretations of scripture. The notion of Christians and Muslims coexisting presents a compelling subject with numerous potential advantages. Nevertheless, it is imperative to take into account the various obstacles and complexities linked to such a configuration. Ultimately, the feasibility and desirability of such an agreement should be left to the discretion of adherents of Christianity and Islam. Christians perceive any setup conducive to disseminating their religious beliefs to neighboring individuals. Believers in Christ do not have a Spirit of fear, as noted in 2 Timothy 1:7, “For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.”

- Isaiah 26:3, You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.
- Matthew 11:28-30, Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”
- Philippians 4:13 I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

Many individuals residing in various sub-Saharan African nations hold firm religious convictions in one or both of the world’s most widespread religions, Christianity and Islam. The persistence of traditional African religious concepts and rituals endures, notwithstanding the prevalence of Christianity and Islam within the region. They prefer coexisting peacefully with both the Islamic and Christian faiths. The existence of theological conflicts notwithstanding, it is undeniable that most individuals experience this phenomenon. A significant number of African individuals actively engage in Christianity or Islam while simultaneously adhering to traditional African belief systems encompassing notions of witchcraft, malevolent spirits, ancestor sacrifices, traditional religious healers, reincarnation, and several other themes. It is incumbent for individuals who identify as Christians to fulfill their responsibility in addressing the spiritual needs of individuals, irrespective of their religious affiliations. Several verses in the Bible teach that a believer has spiritual authority over all sicknesses and demonic powers:

- Matthew 10:1, 7-8, Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness. 7 As you go, proclaim this message: ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’ 8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.
- Matthew 28:16-20, Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18 Then Jesus came to them and said, ”All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”
- Mark 16:15-18, He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but

whoever does not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well."

Islam and Christianity dwell in a state of mutual existence alongside one another. Within the sub-Saharan African region, a substantial portion of those who self-identify as adherents of Christianity and Islam hold a shared conviction that practitioners of these faiths demonstrate notable benevolence and reliability. A considerable proportion of persons throughout numerous nations demonstrate widespread occurrences of anti-Muslim or anti-Christian prejudice, and they typically convey positive assessments of their respective governments' fair treatment of both religious communities. However, it is well recognized that there is a lack of comprehensive knowledge of one another's religious convictions. Islam is a religious concept that claims to promote a state of calmness and advocates for the acceptance of persons from various backgrounds while also aiming to cultivate a sense of global brotherhood. In contrast to prevailing assumptions, empirical evidence often demonstrates instances in which specific Muslim organizations employ violence to further their goals, even at the cost of human lives. Muslims are taught there is no compulsion among religion, but such are never cared for during violent situations (Qur'an 2:256).

- Qur'an 2:256, Let there be no compulsion in religion, for the truth stands out clearly from falsehood. So whoever renounces false gods and believes in Allah has certainly grasped the firmest, unfailing hand-hold. And Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.
- Qur'an 30:21, And one of His signs is that He created for you spouses from among yourselves so that you may find comfort in them. And He has placed between you compassion and mercy. Surely in this are signs for people who reflect.
- Qur'an 49:13, O humanity! Indeed, We created you from a male and a female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you may ˹get to˺ know one another. Surely the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous among you. Allah is truly All-Knowing, All-Aware.

Inter-Faith Dialogue in the Bible

Interfaith dialogue is an integral part of religious understanding and growth. It is a respectful and open exchange between people of different faiths to learn more about each other's beliefs and practices.[120] The Bible does not anticipate any dialogue outside Jesus' teachings in John 14:6, "Jesus answered," I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. The Bible looks at a dialogue that builds bridges between people of different beliefs and fosters greater

[120] Patrick Mburu Kamau, "Christian-Muslim Dialogue With Particular Reference to Pentecostals and Muslims in Nairobi, Kenya" (Ph.D Thesis, Kenyatta University, 2013), chapter three.

understanding and tolerance of who God is (John 12:45). The Bible does not shy away from peaceful promotion of religious dialogue and tolerance between different faiths (Acts 11:17, Romans 14:19). It is within that framework where the Holy Spirit plants a seed of faith. The following teaches the Biblical ideal of the work of Jesus Christ in the promotion of peace:

- John 14: 44-50, Then Jesus cried out, ”Whoever believes in me does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me. 45 The one who looks at me is seeing the one who sent me. 46 I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness. 47 ” If anyone hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge that person. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. 48 There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; the very words I have spoken will condemn them at the last day. 49 For I did not speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me to say all that I have spoken. 50 I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say.”
- Acts 11:17, So if God gave them the same gift he gave us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could stand in God’s way?”
- Romans 14:19, Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.

Interfaith dialogue facilitates an exchange or discourse among individuals with divergent religious convictions, intending to enhance mutual comprehension and foster harmonious coexistence and reverence within disparate groups. The relevance of inter-faith conversation has grown in contemporary society since individuals with varying religious affiliations coexist nearby and engage in regular interactions. On the one hand, the biblical text contains lines that underscore the significance of unity and harmonious interactions among individuals with divergent viewpoints. In the New Testament, a passage from Galatians 3:28 states that distinctions based on ethnicity, social status, and gender are rendered irrelevant in the context of being united in Christ Jesus. This verse asserts the notion of equality among individuals, regardless of their Jewish or Gentile identity, their status as enslaved people or free individuals, or their gender. This passage posits that adherents of Christianity should refrain from engaging in discriminatory practices towards individuals from alternative religious affiliations, instead advocating for their treatment with affection and esteem.

Moreover, Jesus expounded on this principle, stating, “And the second commandment is similar to it: ‘Love your neighbor as you love yourself’ (Matthew 22:39).” The verses mentioned above can be construed as advocating for the facilitation of inter-faith discourse and collaboration among individuals hailing from diverse religious affiliations, with the underlying objective of disseminating the Christian faith. In the context of friendliness and love for one’s neighbor, Christians must avoid displaying unfriendliness towards their neighbors, as this aligns with a fundamental concept within the Christian faith. For example, in Matthew 22:37, Jesus taught the need to love God and humans. See the following verses:

- Matthew 22:34-40, Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. 35 One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: 36 ”Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” 37 Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

Inter-faith Dialogue in the Qur’an

Inter-faith dialogue in the Qur’an has one thing: the monotheistic foundation. Qur’an anticipates that religious dialogue is like a conversation, as shown in the following verses:

- Qur’an 18:34, 37, Give them ˹O Prophet˺ an example of two men. To ˹the disbelieving˺ one We gave two gardens of grapevines, which We surrounded with palm trees and placed ˹various˺ crops in between. 37 His ˹believing˺ companion replied, while conversing with him, Do you disbelieve in the One Who created you from dust, then ˹developed you˺ from a sperm-drop, then formed you into a man?
- Qur’an 58:1, Indeed, Allah has heard the argument of the woman who pleaded with you ˹O Prophet˺ concerning her husband, and appealed to Allah. Allah has heard your exchange. Surely Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.
- Qur’an 5:68, Say, ˹O Prophet, ˺ “O People of the Book! You have nothing to stand on unless you observe the Torah, the Gospel, and what has been revealed to you from your Lord.” And your Lord’s revelation to you ˹O Prophet˺ will only cause many of them to increase in wickedness and disbelief. So do not grieve for the people who disbelieve.

The texts above demonstrate that within the Islamic faith, a distinct recognition and reverence exists for other religions, particularly Christianity and its followers. It is worth noting that Muslims generally do not prioritize providing religious freedom to Christians. Certain Islamic states restrict the presence of Christians within their borders even though the Qur’an upholds the principle of religious freedom.

The Qur’an does not endorse or advocate proselytization. Many individuals transitioning from the Islamic faith to Christianity have experienced violent demise or persecution, as prescribed in the Qur’an. Although Muhammad entered into a marriage with a Christian wife, the Qur’an does not anticipate or endorse the conversion of Muslims to Christianity. The act of apostasy, defined as the renunciation of Islam by a Muslim, whether expressed by thoughts, words, or actions, is prescribed with capital punishment, as stated in the Qur’an and Hadith literature. This penalty contradicts Qur’an 2:256, which says there is no compulsion in religion. Qur’an 18:29 and 11:28 teach that an apostate should be left alone. See the following verses:

- Qur’an 5:54, O believers! Whoever among you abandons their faith, Allah will replace them with others who love Him and are loved by Him. They will be humble with the believers but firm towards the disbelievers, struggling in the Way of Allah; fearing no blame from anyone. This is the favor of Allah. He grants it to whoever He wills. And Allah is All-Bountiful, All-Knowing.
- Qur’an 2:217, They ask you ˹O Prophet˺ about fighting in the sacred months. Say, “Fighting during these months is a great sin. But hindering ˹others˺ from the Path of Allah, rejecting Him, and expelling the worshippers from the Sacred Mosque is ˹a˺ greater ˹sin˺ in the sight of Allah. For persecution is far worse than killing. And they will not stop fighting you until they turn you away from your faith—if they can. And whoever among you renounces their own faith and dies a disbeliever, their deeds will become void in this life and in the Hereafter. It is they who will be the residents of the Fire. They will be there forever.”
- Qur’an 2:191, Kill them wherever you come upon them1 and drive them out of the places from which they have driven you out. For persecution is far worse than killing. And do not fight them at the Sacred Mosque unless they attack you there. If they do so, then fight them—that is the reward of the disbelievers.
- Qur’an 2:256, Let there be no compulsion in religion, for the truth stands out clearly from falsehood. So whoever renounces false gods and believes in Allah has certainly grasped the firmest, unfailing hand-hold. And Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.
- Qur’an 3:90, Indeed, those who disbelieve after having believed then increase in disbelief, their repentance will never be accepted. It is they who are astray.
- Qur’an 3:151, We will cast terror into the hearts of the disbelievers for associating ˹false gods˺ with Allah—a practice He has never authorized. The Fire will be their home—what an evil place for the wrongdoers to stay!
- Qur’an 4:89, They wish you would disbelieve as they have disbelieved, so you may all be alike. So do not take them as allies unless they emigrate in the cause of Allah. But if they turn away, then seize them and kill them wherever you find them, and do not take any of them as allies or helpers,
- Qur’an 4:137, Indeed, those who believed then disbelieved, then believed and again disbelieved—˹only˺ increasing in disbelief—Allah will neither forgive them nor guide them to the ˹Right˺ Way.
- Qur’an 9:5, But once the Sacred Months have passed, kill the polytheists ˹who violated their treaties˺ wherever you find them,1 capture them, besiege them, and lie in wait for them on every way. But if they repent, perform prayers, and pay alms-tax, then set them free. Indeed, Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.
- Qur’an 9:11-12, But if they repent, perform prayer, and pay alms-tax, then they are your brothers in faith. This is how We make the revelations clear for people of knowledge.12 But if they break their oaths after making a pledge and attack your faith, then fight the champions of disbelief—who never honor their oaths—so perhaps they will desist.

- Qur'an 9:66, Make no excuses! You have lost faith after your belief. If We pardon a group of you, We will punish others for their wickedness.
- Qur'an 11:28, He said, "O my people! Consider if I stand on a clear proof from my Lord and He has blessed me with a mercy from Himself,1 which you fail to see. Should we ˹then˺ force it on you against your will?"
- Qur'an 16:106, Whoever disbelieves in Allah after their belief—not those who are forced while their hearts are firm in faith, but those who embrace disbelief wholeheartedly—they will be condemned by Allah and suffer a tremendous punishment.
- Qur'an 18:29, And say, ˹O Prophet,˺ "˹This is˺ the truth from your Lord. Whoever wills let them believe, and whoever wills let them disbelieve." Surely We have prepared for the wrongdoers a Fire whose walls will ˹completely˺ surround them. When they cry for aid, they will be aided with water like molten metal, which will burn ˹their˺ faces. What a horrible drink! And what a terrible place to rest!
- Qur'an 88:22, You are not ˹there˺ to compel them ˹to believe˺.
- Allah's Apostle said, "The blood of a Muslim who confesses that none has the right to be worshiped but Allah and that I am His Apostle, cannot be shed except in three cases: In Qisas for murder, a married person who commits illegal sexual intercourse and the one who reverts from Islam (apostate) and leaves the Muslims*. (Sahih al-Bukhari, 9:83:17)* [121]
- Book 016, Number 4152: 'Abdullah (b. Mas'ud) reported Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: It is not permissible to take the life of a Muslim who bears testimony (to the fact that there is no god but Allah, and I am the Messenger of Allah, but in one of the three cases: the married adulterer, a life for life, and the deserter of his Din (Islam), abandoning the community. 'Abdullah (b. Mas'ud) reported: Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) stood up and said: By Him besides Whom there is no god but He, the blood of a Muslim who bears the testimony that there is no god but Allah, and I am His Messenger, may be lawfully shed only in case of three persons: the one who abandons Islam, and deserts the community [Ahmad, one of the narrators, is doubtful whether the Holy Prophet (may peace be upon him) used the word li'l-jama'ah or al-jama'ah), and the married adulterer, and life for life. (Sahih Muslim, Book 16, Number 4152, 4154). [122]

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[121] Center for Muslim-Jewish Engagement, A Partnership between the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Omar Ibn Al Khattab Foundation, & USC Center for Religion and Civic Culture, Translation of Sahih Bukhari, Book 83: Blood Money (Ad-Diyat)

https://web.archive.org/web/20170610042948/http://cmje.usc.edu/religious-texts/hadith/bukhari/083-sbt.php#009.083.017

[122] Center for Muslim-Jewish Engagement, A Partnership between the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Omar Ibn Al Khattab Foundation, & USC Center for Religion and Civic Culture, Translation of Sahih Muslim, Book 16:, 16:4152, 4154 , chapter 6: When It Is Permissible To Take The Life Of A Muslim,
http://cmje.usc.edu/religious-texts/hadith/muslim/016-smt.php

Honour Killing of Apostates from Islam

Apostate Muslims encounter significant difficulties within their community and personal families. In certain instances, individuals belonging to a clan or family may be subjected to violent acts of murder perpetrated by their relatives. These acts are carried out to prevent the occurrence of a perceived humiliation associated with the engagement in a sin forbidden within the Islamic faith. The Qur'an, specifically in verse 24:2, stipulates a punishment of 100 lashes for adultery or fornication. However, several hadiths, such as Sahih Bukhari 2.413, 8.805, 814, and 819, present a contradictory teaching that advocates for the punishment of stoning to death. According to Islamic teachings, it is prescribed that families should adhere to legal frameworks for the administration of justice rather than taking matters into their own hands. The Bible instructs adherents to refrain from taking the lives of individuals who have lost their faith but instead advocates for their disfellowship, expecting they may eventually regain their faith. Christians who experience a loss of faith are admonished with the prospect of restoration rather than resorting to acts of violence as advocated in the Qur'an and Hadith. Jinn is known to have stolen a recitation in Qur'an 72:1. Read the following texts:

- Qur'an 2:190, Fight in the cause of Allah ˹only˺ against those who wage war against you, but do not exceed the limits. Allah does not like transgressors.
- Qur'an 2:207: And there are those who would dedicate their lives to Allah's pleasure. And Allah is Ever Gracious to ˹His˺ servants.
- Qur'an 4:74, Let those who would sacrifice this life for the Hereafter fight in the cause of Allah. And whoever fights in Allah's cause—whether they achieve martyrdom or victory—We will honor them with a great reward.
- Qur'an 9:88, But the Messenger and the believers with him strived with their wealth and their lives. They will have all the best, and it is they who will be successful.
- Qur'an 9:29, Fight those who do not believe in Allah and the Last Day, nor comply with what Allah and His Messenger have forbidden, nor embrace the religion of truth from among those who were given the Scripture,1 until they pay the tax,2 willingly submitting, fully humbled.
- Quran 9:111, Allah has indeed purchased from the believers their lives and wealth in exchange for Paradise. They fight in the cause of Allah and kill or are killed. This is a true promise binding on Him in the Torah, the Gospel, and the Qur'an. And whose promise is truer than Allah's? So rejoice in the exchange you have made with Him. That is ˹truly˺ the ultimate triumph.
- Qur'an 17:33, Do not take a ˹human˺ life—made sacred by Allah—except with ˹legal˺ right. If anyone is killed unjustly, We have given their heirs the authority, but do not let them exceed limits in retaliation, for they are already supported ˹by law˺.
- Qur'an 24:2, As for female and male fornicators, give each of them one hundred lashes, and do not let pity for them make you lenient in ˹enforcing˺

the law of Allah, if you ˹truly˺ believe in Allah and the Last Day. And let a number of believers witness their punishment.

- Qur'an 33:60-62, If the hypocrites, and those with sickness in their hearts, and rumor-mongers in Medina do not desist, We will certainly incite you ˹O Prophet˺ against them, and then they will not be your neighbours there any longer. 61 ˹They deserve to be˺ condemned. ˹If they were to persist,˺ they would get themselves seized and killed relentlessly wherever they are found!
- Surah 61:10-13, O believers! Shall I guide you to an exchange that will save you from a painful punishment? 11 It is to˺ have faith in Allah and His Messenger, and strive in the cause of Allah with your wealth and your lives. That is best for you, if only you knew.12 He will forgive your sins, and admit you into Gardens under which rivers flow, and ˹house you in˺ splendid homes in the Gardens of Eternity. That is the ultimate triumph.13˹He will also give you˺ another favor that you long for: help from Allah and an imminent victory. ˹So˺ give good news ˹O Prophet˺ to the believers.
- Surah 9:88, But the Messenger and the believers with him strived with their wealth and their lives. They will have all the best, and it is they who will be successful.

Narrated By Ikrima:

- Ali burnt some people and this news reached Ibn 'Abbas, who said, 'Had I been in his place I would not have burnt them, as the Prophet said, 'Don't punish (anybody) with Allah's Punishment.' No doubt, I would have killed them, for the Prophet said, 'If somebody (a Muslim) discards his religion, kill him.' (Sahih Bukhari, Volume 4, Book 52, Number 260).
- Narrated Muawiyah ibn AbuSufyan:
  The Prophet said: If they (the people) drink wine, flog them, again if they drink it, flog them. Again if they drink it, kill them. (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 38, Hadith 4467
  https://Qur'anx.com/hadith/AbuDawud/USC-MSA/Book-38/Hadith-4467/).
- Narrated `Abdullah bin `Umar : The Jew brought to the Prophet a man and a woman from amongst them who have committed (adultery) illegal sexual intercourse. He ordered both of them to be stoned (to death), near the place of offering the funeral prayers beside the mosque." (Sahih Bukhari, 2.413)
- Narrated Jabir bin `Abdullah Al−Ansari: A man from the tribe of Bani Aslam came to Allah's Apostle and Informed him that he had committed illegal sexual intercourse and bore witness four times against himself. Allah's Apostle ordered him to be stoned to death as he was a married Person. (Sahih Bukhari, 8.805).
- Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet said, "The boy is for (the owner of) the bed and the stone is for the person who commits illegal sexual intercourse. (Sahih Bukhari, 8.808).
- Ibn 'Abbas said: 'The Messenger of Allah [SAW] said: 'Whoever changes his religion, kill him.' (Sahih (Darussalam: Sunan an-Nasa'i 4059: Book 37, Hadith 94: Vol. 5, Book 37, Hadith 4064, https://sunnah.com/nasai:4059).

- Qur'an 72:,1 Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ "It has been revealed to me that a group of jinn listened ˹to the Qur'an,˺ and said ˹to their fellow jinn˺: 'Indeed, we have heard a wondrous recitation.
- Sahih Muslim, Book 001, Number 0349:

  "They (the angels) would recognise them in the Fire by the marks of prostration, for Hell-fire will devour everything (limb) of the sons of Adam except the marks of prostration. Allah has forbidden the fire to consume the marks of prostration. They will be taken out of the Fire having been burnt, and the water of life would be poured over them, and they will sprout as seed does in the silt carried by flood."

  Sunan al-Tirmidhi, Hadith Number 3834:

- Narrated by Al-Miqdam ibn Ma'dikarib: Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said, "The martyr receives six good things from Allah: he is forgiven at the first shedding of his blood; he is shown his abode in Paradise; he is preserved from the punishment in the grave; he is kept safe from the greatest terror; he has placed on his head the crown of honor, a ruby of which is better than the world and what it contains; he is married to seventy-two wives of the maidens with large dark eyes; and is made intercessor for seventy of his relatives."

  Sahih Bukhari, Volume 4, Book 52, Number 220:

- Fighting for the Cause of Allah (Jihad)

  Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah's Apostle said, "I have been sent with the shortest expressions bearing the widest meanings, and I have been made victorious with terror**.**"

- Matthew 5:43-44, You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,
- 2 Corinthians 10:4-5, The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5 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.
- 1 Corinthians 5:11-13 , But now I am writing to you that you must not associate with anyone who claims to be a brother or sister but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or slanderer, a drunkard or swindler. Do not even eat with such people. 12 What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? 13 God will judge those outside. "Expel the wicked person from among you
- 2 Corinthians 2:6-8, The punishment inflicted on him by the majority is sufficient. 7 Now instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him, so that he will

not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. 8 I urge you, therefore, to reaffirm your love for him.

- 1 John 4:8, Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

Jesus gave a great example of a wayward son who had gone and squared his inheritance with an extravagant life. The Parable of the Lost Son saw that he was restored to his family as noted in Luke 15:11-32:

- Luke 15:11-32, Jesus continued: ”There was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them. 13 ”Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. 14 After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. 16 He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. 17 ” When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! 18 I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ 20 So he got up and went to his father. “But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. 21 ”The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ 22 ” But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. 24 For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate. 25 ”Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 27 ’Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’ 28 ”The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. 29 But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. 30 But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’ 31 ”‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. 32 But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”

Christianity offers a potential avenue for individuals who have strayed from the right path to regain their moral compass and engage in repentance. However, Allah’s instructions in the Qur’an show us that even the bare concept of a kid bringing

dishonor in the future is sufficient grounds to pronounce the death sentence on the child.[123]

The Bible teaches that a good fruit shall bear worthwhile fruits in Matthew 7:17-18. Further states that those who do evil are from their father, the devil, in John 8:44. The book of James 2:10-11 infers that God's laws are pure and worthy of respect. See the following verses:

- Matthew 7:17-18, Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.
- John 8:44, You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.
- James 2:10-11, For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. 11 For he who said, "You shall not commit adultery," [also said, "You shall not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.

Challenges of Interfaith Dialogue

The engagement and communication process between persons and communities of varying religious beliefs presents obstacles in interfaith discourse. The primary objective of interfaith discussion is to cultivate comprehension, reverence, and collaboration among individuals with diverse religious affiliations. However, regrettably, the outcome frequently deviates from this intended purpose. Despite its numerous advantages, interfaith discussion encounters several notable obstacles that can impede attaining its objectives.[124]

The field of interfaith discourse encounters difficulties in addressing and reconciling the existing religious and cultural differences. Religious practices and convictions can foster a sense of pride and establish a collective identity for both individuals and communities. This phenomenon could potentially provide difficulties regarding individual's willingness to accept novel ideas and perspectives and their ability to understand and appreciate the beliefs and customs of diverse groups. Moreover, cultural disparities might challenge interpersonal communication and mutual understanding due to individuals' varying expectations and communication norms.

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[123] Defense Mission Jericho, Defending The Truth About God, Islam Sanctions Honor Killing In The Qur'an, September 15, 2013

https://davidiqbalkarim.wordpress.com/2013/09/15/islam-sanctions-honor-killing-in-the-Qur'an/

[124] Muhammad Shafiq, Mohammed Abu-Nimer, Interfaith Dialogue: A Guide for Muslims Paperback, 2nd edition (London: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2011), 1-27.

The efficacy of interfaith dialogue is impeded by the lack of trust and animosity among followers of various religious traditions. Historical conflicts, political animosities, and misunderstandings regarding each other's ideologies and customs collectively foster an atmosphere of distrust and skepticism. The occurrence of historical conflicts between Muslims and Christians can be attributed to political tensions and other modern events of global significance. To address the prevailing mistrust and skepticism, it is imperative to undertake a resolute endeavor to disseminate knowledge about the beliefs and practices of individuals and groups while concurrently cultivating an atmosphere of comprehension and reverence.

One further challenge that hinders the achievement of a prosperous ecumenical endeavour is the insufficiency of both financial and social backing. Numerous communities and organizations lack the resources or support required to facilitate productive interfaith dialogue. A scarcity of resources, proficient facilitators, and support from religious leaders and institutions make it hard for interfaith dialogue. In order to tackle this matter effectively, it is imperative that all relevant parties, encompassing religious authorities, communities, and governmental bodies, commit themselves to providing both endorsement and financial resources towards initiatives aimed at fostering interfaith dialogues.

