

*Middle Eastern History
and
the Emergence of Islam*

By

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Chapter One:

Introduction & The Beginning of Middle Eastern History

This study is aimed at providing you, the reader and student, with an overall perspective of Islam. Islam, without doubt, is the most intensely anti-Christ religious system in the world today. The only other belief systems that might eclipse its anti-Christ perspective are Secular Humanism and Marxism. Therefore, the need for including Islam as one of the major worldviews contending with the biblical worldview is obvious to us today. Its oppression, terror, and animalistic brutality practiced by its adherents places it in the same category with the Nazis and the Marxists of totalitarian regimes such as the former Soviet Union, as well as present day Cuba, North Korea, and China. Thus, both in Communist countries and those which are ruled and dominated by Islamic fundamentalists, Christians are routinely persecuted, and the freedoms we so take for granted (e.g., freedom of speech, the right to assemble, a free press and freedom to worship openly) are either completely denied, or seriously abridged.

Many today have tried to portray Islam as a 'peaceful religion'. However, in truth, Islam is anything but peaceful. Now to be sure, there are peaceful Muslims the world over who want nothing to do with the Islamic terrorists, or Islamic terrorism. But the religion itself, as presented in the Quran and the Hadith, is one of violence, oppression, and brutality toward those who don't accept it, or agree with it. This is especially true where and when Sharia, Islamic law, is enacted as the law of the land. Testimonies abound of former Muslims who have come to Christ and have actually risked their lives by becoming a Christian and confessing Jesus as their Lord and Savior. In fact, Sharia provides for and invokes a father or family member to kill another family member who becomes a Christian, and in those countries where Sharia is the 'law of the land', nothing will be said or done to those who kill their Christian family member. For us here in the United States, and in the Western civilized world as a whole, the above act would be comparable to us killing a stray dog or cat that was troubling our family. The difference is that here in America, there are places that have more protection for a stray animal and

greater consequences for killing one, than there is protection for and consequences attending the persecution and killing of a believer in Muslim countries.

Our approach to this study, therefore, is going to be threefold: **Origin, Beliefs, & History**. With regard to the **Origin** of Islam, we will be taking an overview of Middle Eastern History in order to see Islam in its proper context. In our analysis of the **Beliefs** of Islam, we will be looking at not only the Quran and Hadith, but also the commentary of a Muslim scholar, Abdullah Yusuf Ali, who gives a first hand perspective of what Muslims actually believe and practice. In addition, where it is appropriate and helpful, we will also be examining the Arabic itself to get a better understanding of what is actually being taught and believed. In the **History** section, we will be looking at the spread of Islam over the centuries and how it has impacted the peoples and cultures that have come under its influence and dominance, and how all of these events have contributed to the current Islamic terrorism we are facing today.

As I said at the beginning of this introduction, Islam is the most anti-Christ religious belief system in the world today. This study will show in part why it is, and how we who are believers in Christ can approach and confront it, not only for our own benefit and understanding, but also for the benefit, understanding, and deliverance of Muslims from this great darkness. As has been said before, there is absolutely NOTHING beneficial about being ignorant and uninformed, and this is especially true regarding Islam. So, may the Lord bless you and fill you with His wisdom as we enter into this study, and may the Lord open your spiritual eyes to see “the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:7).

I. The Eternal, Triune God

The Bible begins with the following verse: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). The word for beginning is בְּרֵאשִׁית (bērē’sît), and it is referring to the beginning of time as we understand and measure time from a human perspective. Then follows the method and manner in which the Lord brought about the existence of space and matter. The word “heavens” is referring to the entire universe beyond the planet earth, including space and both the visible and invisible elements that

make up space. This is very important in our understanding of the origin of time and matter in that God brought both about. The word for “created” is בָּרָא (bārā’), and in essence it means that God created the universe out of nothing. That is, there was nothing “in the beginning” of creation except God, and He brought all existence into being, including time, space, and matter. And we know that even space itself is made up of molecules and atoms that are invisible to the naked eye.

Thus, God brought everything that exists into being, and this was done through the person of Christ: “And He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have been created by Him and for Him” (Colossians 1:15-16). In addition, we are also told that Christ is God: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being” (John 1:1-3). Consequently, as we look at these two passages, we see that Christ is our eternal God through Whom everything that “came into being,” that is, everything that has been made that was not eternal in nature, was brought into existence through Christ. Why is this so important to understand? It is essential because of the fact that Islam does not see Jesus as God, but rather simply as a man, through whom God did a powerful work in pointing men to His righteousness, but Jesus was ONLY a man, according to Islam.

As a consequence of Islam’s view of Jesus, they naturally and quite vigorously deny the Trinity:

O People of the Book! Commit no excesses in your religion: Nor say of Allah aught but the truth. Christ Jesus the son of Mary was (no more than) an apostle of Allah, and His Word, which He bestowed on Mary, and a spirit proceeding from Him: so believe in Allah and His apostles. **Say not “Trinity”: desist: it will be better for you: for Allah is one Allah:** Glory be to Him: (far exalted is He) above having a son. To Him belong all things in the heavens and on earth. And enough is Allah as a Disposer of affairs. (Surah 4:171)

They do blaspheme who say: **Allah is one of three in a Trinity:** for there is no god except One Allah. If they desist not from their word (of blasphemy), verily a grievous penalty will befall the blasphemers among them. (Surah 5:73)

Neither do they see the Holy Spirit as being God, but rather they view Him as being the Angel Gabriel. This in turn takes away any divine status that might be attached to the Holy Spirit, and simply places Him as a created entity, thus, the created Angel Gabriel:

Say: Whoever is an enemy to Gabriel—for he brings down the (revelation) to thy heart by Allah's will, a confirmation of what went before, and guidance and glad tidings for those who believe – Whoever is an enemy to Allah and His angels and apostles, to Gabriel and Michael—Lo! Allah is an enemy to those who reject Faith. (Surah 2:97-98)

Say, the Holy Spirit has brought the revelation from thy Lord in Truth, in order to strengthen those who believe, and as a Guide and Glad Tidings to Muslims. (Surah 16:102)

According to Abdullah Yusuf Ali, the “Holy Spirit” being referred to in Surah is non other than the Angel Gabriel, who is the one who brought the revelations to Muhammad (Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Meaning of the Holy Quran*, 10th ed. [Beltsville, MD, 1999] 664 – note # 2141).

Consequently, when we see the whole of the Trinity involved in the creation in Genesis 1:1-3, the Muslims deny such a relationship: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light.” These three verses clearly present God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, the One God, bringing creation into existence: God the Father in verse one; God the Holy Spirit in verse two; and in verse 3, “God said,” points to John 1:1 above where it is stated, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” That is, the speaking into existence of creation is the action of the “Word,” Jesus, bringing all things that have been created into existence. The first act of creation was the “light,” and then followed everything else.

God is eternal Spirit, just as Jesus defined Him to the Samaritan woman: “God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:24). Thus, God is eternal, without a beginning or end, and that includes the persons of the Godhead, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit-One God, Who, from all eternity is forever the same. This is absolutely foundational to our understanding the nature and scope of God's love

for His creation as expressed in the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. God did for us in Christ what we ABSOLUTELY CANNOT do for ourselves, and that is make ourselves righteous enough to attain an eternal relationship with God, Who is ABSOLUTE HOLINESS.

This holiness is manifested in practical ways in our lives now through providing for us in Christ the ‘abundant life’ Jesus spoke of in John 10:10: “The thief doth not come, except that he may steal, and kill, and destroy; I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.” The “thief” being referred to in this passage is Satan, whose aim is to deceive every human being on this earth into believing that the pursuit of their own carnal, selfish, and fleshly desires will bring true fulfillment, significance, and meaning to their lives. On the other hand, to be a recipient of the “abundant life” Jesus promises, it is necessary for one to have a real and personal relationship with God, Who is ABSOLUTE HOLINESS, and the only way that can happen is through Jesus. Thus, God “made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (II Corinthians 5:21). In talking about this “abundant life” and our relationship with Jesus, it is important to understand that we as human beings CANNOT ESTABLISH OUR OWN HOLINESS because we are naturally prone toward pursuing the things that are unholy. We mask that pursuit, however, in a form of external ‘religion’ that deceives us into thinking we are covering our blatant, corrupt, and overt sinful desires and actions. The result of such a deceptive pursuit is ALWAYS self-destructive consequences. However, the “abundant life” that Jesus promises us consists of His discernment, wisdom, and insight to see through the lies and deceptions of Satan for what they actually are. And secondly, we receive spiritual, mental, and emotional strength to turn from those lies and walk in obedient and liberating faith in the Lord by the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. There is NO LEGALISTIC religious system, such as Islam, that can even begin to approach this liberating power a believer in Jesus has available to him. Thus, the HOLINESS that is promised in Jesus is an internal separation to the Lord in our thinking by the Holy Spirit, who is constantly making God’s Word alive and real in our minds and emotions. And once again, NO LEGALISTIC religious system that offers an external form of ‘religious righteousness’ based on our own, limited strength and will power can even begin to approach the true freedom and

power we receive through Christ. The former will utterly collapse under the strain of the pressures and temptations assailed against it from Satan. This is certainly true for the unbeliever, but it is also true for the believer who may not be surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus in his or her life. For those believers who are in this latter state of thinking and living, they are prime targets for Satan's attacks in their greatest areas of spiritual, mental, and emotional vulnerability. However, here too, even in the midst of failure for a believer as a result of embracing Satan's lie and deception, there is forgiveness and restoration through repentance and brokenness over the sin and God's 'disciplining' process whereby He, not us, conforms us to the "image of Christ" (Hebrews 12:4-11; Romans 8:28-39). Therefore, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit – the One True God, is working in and through the life of a believer ALL THE TIME!

Another very important thing to observe in the creation is the name of God, אֱלֹהִים (*'ēlōhîm*). This is a plural form in Hebrew, but it does not mean 'gods' in this instance, and the reason we know that is because the verb for "created" in Genesis 1:1 is a third person singular verb; that is, "He," not "They." If this noun was to be considered a plural form of 'gods,' then instead of the verb being בָּרָא (*bārā*), "He created," it would be בָּרְאוּ (*bārē'û*), "they created." Thus, here in this phrase, "He created," we see the Trinity – The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit – all three, but One, bringing into being the universe as we know it. However, as we look in Genesis 1:26, we see a very interesting statement: "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.'" The significant thing here is that the word "God," which is plural in Hebrew, אֱלֹהִים (*'ēlōhîm*), is now being translated by the verb in the plural also, "let Us make man in Our image." What a powerful testimony of the Trinity in this passage as "Us" is referring to the Trinity, Who made human beings.

However, what is also important for us as believers in Christ to know is that we are being "conformed to the image of His Son" (Romans 8:29) continuously until we breathe our last breath and go home to be with the Lord. This process of being "conformed to the image" of Christ, and of our minds being "transformed" (Romans 12:2), is an unceasing

work of the Holy Spirit within us. However, with regard to this work, there is an intense opposition that is going on all the time as well, and this opposition is aimed at taking life from us, not giving it to us! In fact, this is what Jesus said in John 10:10: “The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy; I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly.” Therefore, the work of the Trinity is to develop God’s life within us, versus the death and destruction that Satan wants to create.

II. The Old Testament Background

Having at least a cursory overview of the history of the Middle East is very important to adequately understanding the origin, theological and cultural development, and history of Islam. Islam did not emerge out of a vacuum, but rather its inception goes back to the curse of Canaan in Genesis 9:18-29. This curse was a result of Noah’s third son, Ham, committing an unseemly act against him while he was asleep, recovering from a drunken stupor. It is very interesting to note that Noah’s curse was aimed at Canaan, versus Ham. This has caused some to speculate that Canaan, Ham’s son, was the one who did whatever was done to Noah.

Genesis 9:21 states that Noah “drank of the wine and became drunk, and uncovered himself inside his tent.” The verb “uncovered” means that he was apparently completely nude in his tent. Therefore, it is thought that this might have set the stage for some type of sexually perverted act. In Genesis 9:22 we read, “And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside.” The verb “saw,” which in Hebrew is **ראָה** (*rā’â*), can also be translated “to get to know and become acquainted with.” For example, in Genesis 34:1 this same Hebrew verb is translated “to visit”: “Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out *to visit* the daughters of the land.” That is, Dinah went out “to *see/visit* the daughters of the land” in order to “get to know” them in a more personal, experiential, and intimate manner, which for her meant conversing, not simply “looking” at them.

In Genesis 9:24, we read, “When Noah awoke from his wine, he knew what his youngest son had done to him.” If all that Ham did was to glance at his father and

visually see him naked, why would the verb “had done” be used in this context? It would seem that “had seen” would have been more appropriate.

Genesis 9:23 also makes an interesting statement about the actions of Shem and Japheth: “But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it upon both their shoulders and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were turned away, so that they did not see their father's nakedness.” The word for nakedness in Hebrew is עֶרְוָה (ervâ), and in English this would be translated pudenda, which is referring to the genital area of a man or woman. And once again, this verse states that they “did not see their father’s nakedness,” that is, they “did not know, nor become acquainted with their father’s genital area.”

As we look back to Genesis 9:24, the word for “knew” is the Hebrew word יָדָע (yāda‘), and the idea of “knowing” that it is expressing can be that of an intellectual, mental, emotional, and spiritual awareness and understanding, but it can also refer to an intimate, sexual relationship. For example, in Genesis 4:1 we read, “Now Adam *knew* Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, ‘I have acquired a man from the LORD’” (NKJ). The word for “knew” in the NKJ version of 4:1 is יָדָע (yāda‘), whereas in the NAS the translation is “had relations with.” Thus, in Genesis 9:24 above, this could very well be referring to Noah “knowing” that he had been sexually violated.

The Hamitic line, therefore, became the line that populated and developed Mesopotamia, and consequently, this would be the line responsible for the pagan, idolatrous, sexually perverted worship that began there. Thus, even though the curse was placed on Canaan, Ham was responsible for what took place, and there doesn’t seem to be any repentance on Ham’s part for what occurred. The consequence for that lack of repentance appears to be a hardness of heart and rebellion toward the Lord, which resulted in an embrace of idolatry, self-deification, and religiously sanctioned sexual perversion that is delineated in the writings of ancient Sumeria and Babylon, centers of Mesopotamian culture.

III. The Ancient Near Eastern Background

Nimrod, the son of Cush, who was the son of Ham (Genesis 10:6-10), was the builder of Babel “in the land of Shinar” (Genesis 10:10), which was ancient Sumeria (today, it is Kuwait and southeastern Iraq), and this is where the tower of Babel was built:

Now the whole earth used the same language and the same words. 2 And it came about as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. 3 And they said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks and burn *them* thoroughly.” And they used brick for stone, and they used tar for mortar. 4 And they said, “Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top *will reach* into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name; lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.” (Genesis 11:1-4)

Nimrod, therefore, was the one superintending the building of this tower, and his intention, along with those who were assisting him, was to “make for ourselves a name” over against the name of the Lord; that is, to make themselves “god” in place of the one true God. As we noted previously, Shinar was the land of ancient Sumeria, and this is where the oldest known written texts have been found. At the foundation of these texts is the self-deification of man, and the gods of the ancient Sumerians were in essence superhuman entities who controlled all aspects of the Sumerians’ lives and they were the entities whom the Sumerians worshipped:

Operating, directing, and supervising this universe, the Sumerian theologian assumed, was a pantheon consisting of a group of living beings, manlike in form but superhuman and immortal, who, though invisible to the mortal eye, guided and controlled the cosmos in accordance with well-laid plans and duly prescribed laws. The great realms of heaven, earth, sea, and air; the major astral bodies, sun, moon, and planets; such atmospheric forces as wind, storm, and tempest; and finally, on earth, such natural entities as river, mountain, and plain, such cultural entities as city and state, dike and ditch, field and farm, and even such implements as the pickax, brick mold, and plow—each was deemed to be under the charge of one or another anthropomorphic, but superhuman, being who guided its activities in accordance with established rules and regulations. (Samuel Noah Kramer, *The Sumerians: Their History, Culture And Character* [Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1963], 113-114)

In addition, these gods had all the same desires, passions, and weaknesses of men:

The Sumerian gods, as illustrated graphically by the Sumerian myths, were entirely anthropomorphic; even the most powerful and most knowing among them were conceived as human in form, thought, and deed. Like man, they plan, act, eat and drink, marry and raise families, support large households, and are addicted to human passions and weaknesses. (Ibid., 117)

In essence, therefore, the Sumerian gods were no more than superhuman men without any restraints on their desires or ambitions. Thus, the gods' lifestyles became the pattern for the people of Sumeria, and these lifestyles were based on the people's own carnal imaginations, which substantiated, supported, and gave religious sanction to their own prurient desires and lusts. Consequently, from the Sumerian culture in particular, we see the immersion of human culture into the whole hearted acceptance of idolatry, the deification of man, and unrestrained, sexual license, which received religious sanction through the founders of ancient Sumeria, who in turn were the descendants of Ham. This idolatry, and its accompanying sins, spread throughout the Ancient Near East, and that spread encompassed Ishmael and his descendents, which included the Arab peoples, and it is from the Arab peoples that Muhammad and the Islamic religion emerged.

The reason I emphasize this idolatrous, sexual perversion that encompassed the peoples of the Ancient Near East is that we find the very same thing in present day Islam in religiously sanctioned teaching that includes marriage, divorce, martyrdom, and the treatment of "unbelievers." The reason this is so important to see and grasp is that the same Satanic lie that was the foundation of the ancient Sumerian culture and religious belief system is at the core and foundation of Islamic belief and teaching, and that includes in particular the deification of man (which is the basis of man's salvation through his own supposed works of righteousness) and the religiously sanctioned cover of sexual licentiousness.

As a result of the permeation of this idolatrous perversion throughout the Ancient Near East, this was exactly what Abraham was facing from the beginning of his call by God:

And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'From ancient times your fathers lived beyond the River, *namely*, Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, and they served other gods. 3 'Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River, and led him through all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his descendants and gave him Isaac. (Joshua 24:2-3)

The Israelites also faced this same idolatry and deification of man in Egypt with the deification of Pharaoh:

From early times the epithet *netjer* (*ntr*) referred directly to the king as a god. Sometimes the term occurred alone; at other times it appeared with modifying or descriptive words. Another epithet from early times referred to the king as a descendant of a god-*s'R*’, “son of Re.” Later the Egyptians developed other terms, such as *tjt*, “image” of a god, and *pr`*. The latter, an expression meaning “great house” and referring to the palace, was an abstraction that attributed a corporate nature to the king, much as “White House” can denote the president of the United States. Sometimes the king was also referred as “like” (*mj*) a deity. Ordinarily all these royal epithets were used in specific types of documents. (Byron E. Shafer, ed., *Religion in Ancient Egypt* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991], 59)

Consequently, when God brought the Israelites out of Egypt, all of the miracles God performed were a direct affront to Pharaoh’s claim to deity. That is, in each of the ten areas that God effected a miracle or plague through Moses, those very areas were supposed to be under Pharaoh’s deified control, but Pharaoh was powerless, as his magicians attested. However, even in the face of his own impotence in being unable to abort the plagues, Pharaoh's heart remained hardened, and the Egyptians continued their pursuit of false deities.

This same level of idolatry faced the Israelites when they entered the land of Canaan, and the Lord exhorted them to not embrace any aspect of that perverted culture:

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'I am the LORD your God. 3 'You shall not do what is done in the land of Egypt where you lived, nor are you to do what is done in the land of Canaan where I am bringing you; you shall not walk in their statutes. 4 'You are to perform My judgments and keep My statutes, to live in accord with them; I am the LORD your God. 5 'So you shall keep My statutes and My judgments, by which a man may live if he does them; I am the LORD. 6 'None of you shall approach any blood relative of his to uncover nakedness; I am the LORD. 7 'You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father, that is, the nakedness of your mother. She is your mother; you are not to uncover her nakedness. 8 'You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife; it is your father's nakedness. 9 'The nakedness of your sister, *either* your father's daughter or your mother's daughter, whether born at home or born outside, their nakedness you shall not

uncover. 10 'The nakedness of your son's daughter or your daughter's daughter, their nakedness you shall not uncover; for their nakedness is yours. 11 'The nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, born to your father, she is your sister, you shall not uncover her nakedness. 12 'You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's sister; she is your father's blood relative. 13 'You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, for she is your mother's blood relative. 14 'You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother; you shall not approach his wife, she is your aunt. 15 'You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law; she is your son's wife, you shall not uncover her nakedness. 16 'You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it is your brother's nakedness. 17 'You shall not uncover the nakedness of a woman and of her daughter, nor shall you take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter, to uncover her nakedness; they are blood relatives. It is lewdness. 18 'And you shall not marry a woman in addition to her sister as a rival while she is alive, to uncover her nakedness. 19 'Also you shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness during her menstrual impurity. 20 'And you shall not have intercourse with your neighbor's wife, to be defiled with her. 21 'Neither shall you give any of your offspring to offer them to Molech, nor shall you profane the name of your God; I am the LORD. 22 'You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination. 23 'Also you shall not have intercourse with any animal to be defiled with it, nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it; it is a perversion. 24 'Do not defile yourselves by any of these things; for by all these the nations which I am casting out before you have become defiled. 25 'For the land has become defiled, therefore I have visited its punishment upon it, so the land has spewed out its inhabitants. 26 'But as for you, you are to keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not do any of these abominations, *neither* the native, nor the alien who sojourns among you 27 (for the men of the land who have been before you have done all these abominations, and the land has become defiled); 28 so that the land may not spew you out, should you defile it, as it has spewed out the nation which has been before you. 29 'For whoever does any of these abominations, those persons who do *so* shall be cut off from among their people. 30 'Thus you are to keep My charge, that you do not practice any of the abominable customs which have been practiced before you, so as not to defile yourselves with them; I am the LORD your God.'” (Leviticus 18:1-30)

However, as we know from Scripture, the Israelites did not obey the above exhortation, and the result was they were ultimately displaced from the land and lost the blessings God had promised them.

