

# Comparisons of major facts and teachings of Islam and Christianity

## Islam

When was it established as a belief system?

Muhammad was born in 571 AD.

He received his first revelation/vision from Allah in 611 AD. His visions were written down as the Qur'an, which contains the Islamic belief system.

The Qur'an contains many stories about the same people as in the Bible, but many details of the stories were changed according to the visions received by Muhammad.

Who established it as a belief system?

Muhammad.

By 650 AD, Uthman, a son-in-law of Muhammad, compiled the revelations/visions of Muhammad into what became the Qur'an.

What books have authority?

Qur'an

Hadith (recitations of Muhammad collected 300 years after Muhammad's death. They are second only to the authority of the Qur'an. They are helpful in explaining the content of the Qur'an.)

Muslims are also told to read the Tawrat (book of Moses), Zabur (book of David), and Injeel (New Testament/the book of Jesus). These books are respected but not considered to have authority like the Qur'an because they are considered to be corrupted or changed (Qur'an 2:136, 3:2-3).

## Christianity

Since the beginning of humanity, people have had faith in God. This is described in the Old Testament of the Bible.

**Christianity** had its beginning in the first century AD. It was at this time that Jesus **Christ** lived in the world. By the end of the first century, around 100 AD, the teachings and stories of the New Testament of the Bible were completed.

Christianity was established by God as he inspired and guided people like Peter, Luke, Paul, and others to write truths about God, about Jesus, and about life. This became the New Testament of the Bible.

Bible (including the Old Testament and the New Testament).

The Bible is God's Word. It is inspired by God, in which God impressed upon the writers what He wanted to have written down.

What beliefs do they have about Jesus Christ?

## Islam

According to Muhammad and the Qur'an:

- Jesus is the only prophet who is pure and without sin.
- Jesus was born of the virgin Mary, and Jesus was conceived by the power of God. However, Jesus is not God's son because God could not have a son.
- Jesus did miracles like raising the dead and healing the sick.
- Jesus will be the Intercessor on Judgment Day.
- Jesus was not crucified/killed on a cross because it is not logical that God would punish such a good prophet for the sin of humans.
- Jesus was taken up into heaven and he will return to earth.
- Jesus is the Word of God (Kalimat Allah) and the Spirit of God. However, he is believed to be just a man.

## Christianity

The Bible teaches that:

- Jesus was without sin.
- Jesus was born of the virgin Mary and of God. As the Son of God, Jesus is part of God. In other words, Jesus is God the Son.
- While Jesus is eternal as God, he specially came as a man to live on earth around 1 BC. After about 30 years of teaching people and doing miracles, Jesus, who was divine and perfect, was crucified/killed on a cross to take the punishment of humans for their sins. Three days later, Jesus rose from death and went to Heaven.
- Jesus will return with God the Father at the end of time to judge the living and the dead.

What are other major teachings?

## Islam

According to Muhammad and the Qur'an:

- There is one God and this is Allah. (Allah means "God" in Arabic.)
- All people, except Jesus, struggle with sin.
- Allah is merciful and offers grace to people.
- When people die, they go either to Heaven or to Hell. They will go to Heaven if their good deeds weigh more than their evil deeds (Qur'an 7:8-9). They will go to Hell if their evil deeds are more than their good deeds.
- Allah created all things, including sin, Satan, demons, and angels. God, in his sovereignty, can therefore do good and evil.
- There are 5 pillars of Islam: (1) Creed--"I testify that there is no god except Allah and I testify that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah." If a person states this creed, they are Muslim. (2) A Muslim is to pray 5 times each day. (3) Fasting---during the month of Ramadan. (4) Almsgiving---charitable giving to those in need. (5) A pilgrimage to Medina and Mecca, including walking around the Kaaba 7 times.

## Christianity

The Bible teaches that:

- There is one God. God is one in being and three in persons--- Father, Son (Jesus), and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19).
- All people, except Jesus, struggle with sin (Romans 3:23). In fact, they are unable to do enough good deeds to fully receive God's forgiveness on their own.
- God is the all-powerful Creator, He is all-knowing, eternal, holy, and gracious. God is not the Creator of sin, and God does not sin.
- When people die, they go to Heaven or Hell. People are unable to do enough good deeds to earn their way to Heaven. For this reason, Jesus, the only perfect and divine person, was killed on the cross, taking the punishment for people's sin. Then, he rose from death. If a person has faith that their gracious God forgives their sins through Jesus, the person can go to Heaven instead of Hell (John 3:16). In essence, a person is saved by God's grace, through faith.
- As a person is deeply thankful and committed to God for His love and grace, in response the person will live a life in which she loves God and cares for the well-being of others (Ephesians 2:8-10).
- A prayer is a personal conversation with God. There are no set times when a person is to pray. However, if a person sincerely loves God, they will desire often to pray, to read the Bible as their guide for life, and to worship God.
- A believer is not required to give a certain amount of money to those in need, but if they sincerely love God for all He does for them, they will have a desire to love and help others.