

Judaism & Islam

Judaism:

I. What worldview is Judaism?

Monotheistic

II. Judaism's relationship with Christianity?

Christianity is not separate of Judaism, but rather is the flower that blossomed from the seed of Judaism. It is Judaism's fulfillment. If Christ is the Messiah, then all of God's promises are met in Him as the Messiah of the world.

2 Corinthians 1:20

For every one of God's promises is "Yes" in Him.

III. What is Judaism?

Judaism is the religion of the Jews.

IV. Who is the Founder of Judaism?

Three key figures in Judaism:

- A. Abraham – the person that God brought out of the land of Babylon to establish a covenant and new people.
- B. Moses – the person in which God gave the law beginning with the "Big 10."
- C. David – the person who became the King of Israel, with a checkered past yet hero life, who was known as a man after God's own heart.

V. The Origin of Judaism?

A. **The Story of Abraham** - We must begin with Abraham who was called out of Ur which is in present day Iraq. God brought him to what is known as the “Holy Land” or “Promise Land” and established a covenant with him through his son Isaac. Originally Abraham’s name was Abram, but when God made the covenant with Abram, he was known as Abraham afterwards.

Genesis 12:1-3

The LORD said to Abram:

Go out from your land, your relatives,
and your father’s house to the land that I will show you.
I will make you into a great nation, I will bless you,
I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.
I will bless those who bless you, I will curse those who treat you with
contempt,
and all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you.

Genesis 22:7-18

Then Isaac spoke to his father Abraham and said, “My father.”

And he replied, “Here I am, my son.”

Isaac said, “The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?”

Abraham answered, “God Himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.” Then the two of them walked on together.

When they arrived at the place that God had told him about, Abraham built the altar there and arranged the wood. He bound his son Isaac and placed him on the altar on top of the wood. Then Abraham reached out and took the knife to slaughter his son.

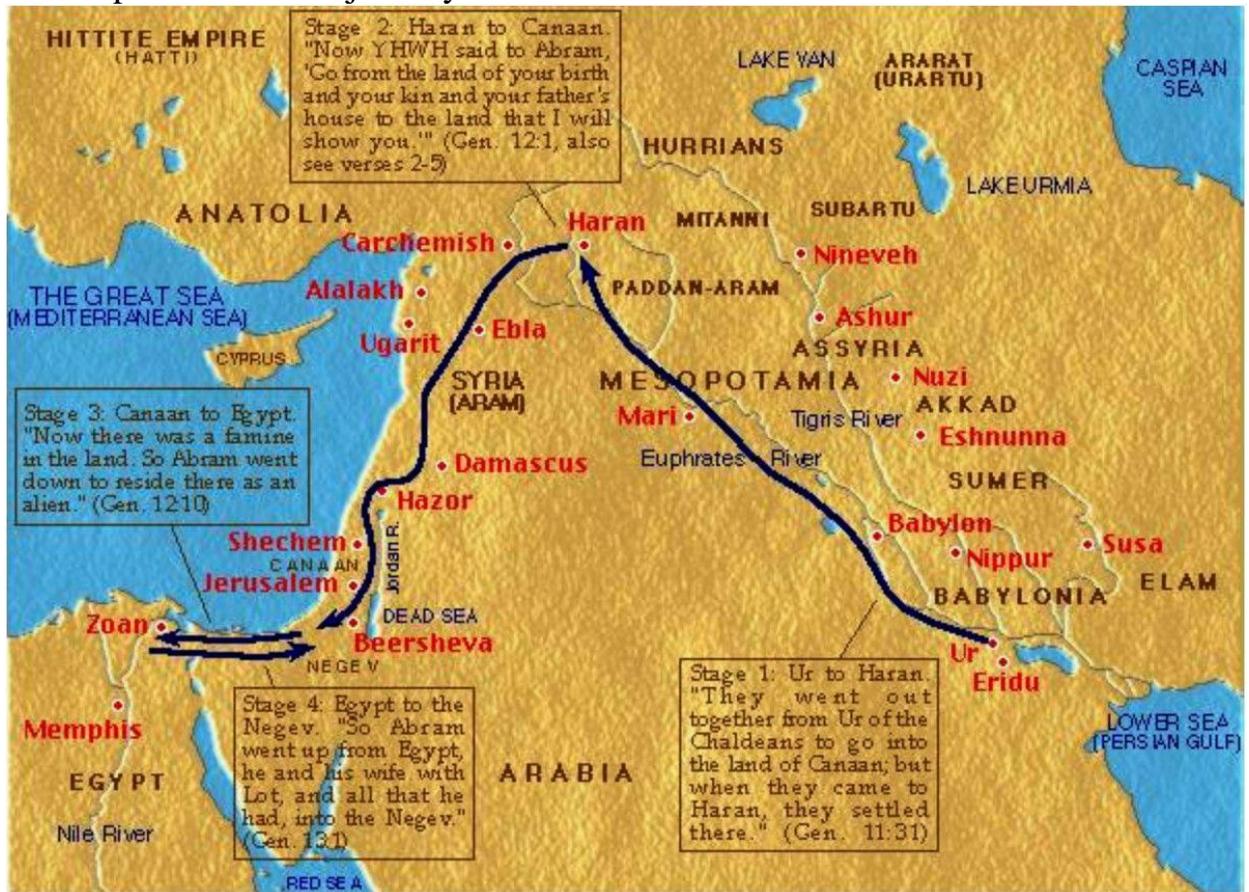
But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!”

He replied, “Here I am.”

Then He said, “Do not lay a hand on the boy or do anything to him. For now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your only son from Me.” Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught in the thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram and offered it as a burnt offering in place of his son. And Abraham named that place The LORD Will Provide, so today it is said: “It will be provided on the LORD’s mountain.”

Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven and said, “By Myself I have sworn,” this is the LORD’s declaration: “Because you have done this thing and have not withheld your only son, I will indeed bless you and make your offspring as numerous as the stars of the sky and the sand on the seashore. Your offspring will possess the gates of their enemies. And all the nations of the earth will be blessed by your offspring because you have obeyed My command.”

See map below for the journey of Abraham.



A people -God told Abraham that he would be the father of a great nation

Genesis 15:5

He took him outside and said, “Look at the sky and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” Then He said to him, “Your offspring will be that numerous.”

A place – God promised Abraham and his descendants a homeland.

Genesis 17:8

And to you and your future offspring I will give the land where you are residing—all the land of Canaan—as an eternal possession, and I will be their God.”

