

Share the Gospel with Muslims

Adapted from teaching of George R.

The camel method, which uses passages in the Koran to open conversations about Jesus, has yielded good results in some parts of the Muslim world. In other parts, workers find other approaches more effective. The camel approach is to ask a Muslim to tell you, or study together with you, what the Koran teaches about Jesus the Messiah (Isa in Arabic). Then, when a relationship is established and you can converse without arguing, proceed to the New Testament's record of the Messiah's work. Supplement this approach with fervent prayer for salvation and healing in Jesus' name.

Background

Five pillars of Islam

1. Creed (*Shahada*)

All Muslims must recite, "There is no God but God, and Muhammad is the apostle of God" (or His Prophet)

2. Ritual Prayer (*Salat*)

All Muslims are to recite prescribed prayers five times a day, along with correct postures, except women when they are unclean.

3. Obligatory Alms (*Zakatalms*)

Muslims give a percentage of their possessions or earnings once a year to help those in need.

4. Ramadan (*Saum*)

Muslims fast during the ninth month of the lunar calendar, the month of Ramadan. It moves year to year. The fast lasts for 30 days from sunrise to sunset. They do not eat or drink, smoke, have sexual relations, swear or become angry during daytime. Believers seek to draw closer to God, and renew their spiritual strength.

5. Pilgrimage to Mecca (*Hajj*)

Every Muslim that has the ability, physically and financially must complete the Hajj, which is part of a purification process when all, despite social standing, are considered equal.

Islamic beliefs

Monotheism

Islam believes in one God. They believe that Muhammad is God's last and greatest prophet. They believe that Jesus is a great prophet but man can never become God.

A believer can agree and say, "Yes, man never can become God but God can become man, and did once."

Allah is the Arabic word for God. Meaning THE God, or the one and only God.

Holy books

Qur'an (Koran) — believed to be the word of God given to Muhammad by the angel Gabriel

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Torat — book of Moses or the Torah

Zabur — Psalms of David

Injil- Gospels of Jesus (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John)

The Haddith — writings that explain the Qur'an from the teachings of Muhammad

Prophets

God has sent many prophets to teach men His ways. The prophets are generally considered to be Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus (Isa) and Muhammad. The last two are the most important, Mohammad bringing the final revelation.

Final Day of Judgment

Islam teaches that at the end of time, a trumpet will sound and the dead shall rise to be judged. On the Day of Judgment God will weigh the deeds of each person and that will determine their destination of Heaven or Hell. Those martyred for their faith go directly to heaven. God reserves the right to send each person where He pleases.

Angels

Muslims believe that God created Angels as sinless beings. They have many different roles not unlike that of Christian belief. They acknowledge four Archangels (Gabriel, Michael, Izrail, the angel of death, and Israfil the angel that will blow the trumpet on the Day of Judgment) There are disagreements as to what type of being that Satan was.

God's Character

The Qur'an Islam continuously emphasizes the importance of the Character of God. Muslims typically believe in 99 attributes of God, though most acknowledge that He cannot be limited to that many. They emphasize His Sovereignty, Omnipotence, mercy and compassion. One major difference in Character between Islam and Christianity is the emphasis on the justice of God rather than the grace of God. The cross is the reconciling factor between the two.

The Camel Method

“Only the camel knows the 100th name of Allah” (Bedouin proverb). But the camel has revealed it — Jesus!

Aim: draw out a ‘Person of Peace’ and build bridges between you and the Muslim community. Raise Jesus from “Prophet” status to “Savior” by using the Qu’ran. You are not out to win an argument. Follow Jesus’ example of using rhetorical questions to draw the truth to the surface (John 4 etc). Be humble and dependent upon the Holy Spirit – you don’t need to know all the answers. Just ask the right questions.

Conversation Starter: “I have discovered an amazing truth in the Koran that gives hope of eternal life in heaven. Would you read Surah Al-Imran 3:42-55?”

1. ‘Isa is holy, Al-Imran 3:45-47. Point out that this verse says that ‘Isa holds the same quality of holiness as Allah.

- “Does this say that ‘Isa came directly from Allah and that he did not have a father?”
- “Are there any other prophets who did not have a father?”
Discuss Adam’s bloodline, and how his sin affected humanity.

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- “Why did Allah have ‘Isa born without a father?”
By not being in Adam’s bloodline, “Isa lived without sin.
2. “Isa has power over Death, *Surah Al-Imran* 3:49
- Point out the miracles display the power of Allah, especially over death.
 - “Do you think that one of people’s greatest fears is death?”
 - “Do you know of any other prophet who was given the power over death?” tell the story of Lazarus.
3. ‘Isa knows the way to heaven, *Surah Al-Imran* 3:55
- Point out: Isa himself has traveled the straight path directly to Allah and is with Him now.
 - “If you wanted to come to my house and you needed help in doing so, who is best suited to help you?”
 - “I am a sinful person. I have done many good things in my life, but still I have Adam’s blood in me. I know that I can never become holy on my own and get to be with Allah in heaven. Out of all the prophets, which one do you think is best capable of helping me get to heaven?”
 - If they answer, “Isa,” then ask them why he can help me.
 - If they answer, Muhammad, ask them to read Surah “The Chambers” 46:9. Carefully ask, “Does this mean that he did not know where he was going after death? If not, how can he help us get to heaven?”

