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# Rocket Science

December 2018

Rabi al-Awal / Rabi al-Akhir 1440



In the name of Allah,  
most Gracious, most Merciful

## The Day of Judgement

Picture the most beloved people in your life, your parents, spouses, children, siblings, and friends. Now imagine them trying to avoid you, and running away from you, and you trying to do the same when you see them. As Allah (swt) explains in the Quran, this is exactly what every soul will be wishing for him or herself. "On the Day a man will flee from his brother, and his mother and his father, and his wife and his children, for every man, that Day, will be a matter sufficient for him" (Surah Abasa, 34-37).

Our journey of the soul continues from the grave to its next destination, The Day of Judgement. It is but one day whose length is equal to 50,000 years. Allah (swt) says in the Quran, "The angels and the soul will ascend to Him during a Day the extent of which is 50,000 years" (Surah Al Maarij, 4). Similarly, the Prophet (saw) said in a hadith "On a Day the length of which is equal to 50,000 years, until judgement is passed among the people" (Sahih Muslim).

Before we can look at the events that Allah (swt) says will happen on the Day of Judgement, we must first ask ourselves just when that day will be. We are not the first to ask that question. Prophet Muhammad (saw) was asked many

times by many people about when this day would arrive. Even though we have made remarkable advances in all forms of knowledge, particularly technology and science, the answer still remains the same and that is that Allah (swt) alone knows when the Day of Judgement will be. When the angel Jibril came to the Prophet (saw), one of the questions he asked was about the Hour. He (saw) answered by saying, "The one questioned about it knows no better than the questioner."

"Men ask you of the Hour. Say the knowledge of it is with Allah only. What can convey to you that maybe the Hour is near?" (Surah Al Ahzab, 63).

The Day of Judgment will come upon humankind suddenly. No matter how well informed or interested someone is in the signs that will precede it, its commencement will come as a shock. The trumpet will be blown and the people will hear a sound so horrendous that the mountains and the Earth itself will crumble to dust. "And when the trumpet is blown with a single blast, and the Earth and the mountains are removed from their places, and crushed with a single crushing, then on that Day shall the (Great) Event befall" (Surah Al Haqqa, 13-15).

The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "How can I feel at ease when the angel of the trumpet, (Israfil) has put his lips to the trumpet and is waiting for the order to blow it?" (At-Tirmidhi).

In another narration, narrated by Abu Huraira, the Prophet (saw) said, "When Allah Most High completed the creation of the Heavens and the Earth, He created the *soor* (the trumpet or the horn) and Allah gave the *soor* to the angel whose name is Israfil (as) and he (Israfil) placed the horn to his mouth. From that time until now, he is holding the horn to his mouth and his eyes are fixed upon the throne of Allah, Most High. He is waiting for the order from Allah to blow into this horn."

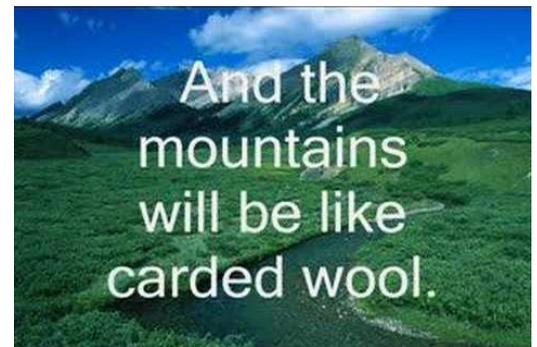
The Prophet (saw) has further told us that from that day, the angel Israfil (as) has never bowed down or blinked, fearing that Allah (swt) may order him to blow into the horn before he is able to raise his head, or before he is able to complete his blink. Therefore his eyes are fixed upon the throne of Allah, waiting for the command to blow. On that Day, Allah (swt) will say: "O Israfil. Blow into the horn."

Allah (swt) says that it will be a single blast, a long continuous sound that will not cease until everything has perished (Surah Sad, 15). It will then be followed by a second blowing of the trumpet. Allah tells us that everyone who has ever lived will find themselves standing, staring, and shocked by the events. Every soul shall be staring upwards until the judgement of Allah is passed. The terror and shock will be so great that people will not be interested in any other thing. Aisha

(ra) narrated that the Prophet (saw) told us, "The people will be assembled barefoot, naked, and uncircumcised." Ayesha (ra) asked, "O Messenger of Allah, will the men and women look at each other?" The Prophet said, "The matter will be too serious for them to notice" (Bukhari & Muslim).

In another hadith of the Prophet (saw) recorded by Bukhari, it is stated that the gathering place will be a smooth flat place, men will be sent to the gathering place naked, barefoot, uncircumcised and faultless; while men wait in the gathering place, the sun will approach and they will sweat; that day men will be sent to the gathering place in three groups; on foot, riding and crawling face downwards.

The trumpet will be blown, the Earth will be rolled up like a scroll and the dead will rise. Mountains will be like fluffed up wool. All of humankind will be gathered on a flat plane called Mahshar. The Day of Judgement will have begun. All of humanity will stand expecting the decree of Allah (swt), some in peace and tranquillity, and some in fear and regret.



This day is known by many names in the Quran and the Sunnah:

*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*, "The Day of Rising". It is given that name because of the rise of great terrors on that day and because the people will rise from their graves to Allah the Almighty.

*Yawm Al-Hasrah*, "The Day of Regret". The negligent will regret what they neglected of their religion.

*Al-Qari'ah*, "The Striking Calamity". This day will strike the people with its great terrors.

