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If they only knew that they were already infected with a far more lethal virus; one that has killed every single person ever born in the world except One. And He is the only hope of cure they will ever have. Far worse than Botulism, VHF, VX, Sarin Gas, the Plague, or Anthrax is the SIN virus. We are sinners by birth. Born alienated from a holy God. The most deadly virus is not the terrorist launched; it's the SIN virus. The biological weapons can kill anyone; so does the SIN virus. There is no cure however for full blown biological attacks; there is a cure for the SIN virus. And God Himself has provided the cure.

Salvation is the cure for the SIN virus. What is the irreducible minimum of what salvation is all about? Our mission is to preach the fact that God will forgive all someone's sins forever. The good news is not that God will fix your marriage, or make your life happier or make you prosperous or make you successful. The good news is that alienation from a holy God which carries the price of eternal damnation can end. And you can be reconciled with God and enjoy His glorious Heaven forever. All your sin having been dealt with. Salvation has two inseparable parts: substitution and imputation. Both are in II Corinthians 5:21

"For He hath made Him who knew no sin to become sin for us".

(SUBSTITUTION) ? God has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him. On the cross, God

treated Jesus as if He had committed every sin ever committed by every person who would ever believe. Though, in fact, He committed none of them.

That's the great doctrine of substitution. God unloaded His fury for all the sins of all the people who would ever believe in Him in the history of the world. He unloaded all His fury against all their sins on Christ. To borrow the language of Leviticus 16, Jesus became the "scapegoat". Scapegoat was guilty of nothing. But the High Priest, as it were, laid all the sins of the people on the scapegoat and sent him away.

"In order that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

(IMPUTATION)? That's the other side of salvation called imputation. The reason Jesus lived a

full life was that He might live a complete life fully righteous. That He might live a complete life absolutely without sin, absolutely perfect so

that that perfect life could be credited to your account. That's the backside of imputation. On the cross, God treated Jesus as if He lived your life so He could treat you as if you lived His life. That's the Gospel. That's substitution.

In faith, repentant faith, acknowledging our sin, we acknowledge Jesus died and rose again for us. We ask Him to save us from our sins and at that moment, the payment of Christ is sufficient for all our sins and the righteousness of Christ is granted to us. And from then on God treats us as if we had lived Christ's life. That's why Paul in Romans says, 8:1, "There is therefore now no condemnation." Can't be, it's paid for. Jesus says, "Paid for. Paid for. Paid for." The Father says, "Sorry Satan, can't see it. All I can see is the righteousness of Christ." The great doctrine of imputed sin to Christ on the cross and the imputed righteousness to us. That's the Gospel message.

If you are persuaded that Christ did all that is necessary and all that ever will be necessary to bring you to God, you not only will be saved but know it!

Without¹²² Jesus' being both human and divine, there is no gospel message. The only way salvation works is that it was God who accomplished it! The incarnation of Jesus Christ is the central fact of Christianity. All Christian theology is built on it. The power of the gospel is that God became man and that, by being both wholly God and wholly man, He was able to reconcile men to God. Jesus' virgin birth, His substitutionary atoning death, resurrection, ascension, and return are all integral aspects of His deity. They stand or fall together.

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

Last Sunday evening we saw that the Ark¹²³ was a perfect picture of salvation. While the door was open, anyone and all who believed God's word could come in. But once the door was shut, no one else could come in. God did not provide a fleet of ships and say, "You may have your choice." The Ark was the only ship available. There are religions without number, but here is only one way of salvation. Jesus said, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved...(John 10:9). ..I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me (John 14:6)."

This morning we are here because we believe the Gospel, the Good News that God has made a way for us to be saved. That is genuine Christianity. There are many counterfeits. That is why in John 14:6 we

find Jesus declaring that He ALONE was the Way to God. This calls us to be on guard for the many false ways that would be proposed as alternate ways to God.

In John 14:6 Jesus absolutely affirms the exclusiveness of salvation. Jesus says He ALONE is the Way, the Truth, and the LIFE!

Jesus shows that genuine believers are TRUSTING THE WAY OF JESUS, BELIEVING THE TRUTH OF JESUS, AND LIVING THE LIFE OF JESUS.

