

John 1:29 September, 11 2011 “Jesus & Muhammad”

Today we commemorate the 10th anniversary of the most calamitous and heinous attack on American soil since the Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Every hijacked plane except United flight 93, which crashed in a field in Shanksville, PA, found their destinations. The last words of Todd Beamer, the leader of the resistance on Flight 93, before charging the terrorists to take the back the plane were, “Let’s roll.” American Airlines Flight 11 and United Flight 175 found their targets at the Twin Towers. Upon impact, people began to flee the buildings but the firefighters and response personnel went into the storm. Another plane also slammed into the Pentagon. On the “For the Fallen” ceremony on September 11, 2008, Former NYC mayor, Rudy Guiliani quoted the English poet, Laurence Binyon, “For The Fallen.” “They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old: Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning, We will remember them.”¹ Out of the 2,795 people who died, at least 200 jumped or fell to their deaths.²

I remember. sitting in a Missions class taught by Dr. George Jumper at the Baptist College of Florida, We were informed of what was believed to have been a terrorist attack in New York City. After class was dismissed, some friends and I surrounded a television in the cafeteria only to stare in disbelief as the Twin Towers crumbled to the ground. Patriotic passion and a profound sense of sadness rose up like a tidal wave.

Q# What on earth could cause someone to do this? All of the 19 terrorists were devout Muslims and members of *Al-qaida* but is there any correlation between Islam and terrorism? So, a simple question must follow: *Is Islam a religion of peace?*

“Islam is peace...” The 9/11 attacks, “violate the fundamental tenets of the Muslim faith”

- **George W. Bush**

“The 9/11 attacks “has nothing to do with Islam” - **Tony Blair**

“Many believe there is an inevitable clash between Western civilization and Western values, and Islamic civilizations and values. I believe this view is terribly wrong. False prophets may use and abuse any religion to justify whatever political objectives they have--even cold-blooded murder. Some may have the world believe that almighty God himself, the merciful grants a license to kill. But that is not our understanding of Islam...Americans respect and honor Islam” - **Bill Clinton**

One fact = all of the men who carried out the attacks were confessional Muslims and believed in a brand of Islam that advocated war against non-Muslims.

¹ <http://www.necn.com/Boston/Nation/Giuliani-quotes-For-The-Fallen-in-911-ceremony-/1221142301.html>

² <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2008/07/10/national/main4250100.shtml>

*American political correctness – By order of NYC mayor, Michael Bloomberg, clergy are excluded from speaking or participating in the 10th year 9/11 anniversary.³

Dr. Dan Ebert

“Failing to understand the Islamic world is to misunderstand the 21st century”⁴

Fact: 1.57 billion Muslims in the world.⁵

Q# Don’t all religions teach basically the same things? = Yes and No.

*C.S. Lewis on religions:

Virtually every religion teaches some kind of morality but only Christianity teaches the concept of Grace.

- Religion teaches “Salvation by **works**”

While the details may differ, the main idea of world religions is that one achieves Salvation via a certain set of rules.

- Christianity teaches “Salvation by **grace** through **faith**”

*Grace is **THE** central difference between Christianity and all other religions, including Islam.

Ephesians 2:8-9

- Islam advocates missions via **militancy** – Surah 9:5-6, 4:76, 8:12, 4:78, 9:123...

History of the birth of Islam & Islamic expansion:

Islam means “submission [to Allah]”

- Mohammad born in 570 A.D. in Mecca, Saudi Arabia
- Reared as an orphan and raised in poverty
- Married a rich widow, Khadija

Q# What did he do after marriage?

- Began to spend long periods of time in the mountains while in deep contemplation
- In his 40th year, Mohammad allegedly received messages from God through the angel Gabriel

Q# What did Gabriel reveal to Muhammad?

= The Qur’an, which is:

- Only valid in Arabic
- About 4/5ths the size of the New Testament

³ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/08/25/911-ceremony-wont-include_n_936336.html

⁴ Dr. Dan Ebert paraphrase. Muhammad Asad, *Islam at the Crossroads* (Ann Arbor, MI: New Era Publishing, n.d.), 15.