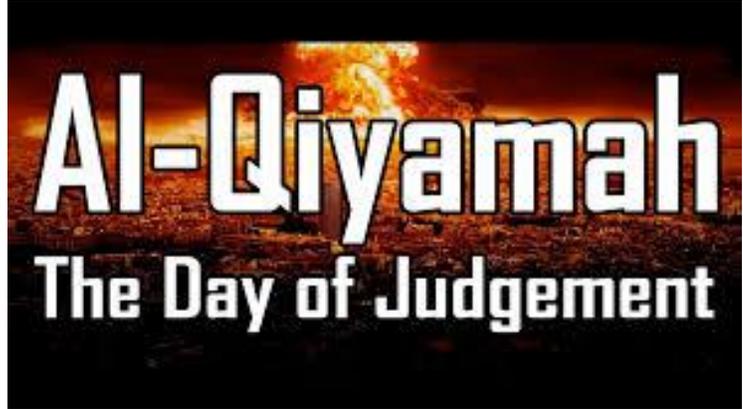
*Yawm Al-Fasl*, "The Day of Judgement". On this Day, Allah will judge between His servants.

*Yawm Ad-Deen*, "The Day of Recompense". Allah will recompense each one according to their deeds.

*Al-Haqqah*, "The Inevitable Reality". It will make Paradise inevitable to some and Hellfire inevitable to others, and it will have the reward and requital, and all things will be real.

*Yawm At-Talaq*, "The Day of Meeting". The foremost and the last will meet with Allah.

Allah (swt) also says, "O mankind, fear your Master. Indeed, the convulsion of the [final] Hour is a terrible thing. On the Day you see it, every nursing mother will be distracted from that [child] she was nursing, and every pregnant woman will abort her pregnancy, and you will see the people [appearing] intoxicated while they



are not intoxicated; but the punishment of Allah is severe" (Surah Hajj, 1-2).

This is how severe and ruthless this Day will be. People will be scattered everywhere as Allah (swt) says in Surah Al Qariah: "It is the Day when people will be like moths, dispersed not knowing what to do." There will be no ties of kinship or friendship, as all of us will be worried about trying to save ourselves.

"And the Hour is coming without any doubt, and Allah will raise up all those in the graves" (Surat Al Hajj, 7)

What will the day be like when we meet our Creator, a day when everyone from all nations, from all generations, will be made to stand as equals in the presence of Allah? Allah will then call each one of us to meet with us individually. There will be no translators or interpreters; it will be just you, your Creator and your deeds, and it will be decided if you will be entering Paradise or Hell Fire.

## The history (sirah) of the Prophet (saw)

**Our beloved Prophet Muhammad (saw) was born on the 12<sup>th</sup> of Rabi ul-Awwal. This year, his birthday fell on 20 November. While we do not celebrate his birth, it is a timely reminder for us to consider his journey through life (sirah). This account is in three parts. The second and third parts will appear in subsequent issues of *Rocket Science*, insha Allah.**

Prophet Muhammad (saw) was born to Abdullah and Amina (ra). He had a noble lineage tracing back to Ibrahim (Abraham, as). His father Abdullah died two months before his birth. The first woman to suckle him was Thuwaybah, and then Haleema. There were several signs during his birth and early childhood, such as the light shining from his mother to the castle of As-Shams and the grass becoming green and producing lots of milk at a time of drought.

### His upbringing

At age 6, his mother died and his grandfather Abdul Muttalib (ra) took custody of him. However, when Muhammad (saw) was 8, Abdul Muttalib passed away. Abdul Muttalib's son, Abu Talib (thus Muhammad's uncle, ra) then took care of him.

The Prophet (saw) was given the title As-Sadiq Al-Ameen "the truthful and trustworthy". Because of this, he was the first to be given the opportunity to decide who would put the black stone back on the Kabah. His solution was to have a large piece of cloth with the stone on it so that all the leaders of the tribes held a part of the cloth and carried it to its resting place. Muhammad (saw) himself then put it back in place.

At age 25, he married Khadija (ra). Khadija was twice a widow and had

inherited great wealth. She was approached by several key figures of the time asking for her hand in marriage, but she refused. One day she wanted someone to work for her, and employed our beloved Prophet (saw). She was impressed with his level of honesty and work ethic, and conveyed her desire to marry him.

She was 40 and he was 25 when they married. She remained his only wife until she died at the age of 65 (when the Prophet was 50). She had six of his children: 4 girls (Fatima, Ruqaiyah, Umm Kulthum and Zainab) and 2 boys (Qasim and Abdallah). The boys did not survive childhood, by Allah's will. Muhammad (saw) was very fond of Khadija (ra) because she was the first to believe in him as prophet, she sacrificed her wealth, and she bore him children while the others did not. (Maria al-Qibtiyya, also known as Maria the Copt, bore a son, Ibrahim, who died in infancy.)

### Events leading to prophethood

At age 35, Muhammad (saw) began to contemplate and dissociate himself from what was happening in the world. He was a shepherd, prayed, fasted, and used to retreat to a cave called Hira on the outskirts of Makkah. Significantly, he never worshipped any idols.

At age 40, he had dreams for a period of six months, that all became a reality. He would often see a light or hear a sound or a voice calling his name as he spent time at Hira. He would tell his experiences to Khadija (ra) who would console him, saying that he was an upright person, generous and good to his family, so there was nothing to worry about.

One day as he was in the cave of Hira, Jibril (as) came to him and said "Read!" The Prophet (saw) replied that he did not know how to read as he was unlettered (unable to read or write). The angel then pressed him hard and told him to read. Out of fear, he sweated profusely. Then he immediately went back to Khadija (ra) and related to her what happened. He told her to wrap him up although he was not feeling cold.

Khadija consoled him and took him to Waraqa, her cousin. Waraqa said that he would be opposed by his people. When asked why, he said that all prophets were opposed by their people.

Revelations came from that day onwards in different forms and patterns depending on circumstances. Jibril would come down with a loud noise, like the toll of a bell, sometimes appearing in the form of an angel with wings. He would also appear in the Prophet's sleep and ask him to repeat what he saw in the dreams after he woke up. At other times, Jibril would come in the form of a man.

