

A Comparative Analysis of the Religion of Islam

Comparing Islam with Biblical Christianity

© Arthur J. Smith, 2016

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	4
The Origin of Islam.....	7
Creedal Statement of Islam.....	9
Method of Conversion to Islam.....	10
The Qur'an.....	11
Translations of the Qur'an.....	13
The Hadith.....	14
The Bible.....	14
The Gospel of Barnabas.....	17
The Muslim Prophets.....	17
Muhammad.....	18
Isa (Jesus).....	21
The Islamic Caliphate.....	25
Sects of Islam.....	26
The Sunni.....	27
The Shi'ite.....	28
Islamic Movements and Outgrowths.....	29
The Divine Being.....	32
Ninety-Nine Names of Allah.....	33
Islamic Monotheism.....	34
Jesus' Deity Denied.....	35
The Nonentity of the Holy Spirit.....	36
Creation.....	36
The Universe.....	37
The Earth.....	37
Angels.....	38
Jinn and Satan.....	38
Mankind.....	39
The Faulty Nature of Mankind.....	40
Relationship between Allah and Mankind.....	40
Sin.....	41
Salvation.....	42

Islamic Law and Practice.....	43
Sharia.....	43
Women under Sharia.....	46
Religious Practices (Deen).....	47
Unattainable Assurance.....	50
Jihad.....	50
The Violent History of Jihad.....	52
Muslim View of the Afterlife.....	53
The Grave.....	53
Interim State of the Dead.....	54
Hell.....	54
Heaven.....	55
Islamic Eschatology.....	56
Universal Resurrection.....	59
Final Judgment.....	60
Islamic Religious Education.....	61
Contemporary Islamic Diversity.....	61
Summary and Conclusions.....	64
Appendix.....	71
Bible Book Name Abbreviations.....	72
The Islamic Campaign for World Dominance.....	73
Glossary of Islamic and Related Terms.....	83
Alphabetical Index.....	89

Introduction

There are currently well over one and one half billion adherents of Islam worldwide. These devout followers of Muhammad are known as Muslims, and their numbers are growing rapidly, so much so that Islam as a competing faith threatening to displace Christianity as the dominant faith on earth cannot be dismissed. Presently, about one in every three of the earth's estimated total population of seven billion are professing Christians, whereas the Muslim demographic is already around one in five.¹ To understand and properly evaluate this rapid growth of Islam, we need to learn as much as possible about its origin and history, as well as its religious doctrines and practices. In addition, we need to understand how Islamic doctrines deviate from sound biblical teaching. The goal of this booklet is to provide a starting point for Christians to acquire that necessary information.

Judaism², Islam, and Christianity are commonly recognized as three Abrahamic religions each of which purports to rest upon a covenant blessing that God promised Abraham would be extended throughout his future generations. The Jew finds biblical evidence of that heritage through Isaac (cf. Ge.17:19), the Muslim stakes a claim

1 According to a 2010 Pew Research Center study, about half of professing Christians world-wide are Roman Catholic, while about twelve percent are classified as Orthodox Christians. Around thirty seven percent can be broadly classified as Protestants – of which only around thirty-five percent of those can be categorized as evangelicals. The remaining one percent or so are either not affiliated with churches, or are involved with various cults such as Mormonism or Jehovah's Witness. By the year 2050, the earth's population is expected to reach somewhere around nine billion and the Muslim population is projected to reach about 2.7 billion – equaling or exceeding today's Christian population, which is currently in a state of decline worldwide.

2 The religion of Judaism is a separate issue and will not be considered in this comparison. We briefly discussed the present-day religion of Judaism in a February 2016 newsletter, which is currently available on the newsletter archive page of www.CRChristianity.org.

to it through Ishmael (cf. Ge.17:20), and the Christian recognizes it as a spiritual heritage based upon an Abrahamic-like faith and unshakable trust in God's Word (cf. Ro. 4:1-3; 13-16).

Secularists, pseudo-believers, and many ill-informed traditional Christians³ assume that Islam is a religion on an equal standing with Christianity inasmuch as Muslims hold to many beliefs that seem quite similar to those of Christianity. These include: 1) belief in one God who is the Sovereign Creator and ruler of all things and worthy of receiving mankind's worship; 2) belief in the veracity of prophecy and in the God-sent prophets of old; 3) the belief that Jesus was a great prophet sent to earth by God, and that He was virgin-born to a woman named Mary; 4) belief in angels as created spirit beings; 5) belief in Satan as the great deceiver; 6) belief in the extreme importance of prayer; 7) belief in a future second-coming of Jesus to earth; 8) belief in the resurrection of the dead; 9) belief in a coming day of final judgment; 10) belief in the existence of Heaven and Hell.

Moreover, Islam shares some significant moral standards with Christianity including, 1) the prohibition of blasphemy (cf. Ex.20:7); 2) the prohibition of theft (cf. Ex.20.15); 3) the prohibition of adultery (cf. Ex. 20:14) and fornication (cf. 1Th.4:3); 4) the importance of caring for the poor and unfortunate (cf. 1Jn. 3:17,18). In addition, Islam prohibits the drinking of alcoholic beverages and forbids gambling, both of which many devout Christians would consider to be commendable virtues.

On the surface, these similarities would seem to suggest a reasonably close correlation of Islamic and Christian doctrines and practice. However, when we closely compare the core orthodox beliefs of Islam with those of biblical Christianity, we are not so much struck by their similarities as we are by their stark contrasts

3 Traditional Christians as we use the term throughout this booklet describes professing Christians who may hold to all the rituals and traditions of Christianity but are very shallow or totally ignorant regarding sound biblical theology and doctrine.

and extreme contradictions. While Christianity is centered upon the person of Jesus Christ, Islam is centered upon the teachings of their prophet Muhammad. Whereas Christianity is focused on the grace of God to redeem a fallen human race, Islam denies mankind's disastrous fall and its desperate need for redemption. Islam generally characterizes sin as unfortunate mistakes and misdeeds committed as a consequence of man's imperfect creation, whereas a Christian recognizes all human sin – from the time of Adam's initial rebellious act on – as a terrible offense against a holy God that not only demands man's physical death but calls for his alienation from God and eternal torment in Hell.

Although Muslims recognize Jesus as a great prophet born of the virgin Mary through miraculous means, they straight-out deny his deity in accord with Islam's extremely strict monotheistic view of the Divine Being. While they see Jesus as being God-sent, they misconstrue his primary purpose for coming to earth as being narrowly focused upon the Jewish nation in an effort to conform their Old-Covenant law to Islamic law and doctrine. The Christian Bible clearly states that Jesus' primary purpose for coming to earth was to die as a propitiation for mankind's sin (cf. 1Jn.2:2).⁴

In the brief analysis that follows, we shall only be able to provide a preliminary overview of major orthodox Islamic beliefs and practices; this analysis is not intended to be a complete restatement of the Islamic faith. Moreover, there is so much variation of Islamic thought and interpretation that a detailed consensus of orthodox Islamic doctrine and tradition that is directly applicable to every professing Muslim is not possible.⁵

This appraisal of the Islamic belief system is written from a committed biblical Christian perspective;⁶ nevertheless, we trust that

4 Jesus came to fulfill the requirements of Old Covenant Law through his perfect life and sacrificial death, not to alter it in any way (cf. Mt.5:17,18).

5 This variation in thought will become apparent when we study the **Sects of Islam** on page 26 and **Contemporary Islamic Diversity** on page 61.

6 Unfortunately, it must be said that not all professing Christians adhere to a

it is reasonably accurate in restating orthodox Islamic doctrines and traditions. We shall state significant orthodox Islamic doctrines, traditions, and practices in the main text of this work and respond with explanatory comments and corresponding biblical Christian teaching within an expanded series of footnotes.⁷ When specific verses of the Qur'an (cf. **The Qur'an**, page 11) are referred to, we shall use the letter "S" followed by the *sura* (i.e., chapter) number, a colon, and then the *ayat* (i.e., verse) number/s (e.g., S5:34). As to Bible verse references, we shall continue to utilize our standard notation.⁸ We shall reference Scripture taken from the *Authorized King James Version* of the Bible supplemented by an interpretation of its doctrinal content that is found throughout *Comprehensively Reformed Christianity (CRC)*, Books I, II, and III – as well as our many newsletters.⁹

The Origin of Islam

Islam was founded by a man named Muhammad.¹⁰ He was born in Mecca in AD 570, into a prominent Hashim family, but he was reared

literal interpretation of Holy Scripture. The views of traditional Christians, which include Roman Catholics, many "high-church" Protestants, and religious liberals may vary considerably from the biblical positions presented in this analysis – particularly as pertaining to biblical soteriology, and eschatology. When necessary, we shall point out these deviations.

- 7 Keep in mind that a complete restatement of the biblical Christian faith cannot be condensed to fit within these footnotes any more than the brief main text is intended to represent a complete restatement of orthodox Islamic doctrine.
- 8 A list of standard Bible Book Abbreviations is printed in the Appendix of this Booklet along with an explanation of chapter and verse notations.
- 9 These three books as well as the series of monthly newsletters are currently available free of charge as down-loadable unabridged pdf texts on www.CRChristianity.org. Optionally, printed copies of our books are available at cost directly from the commercial website of our on-line printer, which is also accessible from our website.
- 10 Alternate spellings of Muhammad's name may be found in various texts (e.g., Mohammed, Mohammad, Mahomet, Mustafa, and Mahound).

by his uncle upon the death of both his parents and grandparents. On a trip to Syria, he became greatly disturbed by the idolatry and insouciant religious attitudes of Christians that he observed there. Not only was statuary of Jesus, Mary, and various other saints being worshiped as deity by the corrupt Roman church, their worship of God was viewed by Muhammad as far too casual and undisciplined.

What Muhammad observed as Christianity in his day was a highly-distorted non-biblical parody of the true faith.¹¹ He had no direct access to the Christian Bible inasmuch as it was not yet available in the Arabic language. He therefore had no clear concept of the true Gospel message, but was constrained to rely upon select Bible texts filtered down from the Roman Church hierarchy along with faulty second-hand information obtained from biographies of martyred saints as well as many fantastic stories about Jesus being circulated from the *Apocrypha*.¹²

In response to this parody of Christianity, Muhammad set himself up in Mecca as an opposition prophet in AD 610. The Meccans strongly resisted his teaching at the outset because it opposed their belief in various idols, gods, and goddesses. Moreover, Mecca was a city of pilgrimages for the worship of this pagan host, such that their opposition was as much financial as it was religious.

When persecution in Mecca became too intense, Muhammad moved his headquarters along with a small band of followers to

11 We discuss the severe fourth century corruption of the church in *CRC Book III*, pages 136-143. It had come about as a consequence of the Roman political coup d'etat of the church that took place under the rule of the Emperor Constantine (the great) and the mass infiltration of the church with rank paganism, which followed during the rule of the Emperor Theodosius.

12 The *Apocrypha* is a collection of books and alleged fragments of Old Testament books of inferior quality that appeared within the four-hundred years separating the Old and the New Testament Scriptures. They were never part of the Hebrew Old Testament, nor were they found listed in the original canon of Scripture recognized by the Church in AD 398 (cf. *CRC Book I*, page 41).

Medina, about two-hundred miles to the north, in AD 622.¹³ There, his teaching eventually flourished – although Meccans still attempted to quash his growing Influence. Although Jews of that day initially related to his strict monotheism (cf. **Islamic Monotheism** page 34) over Christian Trinitarianism, Muhammad was eventually rejected by both Christians and Jews as his wider views became more apparent.¹⁴ In response to this total rejection, the Islamic movement ultimately became a militant campaign to destroy Judaism, as well as Christianity at its roots, which resulted in considerable bloodshed as Muhammad and his followers destroyed idols and established his own religious beliefs by means of the sword (cf. **The Violent History of Jihad** page 52).

In June of AD 632, Muhammad died of natural causes at the age of 63. The religion he left behind is today exclusively referred to as Islam, and its adherents are referred to as Muslims (i.e., those fully submitted to Allah).

Creedal Statement of Islam

“Islam” is derived from an Arabic root word, *salema*, meaning peace, purity, submission, and obedience. Peace in the Islamic sense comes about only through purification gained by total submission and obedience to Allah.¹⁵ In implementation, that submission and obedience is defined within the rigid framework of the Islamic religion

13 Muhammad's ministry is formally divided into Meccan and Medina periods. The AD 622 date of this “flight” (*Hijrah*) is commonly used by Muslims to mark time much as Christians use the Latin term *Anno Domini* (“in the year of the [our] Lord” abbreviated AD or A.D.) to mark the years following the birth of Jesus Christ.

14 Many historians view Islam as an offshoot of Judaism because of their common monotheistic view of the Divine Being and the rejection of Jesus' deity. However, the Jew refused to accept any revelation or prophecy beyond the completion of the Old-Covenant text (*Torah*) as being valid – whether it came from the texts of the New Testament or from Muhammad and the Qur'an.

15 Many of today's progressive-minded Muslims stress peace as a complete definition of Islam, while hiding Islam's broader and more stringent definition, in order to mollify non-Muslims about their peaceful intentions.

by a series of repetitive religious practices (cf. page 47), the first of which is a mandatory recitation of the Islamic creed.

The entire Islamic belief system is summed up in one short creedal statement¹⁶ in Arabic, the *Shahadah*, which when translated to English reads, “There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is Allah's Apostle.”¹⁷ The entire religious system of Islam can therefore be defined as submission to this brief statement of belief, which stresses the indivisible uniqueness of Allah subsisting as the one solitary Divine Being (cf. **Islamic Monotheism** page 34) and Muhammad whom Allah sent as his final and most exalted prophet, exercising total authority over all his previous prophets.¹⁸

Method of Conversion to Islam

The recitation of the seven words of the *Shahadah* in Arabic are all that is required for a person to become a Muslim. This can be a voluntary recitation, or it can be extracted by the threat of force – both are considered valid conversions.¹⁹ In becoming a Muslim, a person

16 The Islamic Creed is very short when compared to most creedal statements of Christianity. The earliest and shortest Christian creed is found in First Corinthians chapter 15 verses 3 and 4 followed later by the *Apostles Creed* containing one long sentence composed of multiple phrases, while one of the most elaborate Protestant creeds is the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, which is heavily documented by voluminous Bible references.

17 Often the word “Prophet” is used when reciting this creed instead of “Apostle.” However Apostle implies a prophet of the first order who carried forth unique revelation as opposed to a prophet that only taught existing doctrine (cf. **The Muslim Prophets** page 17).

18 This second clause essentially grants Muhammad unlimited authority equaling that of the Divine Being on earth as Allah's sole representative. This unquestionable authority has led to the near deification of Muhammad by some Muslims (cf. **Muhammad** page 18).

19 Biblically, any confession of Christian faith that is extracted by the threat of force or through any other means of coercion is considered meaningless. Christian conversion is brought about by an enlightened change of heart and mind in the individual by the grace of God, not by blind submission to a

immediately and thereafter becomes subject to Islamic law (cf. **Sharia** page 43) and its required religious practices (cf. page 47). Because Islam is believed to be the only valid religion, submission must be unconditionally rendered by everyone on earth. Failure to comply identifies that person as an avowed enemy of Islam, and thus of Allah, and it automatically forfeits any hope of temporal or eternal peace.

The Qur'an

The Islamic religion rests upon two primary texts: the Qur'an and the Hadith. The primary source of religious authority comes from the Qur'an, which is written in Arabic. The Arabic word *Qur'an* means "recitation." The Qur'an is alleged to have been recited to Muhammad through the angel *Jibril*²⁰ from an original document that remains in heaven. For that reason, it is considered sacred text. It is often put forth by Muslims that the Qur'an is a great miracle inasmuch as Muhammad was illiterate.²¹ He could not read or write, such that the text was recited aloud by him to various visitors who often wrote his words down on scraps of paper, leather, and any other materials available – including rocks. After his death, it became necessary to locate and collect all of these scattered texts and manuscripts to form one cohesive document for use by future

statement of belief. Sadly, it must be said that the corrupt Roman Catholic Church, which sought to make Roman Churchianity compulsory world-wide, often used both coercion and force to extract meaningless confessions of faith through mindless recitations of the Lord's Prayer and the Hail Mary. (cf. *CRC* Book III, Chapter 17.11, page 211).

20 *Jibril* is an Arabic variant of "Gabriel" as it is found in the Bible.

21 Muhammad's illiteracy has often been called into question by critics. Although his illiteracy appears to be stated in the Qur'an, the Arabic word used there could be interpreted as one who is sent among gentiles or the unlearned. There was one particular incident in which Muhammad took a pen and crossed out words referring to him as an "apostle of God," and wrote instead "son of Abdullah." Although Muhammad may not have received any formal education, he must have nonetheless been very intelligent, such that it is entirely possible that he was self-taught to read and write to a certain extent.

generations of Islamic believers.²² Several composite texts were originally assembled until one finally emerged as a final version and all the others were destroyed.²³ This version has remained unchanged since the seventh century, and it is this text that Muslims claim to be uniformly consistent and without error.²⁴ Muslims point to the rapid growth of Islam and the changed lives of individuals who embrace it as proof of the Qur'an's divine origin.²⁵

-
- 22 Objectively, this seems like a hazardous means to produce a sacred writing on earth that must be an exact copy of one that resides in heaven. If Muhammad had been fully literate, he could have written down the text soon after the angel *Jibril* gave it to him. Failing that ability, he could have dictated it to a personal scribe soon after he received it such that the Qur'an would have been fully completed and verified in his lifetime for future generations. Instead, many isolated fragments of the text were scattered to the wind over time in no particular order. It is impossible to know if all the fragments were located inasmuch as many of these extemporaneous "scribes" had died prior to Muhammad's death. Therefore, what was assembled as the final text of the Qur'an may be incomplete or it could vary greatly from any text of a document alleged to remain in heaven. There is no way its veracity could be satisfactorily verified from a human point of view, but the Muslim accepts its authenticity by faith and even points to its unusual construction as further evidence of the miraculous nature of the Qur'an.
- 23 It is this final document that has been carefully preserved, not a verifiable document allegedly dictated to Muhammad by *Jibril*. Any unwritten text stored in the mind of Muhammad inevitably perished with him in his death.
- 24 The fact is that many inconsistencies can be found in the Qur'an. For instance, in one place it states that the earth was created in six days and in another it was eight days. Some Muslims suggest that these inconsistencies are the result of progressive revelation in which an earlier revelation has been improved upon or needed to be redacted for clarity. However, corrected verses are often located in the text very near their original. The Qur'an also contains some sentences that are incomplete and nearly incomprehensible without outside explanation; grammatical errors such as improper pronouns and verb tenses are also found. Such inconsistencies are not uncommon in human documents, but they are not to be expected in a sacred document existing in heaven.
- 25 In the beginning of the movement, Muhammad had very few followers and many detractors. It was only after he took up the sword that converts began to

The Qur'an is presented as if Allah is speaking – mostly in the first person plural (e.g., “We”).²⁶ It is divided into 114 chapters of equal length known as *suras* (or *surahs*). Eighty-six of these *suras* are related to Muhammad during the Meccan period and twenty-eight during the Medina period, but these are not grouped together as such. *Suras* are not chronologically or logically ordered; the longer are placed first, and the shorter are placed last. They are preceded by an introductory *sura* (*Sura* 1), which is titled *The Opening*. Each *sura* thereafter is given a name that corresponds to some word or phrase contained within its text. Each *sura* is divided into numbered verses (*ayat*) – much like what we find in modern-day Bibles. *Suras* vary in the number of verses they contain, with *Sura* 2, entitled *The Cow*, having the most at 286.

