

# Islam and the Bible

A Special Class on April 5, 2010

## **Introduction:**

- I. Why Study Islam?
- II. Highlights of the first two classes

## **Body:**

### **I. The Hadith**

#### **A. What is it?**

1. The Hadith is a compilation of phrases attributed to Muhammad, the history of Muhammad, and an insight into how Qur'anic law was followed.
2. Hadith means "narrative" as it provides a narrative of the life of Muhammad.
3. The Hadiths were compiled through a large span of time, from the end of the seventh into the eleventh centuries.

#### **B. Why is it important?**

1. Recall that there were principles in the Qur'an that were contradictory or could not be rationalized with the principle of naskh (later prophecies trump older ones). The Hadith provides instruction for how Muhammad implemented the laws given in the Qur'an.
2. Muhammad is held in high esteem in the Islamic faith. It is he who is to be emulated in every possible way (except for when his actions contradict that of the Qur'an, such as in the number of wives a Muslim may have).
  - a. The very mantra of Islam and declaration of faith is, "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is His prophet."
  - b. The Qur'an teaches that you must have faith in Allah AND Muhammad.
    - 1) Surah 58:4 "And if any has not (the wherewithal), he should fast for two months consecutively before they touch each other. But if any is unable to do so, he should feed sixty indigent ones, this, that ye may show your faith in Allah and His Messenger. Those are limits (set by) Allah. For those who reject (Him), there is a grievous Penalty."
    - 2) Surah 49:1 "O Ye who believe! Put not yourselves forward before Allah and His Messenger. But fear Allah. for Allah is He Who hears and knows all things."
  - c. Since Muhammad has the preeminence over all others (Surah 49:1), it is he who is to be emulated.
3. Since the hadiths describe Muhammad in situations where Allah's command was to be implemented, these situations and examples serve as clarification for what's in the Qur'an.
4. The Hadith is one of the main sources of insight for implementation of Sharia law

C. How many books are there in the Hadith?<sup>1</sup>

1. Most Muslims accept six collections of Hadith
  - a. Al-Bukhari (870 AD)
  - b. Muslim Ibn Al-Hajjaj (875)
  - c. Abu Da'ud (888)
  - d. Al-Tirmidhi (892)
  - e. Ibn Maja (886)
  - f. Al-Nasa'i (915)
2. Additionally, the Shi'a Muslims accept four more
  - a. Abu Ja'far Muhammad Al-Kulayni (940)
  - b. Ibn Babuya (991)
  - c. Al-Tusi (first collection) (1068)
  - d. Al-Tusi (second collection) (1068)

D. Problems with the Hadith

1. Dr. Israr Ahmed Khan, professor at International Islamic University Malaysia, has the following preview for his book Authentication of Hadith – Redefining the Criteria:  
In today's complex and volatile world the consequences of relying on fraudulent and counterfeit Hadith to legitimise extremist behaviour, issue violent fatwas, and justify blatant abuse, particularly of women, is not only far too easy but in fact dangerous. Israr Khan addresses the sensitive topic of Hadith authentication, focusing on the criteria adopted by classical scholars to maintain that concentration on the continuity and accuracy of the chain of narrators, rather than the textual content of Hadith, has led to particular Hadith being included which either contradict other Hadith directly, project the Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) in an uncharacteristic light, or do not reflect and/or conflict with the teachings of the Qur'an.  
The study traces in careful detail the historical development of the oral and written traditions, as well as the many targeted attempts at fabrication that took place, critiquing in methodical detail certain Hadith which have come to be widely accepted as 'authentic'. The prominent collections we have today, were made possible by the development of the science of Hadith criticism, and Muslim scholars deserve deep appreciation for their painstaking work, as well as their invaluable contribution towards preserving the Hadith literature to the best of their ability. However, insists the author, the process is ongoing, and the closed door policy which currently surrounds Hadith authentication needs to be carefully re-examined.
2. Many of the Hadiths try to collect the chain of retelling of particular actions or messages. This leads to very long he-said-she-said chains:  
He said, I heard as-Sa`dani say, I heard some of our companions say, Muhammad Ibn Isma'il said: I selected/published [the content of] this book - meaning the Sahih book - from about 600,000 hadiths/reports. Abu Sa`d al-Malini informed us that `Abdullah Ibn `Udayy informed us: I heard al-Hasan Ibn al-Husayn al-Bukhari say: "I have not included in my book al-Jami` but what is authentic, and I left out among the authentic what I could not get hold of."