1 John 5:9-13 We accept man's testimony, but God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son. 10 Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart. Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony God has given about his Son. 11 And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. 13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

This morning we need to remember what Jesus said¹²⁴ - and we need to say it with tears - "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him" (John 3:36). In other words, nominal Christians, devoted Muslims, pious Hindus, faithful Buddhists, orthodox Jews, devout animists, sincere agnostics, secular atheists - everyone who does not hold fast to Jesus Christ as the supremely valuable Son of God and Savior - will perish and not have eternal life. "He who has the Son has life; he who has not the Son of God has not life" (1 John 5:12).

So we begin this morning with the first of these truths TRUSTING THE WAY OF JESUS, which means THE RIGHT WAY OF SALVATION. So GENUINE SALVATION

must have a GENUINE JESUS. Last week we found that Mormonism¹²⁵ has a false Jesus, one who can't save.

- ? Mormonism teaches an ascending hierarchy of numerous gods who are physical men, each a former sinner.
- ? Mormonism teaches redemption by one of many Jesuses on different earths.
- ? Mormonism teaches that "salvation" involves secret rituals which exalt

Mormons to become gods ruling over their own earths, each with another

Adam and Eve, another Satan and fall, another Jesus to die, etc.

- ? Mormons seem to be good family people with conservative values. And they

talk about God, Christ, salvation, resurrection, eternal life but we can't pretend they mean what Christians mean.

This week we need to examine a second wrong way to God that is flooding our airwaves, newspapers, and magazines: ISLAMISM.

In the current news as we hear daily about Islam, we must choose to remember Muslim people have chosen to obstruct their way to eternal life. They believe the Galilean was a great prophet, but not the Savior of the world. He did not die on the cross, but only appeared to do so. He was actually taken up alive to heaven before an embodied spirit resembling him appeared to undergo crucifixion. Since Jesus did not die, he was not raised from the dead. His unshed blood did not atone for the sins of mankind. He will come again to earth just before the Day of Judgment (Anti-Christ?) proclaim that Muhammad was God's final and most sublime prophet, and lead all of mankind into Islam. Then "the son of Mary" will die like any other mortal man and be raised to life along with everyone else on the last day.

- ? For them Christ is a prophet, but not the divine Son of God who said, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58).
- ? For Muslims Jesus is not the Savior who died for their sins and said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).
- ? Unless Muslims - and all others who deny Christ's deity - hear and embrace the good news that "the fullness of deity" dwells in Jesus (Colossians 2:9), they will be without eternal hope.

SO, WHAT IS ISLAMISM?

WE need to clarify some terms. In the national news magazine TIME there was an interesting headline article by religion writer KAREN ARMSTRONG entitled: The True, Peaceful Face Of Islam. The opening lines were meant to calm all of us embattled Americans.

“There are 1.2 billion Muslims in the world, and Islam is the world's fastest-growing religion. If the evil carnage we witnessed on Sept. 11 were typical of the faith, and Islam truly inspired and justified such violence, its growth and the increasing presence of Muslims in both Europe and the U.S. would be a terrifying prospect. Fortunately, this is not the case.”

Wouldn't it be wonderful if what I just read were actually true? I'm sad to say that it is not true. We are at war, and it is far bigger than most of us realize. Is there a spiritual conflict between one of the three great world religions ISLAM and the rest of us not in that religion?

According to Karen Armstrong, TIME Magazine and most of what we are hearing, the answer is NO; don't even think that this attack on America is by Islam. But as those who search God's Word and seek His perspective on all of life we need to examine today's news, this month's events and the Truth of God's Word!

One critical area to understand is the Islamic principle of Abrogation. This is the recognized practice of canceling out an earlier Koranic revelation of Islam by a later one that is contradictory. Most notable Mohammed said to show kindness to the Jew and Christian early on (Sura or chapters 2-3), but when they did not follow Islam he wrote from Medina to invoke Jihad (Sura 9 “the struggle”) and to destroy them. Remember also that the collected sayings of Mohammed are called the Hadith. But the Koran has the place of highest authority.

IT IS THE AGE OLD CONFLICT OF TWO FAMILIES

To understand the spiritual dimension of all the current events remember that the essence of modern Islam can be found in the Biblical record of the key founders. Start with Ishmael in Genesis 16:12: He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers.”