Translations of the Qur'an

The Qur'an has been translated into most African, Asian, and European languages. These include among many others: Persian, Latin, Spanish, English²⁷, Turkish, Japanese, and Chinese. Translations were necessary in order to expand Islam from a regional Arabic religion into a worldwide religion as it is today. However, translations remain problematic for the orthodox Muslim theologically. Inasmuch as the Qur'an was alleged to have been dictated in Arabic to Mohammad by the angel *Jibril*, only Arabic text is deemed suitable for serious reading, studying, and recitation.²⁸

rapidly increase. How many of these converts were genuine believers as opposed to those who only submitted in order to escape death cannot be determined.

26 Muslims see this plurality of speech as a matter of style spoken by a sovereign being (i.e., use of the “royal we”), not a plurality within Allah Himself who is strictly viewed as a monadic being (cf. **Islamic Monotheism** page 34).

27 The anglicized title for the English translation of the Qur'an is “Koran.”

28 Translations often result in subtle changes in meaning due to necessary interpretations to conform specific words in the original language to words

The Hadith

The second most revered writing of Islam is the Hadith (referred to as the *Sunna* by Sunni Muslims – cf. page 27). While this book is not considered to be sacred text, it is nevertheless foundational to Islamic practice. By definition, “*hadith*” means “a story.” This “story” is recorded as a series of narratives that Muhammad spoke aloud to others during his lifetime. They purportedly describe all that he approved or disapproved of, his various personal habits, and, on occasion, something that was said in his presence that he thought was significant.

The Muslim sees Muhammad's lifestyle as one that must be closely imitated by his followers. The most minute details of Muhammad's activities are recorded in the Hadith, from intimate matters of personal hygiene to putting on the right shoe first when dressing. If Muhammad ate something, it is considered to be approved; if he enjoyed something it is mandated; if he disliked or never ate something, the Muslim must refrain from eating it. (cf. S2:219).

The Hadith not only constitutes the sayings of Muhammad regarding Muslim lifestyle and practice, but also provides clarification of certain passages contained in the Qur'an. All of these activities of Muhammad were ultimately codified such that the Hadith became the basis for Islamic law (cf. *Sharia* page 43). The Hadith has also been translated into forty-seven or more major languages with portions of it translated into as many as 114 languages to date.

The Bible

The full text of the Christian Bible existed at the time the Qur'an was written, but it was not available to the laity, nor was it translated

and phrases in another language. For that reason, translations of the Qur'an out of the Arabic are considered by devout Muslims to be mere commentaries (*tafsir*) explaining the content of the Qur'an, not the Qur'an itself.

into the Arabic language until many centuries later. By that time, the Qur'an had become well established as the sacred book of Islam. The Bible was and is viewed with great suspicion because its teaching conflicts in so many ways with established Islamic faith. To the Muslim, the Christian Bible appeared on the scene as a religious innovation specifically designed to refute Islamic doctrine.

Although the Old Testament Pentateuch or *Torah* is occasionally referred to in Islamic literature, Islam opposes biblical authority at almost every turn in deference to their own religious texts.²⁹ Nevertheless, selected texts found in the Bible are commonly referred to in Islamic teaching.³⁰ The Muslim is taught that the Christian Bible, especially the New Testament, has been severely altered from an original text to the extent that it is now totally unreliable. It is alleged that the early church fathers selected the four texts now known as Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John out of thousands of other possible manuscripts available to them to conform the Bible to their own prejudices and nefarious purposes.³¹

29 The Pentateuch written by Moses dates back to somewhere between 1500 to 1200 BC. All of the books of the New Testament date back to the first century AD, whereas the Qur'an only dates back to the seventh century. In that regard, the information contained in the Bible has preeminence over the Qur'an as a result of its antiquity. If we discount the Muslim's claim for the miraculous origin of the Qur'an, we could reasonably assume that innovative Islamic doctrine came about from an intentional distortion of accounts and doctrines recorded in the Bible in a deliberate attempt to discredit biblical Christianity.

30 The selective acceptance of Bible text allows the Muslim to utilize as much of Scripture as they care to in validation of their own religious position, and leave out any other Scripture that conflicts with it. This results in a highly distorted view of nearly every major doctrine of the Christian faith beginning with creation and extending to soteriology and eschatology.

31 It is in the four Gospel accounts that the deity of Jesus is unquestionably revealed. For that reason alone, the Muslim must categorically reject them. There is no evidence that a great multiplicity of "more accurate" accounts of the life and ministry of Jesus ever existed. While it is true that as many as twenty other accounts of Jesus' life do exist, their much later authorship compared to the first-century dates of the four Gospels, which were all written within a single generation of Jesus' crucifixion, renders them unreliable as to

This notion of biblical corruption is further bolstered by the fact that the *Authorized King James Version* of the Bible has been followed by many other English versions that today contain wide variations in their texts.³² These include variations in precise wording as well as some complete omissions such as 1Jn. 5:7 (cf. *CRC Book I*, page 377) and many others, including a series of verses at the end of the book of Mark.³³

the recording of actual events that took place in the early first century. The Muslim, who asserts that Jesus' correct name is Isa (cf. Page 21), believes that the deification of Jesus was a fabrication devised by early church leaders. In *CRC Book I* pages 33-35, we discuss the canonization of Old Testament texts that took place in AD 90 and the diligent care undertaken in the canonization of New Testament Books in AD 398. Although the Roman church had become corrupted with pagan practices by this time, there is no evidence that the scholarly canonization process of Scripture was adversely affected as the Muslim alleges.

- 32 The Authorized King James Bible is now more than 400 years old, and it is still readily available and regularly used or consistently referred to by many Bible Christians. There is no rational evidence supporting an intentional widespread corruption of newer English versions of the Protestant Bible, as we discussed in the first two chapters of *CRC Book I* wherein we address the origin and integrity of the Bible. Continuing efforts are underway to render newer translations that are increasingly closer to the original autographs through scholarly research and valid textual criticism – and at times some questionable or redundant verses are dropped or set aside in square brackets. Nevertheless, it can be said with great confidence that no major doctrine of Scripture has ever been affected by this process. Admittedly, there are a few offbeat “Bibles” intentionally corrupted and printed for liberal churches, religious cults, feminists, and even homosexuals. None of these would ever be accepted as a legitimate study Bible by Bible-believing Christians who are well versed in the true faith. There are also a number of paraphrases around that often purport to be a Bible – but these are easily recognized as commentaries on the Bible, not actual translations.
- 33 The verse of 1Jn. 5:7 is not found in better ancient manuscripts and is thought to have been a marginal note that found its way into the text through repeated copying. While there is nothing inherently wrong with this verse, to include it would provide six witnesses, not three. Moreover the three witnesses in heaven would not constitute an effective witness for those on earth. As to the

The Gospel of Barnabas

One of the texts that some Muslims believe was thrown out by the early church fathers is known as the *Gospel of Barnabas*,³⁴ wherein Barnabas is claimed to have been one of the twelve apostles.³⁵ It is claimed that Jesus' life and mission are more accurately depicted in this "Gospel" than in any of the four Gospels contained in the Bible, and it is often considered required reading to explain Christianity to devout Muslims. It directly contradicts the New-Testament doctrines of Christianity. It further states that Jesus did not die, and that Judas Iscariot was substituted for Him on the cross – which supports the Muslim view that Jesus was not crucified (cf. *Isa* page 21). This is probably the reason for the book's great popularity among Muslims. However, this book also states that Jesus claimed that he was not the Messiah, which is in direct conflict with the Qur'an that openly credits Jesus (*Isa*) with that title (cf. *S5:19,75*).³⁶

The Muslim Prophets

The Arabic word for "prophet" signifies a man who is sent

highly questionable series of verses at the end of the book of Mark, we refer the reader to *CRC Book II*, page 344 where they are discussed at some length.

- 34 This book should not be confused with the non-canonical *Epistle of Barnabas*, believed to have been written between AD 70 and 131, which contains a polemic against Judaizing Christians, and further advocates the abolition of the Old Testament sacrificial system in favor of the "new law" established by Jesus Christ.
- 35 In the New Testament texts, we find no apostle recorded with the name of Barnabas (cf. Mt.10:2-4; Mk3:14-19; Lu.6:13-16; Ac. 1:13). A man named Barnabas is later mentioned as a friend and co-worker of Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles (cf. 1Co. 9:1,2; Ac.9:27), but this Barnabas is never referred to by the title "apostle." Neither Paul nor Barnabas were one of the twelve.
- 36 All internal and external evidence suggests that the *Epistle of Barnabas* was written somewhere around the fifteenth century, and as such it can not be trusted to be a valid Gospel, but rather a later diatribe in opposition to Christianity. Even many Muslim scholars agree that this book is of relatively recent vintage, yet its popularity remains in the Muslim world.

carrying information and news from Allah. This general definition is divided into two classifications: one who is sent with sacred text and one who is sent but must adhere to sacred text previously sent. The Muslim also honors the prophets of Allah as role models for men to follow. While their words are binding, they are not in any way considered to be deity. They are, however, thought to be sinless or at least divinely protected (*isma*) from committing any sin. There have supposedly been more than one hundred thousand Islamic prophets. Many of these prophets are found in the Bible, beginning with Adam and including Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Elijah, and still others which include Jesus.³⁷ Muhammad, whose name is not found in any biblical text, is listed as the final prophet. All of the biblical prophets are believed to have been early Muslims expounding the very same Islamic message from Allah that Muhammad delivered through the Qur'an.

Muhammad

The most important prophet that Muslims universally recognize is Muhammad, and he is considered to be of the first classification of prophets who was sent forth to deliver sacred text – the Qur'an. Muhammad's prophecy is credited with being the last and final revelation from Allah. Abraham's first son, Ishmael, is believed to be the child of Allah's promise for future generations,³⁸ and Muslims believe that Muhammad is a direct descendent of Abraham through Ishmael. Muslim legend records that Muhammad's birth was attended by a host of angels, whereupon the baby Muhammad immediately fell on his face and proclaimed "Allah is Great."

In his youth, Muhammad earned his own living by serving as a shepherd and a trader of goods. He married a rich older widow, Khadija, when he was twenty five. Four daughters were born to him

37 Although this Muslim prophet is often referred to as Jesus in English texts, the proper Muslim name for this prophet is *Isa* (cf. **Isa** page 21).

38 The Bible clearly teaches that God's promise to future generations came about through Abraham's second son Isaac, not Ishmael (cf. Ge.17:19; 21:10).

through Khadija, as well as two sons who died in their infancy.

As for the account of Muhammad's prophetic call, Muhammad tells of being nearly choked to death by an angel until he agreed to "recite." So violent was this incident that Muhammad at first wondered if he had encountered an evil spirit (cf. *Jinn* page 38). Muhammad had apparently feared demon possession many times before, but this time Khadija and a cousin convinced him otherwise. Muhammad reportedly suffered convulsions when receiving these revelations, and afterward he seemed confused and uncertain as to their origin. At one time he recited a revelation that he later changed. For long periods of time he became severely depressed to the point that at least once he contemplated committing suicide. Nevertheless, Muhammad later seemed comfortable with accepting his call.

Muhammad first began his ministry privately by making his revelations known exclusively to family and close friends; his wife Khadija was his first convert. Later, he began his public ministry in the city of Mecca. His initial message proclaimed the absolute sovereignty of Allah, a final resurrection and coming judgment, and a duty to give alms to the poor.

Strangely, the Muslim commonly resorts to portions of the Christian Bible (cf. page 14) for Muhammad's authentication as a prophet. Many of the prophecies that rightly belong to Jesus are claimed instead for the prophet Muhammad. The first of these is found in Deuteronomy 18:15-18, wherein Moses is told of another prophet like himself that will be raised up from among his brethren.³⁹ In Mathew 3:11, John the Baptist refers to one who is coming after him who is greater than himself and will baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire. In both instances, Muslims claim that the reference is applicable to Muhammad.⁴⁰ In John 14:16,

39 Moses was a Jew (cf. Ex. 2:1-10) and the coming prophet must therefore necessarily be a Jew – "from among Moses' brethren." Muhammad obviously does not fit this description since he most certainly was not a Jew.

40 In both of these passages of Scripture it is obvious through wider Scriptural context that reference is being made to Jesus Christ, not Muhammad.

Muhammad is alleged to be the coming “helper” to be sent by Allah to his apostles after Jesus (Isa) is recalled to heaven.⁴¹

Muhammad is also credited with having performed many miracles the most remarkable of which is his alleged ascension to heaven and back on an angelic creature described as having an angel's head, the body of a mule, and a tail like a peacock. This alleged journey from Mecca to Jerusalem, commonly referred to as “the night journey” took place upon this strange beast, and he was guided along the way by the angel *Jibril*. Arriving in Jerusalem, Muhammad allegedly made an ascent from the temple mount through seven heavens to the very throne of Allah – where he was commanded to order Muslims to pray fifty times a day. Thereupon, it is declared that he met Moses and continued to go back and forth between Moses and Allah until the required number of prayers were finally reduced to five a day.⁴²

This journey is possibly mentioned one place in the Qur'an as a journey from the Sacred mosque (in Mecca) to the farthest mosque in Jerusalem. (cf. S17:1). Today, this “farthest mosque” is named the *al-Aqsa* mosque, which stands near the great *Dome of the Rock* that presently covers the temple mount.⁴³

The Hadith contains many more of Muhammad's miracles, such as physical healings, producing water in an empty vessel, turning water into milk, splitting the moon in half, and even talking to trees

41 Here the reference is made to the Holy Spirit who came to indwell believers on the Day of Pentecost (cf. Jn.14:17; Ac.1:8). Again, this could not have been Muhammad who was not born until six centuries after the days of the apostles to whom the Comforter was initially promised.

42 Even many Muslims admit that it is highly likely that this story, called the *Mi'raj*, which is found in the Hadith is pure fiction. Muhammad may have only been relating a strange dream he experienced inasmuch as he never directly claimed to have visited heaven. Be that as it may, Muslims are required to answer five official calls to prayer each day (cf. *Salat* page 48).

43 It is on this natural elevation that Herod's massive Temple once stood during the days of Jesus' ministry on earth and which was completely destroyed in AD 70 (cf. Mt. 24:1,2). Many orthodox Jews hope one day to rebuild their Temple on this same mount where the *Dome of the Rock* currently stands.

that spoke back to him. Moreover, Muslims claim that Muhammad the prophet was totally sinless and represented the most moral man that ever lived.⁴⁴ This is a primary reason why the Hadith is so greatly admired and faithfully followed.

Isa (Jesus)

Isa is the second most important prophet of Islam. Muslims claim that Isa is actually the proper name for Jesus recorded in the New Testament of the Bible.⁴⁵ Isa is mentioned some ninety-seven times in the Qur'an. He is considered to be the great Hebrew prophet and is honored with the title of Messiah, the Word of Allah, and the Spirit of Allah in the Qur'an (cf. S4:171). Yet, in this very same

44 The supposed morality of Muhammad is highly debatable. In his early life Muhammad sanctioned robbing Meccan caravans. He also engaged in polygamy, purportedly having fifteen wives, even though he had received a revelation from Allah in the Qur'an that a man could have at the most four wives (cf. S4:3). Apparently he believed that Allah had granted him a special dispensation as a prophet. At one time Muhammad agreed that it was proper to beat a servant girl to get her to tell the truth about some matter. Muhammad also believed in holy wars or *jihad* (cf. page 50) to fight against all pagans and unbelievers in order to earn a reward in heaven. On at least two occasions Muhammad had people killed for mocking him. Today's more radical fundamentalist Muslims consider this a binding example commanding them to kill any one who dishonors or mocks Muhammad. (This radical thinking resulted in a terrorist attack in January 2015 on the offices of *Charlie Hebdo*, an irreverent satirical French weekly newspaper that repeatedly mocked all forms of religion including Catholicism and Judaism, as well as Islam).

45 "Isa" is the Arabic word for "Jesus," and as such Arabic Christians commonly use that name when referring to Jesus of the Bible without prejudice. Nevertheless in the orthodox teachings of Islam, Isa the prophet is depicted quite differently than Jesus is presented in the New Testament. Although the Qur'an uses honorary titles such as the "Messiah" and "Word of Allah" to describe Isa, this Muslim caricature of Jesus is but a mortal prophet. He is not in any way recognized as having any of the attributes of deity. Therefore, the Muslim description of Isa only loosely correlates with Jesus as He is correctly revealed in the New Testament. This deviation has required us to make a sharp distinction between Jesus of the Bible and Isa of the Qur'an when they are mentioned throughout this analysis.

verse it is said that Isa, the son of Mary, was no more than a created messenger sent from Allah, and it sternly warns against even speaking of a Christian trinity.

To suggest that Isa is the son of Allah is considered blasphemy by Muslims (cf. S19:35). Nevertheless, the Muslim does believe in the virgin birth of Isa to *Maryam* (i.e., Mary). According to the Qur'an, *Maryam*, who was chaste, was approached by the angel *Jibril* who announced she was to have a son by miraculous means as a gift from Allah (cf. S19:17-19). When *Maryam* had conceived, she went into isolation and traveled to the Bethlehem valley where she suffered the severe pains of childbirth and soon gave birth to Isa under a date palm.⁴⁶ After the delivery, she fasted for the rest of the day.

Then, *Maryam* carried the child to her people, who welcomed her and marveled over the child. According to the Qur'an, the baby spoke saying, "I am a slave of Allah, He has given me the Scripture and made me a Prophet" (S19:30). Accordingly, Islam does not view Isa as the son of Allah, but only as a mortal prophet who was created by miraculous means.

Muslims believe that Isa was sent to earth by Allah on a limited mission to the Jews, to reform their old covenant law by better explaining it and conforming it to *Sharia* (cf. *Sharia* page 43). According to Islam, Isa never at any time during his mission claimed to be the son of Allah.⁴⁷ Unfortunately Isa's mission went all

46 No mention is made of Joseph or the arduous trip of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem to be taxed (cf. Lu.2:1-5) in Islamic teaching. Moreover, no mention is made of Isa being born in a stable as was Jesus (cf. Lu.2:7).

47 It is quite true that Jesus did not at any time emphatically state that He was God, lest He give the impression that He encompassed the entirety of the Divine Being in human flesh. However, in John 8:58 Jesus declared, "Before Abraham was, I am." Jesus, born some 30 years before in Bethlehem, actually existed before Abraham's time thus stressing Jesus' eternal nature. In using the words "I am" (instead of a past tense "I was") Jesus declared his full equality with the eternal I AM (i.e., *YHWH* or Jehovah) of Exodus 3:14. Moreover, Jesus spoke often of God as his Father in Heaven, a relationship which when

wrong when many Jews came to believe that he was deity in human flesh. This so angered the Jewish leaders that they sought to crucify him. According to Muslim belief, Isa's mission on earth had become flawed to the extent that he was recalled to heaven to escape the painful death of crucifixion.⁴⁸ Isa is alleged to have ascended into heaven like the Old Testament prophet Elijah.⁴⁹ A few believe that this ascension occurred soon after he was placed on a cross, while most believe that it took place before. A few Muslims believe that Isa took a drug that put him into a coma-like state and that he later revived in the tomb.⁵⁰ Regardless, Muslims say Isa (i.e., Jesus) did

transposed inevitably means that He is God's Son. In John 14:9 He stated that "he that has seen me has seen the Father," and in John 10:30 he stated "I and the Father are one." Add to this the confession of Peter, "thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God" to which Jesus immediately said that Peter was blessed inasmuch as His Father in heaven had revealed it to him (cf. Mt.16:16,17), and it is absolutely impossible to claim that Jesus did not represent Himself to be deity living in human flesh.

