

*Christian Essential
Series:*

“Consider Islam”.

**Why
Islam ?**

its time to know the truth..

Christian Essential Series: Consider Islam.

Introduction:

Islam is very often presented as the rational religion and the '*perfect way of life*'. However the way in which it is proclaimed to prospective converts (or 'reverts' as Muslims prefer to call them) often hides the fact that serious questions can be asked about the textual integrity of the Qur'an, the character of Muhammad and the effects of Islam upon the world.

This document was written with those who are seriously considering the claims of Islam in mind. The purpose of this document is to ask some serious questions and to allow people to make up their minds regarding Islam having heard the 'other side of the story' as opposed to merely listening to sympathetic arguments made by Muslims.

I have chosen to include 31 questions about Islam since that would give someone a whole calendar month to think through some very compelling reasons to doubt some of the triumphalistic claims often made by Muslims apologists. If you are thinking of embracing Islam I would like to plead with you to give yourself at least this month before making any kind of decision regarding Islam. Use this month to consider some of the things that you are not hearing from your Muslim friends, will not see in the videos that they show you and will not read in the books that they give you. Use at least a day to think deeply on every issue presented here, and then decide. These are such important matters, surely you can spare a month to think about them?

Before I continue with the 31 reasons, just a few general remarks:

□ The focus of this document is to ask questions about Islam and not to defend any

other belief system. Muslim often respond to doubts being raised about Islam by saying “*Yes but what about...*” and then proceeding to attack some element of another belief system like Christianity, secularism etc. This method of debating is based on a logical fallacy, as ***proving one thing to be false does not automatically prove another to be true.***

In other words responding to a problem within Islam by pointing to a problem in another belief system does not resolve the initial question, it merely deflects attention away from it. Therefore, as you read this, keep the focus on Islam and the questions being asked of it. There will always be another time and place for researching other belief systems, use this month to investigate Islam with a critical eye. And remember “*Yes but what about...*” is never a good answer!

□ Throughout this document I will only make use of respected sources that are accepted

and ***used by Muslims themselves***. I shall of course refer to the ***Qur'an*** (which Muslims regard as the infallible word of God). In addition to this I shall also quote some of the ***Hadith*** (traditions) especially out of ***Sahih Muslim*** and ***Sahih al-Bukhari*** which are regarded as the most trustworthy of all the Islamic traditions and which therefore carries tremendous weight within Islam.

I shall also be referring to the ***Sirat*** i.e. the early biographies of Muhammad as accepted by Muslims. The point here is that I shall be using Islam's own sources throughout, this means that I cannot be accused of an unfair bias by only quoting from authors or sources that are hostile to Islam.

□ Muslim will often respond to people asking difficult questions by Islam that they are a) *Taking things out of context* and b) *The sources of Islam can only really be understood in Arabic*. Neither of these claims hold any water. Firstly you are welcome to go and check

the context of any text that I quote, to verify if they have been quoted in context. You can do so at these links:

<http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/quran/transliteration/>

(*Qur'an*)

<http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/fundamentals/hadithsunnah/bukhari/>

(*Sahih Bukhari*)

<http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/fundamentals/hadithsunnah/muslim/>

(*Sahih Muslim*)

Secondly I am only quoting from sources that have been translated by Muslims themselves (mostly from the *Yusuf Ali* translation which is the one most widely distributed by Muslims). This means that the translations have been done in a sympathetic way by people who 'had no axe to grind' as far as Islam is concerned and certainly strived to create accurate and

accessible translations. Thirdly those that seek to convince you of the truth of Islam are also quoting the Qur'an...in English! There is an obvious double standard here. Why is it not necessary to know Arabic to understand the verses being used to convince you of Islam while Arabic suddenly becomes a 'safe haven' when any aspect of Islam is questioned!? Therefore if English (or any other non-Arabic language) is ***good enough for Islam to be preached in, it should also be good enough for Islam to be questioned in!*** Now for the questions themselves. Take your time to ponder them!

Question #1 – Do I really want to follow Mohammed's example in everything?