A purpose - There was a reason behind God’s promise. It included the purpose of using Abraham and his descendants to teach all the people of the world about the one true God

Genesis 12:3

... all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you.

The creation of a nation, a chosen people of God

For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession.

The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands.⁷

- B. **The Story of Moses:** Moses, the second major figure in Judaism, is the center of what is known as The Law. God gave Moses the law on Mt. Sinai after leading the Israelites out of Egypt and beyond the Red Sea. The law represented how humanity were to relate to God and to their fellow human.

Exodus 19:7-20:18

After Moses came back, he summoned the elders of the people and set before them all these words that the LORD had commanded him. Then all the people responded together, “We will do all that the LORD has spoken.” So Moses brought the people’s words back to the LORD.

⁷ [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#). (1984). (Dt 7:6–9). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

The LORD said to Moses, “I am going to come to you in a dense cloud, so that the people will hear when I speak with you and will always believe you.” Then Moses reported the people’s words to the LORD. And the LORD told Moses, “Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow. They must wash their clothes and be prepared by the third day, for on the third day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. Put boundaries for the people all around the mountain and say: Be careful that you don’t go up on the mountain or touch its base. Anyone who touches the mountain will be put to death. No hand may touch him; instead he will be stoned or shot with arrows. No animal or man will live. When the ram’s horn sounds a long blast, they may go up the mountain.”

Then Moses came down from the mountain to the people and consecrated them, and they washed their clothes. He said to the people, “Be prepared by the third day. Do not have sexual relations with women.”

On the third day, when morning came, there was thunder and lightning, a thick cloud on the mountain, and a loud trumpet sound, so that all the people in the camp shuddered. Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Mount Sinai was completely enveloped in smoke because the LORD came down on it in fire. Its smoke went up like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain shook violently. As the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered him in the thunder.

The LORD came down on Mount Sinai at the top of the mountain. Then the LORD summoned Moses to the top of the mountain, and he went up. The LORD directed Moses, “Go down and warn the people not to break through to see the LORD; otherwise many of them will die. Even the priests who come near the LORD must purify themselves or the LORD will break out in anger against them.”

But Moses responded to the LORD, “The people cannot come up Mount Sinai, since You warned us: Put a boundary around the mountain and consider it holy.” And the LORD replied to him, “Go down and come back with Aaron. But the priests and the people must not break through to come up to the LORD, or He will break out in anger against them.” So Moses went down to the people and told them.

Then God spoke all these words:

I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the place of slavery.

Do not have other gods besides Me.

Do not make an idol for yourself, whether in the shape of anything in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth. You must not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the fathers' sin, to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing faithful love to a thousand generations of those who love Me and keep My commands.

Do not misuse the name of the LORD your God, because the LORD will not leave anyone unpunished who misuses His name.

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy: You are to labor six days and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. You must not do any work—you, your son or daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the foreigner who is within your gates. For the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and everything in them in six days; then He rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and declared it holy. Honor your father and your mother so that you may have a long life in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

Do not murder.

Do not commit adultery.

Do not steal.

Do not give false testimony against your neighbor.

Do not covet your neighbor's house. Do not covet your neighbor's wife, his male or female slave, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

All the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain surrounded by smoke. When the people saw it they trembled and stood at a distance.

So God gave Moses what we know are the 10 Commandments, but God gave more laws than just these 10. There are actually 613 Mitzvots in the sacred writings of Judaism.

C. The Story of King David: David was the son of Jesse and father of Solomon. David defeated Goliath in the Valley of Elah and is in the heritage of the Messiah. He committed sins such as murder and adultery but was known to God as a man after His own heart. He established a deep royal reign in which his legacy lasted for years. He desired to build God a temple, but God commissioned his son Solomon for the task because David had too much blood on his hands being a warrior. The Messiah was prophesied to be in the royal lineage of King David.

VI. What are the sacred writings?

Torah – in the clearest sense it is the first five books of the Law, also known as the books of Moses, also known as the Pentateuch: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. In a broader sense the Torah means the entire Jewish Bible.

- 1. The Written Torah** – These are the 39 books of the Old Testament. For the Jew there is no New Testament.
- 2. The Oral Torah** – Orthodox Jews believe that God explained the meaning and interpretation of the written Torah to Moses. Moses, in turn, passed these teaching on to other people. These instructions were passed down through generations until they were transcribed in 200 A.D. in a book known as the *Mishnah*. Commentaries to amplify and expand the Mishnah are called the *Gemara*. The Mishnah and Gemara together make up what is known as the **Talmud**. The Talmud covers almost every aspect of life that you could encounter, including issues dealing with marriage, finances, business, agriculture, worship, lawsuits, and morality.

Tanakh – also refers to the entire Old Testament consisting of the 39 books Christians call the Old Testament. Beginning with the Five books of Moses, and then the other 34 books are classified as The Writing or The Prophets.

VII. What is the Shema?

Question: "What is the Shema?"

Answer: *Shema* (“hear”) is the Hebrew word that begins the most important prayer in Judaism. It is found in *Deuteronomy 6:4*, which begins with the command to “Hear.” The whole Shema prayer, which includes *verses 4-9*, is spoken daily in the Jewish tradition:

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Later Jewish tradition developed a three-part Shema prayer that also included *Deuteronomy 11:13–29* and *Numbers 15:37–41*. Tradition states these three parts cover all aspects of the Ten Commandments.⁸

VIII. Who are Jews?

- A. *Ancestry* – some are considered Jews through physical descent. This is why you sometimes hear of a Jew who is an atheist. They are not identifying as Jewish based in religion but by physical descent.
- B. *Religion* – some are considered Jews through religious beliefs such as holding to the views and beliefs of Judaism.
- C. *Spiritual Adoption* – the New Testament teaches that those who are in Christ are descendants of Abraham through the promise.

⁸ gotquestions.org

Romans 9:1-8

I speak the truth in Christ —I am not lying; my conscience is testifying to me with the Holy Spirit — that I have intense sorrow and continual anguish in my heart. For I could almost wish to be cursed and cut off from the Messiah for the benefit of my brothers, my own flesh and blood. They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the temple service, and the promises. The ancestors are theirs, and from them, by physical descent, came the Messiah, who is God over all, praised forever. Amen.

But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. Neither are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants. On the contrary, **your offspring will be traced through Isaac**. That is, it is not the children by physical descent who are God's children, but the children of the promise are considered to be the offspring.