- 48 There are a few verses (*ayat*) of the Qur'an that speak directly or indirectly about the death of Isa (cf., S2:87; 3:55; 4:157-158; 19:33), but most Muslims believe that these verses only indicate that Isa was tortured – perhaps even on a cross, but that he did not die there. A few other Muslims suggest that these verses only refer to his second coming in the end times. The primary reason that the Muslims adamantly deny Jesus' death is the notion that if Isa would have been allowed to die in such a shameful manner it would indicate a failure on Allah's part to vindicate and protect his great prophet – such a failure of deity is not possible. Nevertheless, Jesus' crucifixion and death is recorded in all four of the Gospel accounts – the most detailed account of which is found in John 19:1-42. The death of Jesus actually constitutes an ultimate victory over sin and death, which was powerfully demonstrated when He also arose bodily from the grave. Jesus' death is therefore essential to the Christian faith; without Jesus' atoning death there would be no remission of sin possible.
- 49 Muslim teaching of Isa's ascension differs from the biblical account of Jesus' ascension, which took place after his resurrection from the dead. Jesus' ascension is recorded in Acts. 1:9-11 where He gently ascended up to heaven in a cloud. Conversely, Elijah was taken up to heaven in a violent windstorm (cf. 2Ki. 2:1-15).
- 50 In Matthew 27:34 it is stated that a pain deadening drug (gall or myrrh)

not actually die at all, but ascended bodily to heaven completely unharmed.⁵¹

It is further alleged by Muslims that there is no documented proof of Jesus' crucifixion inasmuch as none of his apostles witnessed it.⁵² As badly battered as Jesus' face was before he was taken to the cross, it is further alleged that no one could have accurately identified Him.⁵³ Therefore, the biblical account could have been of the crucifixion of someone else who was merely mistaken for Jesus. Many Muslims claim that it was actually Judas Iscariot who was crucified on the cross in Jesus' place.⁵⁴

mixed with vinegar was offered to Jesus, but as soon as He tasted it, He refused it. Only at the end of his ordeal on the cross did He accept plain vinegar offered to Him on a sponge in an effort to quench his terrible thirst (Mt.27:48; Jn. 19:28) which enabled him to declare with a strong voice that his work of redemption was completed (cf. Mt.27:50; Jn. 19:30).

- 51 The verse found in S3:55 wherein Isa is promised to be “raised” by Allah, is commonly construed to mean Isa's ascension, not his resurrection. Muslims of the Ahmadiyya sect (cf. page 31) completely deny the ascension of Isa believing he revived after his ordeal on the cross, escaped out of Jerusalem, and traveled to India. There years later, he allegedly died of old age and his body was entombed in Kashmir.
- 52 It is quite true that most of Jesus' closest followers deserted Him after He submissively allowed Himself to be led away by Roman guards (cf. Mt. 26:31, 56; Jn. 18:12,13). However, the young Apostle John was most certainly there at the foot of the cross, for Jesus spoke directly to him from the cross concerning the care of his mother. Mary, the human mother of Jesus, was also there – to whom Jesus also spoke (cf. Jn.19:26,27). Moreover, “All his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things” (Lu.23:49). Although not specifically recorded, it is very likely that Peter was observing the crucifixion from a safe distance as well (cf. Mt.26:58; Mk 14:54; Lu 22:54).
- 53 It is true that Jesus' face was very badly battered and bruised by the fists of Roman soldiers as they taunted and brutalized Him before his crucifixion (cf. Is. 52:14,53:5; Jn.19:1-3). These soldiers were professional executioners and very adept at physical torture and its effects such that they certainly knew who they were taking to the cross.
- 54 This notion comes from the so-called *Gospel of Barnabas* (cf. page 17). We know from Holy Scripture that Judas Iscariot took his own life just prior to

Muslims universally concur that Jesus of the Bible (i.e., Isa of Islam) could not have died on a cross to achieve an atonement for human sin (cf. **Sin** page 41). Being but a human prophet, Isa could not have provided atonement for anyone for anything. It also follows in the Muslim mind that if Jesus was not crucified, the cross has no valid religious significance. Moreover, if Jesus did not die, he could not have been resurrected from the dead.⁵⁵

The Islamic Caliphate

When a large number of Muslims occupy and gain control over a sufficient area, an Islamic Caliphate is established. It is ruled by a Caliph who is a spiritual leader of Islam and who claims his succession from the prophet Mohammad. As we shall discuss below that succession is a source of conflict within various sects of Islam (cf. page 26). The Caliph is superior to the Imam who leads prayers in a local mosque, and who is an authority on Islamic law and theology. The Imam also gives forth authoritative opinions regarding the application of Islamic law (*fatwa*). Although the Shi'ite Imam takes

the crucifixion of Jesus by hanging himself – possibly over the edge of a cliff (cf. Mt 27:5; Ac.1:16-18). The religious rulers as well as the Romans centurions that crucified Jesus could not possibly have made such a disastrous mistake of identity. As for external evidence, the Jewish *Talmud* speaks of *Yeshua* (i.e., Jesus) being “hanged” on the eve of the passover. Even the ancient historian Flavius Josephus mentions that there was a man named Jesus whom Pilate condemned to be crucified and to die (cf. *Antiquities of the Jews*, 18:3).

- 55 Outside of Islamic teaching, few deny the death by crucifixion of Jesus Christ; however, myths abound denying his bodily resurrection from the dead. We discuss these fabrications in some detail in *CRC* Book I, Chapter 4.6, beginning on page 255. Of course, the Islamic teaching that Jesus was not crucified to begin with renders that discussion mute here. Islam renounces all essential Christian doctrine regarding the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ to atone for sin and to justify mankind to God (cf. 1Co. 15:3-7). Remove these essential doctrines and Christianity loses all of its power and assurance; in fact, it becomes absolutely meaningless – which was the obvious underlying intent and purpose of Islam from its very inception.

office through a supposed blood-line succession, in other sects the local Imam is appointed by the local community.

The Islamic Caliphate is not a political nation-state, but rather a theological entity that may or may not have specific national boundaries. The most recent example of such a Caliphate was found within the Ottoman Empire, which was brought to an end in 1922 following World War One. After the fall of that Islamic Caliphate, Muslims continued to occupy many of the nations of the middle east and began to spread outward into the nations of northern Africa. Today a ring of Muslim-dominated nations is beginning to form around the Mediterranean Sea, and Muslim hopes for a restored but even more robust Caliphate is in view. The Muslim ultimately envisions a universal Caliphate that will one day encompass the entire world, and to that end immigration is underway into nearly every nation in the world (cf. **The Islamic campaign for World Dominance**, Appendix page 73).

Sects of Islam

Although the Qur'an expressly forbids any divisions within Islam (cf. S42:13), there are so many diverse trains of thought within today's Islam that it cannot in any way be considered a unified monolithic religion. Following the rapid growth of Islam in the seventh and eighth centuries, it was found that the Qur'an and the Hadith were not sufficient to provide detailed answers to every human situation without interpretation. A school of legal experts was initially established to provide practical authoritative interpretations as needed. However, many Islamic scholars disagreed with many of the renderings set forth by these early legal experts, which resulted in the formation of additional legal schools of widely differing interpretations and thoughts. Followers of these schools eventually solidified into divisions or sects⁵⁶ of Islam. Today, Islam is made up of two Major sects, the Sunni and the Shi'ite, as well as many other

⁵⁶ It should be noted that Muslims often object to the term "sects" referring instead to differing schools of thought within a fully unified Islam.

sub-sects, internal movements, and various religious outgrowths.

The Sunni

The most prominent Muslim sect is the Sunni, currently comprising somewhere around eighty-five percent or more of all Muslims worldwide. It consists of the followers of the Hanifa, Shafi, Hanibal, and Malik schools of thought, which accounts for some diversity of thought within the Sunni faith. In general, the Sunni believe in the absolute sovereign power of Allah, which has led them to become strict believers in determinism.⁵⁷ The Arab word *Sunni* means “tradition,” and Sunni Muslims place a great emphasis upon following the traditions of Muhammad as they are found in the *Sunna*, which is their particular version of the Hadith, as well as adhering to all of the teachings found in the Qur'an.

The Sunni believe that the first Caliph following Muhammad was his father-in-law Abu Bakr – who was not a blood descendent – succeeded in turn by Omar, Uthman, and Ali. They believe that all Caliphs should be elected by Muslims at large. Although very devout believers in Islam, Sunni Muslims are generally amenable to living out their faith within various secular societies.

The Wahhabis, a legalistic Sunni sub-sect, represent a very radical school of thought that essentially advocates offensive *jihad* (cf. **Jihad** page 50) to continually purify the Islamic faith. They are thought by many to be the primary source of Islamic terrorism. Although their extreme teachings are disavowed by many other Muslims, they presently exert strong influence through their Islamic schools located within Saudi Arabia, which is dominated and ruled

57 Philosophically, determinism states that all events come about as a result of previous events as a cause sufficient to do so. That is, based upon what has previously happened, all future events are determined without exception within an unalterable chain of events. It should be noted that determinism differs greatly from the Christian doctrine of predestination, which allows for divine intervention and control at every turn of events to conform future events to God's divine will (cf. *CRC Book I* page 159).

by Sunni Muslims.

A more recent Sunni sub-sect is known as Salafists. Salafism is an ultra-conservative reform effort, which advocates a return to the traditions of the pious ancestors of the first three generations of Muslims, wherein jihad was practiced to continually purify Islam. It came about in the latter part of the nineteenth century in Egypt in response to western colonialism and is exemplified by the Muslim Brotherhood. It is the underlying belief of the current ISIS movement.

The Shi'ite

The Shi'ite, representing about twelve percent of Muslims worldwide, are of the Ja'fari school of thought. In direct opposition to the Sunni position, they believe that the first Caliph was Ali ibn Abi Talib, a son in law of Mohammad who had married Muhammad's youngest daughter, Fatima. The Shi'ite split away from the Sunni sect in AD 661 when the fourth Caliph, Ali, was assassinated. Shi'ite Muslims insisted that all subsequent Caliphs must come through an inherited blood-line of Ali and Fatima. This disagreement remains as a source of great conflict between these two major sects.

Shi'ites place great confidence in their many Imams, whose positions have been inherited by birthright from Muhammad and whose edicts are considered fully binding. It is believed by the Shi'ites that Imams are sinless and will intercede for Muslims in the afterlife following their death. Shi'ites also differ from the Sunnis regarding various interpretations of the Qur'an and even have a different version of the Hadith.

The Shi'ite are divided up into three main sub-groups. The first is the Twelfth-Imam group (commonly referred to as "twelvers"), which currently occupies the lands of Persia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Pakistan and Syria. The last known blood descendent of Muhammad mysteriously disappeared at age 5 in AD 874. Twelfth-Imam Shi'ites believe that a final global Caliphate will come about through the emergence of this twelfth descendent of Muhammad. He

or one of his direct descendents is expected to be revealed as the Mahdi when this future Caliphate is firmly established.⁵⁸

The second sub-group is the Ismailis, which occupies India, Iran, Syria, and East Africa. These Muslims hold much in common with the “twelvers,” but they promote a more esoteric metaphoric interpretation of the Islamic religion that has been greatly influenced by the philosophy of Platonism.

The third sub-group is the Zaydiyyah (or Zaydis), which also hold much in common with the twelvers. However, they do not consider Imams to be divinely chosen by Allah, nor are they considered to be sinless or infallible. They believe that the twelfth Imam is currently alive but is being hidden away from view. He will someday be revealed to establish the final Caliphate. The Zaydis currently dominate the nation of Yemen.

Islamic Movements and Outgrowths

There are various other movements growing within and emerging out of Islam. Sufism represents a mystical wing of Islam. It is popular internationally because it seeks to attain a personal relationship with Allah⁵⁹ through divine love. As one scholar, Abdul-Haqq wrote, “it gives primacy to the religion of the heart.” Sufi teaching contradicts more severe fundamentalist Islamic teaching. It embraces pantheism – believing that Allah exists in all things both animate and inanimate, and it also puts forth that man can obtain “godhood” through being absorbed into the divine nature. Their worship services are highly spirited when compared to Sunni and Shi’ite assemblies. One Sulfi group known as the Mevlevi order engages in spirited religious dances as acts of worship.⁶⁰

58 See Shi’ite Eschatology on page 57 and *CRC Christianity Book III*, page 509.

59 Seeking to develop a relationship with Allah strongly opposes orthodox Islamic teaching, which states that a personal loving relationship between man and Allah is not possible.

60 Sufis are often compared in a general way with charismatic Christians because of their highly spirited religious activities. The rapidly spinning

Folk Islam is another variation of Islam often practiced by African Muslims. It is a mix of Islamic monotheism with the animism of traditional mystical African religions. Adherents combine Islamic traditions of formal structured prayers with magic, superstition, and occultism. Tribal religious leaders, called marabouts, are often consulted to obtain incantations and amulets for protection against evil spirits.

Loosely related to Folk Islam is the so-called Black Muslim movement in the United States. In response to the widespread preaching of black liberation theology⁶¹ in many African-American churches following the U.S. Civil War, many of their membership became convinced that Islam was their previous religion in Africa before they were forcibly carried away as slaves to serve Christian masters in America.

As a consequence, the *Nation of Islam* was founded in 1930 by Wallace Muhammad as a black supremacist organization, opposing what was alleged to be “white man’s Christianity.” Although “Islam” was incorporated within its name to indicate its opposition to Christianity, the organization had no direct connection with prevailing orthodox Islamic doctrine and practice. In the late 1970s, however, it abruptly renounced its black-supremacist origin and name to officially align itself with the Sunni Muslim sect. This action suddenly brought vast numbers of African Americans into the Islamic faith.⁶²

The Druze is a religious sect that is primarily located in

dances commonly performed by Mevlevis as a part of their worship commonly results in them being referred to as Whirling Dervishes.

61 Black liberation theology is an adaptation of liberation theology (cf. *CRC Book III*, pages 354 and 361) that is specifically focused on the liberation of African Americans from white rule in the United States. It had its beginnings in the southern institution of black slavery (cf. *CRC Book III*, page 336) and later matured and flourished within black churches during the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s (cf. *CRC Book III*, page 414).

62 The *Nation of Islam* was later reestablished and continues on as a black supremacist organization under the leadership of Louis Farrakhan.

Lebanon, Syria, and northern Palestine. They are strict monotheists, but their religion is based more upon the philosophical teachings of Plato, Aristotle, and Socrates. In that sense, they are not purely Islamic, but represent an outgrowth of Islam.

The Ahmadiyya faith, which began near the end of the nineteenth century in India, is a religious outgrowth of the Sunni sect. It is considered to be a heretical sect by Muslims because its founder, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, claimed to be the long expected Mahdi. Although most Muslims believe in a second appearance of Isa (i.e., Jesus) in the last days (cf. page 56), the Ahmadiyya believe that both biblical and Qur'anic references to this event are to be taken figuratively because these prophecies are seen to have been metaphorically fulfilled in Ahmad.

Baha'i is an eclectic religion founded in Persia in the nineteenth century, which emerged out of the Shi'ite Muslim sect. It emphasizes a spiritual oneness of all mankind and believes that all religions have a common source in the Divine Being. Therefore, diversity of religion as well as culture must be embraced. Much like the Ahmadiyya, it places an emphasis upon knowing and loving the Divine Being. This special relationship is to be attained through prayer and meditation as well as engaging in loving service to mankind.

Chrislam is a fairly recent religious offshoot of Islam. It has its origin in Nigeria, but it has spread into large parts of the western world. As its name implies, it proposes to blend or harmonize Islamic tradition with Christian tradition in an effort to foster peace between the two major religions. Both the Qur'an and the Bible are considered to be holy books of equal standing. The Divine Being (cf. page 32) is alternately referred to as *Allah* or *Elohim*. Rather than concentrating on the many irreconcilable doctrinal differences between Islam and Christianity,⁶³ only their general similarities are

63 These irreconcilable differences are all important, such that Chrislam is neither Islamic, nor Christian in core belief. It is but a satanically-inspired humanistic effort to infuse traditional churchianity with radical Islamic

stressed. Inasmuch as the month of Ramadan (cf. page 49) apparently coincided with the current month of December on the calendar in use in Muhammad's day, Christmas is celebrated as Jesus' birth date as well as the month commemorating the earliest recitations of the Qur'an. Easter, usually celebrated in the month of March, coincides with the month of the Islamic Hajj (cf. page 50). Worship services are commonly held on Saturdays, to avoid granting favoritism to Muslims who worship on Friday, or to Christians who worship on Sunday.

The Divine Being

At this point, we turn our thoughts from organizational aspects of Islam to its theological beliefs. The name “*Allah*” comes from the Arabic language and means “the Divinity.” It should be noted that the Arabic word, *Allah*, predates Mohammed such that Arabic Christians refer to the Divine Being as Allah as a matter of language. In that sense, no distinction is ordinarily made between the God of the Bible and Allah of Islam. The Muslim states that both refer to the same Divine Being.⁶⁴

traditions in an effort to ultimately subvert the true biblical Christian faith at a doctrinal level.

64 It can rightly be said that both Christians and Muslims believe in one Divine Being. However, basic differences in what the Christian and the Muslim believes concerning the Divine Being leads to the inevitable conclusion that we must be referring to two different “deities:” one of which is real and the other fabricated. To fabricate a mental image of the Divine Being that purports to represent Him other than He truly is amounts to idolatry fully equivalent to fabricating an imaginary physical representation of Him (cf. Ex.20:3-5). *Allah* is defined by the Qur'an as a fully monadic being, while the Christian God is clearly defined by the Bible as a triune being (i.e., three essences subsisting as one). To avoid confusion, we have consistently used “*Allah*” when discussing Islam's monadic deity as defined by the Qur'an, and we have used “God” only when discussing the biblically-defined Divine Being throughout this analysis.

Ninety-Nine Names of Allah

Muslims often refer to ninety-nine names of Allah, which include Allah as the first name above all other names. The basis for this list is found in the Qur'an: "He is Allah beside Whom none has the right to be worshiped but He, the All-Knower of the unseen and the seen. He is the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. He is Allah beside Whom none has the right to be worshiped but He, the King, the Holy, the One Free from all defects, the Giver of security, the Watcher over His creatures, the All-Mighty, the Compeller, the Supreme. Glorified is Allah (High is He) above all that they associate as partners with Him. He is Allah, the Creator, the Inventor of all things, the Bestower of forms. To Him belong the Best Names. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorify Him. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise" (S59:22-24).⁶⁵

Islamic tradition says that Muhammad gave the total number as ninety-nine, and the expanded list that complies with that number often includes names in ways not specifically stated in the Qur'an.⁶⁶ They are seen to represent individual attributes of Allah, not a plurality of his being. Some Muslim scholars have divided these attributes into three categories of Power, Wisdom, and Goodness; others into Majesty, Generosity and Beauty; still others into Essence and Action. More radical elements of Islam have divided them into categories of Glory and Terror. Some of these attributes appear to be contradictory with others on the surface, and still other descriptions appear to be perverse such as haughtiness, tyrannic, and one who

65 In the Old Testament, we find some fifteen descriptive names of God (Heb: *Elohim*). Sometimes *Elohim* is abbreviated as *El* and followed by a descriptor such as we find in the name *El Shaddai* (i.e., Lord God Almighty). However, foremost of those names is *Yahweh* (YHWH) or "I AM," which is the name that God gave for Himself when speaking to Moses (cf. Ex.3:14). *Yahweh* has been transliterated into English as "Jehovah." Jehovah is often appended with descriptive modifiers such as *Jehovah Sabaoth* (the Lord of Hosts), and *Jehovah Shalom* (the Lord of Peace).