Before you use the Camel Method

1. PRAY in faith expecting results! God is already working. You’re just joining Him in His work.
2. DON’T take a Koran with you. Have them read from their Koran.
3. It is better to ask questions than to preach at them.
4. There is not enough light in the Koran to bring them to salvation, but there is enough truth to bring out a man of peace.
5. Once you have drawn out the man of peace, arrange to talk again, bringing a Bible in their language to that next meeting.
6. If asked who you say Mohammed is, respond: “I say Mohammed is who he said he was in the Koran. Let’s look at Surah “The Chambers” 46:9: “I am nothing new among the Prophets; what will happen to me and to my followers, I do not know; I am only a plain person who warns.”
 - By his own testimony, Mohammed is not the greatest of prophets.
 - By his own testimony, Mohammed did not know where he or his followers are going after death.
 - By his own testimony, Mohammed is only a person who warns.
 - By Jesus’ testimony, “I am the Way, the Truth, the Life and no one comes to Allah except through me.” (John 14:6) and “I go to prepare a place for you. If I go to prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there you may be also.” (John 14:1-7)

Taking the Man of Peace from the Koran to the Bible

1. Read Surah Jonah 10:94:

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“And if you (Mohammed) are in doubt concerning that which we reveal unto you, then question those who read the Scripture (that was) before you. Verily the Truth from thy Lord hath come unto you. So be not of those who waver.”

2. Read Surah The Women 4:136:

“O you who believe! Believe in Allah and His messenger and the Scripture which He has revealed unto His messenger, and the Scripture which He revealed aforetime. Whosoever disbelieves in Allah and His angels and His Scriptures and His messengers and the Last day he verily has wandered far astray.”

3. If they believe the Bible has been changed, refer them to Surah Cattle 6:115-116:

“Those unto whom we gave the Scripture (aforetime) know that it is revealed from your Lord, in truth. So be not (O Mohammed) of those who waver. Perfected is the Word of the Lord in truth and justice. There is nothing that can change His words. He is the Hearer, and the Knower.”

4. The roadmap for blessings and eternal life are found in the Taurat and Injil. Read:

Surah The Table Spread 5:65-66: “If only the People of the Scripture (the Jews) would believe and ward off evil, we would remit their sins from them and surely We would bring them into the Gardens of Delight. If they had observed the Taurat and the Injil and that which was revealed unto them by their Lord, then they would have been nourished from above them and from beneath their feet.”

Practical Guidelines

1. **Prayer** is the most powerful thing you can do because only God can change someone’s heart!

We must realize that this work is not simply an intellectual exercise; it involves the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit. In utter dependence on Him, we receive the insights and ideas that grip the mind and heart of our Muslim friend. And similarly, the Holy Spirit works in our friend to give understanding, insight, and receptivity to the good news of Jesus Christ. This trust in the work of the Holy Spirit is something to be cultivated in prayer and faith by the Christian worker.

2. **Understanding.** Christians need to be aware of Islamic beliefs and be firmly grounded in biblical teaching. (See Background, above.)

3. **Relationships.** A confrontational evangelism style rarely is effective with Muslims. Christians need to earn the right to share the gospel with them by befriending them and getting to know them as individuals.

That’s where your testimony becomes helpful . . . In orthodox Islam, God has supposedly not spoken to a single human being since the year Muhammad died (632). For this reason, giving your own testimony of how you became a Christian — of how God revealed Himself *to you* — takes Muslims by surprise. This is a thoroughly biblical approach (1 John 1:3). And there is no argument against a testimony. Your testimony emphasizes your relationship with God through Jesus Christ and is believable when the Muslim that you are sharing with has a personal relationship with you.

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4. **Respect.** Never ridicule the beliefs or customs of a Muslim, even those with which you disagree.

Always build up (Christianity) never tear down (Islam). By building up Christianity, you will send a positive message about your faith. By tearing down Islam, the opposite message will be sent and will probably cause the Muslim to defend themselves.

“Don’t tell a Muslim something and make them mad . . . ask them a question and make them think!”

A Testimony of a Muslim Background Believer: “Before I was saved, I heard all the arguments about why Islam was wrong and Christianity was right. I wasn’t buying any of them. I was born a Muslim, I was raised a Muslim, my family was Muslim, and I would die a Muslim. However, one question was posed to me that still sticks in my mind to this day: "So, whom do you fear most? Your family? Or God?" I realized at that moment that one day I would have to stand before the Judge of the Universe. I knew I had better be right about exactly Who that Judge was. I knew I had to be willing to examine the claims of the Bible. After all, I thought, if Islam is the one true religion, then what do I have to fear from reading the Bible?