- ? Hagar, Ishmael, and Esau (or Edom) with their pride, hatred, bitterness, jealousy, and despising attitude have been institutionalized in ISLAM. Islam teaches revenge and so if Arabs harmed they seek to harm the West, primarily the USA and Israel's Jews. In the Koran ALLAH is revealed as crafty and warlike. ISLAM spreads by war not love. LOVE is entirely absent from the Koran.
- ? So, in a profoundly spiritual perspective when we look at the Mid-East today we are in a time just like the time when Elijah was asking “Who is the Lord?” Yahweh or Baal? Only today our world is

asking “Who is the Lord the Yahweh of the Bible or the ALLAH of the Qu’ran.

ISLAM AT A GLANCE

Contrary¹²⁷ to popular understanding, Islam did not begin with Mohammad. Most of the practices still embodied in Islam had their beginning in pre-Islamic Arabia. Mohammad repackaged the pagan worship associated with the Ka’aba in Mecca into a monotheistic form. This perspective can be confirmed by anyone examining three areas of Islam: their sacred writings, exemplified by the Qu’ran; by a review of their history of conquest and cultural imperialism; and by an inspection of the Islamic countries and their propagating a legacy of hate and repression on their various subjugated populations.

HOW DOES THE BIBLE DESCRIBE THE ARAB MOSLEMS?

It is difficult to know exactly¹²⁸ what we are talking about when we say “Arab history,” because it is difficult to precisely define who an “Arab” is. Historians say the original Arabs were a semi nomadic, Semitic-speaking tribal people who dwelled in the northern section of the Arabian Peninsula, southeast of the Holy Land.

The Bible records that the peoples who roamed the northern Arabian Desert area were largely the descendants of Abraham’s firstborn son, Ishmael, and Issac’s son Esau, also known as Edom. God promised Abraham that he would make Ishmael a great nation, although he made clear that he would establish his covenant with Isaac (Gen. 17:20-21).

- ? The God of Israel also foretold that there would be enmity between the descendants of Isaac’s twin sons, Jacob and Esau (Gen. 25:23). Esau’s children began to fulfill that prophecy when they refused passage to the children of Israel who were on their way from Egypt to the Promised Land.
- ? The Bible first uses the term “Arabians” in 2 Chronicles 17:11, where we are told the Arabs gave tribute, along with the Philistines and others, to the highly honored Jewish King Jehoshaphat, who ruled in the ninth century B.C.
- ? Later on we find the Arabs joining the Philistines in an attack against Jehoshaphat’s son Jehoram (2 Chron. 26:7).
- ? By the time of Christ, all of the desert people who lived east and southeast of the Promised Land were known as Arabs.

JEHOVAH (YAHWEH) IS NOT ALLAH

It is so important to distinguish between the Allah of Islam and the Lord God Almighty of the New and Old Testaments. They are not equivalent.

1. ALLAH is presented as unknowable and capricious. But the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob delights in making and keeping His promises. 2.

ALLAH in the Qu'ran calls for a warrior agenda. Islam divides the universe into two parts: Dar Al Islam: the domain of the faithful (to Islam); and Dar Al Harb: those with whom they are at war until Judgment Day. The agenda of Islam is conquest, by the sword if necessary. But Jesus summarized the entire Law of Moses in two commandments: Love God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind; and love your neighbor as yourself.

- ALLAH has revealed in the Qu'ran is an amalgam of Hinduism, Buddhism, Mythraism, Greek mystery religions, as well as elements from Judaism and Christianity. Many unstudied Westerners naively accept Allah, who inspired Muhammad, as the God of the Bible. But God is revealed in His Word as Holy, Sovereign, All Powerful over all the Universe.
- ALLAH has no son, and ALLAH rejects the Trinity (4:171), ALLAH was the pagan idol/god of Muhammad's tribe before he was born. But God has come to earth in human flesh as the Incarnate Son of God.
- ALLAH tells Muslims, "Take not the Jews and Christians for friends... slay the idolaters [infidels] wherever ye find them. ... Fight against those who... believe not in Allah nor the Last Day" (5:51; 9:5, 29, 41). But Jesus said go into all the World, preach the Gospel and by your love all men will know that you are My disciples.

