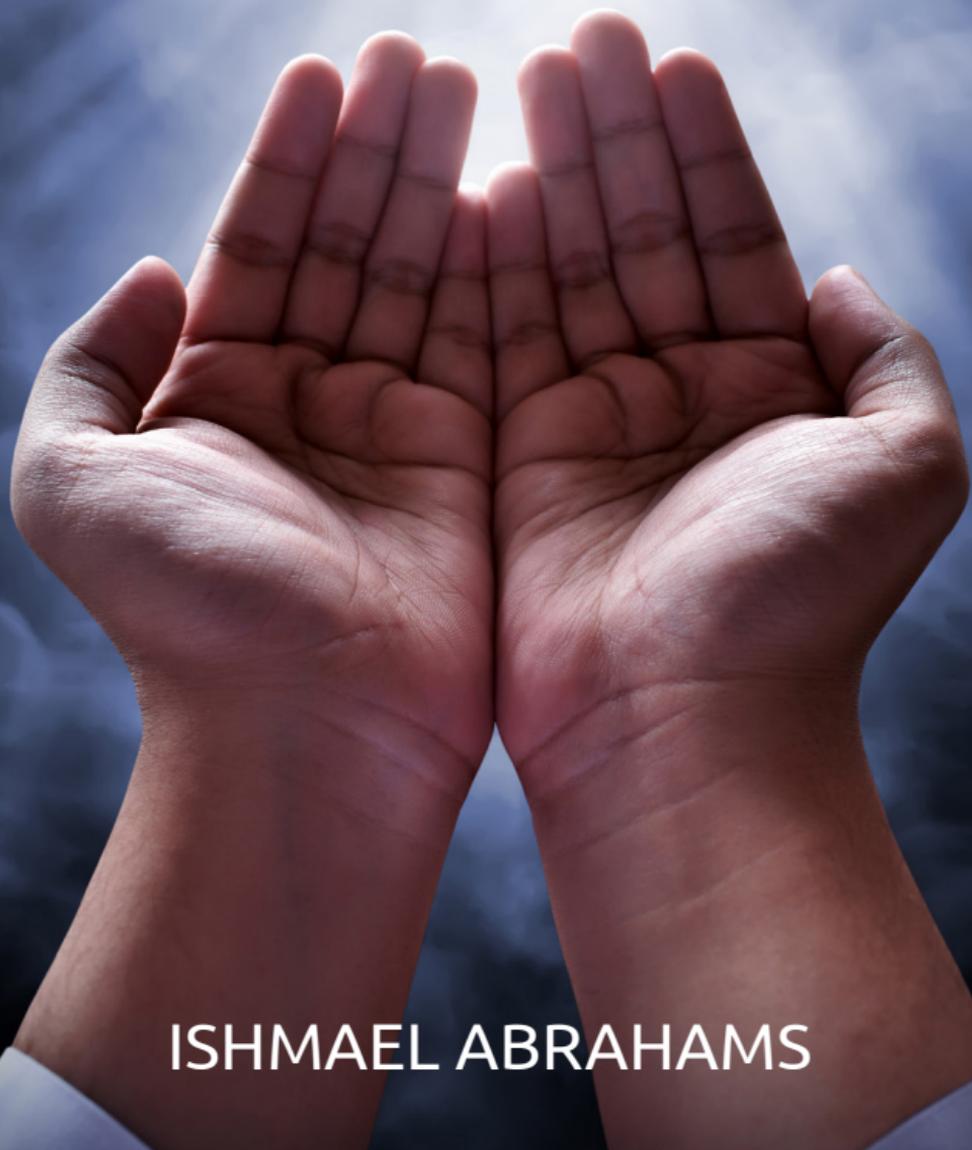


God's Promise to
Muslims



ISHMAEL ABRAHAMS

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by Ishmael Abrahams

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Introduction

The Muslim has a deep respect for the Creator God. A Muslim will openly discuss God's holiness and God's mercy. Such things are highly commendable.

Muslims view God as being all-powerful and eternal. On this, all Muslims agree. God is all-knowing, and God is not bound by time. God is a God of perfect justice, too. And yet, God is gracious and merciful.