To follow Islam you have to acknowledge that Mohammed was 'the perfect man' and model your life on his. Although Mohammed was

certainly an inspirational leader, his example is probably not one that can be held up as a shining beacon for the modern world. Take a look at the following actions of the 'Prophet of Islam' and ask yourself if you are really prepared to follow model your life on his:

□ Mohammed regularly ordered raids (*razzias*) on caravans (and took part in several) in order to steal their contents and to sell people for ransom

□ He forced several of his enemies (e.g. **Abu Sufyan**) to accept his prophethood or be executed.

□ He forced his adopted son (by receiving a 'revelation' from God) to divorce his wife so that he could marry her (***Sahih Muslim Volume 2 Number 2347; Sahih Bukhari Volume 3 Number 249***; see also ***Qur'an 33:6-38***).

□ He 'married', and had sex with, a woman on the same day that her husband, father, brother and most of her family were slaughtered by his followers (***Sahih Bukhari Volume 2 number 68*** and ***Volume 4 number 143,280***) It is clear that he considered her to be part of the 'spoils of war'.

□ Instead of only taking four wives (the amount he allowed his followers) he received a special revelation allowing him to take as many as he wished (***Qur'an 33:50***). Prompting his favorite wife Aisha to exclaim that it seems that God sent down revelations merely to suit the prophet (***Sahih Muslim Volume 2 Number 3453***)!

□ He married Aisha when she was six and consummated the marriage while she was only nine (***Sahih Bukhari Volume 7 Book 62 Number 64***) One tradition even states that she was still playing with dolls at the time the

marriage was consummated (***Sahih Muslim Volume 8 Number 3311***).

He committed genocide by allowing the slaughter 900 (they surrendered) unarmed male members of the **Banu Qurayzah** (Jewish) tribe after they refused to embrace Islam and received 'divine sanction' for it (***Qur'an 33:25-26***).

□ He ordered the assassination of several people who were critical of him (e.g. the poets **Asma bint Marwan** and **Abu Afak**).

□ He ordered the torture of **Kinana al-Rabi** to with a red-hot iron to 'encourage' him to reveal the whereabouts of a hidden treasure.

□ He broke a treaty (**The treaty of Hudabiyah**) which committed him to live in peace with the people of Mecca. Again he conveniently receives a 'revelation' justifying his actions (***Qur'an 60:10***).

□ He allowed his followers to rape captive women (***Sahih Muslim Book 8 Number 3371***) and to see them as part of their reward for fighting battles for the sake of Islam (***Qur'an 23:5-6***)

If we use the above list as a guide we can say that Mohammed was (at the very least) guilty of: highway robbery, genocide, torture, murder, paedophilia, perjury; and that he allowed rape. Muslims often respond to this by saying that the life of Mohammed should be evaluated by the standards of his time. We have to remember however that Mohammed is presented as the final prophet whose message is relevant for all people in all times. His example is also held up as the perfect one to follow for those who wish to attain paradise: “*Ye have indeed in the Apostle of Allah a beautiful pattern (of conduct) for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day.*” (***Qur'an 33:21***) We should therefore be able to

imitate and follow his conduct as the best example for all times!

Ask yourself: is Mohammed's life really 'a beautiful pattern' upon which I want to base my own? How will modern society react if I do? Did Mohammed model values upon which free, prosperous and thriving societies can be built?

Question #2: Is there really a copy of the Qur'an in heaven, or is it in fact an earthly compilation?

Muslims claim that the Qur'an is the literal word of God and that Mohammed was merely the person who transmitted it to the world. This means that it without antecedents and that it supersedes all previous revelations. There is one problem however. Today we are able to show that the Qur'an is in fact a combination of Mohammed's own thoughts and a vast array of pre-Islamic literature. Think about the following:

Several of the passages in the Qur'an serve the purposes of getting Mohammed out of difficult situations. For example, there are 'revelations' allowing him to take more than four wives (***Qur'an 33:50***) and to break a treaty (***Qur'an 60:10***). Another astonishing example is a revelation allowing Mohammed to marry his adopted son's wife (***Qur'an 33:36-38***). This lady was therefore able to claim that her wedding was sanctioned in the 'eternal word of God' and written of on golden plates in heaven! We can point to some very specific sources for many parts of the Qur'an and can even show how Mohammed copied and adapted these sources.