For a Muslim to become a true Christian he must renounce Islam's false god, Allah, and its false gospel of salvation by works. Because the true God of the Bible declares:

- He wants men to know Him (Jer 9:24), and this knowledge is essential to salvation (Jn 17:3).
- Jews are His "chosen people" (Ex 6:7; Lv 20:26; 1 Chr 16:13; Ps 105:6, etc.) and
- Christians are His dearly loved children (Rom 8:16, 21; Gal 3:26; Eph 1:5; 5:1, etc.).

Christ gave His life to save sinners, and His followers must be willing to lay down their lives to bring this good news to the world. Biblical salvation is a free gift paid for by the death of Christ, who said, "go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every
129 Unfortunately, the gospel is being compromised to make it appealing to Muslims. (In the West it's being made appealing to everyone.) Many "converts" have never understood the gospel and thus have not believed that which is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom 1:16). The gospel is definitely not in the Koran. Yet Muslims are supposedly being saved by heeding it. The author of *Building Bridges: Christianity and Islam* (NavPress, 1997) gives the testimony of a "converted Muslim" in Pakistan (p. 27): "As I was listening to the Qur'an read on the radio day after day, I heard that Christ was highly honored...and near- stationed to God. I said to myself, 'If I wanted someone to intercede for me to God, who would be better than someone like Christ...?' And so I prayed, 'Lord Isa [Jesus], please come to my help. I want to devote myself to God through you. Since you are highly honored and sitting near Him, you can do it.'" The author then comments, "After that, he felt like a changed man, much happier than before...." This is a delusion similar to that of those who say, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name?...and in thy name done many wonderful works?", to whom the Lord responds, "I never knew you: depart from me..." (Mt 7:21-23). Asking Islam's Isa to intercede for oneself will not save. One must believe the gospel to be saved: "[H]ow that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor 15:1-4); "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (Jn 3:15). That gospel is not in the Koran, and there is nothing in this "convert's" testimony to indicate that he knew or believed it.

creature" (Mk 16:15). That command includes today's one billion Muslims. They present a tremendous (and inescapable) challenge to every Christian.

SOME ANSWERS FROM THE QU'RAN:

1. Is Jesus the Son of God? The Qu'ran states that Jesus¹³⁰ is a prophet and is the Messiah. Jesus is a word from Allah but not The Word. In the Qu'ran, Adam is also a word from Allah. There is no one who can claim to be the Son of God or Child of God because this

blasphemy reduces God to the level of humans. Remember that associating or partnering anything/anyone with God is the ultimate blasphemy and sin in Islam. They do believe however that Jesus is the Messiah (different meaning), born of a virgin, who performed miracles, and lived a sinless life. Muhammad himself is not described as such in the Qu'ran because he had to repent (implies that he sinned). The Qu'ran teaches that Jesus will return again as the Messiah, but his role in the end times events will be minor compared to Muhammad. As noted above, Islam denies the deity of Christ, his crucifixion, his resurrection, his atoning sacrifice, and his unique relationship with God the Father. Muslims often discount the miracles Jesus performed and compare them with the miracles of other prophets. They look at the individual miracles but overlook the whole person and life of Christ.

2. How is Sin Atoned for?¹³¹ The Qu'ran teaches that one man cannot and should not pay for another man's sins. Islam holds that men do not have a need to be saved. Islam does not address a need for salvation or deliverance from anything. Salvation is not in the vocabulary of Islam. Instead a Muslim obtains success by doing the will of Allah.

3. What was Christ's Crucifixion and Resurrection?¹³² Muslims of course believe that Jesus did not die on the cross. They believe somebody who looked like Jesus was crucified Simon of Cyrene, Judas, or someone else.

4. Is Islam dangerous? We can no longer accept naive statements from well-intentioned government leaders to the effect that we must distinguish between terrorism perpetrated by extremist groups and Islam itself which is peaceful. The fact is there are more than 100 verses in the Qur'an advocating the use of violence to spread Islam. In the Qur'an, Allah commands Muslims, "Take not the Jews and Christians as friends.... Slay the idolaters [non-Muslims] wherever ye find them.... Fight against such...as believe not in Allah..." (Surah 5:51; 9:5,29,41, etc.). Though most Muslims would shrink from obeying such commands, this is official Islam and it cannot change without admitting that Muhammad was a false prophet and murderer.

ISLAM'S EXPLOSIVE GROWTH

In 1985¹³³, a survey of the largest religions in the world showed Roman Catholicism first with 622 million followers, Islam second with 555 million, Hinduism third with 462 million and Protestantism fourth with 370 million.