Galatians 3:27-29

For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ like a garment. There is no Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, heirs according to the promise.

A Religion, Race or Something Else?

Consider page 51

- Although Judaism is a religion, a Jew can be an atheist who believes there is no God.
- Although there is an official and common ancestry in Judaism, you might be considered an anti-Semite (being anti-Jewish) if you refer to the Jews as a separate race.
- A person who is outside the ancestry of Abraham (a "Gentile") can still be considered a Jew.

IX. The Divisions of Judaism

A. The Orthodox Jew

The Oldest and most conservative branch of Judaism. They consider themselves to be “Torah-true.” An orthodox Jew strictly adheres to the original form of Judaism, with all of its customs and practices. Every word of the sacred texts is considered to be divinely inspired and mandatory.

B. The Conservative Jew

The name is confusing but this sect of Judaism is actually middle of the road somewhere between the Orthodox and the Reform. It retains much of the traditions while making accommodations for contemporary lifestyles.

C. The Reform Jew

This is the more liberal and permissive sect of Judaism. They follow the ethical laws of Judaism, but the other traditional customs, such as diet and apparel, are ignored. Instructions from God are considered progressive and can be influenced by history and cultural changes.

There are other smaller divisions such as the *Hasidic*, *Humanistic*, *Reconstructionism*, *Zionism*.

X. Can a Jew Be a Christian?

See reference on page 51

XI. Basic Beliefs

See reference on page 55

Islam:

I. A Quick Look At Islam

- Islam is the second largest of the world's religions.
- There are more than one billion Muslims in the world.
- Being only 1400 years old (having started in the seventh century), Islam is the youngest of the major world religions.
- A growing Islamic presence in the United States did not begin until about the mid-to-late 1800s. It is believed that the first mosque in the United States was constructed in 1934 in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.
- In compliance with their religious requirements to make a pilgrimage to Meccas at least once in a lifetime, more than two million Muslims annually visit Meccas in the twelfth month of the Muslim year.

II. What Worldview is Islam?

Monotheistic

III. What is Islam?

Islam is the religion of the Muslims, a monotheistic faith regarded as revealed through Muhammad as the Prophet of Allah.

IV. Who is the Founder of Islam?

Muhammad ibn Abdallah from Mecca

V. Connection with the other two Monotheistic Religions?

Whereas in Judaism and Christianity the promise came through Abraham's son Isaac, in Islam the promise son was Ishmael who was Abraham's son through Sarah's maidservant.

Genesis 16:1-12

Now Sarai, Abram’s wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian maidservant named Hagar; so she said to Abram, “The LORD has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my maidservant; perhaps I can build a family through her.”

Abram agreed to what Sarai said. So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian maidservant Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife. He slept with Hagar, and she conceived.

When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress. Then Sarai said to Abram, “You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my servant in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the LORD judge between you and me.”

“Your servant is in your hands,” Abram said. “Do with her whatever you think best.” Then Sarai mistreated Hagar; so she fled from her.

The angel of the LORD found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. And he said, “Hagar, servant of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?”

“I’m running away from my mistress Sarai,” she answered.

Then the angel of the LORD told her, “Go back to your mistress and submit to her.” The angel added, “I will so increase your descendants that they will be too numerous to count.”

The angel of the LORD also said to her:

“You are now with child
and you will have a son.
You shall name him Ishmael,
for the LORD has heard of your misery.
He will be a wild donkey of a man;
his hand will be against everyone
and everyone’s hand against him,
and he will live in hostility
toward all his brothers.”⁹

⁹ [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#). (1984). (Ge 16:1–12). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan

VI. What is the origin of Islam

- The year was A.D. 570 when Muhammad ibn Abdallah was born into an aristocratic family.
- Father died before Muhammad was born and family business crushed.
- Mother died when he was six years old and later Muhammad went to live with grandfather but grandfather died shortly thereafter.
- Muhammad then moved in with an uncle who was the head of the Quraish clan. The Quraish clan had the responsibility for the Ka'aba, a Meccan shrine and place of pilgrimage in Arabia.
- Although there were Jews and Christians in the area which gave Muhammad exposure to these beliefs most of those in the area worshipped numerous gods and natural phenomena. There were of a polytheistic worldview.
- Tradition says Muhammad could neither read or write, but had a business mind.
- He married at the age of 25 to a 40 year old woman who owned a caravan business that he came to manage.
- He didn't like the polytheistic beliefs and practices and sought solitude in a local cave.
- At the age of 40 in the year 610 A.D. he was sitting in his cave and had his first mystical vision that was the birth of this new religion.
- He was at first unsure but his wife convinced him they were from God. He later came to believe that the Angel Gabriel gave him these visions and messages of God that there was only one true God and that idolatry was an abomination.
- In 612, Muhammad began to preach and started to get converts. Muhammad recited his revelation and these later became the Qur'an which are the collected sayings of Muhammad.
- In 622, Muhammad and his followers were forced to flee Meccas to the city of Medina which is known as the "City of the Prophet"
- Meccans organized an army to destroy Muhammad and his followers. Major battles ensued over a six year period, but in 630 A.D. Muhammad and his forces conquered Mecca and destroyed every idol and shrine except the Kaaba.
- Muhammad extended his control over Arabia by either treaty or by force.
- Muhammad died in 632.

VII. The Major Doctrines

A. Doctrine 1: God

Muslims believe in the existence and preeminence of God. There is only one God, and his name happens to be Allah.

With the utterance of *Allah Akbar* in their daily prayers, Muslims acknowledge that ‘God is greater than everything.’ The powers they attribute to Allah are the same as that of Judaism and Christianity in that God is:

Omniscience: all – knowing

Omnipotent: all – powerful

Omnipresence: everywhere at the same time

Out of the 99 beautiful names for Allah which are memorized and each one describes Allah’s character, love is not considered to be a defining characteristic of Allah and the Qur’an only describes Allah as loving in at least two places. When it comes to love, the overarching message of the Qur’an is that Allah’s love is conditioned on the response of those who love him by doing good (meaning they do good deeds and adhere to the daily practices of the Five Pillars). It seems that Allah does not love the person whose bad deeds outweigh the good things he or she has done.

The attribute of love is a huge difference between Allah and the God of Judaism and Christianity. That’s why it is incorrect to believe that Allah and God are the same deity but are only simply known by two different names. All of the Qur’an only loves those he deems to be good; the God the Bible loves all humanity, none of who are basically good.