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.religionfacts.com/islam/texts/hadith.htm>  
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- a. Of the 600,000 hadiths Al-Bukhari had at his disposal, he only included 7,397.
3. According to the Sahih Muslim (the second-most trusted Hadith source), Muhammad had banned the writing of the Hadith:  
Sahih Muslim, Zuhd, 72  
“Do not write anything from me except the Qur'an. Whoever wrote must destroy it.”  
Muhammad, narrated by Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri
4. Muslims don't deny the vast existence of fake hadith, but rely on scholars to eliminate them and determine which ones are authentic.
5. Example of Contradictions: What is forbidden during Ramadan fasting? (cupping = blood letting)
  - a. According to the Qur'an: eating, drinking, and sex  
Surah 2:187 “Permitted to you, on the night of the fasts, is the approach to your wives. They are your garments and ye are their garments. Allah knoweth what ye used to do secretly among yourselves; but He turned to you and forgave you; so now associate with them, and seek what Allah Hath ordained for you, and eat and drink, until the white thread of dawn appear to you distinct from its black thread; then complete your fast Till the night appears; but do not associate with your wives while ye are in retreat in the mosques. Those are Limits (set by) Allah. Approach not nigh thereto. Thus doth Allah make clear His Signs to men: that they may learn self-restraint.”
  - b. According to Al-Bukhari (hadith #1 in the aforementioned accepted hadiths) Volume 7, Book 71, Number 597: “The Prophet was cupped while he was fasting.”
  - c. According to Al-Bukhari Volume 3, Book 31, Number 161, cupping is frowned upon during fasting if it makes you weak. “Anas bin Malik was asked whether they disliked the cupping for a fasting person. He replied in the negative and said, ‘Only if it causes weakness.’”
  - d. According to Abu Da'ud (hadith #3 in the aforementioned accepted hadiths), cupping is prohibited during fasts: “The cupper and the cupped have broken the fast”

## II. Attitudes Toward the Bible

- A. Much of my understanding of how Muslims view the Bible comes from personal experience in debating Muslims at school. Here are a few notes from my [Jonathan Hood's] personal experiences:
  1. The religion of Islam is a very physical religion. The entire concept of God having a son necessitates that God would have to have physical, sexual intercourse with a woman, which would be blasphemous! Very few Muslims that I've talked to can get past Genesis 1 in the Bible. For God to create light (1:3) before the sun (1:16) creates a paradox for many Muslim minds.
  2. When discussing the Bible with Muslims, we must emphasize the spiritual nature of eternity, rather than Islam's physical nature of it.
- B. Muslims believe that the Bible was the inspired word of Allah.
  1. Surah 5:68 “Say: ‘O People of the Book! ye have no ground to stand upon unless ye stand fast by the Law, the Gospel, and all the revelation that has come to you from

your Lord.’ It is the revelation that cometh to thee from thy Lord, that increaseth in most of them their obstinate rebellion and blasphemy. But sorrow thou not over (these) people without Faith.”

- C. Muslims believe that there were faithful and unfaithful Jews and Christians. The unfaithful transgressors then changed what Allah had written.
  - 1. Surah 2:59 “But the transgressors changed the word from that which had been given them; so We sent on the transgressors a plague from heaven, for that they infringed (Our command) repeatedly.”
- D. Since Muslims believe the word of Allah has been changed, you are a transgressor if you practice your religion using a flawed book.
- E. The Qur’an is a completion of the Bible, intended to complement the Bible and make Allah’s message clear. The Qur’an is described as the Bible’s confirmation.
  - 1. Surah 2:91 “When it is said to them, ‘Believe in what Allah Hath sent down, "they say, "We believe in what was sent down to us:’ yet they reject all besides, even if it be Truth confirming what is with them. Say: ‘Why then have ye slain the prophets of Allah in times gone by, if ye did indeed believe?’”
- F. How can we then talk to a Muslim about the Bible if it has been so ingrained in their thought process that the Bible is corrupted?
  - 1. Start with the Big Picture presentation. If many Muslims can’t get past Genesis 1, they aren’t going to see the big picture of the Bible; therefore, the big picture needs to be explained to them.
  - 2. Be ready to give a defense for what you believe, and require the Muslim to give a defense for what they believe.
    - a. 2 Tim 4:2 “Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.”
    - b. 1 Peter 3:15 “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always [be] ready to [give] a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;”
    - c. NOTE: No one is familiar with every alleged discrepancy in the Bible. You will be asked questions you may not know the answer to. The correct answer is, “I don’t know – let me find out the answer and we will discuss it next time.” This shows honesty, sincerity, and opens the door to a second study.
    - d. NOTE: Muslims are often going to be able to rationalize the discrepancies of the Qur’an and Hadith away, but if they see that the Bible stands as complete and uncorrupted, the Qur’an itself becomes a moot point. The Qur’an’s goal is to confirm the uncorrupted Bible.
  - 3. If the Bible is complete and uncorrupted on its own, then why does the Qur’an contradict it so much?

