

WORLD RELIGIONS

WEEK 3

ISLAM

Founder: Muhammad or Mohammed (AD 570–632), in Mecca, Saudi Arabia

Date Founded: September 622 is considered to be the beginning of the Muslim era.

Scriptures: (1) Koran or Quran - containing the revelations to Mohammed from the angel Gabriel between 610–622.

(2) Hadith – record of what Mohammed said, did and approved of.

(3) Sunnah – Mohammed’s sayings are called Sunnah in the Hadith.

Vocabulary

Islam – Arabic word for ‘submission’; interpreted religiously as submission to Allah.

Allah – Arabic word for ‘god’; in Islam it is a proper noun, but not a proper name.

Muslim – noun form of verb ‘to submit’; it is one who submits.

Koran – Arabic word for ‘reading’.

Mosque – place of prostration.

Sharia – the way, or path, to the water source.

Caliph – a Muslim ruler.

Iman – a teacher, or leader, of prayers.

Sura – chapter in the Koran

History

Basic Beliefs:

The latest, greatest and last of God’s revelation to mankind.

Five Pillars – confession, prayers, alms, fast of Ramadan, trip to Mecca.

Sharia Law

Divisions within Islam:

Sunnis

Shia

Sufi

Wahhabi

Religious Dimensions

Experiential

Mystic

Doctrinal

Ethical

Ritual

Social

Points of contact with Christianity

Human nature and sin

Salvation

Nature of God

Jesus

Scripture

Questions for Discussion

1. If you were to choose one of these two historical figures, Jesus or Mohammed, to listen to, who would you choose and why?
2. Based upon what you know so far, is there any evidence to support the Muslim claim that the God of the Bible is the Allah of Islam?
3. You are on a long train journey and you find out that the stranger next to you is from Aberdeen and claims to be a Muslim. Upon questioning, you find out that, since there is no mosque close to him, he is lax in praying, and he doesn't believe that the beggars on Union Street are really poor, so they don't qualify for alms. He tries to fast one day a week during Ramadan, sometimes. What approach would you take to convince him that all religion is a matter of doing something to gain merit and we can never know that we have done enough; therefore, the only hope is if God does it for us, as He did in Jesus Christ?