

Islam

by Judah Etinger

This sermon explores the origins and key teachings of Islam, from the birth of Muhammad to the spread of the religion through military conquest.

Scripture: Matthew 4:10, Matthew 6:16, Luke 18:22, 1 Corinthians 15:3, Galatians 1:1

Topics: "World Religions", "Comparative Theology"

Description

Judah Etinger delves into the history of Arabia's diverse religious landscape before the advent of Islam, highlighting the shift in beliefs with the birth of Muhammad in A.D. 570. Muhammad's encounter with the angel Gabriel marked the beginning of his journey as a prophet, leading to the revelation of the Koran. The Koran, like the Christian Bible, acknowledges Jesus as a miraculous Messiah but differs in the belief of His divinity. Despite initial challenges, Islam grew rapidly after Muhammad's death, propelled by military conquests and the adherence to the Five Pillars of Islam for entry into heaven.

Transcript

Arabia encompassed a variety of religions before the advent of Islam. In Southern Arabia, an astral cult known as Sabaeism prevailed. In other regions, there were Jews and Christians. But the great majority of Arabs worshiped local gods and goddesses, and believed in angels, fairies, and demonic jinn.

The year A.D. 570 marked the beginning of a whole new set of beliefs for the Arab people, when Muhammad, the founder of Islam, was born.

Growing up, Muhammad became disturbed by continuous quarreling over matters of religion and honor among the religious chiefs. Muhammad felt a great need to resolve his religious doubts, and would spend days at a time alone in a cave near the base of Mount Hira.

Suddenly one night (Muslims call it "The Night of Power and Excellence"), there rose in a vision before him an angel who claimed to be Gabriel, the messenger of God. Muhammad rushed home afterward in great excitement, half-doubting and half-believing. At first Muhammad had fears for his own sanity,[10] but after a period of self-questioning and discouragement lasting for several months, he came to look upon himself as a true prophet and messenger of Allah (Allah is the Arabic word for God).

Thus marked the beginning of the Koran, Muhammad's complete revelation in writing. Muslims (those who adhere to the Islamic faith) recognize both the Koran and much of the Christian Bible as inspired

revelations from God. Both books agree that God has spoken through a long series of prophets, from Abraham to Jesus, and all those in between. But the Koran adds Muhammad to the end of the list, making him God's final and most important prophet in the series.[11]

In likeness to the Christian Bible, the Koran describes Jesus as a virgin-born, miracle-working Messiah, and also identifies Him as "holy" or "faultless." Unlike the Christian Bible, however, the Koran forbids worshiping Jesus as God. Muhammad taught that Jesus was no more than God's messenger, and that God does not have a Son.[12] As well, Jesus did not die on a cross, most Muslims believe, but rather, prior to His scheduled crucifixion, God raised Him to heaven so that He could not be seized. Approved Muslim commentaries suggest that perhaps Judas, the betrayer of Jesus, was actually the one who was crucified. Judas would have been supernaturally disguised so well that even Mary (Jesus' mother) and Jesus' followers were deceived.[13]

These new teachings at the time successfully converted only about 40 people in the first four years of the religion, but by A.D. 630, Muhammad had the company of close to ten thousand people by his side. Following his sudden death two years later, the religion of Islam spread rapidly, due largely to victory in battle and military conquest, in what is called the jihad ("holy war" or "holy struggle").[14]

As the second largest religion in the world today, devout Muslims strictly adhere to the Koran's prescribed five religious acts of obedience that will help ensure one's entry into heaven.[15] Known as Islam's "Five Pillars," these acts are:

Repetition of the Creed: "There is no god but Allah; and Muhammad is the prophet of Allah."

Prayer.

Almsgiving. In the early days of Islam this was a yearly tax, used as charity for the poor and repairs and administrative expenses for mosques [Muslim places of worship].

The fast during the sacred month of Ramadan, during which Muslims must abstain from food.

The pilgrimage to Mecca once in a lifetime.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/judah-etinge/r/islam/>

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