Christians should not harbour apprehension towards engaging in interfaith discussion. The above situation must be regarded as a valuable occasion to acquire knowledge and establish connections with those who adhere to different religious beliefs. There is a prevailing belief among specific individuals that interfaith exchanges and conversations are characterized by insurmountable disparities that render reconciliation unnecessary. The Book of John (20: 21) says, "Again Jesus said, Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

Christians would likely be held in high esteem when they communicate their views to individuals through many platforms, as they are often perceived as a source of illumination in society. By establishing a positive relationship with individuals, one can be receptive to listening to their perspectives while maintaining personal values. The global community necessitates manifesting a divine being within oneself rather than adhering to a particular religious doctrine. Adopting a Christ-centered worldview is of utmost importance while engaging in interfaith conversation. Individuals must witness the embodiment of a divine presence inside oneself. Christian has a life characterized by extraordinary occurrences. The following verses tell us that we have the mind of Christ:

- John 1:12-13, Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— 13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.
- Romans 8:6-11, The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. 7 The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. 8 Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God. 9 You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not

belong to Christ. 10 But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness. 11 And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.

- 1 Corinthians 2:16, for, “Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.
- Ephesians 4:23-24, to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.
- Philippians 2:5-9, In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! 9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place

  and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
- 1 Peter 1:13, Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming.

Regrettably, individuals who identify as Christians occasionally reside within the realm of spiritual vacuity. Given the particular way of life adopted by several Christians, the interfaith discussion is often perceived as futile. Numerous scriptural passages convey that individuals who adhere to the Christian faith are regarded as the illuminating force within society. The beatitudes in Matthew 5 lays down the foundation for service to reach out:

- Matthew 5:1-11, Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, 2 and he began to teach them. He said: 3 ”Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. 5 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. 6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. 7 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. 8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. 9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. 10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 ” Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.
- Matthew 5:13-16, You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything,

except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Specific individuals within the Christian community assert that engaging in interfaith discourse presents more obstacles than the outcomes it yields. The presence of extremism, hostility, and misconceptions around certain Muslims might cause Christians who wish to communicate their faith to have apprehension. Jesus actively seeks individuals willing to serve as disciples to disseminate their religious beliefs through various means and formats. Humanity relies on individuals to disseminate God's love. The imperative to share the Gospel, as outlined in Matthew 28:18-20, is a divine mandate that cannot be disregarded. The virtues of tolerance, respect, sincere readiness, and allegiance to the faith motivate Christians to share their faith. If we allow Jesus to exercise his abilities, he will perform remarkable feats. The contributions bestowed upon humanity by Jesus Christ are of utmost significance and necessary for our global society's betterment.

- Matthew 28:18-20, Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

THE STATUS OF CHRISTIANS IN ISLAMIC TRADITION

Christians as “Protected” Minority in Islamic Nations

Within certain Islamic traditions, Christians have been acknowledged as a safeguarded minority, commonly referred to as “dhimmi,” in relation to their legal position. The Pact of Umar, an agreement established between the second caliph, Umar, and the Christian community residing in Syria, delineated several provisions wherein Christians were afforded safety and the right to practice their religion, contingent upon paying a designated fee known as jizya).[125] This structure facilitated the coexistence of Christians, enabling them to freely exercise their religious beliefs as long as they refrained from questioning the political supremacy of the Muslim governing body. The following is Umar Pact. Even if some argue it was edited over the years, it was still attributed to him:

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate!

- This is a writing to Umar from the Christians of such and such a city. When You [Muslims] marched against us [Christians],: we asked of you protection for ourselves, our posterity, our possessions, and our co-religionists; and we made this stipulation with you, that we will not erect in our city or the suburbs any new monastery, church, cell or hermitage; that we will not repair any of such buildings that may fall into ruins, or renew those that may be situated in the Muslim quarters of the town; that we will not refuse the Muslims entry into our churches either by night or by day; that we will open the gates wide to passengers and travelers; that we will receive any Muslim traveler into our houses and give him food and lodging for three nights; that we will not harbor any spy in our churches or houses, or conceal any enemy of the Muslims. [At least six of these laws were taken over from earlier Christian laws against infidels.][126]
- That we will not teach our children the Qur’an [some nationalist Arabs feared the infidels would ridicule the Qur’an; others did not want infidels even to learn the language]; that we will not make a show of the Christian religion nor invite anyone to embrace it; that we will not prevent any of our kinsmen from embracing Islam, if they so desire. That we will honor the Muslims and rise up in our assemblies when they wish to take their seats; that we will not imitate them in our dress, either in the cap, turban, sandals, or parting of the hair; that we will not make use of their expressions of speech, nor adopt their surnames [infidels must not use greetings and special phrases employed only by Muslims]; that we will not ride on saddles, or gird on swords, or take to ourselves arms or wear them, or engrave Arabic inscriptions on our rings; that we will not sell wine [forbidden to Muslims]; that we will shave the front of our heads; that we will keep to our own style of dress, wherever we may be; that we will wear girdles round our waists [infidels wore leather or cord girdles; Muslims, cloth and silk].

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[125] Jacob Marcus, The Jew in the Medieval World: A Sourcebook, 315-1791, (New York: JPS, 1938), 13-15. https://www.bu.edu/mzank/Jerusalem/tx/pactofumar.htm

[126] Jacob Marcus, The Jew in the Medieval World: A Sourcebook, 315-1791 (New York: JPS, 1938), 13-15. https://www.bu.edu/mzank/Jerusalem/tx/pactofumar.htm

- That we will not display the cross upon our churches or display our crosses or our sacred books in the streets of the Muslims, or in their market-places; that we will strike the clappers in our churches lightly [wooden rattles or bells summoned the people to church or synagogue]; that we will not recite our services in a loud voice when a Muslim is present; that we will not carry Palm branches [on Palm Sunday] or our images in procession in the streets; that at the burial of our dead we will not chant loudly or carry lighted candles in the streets of the Muslims or their market places; that we will not take any slaves that have already been in the possession of Muslims, nor spy into their houses; and that we will not strike any Muslim.
- All this we promise to observe, on behalf of ourselves and our co-religionists, and receive protection from you in exchange; and if we violate any of the conditions of this agreement, then we forfeit your protection and you are at liberty to treat us as enemies and rebels.

Nevertheless, the parity between Christians and Muslims within Islamic culture was not consistently upheld. The individuals encountered a range of legal limitations, including but not limited to bans on constructing new places of worship, donning unique attire, and possessing weapons. In certain instances, individuals were also subjected to discriminatory practices, including unequal treatment inside the judicial system.[127]

Despite these challenges, Christians and Muslims lived and worked together in proximity for many centuries.[128] Indeed, Christians exerted a significant influence on the cultural and intellectual landscape of the Islamic world. The individuals in question translated philosophical and scientific texts from the Greek language into Arabic, thereby facilitating access to these works within the Muslim community.[129] Christians have significantly contributed to various academic disciplines, including medicine, philosophy, and theology. In the context of their interfaith dynamics, Christians and Muslims typically coexisted harmoniously and engaged in collaborative endeavors. Nevertheless, tension and conflict arose intermittently, especially during political instability or religious persecution. However, many individuals adhering to the Islamic and Christian faiths established intimate interpersonal connections and actively participated in interreligious discourse and interaction.[130]

Christian and Islamic Influences

Christianity and Islam have historically exerted reciprocal influences upon one another. Despite the inherent disparities between the two, these religions have a rich

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[127] Kamau, chapter three.

[128] S. M. Stowasser, “Christian-Muslim Relations,” in The Oxford Handbook of Islam and Politics, ed. John L. Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 400-414.

[129] M. Allard, “Christians and Jews under Islam,” The Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought, ed. Gerhard Bowering (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 60-63.

[130] S. H. Alidina, “The Christians of the Middle East: A Historical Overview,” Middle East Journal, vol. 59, no. 2 (2005), 199-215.

and intricate past of interplay and interchange that has significantly influenced the development of both religious traditions and the global landscape as it stands presently.[131] The mutual cultural and religious history of Christianity and Islam played a pivotal role in their early and profound interplay. Both religions originated in the Abrahamic tradition and exhibit numerous shared beliefs and practices, including believing in a single deity and accepting prophetic revelations. The intermingling of religious concepts and practices between Islam and Christianity throughout the early Islamic era resulted in substantial borrowing and adaptation.

One further manner in which Christianity and Islam have exerted mutual influence is via their political and military engagements. During the formative era of Islam, the Muslim empire experienced significant growth, characterized by swift territorial expansion that encompassed a substantial portion of the Christian realm, notably including the Byzantine Empire and the Persian Empire.[132] Consequently, a substantial cultural and religious interchange ensued between the two communities, encompassing the dissemination of information and ideas. Furthermore, the Islamic empire served as a sanctuary for marginalized Christian sects, such as the Nestorians,[133] who could practice their faith freely under Muslim rule.[134]

The Crusades, a sequence of military expeditions undertaken by Christian forces to regain control over the Holy Land from Muslim governance, significantly influenced the development of Christianity and Islam.[135] The Crusades facilitated substantial cultural interchange and interreligious discourse, fostering heightened interaction between the two religious groups. During this historical era, there was a notable emergence of anti-Muslim feelings inside the Christian realm, accompanied by the dissemination of unfavourable stereotypes about Islam and its adherents.

The Christian community is influencing the Muslim population by employing educational initiatives and outreach efforts. Christians actively engage in several educational and outreach endeavors to foster peace, comprehension, and reciprocal regard between the populations above. Several Muslim students enroll in universities and colleges sponsored by Christian institutions, potentially affecting their beliefs and perspectives. Christian institutions often provide structured chapel sessions that

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[131] R. T. Miller, “The Role of Christianity in Interfaith Relations,” in The Oxford Handbook of Interfaith Dialogue, ed. James Heisig and Paul Knitter (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 238-240.

[132] Kamau, chapter three.

[133] Nestorianism Christian heresy according to which Jesus Christ, the incarnate God, possesses two separate natures, one divine and the other human, as opposed to the orthodox belief that Christ is one person who is at once both God and man.

[134] F. E. Peters, “The Islamic World,” in The Cambridge History of Christianity: Volume 4, Eastern Christianity, ed. Michael Angold (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 132-139. The Byzantine Empire covers Italy, Greece, and Turkey along with portions of North Africa and the Middle East. Persians empire, current Iran.

[135] R. W. Southern, “The Medieval Church,” in The Cambridge Illustrated History of the Middle Ages, vol. 1, ed. Peter Linehan and Janet L. Nelson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 558-559.

allow Muslim students to engage directly with the gospel's teachings. Specific individuals have derived advantages from these endeavors and are committed to a religious devotion to Jesus. Christians actively engage in endeavors to foster global peace and harmony and dismantle societal divisions between various populations.

Christians influence Muslims through their engagement in humanitarian and development initiatives. Numerous Christian groups actively deliver assistance and foster support to individuals facing adversity, irrespective of their religious affiliation.[136] The present study holds substantial implications for the Muslim population, particularly in regions characterized by violence and socioeconomic deprivation. Christians actively promote the virtues of compassion and kindness by offering support and assistance to anyone who needs aid. In doing so, they want to foster an environment that encourages mutual understanding and collaboration among different populations.[137] See the following verses:

- Exodus 33:19, And the Lord said, "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the Lord, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.
- Proverbs 19:17, Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward them for what they have done.
- Proverbs 11:25, A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.
- Matthew 9:36, When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.
- Ephesians 4:32, Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.
- Colossians 3:12-13, Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

Christians influence Muslims through diverse means, such as engaging in interreligious dialogue, facilitating educational initiatives and outreach programs, and participating in humanitarian and development endeavors. These projects can foster enhanced comprehension, reverence, and collaboration among the two religious communities, mitigating tensions and conflicts. In light of the growing interconnectivity of the global landscape, the imperative for collaboration between adherents of Christianity and Islam in fostering peace, justice, and mutual comprehension has assumed heightened significance. This service allows Muslims

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[136] R. J. Brulé, "Humanitarian Assistance and Interfaith Relations," in The Oxford Handbook of Interfaith Dialogue, ed. James Heisig and Paul Knitter (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 251-253.

[137] J. Esposito, "Christian-Muslim Relations," in The Oxford Handbook of Islam and Politics, ed. John L. Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 397-399.

to engage with an unaltered and authentic Christian faith, enabling them to make an informed choice regarding their commitment to Jesus, the Messiah.

Christian influences inside Islam may be historically attributed to the impact of Eastern Christianity, which was prevalent during the formative period of Islam's origins.[138] The religion of Islam, which originated in the predominantly Christian Middle East, was once perceived as a "Christological heresy" referred to as the "heresy of the Ishmaelites." This classification can be found in Concerning Heresy, a work authored by Saint John of Damascus, a renowned Syriac scholar.[139] The notion of the "heresy of the Ishmaelites" pertains to a historical perspective embraced by certain Christian theologians, positing that Islam, as a religious system, represents a deviant manifestation of Christianity. The notion was initially presented around the 7th century, shortly after the rise of Islam. It was predicated on the belief that the religion sprang from a faction of Christians who deviated from the orthodox doctrine.

One such misinterpretation that had a role in shaping the concept of the "heresy of the Ishmaelites" was the notion that the doctrines of Islam distorted the authentic teachings of Christianity. The conviction mentioned above was founded upon various theological and philosophical disparities between the two religious systems, including divergent perspectives on the unity of God and the divine essence attributed to Jesus. Nevertheless, the dissimilarities observed between the two religions did not arise from a distortion of the fundamental principles of Christianity. Instead, they indicated the distinct religious and cultural milieu in which these two faiths originated. Although there exists a dearth of historical evidence substantiating the notion of the "heresy of the Ishmaelites," it was a prevalent belief among select Christian theologians during the medieval period. The text was a foundation for theological discussions and a rationale for religious disputes and military engagements against the Muslim population.

Tensions Between Christians and Muslims in Sub-Saharan Africa

The relationship between Christians and Muslims in Sub-Saharan Africa has, at times, been marked by friction and conflict in the past few decades. This phenomenon can be attributed to various factors, such as political and economic competition, cultural disparities, and religious divergence, among other contributing elements. The tensions have substantially impacted the stability and security of numerous states, impeding progress in peacebuilding and reconciliation endeavors.

Political and economic competition is the primary catalyst for conflict between Christians and Muslims in Sub-Saharan Africa. The interplay between political and economic hegemony and religious identification in numerous regional states has led to a contentious dynamic between these two factions, characterized by disputes over resources and authority. The outcome has been a rise in tension and conflict,

[138] Michael Nazir-Ali, Islam, a Christian perspective (Westminster John Knox Press, 1983), 66.

[139] Sidney H. Griffith, The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque: Christians and Muslims in the World of Islam. Princeton University Press, 2010), 41.

particularly in areas where one religious faction is perceived to hold a superior position compared to the other. One illustrative example is the heightened tensions between adherents of Christianity and Islam in a specific African region, stemming from their political and economic supremacy competition.



Figure 31:1 Religion, political and economic conflicts

Cultural inequalities play a prominent role in the emergence of conflicts between Christian and Muslim communities in the Sub-Saharan African region. Muslims and Christians residing in the region exhibit distinct cultural customs and rituals yet share specific historical and cultural underpinnings. These distinctions have occasionally been a source of conflict, mainly where the two tribes dwell nearby. Religious rivalries and doctrinal conflicts have emerged as prominent factors contributing to tensions between Christian and Muslim communities in the Sub-Saharan African region. Throughout the history of Islam, there has been a continuous dialogue between Christian and Islam adherents over matters of religious belief and ethical principles. Contemporary interfaith relations are significantly shaped by the enduring impact of past encounters, often perpetuating long-standing negative stereotypes that have persisted for millennia. Religiously motivated violence encompasses diverse manifestations, from acts of terrorism and armed conflicts driven by theological disparities to instances of intimidation, harassment, and imprisonment. Religious leaders are often subjected to criticism due to perceived inadequacies in their efforts to mitigate interfaith conflict.

Restrictions on Christians

Throughout the annals of history, adherents of the Christian faith have seen diverse legal restrictions and instances of persecution across different regions. Christian individuals have encountered discriminatory legislation and policies that impede their freedom of expression and hinder their practice of religion in different Islamic countries. For example, there are some nations where Christians face restrictions on engaging in evangelization, disseminating their beliefs, and establishing places of worship. These constraints often arise due to governmental efforts to protect the dominant religion and maintain social stability or the acts of religious fanatics seeking to eliminate perceived challenges to their beliefs.

Furthermore, those identifying as Christians have encountered harassment, intimidation, and physical violence. Political or ideological differences, along with religious or ethnic conflicts, have often been a catalyst for this phenomenon. For example, extremist organizations have specifically focused on individuals from the Christian faith residing in Iraq, Syria, and Nigeria. These targeted individuals have been subjected to violence, including abduction, torture, and homicide. These acts of violence have had a profound adverse impact on the lives of individuals who identify as Christians, leading to the displacement of entire communities.

Restrictions on Muslims

Muslims have encountered diverse sorts of limitations and oppression in various regions across the globe. Certain governments have implemented laws and policies that have subjected individuals to discriminatory treatment, imposing restrictions on their freedom of speech and religious observance. For instance, France has enforced regulations prohibiting wearing hijabs (headscarves), while certain regions in Europe have imposed bans on the construction of mosques. These limitations frequently arise due to the government’s endeavors to uphold societal equilibrium and safeguard the prevailing religion or due to religious fanatics aiming to eradicate perceived challenges to their convictions.

Along with legislative limitations, individuals adhering to the Islamic faith have encountered physical aggression, intimidation, and harassment. The impetus for such actions has frequently stemmed from religious or ethnic tensions alongside political or ideological disparities. Muslims have been victims of violence, hate crimes, and prejudice in numerous nations due to being targeted by extremist groups. The instances mentioned earlier of violence have significantly influenced the Muslim population, resulting in the displacement of specific populations.

Christians and Muslims have encountered diverse forms of limitations and oppression across different regions globally. These restrictions and persecutions have been driven by a multitude of factors, encompassing religious and ethnic conflicts, political or ideological disparities, as well as discriminatory legal frameworks and policies. Despite the concerted efforts made by governments and international organizations to foster religious freedom and tolerance, the circumstances continue to provide significant challenges for numerous adherents of

Christianity and Islam across the globe. It is of utmost importance for Christians to persistently confront the fundamental origins of religious limitations and oppressions, which may be attributed to the concept of sin as outlined in biblical passages such as Matthew 6:14-15 and John 20:23. Christians propose practical answers and actively strive to foster a society characterized by inclusivity and tolerance, promoting peaceful coexistence among individuals of diverse beliefs.

- Matthew 6:14-15, For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.
- John 20:23 If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Economic considerations have also influenced the decrease of Christians in numerous nations predominantly inhabited by Muslims. The economic landscape has presented persistent challenges with elevated poverty and unemployment rates. The circumstances above have posed challenges for adherents of Christianity in sustaining their communal structures, given their arduous endeavors in securing employment and ensuring their sustenance. Furthermore, it is worth noting that many Christians residing in certain African nations have experienced economic marginalization, encountering job discrimination and restricted prospects for career progression. As mentioned above, the factor has significantly diminished Christian communities inside the region, prompting numerous adherents to pursue improved economic prospects in alternative locations.

Christians encounter diverse manifestations of persecution and discrimination, encompassing religious fanaticism and acts of violence, occupational and societal discrimination, political persecution and instability. The prevailing dominance of Islam in certain regions has led to a significant decrease in the Christian population, compelling numerous individuals to relocate from their residences and villages in pursuit of improved living conditions elsewhere. Achieving the goals mentioned above necessitates a dedicated commitment to advancing peace, stability, and human rights, with endeavors aimed at fostering a more comprehensive and equitable society that encompasses all populations within the African region.

Evangelism After September 11

The events that transpired on September 11, 2001, involving the targeted assaults on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, USA, have garnered significant recognition as a pivotal occurrence in contemporary history. The global repercussions of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks were far-reaching, significantly influencing several facets of society, including religion. Following the assaults, there was a notable surge in religious zeal and a heightened inclination towards exploring spirituality. Evangelism, the act of disseminating the teachings of the gospel, was not an anomaly. Following the events of September 11, many individuals found solace and reassurance in their religious beliefs, resulting in a

revitalized focus on evangelism and the adoption of novel strategies for disseminating religious teachings.



The World Trade Center in March 2001 Wikimedia Commons



World Trade Center Attacked 394261 14: A fiery blast rocks the World Trade Center after being hit by two planes on September 11, 2001, in New York City. (Photo by Spencer Platt/Getty Images)

Impact on Evangelism

The September 11, 2001 events heightened individuals' knowledge of the delicate nature of existence and their susceptibility to mortality. As a result of heightened awareness, many individuals experienced a shift in their beliefs and principles, leading them to question their previously held concepts. Consequently, they embarked on a quest to identify remedies for the most significant challenges encountered in life. Consequently, individuals were more inclined to acquire knowledge and explore alternative religious philosophies, such as Christianity. Due to this circumstance, Christians were allowed to elucidate their theological convictions to persons seeking resolutions. Religious nationalism had a notable upsurge after September 11, as individuals actively sought to reclaim and reaffirm their religious identity and historical heritage. The Christian community experienced a strong sense of obligation to disseminate the message of hope and redemption to individuals facing adversity. Consequently, this engendered a profound urgency among them to engage in the act of preaching the gospel.

The period following the events of September 11th has witnessed a notable transformation in how evangelism is conducted. Many individuals who identify as Christians have embraced a compassionate and less confrontational methodology, acknowledging that individuals are more inclined to be open to the gospel's teachings when it is communicated with empathy and without a judgmental attitude. The phenomenon, as mentioned earlier, has given rise to novel approaches in the field of evangelism, including relational evangelism, which emphasizes cultivating interpersonal connections with individuals who do not adhere to the same religious beliefs and afterwards conveying the message of the gospel in a manner that is unforced and congruent with the context of the relationship. The utilization of technology and social media platforms for evangelistic purposes has gained significant traction since September 11, 2001. The dissemination of religious teachings to a worldwide audience has become increasingly accessible due to the advancements in internet technology and the widespread usage of social media platforms. Due to this development, individuals identifying as Christians can now engage with individuals from diverse geographical locations and cultural backgrounds, transcending regional and societal boundaries to disseminate their religious beliefs.

Sacred Festivals and Interactions Between Christianity and Islam

Religious festivities are crucial in human civilization as they foster cohesion among individuals and strengthen their dedication to shared values and beliefs. Sacred festivals hold significant cultural importance as they provide opportunities for commemorating historical events, celebrating the present moment, and anticipating the future throughout various civilizations. Christianity and Islam, two prominent global religions, possess a significant historical heritage of sacred holidays that are fervently celebrated within their communities. Significant interplay occurs between these two religious traditions, particularly in instances of cohabitation, notwithstanding their divergent characteristics. This association often results in the

amalgamation of religious practices and the assimilation of religious festivals and other ceremonial practices from one faith into another.

Sacred Festivals in Christianity

Most Christians agree on a select number of holy days derived from the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Christmas, an annual holiday observed on December 25th, holds significant religious significance since it marks the birth of Jesus Christ, a central Christian figure. On the 25th of December, adherents of Christianity convene to observe their Redeemer's nativity and demonstrate appreciation for his existence and doctrinal instructions within the context of this ceremonial occasion. Easter, a significant Christian holiday, is observed to commemorate the resurrection of Jesus. The event, as mentioned earlier, commonly celebrated on the initial Sunday after the first occurrence of a full moon following the vernal equinox, provides an opportunity for adherents of Christianity to congregate and commemorate the trials endured by Jesus Christ on behalf of humankind while also expressing jubilation in his triumph over mortality. Pentecost and All Saints' Day are prominent Christian festivals with considerable religious and historical importance. Pentecost is observed to commemorate the momentous event of the Holy Spirit descending upon the apostles. At the same time, All Saints' Day is a remembrance of the revered saints within the Christian Church.

Sacred Festivals in Islam

Muslims observe many sacred occasions rooted in the life and teachings of the esteemed prophet Muhammad. One of the most significant observances is Eid al-Fitr. This celebration marks the culmination of the month-long fasting period known as Ramadan and the commencement of a new lunar year. Muslims congregate during this occasion to demonstrate thanks for their blessings and seek forgiveness. Eid al-Adha, an important Islamic holiday, commemorates the sacrificial act performed by the prophet Abraham. Muslims congregate at this festival, known as Eid al-Adha, which is commemorated on the tenth day of the Islamic lunar month of Dhu al-Hijjah, to recall the selfless act of sacrifice performed by the prophet Abraham for the betterment of humanity and pay homage to his unwavering devotion to God. Additional noteworthy Islamic holidays encompass the Night of Power and the Birth of the Prophet Muhammad Festival. These observances commemorate the birth of the esteemed prophet and the occasion when the initial verses of the Qur'an were disclosed to him.