Chapter Two:

An Overview of Biblical Soteriology

The deification of man in idolatrous cultures was something that continually confronted the Israelites, and, as was previously mentioned, this is at the heart of the concept of salvation by our own works, righteousness, and merits. The very first place we see God's plan of salvation and the restoration of true fellowship with Him is in Genesis 4:1-5:

Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, "I have gotten a manchild with *the help of* the LORD." 2 And again, she gave birth to his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. 3 So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground. 4 And Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and for his offering; 5 but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell.

What we see from this passage is an attempt by Cain to offer the works of his own hands and effort as a sacrifice to gain acceptance with God. Abel, on the other hand, simply brought one of the "firstlings of his flock," which he had no part in birthing, nor did he cause it to grow and develop. It was birthed naturally through God's plan of procreation and cared for and nurtured by its mother. Thus, Abel was bringing a blood sacrifice for his sin that he had nothing to do with as far as birthing, growing, and developing it, but rather it was all the work of God through the laws of nature established by God. We discover the basis of this relationship that Abel had with God in Hebrews 11:1-4:

Now faith is the assurance of *things* hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. 2 For by it the men of old gained approval. 3 By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible. 4 By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.

Abel's approach to God, therefore, was not based on his own supposed righteousness, but rather on God's righteousness, which comes through faith in God, and He in turn gives to us His righteousness.

Another example of this righteousness is seen with Noah at the time of the flood. God's appraisal of man at that time before the flood was the same soon after the flood, as well as today: "Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5). The Hebrew word for "intent" is יָצָר (yēṣer), and it refers to a form or frame, such as the forms one sets in place marking the perimeters of a patio to be built of concrete. Thus, before one even begins to mix the concrete to pour for the patio, the forms have to be laid first. In the same way, before our thoughts even become recognizable to us as thoughts, the very beginning of their framing is evil, and not just some of them, but "every intent (*frame*) of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." In addition, the word "continually" means 24-7; thus, man is not seen by God as 'basically good', but rather as 'basically evil'. After the flood, God reiterated His appraisal of man, which at that time included only Noah and his family who were the only surviving humans around:

Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. 21 And the LORD smelled the soothing aroma; and the LORD said to Himself, "I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done. (Genesis 8:20-21)

Once again, in verse 21, we see God clearly reaffirming the thorough sinfulness of man, and as stated above, Noah and his family were the only remaining humans after the flood.

In the introduction, we saw in Genesis chapter 9 just how sinful and corrupt Noah's family was. Noah got drunk, and Ham was guilty of doing something of an unseemly nature against his father. However, we read in Genesis 6 of Noah's righteousness: "But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD. These are *the records of* the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God" (Genesis 6:8-9). In Hebrews 11:7, we read just where this 'righteousness' and 'blamelessness' of Noah's came from: "By faith Noah, being warned *by God* about things

not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.” Thus, Noah, in and of himself, was as corrupt as any other person of his time, but it was the righteousness of God within him that caused him to trust in God and obey Him. Noah clearly had the choice to obey or disobey, but it was God’s righteousness within him that enabled him by faith to believe, trust in, and obey God.

In Romans 1:16-17, Paul categorically states that our righteousness comes through faith: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it *the* righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘But the righteous *man* shall live by faith.’” The quote in verse 17 is taken from Habakkuk 2:4 in the Old Testament: “Behold, as for the proud one, His soul is not right within him; But the righteous will live by his faith.” In reading this quote from Habakkuk, one might tend to think that the “his” is referring to the man himself producing this faith. However, when we read the LXX, which is the Greek translation of the Hebrew made around 250 BC ff., and it is also the text that the apostles preached and taught out of primarily, we read the following: “If he should draw back, my soul has no pleasure in him: but the just shall live by my faith.” The “my faith” referred to here is clearly the faith that comes from the Lord as you read the passage in its context.

Another important passage dealing with this subject is found in Ephesians 2:8-9: “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; not as a result of works that no one should boast.” The word “gift” is referring to the whole of salvation, which includes the faith by which we are enabled to receive Christ and be born again.

Another passage reiterating this truth is found in Galatians 2:20: “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.” The phrase “in the Son of God” may also be translated “from the Son of God.” That is, this faith, which we exercise in believing and following Jesus, also has its inception in Jesus. Thus, Jesus is both the object and source of our faith.

This can also be seen in Hebrews 12:1-2, where we are exhorted to keep our eyes on Jesus:

Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

The phrase, “author and perfecter” is very interesting. The word “author” may also be translated as ‘originator’; that is, He is the one who began the work of faith in our hearts. And the word “perfecter” means just that – He is the one who brings that work to maturity.

One last New Testament example of this focus on faith being a gift from God and not something of our own making and work that we can boast in and be proud of is found in Acts chapter three. In this instance, Jesus, through Peter, heals the man born “lame from his mother's womb,” and Peter then explains to the people how this healing occurred: “And on the basis of faith in His name, *it is* the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which *comes* through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all” (Acts 3:16). This man was healed by “faith in His name,” that is, the name of Jesus, and the faith that this man exercised in the name of Jesus actually came “through Him,” that is, through or by means of Jesus. In other words, the man had to choose to believe in Jesus, but Jesus enabled him to do so through the gift of faith. The man could have said no and rejected this supernatural gift that Jesus was giving him, but he chose to believe Peter’s admonition by exercising that which Jesus was working within him, and he was healed.

Besides the Old Testament references to Cain and Abel and the difference in Cain’s ‘works’ and Abel’s ‘faith’, as well as Noah’s declared ‘righteousness’ in the face of his own corruption and that of his family, there is one more Old Testament reference that is vital in relation to Islam, and that is the reference to Abraham in Genesis chapter 15. Abraham was becoming quite discouraged because he and Sarah had not yet had a child, and he was thinking that he would have to resort to the customs of his day in order for him to have an heir. That is, he couldn’t see any other way for this to feasibly happen and occur than to embrace natural means, which were conceivable in his own thinking

and reasoning. This really had nothing to do with trusting in the Lord, but rather with his ***own efforts and work!*** However, God spoke to him and told him that He was going to do something that Abraham couldn't even begin to comprehend, and Abraham's progeny would be as numerous as the stars of heaven. At that moment, the Bible records one of the most important accounts of faith in the whole of Scripture, and this is especially true with regard to Islam:

After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you; Your reward shall be very great." 2 And Abram said, "O Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, since I am childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" 3 And Abram said, "Since Thou hast given no offspring to me, one born in my house is my heir." 4 Then behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, "This man will not be your heir; but one who shall come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir." 5 And He took him outside and said, "Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." 6 ***Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.*** (Genesis 15:1-6)

Abraham's righteousness was not attained through any work or deed he performed because after this commitment to the Lord, he failed God several times in significant ways. But rather, his relationship with God was established through faith as described in Genesis 15:6, and God "reckoned" Abraham's act of faith and trust in Him as "righteousness." Interestingly, the word "reckoned" may be translated as "continually reckoned." That is, this was an ongoing and eternal relationship established through faith, even in the midst of Abraham's failures, because God used those failures as a tool to break, make, and conform Abraham into the man of faith God purposed for him to be (Romans 8:28-39; Hebrews 12:4-11).

In Romans 10:8-10 we read:

But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart"--that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, 9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus *as* Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; 10 for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

Faith is indeed a gift, which we cannot boast in, but we have the freedom to either accept, or reject that gift. If we accept it and exercise it in the name of Jesus, we will be saved. But if not, we will be eternally lost – the choice is ours freely.

The reason I have emphasized the biblical basis for our relationship with God in conjunction with man's corruption and our salvation being by God's grace alone, is because this is the absolute antithesis of Islam's view, which we will look at in greater detail later. Suffice it to say at this point, however, this biblical truth is the one true appraisal of man, and it is the one and only means of genuine salvation from an anthropological, sociological, psychological, and eternal perspective.

Chapter Three:

The Biblical Origin of Islam

As we begin this part of our study, there are some things that need to be pointed out. Most importantly is the fact that Islam, without doubt, is the most anti-Christ religious belief system in the world today. Almost every anti-Christ doctrine that the early Church encountered in its first five hundred years are contained and entrenched in Islamic beliefs and practices, beginning with the Quran and spilling over into the Hadith. In addition, Islam is fully anti-biblical. Even though it has many references to Old Testament figures, its presentation of those individuals is utterly antithetical to the biblical account and history. Thus, we are not dealing with the ‘same God’ as many Muslims and some professing Christians assert. On the contrary, we are dealing with a belief system that in no way has its origin with the God of the Bible, but rather with the “god of this world” (II Corinthians 4:4) who has and is putting forth his “elementary principles of the world” (Colossians 2:8) as revelation from Allah. However, the actual biblical origin of Islam, from the Muslim perspective, centers in the person of Ishmael, and this is quite significant, especially in light of Paul’s spiritual analogy and contrast of Ishmael, the son of the flesh, and Isaac, the son of the promise. We will look at that a bit later, but for now it is important to note that the events surrounding Ishmael’s birth and his subsequent departure from living with Abraham and his descendents as an heir to the promises God gave to Abraham, Isaac and Isaac’s progeny are central to the Satanic deviation from the biblical truth found in Islam. Therefore, Ishmael is viewed by Muslims as their source of spiritual lineage through Abraham, and we will see later how they exalt him above Isaac. However, at this point, it is very important to see that Muslims trace their spiritual heritage and lineage to Ishmael, and this has tremendous spiritual implications.

As we read in Genesis 15:1-6, God promised to give Abraham a son from his own loins, but in Genesis 16, we see that Sarai became impatient and resorted to the cultural practice of their day in order to have a son:

Now Sarai, Abram's wife had borne him no *children*, and she had an Egyptian maid whose name was Hagar. 2 So Sarai said to Abram, "Now behold, the LORD has prevented me from bearing *children*. Please go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children through her." And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. 3 And after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Abram's wife Sarai took Hagar the Egyptian, her maid, and gave her to her husband Abram as his wife. 4 And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived; and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her sight. (Genesis 16:1-4)

This was an ancient custom of their time, which we find later recorded in Hamurabi's Law Code, # 146:

If a man take a wife and she give this man a maid-servant as wife and she bear him children, and then this maid assume equality with the wife: because she has borne him children her master shall not sell her for money, but he may keep her as a slave, reckoning her among the maid-servants.
(<http://eawc.evansville.edu/anthology/hammurabi.htm>)

John Bright places Abraham's life and time around 2000 BC:

The first half of the second millennium BC (roughly 2000-1550) brings us to the age of Israel's origins. It was probably during the course of these centuries that Father Abraham set out from Haran, with his family, his flocks, and his herds, to seek land and seed in the place his God would show him. (John Bright, *A History of Israel*, 3rd ed. [Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1981], 47)

Bright acknowledges, however, that Abraham's move into Palestine might have been even earlier, perhaps at the end of the 3rd millennium BC, but regardless of the exact time, we do know that it was quite likely somewhere between 2200 – 2000 BC that Abraham made the move into Palestine from Haran, and this is because there was a major influx of nomadic peoples into that area from Mesopotamia around that time:

What these nomadic newcomers called themselves we do not know. No doubt they belonged to various tribal groups and went by various different names. But it is in every way likely that they were part of that general group of Northwest-Semitic peoples known as Amorites, who were pressing upon all parts of the Fertile Crescent at that time. It is probable that the Semites who infiltrated Egypt in the First Intermediate (*ca.* 2200 – 2100 BC) were of similar stock. . . . Perhaps, were our eyes sharp enough, we might discern among them-or following after them as a part of the same general movement-the figures of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (*Ibid.*, 44)

What is very important to remember, therefore, is that Abraham came from an idolatrous culture as we previously saw:

And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'From ancient times your fathers lived beyond the River, *namely*, Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, and they served other gods. 3 'Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River, and led him through all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his descendants and gave him Isaac. (Joshua 24:2-3)

Thus, the pagan culture he came out of had established mores that were quite strong and apparently had a great influence on his and Sarah's lives as is seen by their actions with Hagar.

Hammurabi did not come on the scene until the 18th century BC. He was born ca. 1810, began his reign between 1795-92, and reigned until his death in 1750. What is important to note is that Hammurabi didn't so much write these laws from his own genius with no precedence before him, but rather he codified laws that had been developed in the Ancient Near Eastern culture since the departure of Noah off of the ark.

In Genesis 9:1-6, we see directions being given to Noah by the Lord with reference to the dominion of man over the animal life, man's diet, and the first enactment of laws dealing with capital punishment. The significance of this is that God clearly gave legal directions about how men were to live their lives, and the chief of those laws was capital punishment, which would be the cornerstone of any society or culture so as to establish order in the face of chaos and anarchy.

In Genesis 9:6, therefore, we read the following: "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man." Now at first you might not think that there is anything special about this passage. However, when you take a look in the Hebrew, you notice something very interesting. In the phrase, "By man his blood shall be shed," we see a syntactical construction that is not presented in any English translation, and that is the following: "By the man his blood shall be shed." The Hebrew construction for "By the man" is בְּאָדָם (bā'ādām), and this construction implies that God was designating some specific person to carry out the judgment of capital punishment against a murderer. That in turn seems to indicate that some form of jurisprudence was already being set up by the Lord for an orderly society.

The converse of this is that liberal scholars as a whole believe the biblical Decalogue and its supporting and extended laws (e.g., Genesis 9:6 et al) were merely a compilation of the already existing laws of the Ancient Near East and that there was no specific revelation given to Moses – he simply took what was already written and adapted it to suit the needs of the Israelites, including the scathing reproaches of Jehovah God against the idolatrous cultures of Canaan as manifested by their corrupt and perverted sexual laws and mores. But why and how could any man, simply on his own, write and develop such a legal and moral code as found in the Pentateuch that is so completely foreign to everything around him? The answer is that he would not and could not do such a thing without some compelling, intervening, and overwhelming power, beyond himself, directing and guiding him to do so. And here again, we see the divine and supernatural infusion of God’s sovereign hand to redirect man toward Him, His truth, and His means of productive and redemptive living, versus the corrupt, distorted, and self-destructive form of living that dominated and ruled all of mankind, and this was evidenced in their life styles and sanctioned in their law codes.

For example, it is interesting to note a major difference between Hammurabi’s law code concerning sexual mores and the biblical injunction concerning the same issue in this following comparison:

If a father dedicated (his daughter) to deity as a hierodule, a sacred prostitute, or a devotee and did not present a dowry to her, after the father has gone to (his) fate, she shall receive as her share in the goods of the paternal estate her one-third patrimony, but she shall have only the usufruct of (it) as long as she lives, since her heritage belongs to her brothers. (James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969], 174)

The idea of dedicating one’s daughter as a “hierodule, a sacred prostitute,” was a culturally accepted practice in the Ancient Near East at that time. Some also see in this the reasoning behind Abraham’s offering his wife, Sarah, as a gift to both Pharaoh and Abimelech in hopes that his life would not be taken by them on account of her being his wife. Thus, he presented her as his “sister.” There must be some truth to this, and here again we can see the permeating influence of that perverted culture in the lives of both Abraham and Sarah.

On the other hand, we see in Scripture the absolute opposite to such a practice as offering one's daughter as a "sacred prostitute": "None of the daughters of Israel shall be a cult prostitute, nor shall any of the sons of Israel be a cult prostitute. You shall not bring the hire of a harlot or the wages of a dog into the house of the LORD your God for any votive offering, for both of these are an abomination to the LORD your God" (Deuteronomy 23:17-18). Here is a very clear example of a distortion of biblical truth and sexual morality as compared to the sexual perversion of the pagan cultures of the Ancient Near East.

This distortion, however, is quite typical of false belief systems, which we will look at a bit later in Galatians 1:6-9 with regard to Muhammad's "distorted" gospel. But let it suffice to say at this point that the thread of sexually, perverted sin, which we saw with the Hamitic line in particular, is integral to the rebellion we see against the truth of God, and in place of His truth, we see in some variant form an attempt to deify man so as to make man the author of his own salvation and deification. Thus, from Noah onward, man was given a form of societal law and order, but because of man's utter corruption, that law was distorted, beginning in particular with Nimrod.

However, it is important to note that two other ancient Sumerian law codes preceded Hammurabi's code: Ur-Nammu, who ruled from 2112-2095, and Lipit-Ishtar, who ruled from 1934-1924, both wrote law codes that reflected the cultural mores of their time, which is the same time it is believed that Abraham came on the scene and migrated into Canaan. The significance of this is that Abraham and Sarah were just like people today who are morally climatized by their cultural mores, versus the divine morality of Jehovah God. Thus, we see in Genesis 16 that Sarah, according to the custom of her day, gave Hagar to Abraham, her husband, and Hagar in turn gave birth to Ishmael, who, according to Islamic tradition, became the father of the Arabs, and from the Arabs came Muhammad, the founder of Islam. The truth, therefore, of the consequences of their actions can be seen throughout both biblical and world history with the emergence of Muhammad. This spiritual and physical conflict is spelled out quite clearly by Paul in Galatians 4:22-31:

For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the bondwoman and one by the free woman. 23 But the son by the bondwoman was born according to the

flesh, and the son by the free woman through the promise. 24 This is allegorically speaking: for these *women* are two covenants, one *proceeding* from Mount Sinai bearing children who are to be slaves; she is Hagar. 25 Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. 26 But the Jerusalem above is free; she is our mother. 27 For it is written, "Rejoice, barren woman who does not bear; Break forth and shout, you who are not in labor; For more are the children of the desolate Than of the one who has a husband." 28 And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. 29 But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him *who was born* according to the Spirit, so it is now also. 30 But what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, For the son of the bondwoman shall not be an heir with the son of the free woman." 31 So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but of the free woman.

Chapter Four:

The Birth & Emergence of Muhammad

As we have seen in the previous chapters, idolatry was the rule, not the exception in the Ancient Near East, but Israel was the one nation that advocated monotheism, even though so many of its people would fall away to idolatry at various times. And it was out of this idolatrous culture that the Arab peoples emerged, of whom Muhammad was a descendant. And this, in essence, was the background out of which Islam emerged in the 7th century AD, with one addition, and that was the presence of Christianity. However, that presence was integral to Islam's development because at the very core of Islamic doctrine and teaching is an absolutely antithetical view of salvation IN EVERY WAY from that presented in the Gospel. In fact, one might say that Islam is the quintessential embodiment of antichrist teaching in the same way as the teachings of the ancient Sumerians and the proclamation of Nimrod (Genesis 11:4) may be seen as antigod/antichrist. Thus, from the very beginning until now, Satan has ALWAYS had his counterfeit to challenge the message and presentation of our true God and Savior.

It is believed that Muhammad was born in Mecca in the year 570 AD. Muhammad's father died before he was born, and he was at first under the care of his grandfather, and then, after both his mother and grandfather died, his uncle assumed the responsibility of caring for and raising Muhammad. Muhammad's uncle was a merchant and trader, and Muhammad would go along with him. On one such trip to Syria around 595, Muhammad met a woman named Khadijah, who was 40 years old (he was 25 at the time), and she proposed marriage and Muhammad accepted. Muhammad did not take another wife until after her death in 619. Below is a 1917 picture of Mecca with the Kaaba in the center:



During these early years of Muhammad's life, he observed what he considered to be a selfish disregard of the poor of Mecca by the wealthy merchants in favor of their own personal interests. According to Islamic tradition, one day in 610 when Muhammad was considering this situation of the poor and the wealthy, he had a vision of an angelic being, who was supposed to be Gabriel, and this angel is supposed to have said to him, "You are the Messenger of God." Thus, from that time until his death in June, 632, Muhammad reportedly received messages at various times from Gabriel, and the messages that were written down were gathered together in 650 and formed what is called the Quran. Therefore, according to Muslims, the Quran contains the very words of God. There is another body of literature called the Hadith, which contains his sayings, observations, and the history of his life and actions. These sayings, which we will look at later, are not considered on the same level of inspiration as the Quran, but they are considered authoritative as far as guidelines for everyday life, business, marriage, education, etc.