By 1995, Islam has catapulted into first place with more than one billion adherents!(That's 1,000,000,000 plus) This meant that of the world's 5.2 billion people, 20 percent were Muslims. Islam may be divided into Arabic speaking and non-Arabic speaking worlds. Though Islam is Arab in origin, only one-fifth of the world's Muslims live in Arab countries. Arab Moslems (those who speak Arabic) make up 95% of the population of the 19 countries of the Middle East and North Africa, and total 300 million individuals. Non-Arabs are the most numerous Moslems and there are almost a billion of them in 75 other countries stretching from Senegal on the Atlantic coast of Africa to the scattered island of Indonesia. There are 400 million in Pakistan, Bangladesh and India. Iran and Turkey have about 110 million. Africa, too, has large populations of Muslims.

Today there are 1.2 billion Moslems. But to appreciate the growing power and influence of Islam, you must look beyond the population figures. Muslims now control, to some extent about fifty of the world's most important countries from Indonesia in the East, through the oil-rich states of the Middle East, to Senegal on the Atlantic. These countries control vast wealth and unappreciated commercial resources. For instance, Kazakhstan, the former Soviet republic, refers to itself as "the New Klondike." As of today a total of 70 of the world's 184 countries are considered part of the Dar al Islam, or house, or realm, of Islam. It is a religion practiced in the jungles of Africa, the sands of the Sahara, the oil fields of the Middle East, the mountains of Asia and the islands of the Pacific. Islam is also making its impact felt in traditionally Christian part of the world.

Islam is made up of 1.2 billion people 90% of whom follow "folk" Islam or a religion of culture and society. But the growth of "document" Islam which is completely devoted to the Koranic life now numbering 10% of Islam means that there are atleast 120 million people committed to Jihadistic struggle against Jews and Christians.

What has happened in Christianity's Back Yard? In England, today there are now more Muslims than Methodists. There are even more Muslims than there are evangelical Christians. "Funded by the vast resources of Arab oil money, the Muslims are buying abandoned Anglican churches and turning them into mosques at such a rate that some Muslims claim that England will soon be the first Muslim European country," says author Robert Morey. In 1945 there was 1 mosque in Britain, by 1985

there were an estimated 150 mosques in England; today there are more than 1,100. And as their numbers skyrocket, special privileges come with them. Muslims, the

English Parliament has been forced to rule, are not subject to English Common Law

when it comes to such matters as divorce.

In France there was only one mosque up through 1974, today there are 1700!

Islam is also growing rapidly in Australia, Canada, Germany and the United States. There are now more than 500 Islamic centers in the U.S. and more Muslims than Episcopalians or Presbyterians, and, by the turn of the century, Islam may well surpass Judaism and America's largest minority religion.

"Islam is a religion of peace," Americans are constantly reassured, the terrorists supposedly comprising only a deadly lunatic fringe of a few hundred or even a few thousand who have "hijacked" Islam to philosophically justify their murderous hatred of the West.

Actually, militant Islamism is one of the fastest-growing movements in the world today. Like Communism and Nazism, Islamism is a brutal, coercive utopian movement – a politicized and virulent interpretation and implementation of Islam -- bent on nothing less than total world domination.

In fact, best estimates are that 10-15 percent of Muslims worldwide are of the militant Islamist strain. That means well over 100 million human beings are, to a greater or lesser degree, caught up with what amounts to the world's most dangerous cult.

OUR SHORTSIGHTED FORGETFULNESS

There is a certain hypocrisy¹³⁴ in the new outrage with which America and the world now view terrorism. History's bloodiest, most vicious and successful terrorist was Yasser Arafat. Yet after just a few years of media spin he was given the Nobel Peace Prize and embraced as a world statesman. He is proof to would-be imitators that terrorism pays

big. The United Nations, European Union, and countless world political and religious leaders have sided with him in his terrorism against Israel. Arafat and his PLO held the record for:

- ? the largest hijacking (four aircraft in a single operation) -- which has just been equaled,
- ? the greatest number of hostages held at one time (300),
- ? the greatest number of people shot at an airport,
- ? the largest ransom collected (\$5 million paid by Lufthansa),
- ? the greatest variety of targets (40 civilian passenger aircraft, five passenger ships, 30 embassies or diplomatic ministries plus innumerable fuel depots and factories), etc.