### **The early Muslims**

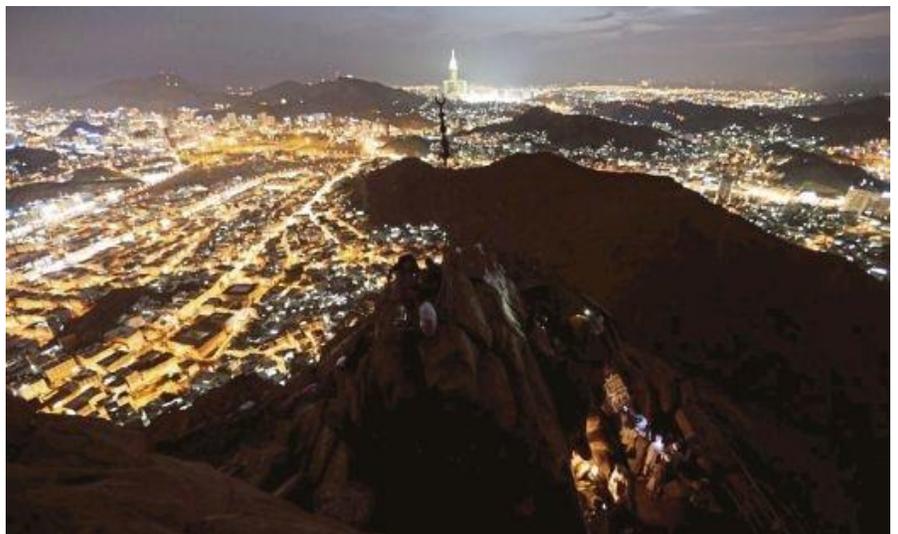
The first person to believe him and embrace the religion was Khadija (ra), his wife. A hadith says that

she will be given a special place in Jannah along with Mariam (Mary, ra, the mother of Isa, Jesus, as), because of the love and dedication she gave to her husband and the religion.

Others who accepted Islam early were Ali ibn Abu Talib (who grew up in the home of the Prophet from the age of 10), Jafar, and Zaid ibn Haritha. They were all from the same household.

The first to accept Islam outside this circle was Abu Bakr (ra), a childhood friend of our beloved Prophet. The Prophet (saw) said that he never called anyone to Islam and he did not show hesitancy except for one man – Abu Bakr.

In the first three years, a total of 40 people accepted Islam. The message of Islam at this early stage was conveyed in secret. In general it was the young who were attracted.



Fajr prayers at the cave of Hira

### The early Makkan period

The Quraish denied the Day of Resurrection, the Day of Judgement, and the Quran. The early surahs to be revealed were short, forceful, assertive and categorical, which left no doubt that this was the reality.

The surahs said to the Quraish that the Prophet was only a clear warner and that there was no compulsion in religion. This principle is relevant even now; we cannot force anyone to accept Islam. The surahs consoled the Prophet (saw) by telling him that his duty was to convey and that he was not responsible for the results. There would come to people a time when they will have to give account for what they did in this world.

### Abu Lahab

A staunch enemy of Islam, Abu Lahab, Muhammad's uncle, resisted all forms of dawah and even plotted against our beloved Prophet (saw). However, the Prophet was patient, even inviting

his uncles and cousins (including Abu Lahab) to dinner twice. At the first dinner, Abu Lahab did not give the Prophet a chance to say what he wanted to say. Abu Lahab said Islam was against the religion of the forefathers, and threatened bloodshed should this continue. He also said the Prophet (saw) was insane and mentally ill.

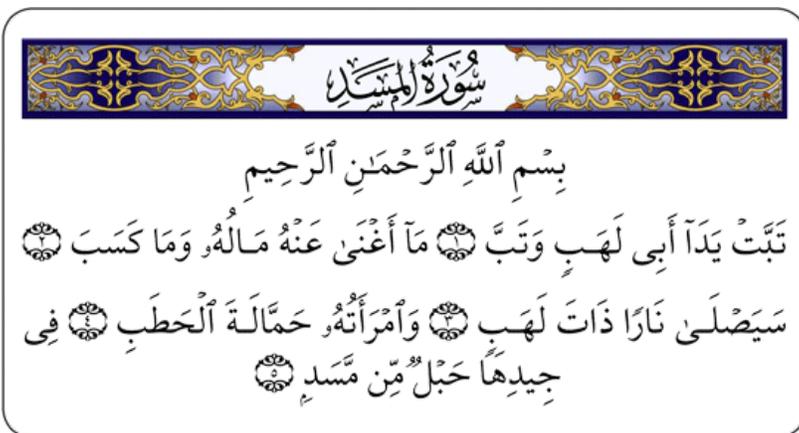
So the Prophet (saw) invited them to a second dinner. This time the Prophet (saw) had an opportunity to convey the message. After the Prophet (saw) spoke, Abu Talib said he saw no harm in what he brought and that he would support him, but he would not abandon the way of his father, Abdul Muttalib. Abu Lahab left the room angrily, in a rude and uncharacteristic manner.

Later, Abu Lahab ordered his sons to divorce the daughters of the Prophet (saw), Ruqaiya and Umm Kulthum. Abu Lahab wanted to publicly hurt our beloved Prophet. Uthman bin Affan (ra) later married these two daughters.

### Negotiation with Abu Talib

The Quraish continued to discourage our Prophet (saw) in other ways. They sent a delegation to Abu Talib as he was the only one who could speak to him. They tried to persuade him not to continue the dawah. But the Prophet said, "Even if you put the Sun in my right hand and Moon in my left, I will not give up this mission (of spreading God's word) until I die."

Abu Talib continued to protect and support the Prophet (saw) until Abu Talib died. However, he never accepted Islam.