Examples can be piled up but I'm sure the following will suffice:

□ ***Qur'an 21:51-71*** (*In which Abraham takes issue with his father's idolatry*) is an almost exact retelling of an illustration on the dangers of

idolatry invented by a Jewish Rabbi (Rabbi Hiyya) which is retold in the **Midrash Habba Genesis**.

□ ***Qur'an 5:31-32*** (*In which a raven shows Cain where to bury his dead brother*) shows amazing similarities with the **Targum of Jonathanben- Uzziah** and the **Mishnah Sanhedrin (4:5)**.

Both of these are (different types of) Jewish commentaries on the Torah.

□ ***Quran 27:17-44*** (*which tells the story of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba*) copies another ancient Jewish manuscript namely the **Targum of Eshter**.

It is not only Jewish stories that were copied in the Qur'an. Some early Christian fables were included as well. ***Quran 5:110*** mention the facts that Jesus could speak while he was still in the cradle and that he was able to breathe

life in birds of clay. These are both legends from extra- Biblical Christian sources. In the first case from **“The Gospel of Thomas the Israelite”** and the second from **“The Gospel of the Infancy of Christ”**.

□ In ***Qur’an 18:9-24*** we find the story of some young people who were prevented from hearing false doctrine through being shut up in a cave for many years. This story shows remarkable similarities to the Orthodox folk tale of the **“Seven sleepers of Ephesus”**.

It should be clear from the above that the Muslim claim that the Qur’an is without antecedents or human sources simply cannot be sustained. The question therefore remains. Am I going to follow the teachings of this book despite the fact that its claim of being directly from God can be seriously questioned?

Question #3: If a part of the Qur’an could be inspired by Satan, how can I trust the rest?

The oldest (and according to Muslims most trustworthy) biography of Mohammed is that of **Ibn-Ishaq**. He relates a story which has far reaching implications as far as the inspiration of the Qur'an is concerned.

According the Ibn-Ishaq Mohammed narrated the following (***Qur'an 53:19-20***):

*“Have you thought of al-Lat and al-'Uzza and Manat the the third, the other **These are the high-flying cranes; verily their intercession is accepted with approval.**”*

The names referred to here (**al-Lat, al-'Uzza** and **Manat**) belongs to pre- Islamic goddesses who were greatly revered by the people of Mecca (most of whom were initially strongly opposed to Mohammed's message of only one God). They welcomed this revelation with great joy since it seemed to grant a role to their beloved goddesses within Islam. Mohammed's followers on the other hand were not too excited. They had sacrificed many things for

the sake of their monotheism and could not understand why this was now being sacrificed. Facing a revolt Mohammed had to backtrack. He came up with an ingenious solution by claiming that the last line was in fact revealed by Satan and should therefore be expunged from the Qur'an! (Hence the term '**The Satanic Verses**'). Modern Qur'an's therefore do not have this line in spite of it being narrated by Mohammed.

This story raises more questions than it answers, for example: Could it be that Mohammed was willing to sacrifice his stern monotheism for the sake of political expediency? What would have happened if his followers did not object, would Islam have accepted these goddesses today? How can we expect to follow someone who was so easily led astray on such an important matter? The most important question however is probably the following: "**If Satan could inspire one part**

of the Qur'an, how can we be sure that there are not other parts of it that came under his inspiration?"

Question #4 – Am I really happy with the way in which Islam views women?