Advice from a Muslim background believer:

You want them to begin to doubt their religion. You may find this surprising, but I’ve found that the best way to do this is to ask questions of them, but always in a respectful, gracious manner. Most Muslims are very eager to talk about their religion. And the more you ask them to explain the teachings of Islam, the more you will get them to think about what they really believe and have placed their faith in. Many Muslims really don’t know what they believe, when it comes down to it. Many Muslims (like many Christians) really don’t know what they are basing their faith on. Get them to discover this fact for themselves. Listen very carefully to what they say. Ask questions. You will begin to discover contradictions in what they’re telling you. Those are your opportunities to question them about those contradictions and inconsistencies. You don’t need to overwhelm and bombard them with a battle plan of facts and arguments in order to place seeds of doubt in their minds. The fact that they will have to verbally and rationally explain their religion to you may cause them to begin to question their belief system without you ever having to say much of anything at all!

5. **Reverence for Scripture.** Muslims treat their holy book, the Qur’an, with utmost respect, and they expect Christians to show similar respect for the Bible. For instance, a Christian should not carry a New Testament in his back pocket or distribute Scripture by leaving it on a doorstep.

Quote the Scriptures and refer to the Qur'an (when possible). Show respect to the Qur'an because it is sacred to the Muslim. Never hold it below your waist and never mock it. Quote from the Qur'an if you can but don't try to tell the person about his or her religion. Quote from the bible to generate discussion not to throw rocks. When using the Qur'an, have your Muslim friend read the selected verse and then ask them, “What is this saying to you?”

One will find that each subject can always be related to the teaching of the Lord Jesus and the apostles and other Scriptures. The Quran bears surprising witness to Jesus. It affirms His virgin birth, His ability to heal and raise the dead, that He is both a word from God and a spirit from God, that He is the Messiah, an all-righteous one (sinless), among those nearest to God, that He is alive in heaven now and will return to judge the earth (Quran 3:45, 49; 4:158; 82:22). Muslims often are convinced that Christ is greater than Muhammad from just reading the Quran. These above points are excellent starting places in leading Muslims to *biblical* truth about Jesus.

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Indeed, in our effort to bring Muslims to study the Bible, we have an unexpected ally in Muhammad's book, the Quran. In a careful reading of the Koran's references (3:84; 5:51, 71; 6:34; 10:37, 64, 94; 46:12), we find that Muhammad affirmed his belief in what was revealed to Moses and Jesus. He taught that God confirms and guards all previous scripture, that Christians are to stand fast on their own books of the Law and the Gospel, and that none could change the Word of God. Finally, the Muslim is told that if he has doubts he should ask the Jews and Christians, who were reading the Holy Books before he was.

Muhammad testified that Jesus was among those nearest to God, held in honor in this world and the hereafter (Quran 3:45). Muslims understand this to mean that Jesus was sinless and all-righteous, something that the early Muslims never claimed for Muhammad.

In the Quran (2:253; 3:45-49; 4:158, 171; 5:49; 19:33; 89:22) Jesus was called the Messiah, He was born of a virgin, He was among the righteous — those nearest to God, He received strength from the Holy Spirit, He gave sight to the blind, cured lepers, and raised the dead. He also prophesied His own death and resurrection, was called a Word from God and a Spirit from God, and finally, is coming back with thousands of angels to judge the world.

- 6. Common ground.** Begin with the Old Testament to apply the word of God, since the foundations of our salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ start there. Since Muslims recognize the first five books of the Old Testament and the Psalms, use selected Scriptures from those books to introduce the concept of sin and sacrifice.

Emphasize submission: You have submitted to the will of God in Christ Jesus. They have submitted to the will of Allah. And, Jesus Christ submitted to the will of the Father and went to the cross to die for you and for me, and for them.

Muhammad, in his obsession to discover and execute the will of God, set in motion a movement that resulted in a wild proliferation of laws attempting to cover every facet of life. By borrowing from the Egyptians the idea that God would weigh our good deeds against our bad deeds in a balance scale on the day of judgment, he betrayed a lack of understanding of the function of law. The law does not save; it condemns.

Christians can begin by complimenting the Muslim on his or her zeal to keep the law of God as he or she understands it, but then we must go on to show that the law has the ultimate function of showing us where we failed. As Paul wrote, "the letter [law] kills, but the Spirit gives life" (1 Cor. 3:6). Our Muslim friends also need to be disabused of the idea that 51 percent performance is good enough to obtain salvation. Show them what James wrote: "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it" (James 2:10). To this could be added Paul's words in Romans 3:20, "Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather through the law we become conscious of sin," and in Galatians 3:24, "The law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith" (Gal. 3:24). This then leads on to a discussion about Christ. Base this discussion on both the Quran and the Bible.

- 7. Parables.** Use gospel narratives rather than theological explanations to explain biblical truth.

Since Jesus taught primarily with stories and parables that related to everyday life, we should seek to do the same. The Gospel of Matthew or Luke to introduce parables that teach about human sin, God's love and the opportunity for assurance of salvation.

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Story telling is a worthwhile method although it requires a commitment to an ongoing relationship. The *Evangelcube* is a great launching point for story telling through the Scriptures.

8. **Avoid offense.** Be culturally sensitive!

Dress modestly. Make sure language and lifestyle are in keeping with the highest moral standards. When witnessing, men should not approach women, and women should not approach men.