The spread of Islam by Muhammad was carried out by use of the sword. The one word that would characterize this spread would be “razzias,” or raids. These raids included massacres, assassinations, brutality (all in the above print), and kidnapping, as well as outreaches to the poorest of the Arabs. However, the following quote puts in ultimate perspective the philosophy of Muhammad and that of Islam:

In 632 Muhammad made his last visit to Mecca, and his speech there has been recorded in the traditional writings as the final statement of his message: “know that every Muslim is a Muslim’s brother, and that the Muslims are brethren: fighting between them should be avoided, and the blood shed in pagan times should not be avenged; Muslims should fight all men until they say, ‘There is not god but God’.” (Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991], 19)

The above quote clearly and tragically affirms Muhammad’s approach toward the spread of Islam as based on threat and intimidation, and today, the exact same method is used to force people into submission to Islamic authority and belief where Muslims are in power

under Sharia Law. This use of threat and intimidation is especially true for any Muslim who might commit his or her life to Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. On the other hand, from a cultural perspective, Muhammad's primary contribution is that he combined together a union of Arab tribes that, after his death, resulted in the ultimate creation of an Arab and Islamic Empire, stretching from North Africa to Iran, and Islam became the glue that held that Empire together. From that Empire created some thirteen hundred years ago, we are today facing the same philosophy of violence, threat, and brutality that was the cornerstone of Islam's spread with Muhammad, and subsequently, with that of his followers as well, long ages after him.

One very important passage to take note of with regard to the revelations Muhammad received is found in Galatians 1:6-9:

I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; 7 which is *really* not another; only there are some who are disturbing you, and want to distort the gospel of Christ. 8 But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed.

When you read this passage in English, you do not get the full picture at all of what is being said. In verses 6 and 7, the words "different" and "another" are two very different Greek words, ἕτερος (*heteros*) and ἄλλος (*allos*) respectively. The word *heteros* means "another of a completely different nature, form, class, and kind," whereas *allos* in this instance is referring to "another of a similar kind." Thus, what Paul is saying is that the *heteros* gospel is of a completely different genus and species, whereas the *allos* Gospel is of the same genus, but of a bit different type, but nonetheless of the same species. A good example would be the comparison between a dog and a horse; this would be *heteros*. However, a Boxer and a Golden Retriever would be *allos*, because they are of the same genus and species, "dog," but they are of a different type of "dog." Thus, in conjunction with Islam being compared to Christianity, Islam is unequivocally a *heteros* gospel; that is, it is of a completely different genus and species. On the other hand, a Baptist church and a Methodist church would be *allos*; that is, of the same genus and species, but of a bit different perspective on such things as baptism.

Therefore, what Paul was writing is that there will be, and for us today, there are indeed many *heteros* gospels parading themselves as being from the one true God. However, in truth they are from the “god of this world,” and Islam is the chief among such gospels.

There are two other very important things that Paul said in this Galatians passage, and the first is found in verse 7 with the word “distort.” In Greek, the word is μεταστρέφω (*metastrephō*), and from this is derived the English word metastasis, which is referring primarily to the spread of cancer in one’s body. Thus, this “distortion” by a *heteros* gospel is likened to the destructive and fatal spread of cancer throughout one’s body. And just as this spread of cancer can not only be stopped, but also excised from one’s body if caught in time, so too the spread of a metastasized gospel can not only be stopped, but also extricated from the people it is destroying and perhaps leading to an eternal hell, or, with reference to Christians, misleading and robbing them of their fullness of joy and victory in Christ. Whichever it may be, a *heteros* gospel always metastasizes and destroys those who embrace it if they do not cast it from them.

The other word I want to look at in this passage is the word “accursed” found in both verses 8 and 9; in fact, it is repeated in verse 9 for the purpose of emphasis so that Paul might stress to the Galatian believers the urgency of rejecting a *heteros* gospel, as well as those who are trying to promote such a false gospel. The word “accursed” in Greek is ἀνάθεμα (*anathema*), and it refers to someone or something that is abominable, detestable, and doomed to destruction. Thus, can we do less than Paul when we are confronted with such heresy? The primary reason for confronting such blatant heresy is that its origin is from hell, and all who are caught up in its grip and deception will either be separated for eternity from God in hell, or if a believer, they will be wasting such valuable time and resources in a meaningless and empty belief system and manner of life. In very simple terms, Christ brings liberty, and Satan brings bondage and enslavement.

The message of Islam, therefore, is a metastasized, *heteros* gospel, and it is one that needs to be castigated from the hearts and lives of those who have been deceived and entrapped by it. One such *heteros* gospel in the first and second centuries AD was Gnosticism. Gnosticism believed and taught among other things the following: salvation was gained through superior knowledge; only through a “spiritual one” who had reached

the level of “superior knowledge” could one be led into becoming a true Gnostic; one group believed that Jesus was only a phantom, while another group believed the Holy Spirit came on Jesus at his baptism and left Him just before the crucifixion; one group said it didn’t matter what you did in your body because it was going to perish, and your mind was the all important thing, while another group buffeted their bodies continually. As we look more closely at Islamic teaching, you will begin to see similar and like minded aspects of Islam in relation to Gnosticism, as well as similarities to other false teachings.

However, there is one aspect of Gnosticism that is especially important in connection with Islam, and that is the idea of only special “spiritual ones” who have attained to superior knowledge can impart the truth of Gnosticism and guide one into becoming a true Gnostic. This eventually led to ‘personality cults’ and idolatry of certain men to whom the people looked to as ‘manifestations of the ultimate being’. Therefore, according to Gnostic teaching, these “spiritual ones” were the only way one could come to true *gnōsis* (knowledge) that would in turn lead one to becoming one with the ‘ultimate being’. John addressed this issue in I John 2:27: “And as for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.” John is refuting this very idea of Gnosticism that one must go to a special “spiritual one” in order to receive true *gnōsis*, which would in turn lead one to becoming one with the ‘ultimate being’. John is saying that every true, born-again believer has the Holy Spirit dwelling in him or her, and He, the Holy Spirit, is the one who guides us into the truth, not some corrupt man who is just like the people he is teaching. John is not denying the role of leadership and teaching done by the pastor/teacher in the church, nor is he in any way saying that such men should not be respected and submitted to, but he is saying they are not the source of truth – Jesus and Jesus alone is, and the indwelling Holy Spirit is the one who is our ultimate teacher, not any human who serves as a pastor/teacher. In addition, there is NO ONE TEACHER who alone has the truth, and apart from him, his writings and teachings, as well as his interpretations of Scripture, no one can ever really know the truth of Scripture. However, this is one of the most frequently propagated lies that cults and false religions espouse. It

is interesting to note that both the Jehovah's Witnesses and Muslims hold to this position – the JW's with regard to the writings of Charles Taze Russell, and the Muslims with regard to their imams.

With regard to the JW's, the following quote from Russell himself is rather clear:

. . . Not only do we find that people cannot see the divine plan in studying the Bible by itself, but we see, also, that if anyone lays the "Scripture Studies" aside (*these were written by Russell as directions to the truth of Scripture – i.e., he is a "spiritual one," and only he can lead people to the real truth of salvation*) even after he has used them, after he has become familiar with them, after he has read them for ten years – if he then lays them aside and ignores them and goes to the Bible alone, though he has understood his Bible for ten years, our experience shows that within two years he goes into darkness. On the other hand, if he had merely read the "Scripture Studies" with their references and had not read a page of the Bible as such, he would be in the light at the end of two years, because he would have the light of the Scriptures. (Anthony A. Hoekema, *The Four Major Cults* [Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970], 227)

This is the lie of Gnosticism pure and simple, and the very same lie is also found in Islam:

Gradually, however, Shī'ism developed a theological content for its political stand. Probably under Gnostic (esoteric, dualistic, and speculative) and old Iranian (dualistic) influences, the figure of the political ruler, the *imām* (exemplary "leader"), was transformed into a metaphysical being, a manifestation of God and the primordial light that sustains the universe and bestows true knowledge on man. Through the *imām* alone the hidden and true meaning of the Qur'ānic revelation can be known, because the *imām* alone is infallible. (*The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th ed., vol. 22, s.v., "Muhammad and the Religion of Islam," 17)

Therefore, Islam is the same lying distortion that Satan has been perpetuating since the fall of man, and the only thing different about the lie of Islam is that Muhammad became the lie's new agent and propagator.

Chapter Five:

The Beginning of the Spread of Islam

I. The Beginning Years

The obvious beginning of the spread of Islam occurred in 610 AD when Muhammad first started receiving his supposed revelations from an angelic messenger who was later identified as Gabriel. This, therefore, is considered to be the beginning date of his role as the *rasūl Allah* (messenger/apostle of God), or the *nabī Allah* (prophet of God). And, as was pointed out previously, these ‘revelations’ that he believed came directly from God were kept in the memory of Muhammad and those who were his disciples, and at times they were immediately written down. However, it was not until eighteen years after his death in 650 that these ‘revelations’ were collected and written in the Quran. And again, as was stated earlier, the other group of writings known as the Hadith contains his sayings and observations about various aspects of life that have become authoritative for Muslims. These writings were compiled about two hundred years after Muhammad’s death in the 9th century.

With regard to the ‘revelations’ that Muhammad received, he had been married to his first wife, Khadijah, for fifteen years before he received the first of these ‘revelations’. The following is a description of how these ‘revelations’ came to him:

Muhammad is said to have been perturbed after the vision and first revelation but to have been reassured by his wife, Khadijah. In his later experiences of receiving messages there was normally no vision (Occasionally there were physical concomitants, such as perspiring on a cold day, and these gave rise to the suggestion, now agreed to be unwarranted, that he was an epileptic). Sometimes he heard a noise like a bell but apparently never a voice. The essence of such an experience was that he found a verbal message in his heart—that is, in his conscious mind. With the help of Khadijah's Christian cousin Waraqah, he came to interpret these messages as in general identical with those sent by God through other prophets or messengers to Jews, Christians, and others and to believe that by the first great vision and by the receipt of the messages he was commissioned to communicate them to his fellow citizens and other Arabs. In addition to proclaiming the messages he received, Muhammad must have offered explanations and expositions of them in his own words, as is evident in the large body of prophetic traditions that the community has preserved. (*The New*

Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15th ed., vol. 22, s.v. “Muhammad and the Religion of Islam”, 2)

As Muhammad began to share these ‘revelations’ with others, he soon began to gather around him a number of followers:

Soon he gathered some sympathetic friends who accepted his claim to be a prophet and joined him in common worship and prayers. These culminated in an act of prostration in which they touched the ground with their foreheads in acknowledgment of God's majesty—still a cardinal act in Islāmic worship. In about 613 Muhammad began preaching publicly, and he and his followers spent their days together in the house of a young man named al-Arqam. It is probable that they sometimes worshipped together in the Ka‘bah, a sanctuary of the Arab pagans. (Ibid.)

Thus began the teaching of others by Muhammad from the supposed ‘revelations’ he had received. Opposition arose to his teaching, however, and there was conflict from the merchants and leaders of Mecca. The result of this opposition was that he had to leave and go to Medina. This was a very significant event for Muhammad, and it is considered to be the beginning of Islamic history:

In the summer of 621, 12 men from Medina, visiting Mecca for the annual pilgrimage to the Kabah (still a pagan shrine), secretly professed themselves Muslims to Muhammad and went back to make propaganda for him at Medina. At the pilgrimage in June 622 a representative party of 75 persons from Medina, including two women, not merely professed Islām but also took an oath to defend Muhammad as they would their own kin. These are known as the two Pledges of al-Aqaba. Muhammad now encouraged his faithful Meccan followers to make their way to Medina in small groups, and about 70 emigrated thus. The Meccans are said to have plotted to kill Muhammad before he could leave. With his chief lieutenant he slipped away unperceived, used unfrequented paths, and reached Medina safely on September 24, 622. This is the celebrated *hijrah* (Latin *Hegira*), which may be rendered “emigration,” though the basic meaning is the severing of kinship ties. It is the traditional starting point of Islamic history. The Islamic Era (AH or *Anno Hegirae*) begins on the first day of the Arabic year in which the *hijrah* took place—July 16, 622, in the Western calendar. (Ibid., 2-3)

As has repeatedly been stated, the initial spread of Islam was characterized by war, intimidation, massacres, assassinations, and kidnapping, and today that is still the case, with the addition of political treachery and lies on a worldwide scale. However, by 650 AD, less than twenty years after his death in 632, both the Byzantine and Persian empires

had experienced defeat at the hand of the Muslim believers who had vowed to commit themselves to Muhammad and Allah:

He made the religion of Islām the basis of Arab unity. Islāmic doctrine maintains that God is the founder of the religion, not Muhammad, but the latter played an obviously important part in fostering the nascent religion. His concern with ultimate questions, his mystical outlook, and his moral seriousness were important adjuncts to the preaching of the Qur’ānic message. (Ibid., 5)

II. The Crusades

One of the most critical issues with regard to the present day terrorism we see emanating from Osama Bin Laden and Al Qaeda in particular is the unrelenting hatred and bitterness toward Western Christianity for the Crusades. Often times Bin Laden has referred to our current War on Terror as a “Zionist Crusader war on Islam”:

There had been recent reports that Bin Laden, who suffers from a kidney ailment, has been unwell. His purported voice on the tape, however, sounded relatively strong and clear. "The blockade which the West is imposing on the government of Hamas proves that there is a Zionist Crusader war on Islam," he said. (<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/politics/bin-laden-tape-condemns-west-crusader-wars-475426.html>)

The above quote comes from the British periodical, **The Independent**, dated April 24, 2006. The point being that not only for Bin Laden, but for a vast number of Muslims, both radical and moderate, the Crusades are still a source of bitterness and antipathy toward Western Christianity. That being the case, I do think it is important to give a breif overview of the Crusades, its causes, and its results. What is interesting to note is that when you talk to Muslims today, their understanding of the reason as to why European Christians “invaded” what we call Israel today, was because of pure, unmitigated, unjustifiable aggression toward Islam. In other words, there is an ignorance and blindness among a vast majority of Muslims not only to the causes of the Crusades from the Christian position, but also to the evils of Islam itself, whereas we in Western Christianity are keenly aware of the foibles, misrepresentations, and misdirections taken

by the “Church” in the name of Christianity. However, on the whole, this is not the case with Islam because of the tyrannical and oppressive structure of the religion itself in not permitting, let alone encouraging critical thinking with regard to the tenets, practices, and history of Islam.

(1) Causes of the Crusades

From the time that Islam became a unified aggregate of Arab tribes in the middle of the 7th century onward, wars of conquest by Muslims against European kingdoms and lands, and thus, Christianity, was an ongoing reality:

Schon in der späteren Karolingerzeit hatten die Heidenkämpfe unter den Faktoren, die auf die Ausbildung eines christlichen heiligen Krieges hinwirkten, eine bedeutende Rolle gespielt. Damals galt es, die Christenheit vor dem Ansturm der Normannen, Ungarn und Muslime zu schützen, und da diese faktisch defensive Stellung die Gerechtigkeit der christlichen Sache verbürgte, hat die Kirche nicht gezögert, den Heidenkrieg nachdrücklich zu ihrer eigenen Sache zu machen. (Carl Erdman, *Die Entstehung Des Kreuzzugsgedankens* [Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1965], 86)

Already in the later Carolingian-period (i.e., from 768-814 AD, within just over one hundred years after Muhammad’s death, the publication of the Quran, and the beginning of the spread of Islam through wars of conquest) the Moorish wars had, under the circumstances, played a significant role, which worked toward the development of a Christian holy war. Since Christendom was validated to defend against the assault of the Normans, Hungarians, and Muslims, and then this actual defensive situation authenticated the righteousness of the Christian cause, the Church did not hesitate, to emphatically make for its own cause the pagan wars. (Carl Erdman, *The Origin of the Crusade Concept* [Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Publisher, 1965], 86 – my translation and explanatory notes)

The point made in the above quotation is that the Church did not just capriciously decide to have a war against Islam in order to regain control of the Holy Land because it had nothing better to do. On the contrary, the idea of a “holy war” was something that the Church cautiously and guardedly taught to those European kingdoms under its influence and jurisdiction because of the pain and destruction associated with war, and this went all the way back to Augustine and his teachings. At this point, I think it would be quite informative to read what Augustine had to say with regard to “just wars”:

But, say they, the wise man will wage just wars. As if he would not all the rather lament the necessity of just wars, if he remembers that he is a man; for if they were not just he would not wage them, and would therefore be delivered from all wars. For it is the wrongdoing of the opposing party which compels the wise man to wage just wars; and this wrong-doing, even though it gave rise to no war, would still be matter of grief to man because it is man's wrong-doing. Let every one, then, who thinks with pain on all these great evils, so horrible, so ruthless, acknowledge that this is misery. And if any one either endures or thinks of them without mental pain, this is a more miserable plight still, for he thinks himself happy because he has lost human feeling. (Philip Schaff, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 2, *Saint Augustine's City of God and Christian Doctrine* [Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983], 405)

But the earthly city, which shall not be everlasting (for it will no longer be a city when it has been committed to the extreme penalty), has its good in this world, and rejoices in it with such joy as such things can afford. But as this is not a good which can discharge its devotees of all distresses, this city is often divided against itself by litigations, wars, quarrels, and such victories as are either life-destroying or short-lived. . . . For it desires earthly peace for the sake of enjoying earthly goods, and it makes war in order to attain to this peace; since, if it has conquered, and there remains no one to resist it, it enjoys a peace which it had not while there were opposing parties who contested for the enjoyment of those things which were too small to satisfy both. This peace is purchased by toilsome wars; it is obtained by what they style a glorious victory. Now, when victory remains with the party which had the juster cause, who hesitates to congratulate the victor, and style it a desirable peace? These things, then, are good things, and without doubt the gifts of God. But if they neglect the better things of the heavenly city, which are secured by eternal victory and peace never-ending, and so inordinately covet these present good things that they believe them to be the only desirable things, or love them better than those things which are believed to be better, — if this be so, then it is necessary that misery follow and ever increase. (Ibid., 286)

Whoever gives even moderate attention to human affairs and to our common nature, will recognize that if there is no man who does not wish to be joyful, neither is there any one who does not wish to have peace. For even they who make war desire nothing but victory, — desire, that is to say, to attain to peace with glory. For what else is victory than the conquest of those who resist us? And when this is done there is peace. It is therefore with the desire for peace that wars are waged, even by those who take pleasure in exercising their warlike nature in command and battle. And hence it is obvious that peace is the end sought for by war. For every man seeks peace by waging war, but no man seeks war by making peace. For even they who intentionally interrupt the peace in which they are living have no hatred of peace, but only wish it changed into a peace that suits them better. They do not, therefore, wish to have no peace, but only one more to their mind. . . . He, then, who prefers what is right to what is wrong, and what is well-ordered to what is perverted, sees that the peace of unjust men is not worthy to be called peace in comparison with the peace of the just. (Ibid., 407-408)

Thus, for the Church to even begin to think about engaging in a Holy War against the Muslims who were in control of Jerusalem and the Holy Land as a whole was not a capricious decision at all, but rather one that was made after carefully evaluating the continuous assaults made against Christians in that area by the Muslims, as well as against those places that were sacred to Christians. In fact, one Middle Age, French historian traces the beginning of the Crusades all the way back to the middle of the 7th century AD based on the pillaging and persecution of Christians in the Holy Land:

Ce n'est pas sans raisonner que le chroniqueur Guillaume de Tyr commence son histoire des Croisades par le récit de la lutte de l'empereur d'Orient Heraclius contre le roi de Perse Khosroès Parviz. Dans un large fresque liminaire, il nous montre le grand roi sassanide envahissant en 614 le Terre Saint, détruisant les églises et pillant le Saint- Sépulcre, puis Héraclius, préfiguration de Godefroy de Bouillon, reconquérant Syrie, reconquête dans laquelle notre auteur voit, en fait, la première des croisades (628). (René Grousset, *Histoire Des Croisades Et Du Royaume Franc De Jérusalem*, [Paris: Librairie Plon, 1934], I)

This is not without reason that the chronicler Guillaume of Tyr (1130-1184) begins his History of the Crusades with the account of the struggle of the emperor of East, Heraclius (575-641 – he was the Eastern Roman Emperor in Constantinople from 610-641), against the king of Persia, Khosroès Parviz (he was a late Sasanian king of Persia from 590-628). Within a large, introductory fresco, he shows us the great, Sasanian king invading in 614 the Holy Land, destroying churches and ransacking the Holy Sepulcher, then Héraclius, a prototype of Godfrey of Bouillon (1060-1100 – a leader of the first Crusade [1095-1099] who became the first European ruler of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem in July of 1099 after capturing Jerusalem from the Muslims), reconquering Syria, reconquered in which our author sees, in fact, the first of crusades (628). (René Grousset, *History of the Crusades and of the Frankish Kingdom of Jerusalem*, [Paris: Plon Publishing, 1934], I – my translation and explanatory notes)

Now although no historian would technically agree with Grousset's conclusion of the dating of the first Crusade, what is interesting to note is that in 638 AD, Jerusalem actually did fall to Caliph Omar I, six years after Muhammad's death, and the Byzantine control of that city, and the Holy Land as a whole, was surrendered to Muslim control for the next 450 years. Tradition has it that when Caliph Omar I took over Jerusalem, he was very gracious to the Christian inhabitants, allowing them to remain if they wished, but having to pay a tax, and he promised not to remove their sacred sites and allowed them freedom of worship (<http://www.snunit.k12.il/njeru/ee31.htm>). Thus, for the next 330

years, there was a relative degree of tolerance for Christians visiting the Holy City and the Sacred Shrines contained therein. However, outside the perimeters of Jerusalem, there was always some form of persecution and oppression aimed at those who refused Islam. Then, in 969, things changed with regard to Jerusalem and the tolerance and respect given to Christians and their Sacred Shrines:

In 969 control of Jerusalem passed to the Shiite Fatimid caliphs of Egypt, and in 1010 the caliph al-Hakim ordered the destruction of Christian shrines. In 1071 the Seljuk Turks defeated the Byzantines, displaced the Egyptians as masters of the Holy Land, and cut the pilgrim routes, thus stimulating the Crusades. (Stewart Henry Perowne, "Jerusalem" in *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th ed., 359A&B)

(2) Dates of the Crusades

The dates of the first Crusade, therefore, are from 1095-1099:

It all started at a meeting of church bureaucrats. Pope Urban II had gathered leaders at Clermont, in South-East France, in November 1095. After nine days of sessions among clerics, he invited the public to a speech. In an open field, Urban called upon the men of France to defend their fellow Greek Christians, who had been invaded by the Turks. Furthermore, he exhorted them to liberate Jerusalem, particularly the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, from the infidel Muslims.