### III. The Muslim View of Jesus

- A. The Bible presents Jesus as God’s Son, the One whom men should hear (Matthew 17:5; Hebrews 1:1-2).
  - 1. Jesus was deity incarnate (John 1:1, 14; Matthew 26:63-64).

2. The Jews attempted to kill Jesus because they understood His claim to be divine (John 5:18; 8:58; 10:31-33).
  3. Hebrews presents Jesus as One to be worshipped (1:6, 8).
- B. The Scriptures affirm that Jesus was crucified by the Romans at the behest of the Jews (Acts 2:22-23; John 20:24-31).
- C. Jesus acts as our intercessor and our mediator (Hebrews 7:25; 8:6; 9:15; 1 Timothy 2:5).
- D. Islam accepts many biblical prophets and Jesus is one of them. However, Muslims consider Muhammad to have been the last and greatest of the prophets, a descendant of Ishmael, Abraham's son.
1. The Islamic creed: “There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is his prophet.”
  2. Muslims claim that all other prophets, including Jesus, pointed to Muhammad.
  3. Islam views Jesus Christ in the following way:
    - a. Commenting on John 14:6, one source states, “Jesus was the way for his time; now Muhammad is the way... Finally we should recall that Jesus is the way, not the destination... God has sent numerous prophets and messengers. Each in his time was the way to God.”<sup>2</sup>
    - b. According to Hadith 8:570, Jesus declines to act as an intercessor, directing Muslims instead to Muhammad. “Allah will gather all people on the Day of Resurrection and they will say, ‘Let us request someone to intercede for us with our Lord.’... They will go to him [Jesus], and he will say, ‘I am not fit for this undertaking, go to Muhammad.’”<sup>3</sup>
    - c. What about the claim of the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God?
      - 1) He was no more than a man, certainly not the Son of God (Qur’an 4:172).
      - 2) “It is common knowledge that the divinity of Jesus was introduced by Saint Paul and his followers and was established on the dead bodies of millions of Christians through history...”<sup>4</sup>
      - 3) The Muslims view the trinity as an idolatrous concept (e.g., Surah 5:72-75).
    - d. According to the Qur’an, Jesus did not die on the cross (Surah 4:156-9).
      - 1) The Jews supposedly made a mistake and crucified someone who looked like Him.
      - 2) “4:155ff. explicitly deny the crucifixion in the words ‘They did not kill him and they did not crucify him, but one was made to resemble him’ (or perhaps, ‘they thought they did’).”<sup>5</sup>
      - 3) Note, however, Matthew 16:21; 20:17-19. What are the implications for Jesus as a prophet of God if these prophesied events did not take place?

<sup>2</sup> Internet website – <http://www.al-muslim.org>. Note: when I returned to this site to verify this quotation, I discovered that the domain name was up for sale; the website had been dismantled.

<sup>3</sup> David Goldmann, *Islam and the Bible* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2004), p. 39.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Mahen Hammad Al-Johani, *The Truth About Jesus*, p. 13.

<sup>5</sup> Dye & Forthman, *Religions of the World*, p. 634.

#### IV. Other Islamic Doctrines Compared to Biblical Doctrines

##### A. Women

1. It is difficult to understand the status of women in Islam for several reasons.
  - a. Various Muslim sources present viewpoints that are quite different from one another.
  - b. The rights and privileges of Muslim women differ significantly from one Islamic culture to another. In some cultures women live very restricted lives, but in other cultures they tend to have much more freedom of behavior and dress. The difference seems to be whether the government of a country is more or less secular and whether Sharia law is implemented.
  - c. The treatment of women in Islamic cultures seems to be the result of a synthesis of the teaching of the Qur'an and the Hadith.
2. In traditional Islam, women are considered to be inferior to men by virtue of their gender.<sup>6</sup>
  - a. Surah 2:228 – “Women shall with justice have rights similar to those exercised against them, although men have a status above women. God is almighty and wise.”
  - b. Women are less intelligent than men (Hadith 1:301; 2:541).
  - c. A woman's testimony is worth less (½) than that of a man (Hadith 1:301; 3:826; e.g., Surah 2:282).
  - d. According to inheritance rules, a woman receives half of what a man would receive (Surah 4:11 – “A male shall inherit twice as much as a female...”)
3. The submission of the woman to men is to be evidenced in several ways:
  - a. She is to avert her gaze before men, i.e., she is not to look directly into the eyes of a man.
  - b. Surah 33:59 – “O prophet! Tell thy wives and daughters, and the believing women, that they should cast their outer garments over their persons [when abroad].”
  - c. Surah 24:31 – “And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty.”
  - d. In traditional Islam, women are excluded from public education, segregated from men in the mosques, and barred from holding public jobs or positions.
4. “Honor killings” are a difficult thing for Westerners to understand.
  - a. In Islam, men are viewed as the guardians and protectors of the women in their family.
  - b. “One's family is the source of honor and reputation. Women are restricted and protected by Islamic law and custom. In particular, the behavior of women reflects upon their family's honor. Extramarital sex is illegal and prohibited.