66 This expanded list of names is far to long to include in this brief analysis.

brings forth damage; nevertheless, taken together, these attributes indicate a complete freedom of divine will that absolute sovereignty requires.

Islamic Monotheism

We find that much like Old Covenant Judaism, Islam's view of the Divine Being is thoroughly monotheistic, and as such it stands in direct opposition to Christian Trinitarianism. This strict monotheism views the Divine Being as monadic, that is not consisting of any parts or distinctions, and is therefore one throughout in every sense.⁶⁷ The entire Islamic belief system is summed up in its one short creedal statement: "There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is Allah's Apostle" (cf. page 9). The first of these seven words in the Arabic, or the *Shahadah*, are used by Muslims, much as the Old Testament *Schema*⁶⁸ is used within Judaism, to impress upon the

67 The Muslim insists that the Christian doctrine of the Trinity states that there are three gods, which is actually a heretical concept known as tritheism. The Christian believes that God is one divine being that has always subsisted as three distinct centers of conscious awareness from eternity. These states of awareness were referred to by earlier theologians using the Latin word *hypostasis* (i.e., underlying state or underlying substance) but were later referred to in English using a special application of the word "persons" – for want of a more descriptive word. Inasmuch as "person" commonly defines an individual human being, use of this word can be very misleading. "Persons" used in this special theological context does not imply three separate beings with three separate wills, for all three "persons" are of one divine indivisible substance and of one eternal will. Furthermore, many Muslims believe that all Christians have deified Mary such that the Trinity actually consists of Mary as a divine goddess, Jesus her son, and God the Father as Mary's husband. This false impression is derived from the corrupt Roman Catholic doctrine of Mariolatry; no truly biblical Christian accepts such a blasphemous notion (cf. *CRC Book III*, page 161-164).

68 See De.6:4: "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD." The word for "God" in Hebrew is *elohiym*, which is plural. Therefore, the verse could have been translated into English as, "...The LORD our 'Gods' is one LORD." Moreover, it is the Hebrew word *echad* that is translated "one." The word *yachid*, which designates absolute singularity and unity could have been

human mind from birth to death the firm belief in one and only one solitary deity who exists and acts alone⁶⁹ – as one who is not begotten nor does he beget.

Jesus' Deity Denied

Inasmuch as Allah is uncreated, eternal, and of one will, it is not possible that he could give birth to or create another eternal being like himself – that is to say, he cannot create another being that is also uncreated. For that reason, the Muslim rejects the Incarnation of Jesus.⁷⁰ He is reckoned to be but a mortal prophet (cf. *Isa* page 21).

used. Nevertheless, *echad* was used which means one in a compound sense.

69 Allah is commonly referred to with a singular masculine pronoun, but when Allah refers to his own intentions and activities in the Qur'an the first-person plural pronouns "we" or "us" are often utilized (cf. S 50:38). We also find this same plurality concerning God's activities in various Bible verses such as Ge.1:26 and Ge.11:7. The Christian experiences no particular difficulty with this plurality in places where it is found in the Old Testament inasmuch as God is clearly revealed in the New Testament as one singular Divine Being that subsists as three distinct centers of awareness or "persons" (cf. *CRC* Book I, Chapter 6.3). The Muslim (as well as the Jew), merely sees this use of first-person-plural pronouns as a gracious matter of "royal speaking," not as indicating any possible plurality within the Divine Being.

70 The Muslim commonly mischaracterizes the Christian doctrine of the incarnation of Jesus as having taken place through a physical sexual act between God and Mary in which their son was created. However, the word "begotten" as it is found in John 1:18, 3:16, and 3:18 does not refer to a physical procreation of the Son of God in the womb of Mary, but it instead indicates a unique eternal relationship within the Godhead that has always existed (cf. Jn. 1:1). This eternal relationship is as one between a father and a son of his own substance (cf. Jn. 1:18), and it therefore should not be confused with the physical birth of Jesus. The incarnation was a miraculous event by which the eternal Son of God took on human flesh in Mary's womb in order to dwell among men (cf. Jn.1:14). In doing so, He temporarily set aside the privileges of his infinite deity so that He could become the uniquely perfect man (fully God and fully man) sent to redeem mankind through his sinless nature and atoning death (cf. Ph.2:6-8).

The Nonentity of the Holy Spirit

Moreover, the Holy Spirit is not recognized as an active and distinct manifestation of the Divine Being. He is a nonentity – his very existence is denied. His role is associated in Islamic theology with the angel *Jibril* as the sole bearer of divine revelation – inasmuch as he recited the Qur'an to Muhammad. Muhammad in turn is commonly equated with the promised divine helper of John 14:16 as we noted earlier (cf. page 20).⁷¹

Creation

The Muslim perceives Allah as the sole Creator and sustainer of all things. As a consequence of Allah's unique creative ability, everything that exists must declare his glory and his unique Oneness. We read in the Qur'an that “The seven heavens”⁷² and the

71 Far from being a nonentity, the Holy Spirit is seen as a distinct manifestation of the Divine Being who is very widespread in Christian theology (cf. *CRC* Book I, Section 5). His presence is first seen in the act of creation (cf. Ge.1:2). The Holy Spirit inspired the Holy Scriptures and speaks through them (cf. Ac.1:16; 2Pe.1:21). He actively participates in the great work of redemption (Jn 3:5,6; Tit.3:5-7) in facilitating a spiritual rebirth of men (cf. 1Pe. 1:23). His role as the divine Comforter, sent forth by the Father and the Son (cf. Jn.14:26), is to first convict men of their sin nature (cf. Jn.16:8) and then to reveal the truth concerning Christ (his atoning death and resurrection) to the human mind (cf. Jn.15:26) to the end that men might believe and be saved. The Holy Spirit then permanently indwells the newborn believer (cf. Jn 14:16,17) to teach, guide, and comfort him, to regenerate his mind (cf. Tit.3:5), and to aid him in prayer when ordinary words fail him (cf. Ro.8:26).

72 “Seven heavens” was an early Mesopotamian concept that may have been derived from a supposed magical concept of the number seven. Biblically, the number seven is symbolic of perfection and/or completeness, and the Mesopotamian concept of seven heavens may only have been considered symbolically. Therefore, this idea of “seven heavens” predates the religion of Islam. According to the Qur'an, Allah created these seven heavens (*samaawat*) in two days (cf. S41:12). The Bible only speaks of three heavens wherein the first heaven represents the atmosphere or sky, the second physical space, and the third the very abode of God, which is outside of space and time. The

earth, and all things therein, declare His glory: there is not a thing but celebrates His praise” (S17:44). Allah is also credited with having created incorporeal beings (i.e., angels and jinn; cf. page 38), and then climaxed his creation with the formation of mankind.

The Universe

The Qur'an states that it was Allah who created the heavens and the earth in six days (cf. S32:4), and He gives order to his creation by regulating and governing the activity of all things (cf. S10:3). Allah created the stars and constellations, the moon to give light, as well as the regular cycles of day and night (cf. S25:61). The sun and moon follow precise courses that He has ordained (cf. S55:37).⁷³ The Muslim places considerable importance on the precise order and pattern of the universe as evidence for the absolute unity of Allah. While the universe is viewed as self-governing, Allah has set precise limits on its behavior.⁷⁴

The Earth

The Muslim believes that Allah created the physical earth in two days (cf. S41:9). He established very specific laws governing it such that it is always in full submission to him. Unlike man, who through

apostle Paul spoke of having been taken up to this third heaven, but he was not able to determine afterward if this was a physical experience or a spiritual revelation received through a vision (cf. 2Co.12:1-4). He was likely speaking of the time when he was stoned by a mob, dragged out of Lystra, and assumed dead, yet was soon revived to continue his work (cf. Ac.14:19,20).

73 As we observe, the Muslim doctrine of the physical creation of the heavens and the earth does not deviate greatly from the orderly account found in Genesis 1, but unlike the Bible, statements concerning natural creation are found scattered throughout the Qur'an.

74 Some Muslims have put forth the possibility of theistic evolution as an explanation for the initial formation of the universe – as, unfortunately, have some Christians. We discussed the non-biblical theory of theistic evolution in our July 2015 Newsletter, which is currently available in the newsletter archives on www.CRChristianity.org.

deliberate choice can deviate from Allah's will, the earth has no will or ability to choose and must therefore follow the precise course that Allah has established for it. Moreover, the Muslim believes that Allah created everything that exists upon the earth both animate and inanimate to be fully submissive to his will without recourse.

Angels

The Muslim believes that Allah created angels out of light, and therefore they are by nature incapable of error or sin.⁷⁵ Angels are all viewed as Allah's faithful messengers, and four of them play a very prominent role in Islamic faith and life. They specifically recognize *Jibril* (Gabriel) as the divine messenger (who recited the Qur'an word-by-word to Muhammad).⁷⁶ and *Mikaeel* (Michael) as the angel of providence and also the guardian of Israel (cf. S2:97-98). In addition, *Isra'il* is recognized as the angel of death, and *Irafil* is recognized as an angel whose primary purpose is to signal the resurrection of the dead (cf. page 59).

Jinn and Satan

What the Christian refers to as fallen angels (i.e., demons) are most generally considered by Islam to be "*Jinn*," which are believed to be a lower class of angelic beings, created from fire instead of light, that can and do commit sin. *Iblis* was a *Jinn* who lived amongst the angels in heaven. However, he rebelled against Allah when he refused to bow down to Adam and was expelled from heaven. *Iblis* allegedly considered himself to be superior to man

75 It is apparent from Scriptures that angels are indeed quite able to sin by turning away from their perfect estate of perfection to disobey and openly rebel against God as some have already done. These are referred to as fallen angels or demons in Scripture. God has prepared a place of everlasting fire for them in the day of judgment (cf. Job 4:18, Mt. 25:41; 2Pe.2:4; Jude 1:6).

76 Muslims often falsely credit *Jibril* with the work of the Holy Spirit, whose works are found throughout the New Testament of the Bible (cf. **The Nonentity of the Holy Spirit**, page 36).

because he was created of fire, whereas Adam was created of mud. *Iblis* is afterward referred to as *Shaitan* (i.e., Satan) who is the avowed enemy of mankind.⁷⁷

Mankind

The Muslim believes that Allah created Adam out of clay to be his vice-regent on earth. However, Islam does not believe that man was originally created in Allah's image as does biblical Christianity⁷⁸, but only that he received knowledge, will, and the ability of intelligent choice from Allah. The Muslim believes that the first man's name was Adam, but they believe that Adam was created in *Adn*, a garden paradise in Heaven, not upon the earth.⁷⁹ Nowhere

77 The Bible indicates that Satan was a high-ranking angel (an archangel) who was perfect when he was first created, but personal pride in his beauty led to his rebellion against God and his necessary expulsion from heaven (cf. Is. 14:12-15; Lu.10:18; Re.12:9).

78 In Ge.1:27, we read, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." God is a spirit-being (cf. Jn.4:24), while Adam was molded out of clay. Adam did not become a living soul until God breathed the spirit of life into him (cf. Ge. 2:7). Through this process Adam initially received many of the attributes of God, which we commonly refer to as communicable attributes (cf. *CRC Book I*, page 93). These attributes included life itself, intellect, a moral will, a creative propensity, truthfulness, goodness, a sense of justice, ability to love, patience, grace, and mercy. It is in this spiritual similitude that Adam was originally created in God's image, not in a physical likeness. This spiritual likeness also does not mean that Adam was a created deity or that he was in any other way equal with God, who was his sovereign Creator.

79 Inasmuch as Adam was created out of clay (the elements of the earth) it has always been understood that the garden of Eden was a physical place located somewhere upon the earth. This is supported by a description of four rivers flowing from it. A river flowed out of Eden to irrigate the garden (cf. Ge.2:10). There it split into four headwaters. The first two rivers mentioned, *Pison* (or *Pishon*) that flowed into *Havilah* (a land containing gold, bdellium and onyx stone) and *Gihon* that flowed down into Ethiopia (land of Cush), are not geographically identifiable today (cf. Ge. 2:11-13). The third river, *Hiddekel* is commonly identified as the Tigris River, and the fourth river, *Euphrates*, is known by that same name today. Therefore, the Garden of Eden

in the Qur'an are we specifically told about the creation of Eve, but it does speak of her presence in the heavenly garden paradise with Adam. Their stay in the garden is commonly viewed as a period of instruction and learning before they were sent down to inhabit and take dominion over the earth.

The Faulty Nature of Mankind

The Muslim does not believe in a disastrous fall of Adam that plunged all of mankind into ruin and utter depravity, as the Bible emphatically states. Adam was merely removed from the heavenly garden earlier than planned to take dominion over the earth after committing a rather inconsequential "error" when he disobeyed Allah. Satan (*Shaitan*) had misled Adam and Eve to taste of a certain forbidden tree, which is unnamed in Islam.⁸⁰ The Qur'an states that Allah had warned Adam and Eve in advance about the cunning nature of *Shaitan*, but that they had unwisely disregarded his warning.⁸¹

Relationship between Allah and Mankind

The Muslim believes that the relationship between Allah and man has always been strictly that of master and slave. This

could have been physically located at the head of the Persian Gulf near where the Tigris and Euphrates rivers currently run into the sea – or perhaps somewhere else nearby.

80 The Bible speaks of the fruit of this tree as "the knowledge of good and evil," such that when Adam partook of it he infringed upon the divine prerogative of God to determine that which is good and evil – right and wrong. Although the fruit may have been physical, evidently what it represented was not. This was hardly an easily forgivable mistake. It was an act of open rebellion that demanded Adam's physical death (cf. Ge.5:5), and his eternal spiritual separation from God (cf. Ge.2:17).

81 The Bible states that Adam was warned not to partake of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (cf. Ge.2:16,17), but there is no biblical evidence that Adam or Eve had any prior knowledge of the existence of Satan or of his nefarious deceptive intent.

relationship is considered to be fixed and unchangeable in man's creation. For that reason, a man cannot experience a companionable relationship with Allah, but, recognizing his supreme authority, man must be fully submissive and absolutely obedient to his every command without question or reservation.⁸²

Sin

Inasmuch as the Muslim does not believe in the ruinous fall of Adam and Eve (cf. page 40), he does not believe that man has a hereditary sin nature as a consequence of this fall. Rather, Muslims believe that mankind has always been less than perfect – weak and prone to disobedience from the time of his creation until the present day. Islam therefore characterizes sin as mistakes and misdeeds that are committed as a consequence of man's faulty creation.⁸³ Due to this natural weakness, Allah graciously forgives those who continue to act in obedience to his will, such that their faulty past deeds are readily excused.

Therefore, all men and women are assumed to be born innocent of any wrongdoing and are subsequently held responsible only for

82 The Bible infers a familiar cooperative loving relationship between God and Adam in the garden that was based upon mutual trust and open communication. This relationship was forfeited as a consequence of Adam's rebellion (cf. Ge. 3:8-10). However, it can be restored again through the acceptance of the death of Jesus Christ as a propitiation for our sin nature – thus restoring a personal relationship with God through fellowship within the person of Christ. In Scripture we find that God loves mankind (cf. Jn.3:16) and desires man's love in return (cf. 1Jn. 4:19). To most Muslims this loving fellowship between Allah and mortal man is seen as impossible, and to suggest such a personal relationship with Him would be considered blasphemous.

83 This notion of faulty creation does not conform to the creation account in the Bible. After God created man on the sixth day, He pronounced everything that He had made “very good” (cf. Ge.1:31). If man was in anyway less than perfect in the eyes of God, he certainly could not have been pronounced “very good.” Moreover, to blame mankind's sin upon his supposed faulty creation is to place blame on the Creator as the author of sin.

their own personal actions in life.⁸⁴ In that sense, all men and women are considered to be fundamentally good at the outset, but because of their natural weakness they often become evil through making bad choices and performing wrongful deeds. Therefore, from the Muslim's point of view, mankind does not need redemption from a fallen sinful state, but only needs to be taught submission and perfect obedience to please Allah.⁸⁵

Salvation

Not unlike Christianity, Islam views life on earth as preparation for an afterlife of eternal bliss in heaven or eternal damnation in Hell.⁸⁶ To the Muslim, eternal salvation is a future deliverance from the wrath of Allah leading to a pleasurable afterlife in heaven (cf. page 55), not something that can be experienced in this life. Salvation must be earned by believing in Allah, by performing a preponderance of good works, and by attaining a favorable accounting of those works at the end of time in the final judgment (cf. page 60).

It is believed that all of the Muslim prophets from Adam to Jesus (Isa) were unworthy to act as intercessors or mediators between

84 It must be noted that some traditional Christians erroneously agree with the innocence of children when they are first born, but the Bible clearly states that all men are born in sin (cf. Ps.51:5) and that they have an inherited depraved nature at birth (cf. Ro.3:10-18; *CRC Book I*, page 188).

85 While the motivation for a Muslim's obedience to Allah stems from the demands of religious duty out of fear of severe punishment for noncompliance, the Christian's motivation for obedience to God comes from a renewed sense of divine love and an inward voluntary desire to please Him who by his wondrous grace saved him from all condemnation (cf. Ro. 8:1) including the great wrath to come in the last days (cf. 1Th. 1:10).

86 While a Christian likewise sees salvation as the avoidance of eternal punishment in Hell – receiving instead the eternal joys of living in a heavenly paradise, salvation goes far beyond that. It means to receive full and permanent redemption from all sin, as well as the full restoration of a peaceful eternal fellowship with his God and Creator through the atonement received in Jesus Christ.

Allah and man. Nevertheless, it is believed that Muhammad has attained that exalted position, because he alone can lead others to paradise through his recitation of the Qur'an and his teaching of obedience found in the Hadith.⁸⁷ Muhammad's alleged intercessory ability is often spoken of through hyperbole in many Islamic prayers and poetry. Moreover, various texts within the Hadith very nearly elevate the human prophet to that of deity by speaking of such things as his preexistence, even stating that he was the primary reason for the creation of the universe.

Islamic Law and Practice

Since man is weak and forgetful, obedience needs to be continually recalled to his mind and learned over time. Islam purports to build this obedient nature by the strict enforcement of moral law and through a repetitious regimen of ritual practices. Both are well integrated into the religious doctrines and beliefs of Islam such that there is no separation of that which is religious from that which is secular.

Sharia

Sharia (Islamic law) is based upon and interpreted from both the Qur'an and the Hadith. In Arabic, the word "*Sharia*" means "way" or "path" – and that path extends well into both public and private life. Islamic law not only encompasses such things as banking, economics, and business enterprises, it intrudes into social issues,

87 An effective mediator must not be one-sided, but he must be able to represent the interests of both parties involved (cf. Ga. 3:20). To become a mediator between God and man, that unique individual must be able to grasp both the hand of God and the hand of man to bring them together face to face for reconciliation. No mere mortal can view the face of God and live, nor can God expose his face to sinful man, lest that man be immediately destroyed (cf. Ex.33:20). Only Jesus Christ, the One who is fully God and fully man, can fill that intercessory role. For that reason, the Bible clearly states that there is but "...one mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ" (1Ti.2:5).

family conduct, diet, sexual matters, and even personal dress and hygiene.⁸⁸

Sharia expressly prohibits the murder of another believer (*mumin*) (cf. S4:93)⁸⁹, and it also prohibits a Muslim from committing suicide (cf. S4:29-30).⁹⁰ The intentional abortion of an unborn child is also classified as murder. Sharia expressly forbids theft and gambling. Sharia forbids deviant sexual practices that include fornication, adultery, sodomy, and homosexuality. Male homosexuality is expressly spoken against in the Qur'an (cf. S26:165-166; S27:55), and it is therefore forbidden by Sharia.⁹¹ Although lesbianism is not directly addressed in the Qur'an, it is spoken of in the Hadith as a deviant practice and is therefore considered illegal.⁹²

The Muslim is subject to strict dietary laws, eating only lawful things that Allah has provided (cf. S2:172). He is prohibited from drinking alcoholic beverages of any kind (cf. S2:219). He is also

88 As we examine individual laws of Sharia, we find some obvious parallels with them and those found in the strict Mosaic Law stated in the Old Testament books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy, but with some variation.