Values of Sacred Festival Interactions

These two religious traditions often interact significantly in areas where Christianity and Islam coexist, particularly regarding their respective significant celebrations. This phenomenon frequently manifests as the amalgamation of religious customs and incorporating festivals and other religious rituals from one faith

into another. In many regions across the globe, Muslim communities have embraced the observance of Christmas, engaging in similar festivities as their Christian counterparts. Likewise, several Christian groups have embraced the custom of observing fasting rituals during Ramadan while also partaking in the festivities of Eid al-Fitr alongside their Muslim counterparts. Regardless of the circumstances, it is imperative to extend the scope of Jesus' ministry by disseminating faith in each possible manner. Including lost souls as a motivating factor enables Christians to attend and actively represent Jesus in any permissible gathering. The Bible says we must share the Christian faith at all times, as noted below:

- Philippians 1:15-18, It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. 16 The latter do so out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. 17 The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. 18 But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice.

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

RELIGIOUS CONFLICT IN AFRICA: CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Religious Conflict in Africa

Africa is characterized by its vibrant and diverse cultural landscape, encompassing a rich tapestry of religious rituals and traditions that have evolved extensively. However, despite the wide range of religious beliefs present, African nations have recently experienced a growing prevalence of religious conflicts. Various factors, including political, economic, and social influences, have played a role in the emergence of these conflicts. However, it is essential to acknowledge that religion remains a prominent catalyst for animosity. The utilization of religious sentiments for political gain constitutes a prominent catalyst in Africa's emergence and perpetuation of religious conflicts. In numerous African nations, political leaders have exploited religion to attain power, exacerbating societal divisions along religious lines. Economic inequality is a contributing factor to the occurrence of religious conflicts in Africa. In numerous African nations, a prevalent correlation exists between religion and affluence, wherein specific religious communities are perceived to possess more incredible wealth and resource accessibility than others. Significant economic disparities among different religious communities in certain nations have been a major contributing factor to the emergence of enmity and conflict.

Furthermore, the religious conflicts observed in Africa can be attributed to a dearth of religious tolerance and comprehension. Numerous African nations have a historical backdrop characterized by religious discrimination and intolerance, a phenomenon further intensified by the emergence of extremist factions that actively propagate animosity and aggression against persons of other religious affiliations. As mentioned earlier, the circumstances have engendered an environment characterized by apprehension and skepticism, resulting in the emergence of religious discord and acts of aggression. In Somalia, the emergence of extremist factions such as Al-Shabaab has resulted in heightened religious discord and aggression, particularly against religious minority communities.

The occurrence of religious conflict in Africa yields extensive and detrimental consequences. Religious conflicts can engender loss of life, displacement, and the destruction of residential and communal infrastructure. Moreover, it is worth noting that these disputes can potentially exert detrimental impacts on the economy, manifesting as a decrease in investment and economic growth. Furthermore, they can adversely affect society, leading to increased discrimination and heightened social tensions. Religious conflicts can potentially exert adverse effects on communities and individual's mental health and overall well-being, particularly among those who have experienced violence or suffered the loss of loved ones.

Numerous measures have been proposed to mitigate the issue of religious conflict in Africa. The implementation of methods aimed at fostering tolerance and understanding among diverse religious groups is of paramount importance. This objective can be achieved by disseminating educational materials and implementing

public awareness campaigns to foster a more profound comprehension of diverse religious customs and beliefs. Religious leaders possess the potential to exert a substantial influence on the advancement of peace and reconciliation, mainly through their vocal opposition to hatred and violence and their dissemination of a message centered on unity and collaboration.

The fundamental factors contributing to religious conflict, namely economic disparities and the exploitation of religious convictions for political purposes, can also be effectively tackled. Implementing political and economic reforms can address these underlying issues and promote fairness and justice. Safeguarding the integrity of the rule of law and ensuring the accountability of individuals who foment religious conflict are paramount. International organizations and governments possess the capacity to contribute significantly to the resolution of religious strife in Africa. This objective can be attained by allocating financial resources and offering aid to bolster peacebuilding endeavors. Additionally, providing technical help to African countries to foster religious tolerance and enhance mutual comprehension can contribute to realizing this goal.

Religious Extremism

There is a growing apprehension among Africans regarding the rise of religious extremism, as many perceive it as a significant danger to the security and stability of the continent. Religious extremism is characterized by a profound dedication to a particular religious ideology, which manifests in acts of terrorism, violence, and various forms of hate towards individuals who may not share the same religious convictions. Al Qaida, Al Nusra, ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria), Al Shabab, and the Taliban represent prominent organized extremist organizations. The sub-Saharan region of Africa is currently recognized as a significant hub for terrorist activities on a global scale. The escalation of religious extremism in contemporary times can be attributed to the remarkable cultural and religious diversity prevalent in the African continent, which serves as a dwelling place for numerous distinct faith communities.

The escalating apprehension stems mainly from the region's heightened violence linked to religious extremism. In nations such as Nigeria, Somalia, and Kenya, violence perpetrated by religious fanatics has led to the tragic loss of innocent lives and significant property damage. As mentioned earlier, the instances of violence have not solely resulted in bodily harm but have engendered a pervasive atmosphere of trepidation and vulnerability within the surrounding communities. Furthermore, religious extremism has resulted in the forced migration of numerous populations as they seek refuge from regions perceived as susceptible to acts of violence.

The impact of religious extremism on the daily lives of Africans is an additional element that contributes to their apprehension. In various nations, local communities have been subjected to the imposition of religious extremist ideologies, curtailing freedoms and hindering access to essential services such as healthcare and

education. The circumstances above have adversely impacted the region's socioeconomic progress while concurrently impinging upon individuals' fundamental entitlements and freedoms. Moreover, the exacerbation of sectarianism and the fragmentation of communities resulting from religious extremism has further compounded the issue.

Religious extremism possesses the capacity to compromise the security and stability of the region alongside its adverse consequences. The coexistence of political and religious extremism is common, and the emergence of increasingly radical organizations seeking to enforce their ideologies through coercive means can contribute to heightened regional instability. The potential consequences of this situation encompass conflict, civil war, and various forms of violence, all of which possess the capacity to exert a prolonged impact on the region.

Persistence of Traditional African Religious Practices

Despite the impact of alternative religious beliefs and cultural globalization, African indigenous religious traditions predating Christianity and Islam's introduction have demonstrated resilience and endurance throughout history. The enduring presence of these religious rites can be attributed to many factors, encompassing cultural heritage, the establishment of personal identity and social cohesion, and the practicality of traditional beliefs in addressing mundane challenges.

Reasons for Persistence

The enduring prevalence of ancient African religious practices can be attributed to the profound cultural legacy and affiliation that numerous African groups maintain with their ancestral beliefs and rites.[140] Traditional religious rituals have a significant role in numerous African civilizations, providing a mechanism for preserving cultural identity and establishing a connection to historical roots. An illustrative instance is the customary observance of ancestral veneration when individuals express reverence towards the spirits of their forebears. This practice is extensively pervasive among numerous African societies and functions to establish a link with the cultural legacy and customs of the society.

The practicality of traditional African religious practices in addressing daily issues is an additional factor contributing to their preservation. Numerous conventional African religious practices present pragmatic resolutions to various predicaments, including ailments, destitution, and diverse manifestations of distress. In numerous African societies, traditional healers hold a significant position in treating physical and psychological ailments through herbal remedies and divination techniques.

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[140]John S. Mbiti, African Religions and Philosophy (Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann educational publishers, 1969),58-70.

Impact on Contemporary Society

The enduring presence of traditional African religious rituals has substantially influenced the current state of African society. Traditional religious beliefs and practices still significantly influence the cultural, social, and political landscapes of several communities. Traditional religious traditions, such as the veneration of ancestors and the observance of rituals, play a crucial role in fostering social cohesion and engendering a sense of belonging across many African communities. Moreover, the enduring presence of traditional African religious practices has significantly influenced the evolution of African spirituality and religion. Despite the impact exerted by foreign faiths, numerous African groups have successfully preserved and advanced their indigenous beliefs, assimilating aspects of Christianity, Islam, and other foreign religions into their ancient traditions. Consequently, the phenomenon above has led to novel religious customs and convictions that mirror the African continent's distinctive cultural and spiritual milieu.

A Continuum of Christian Witness to Muslims in Africa

Throughout history, individuals identifying as Christians and Muslims have engaged in diverse forms of interaction, encompassing conflict and collaboration. The examination of various techniques employed by Christians to engage in evangelistic efforts with Muslims is warranted, spanning from the inception of Christianity to the contemporary era. Consequently, it is imperative to examine the various motivations that have prompted these techniques and evaluate the potential advantages and challenges they present for an efficacious Christian outreach to Muslims in contemporary times.

Historical Approaches

Various manifestations of Christian engagement with the Muslim community have occurred throughout the years. During the formative period of Christianity, adherents frequently engaged in a mode of proselytization towards Muslims that emphasized the demonstration of their religion by personal conduct, as opposed to employing overt evangelistic methods. This phenomenon was notably evident during the initial centuries following the emergence of Islam when Christians and Muslims peacefully cohabited in numerous regions across the globe. Nevertheless, with the expansion of Islamic influence, individuals practicing Christianity within various regions of the Muslim world encountered mounting coercion to embrace Islam or confront the consequences of persecution. Individuals identifying as Christians embraced a more assertive stance, employing polemical and apologetic strategies to safeguard their religious beliefs while critiquing Islam.[141] Simultaneously, an

[141] Peter Schadler, chapter 5 John of Damascus and Theodore Abu Qurrah on Islam In: John of Damascus and Islam, Pages: 182–208. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004356054_007

alternative perspective emerged among certain Christian adherents who embraced a more conciliatory stance. These individuals actively pursued opportunities for constructive engagement with Muslims, aiming to foster discourse and identify shared principles and values.[142]

Contemporary Approaches

Christians have persistently engaged in many forms of interaction with Muslims in the contemporary period, each characterized by distinct objectives and challenges. One approach that has been employed is the continuation of a confrontational tactic observed in previous eras, including apologetics and polemics as a means to counter Islamic assertions and uphold the credibility of Christianity. Many Evangelical Christians have embraced a particular approach due to their perception of Islam as a formidable challenge to their religious beliefs and the global community. One approach employed is identifying common ground with individuals who adhere to the Islamic faith, followed by effective communication and collaboration to foster mutual respect and enhance comprehension. Some Christians desire to engage with Muslims based on shared values and common interests, thereby adopting this method. One alternative strategy has been to embrace a comprehensive perspective, aiming to integrate the principles of Christian love into other facets of existence, including interpersonal connections with individuals who identify as Muslims. This method has been embraced by many Charismatic Christians, who perceive Islam as a potential avenue for spiritual engagement and endeavor to share their faith with Muslims through their personal conduct and interpersonal connections.

Motivations and Challenges

Various factors have influenced these strategies, from theological beliefs to personal experiences. For example, many Evangelical Christians have been motivated by a commitment to maintaining the gospel's authenticity and truthfulness. In contrast, many Liberal Christians have been motivated by a commitment to cultivate harmonious and respectful interpersonal connections. Each technique has inherent challenges of encountering offense, facing rejection, and building authentic connections. For example, the conciliatory attitude adopted by liberal Christians may lead to a diminished sense of authenticity and effectiveness in their testimonies. Conversely, the confrontational stance taken by evangelical Christians might potentially cause offense and rejection among Muslims.

[142] Yahya Ibn Adi - Christians in The Islamic Golden Age (Philosophy). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18vW47wZqfA

Mission as a Christian Witness to Muslims

Islam encompasses many dimensions beyond its manifestations in social, political, religious, and humanitarian spheres. Furthermore, it presents a potential danger to the Church's growth and development and its overall extension. The Missio Dei, at its essence, is inherently a theological quandary. What is the perspective of Muslims on their religion and the role of missionaries within it? One prominent element within Islamic culture is the phrase "Allâhu Akbar." The ultimate message conveyed by Islam is a distinctive, comprehensive, and pervasive vision that emanates from its fundamental understanding. The declaration of faith in Islam, known as Allâhu Akbar (Allâh is Greatest), is intricately linked to the initial portion of the shahâda: La ilâha illa Allâh, and effectively expresses the fundamental beliefs and sentiments of the Islamic faith. In contemporary discourse, the phrase "Allahu Akbar" is commonly used. What is the current status of most Muslim believers?

Christians ought to exercise caution regarding the content of the Qur'an in the context of missionary activities. The Qur'an consistently emphasizes believers' duty to propagate Islam's teachings. The passage from the Qur'an, specifically verses 16:125-127, exhorts adherents of Islam to actively propagate and disseminate their religious beliefs, as noted in the following verses:

- Qur'an 16:125-127, Invite ˹all˺ to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and kind advice, and only debate with them in the best manner. Surely your Lord ˹alone˺ knows best who has strayed from His Way and who is ˹rightly˺ guided. 126 If you retaliate, then let it be equivalent to what you have suffered. But if you patiently endure, it is certainly best for those who are patient. 127 Be patient ˹O Prophet˺, for your patience is only with Allah's help. Do not grieve over those ˹who disbelieve˺, nor be distressed by their schemes.

Furthermore, Christians need to be aware that Muslims are instructed to believe that they are the superior group in the world, as conveyed in their teachings below:

- Qur'an 3:110, You are the best community ever raised for humanity—you encourage good, forbid evil, and believe in Allah. Had the People of the Book believed it would have been better for them. Some of them are faithful, but most are rebellious.

One further aspect that Christians should consider is that, per Islamic doctrine, Muslims perceive their faith as unparalleled. Religion exhibits a propensity for aggression and a willingness to engage in acts of violence, as evidenced in specific verses of the Qur'an, namely 5:3 and 9:29. The following verses speak to that effect:

- Qur'an 5:3, Forbidden to you are carrion, blood, and swine; what is slaughtered in the name of any other than Allah; what is killed by strangling, beating, a fall, or by being gored to death; what is partly eaten by a predator unless you slaughter it; and what is sacrificed on altars. You are also forbidden to draw lots for decisions.1 This is all evil. Today the disbelievers

have given up all hope of ˹undermining˺ your faith. So do not fear them; fear Me! Today I have perfected your faith for you, completed My favor upon you, and chosen Islam as your way. But whoever is compelled by extreme hunger—not intending to sin—then surely Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

- Qur'an 9:29 Fight those who do not believe in Allah and the Last Day, nor comply with what Allah and His Messenger have forbidden, nor embrace the religion of truth from among those who were given the Scripture, until they pay the tax,

In the context of Christian outreach efforts inside Muslim communities, practitioners must comprehensively understand Jesus's role in human salvation. According to the teachings presented in the Book of John, it is posited that the observation of Jesus corresponds to the perception of God.

- John 14:9, Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

It is significant for individuals adhering to the Christian faith to understand that they possess the cognitive faculties akin to Christ, as elucidated in the biblical passage of Philippians 2:6-11. The Biblical passage found in 1 Peter 3:15 encourages adherents of the Christian faith to actively disseminate their religious beliefs to individuals of all backgrounds.

- Philippians 2:6-11, Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! 9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
- 1 Peter 3:15, But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,

The enigma surrounding the divine nature of God and His Trinitarian existence, as exemplified in Jesus' self-renunciation and his manifestation of divinity in his human form, prompts adherents of Christianity to propagate their religious beliefs. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus proclaims his intimate connection with the Father (Matthew 11:27) at an early stage, establishing a parallel between the relationship Christians share with the Father. In the Gospel of John (20:21), Jesus imparts the teaching that, akin to how the Father dispatched him, he likewise bestows his disciples the authority to engage in similar actions. According to the biblical account in John 5:17, Jesus asserts that his Father is consistently engaged in active endeavors. Consequently, he anticipates his disciples to adopt a similar disposition.

- Matthew 11:27, ”All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.
- John 5:17, In his defense Jesus said to them, ”My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working.”
- John 20:21, Again Jesus said, ”Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”

A comprehensive understanding of Jesus’ approach towards his audience should deeply influence Christian engagement with the Muslim community. The divine entity, acting through the figure of Jesus, bestowed illumination upon the entirety of its creation. Jesus is often regarded as the illuminating force guiding and enlightening humanity globally. When disseminating the teachings of Christ, Christians must recognize that they serve as a manifestation of God. The Holy Spirit will facilitate the growth of the seed that has been sown throughout these dialogues. The following verses teach that Jesus is the light of the world:

- Luke 2:32, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.
- John 3:19, This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.
- John 8:12, When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, ”I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”
- John 9:5, While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.
- John 12:46, I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.
- John 12:35, Then Jesus told them, You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. Whoever walks in the dark does not know where they are going.
- John 14:6, Jesus answered, I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

The transformative power of human hearts and minds lies only in the hands of Jesus. Christians are sowing spiritual seeds, as elucidated in the biblical passage of 1 Corinthians 3:6-7. The Church is responsible for testifying to the complete truth revealed through Christ’s life and ministry while approaching Muslims with compassionate and humble love. The efficacy of human logic and intelligence in yielding spiritual salvation is limited, as they primarily serve to evangelize Muslims through the Gospel.

- 1 Corinthians 3:6-7, I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. 7 So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.

The relationship between Christians and Muslims remains burdened by misunderstandings, tensions, instances of rejection, and even animosity, with the potential for conflict to escalate. According to biblical teachings, Christians are instructed not to be governed by fear, as they have been bestowed with the spirit of

courage. Consequently, they are encouraged to embrace bravery and take decisive actions. Furthermore, individuals who identify as Christians serve as representatives of Jesus Christ. God is calling all to continue Jesus' mission on earth, as shown in the following verses:

- Matthew 5: 45, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.
- Matthew 10:1 Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.
- 2 Corinthians 5:20, We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.
- 2 Timothy 1:7, For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

It is widely acknowledged among Christians that Jesus embodies the authentic representation of God. In this scenario, adherents of Jesus possess the understanding that they are not devoid of companionship, as the divine presence of God resides inside them. Christians serve as the authentic dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. Look at the following verses that speak about how God lives by faith in all those who believe in the Son:

- John 10:30-33, I and the Father are one. "31 Again his Jewish opponents picked up stones to stone him, 32 but Jesus said to them," I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of these do you stone me? 33 "We are not stoning you for any good work," they replied, "but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God."
- John 14:16, And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—
- John 14: 19 Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. 20 On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. 21 Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.
- John 14:23 Jesus replied, Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.
- 1 Corinthians 6 :19 Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;
- Revelation 3:20, Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.

The disciples of Jesus who reside in Muslim communities or engage in disseminating their faith should understand that the concept of the Trinity, as elucidated in the Scriptures, is conducive to their cause. It is expected under

Christian doctrine that specific individuals who identify as Muslims may, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, transcend their theological obstacles and adopt the teachings of the Gospel. The Gospel surpasses all the obstacles any religious system presents and fosters a spiritual existence that extends beyond the material circumstances of life. The primary objective of Christian individuals is to provide testimony to the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Gospel, adapting their methods to suit the specific circumstances and requirements of each situation.

Personal Evangelism among Muslims

Personal evangelism within the Muslim community can manifest in several ways, contingent upon the specific environment and approach. Relationship building is a commonly employed method that has gained significant traction. Individuals summoned to fulfill a duty within an Islamic framework can cultivate a personal connection with the individuals they serve. It is imperative to promote the cultivation of trust and the dissemination of the gospel to demonstrate sensitivity towards the cultural and belief systems of individuals adhering to the Muslim faith. This strategy has demonstrated efficacy in various circumstances, particularly in situations characterized by extensive personal engagement and a strong foundation of trust between individuals identifying as Christians and Muslims.

Christians can employ an apologetic approach to substantiate the Christian gospel's veracity and counter Islam's assertions by utilizing facts and logical reasoning. This perspective has gained traction within Christian circles, where Islam is perceived as a religious belief system deemed erroneous and necessitated confrontation and subjugation. Nevertheless, this perspective can be interpreted as combative and lacking sensitivity towards Muslims, thus resulting in offense and subsequent rejection. Furthermore, adherents of Christianity must exemplify the benevolence and compassion demonstrated by Jesus Christ in every facet of existence, including their interactions with individuals who follow the Islamic faith. Christians are encouraged to adopt a lifestyle characterized by love, compassion, and service while also endeavoring to propagate the gospel in a manner that aligns with the attributes and behavior exemplified by Christ. This particular strategy has demonstrated efficacy across various contexts, as it places significant emphasis on the transformative potential of the gospel and can be regarded as a compelling testament to the veracity of the Christian belief system.

Christian Opportunities and Challenges in Personal Evangelism

The practice of personal evangelism within the Muslim community has numerous problems, encompassing various issues, such as cultural disparities and theological opposition. Muslims perceive Christianity as an external and unsatisfactory religious belief system, exhibiting resistance towards any endeavors to disseminate the gospel among them. Furthermore, the religious and cultural milieu prevalent in the Muslim world can pose challenges for Christians in cultivating trustworthy relationships with Muslims and effectively communicating the gospel in a

manner that respects and acknowledges the beliefs and values held by Muslims. The practice of personal evangelism within the Muslim community offers numerous prospects, particularly in contexts where individuals exhibit a willingness and receptivity towards embracing the Christian message. Many individuals who identify as Muslims actively seek spiritual enlightenment and a sense of fulfillment, displaying a willingness to engage with the concept of a divine being. Moreover, personal evangelism serves as a potent means to disseminate the affection of Christ and foster connections of comprehension and reverence between adherents of Christianity and Islam.

When individuals deeply understand their faith, personal evangelism emerges as the most efficacious approach to engage in outreach activities. In order to engage in proselytization within the Muslim community, an individual needs to possess a certain level of familiarity and understanding with the Islamic faith. Jesus instructs Christians to comprehensively understand the Gospel, a process that frequently occurs through its dissemination among individuals. Individuals lacking knowledge of Islam and its cultural aspects may find themselves with limited conversational topics while engaging with Muslims. However, even without knowledge of Islam, the Gospel remains vibrant and may be observed when an individual trusts the Holy Spirit. The Gospels' testimony is the most dependable and credible account of the life and teachings of Christ. Advocate the teachings of the Gospel in its unaltered form. It is imperative to refrain from diluting biblical terminology to accommodate Muslim listeners' sensitivities. It is imperative for individuals who identify as Christians to possess a comprehensive understanding of their beliefs and the underlying rationale that supports their faith. Acquiring knowledge of the Scriptures holds significant importance.

The Qur'an presents contrasting beliefs to those of Biblical Christianity, as it does not align with the concept of the triune nature of God, distorts the Biblical teachings on the person of Christ, and refutes the idea of justification by faith based on Christ's crucifixion. In its assertion of being a permanent religion rooted in nature and history, this ideology aligns itself with the tradition of Christianity. It seeks to substantiate its assertions by positing that the Word of God, as conveyed in the New and Old Testament, has undergone corruption. Christian aims to broaden the perspective of individuals adhering to the Islamic faith, encouraging them to engage with the Gospels as accounts provided by eyewitnesses or companions of eyewitnesses to the historical figure of Jesus.

When disseminating the Gospel, adherents of the Christian faith should refrain from employing specialized terminology commonly used within Christian circles. On the contrary, engaging in discourse about authentic transgressions, genuine culpability, and the true atonement achieved through the shedding of Jesus' blood is imperative. The identification of Jesus should be unambiguous, exemplified through designations such as 'Son of God' and 'Lamb of God'. The terms "New Adam," "I AM - YAHWEH," "Saviour," and "Almighty God" are utilized to describe specific attributes or roles within a religious or theological context. Muslim individuals often inquire about the tenets and principles of the Christian faith. There is no obligation to address all their inquiries within a single day. However, ensuring that the

recipients can perceive your responses to one or two inquiries with utmost clarity is vital. Maintain focus on the topic at hand and refrain from digressing. In order to ensure a consistent emphasis on the fundamental principles of legal and religious doctrine, it is imperative to steer the discourse back on track whenever it veers off course.