B. Doctrine 2: Angels

Muslims believe in a hierarchy of created beings. AT the lowers level would be the animals, above them humans, and angels are an intermediate step between humanity and Allah.

There are good angels and bad angels. The good angels are messengers of Allah, and the top ranked angel is *Gabriel* who is the one who gave the revelations of Allah to Muhammad in the cave. *Shaitan* is the fallen angel, and his fellow bad angels are called jinns, or demons.

C. Doctrine 3: Sacred Scriptures

Muslims are known as ‘people of the book,’ so it is not surprising that they regard certain writings as holy. According to Islam, Allah as revealed himself through four sacred writings:

- The Torah (the books of Moses)
- The Zabur (the Psalms of David)
- The Injil (the Gospel of Jesus Christ)
- The Qur’an (the revelation that Muhammad recited to his transcribers)

Because the Qur’an is the final message of Allah then it supersedes previous revelations. The Qur’an prevails if there are any conflicts in these writings.

Dr. George Braswell, a scholar in the field of world religions.

Of the scriptures of all the religions of the world, perhaps the Qur’an is looked upon by its followers as ideally and practically the most holy. Muslims believe that the Qur’an was revealed to the prophet, Muhammad, in the Arabic language, which is the very language spoken by Allah in heaven. Allah is the author of the Qur’an and Muhammad is the channel of Allah’s word to the people.

Muslims claim that the present-day Qur’an is an exact representation of Muhammad’s revelations without so much as a dot or stroke ever having been lost, changed, or substituted in any way.

What is the Hadith?

(See video “What is the Hadith” from Dr. Shabir Ally, President of Islamic Information Center)

Is Islam a Religion of Peace?

QURAN⁹

1. A declaration of immunity from God and His Messenger to the polytheists with whom you had made a treaty.
2. So travel the land for four months, and know that you cannot escape God, and that God will disgrace the disbelievers.
3. And a proclamation from God and His Messenger to the people on the day of the Greater Pilgrimage, that God has disowned the polytheists, and so did His Messenger. If you repent, it will be better for you. But if you turn away, know that you cannot escape God. And announce to those who disbelieve a painful punishment.
4. Except for those among the polytheists with whom you had made a treaty, and did not violate any of its terms, nor aided anyone against you. So fulfill the treaty with them to the end of its term. God loves the righteous.
5. ***When the Sacred Months have passed, kill the polytheists wherever you find them. And capture them, and besiege them, and lie in wait for them at every ambush.*** But if they repent, and perform the prayers, and pay the alms, then let them go their way. God is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.
6. And if anyone of the polytheists asks you for protection, give him protection so that he may hear the Word of God; then escort him to his place of safety. That is because they are a people who do not know.
7. How can there be a treaty with the polytheists on the part of God and His Messenger, except for those with whom you made a treaty at the Sacred Mosque? As long as they are upright with you, be upright with them. God loves the pious.
8. How? Whenever they overcome you, they respect neither kinship nor treaty with you. They satisfy you with lip service, but their hearts refuse, and most of them are immoral.
9. They traded away God's revelations for a cheap price, so they barred others from His path. How evil is what they did.
10. Towards a believer they respect neither kinship nor treaty. These are the transgressors.
11. But if they repent, and perform the prayers, and give the obligatory charity, then they are your brethren in faith. We detail the revelations for a people who know.
12. But if they violate their oaths after their pledge, and attack your religion, then fight the leaders of disbelief—they have no faith—so that they may desist.

13. Will you not fight a people who violated their oaths, and planned to exile the Messenger, and initiated hostilities against you? Do you fear them? It is God you should fear, if you are believers.
14. Fight them. God will punish them at your hands, and humiliate them, and help you against them, and heal the hearts of a believing people.
15. And He will remove the anger of their hearts. God redeems whomever He wills. God is Knowledgeable and Wise.
16. Or do you think that you will be left alone, without God identifying which of you will strive, and take no supporters apart from God, His Messenger, and the believers? God is well Aware of what you do.
17. It is not for the polytheists to attend God's places of worship while professing their disbelief. These—their works are in vain, and in the Fire they will abide.
18. The only people to attend God's places of worship are those who believe in God and the Last Day, and pray regularly, and practice regular charity, and fear none but God. These are most likely to be guided.
19. Do you consider giving water to pilgrims and maintaining the Sacred Mosque the same as believing in God and the Last Day and striving in God's path? They are not equal in God's sight. God does not guide the unjust people.
20. Those who believe, and emigrate, and strive in God's path with their possessions and their persons, are of a higher rank with God. These are the winners.
21. Their Lord announces to them good news of mercy from Him, and acceptance, and gardens wherein they will have lasting bliss.
22. Abiding therein forever. With God is a great reward.
23. O you who believe! Do not ally yourselves with your parents and your siblings if they prefer disbelief to belief. Whoever of you allies himself with them—these are the wrongdoers.
24. Say, "If your parents, and your children, and your siblings, and your spouses, and your relatives, and the wealth you have acquired, and a business you worry about, and homes you love, are more dear to you than God, and His Messenger, and the struggle in His cause, then wait until God executes His judgment." God does not guide the sinful people.

25. God has given you victory in numerous regions; but on the day of Hunayn, your great number impressed you, but it availed you nothing; and the land, as spacious as it was, narrowed for you; and you turned your backs in retreat.
26. Then God sent down His serenity upon His Messenger, and upon the believers; and He sent down troops you did not see; and He punished those who disbelieved. Such is the recompense of the disbelievers.
27. Then, after that, God will relent towards whomever He wills. God is Forgiving and Merciful.
28. O you who believe! The polytheists are polluted, so let them not approach the Sacred Mosque after this year of theirs. And if you fear poverty, God will enrich you from His grace, if He wills. God is Aware and Wise.
29. ***Fight those who do not believe in God, nor in the Last Day, nor forbid what God and His Messenger have forbidden, nor abide by the religion of truth—from among those who received the Scripture—until they pay the due tax, willingly or unwillingly.***
30. The Jews said, “Ezra is the son of God,” and the Christians said, “The Messiah is the son of God.” These are their statements, out of their mouths. They emulate the statements of those who blasphemed before. May God assail them! How deceived they are!
31. They have taken their rabbis and their priests as lords instead of God, as well as the Messiah son of Mary. Although they were commanded to worship none but The One God. There is no god except He. Glory be to Him; High above what they associate with Him.
32. They want to extinguish God’s light with their mouths, but God refuses except to complete His light, even though the disbelievers dislike it.
33. ***It is He who sent His Messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth, in order to make it prevail over all religions, even though the idolaters dislike it.***
34. O you who believe! Many of the rabbis and priests consume people’s wealth illicitly, and hinder from God’s path. Those who hoard gold and silver, and do not spend them in God’s cause, inform them of a painful punishment.
35. On the Day when they will be heated in the Fire of Hell, then their foreheads, and their sides, and their backs will be branded with them: “This is what you hoarded for yourselves; so taste what you used to hoard.”
36. The number of months, according to God, is twelve months—in the decree of God—since the Day He created the heavens and the earth, of which four are sacred. This is the correct

religion. So do not wrong yourselves during them. And fight the polytheists collectively, as they fight you collectively, and know that God is with the righteous.