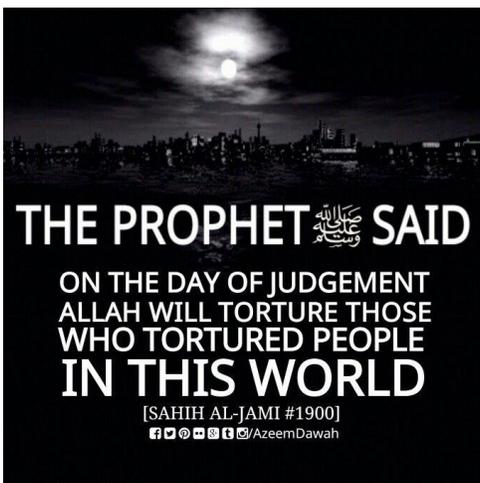
Surah al-Masad (al-Lahab)

## Persecution

The Quraish, being jealous of the progress the Prophet (saw) was making in spreading Islam, and because of their dislike of the message and the Prophet, started persecuting the Muslims. They started by imprisoning them and torturing them.

Bilal (ra) was tortured severely. A hot stone was laid on his body in the middle of the day and he was whipped until he renounced Islam. However, Bilal (ra) never gave up, and continued to say "Ahadun Ahad" ("God is One"). Looking at the suffering of Bilal, Abu Bakr (ra) bought him and ended his torture. It is said that Abu Bakr paid a ridiculous amount of money to free him.

The family of Yasir (ra) was tortured to the extent that Yasir died as a result of the torture. His wife, Summayah (ra), complained and cursed Abu Jahl, who then drove a spear into her body and killed her.



Ammar (ra) was tortured too. It came to a point where he could not bear the torture. So he renounced Allah and the torture was stopped. Ammar then related this story to the Prophet (saw). The Prophet asked Ammar how he felt in his heart, to which he replied that he was content and feared Allah (swt). The Prophet then advised him to do the same if he was tortured again, that is, say it but do not believe it in your heart. This is captured in Surah an-Nahl, verse 106: "Whoever disbelieves in Allah after his belief ... except for one who is forced [to renounce his religion] while his heart is secure in faith. But those who [willingly] open their breasts to disbelief, upon them is wrath from Allah, and for them is a great punishment."

The persecution continued to become more and more severe. Abu Bakr (ra) was beaten and attacked. The Prophet (saw) was also attacked. The intestine of a camel was thrown on him. The Muslims continued to be persecuted.

## Lessons learnt

- Start dawah with near relatives first. Start with yourself, and then move to others.
- Have patience and forbearance during times of trial.
- Jannah is not easy; we need to work for it.
- Allah (swt) has purchased the life of the believer for something better in the Hereafter.

## Sinéad O'Connor converts to Islam

Sinéad O'Connor<sup>1</sup> is an Irish-born singer, best known for her 1990 hit "Nothing Compares 2 U", written by Prince.

The 51-year-old has had a troubled life. She had an abusive mother<sup>2</sup>. She has been married four times and is a mother of four. She was previously ordained as a priest by a Catholic group not affiliated with the Church, but became disillusioned with Catholicism following allegations of child abuse in the church and Vatican<sup>3</sup>. She changed her name in 2017 to Magda Davitt, saying she wanted to be "free of the patriarchal slave names. Free of the parental curses"<sup>3</sup>.

On 20 October, she announced that she had officially converted to Islam in Ireland with Imam Shaykh Dr Umar al-Qadri<sup>4</sup>, and taken the name Shuhada Davitt. "This is to announce that I am proud to have become a Muslim. This is the natural conclusion of any intelligent theologian's journey. All scripture study leads to Islam. Which makes all other scriptures redundant. I will be given (another) new name. It will be Shuhada"<sup>5</sup>. The next day, she tweeted, "My best friend Elaine just gave me my first hijab and she got chills all over her body when I put it on. Not gonna post a photo because is intensely personal. And I'm an ugly old hag. But I'm a very, very, very happy old hag"<sup>6</sup>.

We wish our new sister well in her journey.

1 [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sinéad\\_O'Connor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sinéad_O'Connor)

2 [www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/news/sinead-oconnor-dr-phil-interview-mother-emotional-sexual-abuse-suicide-attempts-a7942411.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/news/sinead-oconnor-dr-phil-interview-mother-emotional-sexual-abuse-suicide-attempts-a7942411.html)

3 [www.newshub.co.nz/home/entertainment/2018/10/sinead-oconnor-newest-celebrity-to-convert-to-islam-changes-her-name.html](http://www.newshub.co.nz/home/entertainment/2018/10/sinead-oconnor-newest-celebrity-to-convert-to-islam-changes-her-name.html)

4 [www.telegraph.co.uk/music/artists/sinead-oconnor-converts-islam-changes-name-to-shuhada/](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/music/artists/sinead-oconnor-converts-islam-changes-name-to-shuhada/)

5 [www.irishpost.com/entertainment/sinead-oconnor-renounces-catholicism-converts-islam-161261](http://www.irishpost.com/entertainment/sinead-oconnor-renounces-catholicism-converts-islam-161261)

6 [consequenceofsound.net/2018/10/sinead-oconnor-islam](https://consequenceofsound.net/2018/10/sinead-oconnor-islam)



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## Tauhid and Christianity

Sinéad O'Connor (see the previous article) has said what many converts to Islam say, namely that she grew up in an (at least nominally) Christian environment, and believed in a higher being (God), but could not understand that position that is given to Jesus (Isa, as) in Christianity. "The Christ character tells us himself: you must only talk directly to the Father; you don't need intermediaries"<sup>1</sup>.

This sentiment is echoed in a recent book<sup>2</sup> by Lauren Booth, the sister-in-law of Tony Blair, the former UK prime minister. She also eventually converted to Islam.

"My main reason for attending [church] was so my daughters would have an awareness that there was more to life than materialism. But the more we went, the more I became aware of my own doubts. During the services I had started to mumble through bits of the Apostles' Creed in which I didn't believe. My recitation from the pew began well:

'I believe in God the Father Almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ ...'

