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Islam

It's the world's fastest growing religion, and it's at the center of most conflicts around the world. What do we really know about it's teachings, or those who practice it?

History

- Muhammad was borne around 570AD
 - Orphaned at a young age
 - Raised by his uncle
- When he was around 26, he became disenchanted with life and retreated to a cave to meditate
- Started receiving revelations from God and became a prophet by submitting to god
 - Muslim means "one who submits"
 - The first revelation supposedly happened in the month of Ramadan
 - Took 3 years before he started preaching these revelations publically in Mecca
- Endured persecution and hostility from the Meccans for years
- Retreated to Medina to avoid persecution
- United the tribes after 8 full years of fighting and pillaging
- Conquered Mecca and started to
- By Muhammad's death in 632BC, Islam had spread

Beliefs

- One God, Monarchianism
- Muhammad was a messenger/prophet in the same vein as Jesus

- The Tawrat (Torah) and Injil (Gospels) are corrupted
- The Qur'an is the literal word of God, means recitation
 - The angel Gabriel gave the words to Muhammad who was illiterate
 - Given in 610 AD, not written until the time of Caliph Abu Bakrⁱ shortly after Muhammad's death.
 - Preserved in its entirety and original language.
 - 114 chapters called Surahsⁱⁱ
 - Roughly the same size as the New Testament
- The Hadith is the lesser book that chronicles the life of Muhammad
 - Not infallible
 - Contains two parts
 - Hadith qudsi or "sacred Hadith" where God Himself is speaking
 - Hadith sharif or "noble Hadith" which contains the prophet's own actions and words.
- Muslims hold Jesus in high regard
 - Jesus was borne from a virgin
 - Jesus performed all the miracles the Gospels say He did
 - Jesus only appeared to die on the cross (swoon theory)
- "Denominations"
 - There are two main "denominations" of Muslims, the Sunnis and the Shiites who have been warring ever since Muhammad died and a successor had to be named.
 - Sunnis believe in a form of predestination called "divine decree" and are considered the more "liberal" form of Islam
 - Shiites believe in a version called "divine justice" and have the unique doctrine of Imamah or political and spiritual leadership of Imams. This is akin to the priesthood which crept into the Church.
- The Five Pillars of Islamⁱⁱⁱ
 - Shahadah, profession of faith

- Salah, ritual prayer
- Zakah, alms/taxes of 2.5%
- Sawm, fasting during Ramadan
- Hajj, pilgrimage to Mecca
- Shiites add 3 more pillars, one of them being Jihad

Tactics

- Allah's characteristics are not the same as YHWH
 - YHWH is unchanging, Allah changes
 - Allah is aloof, YHWH is personal
 - The Trinity
- The Qur'an vs the Bible
 - The Qur'an claims the Bible is true^{iv}
 - The Qur'an contradicts the Bible in several places
 - Time the earth was created in, 7 days or 2^v
 - God's commands change^{vi}
 - Force people to believe in Allah or pay extortion^{vii}
 - Kill those who don't believe^{viii}
- Muhammad vs. Jesus
 - Jesus wasn't just a prophet and Muhammad wasn't much of one
 - Jesus fulfilled performed miracles, healed the sick, and raised the dead
 - The closest Muhammad came to performing a miracle was to dream one up^{ix}
 - Jesus was never accused of deceit^x
 - Muhammad lied^{xi}, murdered^{xii}, and had more than the allotted 4 wives of his own law^{xiii}.
 - Why pray for peace to be upon someone who's already died?
- The Satanic verses^{xiv}

- Have you thought of Allāt and al-'Uzzā and Manāt the third, the other? These are the exalted Gharaniq, whose intercession is hoped for. Sura 53:21
- This section allowed intercession, prayer, to pagan goddesses.
- If the Qur'an is infallible; Why were these verses put into it?
- If Muhammad is sinless; Why was he calling on people to pray to demons?
- If Jesus is merely a prophet; Why didn't he have a blunder like this?
- How can I have any hope in a capricious god?
 - I AM is more than a name, it's a statement.
 - Something that changes isn't constant and therefore untrustworthy.
 - Why should I trade my concrete hope in salvation with a "may"^{xv}?

ⁱ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abu_Bakr

ⁱⁱ Surah means "row"

ⁱⁱⁱ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Five_Pillars_of_Islam

^{iv} "And dispute ye not with the People of the Book [Jews and Christians and the Bible], except in the best way, unless it be with those of them who do wrong but say, "We believe in the revelation which has come down to us and in that which came down to you," (29:46)

^v Sura 41:9 Say, "You disbelieve in the One who created the earth in two days, and you set up idols to rank with Him, though He is Lord of the universe."

^{vi} When We substitute one revelation for another,- and Allah knows best what He reveals (in stages),- they say, "Thou art but a forger": but most of them understand not," (Qur'an 16:101).

^{vii} Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of Truth, (even if they are) of the People of the Book, until they pay the Jizya with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued," (Qur'an 9:29).

^{viii} "But when the forbidden months are past, then fight and slay the Pagans wherever ye find them, and seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem (of war); but if they repent, and establish regular prayers and practice regular charity, then open the way for them: for Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful," (Qur'an 9:5).

^{ix} "Praise be to God who Carried His servant by night from the sacred mosque to the remote mosque, whose surroundings we blessed, that we might show him of our signs." Sura 17

^x 1 Peter 2:22 "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.", Isaiah 53:9 "He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth."

^{xi} "Muhammad bin Maslama got up saying, "O Allah's Apostle! Would you like that I kill him [Ka'b bin Al-Ashraf]?" The Prophet said, "Yes," Muhammad bin Maslama said, "Then allow me to say a (false) thing (i.e. to deceive Kab). "The Prophet said, "You may say it," (Hadith Vol. 5, Book 59, #369)

^{xii} <http://www.prophetofdoom.net/quotes.aspx?g=405&i=4507>

^{xiii} <http://www.anwary-islam.com/women/prophets-wives.htm>

^{xiv} http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satanic_verses

^{xv} "O ye who believe! Turn unto Allah in sincere repentance! It **may** be that your Lord will remit from you your evil deeds and bring you into Gardens underneath which rivers flow, on the day when Allah will not abase the Prophet and those who believe with him. Their light will run before them and on their right hands; they will say: Our Lord! Perfect our light for us, and forgive us! Lo! Thou art Able to do all things," (66:8-9)