

WEEK 4 – Islam continued...

2. Islamic Sects

- There are over _____ sects within Islam, with different names for each. (Taliban, Druze, etc.)
- The largest sect is that of the **Sunni**. Also known as Sunni Islam with the followers referred to as Sunni's. They comprise about _____% of the Moslem world and ascribe to the authority of the Rashidum and Sunnah.
- The next largest sect is the **Shii** Muslims. Also known as **Shiah** with the followers referred to as Shiite. They are found chiefly in _____ and parts of Iraq. They do not recognize the Sunnah as authoritative, nor do they revere all four members of the Rashidum.

3. A brief history of Islam

- Muhammad Ibn Abd Allah was born around _____ AD in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. He was orphaned as a child and raised by his uncle, Abu Talib. He was acquainted with Jewish and Christian beliefs. At the approximate age of 35-40, he had a vision of the angel Gabriel who seized him and ordered him to recite a short sentence. Upon completion of this task, Gabriel released him and as Muhammad fled Gabriel shouted, "Oh, Muhammad, you are the Messenger of God, and I am Gabriel." These visions continued over the next 20 years of his life. He appeared to have epileptic fits when receiving his revelations and visions. In fact, when his first vision occurred he was convinced that either he was insane or _____ possessed. He ultimately married his first wife, Kadijah. She was a wealthy Arabic merchant who persuaded Muhammad that his experiences with Gabriel were from God and encouraged him to preach his message.
- His preaching career began in 610 AD in Mecca. His teachings were so close to Judaism and Christianity that most people perceived it as a reiteration of the truths associated with those religions. After the death of his wife and his uncle in _____ AD, his grief was comforted when Gabriel allegedly carried him to Jerusalem where he was lifted from a prominent _____ to heaven. At this time it is said that he met Abraham, Moses, Jesus and other prophets and eventually he stood before God.
- He began to be persecuted, so he fled to Medina in 622 AD. This flight is referred to as "Hijrah" and marks the beginning of the Muslim lunar calendar. While in Medina, Muhammad amassed a following and returned to capture Mecca in 630 AD. At Mecca, he entered the pagan temple called the Kabah, placed his hand upon a sacred black stone and shouted, "Allah Akbar," which means, "God is most great." The Kabah became the _____ sanctuary of Islam.

- Muhammad DIED in 632 AD. His successor was a man named Abu Bakr, one of the four ‘Rashidum’ Caliph’s who declared “jihad” or “Holy War” with all unbelievers. Within 100 years the Islamic empire spread from northern Spain to India. The _____ Islamic advancement toward Western Europe was halted at the Battle of Tours in 732 AD.

4. What does a Muslim believe?

- The word Islam means “to surrender,” therefore, salvation occurs when one surrenders to two tenants:
 - Allah is One, not a trinity.
 - Muhammad is the last true prophet of Allah.
- Islam teaches that on the Day of Judgment those who have lived a righteous life will _____ Paradise, a place filled with sensual pleasures for its citizens (Wine and women). For the unrighteous and unbelieving a place called barzakh (similar to the Catholic purgatory) is prepared where one may be purified from sin and eventually enters Paradise. The Day of Judgment follows the Day of Great Rising which is the resurrection of the dead. Islam also teaches that there will be a new heaven and earth.

KEY POINT: There are only 2 religions in the whole world:

1. Christ alone (salvation through Christ’s work on the cross) – John 1:12-14; Acts 2:21, 4:12, 8:36-38; Rom 6, 8, 10:9-10,17; 1 John 1:9, 2:2, 4:9-10
2. Salvation by man’s work – Gen 11:1-5

- There are many, many things Islam teaches about heaven, hell, angels, etc. However, a Muslim MUST keep the following five pillars of faith:
 - The declaration of faith (Shahada) that there is NO God but Allah, and that Mohammad is Allah’s messenger.
 - To observe the FIVE compulsory, ritual, daily prayers in the direction of Mecca.
 - To make a welfare contribution (zakah). This is a compulsory payment to assist in meeting community needs and the care for the poor.
 - To keep a daylight FAST (Sawm) during the ninth lunar holy month of Ramadan (the celebration of the revelation of the Quran).