The message conveyed in the Gospel is perceived as offensive by individuals who adhere to the Islamic faith. The current situation is deemed acceptable. There is no need for concern. A divine entity will attend to the well-being of the listener. The message can be attributed to Him. Muslim individuals may be less inclined to embrace Christianity unless they find the message of the Gospel to be personally challenging or provocative. Engage in a discourse that may potentially cause discomfort by providing a comprehensive elucidation of the teachings espoused by Jesus Christ. It is advised to refrain from utilizing Bible translations labeled as 'Muslim friendly'. Utilizing "Muslim-friendly" Bible translations might be considered a highly misleading practice. The texts in question do not accurately reflect the content of the ancient Scriptures. Muslims perceive it as a manifestation of deceit employed by missionaries. Muslim evangelism does not primarily focus on engaging in persuasive debates but rather on guiding individuals who identify as Muslims towards embracing the teachings of Christianity through the proclamation of the Gospel. Discussions may occasionally become impassioned and emotional, which is seen as acceptable. However, the objective of Muslim evangelism does not entail demonstrating the superiority of one's beliefs while discrediting Islam. The primary purpose is to convey the veracity of the gospel. The purpose of the message is to serve as an act of offense. The individual being referred to is not the intended recipient of the message.

It is advisable for Christians engaging in evangelism towards Muslims to exercise patience and avoid hastiness in their approach. Individuals embracing a religious commitment to Jesus Christ may vary in duration, with some requiring an extended period before surrendering. In contrast, others may undergo this transformation very quickly. The absence of immediate acceptance of Christ by a Muslim following a single interaction does not necessarily imply the ineffectiveness of evangelistic efforts. The importance of pre-evangelism is equally significant. According to the biblical passage in 1 Corinthians 3:6-9, individuals are allowed to engage in the act of planting, while the responsibility of watering may be assigned to another party. It is imperative to remember that the conversion of Muslims to Christianity is not a task undertaken by individuals but rather a divine process orchestrated by God, His timing.

- 1 Corinthians 3:6-9, I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. 7 So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. 8 The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor. 9 For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building.

It is imperative to remember that evangelism does not culminate at the initial presentation of the Gospel message to an individual adhering to the Islamic faith. The imperative of evangelism persists beyond the moment of repentance and the commitment of one's life to Christ. They must assume a position subordinate to the authority of the ministry of the Word. Evangelizing a Muslim is considered fulfilled when they have had baptism, participated in the Lord's Supper, and attended church to receive instruction through the preaching of the Word. To put it another way, the practice of evangelism is perpetual. The concept of discipleship can be understood as a form of evangelism. Adherents of the Christian faith must exhibit persistence in their evangelistic efforts, especially in the face of rejection, as emphasized in Revelation 14:7, " He said in a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and the springs of water."

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

SHAPING THE GOSPEL IN AN ISLAMIC CONTEXT

Contextualization: Building Bridges to the Muslim Community

The Gospel, often known as the teachings of Jesus Christ, has exerted a profound influence on the lives of countless individuals across the globe over several centuries. As Christianity expanded beyond its origins in the Middle East, it faced diverse cultural environments, one of which was the background of Islam. Presently, individuals who identify as Christians residing in regions populated mainly by Muslims encounter the task of effectively disseminating the teachings of the Gospel in a manner that demonstrates respect and pertinence to their Islamic counterparts.

Understanding the historical framework in which Christianity and Islam interacted holds significant importance. During the formative decades of the Islamic faith, those identifying as Christians found themselves in a minority position within regions inhabited mainly by adherents of the Muslim faith. Consequently, these Christian communities frequently saw instances of persecution. However, it is noteworthy that Christians and Muslims could coexist and engage with one another, exhibiting both instances of mutual respect and occasional hostility. Christian missionaries worldwide integrate aspects of Islamic culture into their worship and religious practices, thereby adapting the Gospel to better resonate with their Muslim counterparts. The inclusion of Arabic rituals, such as the integration of hymns and songs that reflect shared experiences with Muslims, inside the liturgies of particular Christian communities is a phenomenon that is not unexpected.

The Gospel in an Islamic context is influenced by theological issues as well. Christians residing in nations where Islam is the predominant religion are confronted with the intricate dynamics that characterize the interplay between these two religious traditions. While certain beliefs are shared between Christianity and Islam, notable disparities also exist, necessitating a delicate navigation of this multifaceted connection. Christians adhere to the theological doctrine that Jesus possesses divine attributes, whereas Muslims regard him as a prophet of significant stature but not as the offspring of the divine being. Christians adhere to the theological doctrine of original sin and the necessity of salvation by Jesus, whereas Muslims do not share these beliefs. The disparities between Christians and their Muslim counterparts might pose difficulties when Christians aim to spread the Gospel among them. However, these disparities also offer prospects for innovative involvement and discourse.

A pragmatic approach to contextualizing the Gospel within an Islamic framework involves establishing interpersonal connections with individuals adhering to the Islamic faith. Through establishing interpersonal connections founded upon reciprocal regard and comprehension, adherents of Christianity can cultivate an environment conducive to dialogue concerning the Gospel and its pertinence to Muslim existence. Individuals sharing their faith narratives and experiences, as well as listening to the narratives of others and participating in collective endeavors such as community service or cultural gatherings, have a better result. Through the

establishment of interpersonal connections, those who identify as Christians can generate circumstances wherein they can disseminate the principles and teachings of the Gospel to their Muslim counterparts in a manner that is both considerate and pertinent.

Another pragmatic approach is directing attention towards the shared ideals and experiences commonly held by adherents of Christianity and Islam. Both religions place significant emphasis on the value of compassion and the provision of assistance to individuals who are economically disadvantaged and socially excluded. Additionally, both religions possess a substantial heritage of engaging in acts of philanthropy and actively participating in communal endeavors. By emphasizing shared values and collective experiences, individuals who identify as Christians can establish a platform for dialogue concerning the Gospel and its pertinence to the lives of those who identify as Muslims.

The Central Problem of Contextualization

According to Whiteman, contextualization can be described as a multifaceted process that encompasses efforts to effectively convey the Gospel's message and principles while establishing the church in a manner that resonates with individuals within their specific cultural milieu. Christianity's faith is presented in a manner that addresses individuals' fundamental desires and beliefs, enabling them to embrace the teachings of Christ while maintaining their cultural identity. Contextualization aims to establish a sustainable and impactful Christian presence within a cultural environment unfamiliar to the communicator. The provided definition appropriately assumes that the gospel possesses a transcultural nature, allowing it to be genuinely manifested throughout the diverse scope of human communities. The idea mentioned above is inherent within the teachings of Jesus, as documented in John 4:4:4-14. It pertains to the Holy Spirit's guidance, as evidenced in Acts 8:14-17. Furthermore, this principle became widely accepted and regarded as self-evident among Christian missionaries during the initial century, as indicated in 1 Corinthians 9:24-27.

- John 4: 4-14, Now he had to go through Samaria. 5 So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. 6 Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon. 7 When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" 8 (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) 9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans. 10 Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." 11 "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? 12 Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?" 13 Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty

again, 14 but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

- Acts 8:14-17, When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to Samaria. 15 When they arrived, they prayed for the new believers there that they might receive the Holy Spirit, 16 because the Holy Spirit had not yet come on any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 17 Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.
- 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. 25 Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. 26 Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. 27 No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

The preachers who aimed to spread the Gospel beyond the confines of Palestinian Judaism distinguished between the cultural significance of Jewish wines and the metaphorical representation of the Gospel. According to the biblical passage in Matthew 9:17, Jesus cautioned against placing newly fermented wines into old wineskins. The response from adherents of Judaizing beliefs was prompt and expected, but divine wisdom prevailed, leading the Apostles to assert that one's salvation is not contingent upon embracing Judaism. The matter in scriptural discourse pertains to how contextualization should influence the missionary endeavor rather than questioning its necessity.

- Matthew 9:17, Neither do people pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.

Muslim converts encounter many forms of social exclusion, yet via contextualization, they can maintain their adherence to Christianity while embracing their cultural milieu. Many individuals who choose Christianity after having a Muslim upbringing encounter significant obstacles from their family members. In light of this perspective, newly converted individuals must receive assistance from steadfast adherents to surmount psychological distress. However, even under adverse circumstances, the Lord God Almighty consistently devises a plan when individuals trust Him.[143] The Bible, in the following verses, supports the value of preaching the Gospel:

- Acts 19:18-19, Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed what they had done. 19 A number who had practiced sorcery brought their

[143] Jim Leffel, "Contextualization: Building Bridges to the Muslim Community," https://dwellcc.org/learning/essays/contextualization-building-bridges-muslim-community#Note2 (Online) accessed dates, 21/04/2023.

scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas.

- Romans 10:9, If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.
- 1 Corinthians 1:23-25, Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, 23 but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, 24 but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.
- 1 Corinthians 7:17-24, Nevertheless, each person should live as a believer in whatever situation the Lord has assigned to them, just as God has called them. This is the rule I lay down in all the churches. 18 Was a man already circumcised when he was called? He should not become uncircumcised. Was a man uncircumcised when he was called? He should not be circumcised. 19 Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. Keeping God’s commands is what counts. 20 Each person should remain in the situation they were in when God called them. 21 Were you a slave when you were called? Don’t let it trouble you—although if you can gain your freedom, do so. 22 For the one who was a slave when called to faith in the Lord is the Lord’s freed person; similarly, the one who was free when called is Christ’s slave. 23 You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of human beings. 24 Brothers and sisters, each person, as responsible to God, should remain in the situation they were in when God called them.
- Galatians 1:8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God’s curse! 9 As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God’s curse!
- Ephesians 2:11-13,16, Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (which is done in the body by human hands). 12 remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 16 and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.

The integration of pre-evangelism and church planting is crucial for effective ministry. The faith-based community of Jesus must demonstrate a willingness to assist newly converted individuals as needed. It is suggested that Christians should permit Muslims to examine the Bible to ascertain the truth, as indicated in the biblical passage found in Acts (17:11-12).

- Acts 17:11-12, Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was

true. 12 As a result, many of them believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men.

When Christians demonstrate unwavering commitment in expressing their belief in the redemptive power of Christ, God will orchestrate diverse means to facilitate a receptive disposition within their hearts. The proclamation of Jesus should be consistently advocated, irrespective of the potential hazards involved. According to the biblical passage in John 16:33, Jesus did not make a guarantee of a prosperous earthly existence.

- John 16:33, ”I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

The process of spiritual development should ideally occur inside a specific cultural framework and contextual setting. The presence of the Holy Spirit within an individual permeates their being, enabling the accomplishment of seemingly impossible tasks. The Holy Spirit collaborates with scriptural instruction in discipling converts, facilitating the development of a progressively transformative and redemptive belief system. Muslim individuals who choose to convert to Christianity can benefit from a structured process of discipleship, which involves engaging in dedicated Bible reading sessions, collectively exploring biblical teachings, and addressing any misconceptions that Muslims may have. Adherents of the Christian religion must actively embody the principles of Biblical corporate faith, thereby substantiating the veracity of the Gospel via tangible evidence. The culmination of Christ’s labor on the cross is sufficient for humanity’s needs. In the context of a worldwide state of gender ambiguity, it is imperative to maintain adherence to the principles outlined in the Bible.

Church-Planting and People-Group Movements among Muslims

Establishing new churches inside Muslim communities is an integral aspect of the worldwide mission to engage with populations that have not yet been reached and to foster the growth of followers in all nations. Recently, there has been an increasing focus on the strategic significance of these endeavors, particularly within regions where the bulk of the population adheres to the Islamic faith. Church planting in places with a dominant Muslim population is paramount in fulfilling the Great Commission, as Jesus conveys to his disciples in Matthew 28:19-20. The directive to engage in the process of disciple-making across all nations encompasses Muslims, who represent a significant demographic of individuals who have yet to be effectively reached with the message of the Gospel. The practice of church planting entails the establishment of novel Christian communities, serving as a means to manifest the gospel within a specific locality and facilitating opportunities for evangelism and discipleship. The Great Commission leaves none out, as noted in the following verses:

- Matthew 28:19-20, Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and

> teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Establishing new churches within Muslim communities has distinct and specific obstacles. Muslim societies frequently resist adopting Christianity, with conversion carrying significant social and political consequences. Evangelism and discipleship necessitate a method that upholds the integrity of local cultures and traditions while simultaneously demonstrating attentiveness towards potential hazards. Moreover, many individuals adhering to the Islamic faith possess firmly entrenched theological convictions that may present challenges in reconciliation, notably the view that Jesus served just as a prophet rather than being recognized as the divine Son of God. In order to implement successful evangelism and discipleship techniques, it is imperative to possess a comprehensive comprehension of Muslim culture and worldview alongside a steadfast dedication to cultivating relationships and establishing trust.

Notwithstanding these obstacles, noteworthy prospects exist in establishing churches within Muslim communities. Muslim individuals frequently engage in a quest for resolutions to profound existential inquiries, and the gospel possesses the potential to provide a gratifying and profound transformative solution. Furthermore, there is a growing receptiveness among Muslims towards the gospel, primarily driven by the perceived inadequacies of Islam in addressing their spiritual aspirations, alongside the influence of Christianity disseminated through online platforms and various media outlets. The global dissemination of Christianity serves as evidence of the active involvement of the Holy Spirit inside Muslim societies, resulting in the conversion of numerous individuals to Christianity and the subsequent establishment of fresh Christian congregations.

Establishing churches for Muslim converts in the Arab-Muslim world appears to be an audacious endeavor. The establishment of churches can be interpreted as a manifestation of religious liberty and pluralism, allowing individuals to exercise their religious beliefs without constraint. However, it is essential to note that this situation deviates from the usual, as it can potentially be perceived as a confrontation with the prevailing Islamic culture and an offense to the indigenous tribes. Acknowledging the significant historical and cultural diversity within the Muslim world, encompassing a wide range of religious traditions such as Christianity, Judaism, and other faiths, is imperative. Nevertheless, the prevailing cultural norm in the area has been Islamic for an extended period, spanning several centuries.

Consequently, the construction of Christian churches can be perceived by numerous Muslims as a direct affront to their established way of life. Moreover, Muslims converting to Christianity is seen as apostasy within the Islamic faith, potentially leading to significant social and legal repercussions. Regardless of the situation, the Holy Spirit will guide the newly converted individual in the most appropriate course of action. The assistance of the Holy Spirit enables individuals to recognize the divine summons extended to all humanity, urging them to embrace faith in Jesus Christ.

Recently, there have been documented accounts of the manifestation of the Divine Spirit inside Muslim communities. The impact of the Holy Spirit's influence inside Muslim communities carries substantial ramifications for both Islamic theology and practice. This perspective presents a departure from conventional understandings of the inflexible and rule-based characteristics attributed to Islam. Instead, it introduces novel prospects for cultivating a more individualized and experiential connection with the Christian deity. The Bible continues to inform Christians that they must share their faith:

- 2 Corinthians 5:17, Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!
- 1 Corinthians 12:13, For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.
- Ephesians 1:22-23 22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.
- Ephesians 4:4-6 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.
- Matthew 18:20, For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."

The establishment of new churches inside Muslim communities necessitates a theological foundation rooted in the concept of the kingdom of God, encompassing elements of power, truth, and cultural engagement. Notwithstanding these limitations, prospects exist for establishing new churches within the Muslim community. Effectively engaging with Muslims in sharing the gospel of Christ necessitates cultivating sensitivity, respect, and comprehensive comprehension of their cultural and religious apprehensions. Establishing relationships based on trust, acknowledging individual concerns, and fostering a sense of belonging within a supportive group are crucial aspects to consider. Primarily, it is crucial to effectively convey the fundamental message of the gospel and its applicability to individuals' lives, exemplifying the benevolence and potency of Christ via tangible actions. By engaging in this practice, individuals who identify as Christian can potentially facilitate the exposure of individuals who identify as Muslim to the profound and life-altering influence of the gospel, ultimately leading them to discover liberation and spiritual emancipation through their faith in Christ, as documented in Acts 10:38. The primary objective of the manifestation of the Son of God was to eradicate the endeavors of the Devil (1 John 3:8).

- Acts 10:38, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.
- 1 John 3:8, The one who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

- Ephesians 1:20-22 20 he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, 21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. 22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,
- Colossians 1:12-14, and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. 13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.
- Colossians 2:15, And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.
- Hebrew 2:14, Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—
- 1 Peter 3:21-22, and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

When considering the actions of Jesus as the triumph over Satan and the eradication of Satan's influence on the world, the life, deeds, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus take on a remarkable coherence. Principalities, the manifestations of evil, and the embodiment of the kingdom's existence are conveyed through culturally significant rites. There is a need to Develop a strategic approach for effectively establishing the Church of Jesus Christ inside the Muslim communities.

Challenges of Planting Churches in Muslim Cultures

Establishing Christian congregations in Muslim societies presents significant difficulties, necessitating a distinct methodology for spreading the Christian faith. In recent years, numerous Christian organizations have formulated strategic approaches to disseminate the gospel among Muslim populations, mainly through establishing churches within Muslim communities. The establishment of churches in Muslim societies presents notable obstacles. One of the foremost obstacles lies in Muslim communities' prevailing animosity towards Christianity. Muslims perceive Christianity as a potential challenge to their religious beliefs, leading to a general inclination to resist the gospel's message.[144] Numerous nations with a Muslim majority population have implemented legal measures that impose limitations on Christian evangelism, hence presenting challenges for adherents of Christianity to propagate their religious beliefs openly.

[144] P. Jenkins, "The Growth of Christianity in Muslim-Majority Countries" Missiology: An International Review, 46(3), 2018, 237-249.

Moreover, a significant challenge arises from the cultural boundaries present within Muslim communities. The existence of deeply ingrained cultural traditions within the Muslim community is a substantial challenge in adequately conveying the message of Christianity to this particular demographic. Converting to Christianity is sometimes considered a betrayal of one's family and community in various Muslim countries.

Despite the inherent difficulties, viable prospects exist for establishing churches within Muslim societies. One notable opportunity lies in the receptiveness of specific individuals within the Muslim community towards embracing the gospel's teachings. While it is true that a significant number of Muslims exhibit hostility towards Christianity, there exists a subset within the Muslim community that has a genuine inclination towards acquiring knowledge about the Christian faith. This inclination is frequently ignited by a personal predicament or a sense of discontentment with their present religious affiliation.[145] Moreover, there is currently an observed increase in the prevalence of the Christian faith within nations where Islam is the predominant religion. Despite the prevailing animosity against Christianity, a notable phenomenon has emerged wherein many individuals adhering to the Islamic faith have chosen to convert to Christianity. Consequently, there has been an observable surge in the desire for Christian literature and related materials within these regions. The expansion of this phenomenon has been propelled by the accessibility of Christian media and the internet, facilitating Muslims' acquisition of knowledge about Christianity and fostering their engagement with fellow adherents of the Christian faith.

Various methodologies exist for conducting evangelism in Muslim societies, each with its merits and drawbacks. One strategy that might be employed is the confrontational method, wherein individuals are encouraged to critically evaluate the assertions of Christianity in order to engage with Muslims. As mentioned above, the approach frequently exhibits confrontational tendencies and may be interpreted as hostile, posing challenges in establishing and fostering relationships with individuals who identify as Muslims. An alternative methodology entails adopting the relational approach when individuals establish connections with Muslims and engage in dialogues and conversations to disseminate the gospel. As mentioned above, the technique is frequently seen to be more efficacious within Muslim cultures due to its non-confrontational nature, which facilitates a more comprehensive examination of the Christian religion.

During the initial three centuries following the ascension of Jesus, adherents of the Christian faith encountered diverse challenges and endured persecution, resulting in martyrdom. The Book of Revelation provides insight into the persecution that ensued in the province of Asia during the reigns of many emperors. The open declaration of adherence to the Christian faith was considered a punishable crime during the early second century. According to historical records, those identified as Christians during the reign of the Roman government were presented with a choice: renounce their beliefs or confront the prospect of execution through methods such as

[145] J. D. Brown, "Evangelism in a Muslim Context: Lessons from the Early Church," Journal of Religious History, 43(4), 2019, 428-442.

decapitation, exposure to wild animals, immolation, crucifixion, and several other forms of torment. Christians adhered to the doctrine of Jesus, which stated that God would likewise disown individuals who renounce their faith in him in the presence of others. Numerous biblical scriptures exhort adherents of the Christian faith to persist in their belief in Jesus and to bear witness to others to the transformative impact He has had on their lives. The act of neglecting to present offerings to the Roman authority was regarded as an act of treason. Certificates were awarded to individuals who renounced their religious beliefs. Historical records indicate that certain unscrupulous authorities in ancient Rome would provide certificates to individuals who did not adhere to the worship of the Roman gods, often due to the influence of friendly neighbors. However, instead of impeding the expansion of the nascent Christian community, this period of persecution served to validate the prophetic utterances of Jesus by propelling a more significant number of individuals to disseminate the teachings of Christianity in regions such as Judea, Samaria, and other distant locales (Acts 1:8). The Bible is candid when it comes to sharing one's testimony even if it means sudden death as noted in the following passages:

- 1 Samuel 2:30, Therefore the Lord, the God of Israel, declares: 'I promised that your house and the house of your father should go in and out before me forever,' but now the Lord declares: 'Far be it from me, for those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed.
- Psalm 119:46, I will also speak of your testimonies before kings and shall not be put to shame,
- Matthew 10:32-33, So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven.
- Matthew 25:34, Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.
- Luke 12:8-9, And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God, but the one who denies me before men will be denied before the angels of God.
- Acts 1:8, But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.
- Romans 10:9-10, because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved
- 1 Timothy 6:12-13, Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession,
- 2 Timothy 1:8, Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God,

- Revelation 2:13, ‘I know where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is. Yet you hold fast my name, and you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.
- 1 John 4:15, Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.
- Revelation 3:5, The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels.
- Revelation 6:10-11, They called out in a loud voice, “How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?” 11 Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the full number of their fellow servants, their brothers and sisters, were killed just as they had been.

Church Growth Amidst Secrecy

In the Book of Acts, it is evident that individuals who have converted from Islam to Christianity can engage in house fellowships. The early church effectively engaged in evangelization while maintaining discretion, preventing opponents from becoming cognizant of their activities. The ruling in Rome about Christians posed challenges in conducting public preaching activities in outdoor settings. Initially, the Apostles actively engaged with the synagogue, yet their intentions were not malicious prior to being expelled from these establishments. The book of Acts provides evidence of the growth of an underground church throughout the initial three centuries, which was predominantly facilitated through evangelistic efforts carried out on a personal level and through the demonstration of a particular way of life. The adoption of selective evangelism as a prevailing practice can be attributed to the prevailing atmosphere of suspicion among the inhabitants of Rome, who held anti-Christian sentiments. Christians were cognizant of their divine mandate to serve as the metaphorical salt and light of the world, resulting in their distinctive character. Certain early Christians adopted a strategy of maintaining a low profile in order to avoid the risk of experiencing unnecessary hardship. Muslim converts should seek guidance from the Holy Spirit to effectively share their religion and thrive in the face of rejection within their community. The following verses support that idea of the Holy Spirit’s guidance:

- Nehemiah 9:20, You gave your good Spirit to instruct them. You did not withhold your manna from their mouths, and you gave them water for their thirst.
- Matthew 10:19-20, But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, 20 for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.
- Mark 13:11, Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit.
- Luke 12:12, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.

- John 14:15-26, “If you love me, keep my commands. 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. 19 Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. 20 On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. 21 Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.” 25 All this I have spoken while still with you. 26 But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.
- John 15:13, Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.
- Philippians 3:10, I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,
- 1 Peter 4:13, But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.
- 1 John 2:27, As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him.

The resilience of a community that endured severe persecution without losing hope has captivated the interest of modern individuals. The initial adherents, guided by the Holy Spirit, had a gradual and consistent growth in both their numerical strength and societal impact. During the third century, a Christian community, albeit in the minority, was present in nearly all provinces of the Roman Empire. Certain historians suggest that the implementation of rigorous persecution may have had a role in purging the church of those who exhibited a lack of fervor, as alluded to in the biblical passage of Revelation 3:14ff.

- Revelation 3:14-18, To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God’s creation. 15 I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! 16 So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth. 17 You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. 18 I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.

Historical records indicate that the issuance of “The Edict of Milan” in February 313 CE by the Roman emperors Constantine and Licinius effectively halted the persecution of Christians. The revision of Milan resulted in the cessation of persecution and witnessed the replacement of house church elders’ leadership with

a more complex and institutionalized ecclesiastical structure. Congregations of worshiping families resembling synagogues supplanted house-fellowships and afterwards succeeded by grandiose and costly architectural marvels known as churches.