⁵ <http://pewforum.org/Mapping-the-Global-Muslim-Population.aspx>

- 114 chapters called “suras” with verses called “ayats”
- Arranged from longest to shortest
- Considered to be eternal - exact copy is in heaven

Q# Where do Muslims get their beliefs?

Sources for Islam: Qu’ran & Hadiths (The collected sayings attributed to Muhammad as recorded by his followers are referred to as the *Hadiths*).

- Qur’an “to read” or “to recite.” Revealed to Muhammad over a period of 23 years via the angel Gabriel.
- The Hadiths “record the teachings, rulings, and actions of Muhammad as recounted by early associates.”
- Other valid sources: Torah, works of King David.⁶

Q# Who was with Muhammad when Gabriel appeared and spoke? = No one.

Q# What did Muhammad do once receiving the message from Gabriel?

= Began to spread the message

- Forced to leave Mecca in 622 A.D.
- Went to Medina and made converts
- Began to raid caravans from Mecca
- Muhammad later defeated the Meccan army that was sent against him which resulted in the Treaty of al-Hudaybiya

“If God gives me victory over Quraysh in the future...I will mutilate thirty of their men...By God, if God gives us victory over them in the future we will mutilate them as no Arab has ever mutilated anyone.”⁷

- Returned to Mecca and provided the Meccans a choice: Convert to Islam and live, or stay a pagan and die by the sword.
- Died in 632 A.D.
- At the time of his death, Muhammad had 9 wives and one concubine
- Never claimed to be able to work miracles
- Never was seen to work a miracle *Importance of Miracles in ancient religion
- “An excellent example/noble pattern” for all Muslims Qur’an 33:21

5 (or 6) Pillars of Islam:

1. Confession of God’s Oneness (Shahada, tawhid)
2. Ritual Prayer (*salat*)
3. Mandatory Charity (*zakat* 2.5%)

⁶ David A. Noebel, *Understanding the Times: The Collision of Today’s Competing Worldviews* (Manitou Springs: Summit Press, 2006), 51.

⁷ *Sahih Muslim*, translated by Abdul Hamid Siddiqi, Kitab Bhavan, revised edition, 2000, vol. 3, book 17, no. 4436.

4. Observance of Ramadan (*sawn*)
5. Pilgrimage to Mecca (*hajj*)
6. *Jihad* (Virtually no Muslim would claim that there are six pillars. However, *jihad* is something expected of Muslims, although the definition of *jihad* is by no means universally agreed upon in the Muslim world)

Seven Principles (Beliefs) of Islam:

1. Allah is the one God: Creator, Sustainer, and Sovereign Law-Giver
2. Holy Qur'an: Word of Allah
3. Messengers of Allah, with Muhammad, the last of the prophets
4. Allah's angels and *jinn* (good and evil spirits)
5. Last Day, Resurrection and Judgment (paradise and hell)
6. Predestination of all that happens, good or bad (almost "fate").⁸
- *Lawrence of Arabia, "Nothing is written."
7. Jihad⁹

Muslim author, M.J. Akbar describes *jihad* as follows:

"The spirit of jihad entered Islam at Badr. It is a spirit that inspires among believers a heroism beyond the bounds of reason; equally, it inspires dread among those outside the fold of Allah. Its root lies in the Arabic jahd, meaning exertion or striving. Its resonance comes from the nature of this strife: jihad is the holy war, the war of righteousness, the struggle against tyranny. It is a passion indifferent to the fate of battle because the jihadi wins either way: in the long run, the war will be won; and in the short run, death will bring martyrdom and paradise. Simultaneously, the strife is also to cleanse one's soul, for no martyrdom is possible without that inner purity. The greater of the two kinds of jihad, the Jihad al Akbar, is the war against the enemy within; against one's own weakness and wandering. It is the Jihad al Asghar, or the lesser jihad, that is fought on the battlefield. Islam, as the word itself implies, does not seek violence. Equally, Islam does not permit meek surrender either. There are circumstances in which all Muslims are commanded to fight to defend their faith. In such times war becomes a duty, and those who shirk it are condemned by the Quran. It may only be a lesser jihad, but for some twelve hundred years only a comparative handful of infidel armies emerged from the lesser jihad either with their pride or their power intact."¹⁰

Jihad from the Beginning: 'Christian Europe'

- Laid siege to Constantinople in 668 and 717 C.E.
- Muslim invasion of Western Europe stopped by Charles "The Hammer" Martel, at Tours, France in 732 C.E.
- Spain dominated by Islam for around 800 years ending in 1492 C.E.