The revelation of God

Muhammad affirmed those who came before him like Adam, Noah, Moses, and many others. Muhammad even affirmed that previous prophets (Surah 3:84, 7:157), as well

as the Torah (Law of Moses, Surah 3:84, 7:157), the Psalms (biblical writings, David's works, etc., Surah 3:84), and the Gospel (*Injil*, Surah 3:84, 7:157) were true.

For those who do not understand this, it would be the four divisions in the Bible. The Old Testament in the Bible is broken into three main divisions—the Law of Moses (also called the “Torah” or “Pentateuch”), the prophets, and the psalms (also called “the writings”). Jesus, whom Muhammad agreed was sinless, also affirmed these three divisions in the Old Testament when he said:

Then Jesus said to them, “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.” (Luke 24:44)

“The Law” often included the rest of the Old Testament, too—not just the books of Moses, unless we are speaking strictly of the Torah. For instance, Romans 3:10–19 alludes to Psalms 5:9, 10:7, 36:1, 14:1–3, 51:4, 53:1–3,

59:7–8, 140:3, and Ecclesiastes 7:20 as “the Law.” Even Joshua, who took over after Moses, called his writings the “Book of the Law” (Joshua 24:26). So *the Law* consists of the Old Testament.

The fourth division in the Bible is the Gospel (which means *good news*) and consists of the New Testament portion of the Bible. The New Testament is broken into two parts, the historical accounts of the Gospel (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts) and the explanation of the Gospel, which consisted of the rest of the New Testament epistles (letters).

The Qur’an states that the Bible (literally “the Book” or “Books”/*biblia* in Greek) is true several times and should be followed (Surah 2:40–42, 126, 136, 285; 3:3, 71, 93; 4:47, 136; 5:47–51, 69, 71–72; 6:91; 10:37, 94; 21:7; 29:45–46; 35:31; 46:11). The Qur’an, for instance, claims to make no distinction between God’s revelations¹:

O ye who believe! Believe in God and His Apostle, and the Book which He hath sent down to His Apostle, and the Books which He hath sent down aforetime.

Whoever believeth not on God and His Angels and His Books and His apostles, and in the Last Day, he verily hath erred with far-gone error. (Surah 4:136)

In other words, those who hold the Qur'an in high regard should also hold the Bible in high regard as well, just like Muhammad did. This often surprises many. The Qur'an also states that no one can change the Word of God (Surah 6:34; 10:34).

The problem in creation

Muslims also believe in a six-day creation. Both the Qur'an (Surah 7:54, 10:3, 11:7, and 25:59) and the Bible discuss this (Genesis 1:1–2:3; Exodus 20:11, 31:17). It was originally a paradise—a very good (Genesis 1:31) and perfect (Deuteronomy 32:4) creation. Due to a perfect God, this was expected.

It was a world that had no sin, no death, no suffering. But all this changed when Adam and Eve sinned in Genesis 3. The punishment for sin was death (Genesis 2:17; Romans 6:23, 5:12). Many times, the Qur'an affirms that

there is a sin problem. In the Bible and Qur'an, sacrifices were offered to help cover that sin.

Since God is perfectly honorable and just, God must punish that sin, because that is the virtuous thing to do. The punishment for sin is death, so unless we are sinless, we *all* must be punished for our sin. This is the "bad news."

Good works . . . to outweigh the bad?

How does good works play a role? Good works are good . . . no one questions that.

But do good works nullify the sin that has been committed? For example, if someone fed six Muslims and then murdered six Muslims, does the judge presiding say, "well that makes it even"? Not at all.

The fact that someone did a good act six times did not make up for the six murders. A just judge would say that the good works are irrelevant to the case at hand. What if someone fed ninety-nine Muslims and killed one Muslim? The judge would still say feeding the ninety-nine is irrelevant to the murder at hand. The

issue isn't the good works, but the sin that needs to be dealt with.

God is a perfect judge. God is also perfectly good and the standard of good. When God created man, we were expected to do good works. Even after Adam and Eve's sin, we are still expected to do good works—giving alms to the poor, caring for the sick and injured. Jesus even said we should pray for our enemies and do good to them. This surprises many, too.

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.” (Matthew 5:43–44)

But a good God requires us to do good all the time. Good is expected, but doing good works doesn't solve the *sin* problem.

The full wrath of God upon sin

Since God is an all-powerful God, even one sin against Him would deserve the full wrath