The amalgamation of Christianity and Islam, known as Chrislam, should not be deemed acceptable. It is imperative that every religious tradition separately presents its respective perspective on truth. According to the biblical passage in 1 John 4, any spiritual entity that contradicts the incarnation of Jesus is not of divine origin. Moreover, the Bible instructs adherents to evaluate and scrutinize every spiritual being. Furthermore, those with religious beliefs must not be subjected to disseminating erroneous teachings. It can be inferred from the Qur'an's teachings that Jesus is not recognized as the authentic Son of God, and his divine nature is not acknowledged. Consequently, the Qur'an can be categorized as antichrist. The following verses attest to the teaching of the antichrist and other teaching of deviation:

- Matthew 24:24, For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.
- 2 Corinthians 11:13-15, For such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. 15 It is not surprising, then, if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.
- Ephesians 4:14, Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. 15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. 16 From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.
- 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12, Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. 4 He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God. Don't you remember that when I was with you I used to tell you these things? 6 And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. 7 For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. 8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming. 9 The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with how Satan works. He will use all sorts of displays of power through signs and wonders that serve the lie, 10 and all the ways that wickedness deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refuse to love the truth

and so be saved. 11 For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie 12 and so that all will be condemned.

- 1 Timothy 6:3-5, These are the things you are to teach and insist on. 3 If anyone teaches otherwise and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, 4 they are conceited and understand nothing. They have an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions 5 and constant friction between people of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.
- 1 John 2:18, Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour.
- 1 John 2:22, Who is the liar? It is whoever denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a person is the antichrist—denying the Father and the Son.
- 1 John 4:1-6, Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. 4 Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. 5 They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them. 6 We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.
- Revelation 13:16-17, It also forced all people, great and small, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hands or on their foreheads, 17 so that they could not buy or sell unless they had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of its name.
- Revelation 19:20, But the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who had performed the signs on its behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur.
- Revelation 20:2-5, He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. 3 He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time. 4 I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection.

- Revelation 20:10, And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

In light of the diverse range of Christian beliefs prevalent in contemporary society, it is imperative to discourage any manifestation of nominalism among adherents and promote a steadfast commitment to their faith. Individuals who profess a religious belief but merely express it superficially may exhibit consistent attendance at religious gatherings, yet they demonstrate an inability to effectively incorporate the teachings and values they acquire into their everyday existence. They do not actively engage in community participation or charitable endeavors. Fundamentally, the philosophical perspective of nominalism leads adherents to perceive their religious beliefs as a surface aspect of their existence rather than a guiding principle. Jesus issued a cautionary statement indicating that individuals who do not demonstrate a sincere commitment to their religious beliefs will be met with His disapproval. The book of Revelation 3:16 says, “So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.” Believers should mitigate the effects of nominalism by playing an active role in the Christian faith.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

MUSLIMS AND THE BIBLE

The Relationship Between Muslims and the Bible

The dynamic between adherents of Islam and the Bible is a multifaceted and frequently contentious topic. Muslims believe the Bible has undergone corruption in its doctrinal teachings. Muslims believe the Bible, similar to the Qur'an, is a divinely revealed text from God. However, they assert that Christians have modified their teachings. Muslim scholars, influenced by their religious beliefs, hold the perspective that the pristine authenticity of the original biblical scriptures has been compromised and distorted throughout history, resulting in flaws and contradictions within its doctrinal content. It is widely held among adherents that the Qur'an is seen as the ultimate and most precise rendition of the divine communication to humanity, surpassing and validating the doctrines of preceding revelations, such as the Bible. It is imperative for individuals engaged in Muslim communities to possess knowledge regarding the dissemination of false information concerning the Bible, as mentioned in the Qur'an 2:75. Muslims have been informed that Isa is regarded as one of the most esteemed prophets of Allah and is held in high regard as a messenger by Muslims. Additionally, he is believed to have been born to the Virgin Mary.

Nevertheless, they refute the Christian doctrine that Jesus is the divine Son of God and the ultimate redeemer of humanity. In contrast, it is held that Isa (Jesus) was a prophet entrusted with the responsibility of affirming the teachings of preceding prophets and summoning the contemporary populace to the veneration of Allah. However, despite this falsehood, many Muslims embrace an authentic understanding of Jesus and recognise His redemptive message as the Son of God.

- Qur'an 2:75, Do you ˹believers still˺ expect them to be true to you, though a group of them would hear the word of Allah then knowingly corrupt it after understanding it?

Islamic Scripture and the Bible

Additionally, some approximate parallels exist between specific Qur'an and Bible texts. It is essential to acknowledge that the Qur'an does not replicate Biblical material verbatim, and there is a belief that its references to the Bible may stem from an environment of oral engagement with Jewish and Christian communities. According to the Qur'an, Muslims are encouraged to engage with the Bible through reading (10:93-94). There is not a direct citation which can be found in the Qur'an quoting the Bible, but here are some similarities:

- Qur'an 21:105, Surely, following the ˹heavenly˺ Record, We decreed in the Scriptures: "My righteous servants shall inherit the land." Matthew 5:5, Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Psalm 37:9, For those who are evil will be destroyed, but those who hope in the Lord will inherit the land.11 But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy peace and prosperity. 29 The righteous will inherit the land and dwell in it forever.

- Qur’an 1093-94, Indeed, We settled the Children of Israel in a blessed land, and granted them good, lawful provisions. They did not differ until knowledge came to them. Surely your Lord will judge between them on the Day of Judgment regarding their differences. 94 If you ˹O Prophet˺ are in doubt about ˹these stories˺ that We have revealed to you, then ask those who read the Scripture before you. The truth has certainly come to you from your Lord, so do not be one of those who doubt. Genesis 17:8, “The whole land of Canaan, where you now reside as a foreigner, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God.”
- Qur’an 5:46, Then in the footsteps of the prophets, We sent Jesus, son of Mary, confirming the Torah revealed before him. And We gave him the Gospel containing guidance and light and confirming what was revealed in the Torah—a guide and a lesson to the God-fearing. Matthew 5:17, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.
- Qur’an 5:47, O believers! Do not seek the guardianship of those given the Scripture before you and the disbelievers who have made your faith a mockery and amusement. And be mindful of Allah if you are ˹truly˺ believers. Romans 2:12, All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law.
- Qur’an 57:27, Then in the footsteps of these ˹prophets˺, We sent Our messengers, and ˹after them˺ We sent Jesus, son of Mary, and granted him the Gospel, and instilled compassion and mercy into the hearts of his followers. As for monasticism, they made it up—We never ordained it for them—only seeking to please Allah, yet they did not ˹even˺ observe it strictly. So We rewarded those of them who were faithful. But most of them are rebellious. John 1: 17, For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

The Qur’an claims that John 16 about the coming of the Holy Spirit referred to Muhammad’s coming. The Qur’an 61:6 does not by any chance claim the coming of Muhammad, but the Holy Spirit noted in Acts 1:8. 2 Corinthians 11:14 notes that Satan masquerades as the angel of light.

- Qur’an 7:157, “˹They are˺ the ones who follow the Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, whose description they find in their Torah and the Gospel. He commands them to do good and forbids them from evil, permits for them what is lawful and forbids to them what is impure, and relieves them from their burdens and the shackles that bind them. ˹Only˺ those who believe in him, honor and support him, and follow the light sent down to him will be successful.”
- Qur’an 61:6, And ˹remember˺ when Jesus, son of Mary, said, “O children of Israel! I am truly Allah’s messenger to you, confirming the Torah which came before me, and giving good news of a messenger after me whose name will be Aḥmad.” Yet when the Prophet came to them with clear proof, they said, “This is pure magic.”

- John 16:7-11, But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. 8 When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 about sin, because people do not believe in me; 10 about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; 11 and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.
- Acts 1:8, But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.
- 2 Corinthians 11:14, And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.

The Qur'an pronounces negativity to the Bible in several chapters starting from Qur'an 4:46, Qur'an 5:13, and Qur'an 5:41, among others. The following verses claim the Jews and Christians altered the words from Allah:

- Qur'an 4:46, Some Jews take words out of context and say, "We listen and we disobey," "Hear! May you never hear," and "Râ'ina!" [Herd us!]—playing with words and discrediting the faith. Had they said ˹courteously˺, "We hear and obey," "Listen to us," and "Unẓurna," [Tend to us!] it would have been better for them and more proper. Allah has condemned them for their disbelief, so they do not believe except for a few.
- Qur'an 5:13, But for breaking their covenant We condemned them and hardened their hearts. They distorted the words of the Scripture and neglected a portion of what they had been commanded to uphold. You ˹O Prophet˺ will always find deceit on their part, except for a few. But pardon them and bear with them. Indeed, Allah loves the good-doers.
- Qur'an 5:41 O Messenger! Do not grieve for those who race to disbelieve—those who say, "We believe" with their tongues, but their hearts are in disbelief. Nor those among the Jews who eagerly listen to lies, attentive to those who are too arrogant to come to you. They distort the Scripture, taking rulings out of context, then say, "If this is the ruling you get ˹from Muḥammad˺, accept it. If not, beware!" Whoever Allah allows to be deluded, you can never be of any help to them against Allah. It is not Allah's Will to purify their hearts. For them is disgrace in this world, and they will suffer a tremendous punishment in the Hereafter.

Certain adherents of the Islamic faith employ the Bible to interpret the Qur'an while also utilizing the Qur'an and fundamental tenets of Islam to interpret the Bible. In an attempt to establish the biblical context, scholars may reference certain narratives from the Qur'an that draw upon biblical stories. An illustrative example can be found in Qur'an 38:21-25, whereby the transgression committed by David is shown as the act of killing Uriah rather than being explicitly attributed to adultery. The biblical narrative centers around an instance of infidelity that ultimately resulted in the demise of Uria. In certain instances, adherents of the Islamic faith may employ the Qur'an to interpret the contents and teachings of the Bible.

- 2 Samuel 11: 4, Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her. (Now she was purifying herself from her monthly uncleanness.) Then she went back home. 5 The woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, “I am pregnant.”

The Qur’an 38:21-25, Has the story of the two plaintiffs, who scaled the ˹wall of David’s˺ sanctuary, reached you ˹O Prophet˺? 22 When they came into David’s presence, he was startled by them. They said, “Have no fear. ˹We are merely˺ two in a dispute: one of us has wronged the other. So judge between us with truth—do not go beyond ˹it˺—and guide us to the right way. 23 This is my brother. He has ninety-nine sheep while I have ˹only˺ one. ˹Still˺ he asked me to give it up to him, overwhelming me with ˹his˺ argument.” 24 David ˹eventually˺ ruled, “He has definitely wronged you in demanding ˹to add˺ your sheep to his. And certainly many partners wrong each other, except those who believe and do good—but how few are they!” Then David realized that We had tested him so he asked for his Lord’s forgiveness, fell down in prostration, and turned ˹to Him in repentance˺. 25 So We forgave that for him. And he will indeed have ˹a status of˺ closeness to Us and an honorable destination! Such stories can be found in the Bible 2 Samuel 11:1–12:9.

Conversion From Islam to Christianity

Converting from Islam to Christianity holds great significance within the religious experiences of individuals who choose to undergo this transition. Examining the conversion process from Islam to Christianity is essential, as it explores the underlying motivations driving individuals to undertake such conversions. Additionally, it enables an analysis of the various problems and risks encountered by converts throughout this transformative journey. Moreover, understanding the potential ramifications of this decision for individuals and communities is crucial in comprehending the broader implications of religious conversion. Various circumstances, such as personal spiritual encounters, discontentment with Islamic beliefs or practices, inquisitiveness, and exposure to Christian communities or literature, can influence the decision to convert from Islam to Christianity. Conversion is frequently driven by personal spiritual experiences, wherein individuals aspire to establish a profound relationship with the divine and attain a more gratifying spiritual existence. The exploration of Christianity as an alternative to Islam may be motivated by dissatisfaction with various aspects of Islamic beliefs or practices, including the treatment of women, the prevalence of violence and extremism, or perceived limitations on personal freedom. The exposure to Christian communities or literature, whether through online platforms or human interactions, can be a notable catalyst in motivating persons to convert to Christianity.[146]

Various challenges and difficulties accompany the decision to convert from Islam to Christianity. Challenges and risks have persisted over an extended period, particularly in nations where Islam dominates and apostasy is regarded as a criminal

[146] A. Gualtieri, “Converts from Islam to Christianity: A Qualitative Study,” Religions, 10(2), 2019, 80.

offense. Individuals who undergo conversion may encounter several challenges, including social exclusion, discriminatory treatment, and maybe even physical harm inflicted upon them by their families, communities, and governmental institutions. In certain instances, individuals may face incarceration or maybe capital punishment. The potential hazards and difficulties associated with the conversion process may be further intensified for those belonging to vulnerable or underprivileged communities.[147]

Consequences for Individuals and Communities due to a decision to convert from Islam to Christianity can have substantial consequences for individuals and communities. For individuals, the conversion process can profoundly impact, leading to a heightened spiritual connection with the divine and fostering a sense of inclusion within a previously unfamiliar social group. Nevertheless, it is essential to acknowledge that this phenomenon can also give rise to persistent discord and detachment from one's familial and communal networks. The process of persons transitioning within communities can be perceived as a potential challenge to their cultural and religious identity, eliciting a spectrum of responses ranging from acceptance to rejection and, in extreme cases, even inciting acts of violence.[148]

Various factors may contribute to the phenomenon of conversion, one being the pursuit of a more profound and significant spiritual encounter among numerous individuals adhering to the Islamic faith, which they see to be attainable through embracing Christianity. Christianity presents a message encompassing hope, love, and redemption, which may appeal to persons disenchanted with violence, extremism, and persecution occasionally linked to Islam. One plausible factor contributing to the conversions can be attributed to the impact exerted by Christian missionaries and evangelists. Recently, Christian organizations have exhibited considerable engagement in disseminating their religious teachings globally, emphasizing establishing connections with Muslim communities. These religious organizations employ several strategies to engage potential followers, including disseminating Bibles and Christian literature, leveraging social media platforms and online tools, and engaging in personal evangelism and outreach efforts.

Transitioning from Islam to Christianity is a profoundly personal and momentous occurrence in the lives of individuals who choose to embark upon it. The conversion process can present significant challenges and risks for individuals, especially in nations where heresy is considered criminal. In contrast, the motivations for undertaking such conversions can differ significantly. Conversion can substantially affect individuals and communities, leading to persistent conflict and friction. Jesus warned that it would not be easy for his followers, but He shall be with them until the end of the earth. Read the following texts:

- Matthew 5:10-12, Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,

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[147] W. Al-Faisal, "Conversion from Islam to Christianity," Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies, 2013, 1(1), 1-10.

[148] M. Akyol, "From Islam to Christianity: The Case of Turkey." International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 2011, 1(4), 11-18.

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

- Matthew 10:16–18, I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. 17 Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues. 18 On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles.
- Matthew 28:20, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.
- Mark 10:29–30, "Truly I tell you," Jesus replied, no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel 30 will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—along with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life.
- John 15:19–20, If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. 20 Remember what I told you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also.
- Romans 8:35-37, 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? 36 As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." 37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.
- 2 Corinthians 12:9-10, But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. 10 That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong
- James 1:2-4, 2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. 4 Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.
- James 1:12, Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.
- 1 Peter 3:14, But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened."

- 1 Peter 4:14, if you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

The documented instances of individuals transitioning from Islam to Christianity occur within a larger global religious transformation and discord context. Across various regions globally, there is an observable trend towards religious pluralism, characterized by the coexistence and competition of multiple religious traditions for adherents. The circumstances above may give rise to interpersonal strain and discord but concurrently present novel prospects for constructive discourse and comprehension. The occurrence of documented instances of individuals transitioning from Islam to Christianity is observed within the framework of an expanding recognition of human rights and the promotion of religious liberty. Numerous nations have implemented legal frameworks and governmental measures to safeguard the fundamental right of religious freedom, enabling individuals to exercise their religious convictions further and engage in faith-based rituals without apprehension of persecution.

Transitioning from Islam to Christianity is a multidimensional and intricate phenomenon. The observed conversions can be attributed to many factors, and their consequences hold considerable significance for individuals and societies alike. Conversions have the potential to catalyze individuals in search of a more profound spiritual encounter, instilling a sense of hope and facilitating personal transformation. However, it is essential to acknowledge that conversions can engender discord and strain within communities, giving rise to conflicts and tensions. It is imperative to comprehend this phenomenon within its broader context and strive towards fostering a personal relationship with the divine.

Muslims are Searching for the Truth

In Qur'an 5:47, it is said that individuals are encouraged to make judgments following the teachings of the Gospel. Despite the belief among Muslims that the Bible has been perverted, the Qur'an does indeed encourage them to engage in the reading of the Scriptures. Prophet Muhammad established the importance of Muslims engaging with the Bible due to its divine inspiration. The Prophet expressed a lack of conviction in the corruption of the Bible, which led him to encourage his people to engage in the reading of this religious text. Numerous adherents of the Islamic faith perceive this situation as a quandary, as they are informed by the Qur'an to peruse the Bible, yet are told that it is tainted.

- Qur'an 5:47, So let the people of the Gospel judge by what Allah has revealed in it. And those who do not judge by what Allah has revealed are ˹truly˺ the rebellious.

The exploration of scriptural evidence about Jesus has prompted several individuals to embrace the Christian faith. According to Islamic teachings, Muhammad is regarded as the preeminent messenger of Allah and is considered to be the epitome of human perfection. However, it is worth noting that within several sections of the Qur'an, the angel Gabriel conveyed to the Prophet Muhammad that

the Gospels are a legitimate source of truth that Muslims ought to be engaged. Prophet Muhammad held the belief that the Bible was not corrupt. In Sunan Abu Dawud, he explicitly affirmed that the Torah is divinely inspired.

- Narrated Abdullah Ibn Umar: A group of Jews invited the Apostle of Allah (peace_be_upon_him) to Quiff. So he visited them in their school.
  They said: AbulQasim, one of our men has committed fornication with a woman; so pronounce judgment upon them. They placed a cushion for the Apostle of Allah (peace_be_upon_him) who sat on it and said: Bring the Torah. It was then brought. He then withdrew the cushion from beneath him and placed the Torah on it saying: I believed in thee and in Him Who revealed thee. (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 38, Number 4434)
- Qur'an 29:46, Do not argue with the People of the Book unless gracefully, except with those of them who act wrongfully. And say, "We believe in what has been revealed to us and what was revealed to you. Our God and your God is ˹only˺ One. And to Him we ˹fully˺ submit."
- Qur'an 35:31, The Book We have revealed to you ˹O Prophet˺ is the truth, confirming what came before it. Surely Allah is All-Aware, All-Seeing of His servants.

It is more evident that in the Qur'an 29:46, Muhammad commands Muslims to affirm the authority and authenticity of the Christian Scriptures available then and now. The Qur'an in 35:31 further affirms that the Bible is authentic today. Muhammad accuses the Jews of taking some rulings out of context but does not discredit the Torah, as noted in several verses of the Qur'an below:

- Qur'an 3:3-4, He has revealed to you ˹O Prophet˺ the Book in truth, confirming what came before it, as He revealed the Torah and the Gospel. 4 previously, as a guide for people, and ˹also˺ revealed the Standard ˹to distinguish between right and wrong˺. Surely those who reject Allah's revelations will suffer a severe torment. For Allah is Almighty, capable of punishment.
- Qur'an 5: 46, Then in the footsteps of the prophets, We sent Jesus, son of Mary, confirming the Torah revealed before him. And We gave him the Gospel containing guidance and light and confirming what was revealed in the Torah—a guide and a lesson to the God-fearing.
- Qur'an 5:41, O Messenger! Do not grieve for those who race to disbelieve—those who say, "We believe" with their tongues, but their hearts are in disbelief. Nor those among the Jews who eagerly listen to lies, attentive to those who are too arrogant to come to you. They distort the Scripture, taking rulings out of context, then say, "If this is the ruling you get ˹from Muḥammad˺, accept it. If not, beware!" Whoever Allah allows to be deluded, you can never be of any help to them against Allah. It is not Allah's Will to purify their hearts. For them is disgrace in this world, and they will suffer a tremendous punishment in the Hereafter.
- Qur'an 6:154-157, Additionally, We gave Moses the Scripture, completing the favor upon those who do good, detailing everything, and as a guide and a mercy, so perhaps they would be certain of the meeting with their Lord. 155

This is a blessed Book We have revealed. So follow it and be mindful ˹of Allah˺, so you may be shown mercy. 166 You ˹pagans˺ can no longer say, “Scriptures were only revealed to two groups before us and we were unaware of their teachings.”157 Nor can you say, “If only the Scriptures had been revealed to us, we would have been better guided than they.” Now there has come to you from your Lord a clear proof—a guide and mercy. Who then does more wrong than those who deny Allah’s revelations and turn away from them? We will reward those who turn away from Our revelations with a dreadful punishment for turning away.

- Qur’an 10:37, It is not ˹possible˺ for this Qur’an to have been produced by anyone other than Allah. In fact, it is a confirmation of what came before, and an explanation of the Scripture. It is, without a doubt, from the Lord of all worlds.
- Qur’an 46:12, And before this ˹Qur’an˺ the Book of Moses was ˹revealed as˺ a guide and mercy. And this Book is a confirmation, in the Arabic tongue, to warn those who do wrong, and as good news to those who do good.
- Qur’an 46:30, They declared, “O our fellow jinn! We have truly heard a scripture revealed after Moses, confirming what came before it. It guides to the truth and the Straight Way.

Muslims searching for the truth about Jesus in scripture leads them to conversion. We have established in the above various Qur’anic verses that Muslims are encouraged to read the Bible. In the search for truth, the Holy Spirit illuminates the word of God and makes it alive to those seeking the truth. Jesus declares in John 14: 6, Jesus answered, “ I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” Islam teaches that the Bible and the Qur’an originated from God; though Muslims are instructed that the Bible has been polluted, they are not told by who and when. History shows that there were many variants and disputes of the Qur’an until Uthman ordered their destruction, as noted in Sahih Bukhari (6:61:509-510). The hadiths were written 150-250 years after the death of Muhammad.

- Narrated By Zaid bin Thabit : Abu Bakr As-Siddiq sent for me when the people of Yamama had been killed (i.e., a number of the Prophet’s Companions who fought against Musailama). (I went to him) and found ‘Umar bin Al-Khattab sitting with him. Abu Bakr then said (to me), Umar has come to me and said: “Casualties were heavy among the Qurra’ of the! Qur’an (i.e. those who knew the Qur’an by heart) on the day of the Battle of Yamama, and I am afraid that more heavy casualties may take place among the Qurra’ on other battlefields, whereby a large part of the Qur’an may be lost. Therefore I suggest, you (Abu Bakr) order that the Qur’an be collected.” I said to ‘Umar, “How can you do something which Allah’s Apostle did not do?” ‘Umar said, By Allah, that is a good project. “Umar kept on urging me to accept his proposal till Allah opened my chest for it and I began to realize the good in the idea which ‘Umar had realized.” Then Abu Bakr said (to me). ‘You are a wise young man and we do not have any suspicion about you, and you used to write the Divine Inspiration for Allah’s Apostle. So you should search for (the

fragmentary scripts of) the Qur'an and collect it in one book). By Allah If they had ordered me to shift one of the mountains, it would not have been heavier for me than this ordering me to collect the Qur'an. Then I said to Abu Bakr, "How will you do something which Allah's Apostle did not do?" Abu Bakr replied, "By Allah, it is a good project." Abu Bakr kept on urging me to accept his idea until Allah opened my chest for what He had opened the chests of Abu Bakr and 'Umar. So I started looking for the Qur'an and collecting it from (what was written on) palmed stalks, thin white stones and also from the men who knew it by heart, till I found the last Verse of Surah At-Taubah (Repentance) with Abi Khuzaima Al-Ansari, and I did not find it with anybody other than him. The Verse is: 'Verily there has come unto you an Apostle (Muhammad) from amongst yourselves. It grieves him that you should receive any injury or difficulty… (till the end of Surat-Baraa' (At-Taubah) (9.128-129) Then the complete manuscripts (copy) of the Qur'an remained with Abu Bakr till he died, then with 'Umar till the end of his life, and then with Hafsa, the daughter of 'Umar. (Sahih Bukhari 6:61:509-510).