But instead of being tried by an international tribunal as were the Nazi and Serbian leadership, Arafat's bloody exploits gained for him acceptance as a leader for peace!

We continue our shortsighted forgetfulness when we won't face some simple questions:

- ? Is not the attempt to force them into Islam the cause of the cruel enslavement, torture and slaughter of millions in southern Sudan?
- ? Is not Islam the driving force behind the murderous and destructive riots against Christians in Nigeria, Indonesia, Pakistan and elsewhere?
- ? Is it not the enforcement of Islamic law that makes the Taliban deny all civil rights to those under its control in Afghanistan?
- ? And what is it but Islam that unites the otherwise divided Arab world in an implacable and unreasoning hatred against Israel? No Arab map in the world admits Israel's existence. It is only Islam's claim that Ishmael, not Isaac, was the son of promise and that the Holy Land belongs to them which unites Arabs in the "fanatical" determination to destroy the Jews.

ISLAM IS AT WAR WITH THE ALMIGHTY GOD OF HEAVEN

Israel is now accused of "occupying" land which actually has been theirs for 3,000 years. The come-lately "Palestinians" are sustained by the world in the lie that they are the original owners of this land. As a result, terrorism is perpetrated not only against Israel but now in this latest act against the United States to apply pressure to force Israel out of its rightful land and to spread Islam around the world.

The world has sided with Islam in its false claim to the land of Israel, which is now inaccurately called Palestine. This promised land, given to Israel by the God of the Bible, has been occupied by Jews continuously for the last 3,000 years, and they are the only people to have done so. In recognition of that undeniable historic fact, all of "Palestine" was to be given to the Jews for a national homeland by a 1917 ruling of the League of Nations. But steadily the Jews were betrayed by Britain's administration of this mandate (and the demise of the British Empire can be dated from that betrayal); the land was parceled out to Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, etc. Finally, is Jesus yours? Jesus is all we need.

1st come to Christ for salvation. Here is a prayer you can pray, a prayer that expresses your desire to transfer your trust to Christ alone for your eternal salvation. This prayer can be the link that will connect you to God. And if you pray it in faith, God will receive you. Dear God,

I know that I am a sinner and there is nothing that I can do to save myself. I confess my complete helplessness to forgive my own sin or to work my way

to heaven. At this moment I trust Christ alone as the One who bore my sin when He died on the cross. I believe that He did all that ever will be necessary for me to stand in your holy presence. I thank you that Christ was raised from the dead as a guarantee of my own resurrection. As best as I can, I now transfer: my trust to Him. I am grateful that He has promised to receive me despite my many sins and failures. Father, I take you at your word. I thank you that I can face death now that you are my Savior. Thank you for the assurance that you will walk with me though the deep valley.

Thank You for hearing this prayer. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

APPENDIX

WHO IS JESUS TO MOSLEMS?

According to the Koran¹³⁵, Jesus is not the Son of God, but “the son of Mary,” since God could not have a son. Those who declare that Jesus is God are “unbelievers” who will be “forbidden entrance into Paradise, and shall be cast into the fire of hell,” for “the Messiah, the son of Mary, was no more than an apostle” (Sura 5:73-75). The¹³⁶ Koran’s followers know that conversion to Islam is a very simple matter. One only had to recite three times the Shahada, the Islamic Affirmation of Faith: “There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah.” This simple method of entering Allah’s kingdom contrasted sharply with seventh-century Judaism and Christianity, which had elaborate conversion procedures. Muslim victors often forced whole communities of Christians and Jews to convert or face execution.

The Affirmation of Faith is the first of Islam’s Five Pillars of Faith to which every Muslim must adhere (some authorities add jihad as a sixth pillar). The others are: paying of the zakat, an obligatory alms tax; saying prayers five times a day while facing the Kaaba Shrine in Mecca; keeping the daytime fast during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan; and making the haj, or pilgrimage, to Mecca at least once in a lifetime. These pillars are observed by both Sunni and Shiite Muslims, the two main branches of Islam (there are more than one hundred and fifty Muslim sects altogether). The minority Shiites, most numerous in Iran, Iraq, and Lebanon, are followers of Muhammad’s cousin and son-in-law, Ali. Disappointed that he had not been named the leader of Islam immediately after Muhammad’s death, Ali’s followers engaged in a violent struggle with the Sunnis. The more powerful Sunnis came out on top, keeping control of the holy sites in Mecca and Medina. Shiite and Sunni Muslims still battle each other today, as evidenced by the long and bloody war during the 1980’s between Shiite Iran and Sunni-controlled Iraq, and intermittent skirmishes in Lebanon.