Islam is anything but 'good news' for women! In fact by accepting Islam they have to also accept some rather unflattering things about themselves. For example:

- ☐ They are deficient in “*intelligence and religion*” **(Sahih Bukhari 3:826, 2:541)**
- ☐ They constitute the majority of the population of hell **(Sahih Bukhari 1:28, 2:161)**
- ☐ They are ‘*harmful to men*’ **(Sahih Bukhari 5:33)**
- ☐ They can inherit only half of what a man can **(Qur'an 4:11)**

□ Their testimony is only worth half of that of a man (***Qur'an 2:282***) (*Think of the implications of this in rape cases!*)

□ Women are unclean, therefore a man has to go and wash himself if he touches any woman (even his wife!) before prayer (***Qur'an 4:43***)

□ They should accept punishment (including refusal to share the marital bed and beatings) from their husbands (***Qur'an 4:34***)

□ They should accept that they are a 'tilth' (field to be ploughed) that can be used by their husbands as they please. (***Quran 2:223***)

Is this really the way in which you want to view half of humanity (if you're a man); or is this the way in which you want to be viewed (if you're a woman)?

Question #5 – Am I comfortable with the fact that there is no way (except death) out of Islam?

Islam is very often presented as a tolerant and open-minded religion. The opposite is, in fact, the case. This is nowhere more apparent than in the way that Islam treats those who abandon it (apostates). Mohammed laid down the following guideline for how they should be treated: *“Whoever changed his Islamic religion, then kill him.” (Sahih Bukhari Volume 9, Book 84, Number 57)*

It should be very clear from this that the prescribed Islamic punishment for apostasy is death! This is not merely an archaic teaching that has long been dispensed with. All four Sunni legal schools as well as orthodox Shi’a doctrine agrees that apostates should be executed. This is clearly reflected in the fact that people are often tried (and executed) for apostasy in countries where Islamic law

(*shari'a*) is the 'law of the land'. Even in places where *shari'a* is not consistently applied apostates often live in fear of vigilante action from Muslims eager to carry out Mohammed's judgement. This teaching is without any parallels in any other religion or belief system. It is only Islam that demands death for abandoning it. It should also be noted that the punishment for apostasy do not only apply to those who were born into Islam, but also to those converted to Islam and then later decide to turn their back on it. In the light of this you should seriously consider the following questions:

- ☐ Would I be comfortable with joining a belief system that strives to keep people committed to it on pain of death?
- ☐ What should I make of a belief system that allows conversion to it, but not from it?

☐ Am I willing to commit myself to a system that will call for my death should I decide to leave it?

Question #6: What should I make of all the scientific errors in the Qur'an?

Most often point to their belief that the truths of Islam are confirmed by science. Quite the opposite is true. For a book claiming to be from the Creator of the Universe the Qur'an contains an amazing number of scientific errors.

For example:

☐ It teaches that the sun sets in a muddy spring (***Qur'an 18:85-86***)

☐ According to the Qur'an sperm comes from "*...an area between the backbone and the ribs*" (***Qur'an 86:5-7***) and not from the testicles!

□ The stars were created to stop the *Jinn*'s (spiritual beings) from eavesdropping on heavenly conversations (***Qur'an 37:6-8***) and are even used as projectiles to drive them away! (***Qur'an 67:5***)

□ The Qur'an presents a very confused cosmology. There are Qur'anic verses that indicate that the earth is flat like a carpet (***Qur'an 20:53***), that the sky is a material object that can fall on the earth (***Qur'an 22:65***); that the earth and heavens are stationary (***Qur'an 27:61*** and ***35:41***); and that there are not one but seven earths! (***Qur'an 65:12***)

Remember that Muslims believe that the Qur'an is perfect in every last detail and that no human had any hand in composing it. The question you need to ask is whether this is borne out in the one area where we are able to accurately test its claims (e.g. science). If it is not found to be

accurate, what reason do we have to trust the rest of what it teaches?

Question #7 is the Qur'an really 'complete' and 'easily understood'?

The Qur'an teaches that is a complete revelation ("*...nothing we have omitted from the book*" ***Quran 6:38***, see also ***29:51***) and that its contents is easily understood (*...who hath sent unto you a book explained in detail* ***Qur'an 6:114***).