⁸ Adapted from the course "Comparative Religions 307," by Dr. Daniel Ebert.

⁹ See *Jihad in Classical and Modern Islam* by Rudolph Peters, 1996.

¹⁰ M.J. Akbar, *The Shade of Swords: Jihad and the Conflict Between Islam and Christianity* (New York: Routledge, 2002),

Q# Who Started it? Islam or the West?

- Jihad predates the Crusades by at least 400 years¹¹

Ottoman Empire

- Janissaries “Blood tax” of male children from Christian families in Eastern Europe since the days of the 2nd sultan, Ala ed-Din¹²
- Ruled Palestine, parts of eastern Europe and Asia minor for about 1000 years
- Fall of Constantinople, May, 1453 (Modern day Istanbul, Turkey)
- 90,000 Turks vs. less than 10,000 Byzantines.
- Fleeing scholars landed in Western Europe, primarily Italy.
- Tried to take Vienna, Austria in 1529, (dates of the siege were September 27, 1529 – October 14, 1529 where 16,000 Austrians faced 250,000 Ottoman troops), and 1683.
- Muslim encroachment in Europe finally stopped at Vienna
- The date of Ottoman defeat for the second siege was September 12, 1683. This was the beginning of the end of the Ottoman Empire which ceased to exist after WWI.

Ottoman Empire: Defeat at the Gates of Vienna, Austria

“Vienna was saved from the final Ottoman attack in 1683 not by any western European power, many of which by this time did have significant military strength, but by the Polish commander Jan Sobieski. Eastern Europeans kept western Europeans from Islamic rule, just as they stood before Eastern nomadic invasions of the Mongols in the thirteenth century.”¹³

NOTE: This is an incredible point that evades many historians; observers have noted the drastic rise of Western European cultural achievement in contrast to the largely backward civilization of Eastern Europe, by way of comparison. Could it be that Western Europe’s expedited cultural advancement was partly due to the safety of the Atlantic on one side and Eastern Europe, the bulwark against Turkish invasion, on the other.

Q# What could possibly inspire military expansion in the name of religion? = The Qu’ran: Verses of the Sword

4:76 “Let those then fight on the path of God, who barter this present life for that which is to come; for whoever fights on God’s path, whether he be slain or conquer, we will in the end give him a great reward.”

¹¹ Fregosi, Jihad in the West, 25.

¹² Paul K. Davis, *100 Decisive Battles from Ancient Times to the Present* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 187.

¹³ Paul K. Davis, *100 Decisive Battles from Ancient Times to the Present*, 169.

4:78 “They who believe, fight on the path of God; and they who believe not, fight on the path of Thagout: Fight therefore against the friends of Satan.”

8:12 “I will instill terror into the hearts of the Infidels, strike off their heads then, and strike off from them every fingertip.”

9:5-6 “Kill those who join other gods with God wherever you may find them; and seize them, besiege them, and lay wait for them with every kind of ambush: but if they shall convert, and observe prayer, and pay the obligatory alms, then let them go their way, for God is Gracious, Merciful.”

9:123 “Believers! Wage war against such of the infidels as are your neighbors, and let them find you rigorous: and know that God is with those who fear Him.”

Jihad “struggle” Q# Against what/whom?

1. Against one’s lower nature
2. Defend against enemies of Islam
3. Spread the message of Islam (sharia)

Q# Why #3? = Establish an Islamic society

Islam makes several intriguing claims that seem to mesh well with Christianity until you examine them:

- Claims to fulfill Christianity as Christianity claims to fulfill the Hebrew Scriptures.¹⁴
- Accept the majority of the biblical, Hebrew prophets as prophets of God
 - Adam
 - Noah
 - Abraham
 - Moses
 - Solomon
 - David
 - Jesus
 - Muhammad *only prophet of Ishmael’s line
- Claims to fulfill Christianity as Christianity claims to fulfill the Hebrew Scriptures.¹⁵

Upon first glance this appears to be in accordance with Christianity but one must recognize that Muslims believe that each subsequent prophet serves as a kind of “update”

¹⁴ David A. Noebel, *Understanding the Times: The Collision of Today’s Competing Worldviews* (Manitou Springs: Summit Press, 2006), 56.