When Urban finished, a great cry went up from the crowd: "God wills it! God wills it!" Immediately volunteers approached and knelt before him. To Urban's surprise, the Christian imagination had been seized. In the next few months, as he and others preached his message through France and Germany, dukes and counts, knights and foot soldiers, bishops and priests, and poor, simple pilgrims "took up the cross," literally sewing the emblem on their shirts as a sign of their vow to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. (Mark Galli, "Bloody Pilgrimage," *Christian History*, 40, vol. 12 – no. 4: 8)

This first Crusade ended in victory for the Christian forces as Jerusalem was eventually captured on July 15, 1099. At that point, the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem was established, and it lasted until May 18, 1291, when the last remnant of the coastal kingdom of Jerusalem, Acre, eventually fell back into Muslim control. However, Jerusalem itself went back and forth between the control of Christians and Muslims. For example, in 1187 it fell back into the control of the Sultan of Egypt, which in turn brought on the third Crusade (1189-1192), and then the sixth Crusade (1228-1229)

brought Jerusalem back under Christian control. However, in 1244, Jerusalem once more was taken over by the Seljuk Turks, and in 1247, it came back under the control of the Mamluk Muslims of Egypt, and this led to the seventh and final Crusade of 1248-1254, led by Louis IX of France, which ended in the defeat of the Christian forces. However, even though there were no more major Crusades, there still remained, as I mentioned above, a small remnant of the Kingdom of Jerusalem in the coastal city of Acre. But here too, in 1291, Acre was overrun by the Mamluks, and the Christian presence in the Middle East as an agent of control and dominance ended.

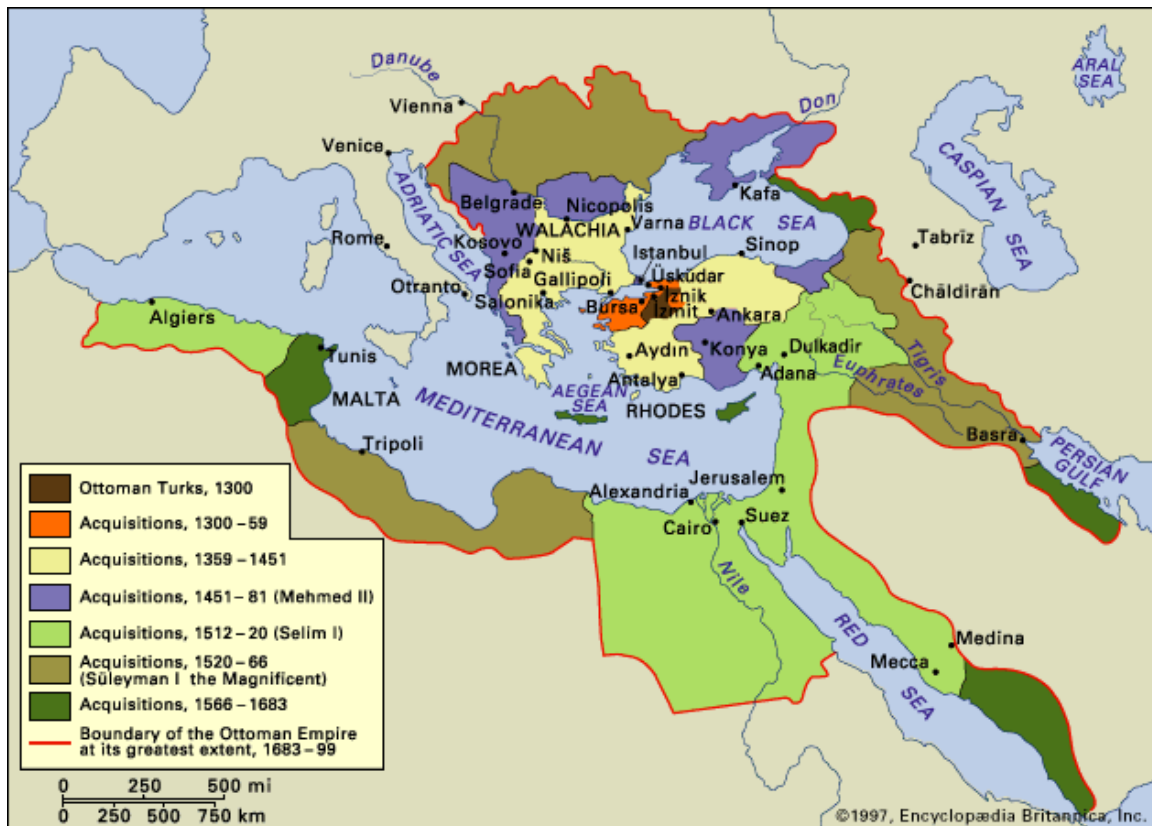
III. The Ottoman Empire

(1) The Beginning of the Ottoman Empire

The Ottoman Empire may be said to have begun with Osman I:

In their initial stages of expansion, the Ottomans were leaders of the Turkish warriors for the faith of Islam, known as *gazis* who fought against the shrinking Christian Byzantine state. The ancestors of Osman, the founder of the dynasty, were members of the Kayı tribe who had entered Anatolia along with a mass of Oguz Turkmen nomads who overwhelmed Byzantium after the Battle of Manzikert (1071) and occupied eastern and central Anatolia during the 12th century. . . . Following the Mongol defeat of the Seljuq army at the Battle of Köse Dag (1243), Osman I emerged as prince (*amir*) of the border principality of Bithynia, in northwestern Anatolia, and was in command of the *gazis* leading the fight against the Byzantines in that area. (Malcolm Edward Yapp, "Turkey and Ancient Anatolia," *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th ed., 915)

From this starting point at the middle of the 13th century, the Ottoman Empire expanded aggressively, capturing Constantinople in 1453, and bringing the center of the Eastern Orthodox Church under Muslim rule. The Ottoman Empire continued to expand, and at its greatest level of expansion, by 1699, its Empire extended from Eastern Europe including Hungary and the Balkans, through Mesopotamia to the Persian Gulf, through Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and across North Africa including Algeria to the border of Morocco.



Under the Ottomans, there was a certain degree of self-rule allowed for Christian and Jewish adherents, and these groups were called *millets*, and they “cared for the many social and administrative functions not assumed by the Ottoman ruling class, concerning such matters as marriage, divorce, birth and death, health, education, internal security, and justice” (Ibid., 924). However, freedom of choice of someone converting from one religious belief to another was discouraged among these *millets* because of the antagonism of the religious groups. However, over all of this society was the Sultan who was the supreme, unchallenged ruler, and this can be seen with one example in the Balkans:

Of the many unique military and administrative forms evolved by the Ottomans, the most notable included the *devşirme* system, whereby Christian youths from the Balkans were drafted and converted to Islam for a lifetime of service. The military arm supplied by the *devşirme* system was the Janissary corps, an infantry group attached to the person of the sultan. Mehmed II (1432-1481) developed the practice of requiring all members of the government and army, Turkish or Balkan, Muslim or non-Muslim, to accept the status of personal slave of the sultan. By that means he hoped to ensure the indivisibility of power, with the

entire ruling class sworn to absolute obedience. (*The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th ed., s.v., "Ottoman Empire.")

However, during the 18th century, a number of European Wars resulted in the loss of formerly held territory to both European countries, as well as to Russia. This continued up through the middle of the 19th century, with Greece gaining its independence and Serbia its autonomous rule, and by the end of the 19th century, through a military defeat with Russia in 1877-1888, Serbia, Romania, and Montenegro gained their independence, with Bulgaria being divided; the northern part gaining political independence, while the southern part maintained administrative independence. In addition, France and England had occupied Tunisia in 1881 and Egypt in 1882 respectively, thereby abrogating any authority the Ottomans once had over those two countries (Yapp, 929-932).

One important thing to keep in mind is that whatever concessions were meted out to non-Muslims, and in particular to the Christians in the Ottoman Empire, it may be said to have been a 'tongue in cheek' response to Christians for the purpose of gaining European support for crisis situations the Ottomans found themselves in:

The Tanzimat has been the subject of much controversy. Many Western writers have dismissed the promises of reform as merely an Ottoman desire to win European diplomatic support at critical moments, and some features of the Tanzimat appear to support such a view. The promises of equality for Christian subjects were not always implemented—for example, it was proposed in 1855 to end the poll tax paid by non-Muslims and to allow them to enter the army, but the old poll tax was merely replaced by a new exemption tax levied at a higher rate, and Christians were still excluded from the army. It is also true that the timing of reform announcements coincided with crises: the 1839 edict came when the Ottomans needed European help against Muhammad 'Alī, the 1856 edict when the Ottomans needed European acceptance in the wake of the Crimean War, and the 1876 constitution when European pressure for reforms was mounting.

This view of the Tanzimat is based, however, upon a misconception of its purpose. Europeans, who were principally concerned with improving conditions for Ottoman Christians, looked first at those elements of the Tanzimat that appeared to be directed toward this goal (*e.g.*, a proclamation in the 1839 edict of the principles of individual liberty, freedom from oppression, and equality before the law and a section of the 1856 edict that was concerned with the rights of Christians). To the Ottomans, however, the purpose of reform was to preserve the Ottoman state. Although the Ottomans found it necessary to make some concessions to European powers and to their own non-Muslim subjects and

although some Tanzimat statesmen did consider equality to be an ultimate goal, it was the desire to preserve the state that brought about the mobilization of resources for modernization. (Ibid., 930)

Thus, whatever freedoms Christians may have had were always circumscribed by the Ottoman state because the major aim of the Ottoman political system was the preservation of Ottoman supremacy for its leadership over against preserving the individual liberties of its subjects – this, in essence, is the Islamic approach to government in any place where Sharia Law is the underlying principle, either as the actual law of the land, or simply understood to be the underlying standard to which all other laws are subservient. From this perspective alone, we can see just how starkly different our Judeo-Christian legal foundation is as compared to the legal foundation of most Muslim countries, and it also interesting to note that Israel is the only true democratic state in the Middle East.

(2) The Ottoman Empire in the 20th Century

As we move into the 20th century, we see the Ottoman Empire begin to crumble and dissipate rather quickly. In April, 1909, a major upheaval took place and the current Sultan was overthrown and a new one installed in his place, and a new direction of industrialization and westernization began to occur, which included a greater secularization of the law, greater use and freedom of journalism, and an overall improvement of the status of women. The “Young Turks,” as they were called, were at the center of these revolutionary moves, and thus, the focus on Turkism, versus Ottomanism, was at the forefront, which included the desire to create a common, unified Turkish language (Yapp, 933).

However, in the face of these internal changes, the foreign holdings of the Ottoman Empire continued to evaporate. In 1908, Bosnia and Hercegovcina became part of Austria, and Bulgaria declared its independence, as well as Albania in 1912. Thus, by 1914, the Ottomans had lost 83% of its territory and 69% of its population (Ibid.). And then came the move that led to the ultimate coup d’etat of what was left of the Ottoman

Empire – their alliance with Germany during World War I, which began in 1914. What World War I did was to bring out the intense hatred and true picture of the Islamic Ottomans against Christians as the following quote depicts:

The Ottomans made a substantial contribution to the Central Powers' (Germany, Austria-Hungary) war effort. Their forces fought in eastern Asia Minor, Azerbaijan, Mesopotamia, Syria and Palestine, and at the Dardanelles, as well as on European fronts, and they held down large numbers of Entente troops. In September 1918 they dominated Transcaucasia. During the war the Young Turks also took the opportunity to attack certain internal problems—the Capitulations (contracts made with Western, Christian nations) were abolished unilaterally (September 1914), the autonomous status of Lebanon was ended, a number of Arab nationalists were executed in Damascus (August 1915 and May 1916), and the Armenian community in eastern Asia Minor and Cilicia was massacred or deported to eliminate any domestic support for the pro-Christian tsarist enemy on the Eastern Front. Possibly a million Armenians either fled or were killed (principally by Kurdish irregulars) or deported. (Ibid., 933)

At the end of World War I, the Ottoman Empire was eventually divided up among the victorious Entente, and for our purposes, one of the most significant, Post World War I decision was contained in the Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917, that “promised to support the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine” (Ibid.). Thus, the overall demise and dismemberment of the only significant, major Islamic Republic was completed, and the foundation was officially laid for the beginning of the renewed nation of Israel in the Balfour Declaration.

IV. Zionism

A discussion of the present day Middle Eastern state of affairs would not be complete without a brief analysis of modern day Zionism, and a discussion of modern day Zionism is integrally connected with Theodor Herzl, its founder. Herzl was born of Jewish parents on May 2, 1860, in Budapest, Hungary. Herzl's first taste of anti-Semitism came as a school boy at fifteen years of age in Budapest at the school he was attending. However, he soon transferred to another school in the area that was primarily Jewish. Then, in 1878, when he was eighteen, his family moved to Vienna where he entered the

University of Vienna to study law, and he received his license to practice law in 1884. However, Herzl had a strong passion for writing and journalism, and this interest and desire led to his employment with the Vienna *Neue Freie Presse* (*New Free Press*), and in 1891, he was appointed to be the Paris correspondent for that paper (*The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th ed., s.v. “Herzl, Theodor”):

Hitherto he had regarded anti-Semitism as a social problem that the Jews could overcome only by abandoning their distinctive ways and assimilating to the people among whom they lived. At the same time, his work as a newspaperman heightened his interest in, and knowledge of, social and political affairs and led him to the conviction that the answer to anti-Semitism was not assimilation but organized counterefforts by the Jews. The Dreyfus affair in France also helped crystallize this belief. French military documents had been given to German agents, and a Jewish officer named Alfred Dreyfus had been falsely charged with the crime (*this was alleged to have occurred in 1894, and although initially he was found guilty in 1894, he was pardoned in 1899 and fully acquitted in 1906 – my note*). The ensuing political controversy produced an outburst of anti-Semitism among the French public. Herzl said in later years that it was the Dreyfus affair that had made a Zionist out of him. So long as anti-Semitism existed, assimilation would be impossible, and the only solution for the majority of Jews would be organized emigration to a state of their own. (Ibid.)

Herzl met with Baron Maurice de Hirsch in 1895 who had suggested a reestablishment of Russian and Romanian Jews in countries of South America. However, Herzl believed that the Jews should be grouped around their own flag and commitment to their own political state, versus simply being dependent upon a philanthropist such as Hirsch. Hirsch did not embrace Herzl’s perspective, but it spurred Herzl on to pursue his vision of a nationalized state for Jews:

The conversation was notable for its effect on Herzl rather than on the Baron de Hirsch, who refused to hear him out. It led to Herzl’s famous pamphlet *The Jewish State*, published in February 1896 in Vienna. The Jewish question, he wrote, was not a social or religious question but a national question that could be solved only by making it “a political world question to be discussed and settled by the civilized nations of the world in council.” Some of Herzl’s friends thought it a mad idea, but the pamphlet won favourable response from eastern European Zionist societies. In June 1896, when Herzl was en route to Constantinople (Istanbul) in the hope of talking to the Ottoman sultan about obtaining the grant of Palestine as an independent country, his train stopped in Sofia, Bulg.; hundreds of Jews were present at the station to greet Herzl and to hail him as a leader. Although he remained in Constantinople for 11 days, he failed to reach the Sultan. But he had begun the career as organizer and propagandist that would end only with his death eight years later. (Ibid.)

Herzl next attempted to rally Jewish leaders in Great Britain to embrace his vision, but they were politely indifferent to his proposal. He then felt that what was needed was a worldwide counsel meeting of those who shared his same Zionist aspirations. He finally settled on Basel, Switzerland:

The congress met at the end of August 1897, attended by about 200 delegates, mostly from central and eastern Europe and Russia along with a few from western Europe and even the United States. They represented all social strata and every variety of Jewish thought—from Orthodox Jews to atheists and from businessmen to students. There were also several hundred onlookers, including some sympathetic Christians and reporters for the international press. When Herzl's imposing figure came to the podium, there was tumultuous applause. "We want to lay the foundation stone," he declared, "for the house which will become the refuge of the Jewish nation. Zionism is the return to Judaism even before the return to the land of Israel." One of Herzl's most faithful supporters was the writer Max Nordau, who gave a brilliant address in which he described the plight of the Jews in the East and in the West. The three-day congress agreed upon a program, henceforth to be known as the Basel Program, declaring that "Zionism aspires to create a publicly guaranteed homeland for the Jewish people in the land of Israel." It also set up the Zionist Organization with Herzl as president. (Ibid.)

This in turn takes us up to the end of World War I and the background and reason for the Balfour Declaration wanting to include a "national home for the Jewish people in Palestine" in the Peace Agreement and the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire. This in turn now leads us to look at the events that led to the ultimate establishment of the State of Israel.

V. The State of Israel & Islamic Terrorism

After World War I and the Balfour Declaration, the hopes of Zionists for a Jewish homeland in Palestine were greatly heightened. During April 19-26, 1920, the ultimate dissolution of the Ottoman Empire was decided at the Conference of San Remo in Italy. It was during this Conference that the "British Mandate" was issued that placed Palestine under a British protectorate in which Britain was ultimately in control (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th ed., "San Remo, Conference of," 399). Then, "the League of Nations approved on July 24, 1922, a British mandate over Palestine that included the Balfour Declaration in the preamble and various provisions dealing with facilitating Jewish

immigration” (Elahu Elath, “Israel,” in *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th ed., 141). Unfortunately, however, this did not and could not settle the deep hostility and hatred the Arab Muslims innately have toward the Jews:

In August, 1929, a dispute over the Jewish use of the Wailing Wall – the only remnant of Herod’s Temple in Jerusalem, forming the outer wall of the Muslim Haram area – was followed by the first large-scale attacks upon Jews by Arabs. In the course of the troubles, the *mufti* (an Islamic scholar who is an interpreter and expounder of Islamic, Sharia law) of Jerusalem, Amin-el Husseini, emerged as the leader and champion of the Palestinian Arab cause. (Ibid., 142)

Husseini also became an ally of Hitler in raising Bosnian troops to fight with the Nazis (he is highlighted in the 60 minute documentary, **Obsession**).

Within ten years of this incident, by 1939, there was great disagreement between the Arabs and Jews as to just how Palestine should be reconfigured to accommodate both the Arabs and the Jews. In addition, as World War II was approaching with the rise of Hitler and Nazism, the German anti-semitic rhetoric was gaining great approval with the Arabs (Husseini being a great proponent of Hitler and Nazism), and that, along with the persecution the Jews were already beginning to experience in Germany, forced both Great Britain and Jewish Zionists in May, 1939, to issue a conciliatory statement called The White Paper:

It stated that there would be no partition and that it was not British policy that the country should become either a Jewish state or an Arab state. It envisaged the establishment within 10 years of an independent “Palestine State.” In the intervening period, Jews and Arabs would be invited to take an increasing share in the administration; and Jewish immigration into Palestine would be limited to a total of 75,000 during the next five years, after which no further immigration would be allowed without Arab consent. Land purchases by Jews from Arabs would be prohibited in some areas and restricted in others, in accordance with regulations to be published by the high commissioner.

As proposal for the final settlement of the Palestine question, the White Paper was opposed by both the Zionists and the Arabs. As a means of freezing the situation for the duration of the war, however, it succeeded. Between 1939 and 1945 Palestine was relatively quiet; only as World War II neared its end did the Arab-Jewish conflict resume. (Ibid.)