37. Postponement is an increase in disbelief—by which those who disbelieve are led astray. They allow it one year, and forbid it another year, in order to conform to the number made sacred by God, thus permitting what God has forbidden. The evil of their deeds seems good to them. God does not guide the disbelieving people.
38. O you who believe! What is the matter with you, when it is said to you, “Mobilize in the cause of God,” you cling heavily to the earth? Do you prefer the present life to the Hereafter? The enjoyment of the present life, compared to the Hereafter, is only a little.
39. Unless you mobilize, He will punish you most painfully, and will replace you with another people, and you will not harm Him at all. God has power over all things.
40. If you do not help him, God has already helped him, when those who disbelieved expelled him, and he was the second of two in the cave. He said to his friend, “Do not worry, God is with us.” And God made His tranquility descend upon him, and supported him with forces you did not see, and made the word of those who disbelieved the lowest, while the Word of God is the Highest. God is Mighty and Wise.
41. Mobilize, light or heavy, and strive with your possessions and your lives in the cause of God. That is better for you, if you only knew.
42. Had the gain been immediate, and the journey shorter, they would have followed you; but the distance seemed too long for them. Still they swear by God: “Had we been able, we would have marched out with you.” They damn their own souls, and God knows that they are lying.
43. May God pardon you! Why did you give them permission before it became clear to you who are the truthful ones, and who are the liars?
44. Those who believe in God and the Last Day do not ask you for exemption from striving with their possessions and their lives. God is fully aware of the righteous.
45. Only those who do not believe in God and the Last Day ask you for exemption. Their hearts are full of doubts, so they waver in their doubts.
46. Had they wanted to mobilize, they would have made preparations for it; but God disliked their participation, so he held them back, and it was said, “Stay behind with those who stay behind.”

47. Had they mobilized with you, they would have added only to your difficulties, and they would have spread rumors in your midst, trying to sow discord among you. Some of you are avid listeners to them. God is Aware of the wrongdoers.
48. They tried to cause conflict before, and they hatched plots against you, until the truth prevailed, and the command of God became evident—in spite of their dislike.
49. Among them is he who says, “Excuse me, and do not trouble me.” In fact, they sunk into trouble. In fact, Hell will engulf the disbelievers.
50. If something good happens to you, it upsets them; and if a calamity befalls you, they say, “We took our precautions in advance,” and they depart, happy.
51. Say, “Nothing will happen to us except what God has ordained for us; He is our Protector.” In God let the faithful put their trust.
52. Say, “Are you expecting for us anything other than one of the two excellences? As for us: we are expecting that God will afflict you with a punishment from Himself, or at our hands. So wait, we are waiting with you.”
53. Say, “Whether you spend willingly or unwillingly, it will not be accepted from you. You are evil people.”
54. What prevents the acceptance of their contributions is nothing but the fact that they disbelieved in God and His Messenger, and that they do not approach the prayer except lazily, and that they do not spend except grudgingly.
55. Let neither their possessions nor their children impress you. God intends to torment them through them in this worldly life, and that their souls depart while they are disbelievers.
56. They swear by God that they are of you. But they are not of you. They are divisive people.
57. Were they to find a shelter, or a cave, or a hideout, they would go to it, rushing.
58. And among them are those who criticize you in regard to charities. If they are given some of it, they become pleased; but if they are not given any, they grow resentful.
59. If only they were content with what God and His Messenger have given them, and said, “God is sufficient for us; God will give us of His bounty, and so will His Messenger; to God we eagerly turn.”
60. Charities are for the poor, and the destitute, and those who administer them, and for reconciling hearts, and for freeing slaves, and for those in debt, and in the path of God, and for the traveler in need—an obligation from God. God is All-Knowing, Most Wise.

61. And among them are those who insult the Prophet, and say, "He is all ears." Say, "He listens for your own good. He believes in God, and trusts the believers, and is mercy for those of you who believe." Those who insult the Messenger of God will have a painful penalty.
62. They swear to you by God to please you. But it is more proper for them to please God and His Messenger, if they are believers.
63. Do they not know that whoever opposes God and His Messenger, will have the Fire of Hell, abiding in it forever? That is the supreme disgrace.
64. The hypocrites worry lest a chapter may be revealed about them, informing them of what is in their hearts. Say, "Go on mocking; God will bring out what you fear."
65. If you ask them, they will say, "We were just joking and playing." Say, "Were you making jokes about God, His revelations, and His Messenger?"
66. Do not apologize. You have disbelieved after your belief. If We pardon some of you, We will punish others, because they are guilty.
67. The hypocrite men and hypocrite women are of one another. They advocate evil, and prohibit righteousness, and withhold their hands. They forgot God, so He forgot them. The hypocrites are the sinners.
68. God has promised the hypocrite men and hypocrite women, and the disbelievers, the Fire of Hell, abiding therein forever. It is their due. And God has cursed them. They will have a lasting punishment.
69. Like those before you. They were more powerful than you, and had more wealth and children. They enjoyed their share, and you enjoyed your share, as those before you enjoyed their share. And you indulged, as they indulged. It is they whose works will fail in this world and in the Hereafter. It is they who are the losers.
70. Have they not heard the stories of those before them? The people of Noah, and Aad, and Thamood; and the people of Abraham, and the inhabitants of Median, and the Overturned Cities? Their messengers came to them with the clear proofs. God never wronged them, but they used to wrong their own selves.
71. The believing men and believing women are friends of one another. They advocate virtue, forbid evil, perform the prayers, practice charity, and obey God and His Messenger. These— God will have mercy on them. God is Noble and Wise.