89 The killing of an unbeliever (infidel) is not judged to fall into the category of murder under Islamic law.

90 Suicide bombing and suicide attacks as acts of terrorism are not commonly judged to be suicide by fundamentalist Muslims, but are seen as ultimate acts of submission in defense of Islam (cf *Jihad* page 50).

91 The biblical account of Lot and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah are often referred to by Muslims in connection with the sins of homosexuality and sodomy (cf. Genesis chapter 19).

92 The Mosaic law defined male homosexuality as an abomination (sin) before God (cf. Le.18:22). It is a desecration of the human nature as intended by God when He created mankind male and female. In the New Testament book of Romans Chapter 1, the sin of homosexuality, whether engaged in by men or women, is described as a divine judgment placed upon those who knowingly suppress the knowledge of God: "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient [proper]"(Ro. 1:28). In that sense, homosexuality within the human race is a symptom of deliberate unbelief.

prohibited from drinking blood or any blood byproduct. Eating carrion (animals that died of natural causes through disease or accident) or meat offered up to idols is forbidden. Animals killed for food must be slaughtered quickly with a sharp blade, so that they do not suffer, and the name of Allah must be ceremonially invoked as they are being slaughtered. Otherwise, eating the meat is illegal. The Muslim is specifically denied the consumption of any form of pork – even in minute quantities.⁹³ Nevertheless, in times of great necessity driven by extreme hunger, a modest consumption of forbidden meat is generally considered to be forgiven by Allah (cf. S2:173).

Punishment for Sharia violations can be extremely harsh in some Islamic societies.⁹⁴ For instance, both male and female thieves, when convicted, can have their right hand cut off. Unmarried couples that engage in fornication are subject to severe public whippings. Likewise, gambling or drinking alcohol are punishable by public flogging. Married women who commit adultery and are convicted of the offense are stoned to death, and male co-defendants could be hanged – although guilt through enticement is commonly placed fully upon the woman. Homosexuals, if and when they are discovered, are summarily executed without exception.

93 It must be noted that consumption of pork as well as the flesh of other “unclean” animals was similarly prohibited in the Old Testament for the Jew in the book of Leviticus 11:7,8 and De. 14:8. Swine in biblical times were ravenous scavengers that ate all sorts of garbage, slime and even fecal matter, which easily spread disease among those who ate the flesh of them. For that reason, swine were considered to be unclean animals and its meat polluted.

94 Many of these harsh penalties also parallel those required for violation of the Law of Moses wherein the death penalty was required for many of its infractions. Even so, God showed mercy to David who was clearly guilty of adultery and murder and yet he lived (cf. 2Sa.12:13). In consideration of the death of Christ for the atonement of human sin, of which we are all guilty, many of these harsh penalties have been tempered in Christian societies in accordance with the grace and mercy demonstrated by Christ (e.g., Jn. 8:3-11). Capital punishment is properly reserved only for more egregious crimes, such as deliberate murder or high treason, while fines and imprisonment are usually enacted for the conviction of lesser crimes (cf. Ro.13:1-7).

Criticizing Mohammad, the Qur'an, or even Sharia law itself makes a person subject to execution. Apostates of Islam (those who convert to any other religion), after being given a brief period of time to repent, are also subject to execution as infidels.

Interestingly, there is no legal mandate of capital punishment for an act of murder. Instead, the murderer's penalty must be decided by the victim's families. They may choose to pardon the killer, to accept monetary compensation (blood money), or to seek execution of the murderer, which the court is then obligated to carry out on their behalf.

Women under Sharia

Women are considered to be inferior to men under Sharia; according to the Qur'an, men were created a degree of perfection above women (cf. S2:228).⁹⁵ Muhammad considered women to lack common sense because their minds are deficient of reason, and he gave them little hope for a favorable afterlife. According to him, Hell will be disproportionately populated with women over men.

Islamic women must be fully submissive⁹⁶ to their husbands as a slave is to a master. If a man considers that he is not getting proper respect, he may order his wife to sleep in a separate bed, and if that does not render her submissive, he may beat her into submission. A husband may legally strike his wife even if he only suspects a degree of presumption in her (cf. S4:34). Domestic violence laws in protection of women cannot be enacted under Islam.

A strict interpretation of Sharia states that only the face and hands of women can be exposed in public, while even stricter interpretations require that the face of women be completely covered

95 The Christian in no way considers a woman to be inferior or lacking in intelligence, but views the woman as being subject to the man's loving guidance and protection as a consequence of God's natural order of creation in which Adam was first created and Eve was afterward created as his helpmeet.

96 Christian submissiveness of women to their husbands is voluntary and in response to her husband's unconditional love for her (cf. Ep. 5:22-25).

as well. Women must always be accompanied by a male relative when they go out in public, and women are not allowed to drive automobiles. Although women may openly testify in a court of law, their testimony is only worth half that of men (S2:228), and a man must receive double the inheritance of women when settling a financial estate (cf. S4:11).

The Qur'an supports polygamy for men.⁹⁷ It allows up to four wives at a time for those men who can afford and are able to manage them (cf. S4:3). Wives are treated as personal property under the ownership and strict authority of their husbands. A man may get rid of any one of his wives if he finds something extremely undesirable about her (cf. S4:129). A man may even marry a young girl prior to her puberty if he chooses to do so (cf. S65:1,4).

Islam permits slavery of both men and women, especially as spoils of war. Not only does Islam permit slavery, slave girls are considered to be sexual property of their owners, and it permits Muslims to freely have sex with female captives in times of war (cf. S4:24).⁹⁸

Religious Practices (Deen)

Unlike biblical Christianity, which expounds God's grace as the sole means of salvation, Islam is a religion of submissive human

97 Christianity demands monogamy for life of one man and one woman in marriage, which was instituted by God through his creation of Adam and Eve.

98 All of this discussion of Sharia sounds quite barbaric to the western mind, but the precise enforcement of Sharia varies somewhat from one sect and nation to another in today's world. Western influence on the Muslim world has resulted in pragmatic changes to Muslim societies, such that many progressive Muslims live a lifestyle that is no longer strictly based upon the traditions of the Hadith, nor do they adhere to strict literal interpretations of the Qur'an. In these societies, women are also given more personal freedom. Even governmental laws in some Islamic lands are beginning to deviate from a strict interpretation of Sharia. This imposing challenge to the Islamic faith at its very core is what has given rise to the resurgence of Islamic fundamentalism by many devout Muslims who violently oppose the western world and its influence on Islam (cf. **Jihad** page 50).

works to gain Allah's favor⁹⁹. These works or duties of obedience are learned through various religious practices (*deen*) to which every Muslim must very strictly adhere. These practices are recognized as the Five Pillars or five principles of Islam. The first principle of Islam is the *Shahadah*, which is a recitation of the Islamic creed declaring that "There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is Allah's Apostle." While the first recitation of the *Shahadah* is all that is required for a recognized conversion to Islam, this creed must thereafter be repeated aloud at every opportunity by a practicing Muslim.

The second principle of Islam is the *Salat* or the saying of prayers that must be offered up seventeen times daily. In Muslim countries, Muslims are also formally called to prayer (*Adhan*) five times a day. The call is given by a *muessin* at specified times from the top of a tower (*minaret*) specifically constructed for that purpose, usually attached to a mosque. It is required that a Muslim ceremonially wash before handling the Qur'an and before prayer. Inasmuch as Islamic prayers involve prostration and sitting on the ground, prayer rugs are commonly utilized to maintain a clean environment.

Islamic prayer beads, referred to as *Misbaha*, *Tasbith*, or *Sibha*, contain ninety-nine beads corresponding to the ninety-nine names of Allah (cf. page 33).¹⁰⁰ Usually only thirty-three beads are used for

99 The biblical Christian believes that salvation comes about by God's grace alone through a God-given faith alone in order that we may accomplish good works that God has before ordained for us to do (cf. Ep. 2:8-10). Good works do not contribute in any way to our salvation but are only viewed as notable evidence of having received it. These works are not rituals, but are practical efforts in promoting the Christian faith and in providing spiritual comfort and material aid to our fellow man.

100 Beads were used in early commerce as a means of counting and calculating totals. This is most evident in the abacus, which was an early calculator consisting of a frame with beads strung on vertical ligaments. Beads have also long been used in various religious rituals as a means of counting rote prayers or meditations. This immediately brings to mind Rosary beads used in connection with the pagan Mariolatry of Roman Catholicism (cf. CRC Book

reasons that will become apparent. Beads are used to keep count during a form of prayer that Muhammad allegedly devised for his daughter. It involves reciting “Glory be to Allah” aloud thirty-three times. Then the count is repeated while reciting “Praise be to Allah.” Lastly the count is again repeated while reciting “Allah is the greatest.” It is usually recommended that a Muslim recite this prayer of praise after each of the five daily ritual calls to prayer. Inasmuch as Muhammad apparently used his fingers to keep count of all things, many Muslims see these beads as an unnecessary innovation and do not regularly use them.

Each Friday at noon, Muslims must gather in a local mosque for corporate prayer with an Imam (cf. page 25) presiding. At this time, the Imam can also offer an important address or *khutba*. During this address the Imam may issue significant expert opinions and interpretations concerning Islamic law called a *fatwa*. At times these opinions may break new legal ground, while at other times they are merely a pragmatic ruling based upon existing law.

The third principle of Islam is the *Sawm* which consists of strictly prescribed periods of fasting. During the entire ninth lunar month of Ramadan all Muslims must fast during daytime hours, eating only at night. Ramadan is chosen for this fast because it is believed that the first few verses of the Qur'an were revealed to Muhammad during this month in AD 610. This fast is brought to a close at the end of the month with the festival of *Eid al-Fitr*, which literally means “festival of breaking of the fast.”

The fourth principle of Islam is the *Zakat* or giving alms of 2.5 percent of one's income to the poor. *Zakat* means “that which purifies.” This obligation is binding upon all who meet a certain criteria for wealth – an evaluation of one's income and the value of possessions. The *Zakat* is collected as a tax, not as a charitable contribution. This collection is then distributed to the poor, new converts to Islam, and to certain Islamic leaders as need dictates. In some Islamic countries this tax is voluntary, but in others such as

Saudi Arabia and Pakistan it is mandatory.

The fifth principle of Islam is the *Hajj* – a pilgrimage to the great mosque in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, which must be completed at least once in a Muslim’s lifetime – if he is at all physically able to do so. Within the courtyard of this mosque is a cubical building that contains a “sacred” black stone allegedly given by Adam to *Jibril*. This stone has been kissed by Muhammad and many faithful Muslims following him. According to Islamic tradition this cubical building was built by Abraham as a temple to Allah. Therefore, this pilgrimage is believed to have been started many centuries earlier by Abraham and Ishmael. This mosque in Mecca, known as the *House of Allah*, is also the location to which Muslims turn when they pray.

Unattainable Assurance

Not unlike many other works-oriented religions, there is no way that a Muslim can ever be assured of having reached the required perfection through works to guarantee him a favorable afterlife despite all of his best efforts.¹⁰¹ However, the Muslim does not commonly recognize this lack of assurance as a problem, but instead considers it a benefit to continually drive him on to even greater obedience. Nevertheless, unlike the atheist who is not concerned with future judgment, the Muslim greatly fears eternal consequences for his failure to reach a complete state of submissive obedience.¹⁰²

Jihad

Jihad is considered to be the ultimate act of submission. The word *jihad* literally means “struggling” or “striving.” This struggling and striving is generally understood by Muslims in three

101 Due to the total depravity of mankind, all religious works to gain acceptance of a perfect Divine Being can only lead to empty delusional pride on the one hand, or to a terrifying fear of failing to measure up to an unattainable standard on the other.

102 This impossible struggle to gain assurance can become most depressing often leading to radical and suicidal thoughts.

different ways:

An Internal Struggle

Jihad can be interpreted allegorically as a personal internal struggle to live up to the teachings of Islam and to strive to understand its deeper meaning. This innovative non-literal interpretation characterizes the thinking of many progressive-minded Muslims of various sects who prefer to represent Islam as a peaceful religion.

An External Defensive Struggle

Jihad can also be interpreted as an external struggle and effort to uphold and protect Islam against all who would discredit or threaten it. Any critical word spoken against Islam or about Muhammad is viewed as a direct threat to the Islamic faith that in turn justifies a firm retaliatory response. This response can take the form of an angry war of words, but at other times it can give rise to deadly acts of violence against the offender. In extreme instances, an offense can result in an Imam issuing a *fatwa* calling for the offender's death.

An External Offensive Campaign

Lastly *jihad* can be interpreted as an unrelenting violent holy war to subdue all unbelievers (*kafirs*) and to expand Islamic influence and territory to create and defend a global Islamic Caliphate. This offensive campaign seeks to protect Islam against the very existence of any who could discredit or threaten it. Any nation, religion, or ideology that in any way obstructs the expansion of Islam is viewed as an existential threat by the very fact that it exists.¹⁰³

103 Today, this includes the Jewish nation of Israel and the entire western world, which is nominally considered to be Christian. This holy war is also waged against other Muslim sects and individuals whose ideology does not fully conform with their effort to reestablish a final caliphate by force. Unfortunately, this radical view of *jihad* has spread throughout various sects of Islam and to individual Muslims through persuasion, compulsion, and force.

The Violent History of Jihad

Regardless of the allegorical interpretation put forth by progressive Muslims today, *jihad* as a means to Islamic expansionism is not a new concept; it is deeply rooted in Islam's earlier history. The Islamic movement of the seventh century was a militant campaign to destroy Roman churchianity¹⁰⁴ at its roots. This resulted in much bloodshed, as Muhammad and both his immediate and later followers destroyed idols and established his religious beliefs by means of the sword.

By the year AD 651, the seven Asian churches recorded in Revelation Chapters 2 and 3, as well as the land commonly known today as Palestine, including the ancient Jewish homeland, were submerged under the violent religious *jihad* of Islam. Large portions of North Africa, including Egypt, were violently overwhelmed by the Islamic religion. The Turks, who dominated Islam at that time, were especially intolerant of Christians – so much so that Islam nearly succeeded in destroying any outward evidence of Christianity as its powerful armies swept both east and west – extending westward into a large area of Spain by 715. The remainder of Europe was preserved from the swarm only when Charles Martel defeated the powerful Muslim army at Tours, France, in 732 – thus ending Islam's relentless advance into Europe.

The Islamic armies then concentrated its efforts on conquering eastern territories. The Byzantium Empire (cf. *CRC Book III*, Chapter 17.10) was submerged under hoards of Islamic militants by the year AD 1081. During this age of Papal power, military crusades were undertaken by the Roman Catholic Church of the west to regain that lost territory. The intended purposes of these crusades were to win back the Holy Lands, Jerusalem, and Constantinople; to protect the Byzantines from the threat of highly militant Seljuk Turks; and to

104 Churchianity is a pejorative term used to describe the aggrandizement of the temporal church such that its non-biblical teachings and social activities are worshiped more than or instead of Jesus Christ.

release eastern Christian inhabitants from the religious oppression of Islam (cf. *CRC Book III*, pages 193-196). Not surprisingly, the Muslim views this effort as an unprovoked attack against a previously-established Islamic state.¹⁰⁵

Muslim View of the Afterlife

In general, Muslims have very little to say about the actual process of dying. However, the Qur'an does speak of the soul of man coming up into his throat (S56:83)¹⁰⁶ at the moment of death. Two angels then come to the dying man or woman, demanding that he or she surrender his or her soul (S6:93).

The Grave

What occurs during and immediately following death is a matter of tradition and much speculation. Many Muslims see the grave (*barzakh*) as a place of sharp interrogation as two angels query the deceased about their Lord, their religion, and their prophet. The proper answers, of course, are: Allah, Islam, and Muhammad. Those who successfully pass this test get a glimpse of paradise as their graves expand to make them more comfortable, while those who fail it feel intense heat from the fires of Hell as their grave narrows to the point of crushing their bones.

In the Hadith, these two angels come and ask what the deceased has to say about Muhammad. Those who witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah have their seat in Hell traded for

105 The very mention of the word “crusade” is offensive to a Muslim inasmuch as “crusade” is derived from the Latin word *crux* which when translated to English is “cross.” The Christian armies that marched into the holy lands to liberate it from Islamic domination carried large crosses along with them that came to be perceived by the Muslim as a symbol of abject hatred – as it is yet today.

106 Perhaps this coming up of the soul into the throat is understood from recognizable gurgling sounds (death rattles) and rapid chest movement as the dying body desperately attempts to swallow and take a series of final breaths.

a seat in paradise. Those who cannot say this with absolute sincerity are doomed to suffer the fires of Hell (see **Hell** page 54). Some Muslims speak of a universal torment in the grave, awaiting believer and unbeliever alike, that differ only in degree.¹⁰⁷

Interim State of the Dead

After a time of testing in the grave, some Muslims believe that the souls of man will go into a sleep state, while the majority believe that the soul remains conscious in the grave.¹⁰⁸ Some believe that the departed's spirit circles his house for a month or so to observe how his belongings are distributed, following which he circles his grave for another year or so to observe his mourners. Ultimately, the spirits of all the dead are gathered together to await the day of universal resurrection and of final judgment (cf. **Final Judgment** page 60).¹⁰⁹

Hell

The Qur'an describes Hell as having a tree that springs out of an abyss of pure fire. Its limbs extend upward and are terminated in heads like those of demons. The occupants of Hell attempt to climb this tree to escape, but they are doused by these demons as they near the top with a mixture of boiling water and are returned to the tree's

107 There is an obvious similarity between this notion of universal torment and the non-biblical Roman Catholic fabrication of purgatory (cf. *CRC Book III*, page 228).

108 "Soul sleep" is an ancient heresy of Christianity. The Bible teaches that only the body sleeps in the grave as it awaits an awakening with the return of its spirit in the resurrection. The soul having left the body remains fully aware either in the presence of Christ for the believer, or in *Sheol* for the unbeliever awaiting the time of final judgment (cf. *CRC Book III*, page 654).

109 There are many variations of these Muslim stories concerning death and life in the grave depending upon whether the person is a believer or an unbeliever. These depressing classic stories are rejected by many of today's Muslims who refuse to speculate about death and the grave. Inconsistencies concerning death prevents many contemporary Muslims from speaking about death or the afterlife altogether.

roots and the eternal fire. Men will beg to be destroyed, but they will be unable to avoid the continual torment. People in Hell are also said to be confined together with long chains, as they wear pitch for clothing, and suffer from burning fire on their faces. They must drink putrid water and will periodically have boiling water poured on them that will melt them inside and out. If they attempt to escape this torment they will be dragged back with iron hooks. There is no escape possible.