- Narrated Anas bin Malik: Hudhaifa bin Al-Yaman came to `Uthman at the time when the people of Sham and the people of Iraq were waging war to conquer Armenia and Azerbaijan. Hudhaifa was afraid of their (the people of Sham and Iraq) differences in the recitation of the Qur'an, so he said to `Uthman, "O chief of the Believers! Save this nation before they differ about the Book (Qur'an) as the Jews and the Christians did before." So `Uthman sent a message to Hafsa saying, "Send us the manuscripts of the Qur'an so that we may compile the Qur'anic materials in perfect copies and return the manuscripts to you." Hafsa sent it to `Uthman. `Uthman then ordered Zaid bin Thabit, `Abdullah bin AzZubair, Sa`id bin Al-As and `AbdurRahman bin Harith bin Hisham to rewrite the manuscripts in perfect copies. `Uthman said to the three Quraish men, (Sahih Bukhari 6:61:510).

During Muhammad's existence, no evidence suggests that the Bible had any official alterations. However, historical records indicate potential modifications and revisions to the Qur'an within the Islamic community. Muslims have claimed that the Bible has been altered, as stated in Qur'an 15:90. However, a careful examination of Qur'an 15:91 reveals internal inconsistencies within the Qur'an itself. The Hadith literature acknowledges the existence of certain citations that were commonly used but underwent editorial modifications. The teachings of Jesus serve as the focal point of any discourse about religion. The teachings of Jesus and Prophet Muhammad exhibit significant differences. While Jesus promotes the concept of loving one's enemy, Muhammad, on the other hand, encourages Muslims to engage in conflict with those they view as enemies, potentially resulting in their demise. Read the following verses and verify their contrast:

- Matthew 5: 43-48, You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 46 If you love those who love you, what reward

will you get? Aren't even the tax collectors doing that? 47 And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? 48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

- Qur'an 2:191, Kill them wherever you come upon them and drive them out of the places from which they have driven you out. For persecution is far worse than killing. And do not fight them at the Sacred Mosque unless they attack you there. If they do so, then fight them—that is the reward of the disbelievers.
- Qur'an 3:151, We will cast terror into the hearts of the disbelievers for associating ˹false gods˺ with Allah—a practice He has never authorized. The Fire will be their home—what an evil place for the wrongdoers to stay!
- Qur'an 15:90-91, ˹a warning˺ similar to what We sent to those who divided ˹the Scriptures˺, 91 who ˹now˺ accept parts of the Qur'an, rejecting others.

It is advisable for anyone adhering to the Islamic faith to seek knowledge regarding Jesus' death, deity, and resurrection from the biblical scriptures rather than relying solely on a potentially ambiguous interpretation found within the Qur'an. Each of the four Gospels provides evidence of Jesus' crucifixion. No historical evidence supports the Qur'anic perspective that Jesus was not crucified. If the available historical evidence consistently indicates Jesus's death and resurrection as the first events, Islam, which emerged six centuries later, lacks a foundation to refute this reality. Despite the presence of concrete evidence substantiating the death and resurrection of Jesus, the teachings of the Qur'an maintain that it was someone other than Jesus who was crucified (Qur'an 4:157). The prevailing belief among Muslims is that Jesus ascended to Heaven without undergoing crucifixion. There is a belief among specific individuals that Allah deliberately fashioned a likeness that closely resembled his own being, which was later crucified in lieu of Jesus. Therefore, Jesus ascended physically into Heaven, where he will reside until his anticipated Second Coming during the eschatological period. Compare Qur'an 4:157-158 and the following verses, which attest to the fact of Jesus's Crucifixion, death, and resurrection:

- Qur'an 4:157-158, and for boasting, "We killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the messenger of Allah." But they neither killed nor crucified him—it was only made to appear so. Even those who argue for this ˹crucifixion˺ are in doubt. They have no knowledge whatsoever—only making assumptions. They certainly did not kill him. 158 Rather, Allah raised him up to Himself. And Allah is Almighty, All-Wise.
- Matthew 27: 32-37, As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene, named Simon, and they forced him to carry the cross. 33 They came to a place called Golgotha (which means "the place of the skull"). 34 There they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall; but after tasting it, he refused to drink it. 35 When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots. 36 And sitting down, they kept watch over him there. 37 Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS, The King OF THE JEWS.

- Matthew 27: 45-50, From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land. 46 About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” (which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”). 47 When some of those standing there heard this, they said, “He’s calling Elijah.” 48 Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. 49 The rest said, “Now leave him alone. Let’s see if Elijah comes to save him.” 50 And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.
- Matthew 28: 1-7, After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. 2 There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. 3 His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. 4 The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. 5 The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. 6 He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. 7 Then go quickly and tell his disciples: ‘He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.’ Now I have told you.”
- Luke 23: 32-34, Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. 33 When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. 34 Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.
- Luke 24:1-8 On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. 2 They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, 3 but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4 While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. 5 In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? 6 He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 7 ’The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.’ ” 8 Then they remembered his words.
- John 19: 15-16 But they shouted, “Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!” “Shall I crucify your king?” Pilate asked. “We have no king but Caesar,” the chief priests answered. 16 Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.

In the contemporary era characterized by the proliferation of information, individuals adhering to the Islamic faith now possess the means to readily access Christian resources, including the Bible, through internet platforms. Individuals can privately examine the Bible’s content without subjecting themselves to potential repercussions if they are discovered in possession of biblical texts. In the Christian faith, it is believed that individuals do not actively seek to find God. However, instead,

God initiates the search for them and establishes a profound and enduring personal connection with them. Jesus proclaimed his intended mission from the outset, stating that he had come to seek out individuals in spiritual disorientation or separation. The divine entity consistently seeks to locate those who have strayed from their spiritual path. However, these individuals must exercise their agency by aligning themselves with the divine. The divine being expressed affection towards humanity by bestowing His one offspring for the sake of atoning for our transgressions.

- Ezekiel 34:16, I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice.
- Matthew 1:21, She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.
- Matthew 9:12-13, On hearing this, Jesus said, ”It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. 13 But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”
- Matthew 10:6, Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel.
- Matthew 15:24, He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.”
- Luke 5:31-32, Jesus answered them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. 32 I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”
- Luke 15:4-7, Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? 5 And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders 6 and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ 7 I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.
- Luke 15:32, But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and was found.
- Luke 19:10, For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.
- John 3:16, For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
- Romans 5:6, You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.
- 1 Timothy 1:13-16, Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. 14 The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. 16 But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life.
- Hebrews 7:25, Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

- 1 John 4:9-14, This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11 Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. 13 This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. 14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.

Muhammad introduced the challenge of an apostate, who declared that whoever leaves Islam, Kill him or her. Jesus never taught about those who assert their faith to be killed; in 1 John 1:9, he encourages them to repent. Compare that verse with the kill the apostate in the Qur'an and Hadith in the following verses:

- 1 John 1:9, If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.
- It was narrated that Ibn 'Abbas said: "The Messenger of Allah [SAW] said: 'Whoever changes his religion, kill him.'" (Sunan an-Nasa'i 4061, Book 37, Hadith 96, Vol. 5, Book 37, Hadith 4066)
- Qur'an 4:137, Indeed, those who believed then disbelieved, then believed and again disbelieved—˹only˺ increasing in disbelief—Allah will neither forgive them nor guide them to the ˹Right˺ Way.
- Qur'an 33:60, If the hypocrites, and those with sickness in their hearts, and rumor-mongers in Medina do not desist, We will certainly incite you ˹O Prophet˺ against them, and then they will not be your neighbors there any longer.

Apostate Muslims encounter familial rejection, societal ostracism, and employment loss, among other adverse consequences. Certain nations with a Muslim majority population, where the legal system is based on Sharia, enforce more stringent penalties for individuals who renounce their faith, including acts of physical persecution, incarceration, torture, and capital punishment. However, it is essential to note that there are instances where Jesus has been reported to manifest to individuals through dreams and visions. Well-crafted online testimonies document the experiences of numerous Muslims who claim to have encountered Jesus, with these accounts reportedly reaching millions of individuals. To a certain degree, he is commonly referred to as the "man in white." Jesus is not limited by space or time; he can talk to people differently. Jesus is leaning on the door of many, as noted in Revelation 3:20, "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they will be with me." Many testimonies are befitting Jesus, instructing Muslims to hear the truth from their Christian neighbors. Jesus uses other means to reach out to Muslims, such as the Christian lifestyle, miracles, signs and wonders, dissatisfaction with Islam, and spiritual truth in the Bible.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

SYNTHESIS OF BIBLICAL TRUTH IN RELATION TO ISLAM

Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed Compared

The book's final section examines the Bible's influence on the Islamic community. The Bible does not offer a means to revise the established absolute truth. The Bible exhorts adherents to exercise discernment in identifying and evaluating instances of fraud within religious instruction. According to the teachings of the Qur'an, it is emphasized that Muslims should strive to establish mutual understanding and agreement with the people of the Book, as stated in Qur'an 3:64. This would entail Christians relinquishing their belief in the Trinity and adopting the teachings of Allah. The Apostle's Creed and the Nicene Creed serve as concise summaries of Christian doctrine.[149] Let us look at a side-by-side comparison of the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed below:

Table 35:1 Side-by-side comparison of the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed

Side-by-side comparison of the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed	
Apostle's Creed	Nicene Creed
I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth.	We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and of all things visible and invisible.
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.	And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father;
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,	By whom all things were made;
born of the Virgin Mary,	Who for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man;
suffered under Pontius Pilate,	And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate;
was crucified, dead, and buried;	He suffered and was buried;
He descended into Hell;	And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures;
the third day He rose again from the dead;	And ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father;

[149] Apostle's Creed, https://www.thecatholickid.com/wp-content/uploads/apostles-creed-coloring-page-cnt-mls.jpg

He ascended into Heaven,	And He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; whose Kingdom shall have no end.
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father	And we believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father [and the Son], who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the Prophets.
Almighty;	And we believe one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church;
From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.	We acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Both creeds articulate the fundamental beliefs and practices of Christians. The creeds effectively articulate the belief in a singular deity who manifests as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Christian faith encompasses several fundamental beliefs, including the prominent tenets of the virgin birth of Jesus, his death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. In addition, the creeds elaborate upon the doctrine about the absolution of transgressions and the perpetuity of existence. The Nicene Creed provides a more comprehensive exposition of the Apostles' Creed by offering more elaboration, particularly concerning the theological concepts of the divinity of Christ and the Holy Spirit and the inherent characteristics of the holy global Church.

Biblical View of the Antichrist

The Qur'an presents contrasting viewpoints to certain doctrines upheld by the Christian faith. Christians believe in the divinity of Jesus, perceiving him as the embodiment of the Son of God. Contrarily, the Qur'an espouses the belief that Isa (Jesus) was divinely created by Allah and served as a prophet, akin to any other individual within the human realm. Upon comparing the teachings of Prophet Muhammad and Jesus the Messiah, it becomes evident that Islam and Christianity diverge significantly in their respective doctrines. According to biblical teachings, individuals who reject the recognition of Jesus as the embodiment of the divine Son of God are considered to be Antichrists. Most Muslims believe that certain Bible teachings have undergone alterations, while the specific agents responsible for these modifications and the timeframes in which they occurred remain undisclosed. The Qur'an holds an erroneous perspective towards the Biblical scripture. Muslims are instructed to refrain from handling or perusing the Bible, even though the Qur'an explicitly encourages people to engage with its contents (Qur'an 2:62; 10:94). Muslim individuals are encouraged to critically examine the authority of the Bible by engaging in a comprehensive and unbiased reading of the text. The following verses teach about the antichrist:

- Daniel 7:8, While I was thinking about the horns, there before me was another horn, a little one, which came up among them; and three of the first horns were uprooted before it. This horn had eyes like the eyes of a human being and a mouth that spoke boastfully.
- Matthew 24:24, For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.
- 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. 4 He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.
- 1 John 2:22, Who is the liar? It is whoever denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a person is the antichrist—denying the Father and the Son.
- 2 John 1:7, I say this because many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist.
- 1 John 2:18, Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour.
- 1 John 4:3, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.
- Qur'an 2:62, Indeed, the believers, Jews, Christians, and Sabians—whoever ˹truly˺ believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good will have their reward with their Lord. And there will be no fear for them, nor will they grieve.
- Qur'an 10:94, If you ˹O Prophet˺ are in doubt about ˹these stories˺ that We have revealed to you, then ask those who read the Scripture before you. The truth has certainly come to you from your Lord, so do not be one of those who doubt,

Comparing God the Father and Allah

The biblical text reveals the existence of God as the Father. The term "Allah" denotes the Islamic deity and is not commonly associated with the paternal role. Despite being considered divine figures in their various religious traditions, it is essential to note that God, the Father, and Allah are distinct entities. It is a widely accepted belief among the academic community that the coexistence of two deities, both claiming to possess absolute truth, is inherently contradictory. Consequently, it is argued that one of the deities must be deemed fake. In this context, it is asserted that Allah is the deity. The Qur'an asserts that Allah possesses omniscience, omnipotence, and mercy attributes. However, it does not explicitly designate the deity as loving, even within the context of the 99 names attributed to Allah. Only God, the Father, possesses such traits.

The disparities between God, the Father, and Allah are substantial. The belief in the Holy Trinity is a fundamental tenet of Christianity, positing the existence of God

as a triune entity, including three distinct persons: the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit. According to Islamic doctrine, Allah is perceived as a singular and indivisible entity devoid of companions or collaborators, as stated in the Qur'an (4:48, 171). The concept of divine revelation is central to the religious beliefs of both Christians and Muslims. Christians hold that God the Father made himself known to humanity through the person of Jesus Christ, whilst Muslims believe that Allah revealed himself to humanity via the Prophet Muhammad and the sacred scripture known as the Qur'an. As mentioned earlier, the two revelations exhibit significant disparities, as observed in the Christian faith, where God manifests Himself to humanity and establishes a personal connection, in contrast to Allah, who is perceived as more remote. The Bible espouses the belief that God the Father is characterized by love and seeks to establish a personal connection with all individuals.

In contrast, the Islamic tradition does not emphasize fostering a personal relationship with Allah. The holy scriptures, namely the Bible and the Qur'an, describe the characteristics and attributes attributed to God the Father and Allah, respectively. One illustrative instance involves the characterization of God the Father as a benevolent and nurturing paternal figure, juxtaposed with the depiction of Allah as a compassionate and equitable entity.

- Qur'an 4:48, 171, Indeed, Allah does not forgive associating others with Him ˹in worship˺,1 but forgives anything else of whoever He wills. And whoever associates others with Allah has indeed committed a grave sin. 171 O People of the Book! Do not go to extremes regarding your faith; say nothing about Allah except the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was no more than a messenger of Allah and the fulfillment of His Word through Mary and a spirit ˹created by a command˺ from Him. So believe in Allah and His messengers and do not say, "Trinity." Stop! —for your own good. Allah is only One God. Glory be to Him! He is far above having a son! To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And Allah is sufficient as a Trustee of Affairs.

The New Testament contains numerous references to God the Father, including John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." The Qur'an only discusses a powerful deity with no relationship with his creation (Qur'an 2:255). God the Father reveals himself to humankind, desires a personal relationship with everyone, and has provided a way to be reconciled to him through his son, Jesus Christ. **God's relationship with Jesus on earth is the same with all who believe in Him.** The book of John 1:12 says, "Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."

On the contrary, Allah has no personal relationship with any individual human being. Instead, Allah is seen primarily as a judge who dispenses mercy and punishment based on the destiny of individuals. The Bible teaches that God is personal, and one can verily talk to Him as shown in the Lord's Prayer, among others

in the following verses. According to Quran 2:255, we do not see Muslims enjoying such a relationship with Allah.

- Matthew 6:9-13, ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, 10 your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us today our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.’
- Romans 8:15, The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.”
- Galatians 4:6, Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.”
- Ephesians 4:6, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.
- James 1:17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.
- 1 Peter 1:3, Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
- Qur’an 2:255, Allah! There is no god ˹worthy of worship˺ except Him, the Ever-Living, All-Sustaining. Neither drowsiness nor sleep overtakes Him. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. Who could possibly intercede with Him without His permission? He ˹fully˺ knows what is ahead of them and what is behind them, but no one can grasp any of His knowledge—except what He wills ˹to reveal˺. His Seat encompasses the heavens and the earth, and the preservation of both does not tire Him. For He is the Most High, the Greatest.

Throughout the Bible, these verses reveal God the Father as a loving, compassionate, and merciful God who desires a personal relationship with his creation.

Biblical Jesus and the Qur’anic Isa

The term “Biblical” refers to anything related to or derived from the Bible; there exists a distinction between Jesus and Qur’anic Isa, as they are considered separate individuals. The Christian faith would lack fullness without the salvific contributions of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:12-22). The disparities observed within the Bible cannot be harmonized with the portrayal of Isa in the Qur’an. One could posit that Jesus and Isa hold significant religious reverence within the contexts of Christianity and Islam, correspondingly. However, can it be inferred that both individuals are identical? The response provided is negative. In biblical literature, Jesus is widely recognized as a divine being, specifically as the Son of God and the individual responsible for delivering salvation to humanity. It is widely postulated that he was born to the Virgin Mary, exhibited extraordinary phenomena, imparted teachings on the concepts of divine affection and absolution, and was subjected to crucifixion as

an expiation for humanity's transgressions. Jesus rose from the dead three days after his death, which is celebrated as Easter.

- 1 Corinthians 15:12-22, But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. 14 And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. 15 More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. 16 For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. 17 And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. 18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. 19 If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. 20 But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. 22 For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.

The term "Isa", as found in the Qur'an, appears to refer to Jesus. However, it is essential to note that this designation does not correspond to the individual portrayed in the biblical narrative. Muslims also hold beliefs around Isa, albeit with divergent perspectives compared to Christians. Muslims believe that Isa, as mentioned in the Qur'an 3:59, is a prophet and messenger of Allah but not considered the Son of God. According to the Qur'an 4:171, it is believed that Isa was born to the Virgin Mary and performed miracles through the divine will of Allah. Muslims believe that Isa (Jesus) was not subjected to crucifixion but instead ascended to heaven through divine intervention by Allah. The documentation of Isa's teachings in the Qur'an is limited. Based on the assumption mentioned above, it can be observed that within Islam, Isa is regarded as a human being, yet in the Bible, he is shown as a divine being. This distinction underscores the fundamental dissimilarity between the two individuals. The following verses declare the differences:

- Matthew 11:5, The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.
- Matthew 16:13-20, When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" 14 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" 16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." 17 Jesus replied, Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. 20 Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

- John 3:16, For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
- Qur'an 3:59, Indeed, the example of Jesus in the sight of Allah is like that of Adam. He created him from dust, then said to him, "Be!" And he was!
- Qur'an 4:171, O People of the Book! Do not go to extremes regarding your faith; say nothing about Allah except the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was no more than a messenger of Allah and the fulfillment of His Word through Mary and a spirit ˹created by a command˺ from Him. So believe in Allah and His messengers and do not say, "Trinity." Stop! —for your own good. Allah is only One God. Glory be to Him! He is far above having a son! To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And Allah is sufficient as a Trustee of Affairs.

God and the Holy Spirit in the Bible and the Qur'an

The Holy Spirit is referenced in the Bible and the Qur'an, albeit with distinct duties and characteristics. According to biblical teachings, the individual in question represents the third entity under the concept of the Trinity. The Trinity is a theological belief centered around a singular deity in three distinct persons: the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit. Moreover, within the context of the Bible, the entity in question is identified as the Comforter and Counsellor. It is widely seen as the manifestation of divine force actively operating within the world and adherents' experiences. The following are some of the Bible verses that reference the Holy Spirit:

- John 14:16- 17, And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.
- John 14:26, But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.
- Acts 1:8, But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

The Qur'an identifies the Holy Spirit as the Angel Gabriel (known as Jibril in Arabic), regarded as Allah's divine messenger. It is widely believed that Gabriel conveyed the revelations to the Prophet Muhammad. The Holy Spirit is not commonly seen as a divine person but as an angelic entity. Indeed, it is evident that Islam and Christianity are two distinct religious traditions that are inherently irreconcilable. Some Quranic verses that reference the Spirit as Angel Gabriel include:

- Qur'an 2:97, Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ "Whoever is an enemy of Gabriel should know that he revealed this ˹Qur'an˺ to your heart by Allah's Will, confirming what came before it—a guide and good news for the believers."

- Qur'an 2:87, Indeed, We gave Moses the Book and sent after him successive messengers. And We gave Jesus, son of Mary, clear proofs and supported him with the holy spirit. Why is it that every time a messenger comes to you ˹Israelites˺ with something you do not like, you become arrogant, rejecting some and killing others?
- Qur'an 16:102, Say, "The holy spirit has brought it down from your Lord with the truth to reassure the believers, and as a guide and good news for those who submit ˹to Allah˺."
- Qur'an 26:193-194, which the trustworthy spirit ˹Gabriel˺ brought down -194 into your heart ˹O Prophet˺—so that you may be one of the warners.

The assertion that the Bible and the Qur'an hold contradictory views regarding the nature of the Holy Spirit raises questions about their compatibility. During the period estimated to be between 30 and 100 AD, Jesus and His apostles were preaching on Earth. Subsequently, around five centuries later, Prophet Muhammad emerged and asserted that the Holy Spirit was none other than the Angel Gabriel. Christianity and Islam exhibit divergent interpretations of the identity and function of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, as depicted in the Bible, is considered a divine being within the Trinity. It is widely thought that the Holy Spirit manifests God's power in both the world and the spiritual journey of those who adhere to the faith. According to Islamic scripture, namely the Qur'an, the Holy Spirit is identified as the Angel Gabriel. This celestial being is recognized as a divine messenger of God who played a pivotal role in delivering the revelations to the Prophet Muhammad. This belief cannot be deemed to agree. Indeed, when the Holy Spirit is mentioned in the Bible, He is divine.

Religious Freedom in Islam

The Qur'an poses an injunction in religious freedom, as noted in verse 109: 6, which says, "Your religion is for you and my religion is for me." Another verse states, "This is˺ the truth from your Lord. Whoever wills let them believe, and whoever wills let them disbelieve (Qur'an 18: 29)." These are the proper examples of religious freedom in Islam, which Muslims do not bother to follow when it comes to persecuting apostates. Furthermore, the Qur'an asks Muslims to behave with wisdom and beautiful words when dealing with the people of other religions (16:125).[150] Some Muslims do not read their Qur'an when they kill or ostracize those of the contrary opinion within their homes. The following verses show that religious freedom is accepted in Islam:

- Qur'an 5: 48, We have revealed to you ˹O Prophet˺ this Book with the truth, as a confirmation of previous Scriptures and a supreme authority on them. So judge between them by what Allah has revealed, and do not follow their desires over the truth that has come to you. To each of you We have ordained a code of law and a way of life. If Allah had willed, He would have made you

[150] Ahmet Kurucan and Mustafa Kasim Erol, Dialogue in Islam: Qur'an, Sunnah, History (London:Dialogue Society, 2011), 36. https://www.dialoguesociety.org/publications/dialogue-in-islam

one community, but His Will is to test you with what He has given ˹each of˺ you. So compete with one another in doing good. To Allah you will all return, then He will inform you ˹of the truth˺ regarding your differences.

- Qur'an 5:68–69, Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ "O People of the Book! You have nothing to stand on unless you observe the Torah, the Gospel, and what has been revealed to you from your Lord." And your Lord's revelation to you ˹O Prophet˺ will only cause many of them to increase in wickedness and disbelief. So do not grieve for the people who disbelieve. 68 Indeed, the believers, Jews, Sabians1 and Christians—whoever ˹truly˺ believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good, there will be no fear for them, nor will they grieve.
- Qur'an 10: 99, Had your Lord so willed ˹O Prophet˺, all ˹people˺ on earth would have certainly believed, every single one of them! Would you then force people to become believers?
- Qur'an 16:125, Invite ˹all˺ to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and kind advice, and only debate with them in the best manner. Surely your Lord ˹alone˺ knows best who has strayed from His Way and who is ˹rightly˺ guided.
- Qur'an 22:17, Indeed, the believers, Jews, Sabians,1 Christians, Magi,2 and the polytheists—Allah will judge between them ˹all˺ on Judgment Day. Surely Allah is a Witness over all things.
- Qur'an 3:64, Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ "O People of the Book! Let us come to common terms: that we will worship none but Allah, associate none with Him, nor take one another as lords instead of Allah." But if they turn away, then say, "Bear witness that we have submitted ˹to Allah alone˺."