Then when the son and Lord part came I just mumbled under my breath. At the end I would mumble the whole section about believing in the holy Catholic church (I didn't), or the communion of saints (nope) before saying the final section out loud:

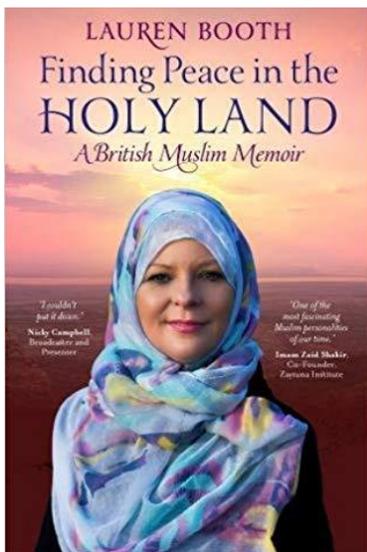
'... the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen'"

In short, both Sinéad O'Connor and Lauren Booth affirm their belief in one God. The Arabic word for this is *tauhid* from the word *ahad* meaning "one".

### Jesus (as) believed in *tauhid*

Muslims follow the teachings of Jesus (Isa, as) in many ways. One of these is that Jesus believed in one God, as recorded in the Bible.

"One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, 'Of all the commandments, which is the most important?' 'The most important one,' answered Jesus, 'is this: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength."' The second is this: "Love your neighbour as yourself." There is no commandment greater than these.' 'Well said, teacher,' the man replied. 'You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him.'" (Mark 12:29-32)





Several things are worth noting from this. Firstly, the second most important commandment quoted by Jesus (as) "Love your neighbour as yourself" is very similar to many hadiths of Prophet Muhammad (saw):

"A person who believes in Allah and the Last Day should be kind to his neighbour." (Muslim)

"He will not enter Paradise whose neighbour is not secure from his wrongful conduct." (Muslim)

"If you are kind to your neighbour you will be a believer." (At-Tirmidhi)

"... the best neighbour in Allah's estimation is the one who is best to his neighbour." (At-Tirmidhi)

"Jibril, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, kept on recommending that I treat neighbours well until I thought that he would order me to treat them as my heirs." (Bukhari)

It is similar to the Golden Rule, mentioned in many religions and cultures, namely of treating others as you would wish to be treated.

Secondly, Muslims will recognise Jesus's saying "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one" as

being very similar to Surah Al-Ikhlâs (112):

"Say: He is God, the One and Only; God, the Eternal, Absolute; He begetteth not, nor is He begotten; And there is none like unto Him."

Thirdly, it is important to note that Jesus (as) said that there is only one God, and he did not say that he himself was God in any way. In other words, it is important to note not only what Jesus said but also what he did not say.

Most modern Christians believe that Jesus was in some literal sense the son of God, that is, at least partly divine himself. This is a form of *shirk*, that is, associating others with Allah (swt), thereby implying that others are on a par with Allah. In the Quran, Allah Himself states that this is the one thing He will not forgive:

"Verily, Allah forgives not that partners be set up with Him [in worship] but He forgives other than that to whom He pleases; and whoever sets up partners with Allah [in worship], he has indeed invented an enormous wrong" (Quran 4:48).

Fourthly, Jesus said, "the Lord our God, the Lord is one." Note the word "our". So, Jesus (as) is saying that the Lord is my (Jesus's) God and your God. Jesus is acknowledging God as his (Jesus's) God.

#### **Unitarian belief in *tauhid***

It was written above that "**most** modern Christians believe that Jesus was in some literal sense the son of God". In fact, there are some Christians who do not believe this. That is, they do believe in one God, and that Jesus was not God.

These Christians are known as Unitarians. This is in contrast to most Christians, who are Trinitarians. Trinitarians (from the word *trinity*, where *tri-* means "three" as in *tricycle*) define God as three persons (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit/Ghost) but they are all divine. Unitarians (from the word *unity*, where *uni-* means "one" as in *unicycle*) understand God as one person. They thus adhere to strict monotheism and they maintain that Jesus (as) was a great man and a prophet of God, but not God himself. This, of course, corresponds to the Muslim view of one God (*tauhid*), and of Jesus being a great prophet, the second-to-last prophet of God (Muhammad, saw, being the last), but without doubt wholly a human being.

In places in the Bible, Jesus (as) is referred to as a prophet.

"And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, 'Who is this?' And the multitude said, 'This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.'" (Matthew 21, 10-11)

"The woman saith unto him [Jesus], 'Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.'" (John 4, 19)

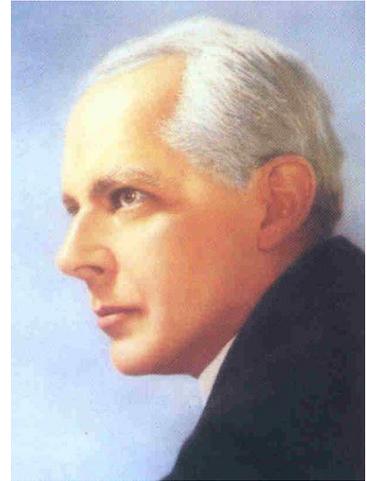
### History of Unitarianism

Unitarianism<sup>3</sup>, both as a theology and as a denominational family of churches, was defined and developed in four countries: Poland-Lithuania, Transylvania (famous for the fictional Dracula, but actually part of Romania), England and the USA. Although

there were common beliefs among Unitarians in each of these regions, they initially grew independently from each other. The Unitarian movement, although not called "Unitarian" initially, began almost simultaneously in Poland-Lithuania and Transylvania in the mid-sixteenth century. Among the adherents were a significant number of Italians. In England the first Unitarian Church was established in 1774 on Essex Street, London, where today's British Unitarian headquarters are still located. The first official acceptance of the Unitarian faith on the part of a congregation in America was by King's Chapel in Boston, from where James Freeman began teaching Unitarian doctrine in 1784, and was appointed rector and revised the Prayer Book according to Unitarian doctrines in 1786.