DO MOSLEMS ENJOY FREEDOM?

The fact is the Islamic Curtain¹³⁷ separating Muslim countries from the rest of the world is every bit as impenetrable as the Iron Curtain ever was, but who hears a word of it in the media? In Saudi Arabia, for example, which Americans died to protect, there is a total blackout on anything Christian; one cannot carry a Bible on the street or have a Bible study in the privacy of one’s own home. Even in our embassy, over which the American flag flies, Christian church services are banned. It is

officially the death penalty in Saudi Arabia and some other Muslim countries (and enforced unofficially elsewhere) for a Muslim to convert to any other religion.

The fact is that only Muslims can be citizens of Saudi Arabia. Even in Arab countries where shari'a (Islamic law) is not enforced by the government, Islam's influence prevents freedom of speech, of the press, of religion and of conscience. In PLO territories, Christian Arabs, who once had freedom under Israel, now suffer persecution, imprisonment and death for their faith. Yet neither the UN nor our own government ever protest such oppression behind the Islamic curtain.

The facts is that Muslims build mosques and worship freely in the West, but in their own countries they deny such freedoms to others. Instead of reporting this hypocrisy, the world media cover it up. One Mideast author writes, Islam is...more antagonistic to the Christian faith than Communism ever was....In Communist China today, Christianity still thrives. But confession of Christ by a national in an Islamic country is regarded as high treason. ...[N]ot even an official Church that a Communist government could allow is permitted...in an Islamic country. (G.J.O. Moshay, *Who Is This Allah?* Dorchester, 1994, p. 111)

The fact is that history records that Islam spread rapidly under Muhammad and his successors through jihad ("holy war"). Muhammad himself planned 65 campaigns and personally led 27 involving naked aggression and treachery. This incredible "evangelism" made "converts" by the millions at the point of a sword. At its peak, Islam had conquered all of North Africa and almost took over Europe.

The fact is that Islam continues its conquest worldwide. Today's invaders are millions of immigrants who make converts to Islam through misrepresentation. One sees on TV fashionably dressed women who claim to be converts to Islam and testify to its joys and peace-loving ways. Yet in a Muslim country they would have to be veiled with only their eyes showing, would have to wear plain black full-length robes, could not drive a car, could be one of four wives habitually mistreated by their husband, to be divorced by his mere denunciation, virtual slaves under shari'a.

The fact is that Islam's earnest goal, set forth in the Koran (references given herein are from three versions) and hadith (Islamic written tradition), remains the same: to bring all mankind into submission (that's what "Islam" means) and to kill or enslave all "infidels"(i.e., unbelievers in

Allah and Muhammad his prophet--Surah 2:190- 192;4:76;5:33;9:5, 29,41;47:4, etc.). Islam (in obedience to the Koran and Muhammad's example) is the driving force behind most terrorism today. Muhammad declared, "The last hour will not come before the Muslims fight the Jews and the Muslims kill them."

NO POSSIBLE PEACE

The Jewish¹³⁸ victory in 1948 created the ultimate challenge to the Islamic world it struck at the very heart of Islamic theology and belief and undermined it. The size¹³⁹ of the State of Israel is immaterial; the Arabs hold 5.4 million sq. mi. of territory, and Israel¹⁴⁰ only 7, 847 sq. mi. without "occupied territories." But this tiny speck on a world map in an affront to Islam.

For this reason, 1948 became "the day of the greatest¹⁴¹ shame in the modern history of the Arabs". The "face" of the Arab nation was "blackened" with shame, as was the face of its god. The continuous call for Israel's annihilation comes not from the Arab world per se, but from Islam and for the honor of Allah. Perhaps some of the statements made by Arab leaders will now make more sense to the reader.

Note the Islamic inferences:

"Our war¹⁴² against the Jews is an old struggle that began with Mohammed...It is our duty to fight the Jews for the sake of Allah and religion, and it is our duty to end the war that Mohammed began".