At the end of World War II, President Harry Truman “urged that the European Jewish refugees be immediately admitted into Palestine” (Ibid., 143). In April of 1946, the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry “recommended the immediate admission to Palestine of 100,000 Jewish refugees from Europe, the withdrawal of all restrictions on Jewish purchase of land, and the eventual incorporation of both communities in a binational state under United Nations trusteeship” (Ibid). However, the government of Great Britain balked at the admission of 100,000 refugees into Palestine and ultimately referred this matter to the United Nations. Following this, the United Nations decided to establish a special committee to deal with the Palestinian problem:

The General Assembly voted on May 15, 1947, to create a Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP-United Nations Special Committee on Palestine) to submit “such proposals as it may consider appropriate for the solution of the problem of Palestine.” When it arrived in Jerusalem, UNSCOP was boycotted by the Arabs but actively aided by the Zionists. Few issues had been more studied than Palestine, and UNSCOP found nothing new but urgency. The only solution, it suggested, was partition, but it urged that the consequences of partition be mitigated by the maintenance of economic union. On November 29 (1947), the UN General Assembly approved, with slight frontier modifications, the UNSCOP recommendations. . . .

On May 14 (1948), the State of Israel was proclaimed and was immediately recognized by the Soviet Union and the United States. On the following day, as the British announced the end of their mandate in Palestine, troops of the modern Transjordanian army and their poorly trained and ill-equipped counterparts from Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq entered the country. (Ibid., 143)

Thus, for the first time since 63 BC when Israel came under Roman domination by Pompey, in exactly 2,011 years, Israel was once again a nation of its own authority and government. However, during the 1948 War of Jewish Independence, the Jordanians retained control of the Old City, while the modern state of Israel retained control of the modern city of Jerusalem and declared it to be its capital. However, between June 5-10, 1967, during what is called the Six Day War, Israel regained control of the Old City of Jerusalem, and for the first time since 70 AD when Titus sacked and destroyed Jerusalem, the whole of Jerusalem was once again under Jewish control. On the other hand, for the Arab Muslims, this was the first time since 1244 that Jerusalem had not been under their control.

Consequently, as we look at this very brief sketch of the history of the occupation and development of the Middle East since the rise of Islam in the mid 7th century, it becomes even clearer for us today in the West to see just how the rise of terrorism within Islam has come about. And not only that, but we also see, based on the very tenets of Islam, how and why it is both justified and encouraged by such leaders as Saddam Hussein, Osama bin Laden, and Mahmoud Achmadinejad of Iran. The terrorist ideology, therefore, is based on an emotionally convoluted, distorted, and demonically engineered lie and deception that has as its very origin the denial of God's grace and mercy as being the only grounds for our salvation and relationship with Him, in favor of a man-centered and self-deified approach that leads not only to self-destruction, but the wholesale destruction of others:



June 20, 2000: Metropolitan from Montenegro in company of two Serbian Orthodox priests conducting a funeral of three slaughtered Serbs in the village of Bijelo Polje near Pec (northwestern part of Kosovo). Albanian Muslim extremists used axes to slaughter these three civilians. Orthodox priests were able to conduct the funeral only under heavy protection of Italian peacekeepers. Albanian Muslim terrorists completely destroyed the village Bijelo Polje, and almost all Serbs from this part of Kosovo and Metohija were either killed or expelled. www.savekosovo.org/default.asp?p=3&leader=0&sp=49

The above event, as you can see, took place just over a year before September 11, 2001, but please note that it was in Montenegro, an area that at one time had been under the control of the Ottoman Empire, and was subject to its application of Sharia Law. Thus, during the first half of the 1990's after the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia under Tito, the Bosnian-Serbian-Croatian War between 1991-1995 was a result of the different ethnic groups attempting to gain their independence and autonomy from one another. Then, between 1996-1998, the Kosovo Liberation Army sought to gain its independence against the newly formed Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and it began to incorporate terrorist tactics associated with other Islamic terrorist groups. The United States State Department had labeled the Kosovo Liberation Army as a terrorist organization in 1998 ("The Crimes of the KLA: Who will Pay?" by Stella L. Jatras, 3/14/02 - <http://www.antiwar.com/orig/jatras9.html>). Unfortunately, however, the Clinton administration took the side of the KLA over against the Serbs, as the following article describes:

The Kosovo Liberation Army is an Albanian-based Islamic mujahideen force which is listed by the State Department as a terrorist organization. They are funded by European Islamic charities, the Shi'ite theocracy in Iran, [al-Qaeda](#), and the sale of heroin. According to the Geopolitical Observatory of Drugs in Paris, "The KLA has built a vast heroin network that reaches from the opium fields of Pakistan to the black-market arms dealers in Switzerland. They transport \$2 billion worth of illegal drugs annually into the heart of Europe."

Their primary weapon has been IEDs and their favorite targets have been civilians and police. They also favor ambushes and small-arm's firefights. But they are well equipped, using an assortment of anti-tank rocket launchers, mortars, anti-aircraft guns, assault rifles, and RPGs. Most of their weapons are sourced through Iran and the People's Republic of China.

Unlike normal jihadists, the KLA wear an insignia identifying themselves on their clothing. They are numerous, trained, and disciplined. In addition to Muslim Albanians, the KLA is composed of 1,000 foreign jihadists from Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Afghanistan in addition to Bosnia and Herzegovina Muslims and Croat Muslims. Their technical advisors are often British and German military or intelligence officers. They work closely with the fundamentalist Islamic regime of Alija Izetbegovic in Bosnia.

The goal of the Kosovo Liberation Army is to unite the Muslim populations of Kosovo, Macedonia, and Albania into a greater Islamic state. Their ruthless assault on Christian civilians and police is what prompted Milosevic to brutally crack down on the Muslim population in 1998. As fighting escalated between the Milosevic government and the KLA terrorists, several hundred thousand people

were displaced and several hundred were killed. Eventually the economy collapsed.

As is the case with all Islamic jihadists, bullets and bombs manufactured more than they killed. The harder Milosevic went after the KLA the faster their numbers grew - eventually reaching more than 20,000 armed Marxist Muslim militia members.

NATO, which, at Bill Clinton's urging during the Monica Lewinski affair, entered the conflict on the side of the Muslims, and thus KLA, estimated that during the first sixty days of Operation Allied Force air strikes the number of armed KLA members doubled. The bloodshed that devastated the Balkan nation was provoked by Islam with an assist from an embattled American president.

(http://prophetofdoom.net/Islamic_Clubs_Kosovo_Liberation_Army.Islam - 12/12/06)

Thus, as can be seen in the above picture and the following description of the brutality and savagery of the Muslim Kosovo Liberation Army, and has been previously stated in Chapter Four regarding the underlying approach Muslims take in spreading Islam, which is based on both the example and precepts of Muhammad, the truth of the matter is that Muhammad is the essence of Islam, including its brutality, and his fingerprints are throughout the Quran, the Hadith, and Islamic culture as a whole. In every area of Islam, therefore, his life, moral values, and actions are the standard by which the cultural mores of Islamic society are measured and adjudicated as far as their correctness is concerned – if the ‘prophet’ did or said it, then it is alright and proper to do it. For example, with regard to pedophilia practiced by Muhammad, which is passed off as marriage by Muslim clerics, it is alright for an adult male in his fifties to take, marry, and copulate with a nine year old little girl because the prophet did it! We will discuss that issue later, but in truth, Islam is Muhammad, and his person is seen throughout Islamic teaching and practice. In conclusion, therefore, to our brief analysis of the historical spread of Islam, from the Empire that Muhammad created some thirteen hundred years ago, as has once again already been stated in Chapter Four, we are today facing the same philosophy of violence, threat, and brutality that was the cornerstone of Islam’s initial spread with Muhammad, and subsequently, with that of his followers as well, long ages after him.

Chapter Six:

The Development of the Sunnah & Shia Divisions

At the time of his death, Muhammad had not appointed a leader to take his place, and thus began the division between the Sunnah Muslims (the traditionalists) and the Shiah Muslims (the “partisans”) who claim a direct blood line with Muhammed:

Despite the notion of a unified and consolidated community, as taught by the Prophet, serious differences arose within the Muslim community immediately after his death. According to the Sunnah, or traditionalist faction—who now constitute the majority of Islam—the Prophet had designated no successor. Thus the Muslims at Medina decided to elect a separate chief. Because he would not have been accepted by the Quraysh, the *ummah*, or Muslim community, would have disintegrated. Therefore, two of Muhammad's fathers-in-law, who were highly respected early converts as well as trusted lieutenants, prevailed upon the Medinans to elect a single leader, and the choice fell upon Abu Bakr, father of the Prophet's favoured wife, Aishah. All of this occurred before the Prophet's burial (under the floor of Aishah's hut, alongside the courtyard of the mosque).

According to the Shiah, or “Partisans” of Ali, the Prophet had designated as his successor his son-in-law Ali ibn Abi Talib, husband of his daughter Fatimah and father of his only surviving grandsons, Hasan and Husayn. His preference was general knowledge; yet, while Ali and the Prophet's closest kinsmen were preparing the body for burial, Abu Bakr, Umar, and Abu Ubaydah from Muhammad's Companions in the Quraysh tribe, met with the leaders of the Medinans and agreed to elect the aging Abu Bakr as the successor (*khalifah*, hence “caliph”) of the Prophet. Ali and his kinsmen were dismayed but agreed for the sake of unity to accept the *fait accompli* because Alī was still young.

After the murder of Uthman, the third caliph, Ali was invited by the Muslims at Medina to accept the caliphate. Thus Ali became the fourth caliph (656–661), but the disagreement over his right of succession brought about a major schism in Islam, between the Shiah, or “legitimists”—those loyal to Ali—and the Sunnah, or “traditionalists.” Although their differences were in the first instance political, arising out of the question of leadership, theological differences developed over time. (Ibid., 15)

In essence therefore, the Sunnah believed they were the true followers of Muhammed's teaching, and the ruler should come from his tribe, the Quraysh. The Shia, on the other hand, believed the ruler should belong to the blood line of Muhammad.

As time went by, other sects began to develop, in much the same way as varying sects developed in the early church. One such sect was the Mutazilah. They were the

intellectual thinkers, and one of their main distinctives was the belief that the Quran was not eternal, but rather was created in time. In addition, they believed that human reason, without the aid of revelation, could determine what was good and evil, but revelation does help support and confirm reason's conclusions. This form of thinking and belief, however, was ultimately rejected in the 10th century. At that time the Sunni, or "orthodox" theology was accepted, and that group which embraced and supported this theological overview in particular was the Sunnah, which means the "well-trodden path."

The Shia, on the other hand, are the one remaining sect in Islam that does not fully embrace the Sunni "orthodox" theology. Earlier we saw that in the Shia beliefs and teachings there is clear and unmistakable influence of Gnosticism in some of its fundamentals, and this is especially true with regard to their view of their political leader, the *imam*, which translated means "exemplary leader." I want to refer to that quote again because it is an excellent example of their view of the *imam* and their veneration of him:

... the *imam* ... was transformed into a metaphysical being, a manifestation of God and the primordial light that sustains the universe and bestows true knowledge on man. Through the *imām* alone the hidden and true meaning of the Quranic revelation can be known, because the *imām* alone is infallible. The orthodox Shiah recognize 12 such *imāms*, the last, Muhammad al-Mahdi, having disappeared in the 9th century. Since that time, *mujtahids* (the Shia divines) have been able to interpret law and doctrine under the putative guidance of the *imam*, who will return toward the end of time to fill the world with truth and justice. (Ibid., 17)

A bit of a fuller explanation of the "Twelfth Imam" is found in the following quote:

The core of the Shi'ite religious world view is the Hidden Imam, Muhammad al-Mahdi, "The Guided One." While the stories of the first eleven Imams are historical in nature, the history of the twelfth Imam is mystical and miraculous. Born in 868 AD / 255 AH, Abu'l-Kasim Muhammad (which is the name of the Prophet himself), and when Hasan al-Askari, the Eleventh Imam, died in 874 AD / 260 AH, the seven year old boy declared himself to be the Twelfth Imam and went into hiding. The Shi'ites believed that he hid himself in a cave below a mosque in Samarra; this cave is blocked by a gate which the Shi'ites call *Bab-al-Ghayba*, or the "Gate of Occultation." This is one of the most sacred sites in Shi'a Islam, and the faithful gather here to pray for the return of the Twelfth Imam.

The central Shi'a doctrines revolving around the Hidden Imam are the doctrines of Occultation (*Ghayba*) and Return (*Raj'a*). The Doctrine of Occultation is simply the belief that God hid Muhammad al-Mahdi away from

the eyes of men in order to preserve his life. God has miraculously kept him alive since the day he was hidden in 874 AD / 260 AH; eventually God will reveal al-Mahdi to the world and he will return to guide humanity.

The Occultation has two distinct stages, the Lesser Occultation and the Greater Occultation. In the Lesser Occultation, the Hidden Imam continued to communicate with humanity through representatives. Since the Imam was the spiritual guide or light to the rest of humanity, the Lesser Occultation only removed the Imam's body from the world, not his spiritual guidance. However, under the threat of orthodox Muslims, the Hidden Imam entered the period of Greater Occultation which is still continuing. In the Greater Occultation, the Imam is still the spiritual guide and light of the world with one exception: there is no longer any direct communication between humanity and the Imam. The Occultation, then, is a profound spiritual tragedy for the world. It means that the spiritual guide to the earth, the gift of God to humanity, which, throughout the ages has lived, breathed, and conversed with humanity, is out of reach. The Imam is the center of light in the world; the Occultation is the extinguishing of that light for the rest of humanity. The Shi'a world view, then, is profoundly tragic and nostalgic. The Shi'ite longs for a return to a time when spiritual truth walked among us, a time when human perfection stood as an icon for all humans to emulate.

The Hidden Imam, however, will eventually leave his Greater Occultation and appear (*zuhur*) to the world of humanity. This return is the most significant event in the future for the Shi'ite faithful and has thunderous eschatological consequences. This return will occur shortly before the Final Judgement and the end of history. Imam Mahdi will return at the head of the forces of righteousness and do battle with the forces of evil in one, final, apocalyptic battle. When evil has been defeated once and for all, the Imam Mahdi will rule the world for several years under a perfect government and bring about a perfect spirituality among the peoples of the world. After the Imam Mahdi has reigned for several years, Jesus Christ will return (*raj'a*), as will Husayn and others. It is the return of the dead that falls under the Doctrine of Return; the Mahdi will only appear to humanity. (<http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/SHIA/HIDDEN.HTM>)

What we see, therefore, in this description of the "Twelfth Imam," is someone who is going to be the antithesis of Jesus and remarkably like the biblical description of the anti-christ in all respects.

Chapter Seven:

An Analysis of the Theological Origins, Beliefs, & Practices of Islam

I. Theological Origins

As we have seen in our earlier study, the Ancient Near East was a cesspool of idolatry and sexual perversion. The origins of Islamic theology are quite interesting and informative because they too are pagan, and they reflect the paganism of the Ancient Near East as a whole, and in particular that which was in Saudi Arabia.

It is thought by many that the Arab moon god, Hubal, was the precursor to Allah, and in fact, he ultimately became Allah. W. Montgomery Watt in his book entitled, *Muhammad's Mecca: History in the Qur'an*, indicates that in Mecca at the Kabah, the pagan Arabs worshipped a moon god called Hubal. According to Watt, Hubal was the Lord of the Kabah, and of the 360 gods worshipped there, he was the highest in rank. However, Watt points out that Allah was also worshipped there, and he too was considered the Lord of the Kabah. On the other hand, a physical idol was not made that was supposed to be a specific representation of Allah among the other gods. But Watt's presentation would indicate that it is likely that at some point the Arabs did make an idol to be a vicarious representation of Allah. Thus, it may very well have been that Hubal, the Moon god, over time became the physical representation of Allah, and that the physical idol of Hubal was likely the entity through which the Arabs made their prayers to Allah. The logical conclusion when looking at this evidence could be construed that Hubal and Allah came to be identified as one in the same.

When Muhammad came on the scene, he destroyed the idol of Hubal, and, therefore, there was no longer any physical form of an idol that might be associated with Allah. Hubal was eventually forgotten, and Allah became the primary focus (W. Watt Montgomery, *Muhammad's Mecca: History in the Qur'an* [Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1989], 26-45).

Karen Armstrong addresses the origin of the name of Allah, and she also sees a continuing influence of the other gods whose remembrance in the minds of the people was not obliterated by the ascendancy of Allah at the expense of Hubal:

... the Ka'aba was dedicated to al-Ilah, the High God of the pagan Arabs, despite the presiding effigy of Hubal. By the beginning of the seventh century, al-Ilah had become more important than before in the religious life of many of the Arabs. Many primitive religions develop a belief in a High God, who is sometimes called the Sky God...But they also carried on worshipping the other gods, who remained deeply important to them. (Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet* [San Francisco: Harper 1993] p. 69).

Thus, even though Allah may have become the focus of the Arabs at Mecca in the 7th century, the influence of the worship of the other gods was still present, according to Armstrong.

Bob Trubshaw in his article, *The Black Stone-the Omphalos of the Goddess*, talks about the name of Allah having a feminine influence:

Pre-islamic worship of the goddess seems to be primarily associated with *Al'Lat*, which simply means 'goddess'. She is a triple goddess, similar to the Greek lunar deity Kore/Demeter/Hecate. Each aspect of this trinity corresponds to a phase of the moon. In the same way *Al'Lat* has three names known to the initiate: *Q're*, the crescent moon or the maiden; *Al'Uzza*, literally 'the strong one' who is the full moon and the mother aspect; then *Al'Menat*, the waning but wise goddess of fate, prophecy and divination. Islamic tradition continues to recognize these three but labels them 'daughters of Allah'.
(<http://www.indigogroup.co.uk/edge/blstone.htm>)

In this same article, Trubshaw also points out how these goddesses were worshipped at the Kabah:

According to Edward Rice (E. Rice. 1978. *Eastern Definitions*. New York: Doubleday Publishing) *Al'Uzza* was especially worshipped at the *Ka'bah* where she was served by seven priestesses. Her worshippers circled the holy stone seven times - once for each of the ancient seven planets - and did so in total nudity. Near the *Ka'bah* is the ever-flowing well, *Zamzam*, which cools the throats of the countless millions of pilgrims. (Ibid.)

Trubshaw goes on to describe how this ancient pagan practice of the goddess worship is carried over into modern day Islam:

When Muhammad wanted to supplant *Al'Lat* with Allah, this was the one Temple he must conquer. Although Muhammad did conquer the *Ka'bah*, little else changed. The faithful still circle the Holy of Holies seven times (although, I hasten to add, now fully clothed). The priests of the sacred shrine are still known as *Beni Shaybah* or 'Sons of the Old Woman' - *Shaybah* being, of course, the famous Queen Sheeba of Solomon's times. (Ibid.)

Thus, it can be seen without a great deal of difficulty that the pagan origins of the god Allah are real and actual, not imaginary and fictitious. This is entirely in keeping with what we have seen with the descendents of the Hamitic line and their influence in the whole of the Ancient Near East, and which influence ultimately enveloped Ishmael and his descendents, to whom the Arabs look as their seminal leader and progenitor.

Ibn Warraq, a former Muslim, also has a very interesting perspective on the relationship of the moon god, Hubal, with Allah. It is also interesting to note that Warraq probably represents the thinking of a large number of Muslims who, unlike him, are fearful to come out and say the things he writes about in his book, *Why I Am Not a Muslim*. Using the research of Old Testament scholars, he states the following:

Hubal was worshipped at Mecca, and his idol in red cornelian was erected inside the Kaaba above the dry well into which one threw votive offerings. It is very probable that Hubal had a human form. Hubal's position next to the the Black Stone suggests there is some connection between the two. Wellhausen thinks that Hubal originally was the Black Stone that, as we have already remarked, is more ancient than the idol. Wellhausen also points out that God is called Lord of the Kaaba, and Lord of the territory of Mecca in the *Koran*. The Prophet railed against the homage rendered at the Kaaba to the goddesses Al-Lat, Manat, and al-Uzza, whom the pagan Arabs called the daughters of God, but Muhammad stopped short of attacking the cult of Hubal. From this Wellhausen concludes that Hubal is no other than Allah, the "god" of the Meccans. When the Meccans defeated the Prophet near Medina, their leader is said to have shouted, "Hurrah for Hubal". (Ibn Warraq, *Why I Am Not a Muslim* [Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1995], 39)

Warraq also gives what he sees as the Islamic view of the Kaaba:

According to Muslim writers, the Kaaba was first built in heaven, where a model of it still remains, two thousand years before the creation of the world. Adam erected the Kaaba on earth but this was destroyed during the Flood. Abraham was instructed to rebuild it; Abraham was assisted by Ishmael. While looking for a stone to mark the corner of the building, Ishmael met the angel Gabriel, who gave him the Black Stone, which was then whiter than milk; it was only later that it became black from the sins of those who touched it. The above is, of course, an adaptation of the Jewish legend (*account*) of the heavenly and earthly Jerusalem. (Ibid., 41)

Warraq then goes on to present a stinging critique of the Islamic view of the Kaaba:

While Muir and Torrey are convinced that the Abrahamic origin of the Kaaba was a popular belief long before the time of Muhammad, Snouck, Hurgronje, and Aloys Sprenger agree that the association of Abraham with the Kaaba was Muhammad's personal invention, and it served as a means to liberate Islam from Judaism. Sprenger's conclusion is harsh: "By this lie, ... Muhammad gave to Islam all that man needs and which differentiates religion from philosophy: a nationality, ceremonies, historical memories, mysteries, an assurance of entering heaven, all the while deceiving his own conscience and those of others." (Ibid.)