Famous Unitarians include:

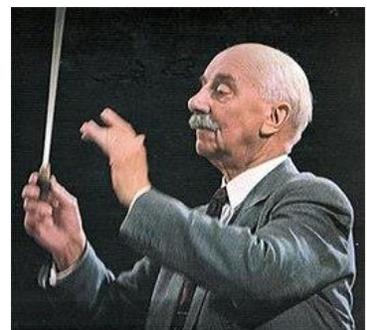
- Louisa May Alcott, American novelist and poet
- Béla Bartók, composer
- Tim Berners-Lee, inventor of the World Wide Web
- George Boole, mathematician, famous for Boolean logic
- Sir Adrian Boult, conductor
- Samuel Taylor Coleridge, English writer
- Charles Darwin, English naturalist
- Charles Dickens, English writer
- Ralph Waldo Emerson, American essayist



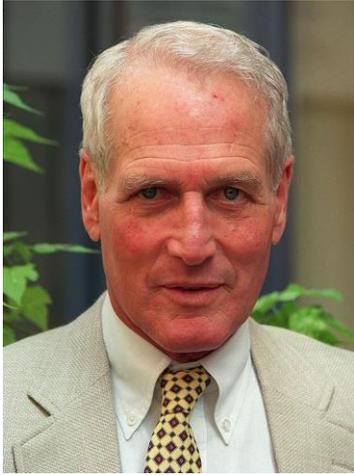
Béla Bartók



Tim Berners-Lee



Sir Adrian Boult



Paul Newman



Kurt Vonnegut



Frank Lloyd Wright

- John Locke, philosopher and physician
- Paul Newman, American actor
- Florence Nightingale, nurse during the Crimean War
- Joseph Priestley, discoverer of oxygen
- Kurt Vonnegut, American writer
- Josiah Wedgwood of pottery fame
- Frank Lloyd Wright, architect and designer

Five presidents of the United States were Unitarians: John Adams, John Quincy Adams, Millard Fillmore, Thomas Jefferson, and William Howard Taft.

**Beliefs**

Unitarians adhere to strict monotheism, and maintain that Jesus was a great man and a prophet of God, but not God himself. They believe Jesus did not claim to be God, and that his teachings did not suggest the existence of a triune ("three in one") God. Unitarians believe in the moral authority, but not the divinity of Jesus.

Although there is no specific authority on the convictions of Unitarian belief apart from rejection of the Trinity, the following beliefs are generally accepted (all quoted from Wikipedia):

1. "One God and the oneness or unity of God". This corresponds to the Muslim concept of *tauhid*.
2. "The life and teachings of Jesus Christ constitute the exemplar

model for living one's own life." While Unitarians, being essentially Christians, do not accept the prophethood of Muhammad (saw), the parallel is clear here between Unitarian Christians regarding the life and teachings of Jesus (as) as a model to be followed, and Muslims regarding the life and teachings of Muhammad (saw) as a model to be followed. The Quran was revealed to Muhammad (saw), he is described as the walking Quran, and many of the hadiths attributed to Muhammad (saw) are hadith qudsi, that is, hadiths carrying the full authority of Allah (swt), while not being part of the Quran itself.

3. "Reason, rational thought, science, and philosophy coexist with faith in God." Similarly, there is no conflict in Islam between believing in Allah (swt) and the findings of science (since science, like everything else, is a creation of Allah). Indeed, during the 8<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, research into various sciences flourished in the Muslim world: Mathematics, Astronomy, Medicine, Physics, Alchemy and Chemistry, Cosmology, Ophthalmology, Geography and Cartography, Sociology, Psychology. Also, there are many passages in the Quran that relate to scientific phenomena that have only been discovered in the recent past.

4. "Humans have the ability to exercise free will in a responsible, constructive and ethical manner with the assistance of religion." In a famous ayat of the Quran, Allah (swt) says, "There is no compulsion in religion" (2:256). This means that you cannot force someone to accept Islam (or any other religion); whether someone accepts Islam or not is their choice, exercising their right of free will.
5. "Human nature in its present condition is neither inherently corrupt nor depraved, but capable of both good and evil, as God intended." Unitarians thus reject the concept of original sin. This is a Christian doctrine that states that, because of the sin of Adam (as) by disobedience to God in the Garden of Eden, mankind (the descendants of Adam and Eve, Hawa, as) is in a state of sin that can only be atoned by belief in Christianity and its view of Jesus. As a result, infants that are not baptized into the church, or that die in childhood, go to Hell as a consequence of original sin. This belief has been challenged by some Christians ever since it was first proposed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century.
6. "Although the authors of the Bible were inspired by God, they were humans and therefore subject to human error." Even Christian scholars admit that the authorship of various parts of the Bible is unknown or dubious. Christians believe that, while the authors of the Bible were inspired by God, God himself was not the author of any of it, that is, it is not claimed to be the verbatim word of God, as the Quran is. Many writers have pointed out that parts of the Bible contradict other parts of the Bible, and that parts of it are therefore wrong, although it may not be obvious which parts.
7. Traditional doctrines are rejected that (Unitarians believe) "malign God's character or veil the true nature and mission of Jesus Christ", as a prophet of God not the son of God. These doctrines include the Atonement, that is, the forgiving or pardoning of sin through the death of Jesus by crucifixion. It seems to be that Unitarians believe that Jesus (as) was crucified, but that this had no implications for the sins of mankind.

### Conclusion

There seem to be many similarities between Unitarian Christianity and Islam:

- Both believe in one and only one God.
- Both believe that Jesus (as) was a great human being (and not divine), a prophet of God, and not the son of God in any literal sense.
- Both reject the belief in original sin.

