

Chapter One: The Attitude to Other Religions and Their Followers

The material usually given to the Palestinian Muslim student about Judaism and Christianity is meager. In earlier textbooks published by the PA there was almost nothing available for CMIP to make a specific chapter on the matter. This time there is a little more material in the books, which justifies this short chapter. There are three characteristics found in the PA books regarding the attitude to other religions and their followers: A. There is hardly any information given to the student about them. B. The two other monotheistic religions are mentioned favorably in general. C. None of the two other religions is really valid compared to Islam.

A. Little Information is given to the Student about Other religions

Except for calling Christianity and Judaism “Heavenly religions”, as compared to “man-made religions” such as Buddhism and Hinduism, and besides mentioning the holy books of each, the two other monotheistic religions are dealt with very briefly, with no adequate information given to the student about them.

The continent [Asia] is considered to be the cradle of the three Heavenly religions. Also, there are many non-Heavenly religious faiths there, such as Buddhism in Japan, Confucianism in China and Hinduism in India.

Geography of the World's Continents, Grade 10 (2004) p. 25

The Heavenly books, some of which are the Torah, the Gospel and the Qur'an...

History of the Ancient Civilizations, Grade 5 (2004) p. 8

The following text has much more information about the Old Testament, but it has been taken from a Christian Education textbook, used by Christian students only.

The Old Testament contains a collection of books (46 books) which are divided into four parts:

The Torah, and their names indicate their contents: The book of Genesis which relates the creation of the world, the book of Exodus which relates the Children of Israel's exodus from Egypt, the book of Leviticus in which the legislation of worship is found, the book of Numbers in which statistics of the twelve tribes are found, and the book of Deuteronomy which is a repetition of the law.

The historical books which is a collection of books that tells the history of redemption from the Hebrews' entrance into the land of Canaan

until the coming of Lord Christ. Their most important ones are Joshua, Judges, First and Second Samuel, First and Second Kings, and others.

The books of wisdom which is a collection of books characterized by wisdom pertaining to [man's] life. Their most important ones [are]: the book of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes... Among the books of wisdom [there is] the book of Psalms which is a collection of beautiful prayers we use a lot in Christian liturgy.

The prophetic books which tell us what God has said through the prophets so that they would preach to the people, bring them back to the right path and guide them to the way of piety and understanding of the events that take place. The Major Prophets are Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, [and] Daniel, and the Minor [ones] are twelve [in number] of whom the most important are Hosea, Joel, Amos, Jonas...

Christian Education, Grade 10 (2004) p. 38

B. The Monotheistic Religions' Close Relation to Islam

The Heavenly books, some of which are the Torah, the Gospel and the Qur'an...

History of the Ancient Civilizations, Grade 5 (2004) p. 8

Christians, Muslims and Jews [all] revere Abraham and consider him "Father of the Believers".

Christian Education, Grade 10 (2004) p. 15

Research and Activity:

- Let us do research on Abraham's importance in Christianity, Islam and Judaism, relying on the appropriate sources.

Christian Education, Grade 10 (2004) p. 16

C. All Other Religions and Their Followers Are Inferior to Islam and Its Followers

God has described the nation of Islam as the best nation brought forth to mankind...

Islamic Education, Grade 10, Part 2 (2004) p. 102

Contrary to the message given in a Christian Education textbook that Christians, Muslims and Jews revere Patriarch Abraham, according to an Islamic Education textbook Christians and Jews are not really related to him (unlike the Muslims).

The Holy Qur'an has rejected the claim by both the Quraysh [pagan tribe of Mecca] and the People of the Book [that is, Christians and Jews] that they

belonged to the nation of Abraham. I will explain verse No. 67 of Surat Al-Baqarah which rejects their claim.

Islamic Education, Grade 10, Part 2 (2004) p. 13

The Muslim traditional claim that the Qur'an alone is guaranteed by God against omission and distortion is repeated here.

The Holy Qur'an is God's Book which He revealed to His Messenger Muhammad... God has distinguished it from other Heavenly books, and some of these distinguishing characteristics are [as follows]:

1. It contains regulations and laws that organize all [aspects] of the individual's life...
3. It is safeguarded against distortion and loss...
4. It is devoid of errors. There is no controversy or contradiction between its regulations and laws...

Islamic Education, Grade 5, Part 1 (2004) pp. 3-4

2. I will mention three characteristics of the Qur'an that distinguish it from other Heavenly books.

Islamic Education, Grade 5, Part 1 (2004) p. 5

I will put a (V) sign next to the correct phrase and an (X) sign next to the incorrect phrase in the following [sentences]:

- God has undertaken to safeguard all Heavenly books against distortion and loss.

Islamic Education, Grade 5, Part 2 (2004) p. 26

Accordingly, texts of other Heavenly books are refuted.

The [Qur'anic] Surah of Maryam [Mary]... explains the miracle of the creation of Jesus, may peace be on him, without a father... and explains that he... is the servant of God who bestowed upon him the grace of being [His] messenger, as He has done with other prophets beside him, which contradicts those who have made him god.

Islamic Education, Grade 10, Part 2 (2004) p. 4

The prevailing view regarding woman before Islam was based on the principle that she was the cause of sin, curse and expulsion from God's mercy. Woman was evil and a means of seduction... The verses of the Holy Qur'an indicate that eating from the tree [in Eden] was done by both Adam and his wife. The[se] verses do not lay the responsibility for that on the woman [alone].

Islamic Education, Grade 10, Part 2 (2004) p. 93

Islam is superior to all other religions in moral terms as well.

The reason why morals in Islam are steady is that they emanate from the Islamic faith. They are God's commands and prohibitions... They differ in that from morals among other peoples, because among them they [morals] are characterized by relativity, unsteadiness and subordination to the criterion of interest and benefit. Such people are not bound by them unless they bring them certain gains.

Islamic Education, Grade 10, Part 1 (2004) p. 81