A few remarks about this:

□ The very fact that Muslims have to consult secondary sources (e.g. the *sunnah*) on theological and legal matters contradicts the claims of Qur'anic completeness. There are many, very important, issues where the Qur'an is silent and where Islamic belief or practice rests on other sources. To illustrate, a person stuck on a desert island with just the Qur'an will **a)** Not know how many times a day to pray

or how to perform the Islamic prayers ritual **b)** Not know about the so-called “Five Pillars of Islam” **c)** Be ignorant of certain core events in the life of the prophet the imitation of which is considered to be very beneficial.

□ Apart from many the above, many facts about Mohammed can also only be gleaned from sources outside the Qur’an, for example how old he was when he became a prophet, how long his prophetic career lasted, the details of his visit to heaven etc.

□ There are many things in the Qur’an that are left unexplained. A Few examples **a) Qur’an 30:2-4** *“The Roman Empire has been defeated. In a land close by; but they, (even) after (this) defeat of theirs, will soon be victorious. Within a few years.”* This is clearly an important prophecy yet it raises more questions than it answers. Where was the Romans defeated? Who defeated them? When did this happen? When will they be victorious?

(Since this is a prophecy the last question is clearly very important!) **b) *Qur'an 111:1-4*** passes judgement on Abu- Lahab (Father of the flame) who was he and why does he and his wife receive such a severe punishment? **c) *Qur'an 113:3*** warns against those who 'blow on knots' (literal translation). Who are these people? Why are they to be feared? It is impossible to answer these questions without using sources outside the Qur'an! Yet we are told that this is a 'coherent' and 'complete' revelation. The question you need to ask yourself is if you are willing to base your whole life on a book, which cannot even pass the tests that it sets for itself?

Question #8 – Am I comfortable with the extreme contempt in which Islam holds non-Muslims? (1)

Despite it's much vaunted tolerance, Islam takes a very dim view of those who have not submitted to it. This is especially apparent in

the later (chronologically) chapters of the Qur'an and also in many of the traditions (*hadith*). Unfortunately for the non-Muslims of the world the later parts of the Qur'an carries more theological weight than earlier revelations, this is because of the Islamic '*law of abrogation (naskh)*' which teaches that later revelations supersedes earlier ones. This is such a huge topic that I will return to it a few more times. I'll start by looking at the way in which Islam views non-Muslims in general, before later turning to it's views on Christian and Jews and the treatment of subjugated peoples. Here are just a few examples of the scorn that the Qur'an pours on those who do not follow Islam (or who merely pretend to):

- They are diseased (***Qur'an 2:10***)
- They are 'perverse' (***Qur'an 2:99***)
- A painful doom awaits them (***Qur'an 2:171***)

- ☐ They are deaf, dumb and blind and void of wisdom (***Qur'an 2:171***)
- ☐ They should never be believed (***Qur'an 3:73***)
- ☐ They should never be befriended by Muslims (***Qur'an 3:28***),
- ☐ They should be slain should they refuse to follow Islam (***Qur'an 4:76***, see also ***9:5***)
- ☐ They are 'open enemies' to Muslims (***Qur'an 4:101***)
- ☐ Some of them have been turned into 'apes and swine' (***Qur'an 5:63***)
- ☐ They should be avoided (***Qur'an 6:106***)
- ☐ They are the 'worst beasts in the sight of Allah' (***Qur'an 8:55***)
- ☐ They are unclean (***Qur'an 9:28***)

How do you as a non-Muslim feel about the way in which Islam describe you (and most

probably your family and friends as well). Would you be willing to think of non-Muslims in the same way should you ever 'embrace' Islam? If not you will find yourself in direct disagreement with the 'perfect word of God'!

Question #9 – How can the many glaring contradictions in the Qur'an be reconciled with its claim to divine inspiration (1)

One of the acid tests that the Qur'an sets for itself is that it is without contradictions and discrepancies: *"Do they not consider the Koran (with care)? Had it been from other than Allah, they would surely **have found therein much discrepancy.**"* Therefore if Muslims call us to Islam, one of their main tasks should be to show us that there are no contradictions in the Qur'an! This would be a very tall order to say the least as there are many statements in the Qur'an that flatly contradicts something in another part of the book. Muslims 'solve' some of these difficulties by pointing to the 'law of

abrogation' (*naksh*) which states that a later revelation supersedes an earlier one. In other words as the circumstances of the earliest Muslims changed revelation 'kept pace'! Only a very small percentage of contradictions can be explained away by using this theological device however. As you will see from the following examples, some of the contradictions have to do with creation or with central theological truths. Are we to assume that God changed his nature or the way in which he created through the course of revealing the Qur'an?