Thus, it is once again clear to see that Islam has its origin in pagan, occult beliefs and practices that were carried over by Muhammad into present day Islamic belief and practice.

Another very important aspect of Islam is its amalgamation of Jewish and Christian beliefs-thus, it is not some original revelation, as it is represented, but rather it is an eclectic combination of the above two revealed truths, plus, as we have seen, pagan, Arabic beliefs. John Gilchrist has a very important analysis of this eclecticism of Jewish and Christian traditions alongside Arabic traditions in his examination of words found in the Quran, which, according to Islam, is supposed to be pure Arabic, the 'language of heaven':

The Quran on numerous occasions proclaims that it has been sent down as an Arabic Quran (Surah 12.2, 13.37, 42.7) so that its teaching would be plain to those who heard it. Throughout the Muslim world the Arabic language is revered as the speech of the Book of Allah and all translations of the Quran into whatever language are regarded as inferior to the Arabic original. Islamic legend goes so far as to declare that Arabic must be the language of heaven. Furthermore, because the book is said to have been revealed by Allah to Muhammad, it is presumed that it is a perfect Scripture dependent on nothing other than his omniscient will and knowledge. Nothing could have come from a human source

or have been learnt by the Prophet from other backgrounds.
(<http://www.truthnet.org/islam/Qurangil4.html>)

He goes on to show that the very name, ‘Quran’, is itself something borrowed from Syriac Christian sources:

The very word quran, which occurs some seventy times in the book and means "a recitation," is not derived from an original Arabic word. Indeed it is significant to note that there are only four occasions where a form of the word qaraa qaraaʾ is not used for the revelation of the quran text to Muhammad. On one of these it refers to the reading of the Scripture that came before the quran (Surah 10.94), on another to a book his opponents demanded he should send down to them which they could read (Surah 17.93) and on two others to books of fate which believers and unbelievers will be made to read on the Last Day (Surah 17.71, 69.19). It is clear that every use of the word is in a religious context, in particular with the reading of heavenly books.

The word qaraa qaraaʾ is not an original Arabic word with the simple meaning "to read." The verbal noun quran itself is not found in Arabic writings prior to the quran itself, and it must be presumed that the word, if not original to the book, is at least contemporary with it. The most probable origin of the word is the Syriac Christian word qiryani meaning the "reading" of a scripture lesson from a lectern in a Church. This is very much the sense in which the word is used in the quran and there can be little doubt that it is derived from Christian sources. (Ibid.)

The Arabic verb from which the word Quran comes from is قرا (*qaraʾa*), and it means “to declaim, recite, read, investigate, and examine.” The word Quran, written in Arabic as القرآن (*al-quran* – “The Quran”), is a nominal form of the verb in the same way that “runner” in English is a nominal form of the verb “to run.” In essence, therefore, the idiomatic usage and understanding of the word Quran in modern Arabic today carries the idea of an “affirmation or confession,” that is, it is viewed as the affirmation and confession of Allah’s will that was given to Muhammad, as Allah recited it to Muhammad. What Gilchrist is saying is that we do not find any usage of the term Quran in Arabic predating the arrival of Muhammad and his subsequent revelations. What we do find, however, is a Syriac word, ܩܪܝܢܐ (*qeryan*), which means “reading, study, and disputation.” This noun in turn comes from the Syriac verb ܩܪܐ (*qaraʾ*), which means “to invoke, pronounce, read, recite, and study.” As you can see, the Syriac word is

identical to the Arabic word in its meaning and even in its form as far as the letters used to form the word. The Syriac language came into development around the 5th century BC in northern Mesopotamia, but in 132 BC, with the founding of the Osroene kingdom in southeastern Turkey, Syriac became that country's official language. By the 2nd century AD, the Old Testament had been translated into Syriac from the Hebrew; by the 3rd century AD, Christian Churches in Edessa (i.e., Osroene) began to use Syriac as their language of worship; and the translation of the Gospels and the Pauline Epistles into Syriac is thought to have been accomplished in the 3rd to early fourth century AD. In I Timothy 4:13, we find the Syriac noun ܩܪܝܢܐ (*qeryan*) being used to translate the word “reading”: “Until I come, give attention to the public reading (ܩܪܝܢܐ - *qarina*) of *Scripture*, to exhortation and teaching.” Therefore, from this form of the Syriac word for “reading” (ܩܪܝܢܐ - *qeryan*), Gilchrist maintains that the Arabic word for “reading,” قرآن (*quran*), had its origin, with the resulting conclusion being that the Arabic of the Quran is not “pure Arabic,” but rather, like all languages, is an admixture of many human languages. In addition, this would clearly demonstrate that during the eighteen year gap between the death of Muhammad and the collating and publishing of the first Quran, there was an unequivocal and overt effort at redacting and collating Muhammad's supposed revelations from the angel Gabriel. The ultimate product of that redaction effort is this convoluted, disjointed, contradictory, and deceptive book called the Quran that has and is continually leading and imprisoning people into great spiritual, mental, emotional, and intellectual darkness and self-destruction.

In addition to the Syriac Christian sources, Gilchrist gives further examples of Greek Septuagint and Greek New Testament influence in the Quran:

Numerous other words and names in the quran are derived from alien sources. Elijah is mentioned three times by name in the book, as Ilyas in Surahs 6.85 (إِلْيَاسَ - *ilyasa*) and 37.123 (إِلْيَاسَ - *ilyasa*), and as Ilyasin in Surah 37.130 (إِلْيَاسِينَ - *ilyasin*). The latter form was apparently used to rhyme his name with the last word of the next verse, al-muhsiniin (الْمُحْسِنِينَ - *almuhsinin*, which means “to the ones being good”). It is very interesting to note that the word has no connection with the original Hebrew name for the prophet (אֱלִיָּהוּ)

– ‘ēliyyāhū), but it is the same as the Greek and Syriac (Ἑλίας – *Ēlias* & ܝܠܝܐ - *Elaya*) translation respectively of his name from which it is clearly derived. The same can be said for the prophet Jonah who is called Yunus four times in the quran (Surah 4.163, etc. – يُونس – *Yunus*). He is called Yonah in the original Hebrew (יֹנָתָן - *Yônâ*) and Yunas (Ἰωνᾶς - *Iōnas*) in the Greek Septuagint and New Testament. The quranic form would appear to have been derived from the Syriac form (ܝܢܢܐ - *Yonan/Yunan*) which is exactly the same and is obtained originally from the Greek. Although Hebrew and Arabic are very similar semitic languages, it is intriguing to find quranic names for Hebrew prophets being derived from Greek and Syriac sources and not from the Hebrew originals (language insertions are mine). (Ibid.)

Thus, in this very brief historical and linguistic analysis of the origins of some of Islam’s theological beliefs and practices, you can see, once again, that this is not some original and new revelation, but rather it is an eclectic combination of pagan, Jewish, and Christian beliefs, words, and expressions in a manner that exalts the ‘son of the bondwoman’ over against the ‘son of the free woman’. This is both a racial assault in that it is clearly anti-semitic (i.e., anti-Jewish) and a theological assault in that it is clearly anti-grace and pro-works. These latter two we will begin to see with greater clarity as we examine Islam’s theology from both a doctrinal and practical application.

II. Islamic Beliefs & Practices

As we begin this section of our study, we will be looking at five areas: (1) Quranic beliefs and doctrine; (2) Hadith beliefs and practices; (3) The ‘five pillars of Islam’; (4) Sharia law; (5) and Jihad. These five areas are the essence of present day Islamic belief and practice, and if you have a basic understanding of these areas, you will be competently equipped to share and minister to Muslims in an informed and confident manner. When I say confident, I do not mean in a carnal, proud, and arrogant manner, but rather in a humble, gentle, and certain manner with regard to the things you are discussing in truth and in love.

(1) Quranic Beliefs & Doctrine

We have already briefly looked at the origin and position given the Quran by Muslims, and now we want to look at some of the doctrinal beliefs espoused in the Quran

and taught by Muhammad. It is important to remember, however, that eighteen years passed between Muhammad's death and the compiling of all these teachings into one book, and once again, as has already been seen, there is an admixture of other elements into the Quran besides 'pure Arabic', whatever that might mean. Thus, what we clearly have in the finished product of the Quran is a conflation and redaction in various areas that portray a decidedly anti-Semitic, anti-Christian, and pro-Arab (in particular, a pro-Ishmaelite position - the child of the Flesh - versus Isaac – the child of the promise) perspective. I am not wanting to 'over-spiritualize' this analogy, but I do believe this is a root cause and driving force behind the writings contained in the Quran.

The Fall of Satan

The first doctrine I would like to look at is the fall of Satan. The biblical view is that Satan was cast out of heaven because he wanted to usurp God's power and authority and take the place of God (Isaiah 14:3-15; Ezekiel 28:12-19), and Jesus said He saw Satan fall from heaven in Luke 10:18: "And He said to them, 'I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning'." However, according to the Quran, Satan was cast out because he refused to 'bow down' to Adam: "And behold, We said to the angels: 'Bow down to Adam' and they bowed down. Not so Iblis: he refused and was haughty: He was of those who reject Faith" (Surah 2:34). Thus, according to the Quran, Allah was commanding reverence and worship of Adam by the angels, but Satan (Iblis) refused to do so and was cast out.

The word for "Bow down" in Arabic is *اسجد* (*asjudu*), and it is a command in the second person plural from the root verb *سجد* (*sajada*), which means "to bow down, to bow in worship; to throw oneself down, to prostrate oneself (س - this is the *ṣ* in Hebrew, which is represented by the English "L," and in both Arabic and Hebrew these two letters stand for the English preposition "to/before"); to worship (الله - *alh* – God). This verb is used commonly for one prostrating himself or herself in a general sense (e.g., when

calamity or danger strikes). However, it is also used of “prostrating” oneself before God (Allah) and worshipping Him (e.g., Surah 2:125; 3:43; 9:112; 13:15 and many, many more). Thus, the angels are enjoined to give the same homage and reverence to man as they are to God in Islamic belief.

In the Bible, the only time God ever told the angels to ‘bow down’ and worship anyone was when He instructed them to ‘bow down’ and worship Jesus in Hebrews 1:6: “And when He again brings the first-born into the world, He says, ‘And let all the angels of God worship Him.’” This quote is actually taken from the LXX, not the Hebrew, in Deuteronomy 32:43: “Rejoice, ye heavens, with him, and let all the angels of God worship Him; . . .” Clearly this passage is referring to Yahweh, and the writer in Hebrews understands this representation in Deuteronomy to be of Jesus.

In addition, the word used for “worship” in Deuteronomy 32:43 and in Hebrews 1:6 is the same Greek word - προσκυνέω (*proskuneō*), and the Arabic word used in the New Testament in Hebrews 1:6 is the exact same word used in Surah 2:34 et al with regard to ‘bowing down to Adam’, and more particular, with reference to the many examples of bowing down and worshipping God (e.g., Surah 2:125; 3:43; 9:112; 13:15, et al). Thus, what we have in the Quran is an incredibly, convoluted attempt to subtly deify man so that he becomes his own redeemer – i.e., we take the place of Jesus in Islam, and in essence, we become our own savior.

But what is even more startling is that this was not some ‘new revelation’ given to Muhammad by Gabriel, but rather this was a teaching and concept that long preceded Muhammad, and very likely the coming of Jesus Christ – this goes all the way back to a book entitled *The Life of Adam and Eve*. It is thought that the original text was most probably written in Hebrew by a Jewish author from Palestine, dating somewhere between 100 BC to the end of the first Christian century, and the subsequent Greek and Latin texts emerged from the Hebrew original somewhere from the time of its final production to about 400 AD (James S. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 2, *Life of Adam and Eve*, trans. and intro. by M. D. Johnson [Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1985], 251-252). The Latin text contains the account of Satan being cast out of heaven because he refused to worship Adam, and the following is that account:

12 And with a heavy sigh, the devil spake: ‘O Adam! all my hostility, envy, and sorrow is for thee, since it is for thee that I have been expelled from my glory, which I possessed in the heavens in the midst of the angels and for thee was I cast out in the earth.’ ² Adam answered, ‘What dost thou tell me?’ ³ What have I done to thee or what is my fault against thee? Seeing that thou hast received no harm or injury from us, why dost thou pursue us?’

13 The devil replied, ‘Adam, what dost thou tell me? It is for thy sake that I have been hurled from that place. When thou wast formed, I was hurled out of the presence of God and banished from the company of the angels. When God blew into thee the breath of life and thy face and likeness was made in the image of God, Michael also brought thee and made (us) worship thee in the sight of God; and God the Lord spake: Here is Adam. I have made thee in our image and likeness.’

14 And Michael went out and called all the angels saying: ‘Worship the image of God as the Lord God hath commanded.’ ² And Michael himself worshipped first; then he called me and said: ‘Worship the image of God the Lord.’ ³ And I answered, ‘I have no (need) to worship Adam.’ And since Michael kept urging me to worship, I said to him, ‘Why dost thou urge me? I will not worship an inferior and younger being (than I). I am his senior in the Creation, before he was made was I already made. It is his duty to worship me.’

15 When the angels, who were under me, heard this, they refused to worship him. ² And Michael saith, ‘Worship the image of God, but if thou wilt not worship him, the Lord God will be wrath with thee.’ ³ And I said, ‘If He be wrath with me, I will set my seat above the stars of heaven and will be like the Highest.’

16 And God the Lord was wrath with me and banished me and my angels from our glory; and on thy account were we expelled from our abodes into this world and hurled on the earth. ² And straightway we were overcome with grief, since we had been spoiled of so great glory. ³ And we were grieved when we saw thee in such joy and luxury. ⁴ And with guile I cheated thy wife and caused thee to be expelled through her (doing) from thy joy and luxury, as I have been driven out of my glory.’ (R. H. Charles, ed., *Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, vol. 2 [Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 2004], 136)

As you can see, this is a very elaborate addition to the creation and fall of man from the original Hebrew account in Genesis 1-3, as well as the fall of Satan metaphorically depicted in conjunction with the falls of the King of Babylon and the King of Tyre described Isaiah 14:3-15 and Ezekiel 28:12-19 respectively. What is most significant about this pseudepigraphal work is that it, along with the Quran, have the angels of God “worshipping Adam.” However, Johnson makes an interesting observation with reference to the theological and cultural mindset of the fifth century AD, which is around the time that the Greek and Latin translations of this work were in circulation. During the late fourth and early fifth century AD, a major controversy arose in the Church in

conjunction with a British monk named Pelagius (360-420). In essence, Pelagius was in direct opposition to orthodox teaching with regard to man's innate, sinful nature and his inability within himself to live pleasing to God:

The monk denied that human sin is inherited from Adam. Man, he said, is free to act righteously or sinfully. Moreover, death is not a consequence of Adam's disobedience. Adam, indeed, introduced sin into the world, but only by his corrupting example. There is no direct connection between his sin and the moral condition of mankind. Almost all the human race has sinned; but it is possible not to sin, and some people have in fact lived without sin. God predestinates no one, except in the sense that he foresees who will believe and who will reject his gracious influences. His forgiveness comes to all who exercise "faith alone"; but, once forgiven, man has power of himself to live pleasing to God. Thus, Pelagius found no real need for the special enabling power of the Holy Spirit. (Bruce L. Shelly, *Church History in Plain Language*, [Dallas: Word Publishing, 1995], 129)

Pelagius' view of man's sin nature is incredibly similar to that of Islam, as well as the position of man's potential ability to live a life of not sinning, and from this perspective, a self-deified view of man begins to emerge in Pelagius' view, which is also incredibly similar to that of Islam.

Thus, M. D. Johnson notes that in the fifth century, there were those under the 'Christian umbrella' who embraced Pelagius' view, and, consequently, they also were drawn to the view of man depicted in Satan's fall in the Latin version of "The Life of Adam": "Literary evidence suggests that during the fifth century, coincidental with the height of the Pelagian controversy, there was great interest, especially among Frankish churchmen, in harmonizing the biblical story of the origins of man with the classical pagan heroic motifs, . . ." (Charlesworth, 255). That is, there was the desire by some within the framework of Christianity to embrace a view that exalted man in a semi-deified state – seeing man expunge his own sin nature and approaching perfection by his own ability and self-will. This is also what we have in Islam with regard to man's sin nature and his innate potential of possibly arriving at a point of sinlessness:

The Judeo-Christian story of the Fall of Adam (the first man) is accepted, but the Qurān states that God forgave Adam his act of disobedience, which is not viewed in the Qurān (in contradistinction to its understanding in the Christian doctrine) as original sin. . . .

Nevertheless, it is always possible for a sinner to repent (*tawbah*) and redeem himself by a genuine conversion to the truth. There is no point of no return, and God is forever merciful and always willing and ready to pardon. Genuine repentance has the effect of removing all sins and restoring a person to the state of sinlessness with which he started his life. (Fazlur Rahman, "Islam," in *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th ed., 7)

In other words, mankind does not have a sin-nature, but rather he simply commits acts of sin. And secondly, when a person genuinely repents of his or her sin, they are once again, in and of themselves, in a state of sinless perfection, and, according to both Islam and Pelagianism, it is possible for that person to live a sinless life.

With this reasoning, therefore, so much of Scripture is blatantly denied, and man is given a position of being his own redeemer and savior. However, biblically speaking, the following passages are the complete antithesis of the above theology of both Pelagius and Islam:

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned--¹³ for until the Law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law.¹⁴ Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.¹⁵ ¶ But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.¹⁶ And the gift is not like *that which came* through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment *arose* from one *transgression* resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift *arose* from many transgressions resulting in justification.¹⁷ For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.¹⁸ ¶ So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men.¹⁹ For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.²⁰ And the Law came in that the transgression might increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,²¹ that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 5:21-21)

If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. (I John 1:8-10)

This leads us directly into the next topic of discussion, which is The Fall of Adam, and here too in this doctrine, we will see the focus on man's works as being the foundation of his salvation, and man thus has the potential within himself to be his own savior.

The Fall of Adam

The 'fall of Adam' is central to our understanding of the origin of man's corrupt, sinful nature, and as stated above, if one alters the biblical account into something different than what it is clearly presenting and the temporal and eternal consequences that attend it, then we have a major problem. The biblical account is found in Genesis 3:1-7, and it is important at this juncture that we quote the entire passage:

Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?" ² And the woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; ³ but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, lest you die.'" ⁴ And the serpent said to the woman, "You surely shall not die! ⁵ "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." ⁶ When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make *one* wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings. (Genesis 3:1-7)

The Quranic account, however, is quite different, and there are actually three separate accounts in the Quran: (1) Surah 2:30-39; (2) Surah 7:11-42; (3) Surah 20:115-127. Now unlike the Gospels, which at times have variations of the same story due to the fact that four different people wrote them from four different perspectives, the Quran is supposed to have been written by only one man, Muhammad. However, in each of these three accounts, we have three different presentations of the same event, supposedly by the same person. For example, in Surah 2:36, we read: "Then did Satan make them slip from the (garden), and get them out of the state (of felicity) in which they had been" (Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Meaning of the Holy Quran*, 9th ed. [Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications, 1997], 142). Surah 7:20 is similar, but different from the above: "Then began Satan to

whisper suggestions to them, bringing openly before their minds all their shame that was hidden from them (before): he said: ‘Your Lord only forbade you this tree, lest ye should become angels or such beings as live for ever’ (Ibid.).” If you will notice, these two accounts are quite different from the above biblical account, in that in the biblical account, Satan did not have a conversation with “them,” but rather with Eve alone.

However, within the Quranic text itself in Surah 20:120-121, we read something not only a bit different from Surah 2:36 and 7:20 above, but one might say, completely different:

But Satan whispered evil to him: he said, ‘O Adam! shall I lead thee to the Tree of Eternity and to a kingdom that never decays?’ In the result, they both ate of the tree, and so their nakedness appeared to them: they began to sew together, for their covering, leaves from the Garden: thus did Adam disobey his Lord, and allow himself to be seduced. (Surah 20:120-121)

Once again, we see that the above passage is completely antithetical to the biblical passage where Satan speaks to Eve, not Adam. Thus, here in Surah 20:120-121, not only do we find a stark difference from the biblical text, but an equally stark difference from the other two Quranic passages, as we are told in Surah 20:120 that “Satan whispered evil to him (*i.e.*, Adam),” and in Surah 7:20 we are told, “Then Satan began to whisper suggestions to them.”