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<sup>6</sup> Goldmann, p. 81. Caner & Caner, p. 133ff.

Brothers protect their sisters. Husbands protect their wives. In fact, a man's honor is based on how well he protects the women in his care."<sup>7</sup>

5. Women are viewed as a major cause of evil and need to be kept under control.
  - a. In Muhammad's visions of hell, the majority of its inhabitants were women (Hadith 7:30, 33; 8:555).<sup>8</sup>
6. Dr. Kaukab Siddique, Muslim apologist, is critical of cultural Islam (typically Arabic) in his book *The Struggle of Muslim Women* [6]: "Islam has made it obligatory for believers to fight and struggle for the liberation and emancipation of the oppressed. Unfortunately the followers of Islam forgot this message over time. They gave up the struggle to emancipate women, and they themselves behave towards women as they had been told not to behave. Nowadays, in fact, the more religious a man is, the more oppressive he is towards women."<sup>9</sup>
7. By contrast, the Bible presents women as being equal in ability and value, although they have been given different roles (e.g., Ephesians 5:22ff; 1 Timothy 2:8-15; 1 Corinthians 14:23-40).

## B. Marriage

1. Biblical teaching regarding marriage can be briefly summarized as follows:
  - a. Marriage is a relationship between a man and a woman for as long as the two shall live (Matthew 19:6; 1 Corinthians 7:2, 10-11; Romans 7:2-3).
  - b. The husband is to be the head of the wife and he is to lead with love (Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 3:19).
  - c. The wife is to submit to her husband and her primary responsibilities are related to the home (Ephesians 5:22-33; 1 Peter 3:1-6; 1 Timothy 2:15; 5:14; Titus 2:3-5).
  - d. Divorce is allowed for the cause of adultery (Matthew 19:9).
2. In comparison, the Qur'an teaches the following about marriage:
  - a. In the early days of Islam, temporary marriage (*muta*) was allowed. Such marriages (still permitted by Shia Muslims) lasted for three nights.<sup>10</sup>
  - b. Polygamy is allowed...for men.
    - 1) Surah 4:3 – "Marry of the women...two or three or four; and if ye fear that ye cannot do justice (to so many), then one."
    - 2) Although restricted to four wives (at one time!), a Muslim man may have as many concubines (slave girls or war captives) as he pleases.
    - 3) Muhammad was allowed to have more than four wives by special dispensation.
    - 4) Husbands are to provide for their wives equally.
  - c. Husbands are allowed to physically punish their wives.

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<sup>7</sup> George Braswell, *What You Need to Know about Islam & Muslims*, p. 72.

<sup>8</sup> Caner & Caner, p. 134. Goldmann, p. 96.

<sup>9</sup> Cited by Ney Rieber, *A Resource for the Study of Islam*, p. 164.

<sup>10</sup> David Goldmann, *Islam and the Bible*, p. 78.

- 1) Surah 4:34 – “As to those women on whose part you fear disloyalty and ill-conduct, admonish them, refuse to share their beds, beat them.”
  - 2) Husbands, however, are not to beat their wives excessively! (Hadith 7:62.77 – “He should feed her if he eats, clothe her when he dresses, avoid disfiguring her or beating her excessively or abandoning her except at home”)<sup>11</sup>
- d. Marriage is intended to be permanent and divorce is discouraged, although provisions were made for divorce in Surah 2 (vs. 228-241).
- 1) A Muslim man can divorce his wife (traditionally, in a verbal fashion), but the wife cannot divorce her husband.
  - 2) Although some would argue that the Qur’an only allows divorce for “open lewdness” (Surah 4:19; it should be noted that this ayah may apply to a particular situation; widows of deceased relatives), the very next ayah (vs. 20) gives the impression that a husband can divorce his wife even if he simply wants to marry another woman (Surah 4:20 – “If you wish to replace one wife with another...”
  - 3) “A Muslim husband may cast his wife adrift without giving a single reason or even notice. The husband possesses absolute, immediate, and unquestioned power of divorce. No privilege of a corresponding nature is reserved for the wife.”<sup>12</sup>
3. Naturally, the teaching of Islam about the status of women in general will influence the role of the woman in the home.