Islam Claims to be a Religion of Peace

Islam purports to be a religion that promotes peace. However, many chapters within its religious text, such as Qur'an 2:191 and 4:89, appear to endorse severe treatment of individuals who do not adhere to the Islamic faith. The Qur'an (60:8) instructs Muslims to exhibit charity towards others after previously advocating for violence against individuals of differing religious beliefs. This assertion suggests that due to its convoluted nature, the reliability of the Qur'an is questionable. According to Islamic teachings, non-Muslims, particularly apostates, deserve eradication. The incidence of familial homicides against apostate Muslims is experiencing an upward trend. The following verses support the deadly threat to those willing to embrace Christianity:

- Qur'an 2:191, says, Kill them wherever you come upon them and drive them out of the places from which they have driven you out. For persecution is far worse than killing. And do not fight them at the Sacred Mosque unless they attack you there. If they do so, then fight them—that is the reward of the disbelievers.
- Qur'an 4:89, They wish you would disbelieve as they have disbelieved, so you may all be alike. So do not take them as allies unless they emigrate in the

cause of Allah. But if they turn away, then seize them and kill them wherever you find them, and do not take any of them as allies or helpers,

- Qur'an 60:8, Allah does not forbid you from dealing kindly and fairly with those who have neither fought nor driven you out of your homes. Surely Allah loves those who are fair.

The Qur'an Contains Fragmented Stories from the Bible

The Qur'an has a fragmented story of the Bible. For instance, the creation story based on the Biblical view of Adam and Eve, among other stories, is incomplete. Several stories are misguided, as noted in Qur'an 2:61; 4:1.

- Qur'an 2:61, And ˹remember˺ when you said, "O Moses! We cannot endure the same meal ˹every day˺. So ˹just˺ call upon your Lord on our behalf, He will bring forth for us some of what the earth produces of herbs, cucumbers, garlic, lentils, and onions." Moses scolded ˹them˺, "Do you exchange what is better for what is worse? ˹You can˺ go down to any village and you will find what you have asked for." They were stricken with disgrace and misery, and they invited the displeasure of Allah for rejecting Allah's signs and unjustly killing the prophets. This is ˹a fair reward˺ for their disobedience and violations.
- Qur'an 4: 1, O humanity! Be mindful of your Lord Who created you from a single soul, and from it He created its mate, and through both He spread countless men and women. And be mindful of Allah—in Whose Name you appeal to one another—and ˹honor˺ family ties. Surely Allah is ever Watchful over you.

In the Bible, it is evident that in Jesus' teaching, "love your enemy" stands out, unlike the Qur'an, which claims to kill your enemy.

The Qur'an Permits Muslims to Read the Bible

It is recommended that individuals of the Islamic faith study the Bible to understand the authentic nature of the given text. This concept is highly esteemed within the Qur'an. In specific households predominantly inhabited by individuals practicing the Islamic faith, possessing a Bible would entail an unequivocal fatality risk. However, Muslims must maintain a connection with the teachings of the Qur'an, which emphasizes the importance of adopting a cooperative and inclusive approach towards others (Qur'an 2:143). According to the Qur'an 2:40, Prophet Muhammad advocated for preserving individual beliefs and emphasized the absence of compulsion in matters of religion.

- Qur'an 2:34, O children of Israel! Remember My favors upon you. Fulfill your covenant and I will fulfill Mine, and stand in awe of Me ˹alone˺.
- Qur'an 2:143, And so We have made you ˹believers˺ an upright community so that you may be witnesses over humanity and that the Messenger may be a witness over you. We assigned your former direction of prayer only to

distinguish those who would remain faithful to the Messenger from those who would lose faith. It was certainly a difficult test except for those ˹rightly˺ guided by Allah. And Allah would never discount your ˹previous acts of˺ faith. Surely Allah is Ever Gracious and Most Merciful to humanity.

Muslim individuals are encouraged to engage with the Bible to understand the authentic nature of the given word, which is held in high regard within the Qur'an. In specific households where Islam is the dominant religion, possessing a Bible can potentially result in fatal consequences. However, Muslims must maintain a connection with the teachings of the Qur'an, which emphasizes the importance of adopting a cooperative approach towards others (Qur'an 2:143). According to the teachings of Prophet Muhammad, it was expected that individuals would adhere to their own beliefs and that religion should not be imposed upon them forcefully, as stated in Qur'an 2:40. Regardless, the following several passages in the Qur'an permit Muslims to read the Bible:

- Qur'an 3:3, He has revealed to you ˹O Prophet˺ the Book in truth, confirming what came before it, as He revealed the Torah and the Gospel.
- Qur'an 5:44, Indeed, We revealed the Torah, containing guidance and light, by which the prophets, who submitted themselves to Allah, made judgments for Jews. So too did the rabbis and scholars judge according to Allah's Book, with which they were entrusted and of which they were made keepers. So do not fear the people; fear Me! Nor trade my revelations for a fleeting gain. And those who do not judge by what Allah has revealed are ˹truly˺ the disbelievers.
- Qur'an 5:46, Then in the footsteps of the prophets, We sent Jesus, son of Mary, confirming the Torah revealed before him. And We gave him the Gospel containing guidance and light and confirming what was revealed in the Torah—a guide and a lesson to the God-fearing.
- Qur'an calls the Bible the Word of God (Qur'an 2:62), Indeed, the believers, Jews, Christians, and Sabians—whoever ˹truly˺ believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good will have their reward with their Lord. And there will be no fear for them, nor will they grieve).
- Qur'an 10:94-95, If you ˹O Prophet˺ are in doubt about ˹these stories˺ that We have revealed to you, then ask those who read the Scripture before you. The truth has certainly come to you from your Lord, so do not be one of those who doubt 95 and do not be one of those who deny Allah's signs or you will be one of the losers.
- The Book of God:
    - Qur'an 2:101, Now, when a messenger from Allah has come to them—confirming their own Scriptures—some of the People of the Book cast the Book of Allah behind their backs as if they did not know.
    - Qur'an 3:23, Have you not seen those who were given a portion of the Scriptures? Yet when they are invited to the Book of Allah to settle their disputes, some of them turn away heedlessly.
    - Qur'an 5:44, Indeed, We revealed the Torah, containing guidance and light, by which the prophets, who submitted themselves to Allah, made

judgments for Jews. So too did the rabbis and scholars judge according to Allah's Book, with which they were entrusted and of which they were made keepers. So do not fear the people; fear Me! Nor trade my revelations for a fleeting gain. And those who do not judge by what Allah has revealed are ˹truly˺ the disbelievers.

- The enlightening book in (Qur'an 3:184), If you are rejected by them, so too were messengers before you who came with clear proofs, divine Books, and enlightening Scriptures.
- The Qur'an calls the Bible, or parts of the Bible, a light, (Qur'an 11:17 ˹Can these people be compared to˺ those ˹believers˺ who stand on clear proof from their Lord, backed by ˹the Qur'an as˺ a witness from Him, and preceded by the Book of Moses ˹which was revealed˺ as a guide and mercy? It is those ˹believers˺ who have faith in it. But whoever from the ˹disbelieving˺ groups rejects it, the Fire will be their destiny. So do not be in doubt of it. It is certainly the truth from your Lord, but most people do not believe.), and a warning.
- Qur'an 17:4 And We warned the Children of Israel in the Scripture, "You will certainly cause corruption in the land twice, and you will become extremely arrogant.
- It also states that the authors of the Bible were inspired:
    - Qur'an 4:163, Indeed, We have sent revelation to you ˹O Prophet˺ as We sent revelation to Noah and the prophets after him. We also sent revelation to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and his descendants, ˹as well as˺ Jesus, Job, Jonah, Aaron, and Solomon. And to David We gave the Psalms.
    - Qur'an 5:111, And how I inspired the disciples, "Believe in Me and My messenger!" They declared, "We believe and bear witness that we fully submit ˹to Allah˺."
    - Qur'an 5: 48, We have revealed to you ˹O Prophet˺ this Book with the truth, as a confirmation of previous Scriptures and a supreme authority on them. So judge between them by what Allah has revealed, and do not follow their desires over the truth that has come to you. To each of you We have ordained a code of law and a way of life. If Allah had willed, He would have made you one community, but His Will is to test you with what He has given ˹each of˺ you. So compete with one another in doing good. To Allah you will all return, then He will inform you ˹of the truth˺ regarding your differences.

The above verses should raise curiosity for Christians and Muslims to know what the Qur'an says about the Bible. **For Muslims, this can be a starting point for reading the Bible**.

The Quran Prohibits Insulting Other Religions

Some scholars claim that the Qur'an prohibits insulting other religions, their gods, and their followers (Al-Qur'an 6: 108).[151] In addition, the Qur'an (49: 11) infers that there are categories of prohibitions ridiculing a community and prohibits referring to them with offensive terms. Though Prophet Muhammad held a positive attitude towards his neighbors, his political anticipations and career may appear to define something different. There are many other traditions regarding the rights and dignity of neighbors, irrespective of their religious affiliation. Kurucan and Erol asserts, "There are many records that non-Muslims were well received with their cultural and religious identities and provided a secured life in many lands under the rule of the four rightly guided caliphs, the Umayyads, Abbasids, Seljuks, and Ottomans."[152] There will always be various religions in global communities.

The true God will always open people's hearts to know the truth. When that happens, many shall accept the true God and will always find themselves in the wrong hands of Islamic fundamentalism. The Qur'an admonishes its followers to maintain unity in differences and accept apostates with sincerity, love, and cooperation. Kurucan and Erol confirm, "Islamic teachings do not encourage Muslims to harm the people of other religions but encourage helping and securing them and providing them with their due rights and dignity."[153] Nonetheless, this has been far from the reality.

- Qur'an 6:108, ˹O believers!˺ Do not insult what they invoke besides Allah or they will insult Allah spitefully out of ignorance. This is how We have made each person's deeds appealing to them. Then to their Lord is their return, and He will inform them of what they used to do.
- Qur'an 49: 11, O believers! Do not let some ˹men˺ ridicule others, they may be better than them, nor let ˹some˺ women ridicule other women, they may be better than them. Do not defame one another, nor call each other by offensive nicknames. How evil it is to act rebelliously after having faith! And whoever does not repent, it is they who are the ˹true˺ wrongdoers.

Covenant in Christianity and Islam

According to the Qur'an (2:40), the fidelity of Allah is contingent upon individuals fulfilling their obligations under the covenant. The Christian deity does not align with the concept of reciprocal exchange. However, it might be argued that God remains steadfast in fulfilling His promises, irrespective of any human actions. As indicated in

[151]Khan, I., Elius, M., Mohd Nor, M. R., Yakub zulkifli Bin Mohd yusoff, M., Noordin, K., & Mansor, F. A Critical Appraisal of Interreligious Dialogue in Islam, SAGE Open, 10(4), 2020. https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020970560.

[152] Ahmet Kurucan and Mustafa Kasim Erol, Dialogue in Islam: Qur'an, Sunnah, History (London:Dialogue Society, 2011), 85. https://www.dialoguesociety.org/publications/dialogue-in-islam.

[153] Ahmet Kurucan and Mustafa Kasim Erol, Dialogue in Islam: Qur'an, Sunnah, History (London:Dialogue Society, 2011), 43. https://www.dialoguesociety.org/publications/dialogue-in-islam 43.

the Qur'an 2:40, it is evident that the document in question represents a contractual agreement rather than a promise. II Timothy 2:13 highlights various passages throughout the Bible that depict the Lord God as a steadfast being that remains faithful to his covenant, even in instances where humans prove to be fallible. The theological concept posits that the exclusive means of attaining salvation is through the redemptive actions of Jesus Christ on the crucifix, as stated in the biblical reference of John 14:6. In contrast to the teachings of the Qur'an, which emphasize that redemption is attained by a combination of faith in 'Allah,' the belief in a 'day of judgment,' and the doing of 'good works' (Qur'an 2:123). The Bible places significant emphasis on the confession of Jesus as the Son of God, as stated in Romans 10:10. According to the biblical passage Ephesians 2:8-9, individuals attain salvation through grace rather than through acts of righteousness. Muslims believe that nobody save Allah can forgive their sins and are uncertain about their everlasting salvation. There are verses in the Qur'an, specifically 46:9 and 48:1-2, which suggest that Prophet Muhammad had uncertainties regarding his salvation. According to a narration in Sahih al-Bukhari (book 53, hadith 266), Prophet Muhammad expressed uncertainty regarding his last destination after his demise. Christians are firmly convinced that Jesus Christ, as documented in biblical references such as Matthew 20:28, Romans 3:25, and 1 Timothy 2:6, fulfilled the act of atonement for their transgressions by his crucifixion. According to the teachings of the Qur'an (2:265), Muslims are instructed that the act of almsgiving might serve as a means of exploiting certain transgressions. According to the teachings of the Bible, it is asserted that the atonement for our sins may solely be achieved via the blood of Jesus Christ, as mentioned in Romans 5:11).

- Matthew 20:28, just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.
- Romans 3:25, God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—
- Roman 5:11, Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.
- Roman 10:10, For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.
- Ephesians 2:8-9, For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast.
- 1 Timothy 2:6, who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time.
- II Timothy 2:13, if we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot disown himself.
- Qur'an 2:265, And the example of those who donate their wealth, seeking Allah's pleasure and believing the reward is certain,1 is that of a garden on a fertile hill: when heavy rain falls, it yields up twice its normal produce. If no heavy rain falls, a drizzle is sufficient. And Allah is All-Seeing of what you do.

- Qur'an 2:40, O children of Israel!1 Remember My favors upon you. Fulfill your covenant and I will fulfill Mine, and stand in awe of Me ˹alone˺.
- Qur'an 2:123, And guard yourselves against the Day when no soul will be of any help to another. No ransom will be taken, no intercession accepted, and no help will be given.
- Qur'an 48:1-2 Indeed, We have granted you a clear triumph ˹O Prophet˺ 2 so that Allah may forgive you for your past and future shortcomings,1 perfect His favor upon you, guide you along the Straight Path,
- Qur'an 46:9 Say, "I am not the first message ever sent, nor do I know what will happen to me or you. I only follow what is revealed to me. And I am only sent with a clear warning."
- Sahih al-Bukhari book 53, hadith 266 Narrated 'Um al-'Ala: An Ansari woman who gave the pledge of allegiance to the Prophet that the Ansar drew lots concerning the dwelling of the Emigrants. 'Uthman bin Mazun was decided to dwell with them (i.e. Um al-'Ala's family), 'Uthman fell ill and I nursed him till he died, and we covered him with his clothes. Then the Prophet came to us and I (addressing the dead body) said, "O Abu As-Sa'ib, may Allah's Mercy be on you! I bear witness that Allah has honored you." On that the Prophet said, "How do you know that Allah has honored him?" I replied, "I do not know. May my father and my mother be sacrificed for you, O Allah's Apostle! But who else is worthy of it (if not 'Uthman)?" He said, "As to him, by Allah, death has overtaken him, and I hope the best for him. By Allah, though I am the Apostle of Allah, yet I do not know what Allah will do to me," By Allah, I will never assert the piety of anyone after him. That made me sad, and when I slept I saw in a dream a flowing stream for 'Uthman bin Mazun. I went to Allah's Apostle and told him of it. He remarked, "That symbolizes his (good) deeds."

The Place of Abraham in Christianity and Islam

Muslims are taught to hang on to Abraham's faith (Qur'an 2:135). In this verse, Judaism and Christianity deviated from what Abraham believed. Nonetheless, Islam deviated from Abrahamic promises through his son Isaac, which Muslims reject and include Ishmael. The Bible teaches that Christians have something better than the Law (Galatians 3:18-19; Hebrew 4:12). The Bible (Galatians 3:16) states, "The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed, Isaac. Scripture does not say and to seeds," meaning many people, but "and to your seed," meaning one person, who is Christ.

- Qur'an 2:135, The Jews and Christians each day, "Follow our faith to be ˹rightly˺ guided." Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ "No! We follow the faith of Abraham, the upright—who was not a polytheist."
- Galatians 3:18-19, For if the inheritance depends on the law, then it no longer depends on the promise; but God in his grace gave it to Abraham through a promise. 19 Why, then, was the law given at all? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was given through angels and entrusted to a mediator.

- Hebrews 4:12, For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. 13 Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.
- Hebrews 4:14-16, Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. 16 Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Biblical and Islamic Views of Divorce and Remarriage

According to the teachings of the Qur'an (2:230, 236), it is said that an individual is not permitted to remarry their divorced spouse unless the latter has entered into a subsequent marriage and afterwards undergone divorce once again. The biblical texts of Malachi 2:16 and Matthew 5:31-32 do not support or endorse the practice of divorce. According to the Qur'an (3:15), it is asserted that devout Muslims would be granted virtuous partners in the afterlife (Qur'an 3:15). Based on the biblical text found in Matthew 22:30, it is stated that the occurrence of marriages will not take place in the heavenly realm. Contrary to the biblical perspective seen in Mark 10:8, the Qur'an, specifically in verse 4:3, supports the practice of polygamy.

- Malachi 2:16, The man who hates and divorces his wife, says the Lord, the God of Israel, "does violence to the one he should protect," says the Lord Almighty. So be on your guard, and do not be unfaithful.
- Matthew 5:31-32, It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.'32 But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.
- Matthew 22:30, At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.
- Mark 10:8-12, and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh. 9 Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate. 10 When they were in the house again, the disciples asked Jesus about this. 11 He answered, "Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. 12 And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery."
- Qur'an 2:230, So if a husband divorces his wife ˹three times˺, then it is not lawful for him to remarry her until after she has married another man and then is divorced. Then it is permissible for them to reunite, as long as they feel they are able to maintain the limits of Allah. These are the limits set by Allah, which He makes clear for people of knowledge.

- Qur’an 2:236, There is no blame if you divorce women before the marriage is consummated or the dowry is settled. But give them a ˹suitable˺ compensation—the rich according to his means and the poor according to his. A reasonable compensation is an obligation on the good-doers.
- Qur’an 3:15, Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ “Shall I inform you of what is better than ˹all of˺ this? Those mindful ˹of Allah˺ will have Gardens with their Lord under which rivers flow, to stay there forever, and pure spouses, along with Allah’s pleasure.” And Allah is All-Seeing of ˹His˺ servants.
- Qur’an 4:3, And if you fear that you will not deal justly with the orphan girls, then marry those that please you of [other] women, two or three or four. But if you fear that you will not be just, then [marry only] one or those your right hands possess [i.e., slaves]. That is more suitable that you may not incline [to injustice].

The Christian God’s Love Compared to Allah’s

Muslim individuals are instructed that the sole means to attain a virtuous existence is via their faith in Allah and their adherence to the teachings of Prophet Muhammad, as stated in the Qur’an (3:19; 3:31). The biblical teachings assert that God’s love extends to all individuals, irrespective of their moral character, as evidenced in several passages such as Matthew 5:44-45, Luke 6:27-31, Luke 6:35, 1 John 4:7-11, and Psalm 45:9. According to the Qur’an (3:92), righteousness is predicated upon one’s actions or deeds. The concept of work salvation is contradicted in the Bible, as it asserts that righteousness is attained through faith in Jesus Christ, available to everyone who believes (Romans 3:10, 22). The user’s text lacks academic style and structure. It would be more appropriate to rewrite it. Within the vast array of names attributed to Allah, there exists a notable absence of any specific reference to love as an inherent virtue. Christians possess knowledge of their deity as an embodiment of love, as stated in biblical references such as 1 John 4:8 and Psalm 136:26. Furthermore, the worship of this divine being is characterized by a commitment to truth and a connection with the spiritual realm, as emphasized in John 4:24, which asserts that God is spirit and that his adherents are obligated to engage in worship that is both truthful and spiritually grounded. The user’s text does not contain any specific information to rewrite academically. According to the Biblical passage in Romans 8:39, individuals who identify as Christians believe they are eternally connected to the love of God via their faith in Jesus Christ. According to the Qur’an, Allah is depicted as possessing attributes of wrath and vengeance (Qur’an 48:6), and is capable of leading his followers astray at his discretion (Qur’an 6:25; 14:4). Undoubtedly, it is evident from the Qur’an that Allah has predestined specific individuals to assume leadership roles, while others are destined to be led astray. Qur’anic verses such as 87:2 emphasize Allah’s role as the creator and perfect fashioner of all things, and 37:96 highlights the distinction between those who are guided and those who are misguided. The subsequent passage elucidates the distinctions between Allah and the Christian deity.

- Psalm 45:9 says, The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.
- Psalm 136:26, Give thanks to the God of heaven. His love endures forever.
- Matthew 5:44-45, But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.
- Luke 6:27-31, But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. 29 If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. 30 Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. 31 Do to others as you would have them do to you.
- Luke 6:35, But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.
- Romans 3:10, 22, As it is written: There is no one righteous, not even one; 22 This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile,
- Romans 8:39, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- 1 John 4:7-11, Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. 9 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11 Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.
- Qur'an 3:19, Certainly, Allah's only Way is Islam. Those who were given the Scripture did not dispute ˹among themselves˺ out of mutual envy until knowledge came to them. Whoever denies Allah's signs, then surely Allah is swift in reckoning.
- Qur'an 3:31, Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ "If you ˹sincerely˺ love Allah, then follow me; Allah will love you and forgive your sins. For Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful."
- Qur'an 3:92, You will never achieve righteousness until you donate some of what you cherish. And whatever you give is certainly well known to Allah.
- Qur'an 6:25, There are some of them who ˹pretend to˺ listen to your recitation ˹of the Qur'an˺, but We have cast veils over their hearts—leaving them unable to comprehend it—and deafness in their ears. Even if they were to see every sign, they still would not believe in them. The disbelievers would ˹even˺ come to argue with you, saying, "This ˹Qur'an˺ is nothing but ancient fables!"
- Qur'an 14:4, We have not sent a messenger except in the language of his people to clarify ˹the message˺ for them. Then Allah leaves whoever He wills to stray and guides whoever He wills. And He is the Almighty, All-Wise.

- Qur'an 37:96, "when it is Allah Who created you and whatever you do?"
- Qur'an 48:6, Also ˹so that˺ He may punish hypocrite men and women and polytheistic men and women, who harbor evil thoughts of Allah. May ill-fate befall them! Allah is displeased with them. He has condemned them and prepared for them Hell. What an evil destination!

Jesus the Son of God

According to the Qur'an (4:171), it refutes the notion that Jesus Christ is the exclusive Son of God. According to biblical teachings, Jesus is identified as the Word, as stated in John 1:1 and 10:30. The Qur'anic verse 5:73 refutes the notion of the Trinity. This doctrine is affirmed throughout the Scriptures. The biblical text (Isaiah 44:6) portrays God the Father as singular. The biblical passages (Acts 20:28; I John 5:7-8; Revelation 2:8; 22:13, 16) depict God the Son in a manner that shares resemblances with God the Father. The Qur'an asserts that Isa spoke while in the cradle, as mentioned in verses 5:110-112. However, the Bible presents a contrasting perspective, as indicated in Philippians 2:5-11. The biblical passage in John 20:27-29 provides evidence of the apostles engaging in acts of worship towards Jesus on multiple occasions. According to a verse in the Qur'an (6:101), it is said that Allah does not have a son. This assertion holds validity as Allah and the Christian God are distinct beings. According to biblical references (Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:34-35), Jesus' conception is attributed to the intervention of the Holy Spirit.

- Isaiah 7:14, Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.
- Isaiah 44:6, "This is what the Lord says—Israel's King and
  Redeemer, the Lord Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God.
- Matthew 1:20, But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.
- Matthew 1:23,
- Matthew 3:17, And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."
- Mark 2:5-7, When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven." 6 Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, 7 "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"
- Luke 1:34-35, "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" 35
  The angel answered, The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.
- John 1:1, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

- John 5:18, For this reason they tried all the more to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.
- John 10:30, “I and the Father are one.”
- John 20:27-29, Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.” 28 Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!” 29 Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”
- Acts 20:28, Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.
- Colossians 1:15, The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.
- Philippians 2: 5-11, In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross! 9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
- I John 5:7, For there are three that testify: 8 the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.
- Revelation 2:8, “To the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These are the words of him who is the First and the Last, who died and came to life again.
- Revelation 22:13, 16, I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. 16 “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star.”
- Qur’an 4:171, O People of the Book! Do not go to extremes regarding your faith; say nothing about Allah except the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was no more than a messenger of Allah and the fulfillment of His Word through Mary and a spirit ˹created by a command˺ from Him. So believe in Allah and His messengers and do not say, “Trinity.” Stop!—for your own good. Allah is only One God. Glory be to Him! He is far above having a son! To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And Allah is sufficient as a Trustee of Affairs.
- Qur’an 5:73, Those who say, “Allah is one in a Trinity,” have certainly fallen into disbelief. There is only One God. If they do not stop saying this, those who disbelieve among them will be afflicted with a painful punishment.
- Qur’an 5:110, And ˹on Judgment Day˺ Allah will say, “O Jesus, son of Mary! Remember My favor upon you and your mother: how I supported you with the holy spirit so you spoke to people in ˹your˺ infancy and adulthood. How I

taught you writing, wisdom, the Torah, and the Gospel. How you molded a bird from clay—by My Will—and breathed into it and it became a ˹real˺ bird—by My Will. How you healed the blind and the lepers—by My Will. How you brought the dead to life—by My Will. How I prevented the Children of Israel from harming you when you came to them with clear proofs and the disbelievers among them said, “This is nothing but pure magic.”