Let's start this topic by looking at what the Qur'an says about creation. Note the length of creation in the following passages:

□ ***Quran-7:54***: Your guardian-L earth in **six days**

□ ***Quran-10:3***: Verily your Lord is Allah, who created the heavens and earth in **six days**

□ **Quran 11:7**: He it is Who created the heavens and earth in **six days**

□ **Quran-25:29**: He Who created the heavens and earth and all that is between, in **six days**

The above verses clearly state that Allah created the **heavens** and the **earth** in 6 days. Now take a look at another passage (**Qur'an 41:9-12**) dealing with creation:

*Say: "Is it that ye deny Him Who created the **earth in two Days**? And do ye join equals with Him? He is the Lord of (all) the Worlds. He set on the (earth) mountains standing firm, high above it, and bestowed blessings on the earth, and measured therein all things to give them **nourishment** in due proportion, in **four Days**, in accordance with (the needs of) those who seek (sustenance).*

Moreover He comprehended in His design the sky, and it had been (as)

*smoke: He said to it and to the earth: "Come ye together, willingly or unwillingly." They said: "We do come (together), in willing obedience." So he completed them as **seven firmaments** in **two Days**, and He assigned to each heaven its duty and command. And We adorned the lower heaven with lights, and (provided it) with guard. Such is the Decree of (Him) the Exalted in Might, Full of Knowledge."*

If you add up the days of creation as mentioned in this passage you come to a grand total of **8!** (*earth 2 days, nourishment 4 days, seven firmaments 2 days*). This clearly contradicts all the other passages mentioned above which states that creation took **six days**. There are other problems with the Qur'anic account of creation. ***Qur'an 2:29*** state that first the earth and then the heavens were created. This is contradicted by ***Qur'an 79:27-30*** which reverses the order! Furthermore the above passage (***Qur'an 41:11***) teaches that creation

consisted of many parts that were called to 'come together'. On the other hand ***Qur'an 21:30*** clearly states that creation was initially in one piece, which had to be '*cloved assunder*'! It may seem as if we're splitting hairs here, but remember that a lack of contradictions is one of the main tests that the Qur'an gives for its authenticity. Are you willing to base your life upon a revelation that cannot even pass the tests that it sets for itself?

-The End –

How to receive Christ:

Receiving Christ is as easy as A-B-C.

A – Admit your sins

You must first repent of your sins. This means turning away from them and asking God to forgive you. Acts 3:19 says "Therefore repent

and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.”

B – Believe and confess

What does it mean to believe? It means to trust your life to Jesus. If you jump out of a falling airplane with a parachute, you don’t just know or hope the parachute will save you. You believe it! You trust your life to the parachute. Similarly, believing in Jesus means trusting your eternal life to him. Acts 16:31 says “They said, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.’” Paul affirms this in Romans 10:9-10 “That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.”

In verse 13 it says "For whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved."

C – Call on Jesus as your savior

Through prayer, invite Jesus to come in and change your life through the Holy Spirit. Invite him to save you. "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." – Romans 5:1 (NASB) Remember "he who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life." – 1 John 5:12-13 (NASB)

What Now: Find a Family not just a Church

If you accepted Christ as your savior, the next step is to find a local, Bible-preaching Church in your area. A place where you belong! The

author of Hebrews writes “and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.” – Hebrews 10:24-25 (NASB)



Tessera Church info:

66 Christiaan Beyers Street.

Postal address: P O Box 1615, Westonaria,

1780 Office administration: 011753 2328/

Fax: 086 557 5292.

Tesserachurch@gmail.com