### C. Final Judgment

1. Muslims believe in the Second Coming of Jesus and that all Christians and Jews will realize the truth about Jesus before he dies at the age of forty (Qur’an 3:46; 19:33), to be buried at Medina with his brother prophet Muhammad.
2. Good deeds will be balanced against evil deeds; souls will pass to heaven or hell on a bridge “finer than a hair and sharper than a sword.”
3. “Nothing shall befall us except what God has ordained” (Qur’an 9:51; see also 3:153-157, 165-166).
4. The Bible teaches the free-will of man, his capacity to choose good or evil. Muslims would agree that man has free-will, but not freedom of results “for the laws of God control actions and results.”<sup>13</sup>
5. The Bible doesn’t teach that good deeds will be weighed against evil deeds (a “salvation by works” concept). We will be saved by the grace of God.

### D. Heaven/Paradise

1. Both the Bible and the Qur’an speak of “paradise,” but the Islamic concept of “paradise” is actually more parallel to the biblical doctrine of heaven. That is not to say that the Islamic teaching about paradise is the same as what the Bible teaches about heaven.

<sup>11</sup> Caner & Caner, Unveiling Islam, pp. 138-139.

<sup>12</sup> Dr. Anis Shorosh, Islam Revealed, p. 167.

<sup>13</sup> Braswell, p. 30.

- a. Paradise is mentioned in the Bible (NKJ) in these locations: Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 12:4; Revelation 2:7.
  - b. Paradise in the Qur'an is a revision of the biblical doctrine of heaven.
2. In the Qur'an, "paradise" is a very sensual, physically-oriented place. Note these passages:
- a. Surah 9:72 - "God has promised men and women who believe gardens with streams of running water where they will abide forever, and beautiful mansions in the Garden of Eden, and the blessings of God above all. That will be happiness supreme."
  - b. Surah 47:15 - "The semblance of Paradise promised the pious and devout (is that of a garden) with streams of water that will not go rank, and rivers of milk whose taste will not undergo a change, and rivers of wine delectable to drinkers, and streams of purified honey, and fruits of every kind in them, and forgiveness of their Lord."
  - c. Surah 2:25 - "Announce to those who believe and have done good deeds, glad tidings of gardens under which rivers flow, and where, when they eat the fruits that grow, they will say: 'Indeed they are the same as we were given before,' so like in semblance the food would be. And they shall have fair spouses there, and live there abidingly."
  - d. Surah 44:51-55 - "Surely those who fear and follow the straight path will be in a place of peace and security in the midst of gardens and of springs dressed in brocade and shot silk, facing one another. Just like that. We shall pair them with companions with large black eyes. They will call for every kind of fruit with satisfaction."
3. "Heaven is a garden watered by rivers where grow rich fruits and flowers. There the Muslims drink the wine they have been denied on earth, wine that has no after-effects. It is brought to them by handsome youths, and dark-eyed houris wait on their every pleasure. Again and again the sensuous joys of Paradise are described in great detail." Dye & Forthman, Religions of the World, p. 636.
4. The Bible, however, does not indicate that heaven will be a place of carnal pleasures (e.g., Revelation 4 & 5).

### **Conclusion:**

- I. There are significant differences between the Islamic view of Jesus and that presented by the Scriptures, both in terms of His nature and redemptive work. This lesson has only presented some sample issues.
- II. We must choose between the Bible and the Qur'an; they teach conflicting doctrines.
  - A. I reject the view that the gospel taught by Jesus (the New Testament) has been corrupted.
  - B. Muslims accept the accuracy of the Scriptures when they want to use the Scriptures to bolster the teachings of the Qur'an.
  - C. If God has preserved the Qur'an from corruption (Islamic claim), why could He not do the same thing for the Torah and the Gospel?
  - D. If the Torah and the Gospel have been corrupted, how can we be sure that the Qur'an has not likewise been corrupted? It is the same God who supposedly revealed all three books!

Note: This outline is a collaborative effort of Jonathan Hood and Allen Dvorak (April, 2010).