72. God promises the believers, men and women, gardens beneath which rivers flow, abiding therein forever, and fine homes in the Gardens of Eden. But approval from God is even greater. That is the supreme achievement.
73. O Prophet! Strive against the disbelievers and the hypocrites, and be stern with them. Their abode is Hell—what a miserable destination!
74. They swear by God that they said nothing; but they did utter the word of blasphemy, and they renounced faith after their submission. And they plotted what they could not attain. They were resentful only because God and His Messenger have enriched them out of His grace. If they repent, it would be best for them; but if they turn away, God will afflict them with a painful punishment—in this life and in the Hereafter—and they will have on earth no protector and no savior.
75. Among them are those who promised God: “If He gives us of His bounty, we will donate and be among the upright.”
76. But when He has given them of His bounty, they became stingy with it, and turned away in aversion.
77. So He penalized them with hypocrisy in their hearts, until the Day they face Him—because they broke their promise to God, and because they used to lie.
78. Do they not know that God knows their secrets and their conspiracies? And that God is the Knower of the unseen?
79. Those who criticize the believers who give charity voluntarily, and ridicule those who find nothing to give except their own efforts—God ridicules them. They will have a painful punishment.
80. Whether you ask forgiveness for them, or do not ask forgiveness for them—even if you ask forgiveness for them seventy times, God will not forgive them. That is because they disbelieved in God and His Messenger. God does not guide the immoral people.
81. Those who stayed behind rejoiced at their staying behind the Messenger of God. And they hated to strive with their wealth and their lives in God’s way. And they said, “Do not venture out in the heat.” Say, “The Fire of Hell is much hotter, if they only understood.”
82. Let them laugh a little, and weep much; in recompense for what they used to earn.

83. If God brings you back to a party of them, and they ask your permission to go out, say, "You will not go out with me, ever, nor will you ever fight an enemy with me. You were content to sit back the first time, so sit back with those who stay behind."
84. You are never to pray over anyone of them who dies, nor are you to stand at his graveside. They rejected God and His Messenger, and died while they were sinners.
85. Do not let their possessions and their children impress you. God desires to torment them through them in this world, and their souls expire while they are disbelievers.
86. When a chapter is revealed, stating: "Believe in God and strive with His Messenger," the prominent among them ask you for exemption. They say, "Allow us to stay with those who stay behind."
87. They prefer to be with those who stay behind. Their hearts were sealed, so they do not understand.
88. But the Messenger and those who believe with him struggle with their possessions and their lives. These have deserved the good things. These are the successful.
89. God has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. That is the great victory.
90. Some of the Desert-Arabs came to make excuses, asking to be granted exemption, while those who were untrue to God and His Messenger stayed behind. A painful punishment will afflict those among them who disbelieved.
91. There is no blame on the weak, nor on the sick, nor on those who have nothing to give, provided they are true to God and His Messenger. In no way can the righteous be blamed. God is Forgiving and Merciful.
92. Nor on those who approach you, wishing to ride with you, and you said, "I have nothing to carry you on." So they went away, with their eyes overflowing with tears, sorrowing for not finding the means to spend.
93. But blame is on those who ask you for exemption, although they are rich. They are content to be with those who stay behind. God has sealed their hearts, so they do not know.
94. They present excuses to you when you return to them. Say, "Do not offer excuses; we do not trust you; God has informed us of you. And God will watch your actions, and so will the Messenger; then you will be returned to the Knower of the Invisible and the Visible, and He will inform you of what you used to do."

95. They will swear to you by God, when you return to them, that you may leave them alone. So leave them alone. They are a disgrace, and their destiny is Hell; a reward for what they used to earn.
96. They will swear to you that you may accept them. But even if you accept them, God does not accept the wicked people.
97. The Desert-Arabs are the most steeped in disbelief and hypocrisy, and the most likely to ignore the limits that God revealed to His Messenger. God is Knowing and Wise.
98. And among the Desert-Arabs are those who consider their contribution to be a fine. And they wait for a reversal of your fortunes. Upon them will fall the cycle of misfortune. God is Hearing and Knowing.
99. Yet among the Desert-Arabs are those who believe in God and the Last Day, and consider their contribution to be a means towards God, and the prayers of the Messenger. Surely it will draw them closer, and God will admit them into His mercy. God is Forgiving and Compassionate.
100. The Pioneers—The first of the Migrants and the Supporters, and those who followed them in righteousness. God is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him. He has prepared for them Gardens beneath which rivers flow, where they will abide forever. That is the sublime triumph.
101. Among the Desert-Arabs around you there are some hypocrites, and among the inhabitants of Medina too. They have become adamant in hypocrisy. You do not know them, but We know them. We will punish them twice; then they will be returned to a severe torment.
102. Others have confessed their sins, having mixed good deeds with bad deeds. Perhaps God will redeem them. God is Forgiving and Merciful.
103. Receive contributions from their wealth, to purify them and sanctify them with it; and pray for them. Your prayer is comfort for them. God is Hearing and Knowing.
104. Do they not know that God accepts the repentance of His servants, and that He receives the contributions, and that God is the Acceptor of Repentance, the Merciful?
105. Say, “Work. God will see your work, and so will His Messenger, and the believers. Then you will be returned to the Knower of secrets and declarations, and He will inform you of what you used to do.”

106. Others are held in suspense, awaiting God's decree, as to whether He will punish them, or accept their repentance. God is Aware and Wise.
107. Then there are those who establish a mosque to cause harm, and disbelief, and disunity among the believers, and as an outpost for those who fight God and His Messenger. They will swear: "Our intentions are nothing but good." But God bears witness that they are liars.
108. Do not stand in it, ever. A mosque founded upon piety from the first day is worthier of your standing in it. In it are men who love to be purified. God loves those who purify themselves.
109. Is he who founds his structure upon piety and acceptance from God better, or he who founds his structure on the brink of a cliff that is about to tumble, so it tumbles with him into the Fire of Hell? God does not guide the unjust people.
110. The structure which they built will remain questionable in their hearts, until their hearts are stopped. God is Knowing and Wise.
111. God has purchased from the believers their lives and their properties in exchange for Paradise. They fight in God's way, and they kill and get killed. It is a promise binding on Him in the Torah, and the Gospel, and the Quran. And who is more true to his promise than God? So rejoice in making such an exchange—that is the supreme triumph.
112. Those who repent, those who worship, those who praise, those who journey, those who kneel, those who bow down, those who advocate righteousness and forbid evil, and those who keep God's limits—give good news to the believers.
113. It is not for the Prophet and those who believe to ask forgiveness for the polytheists, even if they are near relatives, after it has become clear to them that they are people of Hellfire.
114. Abraham asked forgiveness for his father only because of a promise he had made to him. But when it became clear to him that he was an enemy of God, he disowned him. Abraham was kind and clement.
115. God would never lead a people astray, after He had guided them, until He makes clear to them what they should guard against. God has knowledge of all things.
116. To God belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. He gives life, and He causes death. And besides God, you have neither protector, nor supporter.
117. God has redeemed the Prophet, and the Emigrants, and the Supporters—those who followed him in the hour of difficulty—after the hearts of some of them almost swerved. Then He pardoned them. He is Kind towards them, Compassionate.