1  
[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sinead\\_O%27Connor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sinead_O%27Connor),  
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 thoughts on the new  
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[aucklandunitarian.org.nz/beliefs-principles](http://aucklandunitarian.org.nz/beliefs-principles)  
 6  
[dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/faith](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/faith)  
 7 [www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/faith](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/faith)  
 8  
[en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/faith](http://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/faith)  
 9  
[www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/faith](http://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/faith)

- Both reject the belief that Jesus died on the cross "for our sins". As Muslims, we reject this because we believe that Jesus did not die on the cross (Quran 4:157).
- Both believe that the Bible was written by human authors, not God, and is therefore liable to error.
- Both believe that religion is compatible with science, free will, etc.

In the Quran, Allah (swt) says, "You will find the closest in affection to those who believe are those who say: 'We are Christians'" (5:80). It seems that the Christians that are closest to Muslims are the Unitarians, as their beliefs about Christianity, Jesus and the Bible are very similar to those of Muslims. While they may not believe in Prophet Muhammad (saw) and the Quran, their belief system corresponds quite closely to Islam.

Two final points. Firstly, Unitarianism is often mixed with Universalism<sup>4</sup>. However, Wikipedia states, "Unitarian Universalism is a liberal religion characterized by a 'free and responsible search for truth and meaning'. Unitarian Universalists assert no creed, but instead are unified by their shared search for spiritual growth. As such, their congregations include many atheists, agnostics, and theists within their membership." As a result, it is difficult to see in what sense Unitarian Universalists are Christians. The problem lies in the lack of a hard-and-fast definition of Christianity. While Muslims can state that the definition of a Muslim is someone who recites the shahadah "There is

nothing worthy of worship except Allah, and Muhammad is his messenger", there is no equivalent in Christianity. It is thus difficult to see how Unitarian Universalists, who include many atheists and agnostics (that is, people who deny or do not confirm the existence of God) are Christians. Similarly, it is difficult to see how other Unitarians are Christians, as they do not see Jesus (as) as the literal son of God, or the Bible as the infallible word of God, or accept the concept of original sin and atonement, beliefs that are central to other branches of Christianity.

Secondly, there is a Unitarian church in Auckland, at 1 Ponsonby Road. Their slogan<sup>5</sup> is "Many beliefs, one faith". This seems self-contradictory. Dictionaries show that the two words are synonyms:

Faith: Strong belief in God or a particular religion (Cambridge<sup>6</sup>)

Faith: Belief in the traditional doctrines of a religion (Merriam-Webster<sup>7</sup>)

Faith: Strong belief in the doctrines of a religion, based on spiritual conviction rather than proof. (Oxford<sup>8</sup>)

Faith: Belief in a god or gods; a religion (Macmillan<sup>9</sup>)



## Christchurch mosque appeal

Since the beginning of this year, Muslims in the eastern suburbs of Christchurch have been praying at Linwood Mosque, a property they have been intending to buy, at a price of \$397,000.

Renovations have already started. The building is a former church and community centre. The garage has been moved, so that cars can drive right round the building. All interior walls have been knocked down. A separate area for women, and a wudu area have been established, and the prayer area has been carpeted. Much of this work has been done by volunteers.

As a result, the mosque can already cover most of the needs of the East Christchurch Muslim community:

- Five times prayers daily
- Friday prayer weekly

- Daily short lessons of hadith after Maghrib prayer
- Weekly visits to Muslim families on Friday
- Weekend classes for children (boys & girls)
- Special classes and activities for sisters
- Marriage ceremonies
- Funeral (janaza) facilities available at the centre
- Gatherings, meetings and events for any ethnic Muslim group
- Ramadan, Eid Al-Fitr, and Eid Al-Adha celebrations
- Ample on-site and street parking

The mosque is now asking for donations to cover what remains of the purchase price.



Bank: Kiwibank

Account number:

38 9018 0190632 01

Account name: Linwood Islamic Charitable Trust

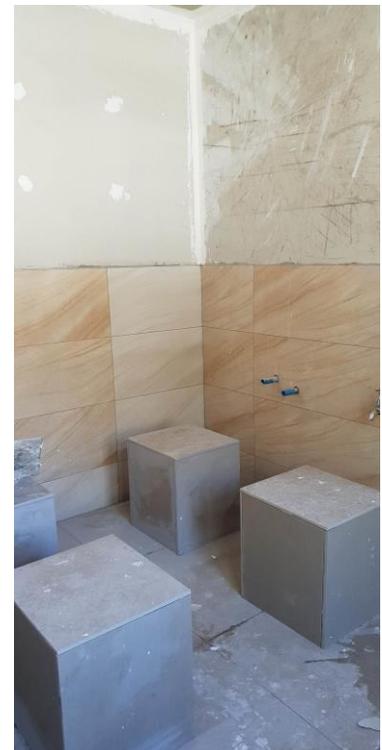
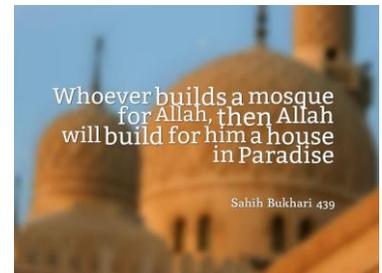
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Yasir Qadhi

## Voice of Islam

VOI delivers the message of Islam based on the teachings of the Noble Quran and the Sunnah (practices) of the Prophet Muhammad (saw).  
VOI television is broadcast on:

- APNA TV (Freeview channel 36)(10.30 am Sun)
- Face TV (SKYTV channel 83) in New Zealand (11.30 am Sat & 9.00 am Sun)
- Southern Television (Freeview Channel 39) in Dunedin and Southland (see TV guide for times)
- Mai TV (Fiji Broadcasting Corporation) in Fiji (9.00 am Sun)
- Metro TV in Ghana, West Africa (see TV guide for times)

### 2 December

Quran: 114: An-Nas.  
Animation 32: Honesty – a first step to being a Muslim.  
Islamophobia series 2: 18. The different types of patience.  
The beginning & the end 05: The throne.  
Scientific facts in the Quran: Lying & sinning.  
Amazed by the Quran: 10. Allah hears & knows.  
Prophet Muhammad’s character.

