



0. JEWS, CHRISTIANS AND THE KORAN - Story Preface

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Islamic art often depicts the Prophet Muhammad with a flame. In this illustration, from a medieval Persian manuscript, "Muhammad leads a group of his predecessors including Abraham, Moses and Jesus in prayer." The image is included, among other places, in *The Middle Ages. An Illustrated History* by Barbara Hanawalt (Oxford University Press, 1998, at page 36). Online via Wikimedia Commons.

Both Jews and Christians lived in Mecca in pre-Islamic days. Muhammad was familiar with the beliefs of both religions. In the *Koran* (this link takes you to an on-line version), especially in the lengthy second Sura (called "The Cow"), we find specific references to both Jews and Christians.

We also find references to Jesus (called *Isa* in the *Koran*). Muslims believe Jesus was a great prophet (not the Son of God) who did not die and was not crucified. Islam teaches that Jesus was taken to heaven (like the Biblical Enoch) and will return to earth again at some point in the future.

The *Koran* accepts that God created Adam and that Adam and his wife fell from grace while living in the Garden:

*We said: "O Adam! Dwell thou and thy wife in the Garden; And eat of the bountiful things therein as (where and when) ye will; but approach not this tree, or ye run into harm and transgression."*

*Then did Satan make them slip from the (Garden) and get them out of the state (of felicity) in which they had been. We said: "Get ye down, all (ye people), with enmity between yourselves, on earth will be your dwelling-place and your means of livelihood - for a time." Koran, S. II 35-36.*

But on the question of salvation, the *Koran* says:

*And they say: "None shall enter Paradise unless he be a Jew or a Christian." Those are their (vain) desires. Say: "Produce your proof if ye are truthful." Nay, - whoever submits His whole self to God and is a doer of good, - He will get his reward with his Lord; On such shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve."*

*The Jews say: "The Christians Have naught (to stand) upon; And the Christians say: "The Jews have naught (To stand) upon." Yet they (profess to) study the (same) Book, Like unto their word is what those say who know not; But God will judge between them in their quarrel on the Day of Judgment. Koran, S. II 111-113.*

The *Koran* acknowledges that Jesus lived on earth, but it denies He was the Son of God:

*They (Christians) say: "God hath begotten a son": Glory be to Him. - Nay, to Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth: everything renders worship to Him. Koran, S. II 116.*

The *Koran* asserts that the God of Islam (Allah) is also the God of Jew and Christian:

*Say ye: "We believe In God, and the revelation given to us, and to Abraham, Isma'il [Ishmael], Isaac Jacob, and the Tribes, and that given to Moses and Jesus, and that given to (all) Prophets from their Lord: We make no difference between one and another of them: And we bow to God (in Islam) [in surrender]." Koran, S. II. 136.*

Muslims believe in the Last Judgment and in the Resurrection:

*And those who followed would say: "If only we had one more chance, we would clear ourselves of them, as they have cleared themselves of us." Thus will God show them (the fruits of) their deeds as (nothing but) regrets. Nor will there be a way for them out of the Fire. Koran, S. II. 167.*

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*The life of this world is alluring to those who reject faith, and they scoff at those who believe. But the righteous will be above them on the Day of Resurrection; For God bestows His abundance without measure on whom He will. Koran, S. II. 212.*

The *Koran* refers to some important Judaic and Christian beliefs. But according to the Islamic faith, a person must follow the five pillars of Islam and accept Muhammad as the last Prophet, sent by God, in order to be saved. For a Christian, that means rejection of Jesus as one's Lord and Savior. For a Jew, it means acceptance of a prophet who came thousands of years after God stopped sending prophets.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/JEWS-CHRISTIANS-AND-THE-KORAN-Muhammad-the-Prophet>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/JEWS-CHRISTIANS-AND-THE-KORAN-Muhammad-the-Prophet>