¹⁵ Ibid.

to previous revelation. In fact, Muhammad is claimed to be the “Comforter” promised by Jesus in John 14:16-17.¹⁶

What are the differences between Islam & Christianity?

Q# Don’t Christians and Muslims worship the same God?

1) Deny that God loves **sinners**

In Islam, God’s love is conditional given that it must be predicated by human love and obedience. This strikes with the biblical picture that not only is God’s love not predicated by human merit but it cannot be. The biblical picture that portrays the depths of human depravity, a concept not found in Islam, taken together with the holiness of God, communicates the inability of humanity to warrant God’s love by exhibiting human love. Why is this the case? According to I John 4:7-11, love can only come from God. Without the intervention of the love of God via the grace of God, humanity is a parched desert in which the life-giving water of God’s love is nowhere to be found. The text reads:

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”

“Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful”?

“...Allah loves the righteous Muslims but is NOT Compassionate or Merciful to the wicked. Allah does not love them.” – Imam “O”

- “To those who believe and do righteousness, God will assign love.” (XIX. 97).
- “God loves not the unbelievers” (III. 33)
- “God loves not the impious and sinners” (II. 277)
- “God loves not evildoers” (III. 58)
- “God loves not the proud” (IV. 37)
- “God loves not transgressors” (V. 88)
- “God loves not the prodigal” (VI. 142)
- “God loves not the treacherous” (VIII. 59)
- “God is an enemy to unbelievers” (II. 99)
- “To those who believe and do righteousness, God will assign love.” (XIX 97).

¹⁶ For a detailed rebuttal against this claim, see John Gilchrist’s article, “Is Muhammad Foretold in the Bible?” <http://answering-islam.org/Gilchrist/muhammad.html> or Ryan Turner’s critique, “Does John 14:16 Predict the Coming of Muhammad?” <http://carm.org/does-john-14-16-predict-muhammad>

•“If you love God, then follow me: God will love you, and forgive your sins, for God is Forgiving, Merciful. Say: Obey God and the Prophet; but if you turn away, then verily, God loveth not the unbelievers.” (III 29).

William Lane Craig, “Over and over again the Qur'an declares that God does not love the very people whom the Bible says God loves so much that He sent His Son to die for them! Now this may seem paradoxical in light of the Qur'an's calling God "*al-Rahman al-Rahim*"--the All-Merciful--until you realize that according to the Qur'an what God's mercy really cashes out to is that if you believe and do righteous deeds, then God can be counted on to overlook your sins and reward your good works.”¹⁷

Matthew 5:46 “*For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?*”

According to Jesus, those who only love those who love them are far from virtuous. How much more would God’s love contrast this base level of human “love?”

2) Deny that Jesus is the **Son** of God but affirm that He is a **prophet** of God¹⁸

3) Deny the **Trinity** –

“The most gracious has betaken a son!” Indeed ye have put forth a thing most monstrous! At it in the skies are about to burst, the earth to split asunder, and the mountains to fall down in utter ruin, that they attributed a son to the Most Gracious, for it is not consonant with the majesty of the Most Gracious that he should beget a son” (Qur’an 5:88-92)

*Here is the unpardonable sin of *shirk*; to associate anything with God other than his Oneness.¹⁹

4) Deny Salvation by grace through faith

“Work and God will surely see your work.” (IX. 105)

“Every soul shall be paid in full for what it has earned.” (II. 282)

“Those who believe and do deeds of righteousness and perform the prayer and pay the alms—their wage awaits them with the Lord.” (II. 278).

How do Muslims think they will fare on Judgment Day? It depends upon whether one’s good surpasses one’s bad deeds.