Heaven

On the other hand, Heaven in the Qur'an is described as "Gardens of Felicity," in which every desire of its occupants are met. They will drink clear water and partake of every imaginable kind of food and drink as they desire – including wine that is no longer intoxicating. They will also enjoy the companionship of *huri* – young and beautiful women (i.e., chaste virgins).¹¹⁰ The occupants of paradise reside in a peaceful and safe environment where they will never again be accosted by evil or experience the taste of death.

While these graphic descriptions of Hell and Heaven are expressed as a physical reality, not all Muslims understand these two accounts in a literal sense, but rather allegorically. They suggest that there is a reality of pain and pleasure beyond what these accounts describe that cannot be experienced physically and is therefore beyond all mortal comprehension. Moreover, while the duration of life in paradise is seen to be eternal, there is no solid consensus concerning the duration of punishment in Hell. Some say it is eternal and others only see it as continuing for a very long length of time.¹¹¹

110 This is apparently the source of the strange notion that Muslim men who give their life in *jihad* can expect to be received in heaven by seventy-two virgins.

111 One could assume that annihilation or a release of its occupants must occur at the end of that time, but neither is actually stated.

Islamic Eschatology

Islamic eschatology (teachings concerning the end times) can be compared with the eschatology recorded in the Bible book of Revelation, but with very significant differences involving role reversals. It is believed that the time of the end has already been determined, but that it is being hidden away in the mind of Allah (cf. S20:15). This results in a sense of immanency¹¹² regarding the coming final hour (cf. S33:63). In general, many cataclysmic events are seen to accompany the end-times, such as, “When the sun shall be wound round and its light is lost and is overthrown. And when the Mountains shall be made to pass away.” (S81:1,3) and “When the heaven shall be cleft asunder. And when the stars shall be fallen and scattered. And when the seas shall be burst forth.¹¹³ And when the graves shall be turned upside down (and bring out their contents)” (S82:1-4).

Isa, the Muslim caricature of the biblical Jesus, plays an important role in the Muslim end-time scenario.¹¹⁴ In the Qur’an and the Hadith, we read that Isa is presently in heaven standing beside Allah and is waiting for Allah to send him back down to earth. When he returns to earth he will allegedly correct all of the false misconceptions that Christians have about him being divine and all the supposed false statements attributed to Jesus in the New Testament Scriptures. Moreover, after his return, Isa will marry, beget children, die, and be buried near Muhammad in Medina.

112 Dispensational Christians believe that the end-times will begin at a time not disclosed (cf. Mt. 24:36) heralded by a sudden imminent shout of Christ to the earth for his Church to join Him in the heavens (i.e., the Rapture; cf. 1Th.4:16,17).

113 Jesus spoke of a somewhat similar cataclysmic event in his Olivet discourse signaling the time of his second advent (cf. Mt.24:27-30). These events are further detailed in the Bible's book of Revelation.

114 Isa, the Muslim caricature of Jesus as described in the Qur'an, is quite different than the biblical Jesus as we noted earlier. This must be kept firmly in mind as we discuss Islamic eschatology.

There, he must await the universal resurrection of the dead with the rest of mankind (cf. **Universal Resurrection** page 59).

According to many Muslims, a more detailed end-time scenario will take place.¹¹⁵ They envision three major signs heralding the end of human history. The first sign is the coming of the Mahdi, the guided one, or Muslim savior whom we mentioned earlier on page 29. He is a messianic figure and is alleged by the Shi'ite to be the twelfth Imam, a direct descendent of Muhammad, whom we discussed as having vanished in AD 874 at age 5. The Mahdi will come to earth riding upon a white horse exactly as it says in Revelation 6:1,2.¹¹⁶ The Mahdi is expected to arrive during a time of widespread crisis and great turmoil in the world, and his specific mission will be to slaughter all men and women who cannot be forced to worship Allah and convert to Islam. His vast army will go forth from nation to nation to punish all unbelievers of Islam. This army will carry black flags with the word "punishment" imprinted on them.¹¹⁷

The Mahdi will allegedly bring forth rain, wind, peace, and happiness and will be universally revered by everyone. At first, he will make a pact with Israel and the western nations for seven years.¹¹⁸ During that time, the Mahdi will allegedly uncover certain documents that correct the Torah and ancient Christian writings. These will be used to demonstrate to Jews and Christians alike that

115 This Muslim eschatology is a highly twisted interpretation of the end-times as they are recorded in the book of Revelation.

116 The Muslim makes specific reference to this verse of Scripture. Note that the rider of this white horse recorded in Revelation 6 is universally interpreted by biblical Christians as the coming antichrist. The Muslim Mahdi is therefore the biblical antichrist. It may very well be that when the antichrist actually appears on the scene in the future, Muslims will readily accept him as their Mahdi.

117 It should be noted that Muslims involved in the current ISIS movement carry just such a black flag to intimidate and unnerve their victims as they parade through the streets or go into battle.

118 This signing of a peace pact with Israel for seven years further identifies the Mahdi with the biblical antichrist (cf. Da.9:27).

they were wrong about everything, because they had false scriptures. This pact will soon be broken, and Israel will be the first nation to be punished as the Mahdi kills all the Jews and establishes the final Caliphate or kingdom of Islam on earth. He will then set up his throne in Jerusalem on the temple mount.¹¹⁹

The second sign of the end will be the arrival of Isa, the Muslim caricature of Jesus, who is a subordinate of Mahdi.¹²⁰ Isa's mission will be to assist and aid the Mahdi in ordering all Christians to follow the teachings of Muhammad. Isa will be a very radical Muslim arriving at a minaret near Damascus while holding on to the wings of two angels who will fly him down to earth. Isa will pray to the Mahdi, will acknowledge him as Lord, and will also make a pilgrimage to Mecca. He will direct all that follow him to reject the doctrine of the biblical Jesus and accept him as the authentic "Jesus."

Mahdi will establish Sharia Law world-wide, and he will be the ultimate witness on the day of judgment against all non-Muslims. Through him, it is alleged that all remaining Christians will finally admit that the New Testament was wrong. He then will "shatter crosses" as he devastates the corrupt temporal church of that day.¹²¹ Lastly, it is alleged that Isa will be buried next to Muhammad in Medina.¹²²

The third and final sign is the appearance of the Muslim

119 The establishment of the Mahdi's throne in Jerusalem relates directly to the abomination of desolation of Da.9:27; Mt.24:15;Re.13:15. The actions of the Mahdi match the precise description and activities of the biblical antichrist, who rides the white horse of revelation 6:1,2 and is also the beast of Revelation 13:1.

120 When Muslims say they believe in the return of "Jesus" to earth, they are specifically speaking of the return of Isa, not the Jesus of the Bible.

121 The Bible states that the minions of the antichrist will ultimately destroy the corrupt temporal church, which remains after the true Church is removed from the earth to join and be with Christ in the air (cf. Re. 17:3-7,16,17).

122 In this Muslim dialogue, we find that Isa equates perfectly with the false prophet and the beast arising out of the earth as described in the book of Revelation (cf. Re.13:11). Isa is in fact the biblical antichrist's false prophet.

“antichrist” who is referred to by Muslims as *Dajjal*, the great deceiver.¹²³ He will allegedly come down to earth riding upon a mule, and he will be blind in one eye and will have *kafir* (unbeliever) written on his forehead.¹²⁴ *Dajjal* is alleged to be a false miracle worker who blasphemously claimed to be the Son of God. The great army of "Satan" will be led by *Dajjal*, in an attempt to stop the Mahdi and Isa, but the army of "Satan" will be defeated. Isa will then slaughter *Dajjal*.¹²⁵

Universal Resurrection

The Muslim believes in a universal bodily resurrection of all mankind from Adam until the very last soul of mankind is given up.¹²⁶ The time of this resurrection is kept hidden from man, but it will be preceded by a period of extreme moral corruption and signaled by cataclysmic events in the heavens. It will begin with the blast of a trumpet blown by an angel known as *Israfil*. All men will be raised up from their “imperishable seed” in a replicated physical form identical to that in which they had previously lived and died.

123 The Muslim's *Dajjal* or “deceiver” of Islam in fact refers to the “Faithful and True” Jesus Christ of the New Testament (cf. Re. 19:11).

124 This prediction is a terrible parody of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem riding upon a donkey symbolizing peace (cf. Mk. 11:7-11).

125 Note the identity reversals of the biblical God with Satan, as well as the coming false prophet of the antichrist with Jesus Christ in this reversed Muslim scenario of the end times. It is in fact Jesus Christ, the true Son of God, who will emerge victorious in the future great battle of Armageddon, not the Mahdi (the antichrist) and Isa (the false prophet) both of which will be cast alive into the lake of fire (cf. Re. 19:11-21).

126 In contrast, the Bible speaks of two resurrections. The first began with the resurrection of Jesus Christ and will be concluded in a future transport (rapture) of the true Church off the earth. The second resurrection will take place at the end of the Millennial age on earth in which all the reprobate must stand before a great white throne to receive their just sentence prior to being condemned to Hell.

Final Judgment

Some Muslims say that all resurrected mankind will be assembled before the throne of Allah, barefoot, unclothed and totally helpless with a seal over their mouths as they face the hour of final judgment. Regarding the means of this judgment, some say a scale or balance (*mizan*) will be produced, which will weigh a person's good deeds on one side against his or her bad deeds on the other side as they are found recorded in a Book of Deeds¹²⁷. This book is alleged to have been written by two angels that attend each man during his lifetime. One angel observing on his right records good deeds, and the other who is on his left records evil deeds. Those whose scale is heavy with good deeds will inherit salvation and those whose scale is heavy with evil deeds will be sent to Hell.¹²⁸

As a final test, Allah will set up an extremely narrow knife-edged bridge (*sirat*) over the fires of Hell. Those who did not readily pass the test of the scales due to a close balance will be required to cross over this frightful bridge. The more determined and dedicated will cross it with relative ease, thus verifying their faith, while the trembling fearful and unfaithful will lose their balance and fall into the fiery abyss of Hell.¹²⁹

127 Biblical Christians believe in the universal resurrection of the reprobate dead at the end of the millennium just prior to the eternal ages. The books of deeds will be opened, and all men who will not have been found in the lamb's book of life will be judged by their deeds to determine their degree of punishment. All of those who are not found in the lamb's book of life will be cast into the lake of fire to experience eternal torment (cf. Re. 20:11-15; *CRC Book III*, page 656).

128 Many traditional Christians mistakenly think that as long as their good deeds out-way their bad ones, they will be welcomed into Heaven. However, the Bible clearly teaches that even the smallest sin is so condemning that no amount of good deeds can ever atone for it. Only the redeeming blood of Jesus Christ can accomplish that propitiation.

129 It must be noted that many contemporary Muslims reject some or all of these very graphic accounts as mere legend.

Islamic Religious Education

Knowledge is mentioned more than eight hundred times in the Qur'an, where it is often stressed with frequent commands such as, "Allah will exalt those of you who believe and those who have knowledge to high degrees" (S58:11). Islamic education is centered upon religious instruction, wherein the Qur'an is considered to be the primary source of all sound knowledge. The Qur'an's emergence in the seventh century inevitably stimulated a need to read and write¹³⁰ within an Arab society whose knowledge was mostly sustained and advanced through the oral traditions of hearing, memorization, and recitation.

Early Islamic instruction began in what is known as the *kuttab*, whose sole purpose was to teach young male children to read in order to study and recite the Qur'an.¹³¹ These early "schools" were established in mosques, shops, and homes and were specifically directed toward male children as young as four years old. Teachers were very strict, frequently resorting to corporal punishment for laziness, and failure to comply or to live up to expectations. Learning consisted of memorizing and reciting the Qur'an and becoming proficient regarding Islamic practices, fasting, and prayer (cf. Page 47).

Contemporary Islamic Diversity

A great amount of diverse thinking can be found within today's broader definition of Islam. We have already discussed variations of

130 Literacy inevitably develops out of any religion that is established upon written documents. This is true of Judaism's dependence upon the Torah, as well as Christianity's dependence upon the completed Bible.

131 Islam considers young girls, incapable of understanding and embracing all the deeper tenets of Islam, because of their supposed inferior creation and nature (cf. page 46). This bias was recently brought to light to the western world during the rule of the Taliban in Afghanistan, but it exists to some degree in all Islamic societies.

thought held by various sects within Islam (cf. **Sects of Islam** page 26).¹³² We discussed the strict views of fundamentalist Muslims as opposed to the far more liberal allegorical views of progressive Muslims. Many individual Muslims belong to smaller groups or movements that do not conform to any specific Islamic sect, such that they often interpret Islam quite differently than any of the established sects.

Beyond that, individual Muslims may view their faith quite differently than other individual professing believers. There are many who have recited the *Shahadah* and became Muslims who have little or no direct understanding of the central teachings of Islam. Among these are traditional Muslims who outwardly engage in the Five Pillars of Islam (cf. page 47) as a matter of ritual practice, yet have little or no personal knowledge of the Qur'an and its core teachings. Many Muslims do not regularly attend mosques where they could receive this teaching and thus remain unenlightened regarding the central doctrines of Islam.

While the *kuttab* is still present in some Islamic societies (cf. page 61), its very limited reach into secular subjects has resulted in a great need for expanded secular education in order to serve the practical needs of a modern Islamic state. Today's Islamic universities teach mathematics, astronomy, medicine, the sciences, engineering, and many other topics of higher learning.

These universities are also increasingly open to accepting Muslim women who have been denied early religious education on the basis of strict Islamic teaching regarding their supposed deficient intellect (cf. **Women Under Sharia** page 46).

132 Similarly, Christianity as it is broadly defined today is far from being a monolithic religion, composed of many sects and denominations holding to their own distinctive traditions and beliefs. Through the relentless advance of religious liberalism operating within churchianity, many essential Christian core doctrines are being denied and even the veracity of the Bible itself is renounced by those who claim to be Christians. There are many professing Christians who, to their shame, deny the virgin birth and deity of Christ as well as his physical resurrection from the dead.

While many women are still sorely oppressed within strict Islamic regimes, Muslim women in more progressive Islamic societies – especially those in the western world – are not severely burdened with strict Sharia mandates regarding their manner of dress and personal activities – although many freely submit to a less stringent dress code as a tradition and as an expression of their faith.¹³³

The emotional romantic relationship that western societies usually associate with marriage is commonly missing in Islamic societies, yet many Muslim women are married to Muslim men who do not view their wives as personal chattel but instead as valuable partners in life. As a consequence, we find that many Muslim women consider themselves to be happily married. These progressive-minded Muslim women often remain very outspoken in promoting Islam as a peaceful religious faith, while simultaneously deploring the manner in which other Muslim women are being treated in strict Islamic cultures.

The influence of western civilization on Islam and the expansion of knowledge through secular education have resulted in what can best be termed an Islamic transformation movement undertaken by today's progressive Muslims. This movement represents a large number of Muslims worldwide who advocate a shift within Islam away from its radical roots to make it over into a more peaceful and less combative religion, while still maintaining Islam's ritual traditions and core dogmas through symbolic allegory.

A literal interpretation of the Qur'an is what today's so-called Islamic radicals rely upon to authenticate an ideology that promotes violent *jihad*. This ideology is actually derived from a reformation of

133 There are many Christian sects that similarly conform to specific dress codes as an outward expression of their faith. These include the Amish and Mennonites, as well as some holiness groups. None of this conformity to outward dress is biblical inasmuch as God looks upon the inward man, not upon an outer appearance that can be prideful and highly deceptive (e.g., Lu.11:39).

Islam back to its fundamental roots, which encouraged the violent Islamic conquests of the seventh century (cf. page 52).¹³⁴ What today's progressive Muslims actually advocate, then, is not actually Qur'anic reform, but a transformation of Islam away from its fundamental radical roots through an allegorical interpretation of the Qur'an, as well as a far less meticulous conformity to the Hadith.

Summary and Conclusions

As we have discovered throughout this brief analysis, nearly all of the core doctrines of Islam stand in direct opposition to essential core doctrines of biblical Christianity. Moreover, the allegorical interpretation of the Qur'an by many of today's progressive Muslims does not make Islam any more compatible with Christianity; the extreme doctrinal contradictions remain – especially those concerning the deity of Jesus Christ and his mission to redeem fallen men from their self-destructive sin nature.

Therefore, the religion of Islam represents a very serious threat to the historic Christian faith at a theological level that must not go unanswered. This theological threat is the main thrust within a greater spiritual war being waged by Satan and his minions behind the scenes through the perpetuation of various false religions of which Islam is currently the most prevalent.¹³⁵ In order to better achieve his nefarious

134 Whereas the *Protestant Reformation Movement*, driven by a literal interpretation of the Holy Bible, opposed the militant actions and traditions of corrupt Roman Catholicism in expanding and retaining converts, a literal interpretation of the Qur'an has had a reverse effect through an authentication of violent holy war (*Jihad*) to accomplish Islam's goal of expansion and retention.

135 As we discussed in our September 2015 newsletter, all of the world's false religions find their origin in the ancient Babylonian religion, which Satan instituted through Nimrod following the great flood of Noah's day. Satan continues this initial effort through other individuals who, like Nimrod of old, fabricate various other man-made religions. These religions are all based upon attractive works to attain a false sense of personal righteousness. This fabricated righteousness by sinful man is totally unacceptable to our holy God

purposes, Satan has sub-divided Islam into two opposing camps, each of which implements a different approach to Islamic expansionism.¹³⁶ As we have seen, a wide divergence of thought has developed within Islam regarding the method by which the Qur'an and the Hadith should be interpreted. While Muslim fundamentalists hold to a strict literal interpretation of the Qur'an, Muslim progressives promote a far less precise allegorical interpretation. The literal interpretation, which represents original intent, leads fundamentalists to carry out violent acts of death and mayhem against Muslim progressives in defense of Islam's strict fundamental core doctrines. Because Islamic fundamentalists believe that this allegorical interpretation has largely been and continues to be the consequence of strong western societal influence, the western world at large has also become the extended target of their terrorism and violence.

While fundamentalist Muslims have attracted many angry delusional non-Muslim individuals to their cause, and have coerced still others to accept Islamic fundamentalism through force and threats of death, it is progressive Muslims who have been most effective in Islam's overall aim to gain world domination. Global expansionism has largely been perpetuated through Muslim immigration into western nations in increasingly greater numbers. Much of this mass immigration has been a direct consequence of progressive Muslims having fled out of Islamic lands to avoid being severely persecuted by strict fundamentalist Islamic regimes.

While a precise literal reading of the Qur'an and the Hadith, as well as a study of Islamic history, makes it very clear that Islamic *jihad* is not a mere allegory symbolizing an internal struggle within the hearts and minds of Muslims as they fight personal temptation,

who demands a perfect divine righteousness, which only He can provide through an act of unmerited grace as a benefit of the perfect atonement provided by Jesus Christ through his sacrificial death on the cross.

136 The current Islamic movement to gain world domination was discussed in some detail in our January 2016 Newsletter, a reference copy of which has been reprinted in the Appendix of this booklet.

progressive Muslims have come to accept that allegory as fact. As a consequence, they generally oppose any acts of terrorism and have no inclination to overthrow western societies or governments by force. Nevertheless, immigration by Muslim progressives into non-Islamic nations is inevitably followed by a quiet but persistent subversion of host western societies from within, which has been highly effective in eroding well-established Christian principles and values.

Moreover, many mosques around the world remain a breeding ground for reformed Islamic fundamentalism in the very midst of the more peaceful Muslim progressive movement. Many Imams who regularly lead prayers teach directly from the Qur'an and the Hadith, consistently instructing the faithful in literal fundamental Islamic core doctrines as well as strict obedience to *Sharia* law. Imams portray *jihad* as a sacred duty required of all Muslims in order to defend Islam through all means available against those who do not fully conform to the teachings of Muhammad. Therefore, all Muslims who regularly attend such mosques and diligently study the Qur'an for their religious edification are highly susceptible to being subverted into violent fundamentalist radicals regardless of their earlier peaceful inclination.