As we exegetically examine Surah 7:20, we notice that the phrase in Arabic, “Your Lord only forbade you,” is read, نَهَاكُمَا رَبُّكُمَا عَنْ (nahakuma rabbukuma aan), and the two pronouns, “your” and “you,” are both plural (*kuma* being the dual/plural form for both). Thus, there is no mistaking that as Satan is speaking in 7:20, he is actually speaking to and addressing both Adam and Eve. In addition, the Arabic word translated as “only” in English (عَنْ – ‘aan) has a somewhat more emphatic meaning than the word “only” characterizes for us who are English speakers. In Arabic, ‘aan carries the idea of “to individualize, particularize, designate, determine, and appoint” (J. M. Cowan, ed., *A Dictionary of Modern, Written Arabic*, 3rd ed. [Ithaca, NY: Spoken Language Services, Inc., 1976], 662). Thus, this is an extremely focused word, and it is used for emphasis in order to “specify,” if you will, Adam and Eve as the two, specific individuals, together,

who Satan is addressing. However, in 20:120, Satan says, “O Adam! shall I lead thee to the Tree of Eternity.” The phrase in Arabic, “Shall I lead thee,” is هَلْ أَتُكَ (*hal adulluka*), and the “thee” (*ka*) is the masculine, 2nd person singular pronoun for “you,” which in this case is referring to Adam by himself, whereas in Surah 7:20, Satan is clearly referring to both Adam and Eve (كُـمَا – *kuma* being the plural/dual form of you).

The question before us, therefore, is, which is the correct narrative? Now this might not seem to be of any great significance, but in truth it is. We have at least two different narratives occurring about the one event by the same author, and this supposed oral revelation given to Muhammad by Gabriel, which in turn became the written revelation in the Quran, is believed to be the “pure Arabic,” which is proclaimed to be the “language of heaven.” If that is the case, then Gabriel was confused in his transmission to Muhammad, or maybe it was Muhammad who was confused. On the other hand, in the four Gospels, we have four different individuals writing about the same events, and in many instances there are written variations of the same events by the different authors. However, this is to be expected because each of these four writers saw the same events from different angles, and they then, under the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit, wrote what they saw and heard. God in turn blended these different perspectives together so that they expand, compliment, and support the events they are describing into one story. However, with the Quranic text, according to Islamic tradition as stated above, the Arabic given to Muhammad is claimed to be “pure Arabic,” which means it is flawless, and it is supposed to be the “language of heaven.” On the other hand, the text itself, as we have seen, refutes such a belief and doctrine, but what the text does indicate is that during the eighteen year gap between Muhammad’s death (632 AD) and the collating and publishing of the Quran (650 AD), there was a complicit, purposeful, but not very competent redaction in the development and compilation of the Quranic text. We will see more of this purposeful redaction in the Quran as we get into some of its actual teachings in relation to both the Old Testament and New Testament writings, and in these instances we will discover a dependence on writings of an apocryphal nature that were circulating in the 6th and 7th centuries AD in the Middle East, versus on the actual biblical text.

However, that which is the most serious aspect of the above account of Adam and Eve's fall is what it doesn't have, and that is, what I would see as a recognition of one's sin as being against the holy and righteous God, versus simply one sinning against 'one's own soul', which is what we see in Surah 7:23: "They said: 'Our Lord! We have wronged our own souls: If thou forgive us not and bestow not upon us Thy Mercy, we shall certainly be lost'" (Ali). Indeed, they certainly did wrong their "own souls," but what is at question is the root of that "wrong," and in my opinion, that is where the distortion occurs.

In Surah 2:37 we read the following response by Adam to God over his sin: "Then learnt Adam from his Lord words of inspiration, and his Lord Turned towards him; for He is Oft-Returning, Most Merciful" (Ibid.) In this last passage, Adam is simply said to have "learnt from his Lord words of inspiration." This latter statement is very reminiscent of Gnosticism, which stresses knowledge over any form of repentance. In Surah 20:121-122, we read the following account of God's response with reference to Adam's sin: "thus did Adam disobey his Lord, and allow himself to be seduced. But his Lord chose him (for His Grace): He turned to him, and gave him Guidance." Of these three, only Surah 7:23 contains any reference to some form of confession and repentance, whereas these last two focus more on 'knowledge', whereby someone is 'guided' to an intellectual reconciliation with God, depending on their own knowledge and perception, versus being brought to conviction of their sin by the Holy Spirit, leading to repentance and salvation.

I believe this Quranic emphasis on knowledge as the key to salvation can be seen most clearly in Surah 2:37, which we have already looked at. Once again, the passage reads as follows: "Then learnt Adam from his Lord words of inspiration, and his Lord Turned towards him; for He is Oft-Returning, Most Merciful" (Ali). The phrase "Then learnt" is the Arabic word **فَتَلَقَّى** (*fatalaqqā*). This is a reflexive verb form, with the "ta" indicating the reflexive nature of this verb. It comes from the verb root **لَقِيَ** (*laqiya*), whose basic meaning is "to encounter, to meet, to experience," and with the reflexive "ta," the meaning may also be translated as "to receive, to take, to learn, to be informed." The reflexive aspect, therefore, may be translated as, "Then Adam *caused himself to learn*

from His Lord words of inspiration, and his Lord Turned towards him; . . .” It appears to be quite evident that the qualifying event that caused the “Lord” to turn “towards him” was the fact that “Adam caused himself to learn from his Lord words of inspiration,” versus a broken and repentant heart over his sin against God and a trust in God’s righteousness, not his own, for his salvation. Another aspect of the reflexive translation with regard to the basic meaning of لَقِيَ (*laqiya*) is the following rendering: “Then Adam caused himself to encounter/experience from his Lord words of inspiration.” Once again, this implies Adam as being the agent to discover within himself these “words of inspiration,” which is the same type of verbalism used in the ‘New Age’ movement, and it is nothing less than the ‘self-deification’ we have seen instituted with Nimrod, to ancient Sumeria, and to this very day! We do not find within ourselves “the words of inspiration,” but rather the Living Word of God, Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, imparts His life-giving Spirit within us from without, and we are born again to new life in Christ. And it is then, and only then that we begin to learn of Christ as His indwelling Holy Spirit teaches us, not us ‘teaching ourselves’.

What is interesting here is to once again compare the biblical text with the above accounts. When we do, we see that it was God, through His sovereign grace and mercy, that provided the righteousness Adam and Eve needed for a relationship with Him, and He did that through the shedding of blood of animals that atoned for their sin, whereby “the LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.” Thus, it was the act of God that established their righteousness through His ‘clothing’ with His righteousness, versus their efforts at attempting to clothe themselves, through their knowledge and effort, with their own righteousness.

The Deity of Jesus Christ

The next Quranic doctrine I would like for us to look at concerns the nature and deity of Jesus Christ. In the Quran, Jesus is described as having a nature just like Adam’s, which means that Jesus and Adam (i.e., man – you and me) are identical in nature: “The similitude of Jesus before Allah is as that of Adam; He created him from dust, then said

to him, ‘Be’: and he was” (Surah 3:59). Abdullah Yusuf Ali makes the following comment about this verse:

After a description of the high position which Jesus occupies as a prophet, we have a repudiation of the dogma that he was Allah, or the son of Allah, or anything more than a man. If it is said that he was born without a human father, Adam was also born without either a human father or mother. As far as our physical bodies are concerned they are mere dust. In Allah’s sight Jesus was as dust just as Adam was or humanity is. The greatness of Jesus arose from the Divine command “Be”: for after that he was – more than dust – a great spiritual leader and teacher. (Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Meaning of the Holy Quran*, 9th ed. [Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications, 1997], 142)

On the other hand, the biblical account of Jesus’ nature is quite different from that described in the Quran, as well as Ali’s commentary: “Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted” (Hebrews 2:17-18). Indeed, He was made like us as far as our human frailty is concerned, but He was quite unlike us as far as the essence of His nature is concerned:

Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:14-16)

Jesus was tempted in all points as we are, but HE DID NOT SIN! When we read Romans 3:23, we find a startling statement about mankind: “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” This “all” of course includes all mankind, except Jesus, because He WAS NOT AND IS NOT LIKE ALL MEN! He was the unique, Son of God, born of the virgin Mary, Who is the only One who can take our sins away.

The other area concerning the deity of Jesus that is intensely denied by the Quran has to do with His supernatural, divine birth and His eternal deity:

In blasphemy indeed are those that say that Allah is Christ the son of Mary.
(Surah 5:17a)

They do blaspheme who say: 'Allah is Christ the son of Mary.' But said Christ:
'O Children of Israel! Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord.' Whoever joins
other gods with Allah – Allah will forbid him the Garden, and the Fire will be his
abode. There will for the wrongdoers be no one to help. (Surah 5:72)

And behold! Allah will say: 'O Jesus the son of Mary! Didst thou say unto men,
'Worship me and my mother as gods in derogation of Allah?' He will say:
'Glory to Thee! Never could I say what I had no right (to say). Had I said such a
thing, Thou wouldst indeed have known it. Thou knowest what is in my heart,
though I know not what is in Thine. For Thou knowest in full all that is hidden.
(Surah 5:116)

The Bible, on the other hand, presents a completely different picture of Jesus'
supernatural, divine birth and His eternal deity:

Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee,
called Nazareth, 27 to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the
descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. 28 And coming in, he
said to her, "Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you." 29 But she was greatly
troubled at this statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this might
be. 30 And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found
favor with God. 31 "And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a
son, and you shall name Him Jesus. 32 "He will be great, and will be called the
Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father
David; 33 and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom
will have no end." 34 And Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a
virgin?" 35 And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come
upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that
reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God. (Luke 1:26-35)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was
God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being by Him,
and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. (John 1:1-
3)

And He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation. 16 For by
Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and
invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have
been created by Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all
things hold together. (Colossians 1:15-17)

Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am."
59 Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself, and
went out of the temple. (John 8:58-59)

I and the Father are one." 31 The Jews took up stones again to stone Him. 32 Jesus answered them, "I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?" 33 The Jews answered Him, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God." 34 Jesus answered them, "Has it not been written in your Law, 'I said, you are gods'? 35 "If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), 36 do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'? 37 "If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; 38 but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father." 39 Therefore they were seeking again to seize Him, and He eluded their grasp. (John 10:30-39)

But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. 25 The other disciples therefore were saying to him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I shall see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." 26 ¶ And after eight days again His disciples were inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst, and said, "Peace *be* with you." 27 Then He said to Thomas, "Reach here your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand, and put it into My side; and be not unbelieving, but believing." 28 Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" 29 Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed *are* they who did not see, and *yet* believed." (John 20:24-29)

God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. 3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; 4 having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they. 5 For to which of the angels did He ever say, "Thou art My Son, Today I have begotten Thee"? And again, "I will be a Father to Him And He shall be a Son to Me"? 6 And when He again brings the first-born into the world, He says, "And let all the angels of God worship Him." (Hebrews 1:1-6)

In conjunction with the Quran's denial of Jesus' divine, supernatural birth and His eternal deity, is its statement that Jesus was only a messenger and nothing more:

O People of the Book! Commit no excesses in your religion: nor say of Allah aught but the truth. Christ Jesus the son of Mary was (no more than) a Messenger of Allah, and His Word, which He bestowed on Mary, and a Spirit proceeding from Him: so believe in Allah and His Messengers. (Surah 4:171 a-b)

Christ, the son of Mary, was no more than a Messenger; many were the Messengers that passed away before him. (Surah 5:75 a)

As is quoted above in John 20:24-29, after Jesus had risen from the dead, He appeared to His disciples, but Thomas wasn't there. Eight days passed from that first encounter Jesus had with His disciples, and then He appeared again, and Thomas was there with the others at this appearance. Thomas had initially doubted that the disciples had actually seen Jesus, but when Jesus appears this time, He tells Thomas to examine His hands and side where He had been pierced. Upon doing that, and realizing that this was indeed the resurrected Jesus, Thomas exclaimed: "My Lord and My God" (John 20:28)! Thus, Jesus was far more than just a prophet.

The Crucifixion of Jesus

The fourth Quranic doctrinal difference with the Bible I would like for us to examine is the Quran's denial of Jesus' crucifixion: "That they said (in boast), "We killed Christ Jesus the son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah" – but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them, and those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge, but only conjecture to follow, for of a surety they killed him not" (Surah 4:157). This, therefore, is a complete denial of the atonement, and that means that we are still in our sins, and we must atone for our own sins by our own works! However, the above passage in John 20:24-29 attests not only to the fact of Jesus' death and burial, but also of His resurrection. Paul states very forcefully the importance and necessity of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection:

Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, 2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. 3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. . . . Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; 14 and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith

also is vain. 15 Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we witnessed against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. 16 For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; 17 and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. 18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. 19 If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied. (I Corinthians 15:1-5, 12-19)

Thus, we can see rather clearly that just on this one and all crucial aspect of the deity of Christ and the atonement of our sins through His death, burial, and resurrection, the Quran and the Bible are the absolute antithesis of each other. And this is the essence of that difference – salvation through the grace of God, versus salvation through man's works and his own supposed righteousness. The latter, according to the Bible, is non-existent. Consequently, the satanic deception of Islam is perpetuated through a false sense of righteousness attained by one's own works: "Those who believe (in the Quran), and those who follow the Jewish (scriptures), and the Christians and the Sabians – any who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and work righteousness, shall have their reward with their Lord; on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve" (Surah 2:62). The Bible says just the opposite with reference to our works:

For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, to perform them." 11 Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, "The righteous man shall live by faith." 12 However, the Law is not of faith; on the contrary, "He who practices them shall live by them." 13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us-- for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree "-- 14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. (Galatians 3:10-14)

More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ, 9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith. (Philippians 3:8-9)

Marriage & Divorce

The fifth Quranic doctrine I would like for us to look at has to do with marriage and divorce. The following quote from the Quran has to do with Muhammad's desire for his stepson's wife and how he eventually got her:

It is not fitting for a Believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by Allah and His Messenger to have any option about their decision: if any one disobeys Allah and His Messenger, he is indeed on a clearly wrong Path. Behold! Thou didst say to one who had received the grace of Allah and thy favour: "Retain thou (in wedlock) thy wife, and fear Allah." But thou didst hide in thy heart that which Allah was about to make manifest: thou didst fear the people, but it is more fitting that thou shouldst fear Allah. Then when Zaid had dissolved (his marriage) with her, with the necessary (formality), We joined her in marriage to thee: in order that (in future) there may be no difficulty to the Believers in (the matter of) marriage with the wives of their adopted sons, when the latter have dissolved with the necessary (formality) (their marriage) with them. And Allah's command must be fulfilled. There can be no difficulty to the Prophet in what Allah has indicated to him as a duty. It was the practice (approved) of Allah amongst those of old that have passed away. And the command of Allah is a decree determined. (Surah 33:36-38)

The following is an Islamic commentary on the above passage in order to justify what Muhammad did with his daughter-in-law by his stepson:

Zayd's marriage with the Prophet's cousin Zaynab, daughter of Jahsh, did not turn out happy. Zaynab the high-born looked down upon Zayd the freedman who had been a slave. And he was not comely to look at. Both were good people in their own ways, and both loved the Prophet, but there was mutual incompatibility, and this is fatal to married life. Zayd wished to divorce her, but the Prophet asked him to hold his hand, and he obeyed. She was closely related to the Prophet; he had given a handsome marriage gift on her marriage to Zayd; and people would certainly talk if such a marriage was broken off. But marriages are made on earth, not in heaven, and it is not part of Allah's Plan to torture people in a bond which should be a source of happiness but actually is a source of misery. Zayd's wish – indeed the mutual wish of the couple – was for the time being put away, but it became eventually an established fact, and everybody came to know of it. (Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Meaning of the Holy Quran*, 10th ed. [Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications, 1999], 1068 – commentary #3723)

In response to the above commentary by Ali is the following assessment:

One of the most shocking events in the life of Muhammad, one which has been a major source of embarrassment for Muslims, is his marriage to his adopted son's former wife, Zaynab bint Jash. Zaynab had married Zayd, the freed slave of Muhammad's first wife, Khadijah, whom Muhammad adopted as his son. According to some versions of the story, Muhammad had ventured to see his adopted son, Zayd, at his house. Upon arriving, he found Zaynab unveiled and was enamored by her beauty. As he departed, Muhammad made some comments which she heard and, when her husband returned, told him what had transpired. After Zayd heard that Muhammad had made some comments about his wife's beauty, he went to his adoptive father and told him that he would divorce her so he could marry her if this is what Muhammad desired. Muhammad refused and encouraged his adopted son to remain with his wife. Subsequently, Zayd divorced his wife and Muhammad was commanded by Allah to then marry Zaynab, his adopted son's divorcee. . . . In light of the preceding, is it not rather obvious that Muhammad needed justification for marrying his adopted son's wife, his daughter-in-law, after having caused a rift in the marriage due to his desires for Zaynab which then led to the couple divorcing? Are we really supposed to believe that the true God not only put it in Muhammad's heart to desire a married woman, but also caused Zayd to divorce his wife in order that Muhammad could marry her? Does God really cause people to lust, to have adulterous desires? Surprisingly, according to Islamic theology, he actually does:

Narrated Ibn 'Abbas:

I did not see anything so resembling minor sins as what Abu Huraira said from the Prophet, who said, "**Allah has written for the son of Adam his inevitable share of adultery whether he is aware of it or not: The adultery of the eye is the looking (at something which is sinful to look at)**, and the adultery of the tongue is to utter (what it is unlawful to utter), and the inner self wishes and longs for (adultery) **and the private parts turn that into reality** or refrain from submitting to the temptation." (*Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Volume 8, Book 77, [Number 609](#))

Abu Huraira reported Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him) as saying: **Verily Allah has fixed the very portion of adultery which a man will indulge in, and which he of necessity must commit.** The adultery of the eye is the lustful look, and the adultery of the tongue is the licentious speech, the heart desires and yearns, which the parts may or may not put into effect. (*Sahih Muslim*, Book 033, [Number 6421](#), see also Number 6422)

How, then, can the Allah of Islam be the same God revealed in the Holy Bible?

The answer is, he can't be, simple as that.

(<http://answeringislam.org/Responses/Menj/zaynab.htm>)

As I view our sexual sin, before or after Christ, whether heterosexual or homosexual, I thank God for His mercy and grace, but I am also deeply grateful for the truth of genuine repentance and brokenness that God works in our lives by His Holy Spirit concerning our sin in order to bring us into a true, liberating, and sanctifying relationship with Jesus. On

the other hand, there are not too many things more self-destructive and damnable than a false, deceptive, and corruptible form of religiously sanctioned sexual sin, which is what we have in Surah 33:36-38. When one is in a true father –son/daughter relationship with God, God disciplines His children “that we may share His holiness” (Hebrews 12:10). Such discipline may be very painful, but it is healing and restorative, separating us from sin and its deception, giving us discernment and solidity whereby we uncompromisingly call sin, sin, and we turn from it: “All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness” (Hebrews 12:11). On the other hand, the pseudo discipline of Islam leads Muslims into greater sin so that they both embrace and sanction Muhammad’s sexual sin as being “good,” and thus, fall even more deeply into sin’s enslaving, self-destructive darkness. Tragically, therefore, this is exactly what Surah 33:36-38 does in sanctifying the sexual sin of Muhammad (i.e., justifying his overt concupiscence), which sin is continually being perpetrated by millions of Muslims today, leading to their temporal and eternal separation from God’s liberating truth in Jesus.

(2) Hadith Beliefs & Practices

The Hadith has so many strange and odd things that are purportedly attributed to the prophet, that it would be very impractical to list even a small number of them. Thus, I simply want to look at two to get a flavor of what it contains. All of these quotes are taken from the Shahi Bukhari Hadith:

(a) Book 69, number 494b, narrated by Abu 'Amir or Abu Malik Al-Ash'ari: that he heard the Prophet saying, "From among my followers there will be some people who will consider illegal sexual intercourse, the wearing of silk, the drinking of alcoholic drinks and the use of musical instruments, as lawful. And there will be some people who will stay near the side of a mountain and in the evening their shepherd will come to them with their sheep and ask them for something, but they will say to him, 'Return to us tomorrow.' Allah will destroy them during the night and will let the mountain fall on them, and He will transform the rest of them into monkeys and pigs and they will remain so till the Day of Resurrection.

If indeed this is a quote from Muhammad, then we can see how absolutely spiritually and mentally misguided he actually was in his reasoning and sense perception. In fact, what

the above passage indicates is someone who was guided by superstition, versus divine revelation.