### 9 December

Quran: 114: An-Nas.  
Animation 33: How Satan stops you from Quran.  
Islamophobia series 2: 19. Is suicide the solution?  
The beginning & the end 06: Invoking the Lord of the throne.  
Scientific facts in the Quran: Pain receptors.  
Amazed by the Quran: 11. Allah inspires hearts.  
The power of Ayatul Kursi.  
My Hijab story.  
What is the secret to success?

### 16 December

Quran: 114: An-Nas.  
Animation 34: How to be a good husband  
Islamophobia series 2: 20. Are there superstitions?  
The beginning & the end 07: Honorable mention.  
Amazed by the Quran: 12. Allah is not unjust.  
Why do bad things happen to good people? Yasmin Mogahed.

### 23 December

Quran: 114: An-Nas.  
Animation: Jesus loved in the Quran  
Islamophobia series 2: 21. Isra & Maraj – Miracle or myth?  
The beginning & the end 08: The throne shook.  
Amazed by the Quran: 13. Allah’s help will come.  
Jesus in Islam. Yasir Qadhi.

### 30 December

Quran: 114: An-Nas.  
Animation 35: How to be a good wife  
Islamophobia series 2: 22. Why did God create the universe?  
The beginning & the end 09: The pen & the tablet.  
Amazed by the Quran: 14. Allah’s promise is true.  
Ultimate happiness – the face of Allah. Yasir Qadhi.

Watch VOI online, or order a free copy of the Quran: [www.voitv.org](http://www.voitv.org)

## Auckland prayer timetable for December 2018

(from [www.islamicfinder.org](http://www.islamicfinder.org). For other cities in New Zealand, see [www.fianz.co.nz](http://www.fianz.co.nz)).

Date	Fajr	Sunrise	Dhuhr	Asr 1	Asr 2	Maghrib	Isha
1	04:07	05:55	01:11	05:02	06:14	08:25	10:06
2	04:07	05:55	01:11	05:02	06:15	08:26	10:08
3	04:06	05:55	01:11	05:03	06:16	08:27	10:09
4	04:06	05:55	01:12	05:03	06:16	08:28	10:10
5	04:06	05:55	01:12	05:04	06:17	08:29	10:11
6	04:05	05:55	01:13	05:04	06:18	08:30	10:12
7	04:05	05:54	01:13	05:04	06:18	08:31	10:13
8	04:05	05:54	01:13	05:05	06:19	08:32	10:15
9	04:05	05:55	01:14	05:05	06:19	08:32	10:16
10	04:04	05:55	01:14	05:06	06:20	08:33	10:17
11	04:04	05:55	01:15	05:06	06:21	08:34	10:18
12	04:04	05:55	01:15	05:07	06:21	08:35	10:18
13	04:04	05:55	01:16	05:07	06:22	08:35	10:19
14	04:04	05:55	01:16	05:08	06:22	08:36	10:20
15	04:05	05:55	01:17	05:08	06:23	08:37	10:21
16	04:05	05:56	01:17	05:09	06:24	08:38	10:22
17	04:05	05:56	01:18	05:09	06:24	08:38	10:23
18	04:05	05:56	01:18	05:10	06:25	08:39	10:23
19	04:06	05:57	01:19	05:10	06:25	08:39	10:24
20	04:06	05:57	01:19	05:11	06:26	08:40	10:24
21	04:06	05:58	01:20	05:11	06:26	08:40	10:25
22	04:07	05:58	01:20	05:12	06:27	08:41	10:25
23	04:07	05:59	01:21	05:12	06:27	08:41	10:26
24	04:08	05:59	01:21	05:13	06:28	08:42	10:26
25	04:09	06:00	01:22	05:13	06:28	08:42	10:27
26	04:09	06:00	01:22	05:14	06:29	08:43	10:27
27	04:10	06:01	01:23	05:14	06:29	08:43	10:27
28	04:11	06:02	01:23	05:15	06:29	08:43	10:27
29	04:12	06:02	01:23	05:15	06:30	08:44	10:28
30	04:13	06:03	01:24	05:16	06:30	08:44	10:28
31	04:14	06:04	01:24	05:16	06:31	08:44	10:28

Asr 1: Maliki, Shafii and Hanbali schools (single shadow length)

Asr 2: Hanafi school (double shadow length)

“A person may offer a prayer and nothing of it is recorded for him except one tenth of it, one ninth of it, one eighth of it, one seventh of it, one sixth of it, one fifth of it, one quarter of it, one third of it, or half of it.”

(Hadith recorded by Ahmad on the importance of concentration)

## Credits

*Rocket Science* is a monthly newsletter produced by the Mount Albert Islamic Trust.

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## Why attend Rocket Park jumuah?

Prayers are held at the **Senior Citizens' Association building, Rocket Park, New North Road, Mount Albert.**

- ✓ Central location
- ✓ Plenty of free parking
- ✓ Facilities for ladies
- ✓ Heating and air-conditioning
- ✓ Bayan (religious talk) before jumuah prayers
- ✓ All bayans and khutbahs in English

NB We are only open for Friday prayers – not for the five daily prayers.

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## ***SwT, saw, as, ra***

**SwT:** subhanahu wa ta'ala "Glory to Him, the Exalted" (when mentioning Allah)

**saw:** salallahu alaihi wassalam "May the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him" (when mentioning Muhammad)

**as:** alaihis salam "Peace be on him" (when mentioning other prophets)

**ra:** radi allahu anhu/ha/hum "May Allah be pleased with him/her/them" (when mentioning members of Muhammad's family, companions, etc)