- To make a pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca. This is the pinnacle of achievement in a Muslim's life and must be done at least ONCE in his lifetime (hajj).
- A good Muslim must follow the five pillars of faith and earn a place in Paradise in the presence of God. Muslims are NOT evangelistic; their arena for "reaching the world" is international politics and jihad.
- Because Islam believes it is the one true religion, it therefore assumes the role of world reformer. This is to be done through assumption of political power in order to implement the principles of Islam through public institutions. Islamic states are to be ruled _____ by Muslims with the Quran as its constitution. According to Islamic theologians, non-Muslims are permitted to live peaceably in the Islamic state and even to practice their religion so long as it does not violate the Quranic rule of the state. While this may be true in the minds of theologians, it is certainly _____ practically true as evidenced by the laws and mandates of past and present day Muslim governments. Jihad, which means "holy war," is the Islamic justification for _____ and warfare. The Quran clearly teaches that when Islam is threatened Muslims must fight to protect it. Like Catholicism, Islam is tied directly to world politics. Any time a nation makes a favorable move toward _____ it is viewed as a direct attack on Allah, therefore "jihad" is declared and carried out through whatever means necessary.
- There are different levels of faithfulness among Muslims. Some adhere strictly to the tenants of Islam while others are nominally Muslim. Just like other _____ religious people, you will find some who don't know anything about Islam. They are Muslim because their family is Muslim. When a Muslim converts it is viewed as turning your back on your family. In many parts of the Muslim world converted people are severely persecuted and _____ (as commanded in the Quran).

NOTE: No Muslim knows for sure if he will go to heaven...unless he dies in Jihad and even then it is still a MAYBE.

5. General Islamic information

- The financing of Islam is certainly supported by the general offerings given by the Muslim faithful. However, because Islam is directly linked to government, it is financially supported by the Islamic _____ economies (Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Libya, etc.; It is fiscally similar to communism as it is supported in Russia and China).
- Islamic doctrine is political and completely intolerant. Islam claims to be the mother of ALL religions: "Islam is, therefore, an all-comprehensive religion within which are included all the religions of the world." It is interesting to note that the seeds for unity among all religions are present in the teachings of Islam.

NOTE: The Anti-Christ will capitalize on this fact as he pulls all the world's religions together into one as he sits on a throne on the temple mount!

- The atmosphere Islam creates is _____, oppressive, and religious. Muslims wash themselves before each of the five prayer times. In stringently Islamic states women are second class citizens, not permitted to reveal any skin in public. Although they are very legalistic, Muslims are known for having very strong family bonds and promote the common good in their communities. Most would say that Muslims are "_____."

REMEMBER THE LORD DESIRES **ALL** TO COME TO REPENTANCE (2 Peter 3:9)

Muslims are generally very PROUD people. They believe that they have the absolute truth and therefore, it is very difficult to witness to them. Remember that God will give you open doors with those whom he is drawing to himself. Here are some key points that you could capitalize on:

1. Ask them if they have READ the Quran. Many Muslims haven't read the Quran because they cannot understand Arabic and many do not trust English translations. Gently help them to see how ridiculous it is to believe something you have never read.
2. Ask them WHY they believe the Quran is the word of Allah. Why is the Quran the standard of truth and not Confucius, or Buddha, or the Bible? They will probably respond that all of those just mentioned are legitimate prophets of God, but Muhammad is the last prophet of God and therefore, the standard. The problem then is that the Bible and the Quran disagree on some major issues: who God is, who Jesus Christ is, what the absolute standard of truth is, etc. Two contradictory books can't both be the absolute standard of truth. Either one is right or both are wrong. Tell them WHY the Bible is God's word and the standard of truth. This argument will hinge on some key points:
 - a. Fulfilled prophecy is the greatest evidence (Is. 42:9; 46:9, 10). The Quran has NO fulfilled prophecy. Since the Bible is totally accurate in prophecy, its claim to be the only legitimate word of God must also be true.
 - b. God's word was completed around 90 AD, but the Quran was written more than five centuries later. See Deut. 4:2; 12:32; Pr. 30:5, 6; Rev. 22:18, 19.
 - c. At this point you can capitalize on the fact that Muhammad received his revelations from an angel. See Galatians 1:6-9; 2 Co. 11:3, 4, 13-15; 2 Peter 1:16-21. This can lead you into the gospel.
3. Use ABRAHAM as a common starting point. There are many directions you can go from here. Show them that the God of Abraham was a trinity, show them that God desired to be Ishmael's God (Gen 17:20), etc.

Key Point to remember: Logic will not, in and of itself, win anyone to Christ. The word of God saves people, not our intellect (1 Co 2:1-5). We must be sure to preach the gospel to them!!