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Forgiveness: Jesus, Muhammad & Us

Dear Friend in Jesus! In the same way Moses's life is an example for the Jews to follow, Muhammad's life is the example for a Muslim. For example, a Muslim friend and I were about to share our thoughts on sin and forgiveness in Islam and Christianity when we were suddenly interrupted. Later that evening, he sent me the words of a prayer of forgiveness (see picture). Since it is recommended by the prophet of Islam, he recites it every day. The translation is as follows: "O Allah, you are my Lord. There is no god but you. You created me, and I am your slave. I am abiding by your covenant and promise (to follow) as best as I can. I seek refuge in you from the evil I have committed. I acknowledge your favor upon me and I confess my sin. So, forgive me because no one forgives sins except you."



Why Jesus & not Islam?

- God has spoken finally through Jesus (Hebrews 1:1-2)
- He is the only mediator (John 14:6; 1 Tim 2:5)
- Salvation is available through Jesus only (Acts 4:12)
- Through first Adam we lost our eternity, through 2nd
 Adam we are raised again to eternal life (Romans 5:12)

This prayer is mentioned several times in the Muslim books of traditions with some variations. My Muslim friend asked me if Jesus recommended anything like this or if Jesus prayed for forgiveness for the sins of his followers. My Muslim friend knows the Qur'an mentions God telling Muhammad to ask for the forgiveness of his sins and for the sins of his people (Sura 47:19). Many traditions quote

Muhammad as praying: "Please forgive my past and future sins and those sins which I did in secret or in public. It is You whom I worship, none has the right to be worshipped except You." (Sahih Bukhari, Vol. 9, Book 93, Number 590; also Number 534)

Through the prayers recited in Islam, we see the anxiety and burden Muhammad carried: "O Allah! Wash away my sins with the water of snow and hail and cleanse my heart from all the sins as a white garment is cleansed from the filth and let there be a long distance between me and my sins, as You made East and West far from each other" (Sahih Bukhari, Vol. 8, Book 75, Number 379).

Since this prayer so closely resembles the prayer of repentance King David prayed around 1600 years before, it is possible Muhammad heard someone recite King David's cry: "Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so, you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge... Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; Wash me, and I will be whiter than snow" (Psalm 51:1-4, 7).

Following Muhammad's example, Muslims pray for forgiveness. However, there is a big difference between believers in Jesus asking for forgiveness and Muslims asking for forgiveness. According to the Scriptures, Christians present all supplications through the name of Jesus Christ (John 14:13-14). So, when King David cried out to God, he received his answer through Messianic hope—that one day the Messiah would be his intercessor. Thus, he sang boldly, "as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us" (Psalm 103:12).

Now one may ask, "Why Not Jesus?" In Scripture, Jesus was never commanded to pray for forgiveness because he was faultless. We never find him praying for forgiveness of any faults, wrongs and sins. From the time of His birth, He remained innocent and pure. In the Bible and in the Qur'an, several prophets like Abraham, Moses and David asked God for forgiveness, but there is no verse that says Jesus ever asked for forgiveness. He challenged His enemies openly: "Can any of you prove me guilty of sin?" (John 8:46). No one was able to point out any fault in Him. Even at His trial before the Roman governor, Pilate was compelled to admit, "I find no basis for a charge against Him" (John 18:38; 19:4,6).

Now, it is easy to claim that one is sinless, but the proof surely comes from one's life and the testimony of others. Jesus' friends who lived with Him have the greatest testimony of all. Peter quotes a verse from the Old Testament with reference to Jesus: "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in

His mouth." (I Peter 2:22; Isaiah 53:9). The Scripture testifies that although Jesus was "tempted in every way, just as we are - yet was without sin" (Hebrews 4:15).

Judaism, Christianity and Islam all agree that only God can forgive sins. However, due to His special place with God as the Word of God and being divine, Jesus has the same authority to forgive sins, according to the Bible. Jesus himself proves this to be true. (See Luke 7:36-50.) Not only did He have the authority to forgive sin, Jesus also had control over the normal workings of nature as well. People were amazed at His power and exclaimed, "Even the winds and the waves obey Him!" (See Matthew 8:23-27.)

God forgives us of our sins through Jesus Christ. As John the Baptist (known as Yahya in Islam)

testifies, "The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, 'Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!' " (John 1:29). The Scripture also states that when we stumble and fall, we have an Advocate with the Father: Jesus Christ, the Righteous One (1 John 2:1). It bears testimony that forgiveness of sins is available through Jesus Christ (John 3:17-18). Salvation comes only to those who repent of their sins and accept Jesus as their Savior and Lord. The best choice is to embrace Jesus and ask for forgiveness in His name.

Prayer and praise points

We thank God for our brothers and sisters reaching Muslims

with the Gospel and praise Him for salvations! For security reasons we do not publicize much of the news in this regard. If you would like to know more in detail, please contact us and we will be glad to share.

- Pray for the safety of those who have left Islam, but still live in predominantly Muslim communities.
- Pray for us and our Administrative help in the office to be effective and productive.



Please pray with us as we are in the process of launching another new website for our Muslim friends in conjunction with tv/satellite broadcasting (www.lman-u-AmalTV.com). Pray that the Lord will use all the presentations and conversations for His glory and that many will come to know Jesus, the only Savior.

Please pray with us for God's continuous Anointing, God's Protection against the Spiritual warfare that becomes fierce against us, and for God's Provision in convicting the hearts and minds of His people.

- Please pray for Steven & Karen as they will be sharing and equipping the body of Christ in September and October in Maine and New Hampshire.
- Please pray for open doors in churches to equip the body of Christ to reach Muslims with the Gospel.

Jesus to Muslims: Financial Aspects

This ministry relies solely on God and the generosity of our donors: to reach Muslims with the Gospel, to expand our outreach, to hold seminars that equip Christians, as well as to research and publish material for truth seekers.

We thank and praise God for your continuous support. Thank you for being steadfast with us in your calling as we fulfill our calling in reaching Muslims and equipping Christians. Please pray for our need to be met. Funds in total received:

June 2018: \$14,162 July 2018: \$7,684 Monthly Need is \$15,000

In spite that funds were low in July, God has promised to be faithful and we praise Him for His blessings! If you are mailing your gift, please use the envelope provided. For online giving go to: www.JesusToMuslims.org and click on 'Support'.