Although we must take up arms against fundamentalist Muslims who carry out murderous acts of terrorism, hateful anti-Muslim rhetoric, currently expounded by some individuals to incite revengeful violence against all Muslims living in western nations, is totally unacceptable from a biblical Christian perspective. It is very damaging to the peaceful Judaeo-Christian ethic that many western Christians are struggling to defend, and it also tends to generate sympathy for the Islamic cause of universal acceptance by validating all Muslims as innocent victims of religious intolerance.

Having said that, however, Christians must valiantly defend biblical Christianity against the many theological errors and traditions of Islam that are attempting to infiltrate and conquer it from within. Unfortunately, many liberal churches are compromising what remains of their precarious faith by seeking to conform it to various Islamic traditions out of a delusional desire to achieve a broad state of

religious tolerance and to establish a sense of political inclusiveness. Due to the rampant humanism found in today's wide-spread churchianity, many temporal churches are theologically weak and highly vulnerable to being seduced with Islamic dogma and traditions. Some of these churches already practice parallel traditions quite similar to those found in Chrislam (cf. page 31).

This underlying spiritual war, in which biblical Christians find themselves currently embroiled, is not being fought against living people or other nations, who are but pawns in this war, but against a religious ideology that knows no national boundaries and against which material weapons are both inappropriate and useless. As the Apostle Paul said about such conflicts, "... we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ep. 6:12). Therefore, we find that both fundamentalist and progressive camps work to serve Satan's overall purpose, which is to degrade and to ultimately eradicate Christianity through a hostile coup d'etat by the religion of Islam.

Conversely, the increasing number of Muslims in the United States¹³⁷ must also be viewed as a nearby missions field by every evangelical-minded Christian. The Christian mandate is to take the true Gospel to every living man and woman without respect of persons. This good news, which we have so freely received, must also be made available by us to others in hopes of a positive mental response to the end that they become saved from God's inevitable wrath. Most certainly, Muslims cannot be excluded from this Christian mandate; for at a purely human level, they are no different than all other unsaved men and women on earth. All of mankind stands

137 The Muslim population in the United States is widespread, but they constitute the largest non-Christian group in twenty states of the south and the Midwest. According to the Pew Research Center, the 2015 population of Muslims in the United States was around one percent of the total population or about 3.2 million, but that number is projected to more than double by the year 2050 to 8.1 million. The largest concentration of Muslims is presently located in New York City, followed by Dearborn, Michigan, and Los Angeles, California.

condemned under the ancient curse of Adam, and all are in great need of the divine redemption that Jesus Christ has made available to mankind through his atoning death on the cross.

Even so, reaching out to truly devout Muslims with the Gospel in an effort to lead them to accept salvation in Christ is clearly impossible from a purely human perspective. Although a devout Muslim can be very rational regarding science, engineering and various secular matters, he cannot apply that same rationality of thought to his Islamic faith, which is tightly encased within a rigid paradigm of submissive obedience that cannot be breached by human argument. Only God can breach the walls of that rigid paradigm through direct intervention, as He chooses to do so.¹³⁸ Should that paradigm finally crack open and its walls fall to dust, Christian believers are under divine obligation to assist these men and women who escape its prison in every way possible.

As we have previously noted, however, not all Muslims are devout fundamentalists, but are progressive and more contemplative in thought. These individuals are potentially reachable with the Gospel message. Due to the wide diversity of thought found within Islam, it first becomes necessary for a Christian to determine what sort of Muslim they are addressing before presenting the Gospel to them – lest they make false assumptions and charge them with beliefs that they do not personally hold. This classification often takes considerable time and patience to determine through an on-going non-combative dialogue. For that reason, it behooves Christians to develop and maintain friendly relationships with Muslims, whenever and wherever possible, to project a personal witness to the true faith that is within us, such that we may be effective in presenting the Gospel when the opportunity arises.

In order to bridge the theological gap existing between Islam and Christianity, a Christian witness must first have acquired a well-

138 Many Muslims who later converted to Christianity have described a dream in which they saw Jesus Christ as a turning point in their lives that eventually led them to accept the truth of the Gospel.

established knowledge of biblical Christianity obtained through many years of intense personal Bible study. Secondly, he or she must gain a sound working knowledge of basic Islamic beliefs¹³⁹ and have a general understanding of the similarities and vast differences between the two opposing faiths – the primary requisites of which we have attempted to set forth in this booklet.

The two main obstacles that Muslims have standing in the way of their escape from the Islamic paradigm is their adamant rejection of the integrity and authority of the completed Christian Bible and their extremely rigid monotheism that it opposes. Muslims are consistently taught that they cannot trust the New Testament texts of the Bible because they were intentionally chosen and corrupted by early and medieval church leaders to suit their own nefarious prejudices and traditions (cf. **The Bible** page 14). When closely examined, this argument cannot be substantiated by historic evidence, and it is further refuted by the very fact that Muslims pick and choose isolated passages taken out of context from both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible whenever it suits them in refuting well-established Christian doctrine.

The rigid monotheism of Islam (cf. **Islamic Monotheism** page 34) is amply repudiated by the New Testament wherein the Divine Being is clearly revealed throughout its texts as subsisting as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Islamic monotheism clouds the Muslim's mind to any possibility of an incarnation of deity through miraculous divine action. Although Jesus' birth is recognized as miraculous (cf. page 22), the Muslim concept of Jesus (i.e., *Isa*) is only as a human messenger sent from *Allah* to the Jewish nation to conform it to *Sharia* law. Inasmuch as Islam also denies Jesus'

139 Although it is necessary to fully understand opposing faiths in order to aid others in escaping from them, the study of any false religion in great depth can be hazardous to the spiritual lives of professing Christians who are not well grounded in biblical faith. We must be consistently on guard against the effects that such a study may have upon our minds lest we be swayed or contaminated by our close association with false religious doctrine (cf. Jude 1:20-23).

crucifixion, his redemptive death, and his resurrection, Muslims have fully steeled their minds against accepting the truth regarding the will and purpose of God to redeem the human race through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

What Christianity has to offer the Muslim is firm assurance of eternal redemption, amply supplied through divine grace resting firmly upon the full authority of God's very Word and express promise. This far exceeds Islam's depressing lack of hope and assurance, which is repeatedly brought to mind through Islam's rigorous legalism and its futile system of endless ritualistic works.

For that reason, we must constantly pray that God in his infinite mercy will open the minds of Muslims. Unless He chooses to open their minds they will forever remain unperceptive of the Truth contained in the Gospel, such that the eternal destruction so many of them greatly fear becomes inevitable.

Appendix

Bible Book Name Abbreviations

Old Testament

Genesis...Ge.
Exodus...Ex.
Leviticus...Le.
Numbers...Nu.
Deuteronomy...De.
Joshua...Jos.
Judges...Jud.
Ruth...Ru.
1st Samuel...1Sa.
2nd Samuel...2Sa.
1st Kings...1Ki.
2nd Kings...2Ki.
1st Chronicles...1Chr.
2nd Chronicles...2Chr.
Ezra...Ezr.
Nehemiah...Ne.
Esther...Est.
Job...Jb.
Psalms...Ps.
Proverbs...Pr.
Ecclesiastes...Ec.
Song of Solomon...Song.
Isaiah...Is.
Jeremiah...Je.
Lamentations...Lam.
Ezekiel...Eze.
Daniel...Da.
Hosea...Ho.
Joel...Jl.
Amos...Am.
Obadiah...Obad.
Jonah...Jona.
Micah...Mi.
Nahum...Na.
Habakkuk...Hab.
Zephaniah...Zep.
Haggai...Hag.
Zechariah...Zec.
Malachi...Mal.

New Testament

Matthew...Mt.
Mark...Mk.
Luke...Lu.
John...Jn.
Acts...Ac.
Romans...Ro.
1st Corinthians...1Co.
2nd Corinthians...2Co.
Galatians...Ga.
Ephesians...Ep.
Philippians...Ph.
Colossians...Col.
1st Thessalonians...1Th.
2nd Thessalonians...2Th.
1st Timothy...1Ti.
2nd Timothy...2Ti.
Titus...Tit.
Philemon...Phm.
Hebrews...He.
James...Ja.
1st Peter...1Pe.
2nd Peter...2Pe.
1st John...1Jn.
2nd John...2Jn.
3rd John...3Jn.
Jude...Jude.
Revelation...Re.

These abbreviations are used throughout this work followed by the chapter number, and a colon, followed by a verse number. (i.e., Jn.7:13 refers to the book of John, Chapter 7, verse 13). If multiple verses are being referred to, a comma is placed between non-consecutive verses while a dash is placed between the first and last verse of a continuous text. (i.e., Jn.7:13,15 would refer to verses 13 and 15, but not 14). (Jn.7:13–18 would refer to verses 13 through 18). If the notation includes more than one reference, a semicolon is used to separate references. (i.e., Jn.7:13; Mt.2:1 refers to John, Chapter 7, verse 13 and Matthew, Chapter 2, verse 1). In addition, one may occasionally find the abbreviation cf. that means to confer or compare the verses or location that follows this abbreviation with the current text.

The Islamic Campaign for World Dominance

Newsletter, published January 2016 (Revised)

As the year 2016 dawns, the path ahead for mankind appears very bleak with unprecedented political, financial, and religious problems and conflicts on the near horizon, which are vastly overshadowed by acts of extreme religious violence on a global scale. Therefore, it seemed appropriate for us to briefly depart from our ongoing discussion of the temporal church to examine world issues – as we have periodically done in the past – in order to assess the nature of this current threat. In this newsletter we shall discuss the major campaign by Islam to achieve worldwide religious dominance through infiltration and immigration. The movement is being spearheaded through a “holy war” undertaken by radical elements of a sect within the greater religion of Islam. Islam is today's second largest religion and rapidly growing with more than one and one half billion adherents worldwide such that the credibility of its endeavor to achieve global dominance cannot be denied. In the following brief discourse of the origin of the Islamic movement and its rise to immanency, we shall utilize edited excerpts taken from *Comprehensively Reformed Christianity* Book III. Then, we shall move on to address the threat of Islam to the western world's way of life through covert expansionism as well as through intimidating acts of terrorism – both undertaken in the name of the religion of Islam.

Islam was founded by a man named Muhammad. He was born in Mecca in AD 570, into a prominent Hashim family, but he was reared by his uncle upon the death of both his parents and grandparents. On a trip to Syria, he became greatly disturbed by the idolatry and insouciant religious attitudes of Christians that he observed there. Not only was statuary of Jesus, Mary, and various other saints being worshiped as deity by the corrupt Roman church, their worship of God was seen as pragmatic and undisciplined. In hostile reaction, Muhammad established himself as a prophet in AD 610 whereupon he soon began an all out effort to eradicate all forms of idolatry. This

religion is exclusively referred to as Islam today, and its adherents are referred to as Muslims.

The early Islamic movement of the seventh century soon became a militant campaign to destroy corrupt Roman churchianity and all other forms of idolatry at its roots, which resulted in much bloodshed as Muhammad and his followers destroyed idols and established his religious beliefs by means of the sword. By the year AD 651, the seven Asian churches (located in present-day Turkey) that are recorded in Revelation Chapters 2 and 3 finally fell under the Islamic advance. The region commonly known as Palestine, including the ancient Jewish homeland, was also submerged under the fierce religious *jihad* (holy war) of Islam. Large portions of North Africa, including Egypt, were likewise overwhelmed by the Islamic onslaught. The Turks, who dominated Islam at that time, were exceedingly intolerant of Christians. Their violent conquests that had gained them possession of the Holy Lands, and their barbarous treatment of Christians residing in Palestine, would become in large part the motivation behind the bloody Christian crusades of AD 1095-1272 (cf. *CRC Book III*, pages 193-196). Islam had nearly succeeded in destroying any outward evidence of Christianity as its powerful armies swept both east and west – extending westward into a large area of Spain by 715. The rest of Europe was protected from Islamic dominance when Charles Martel defeated the Muslim army at Tours, France in 732 – thus ending the massive advance into Europe. In AD 1453, Ottoman Turks captured the Eastern Christian capitol of Constantinople, which brought the Byzantine Empire to an end (cf. *CRC Book III*, Chapter 17.10). The Ottoman Caliphate thus created existed for 469 years until it was partitioned and brought to an end in 1922 – following World War I.

After the fall of the Islamic Caliphate, Muslims continued to occupy many of the nations of the middle east and began to spread outward into the nations of northern Africa. Today a ring of Muslim dominated nations is beginning to form around the Mediterranean Sea, and Muslim hopes for a restored but even more robust Caliphate is in view. One notable obstacle to the formation of this Islamic Caliphate is

the modern democracy of Israel, which was founded in 1948 through an action of the United Nations. Israel's initial boundaries along the eastern Mediterranean Sea encompassed much less than the area that God had expressly granted to Israel, but it is an area that had been previously occupied by various nomadic Muslim Arab tribes for 1000 years or more. Many Muslim Arabs who had permanently settled in the territory abandoned their homes to avoid living under Jewish rule – preferring instead to live as exiles in surrounding territories that now include the west bank of the Jordan river and a narrow strip of land along the Mediterranean known as Gaza. Muslim leaders had strongly encouraged this mass exodus in order to establish a self-imposed refugee status in surrounding camps, which could be manipulated as grounds for the ousting of Israel and the establishment of Muslim sovereignty over all of Palestine. Disputes over ownership and control of the holy city of Jerusalem have become a major obstacle to any talks of political peace between Israel and her Palestinian neighbors. Israel is viewed by all Muslims as an impediment to the establishment of a future Caliphate that already has its foundations anchored in Jerusalem. The massive Islamic Dome of the Rock covering a rock formation in Jerusalem where Muslims believe that Muhammad ascended to heaven is co-located with the Al-Aqsa Mosque, which is considered to be the third most holiest site of Islam.

While the planned future Caliphate is forming in the middle east around the Mediterranean Sea, a well-planned dispersion of Muslim populations around the world is also underway to gain an eventual world-wide dominance of Islam. This dispersion commonly takes place through simple immigration. Some Muslim immigrants flee from oppressive governments in fear of their lives, while others seek to immigrate with the express purpose of expanding Islam worldwide. Regardless of their motive, when Muslim immigrants arrive in a host nation, they at first keep themselves separate from its citizens to avoid conflict. When they have gained sufficient numbers through additional immigration, they establish a Muslim enclave within the host nation and begin to recruit converts from the surrounding population. Then

comes the building of mosques enabling them to establish a strong religious anchor. Overtime, these enclaves grow into cities and from there they seek to overwhelm regional governments. At that point, they could exercise newly acquired political power to fundamentally transform an entire nation into an Islamic Caliphate. We should note that expansionism is an inevitable consequence of holding to a religious belief that is considered to be the only legitimate one for all of mankind. In that sense, this activity is not all that much different than that of Christian immigrants and foreign missionaries who for many centuries have sought to convert the world to Christianity – most often by peaceful means, but deplorably in earlier times through the use of militant abusive force (cf. *Global Expansion of Roman Catholic Churchianity*, CRC Book III, Chapter 17.11).

By the year 2000, Islam's attempt at world dominance was already well underway through the infiltration of western nations of Europe and the Americas with large numbers of Muslims through both legal and illegal immigration over national boundaries. This incursion was coupled with an active recruitment of disgruntled citizens within those nations. Early recruitment in the United States was especially targeted to the African American population that was made susceptible through the relentless preaching of black liberation theology (cf. *CRC Book III*, pages 336, 414) from a large number of their church pulpits. Many were easily led to believe that Islam was the original faith of their forefathers in Africa before Christianity had been forced upon them in a nation where they were still being held in virtual slavery by a white society and its oppressive laws. Today, the Islamic movement has expanded its enlistment tactics to gain recruits from every conceivable race and ethnic background. The Internet and Social Media have greatly facilitated this recruitment success, and the inherent obscurity of Internet Media has made it easy for radical elements to plan subversive activities undetected.

Muslim infiltration of the United States has on the surface been a peaceful one, inasmuch as most of these Muslims have immigrated from extremely severe Islamic regimes that had endangered their lives.

However, their growing presence in a nation that was built upon Christian faith and ethics has produced a subversive stress on the U.S. Constitution due to the clash of radically opposing cultures and religious values. Unlike many immigrants of the past who retained their ethnicity yet became Americanized over time, there is no intent by American Muslims to assimilate into civil society. The religious divide for them is far too vast to overcome.

There is a large number of today's Muslims who advocate a change within Islam to make it a more peaceful and less combative religion. Whereas the Christian reformation movement, driven by a literal interpretation of the Bible, opposed the militant errors of Roman Catholicism, a literal interpretation of the Qur'an is precisely what today's so-called Islamic militants use to authenticate their violent ideology. This "radical" ideology is actually a reformation of Islam back to its elemental roots. What moderate Muslims actually advocate, then, is a transformation movement – away from Islam's fundamental roots toward a more liberal allegorical interpretation of the Qur'an. Nevertheless, U.S. mosques remain a breeding ground for Islamic fundamentalism. Imams who lead prayers and teach Islamic doctrine from the Qur'an and the Hadith in American mosques consistently teach Sharia law (cf. *CRC Book III*, page 515) as well as portray *jihad* as a sacred duty required of all Muslims. Indeed, they would neglect their religious calling if they did not do so. A literal reading of the Qur'an and the Hadith as well as Islamic history makes it very clear that *jihad* is not a mere allegory symbolizing an internal struggle within the hearts and minds of Muslims as they fight personal temptation. Nevertheless, peace-loving transformational Muslims have come to accept that allegory as fact. They have no inclination to overthrow the U.S. government by force and in that sense they represent no direct threat to civil society. Even so, they are hard at work to gain full acceptance of Islam as a peaceful religious faith on a par with or superior to Christianity. Hidden within this outwardly peaceful agenda, is the real threat to western society.

Atheists and progressive humanists, who are so busy in their

attempts to eradicate Christianity in the United States, do not differentiate one religion from another and have no idea what is really at stake – they lump all religions together like they are but superstitious fraternities that do not particularly like each other. In the interest of so-called “religious tolerance” and in hopes of promoting some form of secular understanding, Islamic dogma is rapidly finding its way into the nation's public school systems, colleges, and universities through specially designed religious courses that easily subvert the nation's spiritually-naive youth away from a sound Christian foundation and moral ethic. Western legal systems are likewise being infiltrated with opinions from Islamic law.

The more radical Shi'ite sect within fundamentalist Islam believes in the advent of a hidden twelfth Imam. This Imam's name is Abu al-Qasim Muhammad or Muhammad al Mahdi. Mahdi means savior or messiah. The Mahdi's return is expected to be accompanied by a series of extreme chaotic events that will take place during a span of three years. Shi'ite Muslims of a more zealous disposition believe that they must initiate that state of chaos themselves through overt and covert means in order to bring in the twelfth Imam and the final Caliphate under his rule. Iran is currently ruled by this sect.

The world at large was slowly awakened to this violent aspect of Islam as the twentieth century was coming to a close. On February 26, 1993, a group of Islamic conspirators headed up by Sheik Omar Abdel-Rachman attempted to topple tower one of the World Trade Center of New York into tower two with a 1500 pound urea-nitrate bomb planted in a rented Ryder van. Six people died, and one thousand more were injured in the explosion. All of the conspirators were caught and sentenced to long prison terms, and most citizens falsely assumed that this violence had been isolated to one small radical group of Muslims.