118. Also towards the three who were left behind. Then, when the earth, as vast as it is, closed in on them, and their very souls closed in on them, and they realized that there was no refuge from God, except in Him, He redeemed them, so that they may repent. God is the Redeemer, the Merciful.
119. O you who believe! Be conscious of God, and be with the sincere.
120. It is not for the inhabitants of Medina and the Desert-Arabs around them to stay behind the Messenger of God, nor to prefer themselves to him. That is because they never suffer any thirst, nor fatigue, nor hunger in the cause of God, nor do they take one step that enrages the disbelievers, nor do they gain anything from an enemy, but it is recorded to their credit as a righteous deed. God does not waste the reward of the righteous.
121. Nor do they spend any expenditure, small or large, nor do they cross any valley, but it is recorded to their credit. That God may reward them in accordance with the best of their deeds.
122. It is not advisable for the believers to march out altogether. Of every division that marches out, let a group remain behind, to gain understanding of the religion, and to notify their people when they have returned to them, that they may beware.
123. O you who believe! Fight those of the disbelievers who attack you, and let them find severity in you, and know that God is with the righteous.
124. Whenever a chapter is revealed, some of them say, "Which of you has this increased in faith?" As for those who believe: it increases them in faith, and they rejoice.
125. But as for those in whose hearts is sickness: it adds disgrace to their disgrace, and they die as unbelievers.
126. Do they not see that they are tested once or twice every year? Yet they do not repent, and they do not learn.
127. And whenever a chapter is revealed, they look at one another, "Does anyone see you?" Then they slip away. God has diverted their hearts, because they are a people who do not understand.
128. There has come to you a messenger from among yourselves, concerned over your suffering, anxious over you. Towards the believers, he is compassionate and merciful.
129. If they turn away, say, "God is enough for me; there is no god except He; in Him I have put my trust; He is the Lord of the Sublime Throne."

(See video of Nabeel Qureshi “Is Islam a peaceful religion)

D. Doctrine 4: The Prophets

Islam, like the other two monotheistic religions, is a prophetic religion. Here are some of the famous prophets that may be recognizable.

- Adam
- Noah
- Abraham
- Moses
- David
- Solomon
- Jonah
- John the Baptist
- Jesus

While Jesus is recognized as an important prophet in Islam, He isn't viewed as the Son of God. It is blasphemy to a Muslim to suggest Jesus could be God, and the Qur'an emphatically denies it. Interestingly, however, Muslims believe that Jesus Christ was sinless. (Not even Muhammad shares this distinction) And Qur'an even teaches that Jesus was born of a virgin. But Muslims deny that Christ's distinctives such as His perfection and virgin birth are evidence that He is God in human form. They respect and honor Jesus, but they consider Him to be of less significance than Muhammad. Muhammad was, however, the greatest prophet, and the message that he brought applies to everyone for all time.

*Muslims don't believe that Jesus, or Isa, was crucified or was resurrected. But He, not Muhammad, will return to play a special role before the future judgment, perhaps turning Christians to Islam.

E. Doctrine 5: Future Judgment

Muslims believe in an afterlife. They believe that life includes a spiritual dimension that continues after death. Everyone who has ever lived will be resurrected from the dead at some unknown future time. This is the great Day of Judgment.

The Qur'an teaches that all human activities are written down by two angels. At the time of judgment these two angels review the database of

the individual. The actions of each person are weighed on a scale of absolute justice by Allah. The good deeds are balanced against the evil deeds. The way the scaled tips determines the person's eternal destiny. If your good outweighs your bad then heaven it is, but if your bad deeds outweigh the good, the you'll spend eternity in unimaginable suffering.

What about Martyrdom and those 70 virgins?

Martyrdom - Everything is arbitrary depending on Allah so there is no sense of assurance except in one case. There is one loophole that would allow a Muslim, and only a Muslim, to avoid the judgment. Those who die as martyrs in defense of the Islamic faith or in a 'holy war,' also known as jihad, go directly to heaven and avoid the uncertain outcome of waiting to see which way the scales tip.

72 Virgins -The 72 virgins or 72 houri (/ˈhʊəriːz/[1]; from Persian: خوری, *hūrī*; plural of 'haurā' or 'hūrīyah'; Arabic: خورِيَّة (Xūrīyya) refers to a celestial being that is an aspect of Heaven or jannah(Arabic: جنة 'Jannah'; plural: *Jannat*). This concept is mentioned in Qur'anic text as a reward to believing men after death. According to the Quran, once in jannah, believers are wed to virgins with "full grown", "swelling" or "pears-shaped" breasts.[2][3][4] The Quran provides a physical and personal description of the houri and denotes them as awards to believers. Sahih (authentic) hadith detail the amount if houris and what they are for.[5]

Orthodox Muslim theologians such as Al-Ghazali (1058 - 1111 CE) and Al-Ash'ari (874 - 935 CE) have discussed the rewards and pleasures found in heaven. Often scholars refer to hadiths that describe heaven as a slave market where there will be "no buy and sale, but... If any man will wish to have sexual intercourse with a woman, he will do at once." [6][7]

⁷¹ "A man asked the Prophet : O Prophet of God, will the inmates of Paradise have sexual intercourse ? He said: Anybody among them will be given sexual strength of seven, persons among you. The Prophet said : An inmate of Paradise will have five hundred hurs, four thousand unmarried women and eight thousand widowed women. Each of them will keep embracing him for the duration of his whole worldly life time. He also said: There will be markets in Paradise in which there will be no buy and sale, but there will be men and women. If any man will wish to have sexual intercourse with a woman, he will do at once. The Hurs will sing in Paradise on divine purity and praise-we are most beautiful Hurs and we are for the honoured husbands.", Al Ghazzali, "Ihya Uloom Ed-Din (The Revival of the Religious Sciences) Vol. 4", Death and Subsequent Events 430 (archived)

VIII. The Five Pillars

A. Recite the Creed

It is called the Shahadah which means to ‘bear witness’ and every Muslim is to publicly recite it. The English translation is “There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his messenger.” This acknowledges that Muhammad is the top prophet. Repeating this phrase in Arabic throughout his lifetime confirms a person’s membership in the Islamic faith.