However, there is one other area in the Shahi Bukhari Hadith that I want us to look at that is of utmost importance, and it colors the whole of Islam's true grid of sexual morality and exposes it for what it actually is:

(b) Book 58, numbers 234-235, narrated by Aisha:

The Prophet engaged me when I was a girl of six (years). We went to Medina and stayed at the home of Bani-al-Harith bin Khazraj. Then I got ill and my hair fell down. Later on my hair grew (again) and my mother, Um Ruman, came to me while I was playing in a swing with some of my girl friends. She called me, and I went to her, not knowing what she wanted to do to me. She caught me by the hand and made me stand at the door of the house. I was breathless then, and when my breathing became alright, she took some water and rubbed my face and head with it. Then she took me into the house. There in the house I saw some Ansari women who said, "Best wishes and Allah's Blessing and a good luck." Then she entrusted me to them and they prepared me (for the marriage). Unexpectedly Allah's Apostle came to me in the forenoon and my mother handed me over to him, and at that time I was a girl of nine years of age. That the Prophet said to her, "You have been shown to me twice in my dream. I saw you pictured on a piece of silk and some-one said (to me). 'This is your wife.' When I uncovered the picture, I saw that it was yours. I said, 'If this is from Allah, it will be done.'"

The above is the account by the little girl herself, 'Aisha, when she first met the Prophet and was promised to him as his wife, and then when she was actually "handed over to him" at "nine years of age," at which time the marriage was actually consummated. The following, therefore, are further statements in the Hadith Shahi Bukhari about the time when she was handed over to Muhammad and the length of their marriage:

Narated By 'Aisha : That the Prophet married her when she was six years old and he consummated his marriage when she was nine years old, and then she remained with him for nine years (i.e., till his death). That the Prophet married her when she was six years old and he consummated his marriage when she was nine years old. Hisham said: I have been informed that 'Aisha remained with the Prophet for nine years (i.e. till his death). . . . Narated By 'Ursa : The Prophet wrote the (marriage contract) with 'Aisha while she was six years old and consummated his marriage with her while she was nine years old and she remained with him for nine years (i.e. till his death). (Ibid., vol. 7, Book 62, #'s 64-65, 88)

This is one of the sickest and most tragic aspects of Islam that I have read-divinely sanctioned pedophilia! The following continues this tragic story and incident in Hadith Shahi Bukhari, Book 58, number 236, narrated by Hisham's father: "Khadija died three years before the Prophet departed to Medina. He stayed there for two years or so and then he married 'Aisha when she was a girl of six years of age, and he consumed that marriage when she was nine years old." Not much more can be said about the above, except to note that this form of pedophilia is still encouraged and advocated by Muslim imams today.

A brief overview and review, therefore, of Muhammad's life is important at this point in order to see how sexually perverted Muhammad actually was. As we have already stated, Muhammad was born in 570, and he married his first wife, Khadijah, in 595 at age twenty-five. Khadijah died in 619 when Muhammad was forty-nine years old. Muhammad died in 632 at the age of sixty-two years old, and according to the above Hadith accounts, 'Aisha and Muhammad were married (including the betrothal) for nine years. Thus, Muhammad actually married her when he was fifty-one years old and she was six, and three years later, when he was fifty-four and she was nine, he consummated the marriage. By anybody's standard, either ancient or at present, for a fifty-four year old man to have sexual intercourse with a nine year old little girl is absolutely repugnant, but even in Muslim society today, and especially where Sharia law is enforced, this is still an accepted practice for men to take and consummate a marriage with a nine year old little girl because 'the prophet did'. Thus, pedophilia is both accepted and encouraged in Muslim societies to this day. However, I have encountered many Muslims in our country who are ignorant of Muhammad's actions, and this is especially true of those who are native born Americans and convert to Islam. I once met a young man who was dressed in Arab garb who was a white American from Southern California. I began to talk with him about Islam, and when I brought up Muhammad's marriage with 'Aisha, he told me that he had been told by his Muslim teachers that 'Aisha was sixteen years old. When I told the young man the truth, and the difference in Arabic between six and sixteen is as obvious as is the difference in English, he was noticeably disturbed. Thus, here was a situation in which Muslim instructors were purposefully lying to a potential convert about the distortion and perversion inherent in Islam and in the life of their prophet,

Muhammad. Not much more can be said about the above, except to note once again that this form of pedophilia is still encouraged and advocated by Muslim Imams and Mullahs today.

(3) The 'Five Pillars of Islam'

These 'pillars', as they are called, are the rallying point around which Muslims unite, and they cement their commitment to Muhammad as the 'prophet of Allah', and to the Quran as Allah's word for them. These 'pillars' began to be formed within the first few decades after Muhammad's death, and they continue today.

Pillar # 1- Profession of Faith

The first pillar is the profession of faith: "There is no deity but God, and Muhammad is the messenger of God," upon which depends membership in the community. The profession of faith must be recited at least once in one's lifetime, aloud, correctly, and purposively, with an understanding of its meaning and with an assent from the heart. From this fundamental belief are derived beliefs in: (1) angels (particularly Gabriel, the Angel of Revelation); (2) the revealed Books (the Quran and the sacred books of Judaism and Christianity); (3) a series of prophets (among whom figures of the Judeo-Christian tradition are particularly eminent, although it is believed that God has sent messengers to every nation), and (4) the Last Day (Day of Judgment).

Pillar # 2 – Prayer

The second pillar consists of five daily canonical prayers. These prayers may be offered individually if one is unable to go to the mosque. The first prayer is performed before sunrise, the second just after noon, the third in the late afternoon, the fourth immediately after sunset, and the fifth before retiring to bed. Before a prayer, ablutions, including the washing of hands, face, and feet, are performed. The *muezzin* (one who gives the call for prayer) chants aloud from a raised place (such as a tower) in the mosque. When prayer starts, the *imām*, or leader (of the prayer), stands in the front facing in the direction of Mecca, and the congregation stands behind him in rows, following him in various postures. Each prayer consists of two to four genuflection units (*rakah*); each

unit consists of a standing posture (during which verses from the Quran are recited—in certain prayers aloud, in others silently), as well as a genuflection and two prostrations. At every change in posture, “God is great” is recited. Tradition has fixed the materials to be recited in each posture. Special congregational prayers are offered on Friday instead of the prayer just after noon. The Friday service consists of a sermon (*khutbah*), which partly consists of preaching in the local language and partly of recitation of certain formulas in Arabic. In the sermon, the preacher usually recites one or several verses of the Quran and builds his address on it, which can have a moral, social, or political content. Although not ordained as an obligatory duty, nocturnal prayers (called *tahajjud*) are encouraged, particularly during the latter half of the night. During the month of Ramadan, lengthy prayers, called *taraweeh*, are offered congregationally before retiring. In strict doctrine, the five daily prayers cannot be waived even for the sick, who may pray in bed and, if necessary, lying down. When on a journey, the two afternoon prayers may be followed one by the other; the sunset and late evening prayers may be combined as well. In practice, however, much laxity has occurred, particularly among the modernized classes, although Friday prayers are still very well attended.

Pillar # 3 – Obligatory Tax

The third pillar is the obligatory tax called *zakāt* (“purification,” indicating that such a payment makes the rest of one's wealth religiously and legally pure). This is the only permanent tax levied by the Quran and is payable annually on food grains, cattle, and cash after one year's possession. The amount varies for different categories. Thus, on grains and fruits it is 10 percent if land is watered by rain, 5 percent if land is watered artificially. On cash and precious metals it is 2 1/2 percent. *Zakāt* is collectable by the state and is to be used primarily for the poor, but the Quran mentions other purposes: ransoming Muslim war captives, redeeming chronic debts, paying tax collectors' fees, *jihād* (and by extension, according to Quran commentators, education and health), and creating facilities for travellers. After the breakup of Muslim religio-political power, payment of *zakāt* became a matter of voluntary charity dependent on individual conscience. In the modern Muslim world it has been left up to the individual, except in

some countries (such as Saudi Arabia) where the Shariah (Islāmic law) is strictly maintained.

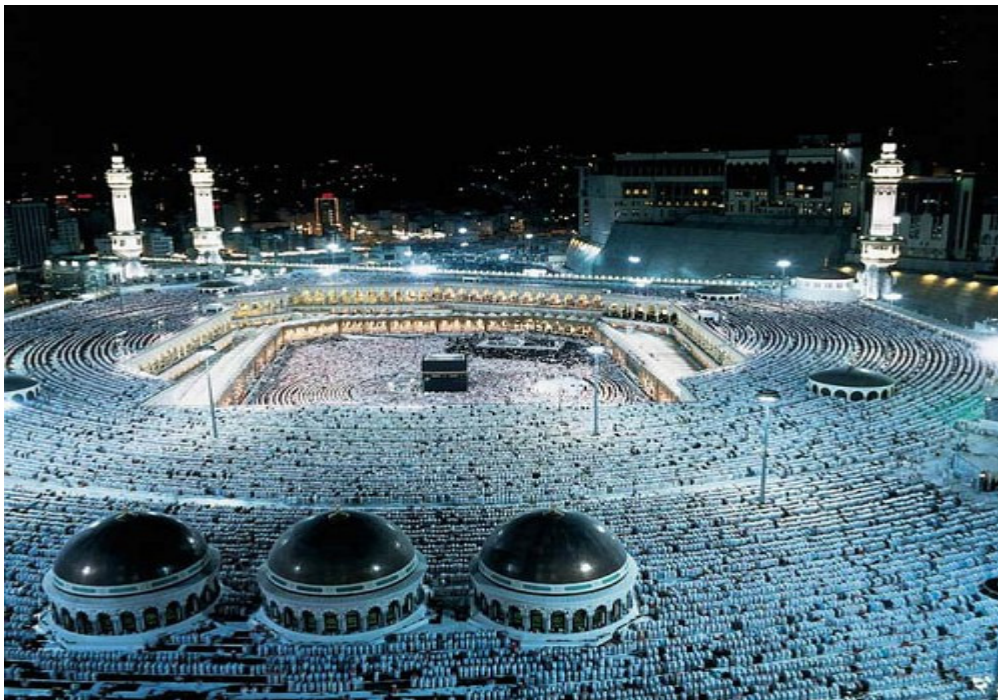
Pillar # 4 - Fasting

The fourth pillar is fasting, which is during the month of Ramadan (ninth month of the Muslim lunar calendar), and this was stated in the Quran in Surah 2:183–185. Fasting begins at daybreak and ends at sunset, and during the day eating, drinking, and smoking are forbidden. The reason for this particular time is that, according to Surah 2:185, the Quran was revealed to Muhammad at this time: “Ramadan is the (month) in which was sent down the Qur'an, . . .” In Surah 97:1, we also read: “We have indeed revealed this (Message) in the Night of Power,” which Muslims generally observe on the night of 26–27 Ramadan. For a person who is sick or on a journey, fasting may be postponed until “another equal number of days.” The elderly and the incurably sick are exempted through the daily feeding of one poor person if they have the means.

Pillar # 5 – Pilgrimage

The fifth pillar is the annual pilgrimage (*ḥajj*) to Mecca prescribed for every Muslim once in a lifetime—“provided one can afford it” and provided a person has enough provisions to leave for his family in his absence. A special service is held in the Sacred Mosque on the 7th of the month of *Dhū al-Hijjah* (last in the Muslim year). Pilgrimage activities begin by the 8th and conclude on the 12th or 13th. All worshippers enter the state of *iḥrām* where they wear two seamless garments and avoid sexual intercourse, the cutting of hair and nails, and certain other activities. Pilgrims from outside Mecca assume *iḥrām* at specified points en route to the city. The principal activities consist of walking seven times around the Kabah, a shrine within the mosque; the kissing and touching of the Black Stone (Hajar al-Aswad); and the ascent of and running between Mount Safa and Mount Marwah (which are now, however, mere elevations) seven times. At the second stage of the ritual, the pilgrim proceeds from Mecca to Minā, a few miles away; from there he goes to Arafat, where it is essential to hear a sermon and to spend one afternoon. The last rites consist of spending the night at Muzdalifa (between Arafat and Minā) and offering sacrifice on the last day of *iḥrām*, which is the *ʿīd* (“festival”) of

sacrifice. Many countries have imposed restrictions on the number of outgoing pilgrims because of foreign-exchange difficulties. Because of the improvement of communications, however, the total number of visitors has greatly increased in recent years. By the early 1990s the number of visitors was estimated to be about two million, approximately half of them from non-Arab countries. All Muslim countries send official delegations on the occasion, which is being increasingly used for religio-political congresses. At other times in the year, it is considered meritorious to perform the lesser pilgrimage ('*umrah*), which is not, however, a substitute for the *hajj* pilgrimage (*The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th ed., vol. 22, "Islam," 13-14).



(4) *Sharia Law*

Over the centuries, the application of Sharia Law has undergone various changes and alterations, in large part to better coincide with Western jurisprudence (Saudi Arabia, however, being a clear exception). However, over the past fifty years, Islamic fundamentalism, fueled especially by the emergence of Israel, and by what many fundamentalist Muslims see as an encroachment of corrupt, Western ideas and concepts into their cultures, the strict conformity to Sharia Law has been reintroduced into many Muslim societies. We do not have the space or time to deal with all of its various

exigencies, but I do want to deal with a few important examples that are significant for us:

(a) Penal Law

For six specific crimes the punishment is fixed (*ḥadd*): death for apostasy and for highway robbery; amputation of the hand for theft; death by stoning for extramarital sex relations (*zinā*) where the offender is a married person and 100 lashes for unmarried offenders; 80 lashes for an unproved accusation of unchastity (*qadhf*) and for the drinking of any intoxicant.

(b) Family Law

A patriarchal outlook is the basis of the traditional Islāmic law of family relationships. Fathers have the right to contract their daughters, whether minor or adult, in compulsory marriage. Only when a woman has been married before is her consent to her marriage necessary; but even then the father, or other marriage guardian, must conclude the contract on her behalf. In Ḥanafī and Shī'ī law, however, only minor girls may be contracted in compulsory marriage, and adult women may conclude their own marriage contracts, except that the guardian may have the marriage annulled if his ward has married beneath her social status.

Husbands have the right of polygamy and may be validly married at the same time to a maximum of four wives. Upon marriage a husband is obliged to pay to his wife her dower, the amount of which may be fixed by agreement or by custom; and during the marriage he is bound to maintain and support her provided she is obedient to him, not only in domestic matters but also in her general social activities and conduct. A wife who rejects her husband's dominion by leaving the family home without just cause forfeits her right to maintenance. But it is in the traditional law of divorce that the scales are most heavily weighted against the wife. A divorce may be effected simply by the mutual agreement of the spouses, which is known as *khul* when the wife pays some financial consideration to the husband for her release; and according to all schools, except the Ḥanafīs, a wife may obtain a judicial decree of divorce on the ground of some matrimonial offense—*e.g.*, cruelty, desertion, failure to maintain—committed by the husband. But the husband alone has the power unilaterally to terminate the marriage by repudiation (*ṭalāl*) of his wife. *Ṭalāl* is an extrajudicial process: a husband may repudiate

his wife at will and his motive in doing so is not subject to scrutiny by the court or any other official body. A repudiation repeated three times constitutes a final and irrevocable dissolution of the marriage; but a single pronouncement may be revoked at will by the husband during the period known as the wife's *'iddah*, which lasts for three months following the repudiation (or any other type of divorce) or, where the wife is pregnant, until the birth of the child.

The legal position of children within the family group, as regards their guardianship, maintenance, and rights of succession, depends upon their legitimacy, and a child is legitimate only if it is conceived during the lawful wedlock of its parents. In Sunnī law no legal relationship exists between a father and his illegitimate child; but there is a legal tie, for all purposes, between a mother and her illegitimate child. Guardianship of the person (*e.g.*, control of education and marriage) and of the property of minor children belongs to the father or other close male, agnate relative, but the bare right of custody (*ḥāḍnāḥ*) of young children, whose parents are divorced or separated, belongs to the mother or the female, maternal relatives. (*ibid.*, 32-33)

(5) *Jihad*

We in the West have been hearing a lot about *Jihad*, and it is important that we at least have a cursory understanding of what it means. In essence, *Jihad* is a religious duty imposed on Muslims to spread Islam by waging war, and it can also be spelled *jehad* (جهاد), which means “struggle” or “battle.” *Jihad* has come to denote any conflict

waged for principle or belief and is often translated to mean “holy war.”

Islam distinguishes four ways by which the duty of jihad can be fulfilled: by the heart, the tongue, the hand, and the sword. The first consists in a spiritual purification of one's own heart by doing battle with the devil and overcoming his inducements to evil. The propagation of Islam through the tongue and hand is accomplished in large measure by supporting what is right and correcting what is wrong. The fourth way to fulfill one's duty is to wage war physically against unbelievers and enemies of the Islamic faith. Those who professed belief in a divine revelation—Christians and Jews in particular—were given special consideration. They could either embrace Islam or at least submit

themselves to Islamic rule and pay a poll and land tax. If both options were rejected, *Jihad* was declared. Modern Islam places special emphasis on waging war with one's inner self. It sanctions war with other nations only as a defensive measure when the faith is in danger.

Throughout Islamic history, wars against non-Muslims, even though with political overtones, were termed *Jihads* to reflect their religious flavor. This was especially true in the 18th and 19th centuries in Muslim Africa south of Sahara, where religious-political conquests were seen as *Jihads*, most notably the *Jihad* of Usman dan Fodio, which established the Sokoto caliphate (1804) in what is now northern Nigeria. The Afgan War in the late 20th and early 21st centuries was also viewed by many of its participants as a *Jihad*, first against the Soviet Union and Afghanistan's Marxist government and, later, against the United States. Both then and now, Islamic extremists used the theory of *Jihad* to justify violent attacks against Muslims whom the extremists accused of apostasy (Arabic *riddah*). (“jihad,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*. [Ultimate Reference Suite](#). Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, 2008)

Conclusion

This ends our Seminar on **Middle Eastern History and the Emergence of Islam**, and I pray that God will powerfully use what He has taught you through this material to be an even greater ‘light’ in the midst of this very dark world in order to point people to the Light of Jesus Christ: “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me’” (John 14:6).

In summation, therefore, it is of utmost importance to realize and understand the great darkness that Muslims are in. Sadly, I have NEVER talked to a Muslim who had any assurance of eternal life after death, but only, “I hope my good works will outweigh my bad works.” In relation to this, is the Muslim’s belief that Satan was cast out of heaven because he refused to bow down and worship Adam (Surah 2:34). In essence, Satan was commanded to “bow down” and give worship and reverence to Adam, who is mankind. Thus, man, a created being, was to be worshiped by the angels. That being the case, I, as a man, can claim deity and the right to be worshiped by lesser beings, and I am also my

own savior. As we have already seen, this too is the absolute opposite of biblical truth (Hebrews 1:5-6). Therefore, based on Hebrews 1:5-6, along with Surah 2:34, we can clearly see that based on the Quran, Islam places man on the exact same level as Jesus, and indeed, we each become our own Savior.

However, in truth and reality, we are completely corrupt to the core and utterly incapable of saving and redeeming ourselves. The only hope, and the wonderful assurance we have in Christ is that our sins are completely forgiven in Him. Jesus has and does completely redeem us from our sin, but the satanic deception is very strong in our lives as believers, and we must be equipping ourselves every day in God's complete armor:

Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸ With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, . . . (Ephesians 6:10-18)

May the Lord cause all of us to walk wisely in Him and His truth. May He cause us to be led by His Spirit and walk humbly before Him. May He also cause us to walk in love before the Muslim and any and all who do not have a saving relationship with Jesus. Always remember that it is not a doctrinal apologetic, presented in an argumentative manner, that is going to bring any Muslim, or any non-believer to a saving faith in Jesus Christ, but rather it is going to be the power of the Holy Spirit, working through your and my heart of love for that individual, that is mirroring the love of Christ for them (John 3:16-21):

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. ¹⁷ "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved

through Him.¹⁸ "He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.¹⁹ "And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil.²⁰ "For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.²¹ "But he who practices the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God."

In addition, it is imperative to remember that we are not the Holy Spirit, but merely channels through which He works and ministers. It is He, and He alone who convicts men and women of their sin, the righteousness of Jesus, and the judgment that follows if they refuse Christ Jesus as stated in John 16:8-11: "And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment; concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you no longer behold Me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged." Thus, when we pray for and speak to Muslims, or anyone else about Jesus, always remember that it is the Father, through His Holy Spirit, that is drawing people to Jesus, NOT US THROUGH OUR PERSUASIVE SPEECH: "No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day" (John 6:44).

Therefore, let the following passages be our guide as we share the liberating life of Jesus Christ with Muslims who KNOW ABSOLUTELY NOTHING OF LOVE AND FORGIVENESS OF GOD FOR OUR SINS THROUGH JESUS:

If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.² And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.³ And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.⁴ Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant,⁵ does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered,⁶ does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth;⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.⁸ Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away.⁹ For we know in part, and we prophesy in part;¹⁰ but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.¹¹ When I was a child, I used to speak as a child, think as a child, reason as a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things.¹² For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know fully just

as I also have been fully known. ¹³ But now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. (I Corinthians 13:1-13)

Remind *them* of these things, and solemnly charge *them* in the presence of God not to wrangle about words, which is useless, *and leads* to the ruin of the hearers. ¹⁵ Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth. (II Timothy 2:14-15)

But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels. And the Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, ²⁵ with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, ²⁶ and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will. (II Timothy 2:23-26)

I solemnly charge *you* in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: ² preach the word; be ready in season *and* out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. ³ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; ⁴ and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths. ⁵ But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. (II Timothy 4:1-5)