Throughout the next decade, however, Muslims continued to fund and execute still more attacks against United States interests abroad in the world. At the end of the Twentieth Century, a radical Muslim group founded by Osama bin Laden and known as Al-Qaeda sprung up out

of the earlier war with Russia in Afghanistan. Its primary goals were the establishment of Sharia law throughout the world, the elimination of Israel as a political state, and the political unification of all nations under a restored Caliphate. It was not until the World Trade Center was successfully attacked and destroyed on September 11, 2001 by Islamic terrorist members of Al-Qaeda using hijacked commercial airliners as missiles that Americans became seriously concerned about the imminent threat of Islam. Since then, the United States has been involved in wars in Afghanistan and Iraq in an effort to eradicate Al-Qaeda. Osama bin Laden was killed in a U.S. commando attack in Pakistan in May of 2011, but his many followers remained to spread their murderous venom elsewhere.

Much like Hydra, the mythological multi-headed monster, as one head of radical Islam is cut off more groups with new leaders spring up to take its place. A modern Salafist movement within the Sunni sect is the source of much of today's violent activity within Islam. It views brutality and terrorism as a perfectly valid means of waging militant *jihad* until the whole world finally submits to all the demands of Islam. Fueling this call for violence, the radical Muslim believes that there is only one sure way to enter paradise and that is by giving his own life to further the Islamic cause by killing the enemies of Allah. Therefore, the term "radical Islam" is precisely descriptive, inasmuch as "radical" accurately describes the Islamic core doctrine of *jihad* that the radical Salafist group embraces. Extremist elements of radical Islam have expanded *jihad* from organized warfare to include individual acts such as suicide missions and suicide bombings. Although Islam does not condone suicide, it is being justified by radicals because it simultaneously murders non-submissive "infidels."

By 2003, a modern Salafist jihadist group known as ISIL or *Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant* came into being to compete with Al-Qaeda (Levant is a previous name for the geographical area of the middle east that is now occupied by Lebanon, Syria, and Israel). As civil war broke out in Syria in 2013 arising from persistent Syrian citizen protests and subsequent severe government crack-downs over

the previous two years, ISIL hijacked the revolution establishing what is provisionally known today as ISIS or the *Islamic State of Iraq and Syria*. Muslim Iraq, which was greatly weakened by the U.S. pullout of troops at the conclusion of the Iraq War, rapidly lost a large portion of its northern territory to this rapidly expanding fundamentalist Sunni force whose intent was and is to establish an Islamic Caliphate in Iraq and Syria, further expand it to encompass the middle east, and ultimately the entire world. ISIS is currently funded by the sale of captured oil reserves supplemented by human trafficking and ransoms received from the kidnappings of various western nationals. It has committed barbaric atrocities that far exceed those committed earlier by Al-Qaeda from which it was spawned. Many Christians as well as various other religious minorities in Iraq – and even other Muslims that differ in any way from their extreme religious views – have suffered brutal deaths at their hands.

On the night of September 22, 2014 a loose coalition consisting of the United States and five Arab nations mounted a limited air attack on Raqqa, the home base of ISIS located within war-torn Syria. France, Canada and a few other nations later unenthusiastically joined this coalition. While some progress has been made in recovering captured territories in northern Iraq, ISIS is rapidly advancing their radicalism into other nations. This progress was recently aided by a vast flood of refugees that came out of Syria when Russia began determined bombing efforts in support of the Assad regime. All nations of Europe have been overwhelmed by this sudden influx of Muslims, which threatens to undermine their national sovereignty.

A coordinated attack on Paris, France occurred on November 13, 2015 wherein 130 persons were killed and another 391 were injured thus terrorizing French citizens. One or more of the attackers was from Syria and had entered France hidden within the flood of refugees fleeing the Syrian civil war. Stating humanitarian concern, U.S. President Barack Obama has authorized the acceptance of ten thousand of these refugees into the United States over the next year, and quite likely more in the future. The increased terrorist risk to the

U.S. homeland as a consequence of accepting large numbers of Muslim refugees from Syria, where the ISIS movement is currently centered, has caused many state governors and congressmen to oppose this vast influx of refugees. However, immigration-control is within the sole jurisdiction of the federal administration – as it is written in the Constitution of the United States. The first amendment to the constitution guarantees freedom of religion such that the federal government cannot pass any law to promote a particular religion or prevent the free exercise of another. Although this amendment applies specifically to U.S. citizens, a religious test for immigrants has never been established on that same basis. Admission of nationals from enemy nations can be banned in times of war, but this is not applicable to the present immigration issue since no national war has been declared.

It only takes one or two determined terrorists to take many innocent lives. Case in point: on December 2, 2015, two radicalized Muslim terrorists, Syed Rizwan Farook and his wife Tashfeen Malik, opened fire with assault rifles at a Christmas office party that was taking place at the Inland Regional Center in San Bernardino, California. Fourteen people were killed and twenty-one were wounded. Farook was a natural-born U.S. Citizen, but his wife of two years was a recent Pakistani who had entered the United States on a fiance' visa. Both were later killed in an intense shootout with local police as they attempted to escape from their rented apartment in a van. Whereas earlier converts to radical Islam traveled to Syria and Iraq to engage in the front lines of the ongoing *jihad*, they are increasingly being told to stay at home to commit terrorist acts locally. So-called sleeper cells already lie in wait in every state of the United States. If they all or even most of them should successfully execute simultaneous attacks, the effect upon the perceived security of the nation would be devastating and could induce a state of national panic. Since many radicalized individuals are U.S. citizens with no criminal record, they are very hard to detect ahead of committing a terrorist act. Some express their violent intent in American mosques, but the loyal

Muslim religious society is reluctant to report such inclinations to civil authorities. Some may be submissively sympathetic to this rhetoric, while others are fearful lest they could become its target.

We can fully expect radical Islamic acts of terrorism to increase worldwide not only in quantity but in severity as the radical Islamic movement gains access to more sophisticated weapons. Shi'ite dominated Iran is very close to developing its own nuclear weapons, and Israel is its first declared target. Nuclear, chemical, and very likely biological weapons are already being stockpiled and traded among various other rogue nations around the world. It is inevitable that radical Islamic groups will eventually obtain nuclear weapons in a light portable form, and they will have no qualms against using them to further their global *jihad*. When that occurs, all non-radicalized nations of the world must bury all political differences and band together to defeat the common enemy.

The close association of western, Islamic, and Asian nations required to combat this global threat, as well as the delusional fear of man-induced global climate change, could eventually lead to the collapse of nationalism altogether – resulting in the formation of a powerful one-world government to put down all opposition to “necessary” international edicts. Depending upon the outcome of the current Islamic conflict, this global government could be forced to adopt Sharia law to bring Muslims on board – or conversely, adopt a rigid form of socialism to retain very strict international control. Either way, a very strong leader will be needed to head it up; the world would be fully disposed to receive the ultimate antichrist of Revelation 6 as that leader (cf. 1Jn.2:18; Re.6:2). Indeed, we may be on the very threshold of great apocalyptic events.

© Arthur J. Smith, January 2016, Revised October 2016

**Glossary of Islamic and
Related Terms**

Abu Bakr: first Caliph following Muhammad according to Sunni tradition

Adhan: formal call to prayer (*salat*) five times daily – second pillar of Islam

Adn: a garden paradise in Heaven where Islam states that Adam was created

Ahmadiyya: a sect of Islam that originated in India and whose founder claimed to be the coming Mahdi

Ali: **1)** son of Abi Talib, the first cousin of Muhammad – recognized by Shi'ites as the true successor to Muhammad; **2)** the fourth Caliph of the Sunni sect

Allah: Arabic name for the Divine Being

Al-Aqsa: the “farthest mosque,” which stands next to the great *Dome of the Rock* presently covering the temple mount in Jerusalem

Al-Qa'ida: an Islamic terrorist network providing support and training to a great number of terrorist groups and cells opposing the western world and its lifestyle

Angels: sinless spirit beings created by *Allah* out of light

Ayat: Arabic word for numbered verses found in the Qur'an

Barzakh: **1)** Arabic word for “barrier;” **2)** the barrier between this world and the spirit world; **3)** death – or the grave

Caliph: **1)** Arabic for successor; **2)** absolute spiritual leader of an Islamic theocracy claiming direct succession from Muhammad

Chrislam: a religion originating in Nigeria proposing to harmonize Islamic tradition with the traditions of Christianity

Muhammad: most revered as the final prophet of Allah

Caliphate: jurisdiction or theocratic government of a Caliph

Dajjal: **1)** Arabic for “liar” or “deceiver;” **2)** name for the Islamic “antichrist” – the great deceiver of the last days

Deen: **1)** Islamic way of life; **2)** required religious practices

Druze: a minor sub-sect of Islam whose monotheistic religion is based upon the teachings of the ancient philosophers

Eid al-Fitr: name for the feast ending the great fast of Ramadan

Fatwa: expert opinion of Islamic law given by an Imam relating to

its application

Hadith: the second most revered writing of Islam (referred to as the *Sunna* by Sunni Muslims – foundational to all Islamic practice)

Hajj: Pilgrimage to Mecca – the fifth pillar of Islam

Hanibal: one of four Sunni schools of Islamic thought

Hanifa: one of four Sunni schools of Islamic thought – named after its founder Abu Hanifa

Hijrah: 1) Arab word meaning “migration;” 2) Muhammad's migration from Mecca to Medina in AD 622; 3) religious holiday marking the beginning of a Muslim New Year

Iblis: a *Jinn* who lived amongst the angels in heaven, but rebelled against Allah when he refused to bow down to Adam and was expelled from heaven – commonly referred to as *Shaitan* (Satan).

Imam: 1) Arab word for “leader;” 2) a man who leads prayers in a local mosque, and is an authority on Islamic law and theology.

Isa: Arabic name for Jesus, who is viewed as a great Muslim prophet

Ishmael: the first son of Abraham by Hagar, Sara's handmaiden

ISIL: *Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant* which came into being to compete with Al-Qaeda when it was weakened by earlier western military efforts – see Levant

ISIS: *Islamic State of Iraq and Syria;* a preliminary effort to make way for ISIL in the near future (see ISIL).

Islam: 1) “submission” to Allah – derived from a root word, *salema*, meaning submission, obedience, peace, and purity; 2) name for the global religion founded by Muhammad

Isma: 1) Arab for “preservation;” 2) divinely protected from committing any sin

Isra'il: the angel of death

Irafil: an angel whose primary purpose is to signal the resurrection of the dead

Ja'fari: a school of Islamic thought founded by Ja'far as-Sadiq, the sixth Shi'ite Imam; this teaching is followed by Shi'ite twelvers as well as some Ismailis and a few Zaydiyyah

Jesus: see “Isa”

Jibril or Jibreel: 1) Arabic word for “archangel”(an Arabic variant of Gabriel); 2) the angel who allegedly recited the Qur'an to Muhammad in the cave *Hira*, in 610AD

Jihad: 1) Arabic word for “struggle;” 2) an Islamic Holy War – may be fought with words or weapons

Jinn: an invisible spirit being created by Allah out of fire

Kafir: 1) Arabic word meaning “to hide;” 2) word used for “unbeliever”

Khadija: name of the first wife of Muhammad

Khutba: an important religious address delivered by an Imam

Koran: 1) transliterated name for Qur'an; 2) Title given to English translations of the Qur'an

Kuttab: an Islamic school to teach young male children to read, study, and recite the Qur'an

Levant: a previous name for the geographical area of the middle east now occupied by Lebanon, Syria, and Israel

Mahdi: 1) Arabic word meaning “a guide;” 2) a coming “guided one” who will be a world leader that will enforce global righteousness and peace in the end times

Malik: one of four Sunni schools of Islamic thought, named after its founder Malik ibn Anas

Maryam: Arabic word for Mary, the mother of Jesus (Isa)

Mecca: city in Saudi Arabia – birthplace of Muhammad and destination of the Hajj

Medina: second most revered city in Saudi Arabia after Mecca where Muhammad fled with his followers in AD 622

Mikael: Arabic for Michael – the angel of providence and the guardian of Israel

Minaret: a high tower, usually attached to a mosque, constructed with a small platform at the top from which the faithful are called to prayer

Mi'raj: the mysterious night journey of Muhammad from Mecca to Jerusalem aboard the back of a strange mule-like animal and his

ascension into the seven heavens

Misbaha: Islamic prayer beads also known as *Tasbeeth*, or *Sibha*

Mizan: 1) Arabic word for a “scale” or “balance;” 2) In Islamic teaching a balance used in the time of judgment weighing a person's good deeds against their bad deeds to determine their entry into Heaven

Mosque: a building constructed for the gathering of Muslims to pray and worship Allah every Friday and at other appointed times

Muhammad: the high prophet and founder of the religion of Islam – also known as Mohammed, Mohammad, Mahomet, and Mahound

Muessin: the man chosen to give the call to prayer from a Minaret five times daily

Mujahidin: Muslims engaged in an Islamic holy war (see *jihad*)

Mumin: an Islamic believer who observes the commandments of the Qur'an as opposed to an unbeliever

Muslim: 1) literally “one who submits” to Allah; 2) an individual who strictly adheres to the Qur'an and the teaching of Muhammad

Qur'an: 1) Arabic word meaning “recitation;” 2) the Holy Book and source of Islamic religious authority written in Arabic and alleged to have been recited to Muhammad through the angel *Jibril* from an original document remaining in heaven

Sadaqa or Sadaqah: Arabic word for “charity” – a collecting of alms for the needy above that required for the *Zakat*

Salafism: a nineteenth-century ultra-conservative Sunni reform effort advocating a return to the harsh Islamic traditions and practices of Islam's “pious ancestors” consisting of the first three generations of Muslims; the underlying belief of the current ISIS movement

Shafi: one of four Sunni schools of Islamic thought named after its founder Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i

Salat: 1) saying of prayers to be offered up seventeen times daily; 2) a formal call to prayer five times a day in Muslim countries – the second pillar of Islam

Salema: 1) Arabic word meaning peace, purity, submission, and

obedience; **2)** root word from which the word *Islam* is derived

Sawm: prescribed periods of fasting during Ramadan – the third pillar of Islam

Shahadah: recitation of the Islamic creed declaring that “There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is Allah's Apostle” – the first pillar of Islam

Shaitan: Arabic name for Satan

Sharia or Shariah: **1)** Arabic word meaning “the path to a watering hole;” **2)** Islamic law based upon the Qur'an and the Hadith (Sunna)

Shi'ite: the second largest Islamic sect after the Sunni.

Sirat: **1)** Arabic word for “bridge;” **2)** an extremely narrow knife-edged bridge set over the fires of Hell in the final judgment of mankind

Sufism: a small mystical movement within Islam seeking to attain personal unification with Allah through divine love

Sunna: the Sunni Muslim's word for the customs found in the Hadith

Sunni: the majority sect of the religion of Islam – name derived from the *Sunni*, which is the Sunni sect's name for the Hadith

Sura or Surah: Arabic word for chapter divisions found in the Qur'an

Taliban: a fundamentalist Islamic militia, enforcing a strict Muslim code of conduct, which was established an Islamic government in Afghanistan in 1996

Twelfth Imam: the final Caliph and twelfth blood descendent of Muhammad, which disappeared at age 5 in AD 874 – Shi'ite Muslims believe he will come again in the last days as a messianic figure

Wahhabis: a small sub-sect of Islam, representing the very radical wing of the Shi'ite sect that advocates continuous violent *jihad*

Zakat: **1)** Arabic word meaning “that which purifies” **2)** the forth pillar of Islam, requiring giving alms (*Sadaga*) of 2.5 percent of one's income to benefit the poor

Alphabetical Index

Abraham	18	Demons	38
Adam	39	Divine Being, the	32
fall of.....	40	Allah.....	32
Afterlife, the	53	Dome of the Rock	20
al-Aqsa mosque	20	Eschatology	56
Allah	32	Fasting	49
ninety-nine names of.....	33	Final Judgment	60
Alms	19, 49	Folk Islam	30
giving mandated.....	49	Garden of Eden	39
Angels	38	Gospel of Barnabas	17
creation of.....	38	Grave, the	53
Baha'i	31	activity in.....	53
Bible, the	14	Hadith, the	14
alleged alteration of.....	15	Heaven	55
opposition to.....	15	Hell	54
selective acceptance of.....	15	torment of.....	54
Black Muslim Movement	30	Holy Spirit, the	36
Caliph	25	Imam	25, 49
Chislam	31	the twelfth.....	57
Conversion to Islam	10	Imams	28
Creation	36	Isa	22
of Adam.....	39	ascension of.....	23
of angels.....	38	return of.....	58
of Eve.....	40	the Muslim Jesus.....	21
of Jinn.....	38	virgin birth of.....	22
of the Earth.....	37	Ishmael	18
of the universe.....	37	Islam	7
Creed of Islam	9	Caliphate.....	25
Cross, the	25	conversion to.....	10, 48
Crusades, the	52	five Pillars of.....	48
Charles Martel.....	52	monotheism.....	34
Cross, the.....	53	sects of.....	26
Death	53	Ahmadiyya.....	31
interim State of.....	54	Druze.....	30

Shi'ite.....	28	alleged miracles of.....	20
Sufism.....	29	as intercessor.....	42
Sunni.....	27	ascension of.....	20
Wahhabis.....	27	birth of.....	18
threat to Christianity.....	64	death of.....	9
Islamic		ministry of.....	19
creedal statement.....	9, 48	prophetic call of.....	19
diversity.....	61	sinless nature of.....	21
education.....	61, 62	the night journey.....	20
immigration.....	26	Muslim Prophets	17
prayer beads.....	48	from the Bible.....	18
religious practices.....	47	Isa.....	21
transformation movement.....	63	Jesus.....	18
Ismailis	29	Muhammad.....	18
Jesus	21	Muslim Women	46, 63
ascension of.....	23	dress codes.....	46, 63
crucifixion of.....	24	inferiority of.....	46
death of.....	23	legal standing of.....	47
Jibril ... 11, 13, 20, 22, 36, 38, 50		progressive.....	63
Jihad	50	submission to husbands.....	46
an external struggle.....	51	violence against.....	46
an internal struggle.....	51	Nation of Islam	30
an offensive campaign.....	51	Pilgrimage	50
history of.....	52	Pillars of Islam	48
Jinn	38	Hajj.....	50
creation of.....	38	Salat.....	48
Mahdi	29	Sawm.....	49
Mahdi, the	57	Shahadah.....	48
Maryam (Mary)	22	Zakat.....	49
Mikael	38	Polygamy	47
Moses	20	Prayer	48
Muhammad	7	Prayer rugs	48
alleged biblical authentication		Qur'an, the	11
of.....	19	compilation of.....	11

surras of.....	13	gambling.....	44, 45
translations of.....	13	homosexuality.....	44, 45
Resurrection	59	inferiority of women.....	46
of Jesus.....	25	lesbianism.....	44
of the dead.....	59	murder.....	44, 46
Salafism	28, 79	punishment for offenses.....	45
Salvation	42	sodomy.....	44
Satan	38, 39	theft.....	44, 45
Seven heavens, the	20, 36	Sin	41
Sharia	43, 58	denial of sin nature.....	41
abortion.....	44	Slavery	47
adultery.....	44, 45	Sura	13
alcohol.....	45	Twelfth Imam, the	57
apostates of Islam.....	46	Twelvers	28
dietary laws.....	44	Unattainable assurance	50
drinking blood.....	45	Zaydiyyah	29
fornication.....	44, 45		