B. Pray the Prayers

Prayer is the discipline most consistent Muslims practice because it shows obedience. Prayer is a ritual carried out five times a day: at dawn, noon, mid-afternoon, after sunset, and at night. Prayers must be said facing Mecca which can be done at home or in the mosque or any place except on Fridays. On that day Muslims must attend the mosque at noon to say their prayers together.

C. Give the Alms

“Giving alms for the poor” is one of the requirements. Alms, or zakat, equals 2.5 percent of one’s income. Given to assist those is the Muslim community such as widows and orphans and build Islamic institutions.

D. Start the Fast

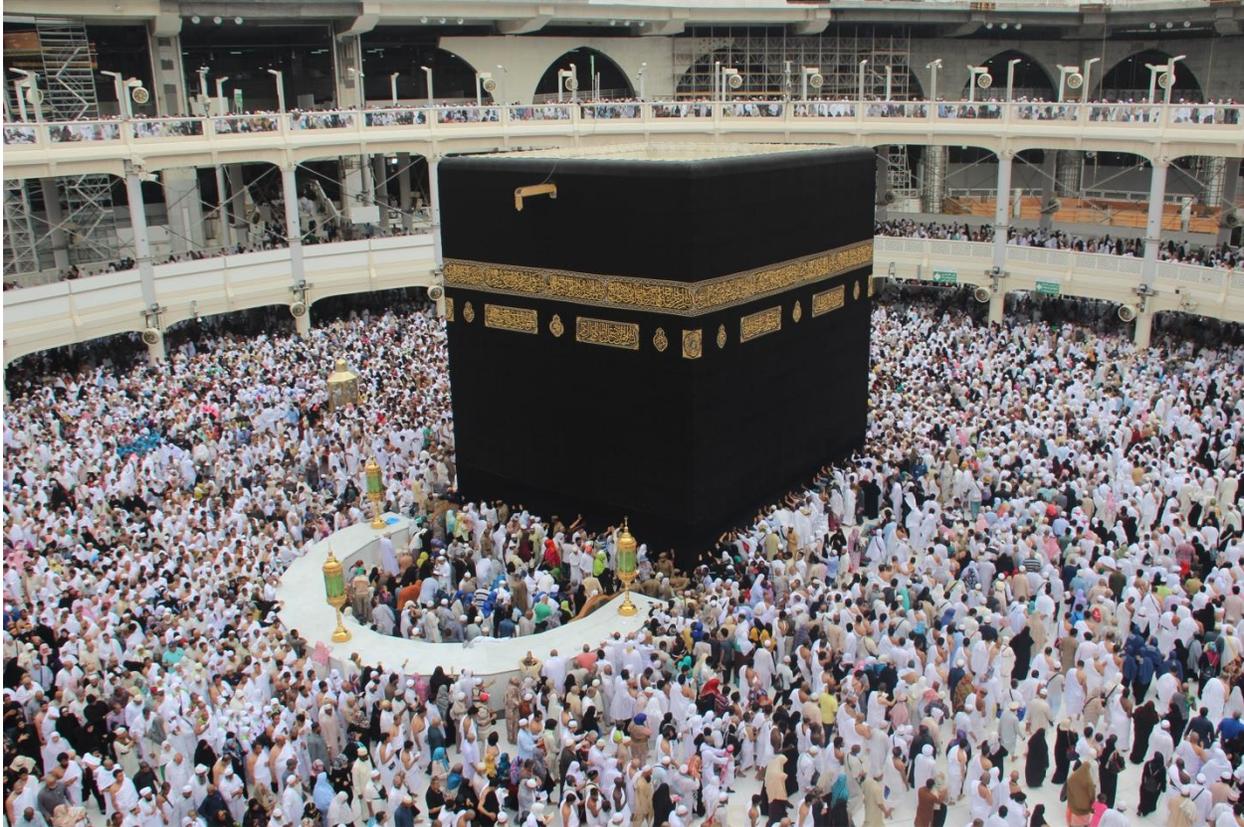
Fasting can be done for either piety or penance. Muslims observe the entire month of fasting during Ramadan (the 9th month of the Muslim lunar year – the same month that Muhammad first received the revelation of the Quran.) Fast is serious business, as Muslims abstain from food, drink, and pleasures from sunrise to sunset each day during the month; any eating must be accomplished after sunset and before dawn.

E. Make the Pilgrimage

Every Muslim is required by the Quran to at least once in their lifetime make a pilgrimage to Mecca. Muslims descend on Mecca during the twelfth month of the Islamic Calendar. This is called the Hajj. This

pilgrimage involves prescribed rituals including praying vows and circling the Kaaba. The hajj is symbolic of the global unity of Islam.

The Kaaba



The Sunni-Shi'ite Split

The two primary and largest sects, even though there are a variety of sects within Islam, are the Sunnis and the Shi'ites. The split between the Sunnis and the Shi'ites dates back to the years not long after Muhammad's unexpected death in 632. He had not appointed a successor, and therein lies the basis for the primary disagreement.

- The *Shi'ites* – they broke away from mainstream Islam primarily over leadership. They believed that the successor of Muhammad should be in Muhammad's bloodline. They also take the position that Islamic religious leaders should also be political leaders. This sect is the smaller of the two, and it predominates in countries such as Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, and parts of Africa.

- The *Sunnis* are known as ‘followers of the tradition’ or ‘followers of the path.’ They believe that the leaders of Islam should be elected and that there should be a separation between the realms of religion and government. Sunnis comprise approximately 80 percent of the Muslim population and have the greater representation in the countries of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan.

Conclusion

1. What are some of the major differences between the three mono-theistic religions?
2. What would you say is the most appealing and the least appealing in Judaism and Islam?
3. What curiosities or questions did tonight’s study answer or bring up for you?
4. Final thoughts?

Notes: _____
