

A Christian's Guide to the Koran, Lesson 2: Some Things That Muslims Believe.

What is Sharia Law?

Generally speaking, Muslims call the law of God "Sharia", literally, "the path to the water hole." In a desert culture, this definition tells it all. The way to peace. To refreshment. To restoration. The Muslim way of life. How we order our lives.

The details of this law are many and involved. And, the philosophy behind them varies according to the sect of Islam enforcing them. As in every legal system, everything imaginable is included. I will list only a few items that might be of interest, not in any way attempt a complete understanding of Sharia.

1. A man is entitled to up to four wives, and the wives are entitled to separate housing if possible.
2. Crimes against God, listed by the Koran, must be dealt with severely, but through an involved legal process also, that involves witnesses. Such crimes are adultery, apostasy, blasphemy, sodomy, lesbianism, alcohol/drug use, and - interestingly enough - terrorism and armed violence, theft.
3. Penalties can include the cutting off of the hand of a thief, flogging of adulterers, and death to those who leave Islam, a crime equivalent to treason.
4. A myriad of dietary rules, dress code, rituals, much of it reminiscent of the Jewish code, and indeed much of it very health-oriented and sanitary. But such a heavy weight.

There is so much more that can be said of Islamic law, Islam, the Koran. My intention is only to introduce these subjects. The main thrust of the study I make is the searching out of the sayings of the Koran for Christian believers to see for themselves what is being taught, then to bring Christian truth alongside.

I repeat here that this study is for Christians only. Muslims already know that their book is radically different, and they glory in it. Believers who are not yet convinced that the Bible is the Word of God will have to make a decision between Biblical truths and Koranic "truths." True Christian believers must make all decisions before entry into the Koran. Is the Bible God's Word or not, believer in Jesus?

No attempt is being made to spread hatred of people, for the world has seen enough of this. Nevertheless, Christians, called to love Muslims, are also called to hate what God hates, namely, lies about His Word, His Son, and His plan to save all who will hear and believe the Gospel. Vengeance and judgment, and it will be plentiful and bloody, belongs to the Lord upon His return, and it will be vented on all the non-repentant of the world. For now we preach Christ, we expose lies, we call to repentance, we plead with the hearts of all men, we desire with God that all should be saved, and we shed real tears from Heaven as witness to our love.

As we make our way through the Koran, we will discover some things that are very painful to our belief system. It is important that we know the truth as it is stated by the Holy Spirit through the apostles and prophets of the Bible, before making such a trip. Be looking for the Biblical and Koranic chapter and verse for these items, so as to be able to hold a better conversation with a Muslim, if needed. Are you ready? here is a preview of coming attractions, for the sura by sura study which follows.

About God. His name to the Muslim is Allah. The basic Arabic means only "God." In the Muslim sense, it is the only God, the exalted God, and so forth. We will see, when we are in the Koran, that this God is not our God, for He has no Son. There are other reasons...

However, the title "Allah" is used by many Christians of the East, and can be considered a relative to the "Elohim" of the Bible. The fact that all mean "God" when they use the term does not prove that the person to whom they pray is the same entity. Even in English, "god" can mean anyone we choose it to mean, false or otherwise.

There was an "Allah" in Arabia before Muhammad and his new religion. It was the moon god, and Muhammad's father was a devotee of this god. It seems that Muhammad chose to lift this one god out of obscurity and make of it the only god. Hence, as some claim, "monotheistic heathenism." But that is not to say that Muslims today worship the god of the moon knowingly. They worship the god created by the Koran, which they have been told is the God of the Bible, brought into sharp and accurate focus by Muhammad.

The God of Islam is gender neutral. To ascribe "natural gender" to Deity is considered blasphemous to a Muslim. The masculine pronoun is used only for linguistic reasons, they say.

As for Jesus, we will discover that He is a revered prophet, and nothing more. That He was not the one who died on that cross. That He is never to be worshiped, on pain of idolatry and the consequences thereof. Oh, this is a dark road we must travel. But we travel it to find the proof we seek, and to put the darkness next to light. Light will always win.

There are spirit-like beings in Islamic thought, called jinns. They seem like demons from a Christian perspective. But Muslims deny the true definition of demons, that is, fallen angels. Angels cannot fall. They are all Muslims. And they are all good. Gabriel, Michael, and all the rest.

Jinns are the cause of many supernatural phenomena. They haunt houses. They possess people. They give predictions to psychics.

Entry into Islam is quite simple. Applicants merely need to confess a two-line testimony of faith in the presence of two witnesses. At that moment, sins are erased and the newly rescued believer is re-born.

Subsequently, forgiveness can come in four steps: Sorrow. The simple request of Allah for forgiveness. Restitution as needed. And the resolution never to sin again. On judgment day, entrance into heaven or hell is based on the Muslim's faith, his works, the motivations of his heart. It is Allah's decision, and one can't know what that decision is until his time here is up. Salvation, then, to a Muslim,

is "simply" accepting and obeying Allah in all morals, all rituals, and regular repentance. And we have all heard this story quite often...

I could not help but think how many of the world's religions, and how many mis-informed Christian believers, have a similar regimen, a hope based only on "my performance".

The Islamic method and spirit. We do not have to speak of radicals or extremists to identify within Islam a spirit of violence and control and anger that can erupt all too easily. Jesus said to disciples in his day, You know not what spirit you are of. He was referring to two brothers who wanted to call down fire in His Name on a town that would not accept Him. Jesus said, that's not how we do things now. Things have changed. I came to forgive, to heal, to build a spiritual kingdom that is not based on violence at all. Not until I come again.

He demonstrated His methods in the Garden, at His trial, on the cross. And God showed what he had in mind at the resurrection.

The Muslim religion does not approach life this way. Let us leave it there for now. It will show up as we read the Koran together. We shall be horrified, but at least well educated.

We must fairly add that Romanism has been a violent religion in its days of power too. Even Protestant groups have played that awful game. It simply is not Christ. Not now. Vengeance will follow. But not now. When we confront these atrocities in the suras, we will shed the light of Jesus on it.

There are many more strange things ahead of us. Are you ready yet to confront the truth of Islam? Are you ready to stop listening to the news media for your information? Will you cease hearing the watered-down version of Islam that is proclaimed by Western Muslims? Have you any idea what their book says about you, about life, about God's plan for your life? Soon you will. Stay tuned.