- Qur’an 6:101, He is˺ the Originator of the heavens and earth. How could He have children when He has no mate? He created all things and has ˹perfect˺ knowledge of everything.

Biblical Love for Family Members Compared to Islam’s

Irrespective of their religious affiliations, individuals inherently possess a deep affection for their family members. According to biblical teachings, children are seen as a divine blessing, as stated in Psalm 127:3. According to the teachings of Ephesians 6:4, adherents are instructed to demonstrate unconditional love towards their children and to provide them with proper care. Specific individuals who identify as Muslims may exhibit a propensity to engage in acts of violence against their family members who choose to convert to a different religious religion. This behavior is often justified by their adherence to the teachings outlined in the Qur’an. The act of murder is explicitly prohibited in the Bible, as stated in Exodus 20:13 and Matthew 7:12. This prohibition is rooted in the belief that human beings possess the inherent likeness of God, as described in Genesis 1:26-27 and 9:6. The narrative found in the Qur’an (18:74,80) depicts an account wherein a father, in order to prevent the occurrence of familial shame, takes the life of his son. The practice of honor killing within the Muslim community is a religio-cultural phenomenon. According to biblical teachings, children are regarded as God’s children regardless of their obedience or disobedience towards their parents. The narrative of the prodigal son presents a significant portrayal of the dynamics within the parent-child relationship, as depicted in the biblical passage of Luke 15:11-32. Individuals are encouraged to demonstrate affection towards the divine being and their fellow human beings, as stated in the biblical passage Mark 12:30-31. The following verses provide a simple summary of how children should be treated:

- Genesis 1:26-27, Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” 27 So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.
- Genesis 9:6, Whoever sheds human blood, by humans shall their blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made mankind.
- Exodus 20:13, You shall not murder.
- Psalm 127:3, Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him.
- Isaiah 54:13, All your children will be taught by the Lord, and great will be their peace.

- Proverbs 17:6, says, Children's children are a crown to the aged, and parents are the pride of their children.
- Matthew 7:12, So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.
- Matthew 19:14, Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."
- Mark 12:30-31, Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' 31 The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these.
- Luke 15:11-32, Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them. 13 " Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. 14 After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. 16 He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. 17 When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! 18 I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' 20 So he got up and went to his father. "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. 21 " The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' 22 "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. 24 For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate. 25 " Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 27 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.' 28 "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. 29 But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. 30 But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!' 31 "'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. 32 But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'

- Ephesians 6:4, Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.
- Qur'an 18:74,80, So they proceeded until they came across a boy, and the man killed him. Moses protested, "Have you killed an innocent soul, who killed no one? You have certainly done a horrible thing." "And as for the boy, his parents were ˹true˺ believers, and we1 feared that he would pressure them into defiance and disbelief.

Biblical Love for Neighbours Compared to Islam's

The Qur'an presents varying perspectives on the relationship with neighbors, occasionally advocating for their compassionate treatment but, in other instances, expressing sentiments of animosity towards them, leading to confusion among its adherents. Muslims are instructed in the Qur'an (5:51) to refrain from forming friendships with individuals who identify as Christians. According to the biblical text in Romans 12:18, Christians are instructed to actively pursue peaceful relations with individuals from all walks of life. Furthermore, the biblical text emphasizes the need to treat one's neighbors with reverence, as exemplified in the teachings of Mark 12:31. According to the biblical passage found in Luke 6:27-36, individuals who identify as Christians are encouraged to demonstrate affection and goodwill towards those whom they may regard as adversaries or those who genuinely oppose them. In addition, adherents of the Christian faith are instructed to abstain from making false statements about their fellow individuals, as stated in Exodus 20:16. Furthermore, adherents of the Christian faith are instructed to refrain from desiring or coveting the possessions of their fellow individuals, as stated in Exodus 20:17. In contrast, the Qur'an asserts in verse 2:191 the directive to engage in combat against one's adversaries. The passage in Qur'an 9:5 instructs Muslims to engage in combat with non-believers, while the after verse, 9:6, advises providing them shelter. This apparent contradiction within the verses has been a subject of discussion and interpretation among scholars. They are questioning the reliability of the teachings presented in the Qur'an. The Qur'an (9:29) has a passage that advocates for violence against non-believers, contrasting the message conveyed in Qur'an 6:151.

Furthermore, Muslims are instructed in the Qur'an (5:51) to refrain from selecting Jews or Christians as guardians. The Qur'an, specifically in verses 21:11-15, has accounts attributed to Prophet Muhammad regarding violence resulting in loss of life. This pattern of violence has persisted throughout Islamic history. One can be confirmed from the following texts:

- Exodus 20:16, You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.
- Exodus 20:17, "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."
- Mark 12:31, The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these.
- Luke 6:27-36, "But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who

mistreat you. 29 If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. 30 Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. 31 Do to others as you would have them do to you. 32” If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. 34 And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. 35 But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. 36 Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

- Romans 12:18, If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.
- Qur’an 2:191, Kill them wherever you come upon them and drive them out of the places from which they have driven you out. For persecution is far worse than killing. And do not fight them at the Sacred Mosque unless they attack you there. If they do so, then fight them—that is the reward of the disbelievers.
- Qur’an 5:51, believers! Take neither Jews nor Christians as guardians—they are guardians of each other. Whoever does so will be counted as one of them. Surely Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people.
- Qur’an 6:151, Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ “Come! Let me recite to you what your Lord has forbidden to you: do not associate others with Him ˹in worship˺. ˹Do not fail to˺ honor your parents. Do not kill your children for fear of poverty. We provide for you and for them. Do not come near indecencies, openly or secretly. Do not take a ˹human˺ life—made sacred by Allah—except with ˹legal˺ right. This is what He has commanded you, so perhaps you will understand.
- Qur’an 9:5-6, But once the Sacred Months have passed, kill the polytheists ˹who violated their treaties˺ wherever you find them, capture them, besiege them, and lie in wait for them on every way. But if they repent, perform prayers, and pay alms-tax, then set them free. Indeed, Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful. 6 And if anyone from the polytheists asks for your protection ˹O Prophet˺, grant it to them so they may hear the Word of Allah, then escort them to a place of safety, for they are a people who have no knowledge.
- Qur’an 9:29, Fight those who do not believe in Allah and the Last Day, nor comply with what Allah and His Messenger have forbidden, nor embrace the religion of truth from among those who were given the Scripture, until they pay the tax, willingly submitting, fully humbled.
- Qur’an 21:11-15, ˹Imagine˺ how many societies of wrongdoers We have destroyed, raising up other people after them!12 When the wrongdoers sensed ˹the arrival of˺ Our torment, they started to run away from their cities.13 ˹They were told,˺ “Do not run away! Return to your luxuries and your homes, so you may be questioned ˹about your fate˺.”14 They cried, “Woe to

us! We have surely been wrongdoers.”15 They kept repeating their cry until We mowed them down, ˹leaving them˺ lifeless.

Globalization and Migration of Muslims

With globalization and the increased immigration of Muslims to various regions, missions have become integral to contemporary evangelistic efforts. Achieving successful missions targeted towards the Muslim population necessitates a comprehensive comprehension of Islamic social dynamics, cultural intricacies, theological principles, and belief systems. Adherents of the Christian faith must adopt a lifestyle characterized by grace, as they are considered the metaphorical salt and light of the world, as stated in the biblical passage Matthew 5:13-16. Within this conceptual framework, it is anticipated that Muslims will cease to perceive Christianity as an external and antagonistic religious tradition. It is imperative for Christians residing within Muslim communities to exert effort in acquiring knowledge and demonstrating appreciation for the cultural and religious contexts of the individuals they are engaging with. It is imperative for adherents of the Christian faith to actively endeavor to uphold their religious beliefs while also seeking to comprehend the local customs, language, and religious practices of individuals who identify as Muslims. The following verses teach how Christians should live under any circumstances:

- Matthew 5: 13-16, “You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. 14 ” You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Biblical Truth among Muslims

Sharia law mandates the execution of an individual who converts from Islam to another religion. The imposition of capital punishment for apostasy in Muslim-majority nations is prevalent. Despite facing such challenges, many Muslims are converting to Christianity. Specific individuals have experienced the unfortunate circumstances of being disowned or, in more extreme cases, having their lives terminated. Muslim individuals who have been exposed to the teachings of the Bible and have comprehended the essence of Jesus’ identity possess an unwavering determination that cannot be hindered, even in the face of imminent mortality. The following verses provide that truth:

- Job 42:5, My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you.
- Psalm 34:8, Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.

- Jeremiah 31:34, No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”
- Luke 7:11-17, Soon afterward, Jesus went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went along with him. 12 As he approached the town gate, a dead person was being carried out—the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the town was with her. 13 When the Lord saw her, his heart went out to her and he said, “Don’t cry.” 14 Then he went up and touched the bier they were carrying him on, and the bearers stood still. He said, “Young man, I say to you, get up!” 15 The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother. 16 They were all filled with awe and praised God. “A great prophet has appeared among us,” they said. “God has come to help his people.” 17 This news about Jesus spread throughout Judea and the surrounding country.
- John 4:42, They said to the woman, “We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world.”
- John 5:39-40, You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, 40 yet you refuse to come to me to have life.
- John 14:16-17, And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.
- John 16:14-15, He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. 15 All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.”
- Acts 9:3-6, As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. 4 He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” 5 “Who are you, Lord?” Saul asked. “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,” he replied. 6 “Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”
- Acts 17:11-12, Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. 12 As a result, many of them believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men.
- Romans 8:15-16, The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” 16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.
- 1 Corinthians 2:9-10, However, as it is written: “What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived”— the things God has prepared for those who love him—10 these are the things God has

revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.

Personal Relationship with Jesus Christ

The following scriptures teach about the relationship between Jesus and the individual. Jesus is real and alive, as the scriptures teach. The gospel transforms people. Islam chokes its followers with “do, do, do,” which in Jesus “It is already done” only received by faith. Prayerfully read the following passages of the Bible:

- Isaiah 42:1-4, “Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight;
  I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations. 2 He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets. 3 A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; 4 he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his teaching the islands will put their hope.
- Isaiah 55:1-3, “Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. 2 Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and you will delight in the richest of fare. 3 Give ear and come to me; listen, that you may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David.
- Matthew 6:24, No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other.
- John 6:44, No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.
- John 6:48, I am the bread of life.
- John 10:11, I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.
- John 11:25, Jesus answered, I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father’s name testify about me,
- John 14:15, If you love me, keep my commands.
- John 15:2, He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.
- John 15:4-5, Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.
- John 15:7-8, If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.
- John 15:13, Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.

- John 15:16, You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.
- John 16:33, “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”
- John 17:3, Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.
- John 17:21-23, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— 23 I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.
- Romans 1:17, For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: The righteous will live by faith.
- Romans 6:22, But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.
- 2 Corinthians 5:10, For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.
- Galatians 2:20, I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.
- Philippians 3:8-10, What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. 10 I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,
- Colossians 3:1-3, Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. 3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.
- Hebrews 2:1, We must pay the most careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away.
- Hebrews 2:3, how shall we escape if we ignore so great a salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him.
- 1 John 2:3-6, We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. 4 Whoever says, “I know him,” but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. 5 But if anyone obeys

his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: 6 Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.

- 1 John 4:19-20, We love because he first loved us. 20 Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen.
- Revelation 3:15-16, I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! 16 So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.

The Gospel of Jesus captures human hearts when presented to anyone. Regardless of the situation, individual matter, or context, the Gospel is God's transforming power. The Bible says "Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great Patience and careful instruction (2 Tim. 4:22)."

Encouragement to Christian Converts from Islam

It has been established that new Muslims who convert to Christianity face various legal identities within their government and family. Muslim Background Believers (MBBs) encounter many problems in their faith journey. However, the biblical teachings assert that Jesus triumphed over the adversities of the world, even in the face of rejection by his compatriots (John 16:33). According to Psalm 139 in the Bible, it is stated that God possesses comprehensive knowledge of all our actions and behaviors. Divine assistance is perpetually accessible during arduous situations, as indicated in biblical passages such as Psalm 46:1-3, Isaiah 41:10, and Matthew 6:25-32. According to the teachings of Jesus, as recorded in the Gospel of John (16:33), those who profess faith will encounter numerous challenges within the confines of the earthly realm. According to the biblical account in Luke 12:12, Jesus told his apostles that the Holy Spirit would provide them with the necessary words to articulate during adversity or in the face of persecution. In the face of imminent peril, Jesus asserts that individuals ought not to be apprehensive of those who can terminate their physical existence but lack the power to extinguish their spiritual essence (Matthew 10:28). According to the biblical text found in Matthew 11:28-30, it is said that individuals are advised to seek redemption via Jesus. According to the biblical text in Matthew 24:13-14, the church is instructed to exercise vigilance due to the omnipresence of persecution. However, it is emphasized that those who demonstrate perseverance until the end will ultimately attain salvation. New converts to Christianity can read the following passages as a word of encouragement:

- Psalm 139:1-7, You have searched me, Lord, and you know me. 2 You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. 3 You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. 4 Before a word is on my tongue you, Lord, know it completely. 5 You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me. 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain. 7 Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

- Psalm 46:1-3, God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. 2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, 3 though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.
- Isaiah 41:10, So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.
- Matthew 6: 25-32 “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Isn't life more than food, and the body more than clothes? 26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? 27 Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? 28 ”And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. 29 Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. 30 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? 31 So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ 32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.
- Matthew 10:28, Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.
- Matthew 11:28-30, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”
- Matthew 24:13-14, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. 14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.
- Luke 12:11-12, “When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, 12 for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.”
- John 16:33, “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

Personal Salvation and Discipleship

The Qur’an teaches that salvation results from good works (Qur’an 2:82; 2:129). In addition, Beck notes that in the Qur’an, there are four pathways to human salvation, which include belief (Qur’an 10:103), works (Qur’an 3:140-142),

repentance (Qur'an 4:116; 4:18) and predestination (Qur'an 3:145).[154] Compare the Biblical and Quranic verses on salvation to see the distinctions. The following verses teach that salvation in Islam is about dos and don'ts:

- Qur'an 10:103, Then We saved Our messengers and those who believed. For it is Our duty to save the believers.
- Qur'an 2:82, And those who believe and do good will be the residents of Paradise. They will be there forever.
- Qur'an 2:129, Our Lord! Raise from among them a messenger who will recite to them Your revelations, teach them the Book and wisdom, and purify them. Indeed, You ˹alone˺ are the Almighty, All-Wise.
- Qur'an 3:140-142, If you have suffered injuries ˹at Uḥud˺, they suffered similarly ˹at Badr˺. We alternate these days ˹of victory and defeat˺ among people so that Allah may reveal the ˹true˺ believers, choose martyrs from among you—and Allah does not like the wrongdoers—141 and distinguish the ˹true˺ believers and destroy the disbelievers. 142 Do you think you will enter Paradise without Allah proving which of you ˹truly˺ struggled ˹for His cause˺ and patiently endured?
- Qur'an 3:145, No soul can ever die without Allah's Will at the destined time. Those who desire worldly gain, We will let them have it, and those who desire heavenly reward, We will grant it to them. And We will reward those who are grateful.
- Qur'an 4:16, But whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger and exceeds their limits will be cast into Hell, to stay there forever. And they will suffer a humiliating punishment.
- Qur'an 4:18, However, repentance is not accepted from those who knowingly persist in sin until they start dying, and then cry, "Now I repent!" nor those who die as disbelievers. For them We have prepared a painful punishment.
- Qur'an 4:116, Surely Allah does not forgive associating ˹others˺ with Him ˹in worship˺, but forgives anything else of whoever He wills. Indeed, whoever associates ˹others˺ with Allah has clearly gone far astray.

Personal salvation in the Bible is through the finished work of Jesus Christ. It can never be bought or through any good work. Human righteousness, as the Bible teaches, is filthy rags (Isaiah 64: 6). Salvation is all the work of God through his Son, Jesus Christ (John 3:16-17). None can achieve salvation unless through the finished work of Jesus Christ (Titus 2:11–14; Titus 3:5; 2 Timothy 1:9). The Bible teaches that "the wage of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life (Romans 6:23)." The Bible says, "Jesus answered, I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me (John 14:6)." Those who accept Jesus as children of God (John 1:12-13). Salvation is not a foreign word since Jesus, speaking on the subject, says one must be born again (John 3:3–6). The Bible teaches that God has destined people to salvation (1 Thessalonians 5:9–10), but they should be willing to accept the gift available to all (Romans 10:10, 13). All in all, salvation is a free gift; one is saved by grace and not by works (Ephesians 2:8-9, For it is by grace you

[154] Callum Beck, "A Summary of the Qur'anic Teaching on Salvation" Answering Muslims, a Christian Dialogue, https://www.answering-islam.org/authors/beck/salvation_Qur'an.html.

have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works so that no one can boast). The Bible says, “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).” Read the following verses, which show Biblical teaching on personal salvation and discipleship:

- Isaiah 64:6, All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.
- Jeremiah 17:14. Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved, for you are my praise.
- John 3:16-17, For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.
- John 1:12–13, Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— 13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.
- John 3:3–6, Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.”4 “How can someone be born when they are old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!” 5 Jesus answered, Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. 6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.
- Romans 6:23, For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- Romans 10:10,13, For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. 13 for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”
- 1 Thessalonians 5:9–10, For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. 10 He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him.
- 2 Timothy 1:9, He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time,
- Titus 2:11–14, For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. 12 It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, 13 while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.
- Titus 3:5, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,

BLURBS

In his new book, Biblical and Qur'anic Missiological Perspectives: A Comparative Analysis, Dr Patrick Kamau, a renowned scholar of Christian-Muslim Dialogue, looks at the missiology as construed by two Abrahamic faiths—Islam and Christianity. He draws on his expertise as a scholar of Christian-Muslim Dialogue and goes beyond dialogue to assess the incompatibilities of the two faiths regarding mission. With a lot of interest in missiology at the moment, this book is timely, especially for those interested in doing mission work among Muslims. The book is an excellent resource for those interested in Christianity in a pluralistic Society. This book is a good resource for Muslims wanting to know a bit about the Christian faith and for Christians wanting to understand Islam. This book will dispel the misconceptions between the two faiths, and for those interested in dialogue, this will help them ground dialogue on firm foundations rather than on misconceptions. I highly recommend this book.

Gift Mtukwa, PhD
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Dr Patrick Mburu Kamau teaches and conducts research at the intersection of Christianity and other religions. In his book, Biblical and Qur'anic Missiological Perspectives: A Comparative Analysis, he presents the reader with a summary of the beliefs and practices of Christianity and Islam from a Christian perspective. His presentation encourages dialogue and aims to engender peaceful engagements between the two religions within the African context. I recommend his work to mission practitioners and anyone seeking a better understanding of the perspectives of Christianity and Islam.

R. Frazier, PhD
Senior Lecturer
Africa Nazarene University

In this book, Biblical and Qur'anic Missiological Perspectives: A Comparative Analysis, Dr Patrick Mburu Kamau does what many Christian scholars deliberately shun to do. With facts, he comprehensively and courageously argues that the God revealed in the Bible is not the same as the Muslim God—Allah. If you are serious about understanding the Divine-human faith relationship drawn from the two Scriptural authorities of Christianity and Islam, this is a "must-have, must-read book."

Mzee Hermann Mvula, PhD
Senior Lecturer, Old Testament Ethics and Applied Theology
University of Malawi

The book, Biblical and Qur'anic Missiological Perspectives: A Comparative Analysis, is an insightful and comprehensive study of the Christian and Islamic mission work in Africa, which has shaped the socio-political and cultural development of the continent over the years.

The book provides a detailed historical analysis of the Christian and Islamic mission work in Africa, which has influenced the African community for centuries. It examines the profound impact of both religions on African society, culture, and identity and highlights how these influences continue to shape the continent's development.

Overall, Biblical and Qur'anic Missiological Perspectives: A Comparative Analysis is a compelling read for anyone interested in the history of African Christianity and Islam and how these religions have shaped the African continent over the years.

Daryll Stanton, EdD
Global Resourcing Coordinator
Nazarene Discipleship International

The Biblical and Qur'anic Missiological Perspectives: A Comparative Analysis, offers a stimulating and scholarly examination of the fundamental theological and missiological concepts in both the Bible and the Qur'an. This scholarly publication explores the intricate religious customs of Christianity and Islam, scrutinizing the distinct methods of each faith towards the notions of mission, evangelism, and outreach. The book presents a comprehensive comparative investigation of two prominent global religions, offering readers a distinct opportunity to acquire insights into the beliefs, techniques, and viewpoints that influence the missionary efforts of these religious traditions. This statement highlights the distinction between the Christian deity, commonly referred to as God, and Allah, the Islamic deity. This observation highlights the distinction between the figures of Jesus in the Bible and Isa in the Qur'an. Furthermore, the Book highlights the inherent incompatibility between the concepts presented in the Bible and those found in the Qur'an. This book is an excellent resource for scholars, theologians, missionaries, and individuals interested in interfaith relations and comparative religious studies, as they aim to cultivate comprehension and discussion between these two significant religious traditions: Christianity and Islamic scriptures.

Rev. Aweis A. Ali, PhD
Missiologist

This book, Biblical and Qur'anic Missiological Perspectives: A Comparative Analysis, presents an in-depth comparative analysis of two major religions with significant history in missional approach. Dr. Patrick Mburu Kamau is keen to dig into the history of Islamic and Christian religions, considering their holy books, the Qur'an and Bible, respectively, with an African eye and African traditional religion. He brings forth the doctrinal similarities and differences of the two religions. The author's open-mindedness in emphasizing tolerance, love, hospitality, and a peaceful coexistence presents these two religions as sojourners in missiology. In essence, Dr.

Kamau's book breathes an aroma of inter-religious dialogue between Christianity and Islam with ears to listen and minds to understand that a missiological approach is anchored on the spirit of love and mutual respect while addressing religious irreconcilable differences.

Caleb Osore
Author and Researcher

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GLOSSARY

‘Idul Fitr (EE-du el-FEE-tra) : Festival at the end of Ramadan
Allahu Akbar : ‘God is the greatest’ used in Islamic prayers
Assalamu alaikum : Muslim greeting ‘Peace be upon you’
Ayatollah : highest ranking religious leaders in Shia branch of Islam

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Rev. Dr. Patrick Mburu Kamau is a distinguished scholar and religious leader known for his expertise in interfaith dialogue. He holds a Ph.D. in Interfaith Dialogue from Kenyatta University, a Master's degree in Religion and a Bachelor's degree in Theology from Africa Nazarene University. He has dedicated his academic pursuits to fostering an understanding between Christianity and Islam, major world religious communities. Dr. Kamau's educational background positions him as a thoughtful leader in the field, equipped with theoretical knowledge and practical insights into the complexities of religious diversity.

Dr Kamau is a Senior Lecturer at Africa Nazarene University and significantly influences the intellectual development of upcoming religious leaders and intellectuals. His commitment to teaching is demonstrated by his leadership of the doctoral program at the same University, where he mentors aspiring academicians in their study and intellectual endeavors. He, too, serves as a senior pastor at Nairobi Central Church of The Nazarene.

Dr. Kamau's impact extends beyond the classroom because he has written multiple articles that actively contribute to the scholarly conversation. His works, primarily concerned with issues pertaining to Christians and Muslims, show a sophisticated grasp of the theological, sociological, and cultural aspects of interfaith relations. Through his involvement with current affairs, he adds to the continuing conversation aiming toward distinguishing the similarities and irreconcilable differences in doctrinal beliefs between Christianity and Islam.

Dr. Kamau stands out as a figure whose work crosses academic lines, influencing communities and promoting tolerance and understanding in a diverse religious landscape because of his leadership, knowledge, and dedication to interfaith discourse.



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