

# A Dialogue on the Internet

Hello! My name is ... and I'm a student at Messiah College. I'm currently taking a world religions' class and we just have got done studying Islam. I found this faith to be very fascinating and I still have a few questions, which I was unable to find answers for since the class is designed as an introductory class and can not spend a lot of time on one particular religion. So I thought maybe I could ask you guys. I hope that you have time to answer my questions below, and increase my knowledge about your interesting faith!!

## Questions:

1- We have learned that Muslims believe that Allah could not have any of his Prophets be put to death, as we believe Jesus was. But, since Islam means to be obedient and practice submission, wouldn't Jesus' death be seen as the ultimate act of obedience and submission and thus should be greatly venerated? I have been reading the Quran and in Surah 3:54, doesn't it say that Allah will cause Jesus to die?

2- If the Quran is eternal then isn't it a sin of Ishrak (associating partners with God) committed by equating it to God, Who is eternal as well?

3- According to Islam, what are the proofs that Islam is the true religion of God?

4- If Muhammad was sinless as Islamic traditions regard him, and that Islam follows the basic ethical teachings contained in the ten commandments and the Bible as a whole, wouldn't he have committed a sin since having more than one wife is regarded as a sin?

5- Why do Muslims believe that Jesus will come back again instead of Muhammad?

6- We learned in class that Muslims believe that previous divine revelations have been destroyed by man, which was why the Quran came about to correct man's distortions. Could you give example

of some distortions of the Bible? Given the fact that the Bible was written over many years in different locations, and with the discovery of the dead sea scrolls, wouldn't the alterations be hard to have occurred universally.

7- How would you assess modern day Islam – Christian relations?

8- What do you cherish most about your faith?

## Comment:

I know that I have asked a lot of questions here, and it may not be possible to provide me with a simple answer. It is my hope though that you will answer my questions. As I mentioned before I find Islamic faith to be very interesting and I would like to be as knowledgeable about the faiths around me as possible, so that I can be in a position of respect, rather than ignorance if I were to meet Muslims, as adherents of other faiths, in the future. Again I pray that you can answer my questions and thanks for your time and efforts....

## Answers:

Thank you for your internet message. Here are my answers to your questions on Islam:

1- Your statement that “Allah could not have any of His prophets be put to death” is inaccurate. For indeed, some Prophets mentioned in the Quran, were saved by God at the critical moment; but other prophets and believers were tested by death. Jesus Christ p.b.u.h. differs. He had a miraculous birth, could perform miracles by God's leave, and was raised to heaven (alive) by another miracle. All this was meant to be an eye opener to his followers. Instead, they went to two extremes: Some of them who were the majority in the beginning believed that he was an imposter, the son of an adulteress and an unbeliever in their perverted religion so he deserved to be crucified. Others claimed that he was God incarnate and that he was raised from death after three days and that he went up to Heaven with God the father. So the meanings of obedience and submission you attribute to his claimed death are out of place. Your question No. 5 is related to this answer. Muslims believe in all prophets. They are all messengers of God. We do not prefer or even

compare between one and another prophet. It doesn't matter to us, whether Jesus or Muhammad will come back to earth. But the Quran asserts that Jesus will return so that 1) he may kill the anti-Christ, 2) he will follow the religion of Islam, 3) he will get married, have children and then die a normal death. Muhammad died a natural death after he performed his mission, so there is no point of his return while in the case of Jesus his term is still incomplete. That is why he has to return to complete it, because God alone does not perish.

2- You seem to be confused about the nature of God. Eternity for anything does not qualify it to be God like. Paradise and Hell are also eternal. Does this equate them with God? You may need to review the 99 names of God so that you do not confuse Him with any one or any thing.

3- The main proofs that Islam is the only true religion with God are the following:

The Holy Quran asserts this, when it states “the only religion acceptable to Allah is Islam.”

The Quran that we have today is word for word, even syllable for syllable, the same book that was revealed to Muhammad over 14 centuries ago. By Quran I mean the one in Arabic and not translations. If you pick up any edition of the Quran and compare it with any other edition published anywhere in the world you will find them identical. So Muslims today have one book not several. There is not a single instance of any contradiction in the Quran. The Quran was not the work of Muhammad. It is the divine revelation he received from God. To Muslims Muhammad is not God, but he is a mortal, a slave and a messenger of God.

In the Quran, Muhammad himself is criticized and disciplined. The address in the Quran is often in the second person singular, “You”, which shows that he is the receiver not the author of the Quran. The Quran refers to certain scientific facts which neither Muhammad nor his age nor several centuries after, knew anything about them.

Finally, there still exists to this day two copies of the Quran from the era of Muhammad: One in the famous Top Capi Saray museum in Istanbul-Turkey and the other is in Tashkent,

central asia. They are identical to any other copy of the Quran. This among many other things shows that the true book of God is the Quran which conveys the true religion of God – Islam.

4. It is wrong to claim that Muhammad was flawless or sinless. To Muslims, Muhammad was the messenger of God not God or a semi God, but a human among humans. He was born, ate food, got married and had children and then he died. This is one thing, the other point is that he was entrusted with a message to convey to humanity which he did. He, however, made some mistakes or, rather, he was expected to do something better in the worldly affairs than what he did sometimes. So, he was corrected by the will of God. And he acknowledged this when he said “:You know better the affairs of your world. He was a man among men. And this is the beauty of his message; for how could you follow him and imitate him if he was super human?”

To claim that Prophet Muhammad sinned by having several wives, this stems from the Christian perspective of sex where it is considered as a sin. Not so is sex within marriage in Islam. On the contrary, we learn from a saying by the Prophet Muhammad that he who gets married secures one half of his religion. So in Islam marriage is a type of worship rather than a sin.

As for polygamy in the case of the Prophet Muhammad, it has several good reasons for it and here is not the right context to review them. 6. The Bible itself is not one bible. The Catholics Bible is composed of 73 books, while the Protestant Bible consists of 66 books. This is one example of the process of omission and addition in the Bible. You don’t have the Bible in the original language. Do you? It is only through translations that you read the Bible. There are 4 variations in the first four gospels

in the New Testament about the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and his lineage. Which one should we take? There are innumerable contradictions in the Bible. Bible experts themselves acknowledge this fact that is why another scripture had to be revealed to confirm what is right in it and correct what is wrong. That scripture is the Quran. Remember the recommendations of Jesus Seminary, which held its concluding sessions in California in the early nineties. They asserted among other things that only 20 percent of the statements attributed to Jesus in the New Testament are either true or possibly true, while 80% are either false or possibly false.

Modern Muslim Christian relationship is of two types: Christians living with Muslims in the east. These have always enjoyed the tolerance and good treatment of Islam and Muslims. Unfortunately Western Christians preferred and still prefer to be the enemies of Islam and Muslims. One example is the colonial rule of Muslim countries committed by Christian powers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Muslims are always ready to improve this relationship if Christians do their part.

8. What I cherish most about Islam is my faith in God Almighty, the Unique Lord of the universe, who is most compassionate, absolute, completely different from His creation, Fair and most just, Living, and most Loving. He begets not, nor was begotten and there is no one like unto Him. He is the first and the Last, the All-powerful. Whatever problems or crises face me, they disappear once I resort to God Allah Almighty. I do not need anyone to intercede between my Lord, Allah, and myself.

With my best wishes that you meet success in finding the path of truth - Islam.

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