"I promise¹⁴³ to crush Israel and return it to the humiliation and wretchedness established in the Koran. Anwar Sadat.

NO COEXISTENCE ALLOWED

Current¹⁴⁴ events give the appearance that the Arab nations are finally making peace with their common enemy, and the world is ecstatic. But the Koran forbids the existence of the Jewish state, and there can be no peace in the Middle East while it exists. All of the above statements from Islamic leaders were made prior to the signing of the September 1993 agreements between Israel and the PLO in Oslo. The Oslo agreements will bring no change in Islamic attitudes to Israel, and the following statement made four months after the signing proves this: "You don't understand...Islam can never negotiate or recognize Israel." Hamas leader in an interview with the BBC, early January, 1994.

NO TURNING BACK ALLOWED

When Islam¹⁴⁵ conquers, it establishes memorials to its conquest. Islam's most holy sites (apart from the two in Mecca and Medina) are former Jewish or Christian holy sites. Thus the Omar mosque (Dome of the Rock) stands over the site of the Jewish temple to denote Islam's superiority over Judaism. And, just a stone's throw away, stands the monument to Islam's superiority over Christianity, the Aqsa mosque built over the site of Solomon's porches where the Christian Church began (John 10:23; Acts 3:11, 5:23). Many hundreds of churches throughout the world (around 500 in Britain) have now been turned into mosques. Islam is marching; the Church is retreating.

NO CONFUSION IN GOD'S WORD

In the end-time battle¹⁴⁶ of God and Magog, Gog is depicted as a military leader that arises from "the northern region" (from Israel's vantage point) of Magog (ancient Scythia). Today this area is comprised of the former Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Kirghiza, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan. According to Ezekiel, the other nations that will align themselves with Magog to invade Israel are Meshech and Tubal (Territories in Turkey), Gomer (Germany), Togarmah (Turkey), Persia (Iran), Cush/Ethiopia (Sudan), Put (Libya), and Egypt (according to Daniel 11:40-42). While there is a difference of opinion as to the precise timing of this war, most premillennial scholars place it sometime before or during the Tribulation period (see Ezekiel 37:8, 16; 39:9).

Can¹⁴⁷ it be only coincidental that the balance of power in this part of the world has for decades been concentrated in Russia and the Arab countries? Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, six of the former southern republics have become independent Islamic nations:

Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kirghiza, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan. All of these new nations, which are today in the region of Ezekiel's prediction, have militant Islamic movements and are virulently anti-Semitic. Also they all have experienced economic hardships and political instability that have forced them to make alliances with other nations that have been able to supply them with nuclear technology. In mother Russia there is also a strong anti-Semitism among nationalists and ultra nationalists.

One of Russia's prominent ultra nationalists, Vladimir Zhirinovsky, in a book entitled *The Final March to the South*, proposed a military strategy for world domination that is remarkably similar to the prophetic sketch of the end-time one-world government that will be divided into ten national

entities (Daniel 7:24; Revelation 17:12-13). He has voiced a new radical desire for a restoration of Russia's primacy and has threatened to use nuclear weapons to achieve his ends. He argues that it is Russia's destiny to capture the lands to the south, including Israel. Interestingly, his plan does not call for the destruction of Israel, but control over it. The Essence¹⁴⁸ of Mid East trouble is religion - Who is really God! Islam up to 1967 said they had superseded Israel they had Haram-El-Sharif "The Noble Sanctuary". But Israel came back from their wanderings. Jerusalem represents Islam's triumph over Christianity and Judaism, it is more important than anywhere else on the planet! The key is that Isaiah 11 says at the 2nd gathering they will never be scattered again!

1. A Singular Faith (placed in Christ Alone). Let me¹⁴⁹ say it once more: If you are persuaded that Christ did all that is necessary and all that ever will be necessary to bring you to God, you not only will be saved but know it! Romans 10:9-10 That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. Romans 10:17 Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ. 2 Timothy 1:12 That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.

2. A Confirmed Faith (impacted by the Holy Spirit) Romans 8:16-17 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. 17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. God's Holy Spirit leads us away from sin, into assurance, and plants a hunger for God deep within our hearts that is insatiable.

3. A Fruitful Faith (bearing Spiritual Fruit) Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared

in advance for us to do.

4. A Growing Faith (in grace and knowledge) 2 Peter 3:18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.