“Then those whose balance (of good deeds) is heavy, they will attain salvation: But those whose balance is light, will be those who have lost their souls, in Hell they will abide”

Qur’an 23:102-103

¹⁷ William Lane Craig “Question 123 – Is the Islamic Conception of God Morally Inadequate?” <http://www.reasonablefaith.org/site/News2?page=NewsArticle&id=7421>

¹⁸ <http://www.saaaid.net/islam/6.htm>

¹⁹ For a rebuttal against this misunderstanding about the nature and deity of Christ, see: <http://carm.org/religious-movements/islam/jesus-cannot-be-gods-son>

5) Deny that Jesus was **crucified**

Qur'an 4:157-58 "And [for] their saying, "Indeed, we have killed the Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, the messenger of Allah." And they did not kill him, nor did they crucify him; but [another] was made to resemble him to them. And indeed, those who differ over it are in doubt about it. They have no knowledge of it except the following of assumption. And they did not kill him. Rather, Allah raised him to Himself. And ever is Allah Exalted in Might and Wise."

"But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8). Muhammad's "visions" clearly contradict the plain teachings of the Gospel as found in the New Testament.

The New Testament and other historians all claim that Jesus was crucified (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Josephus, Tacitus).

Contrast: Jesus & Muhammad

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." - Jesus (Matthew 5:43-44).

"When ye meet the infidels, strike off their heads till ye have made a great slaughter among them, and of the rest make fast the fetters (chains)" - Muhammad, Sura 47:3-4.

"Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." - Jesus, Matthew 5:44.

"Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into the hearts of the enemies, of Allah and your enemies, and others besides, whom ye may not know, but whom Allah doth know." - Muhammad, Sura 8:60.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." - Jesus, John 3:16

"Allah hath purchased of the believers their persons and their goods; for theirs in return is the garden of Paradise: they fight in His cause, and slay and are slain: a promise binding on Him in truth..." - Muhammad, Qur'an 9:111

How to witness to Muslims:

- Use The Law (10 Commandments) to bring the knowledge of sin
- Magnify the justice of God
- Explain the grace of God through the sacrifice of Jesus
- Emphasize the trustworthiness of prophets

Application: So what do we do about this?

The Man with the Red Bandanna: Welles Remy Crowther (May 17, 1977 – September 11, 2001)

“Welles' final hour remained a mystery until an article about September 11th printed in The New York Times (5/26/02) mentioned eyewitness reports of a mysterious man in a red bandanna on the 78th floor Sky Lobby of 2 World Trade Center when the second plane crashed into the south tower. This is where Welles was likely to have been at that time, since he was ultimately able to get down to the main lobby before the tower collapsed. Eyewitnesses reported that, after the plane had hit into the Sky Lobby, a man suddenly appeared “out of nowhere”. He was stripped to his T-shirt and wearing a red bandanna to cover his nose and mouth, protection against the smoke and debris. This man organized a rescue effort on the floors high above where the official rescue workers were able to reach. He called for fire extinguishers, he found and directed dazed and confused victims to the only stairwell that was open for escape, and he carried a woman down to the 61st floor, then returned to the 78th floor to rescue more people. He turned back up once again after bringing the second group of survivors down. Eyewitnesses report that the man spoke calmly, with authority.”²⁰

Survivor Ling Young remembers Welles' command, “I've found the stairs. Follow me.” Upon finding people on the 78th floor, once giving them to the firefighters on the 61st floor, he returned and went back up the stairs again. At 9:59 am, the South Tower collapsed. Lina Young later said, “Without him, I wouldn't be here. He saved my life.”²¹ Another survivor, Judy Wein stated, “If he hadn't come back, I wouldn't have made it,” said Wein. “People can live 100 years and not have the compassion, the wherewithal to do what he did.”²² South Tower: Area hit-floors 86-92 North Tower: Area hit-floors 95-102²³ Point = We have a distinctive badge, the message of the Gospel and how the red, crimson, blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin and we have been given a mandate to take the Gospel to ***all the nations*** so that God may be glorified in their salvation. And when that Final Day comes or we die in faith before, we will be able to kneel before the feet of Jesus having fought the good fight and if we are somehow able to look around and see people from every tribe on the earth, worshipping in brokenness before the throne of God, it may be that, through our prayers and our going, that former Muslims who were captured by a false hope, had heard the Gospel and been saved

John the Baptist, upon looking at Jesus, declared, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29b)!

²⁰ http://www.crowthertrust.org/welles_story.htm

²¹ <http://espn.go.com/video/clip?id=6929979>

²² <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2002/america.remembers/stories/heroes/welles.html>

²³ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/flash/0,,567641,00.html>