

ISLAM - A Brief Overview¹

I. BRIEF HISTORY:

a. **Muhammad*** – **Born around A.D. 570.** “His father died before his birth, his mother died when he was six. He was raised first by his grandfather and later by his uncle...He was of the Hashimite clan of the *Al Qu’raysh* tribe...**At the age of 25 he married a wealthy 40 year old widow named Khadijah.**” At the age of 40 he had his first vision and felt his “*Call.*” His visions or revelations would eventually be written down and become known as the *Qu’ran*.

Muhammad’s first convert was a man named **Abu Bakr**, who would eventually succeed him as one of Islam’s Caliphs.

Muhammad was eventually run out of *Mecca* and fled to Yathrib which has been renamed *Medina*. This flight is the turning point for Muhammad. **Flight = “Hijira.”** “**All Islamic calendars mark this date, July 16, 622 as their beginning. Thus 630 A.D. would be 8 A.H. (i.e. in the year of the Hijira).**” Eventually he would get enough followers that he was able to come back to Mecca, and, **breaking a truce he signed with his own Qu’raysh tribe**, he conquered Mecca, cleansed the *Ka’aba* (small black, box-shaped building), and set up Islam.

b. **Muhammad died in A.D. 632.** He had not written a will or anything to instruct the Muslim leadership on who was to take over as Caliph (Khalifa) or leader. “But the community he had founded was a theocracy with no distinction between Church and State, and someone must clearly succeed, not to give, but to enforce the law, to lead in war and guide in peace.” (McDowell, p. 155) So that has caused the divisions we see in Islam (i.e. *Sunnis & Shiites*) even until this day. The aged Abu Bakr was hurriedly put into the position of Caliph [the 2nd Caliph]; however he died less than two years after taking over. Umar ibn al Khattab “became successor [3rd Caliph], and under him the borders of the Islamic empire were considerably expanded. Eventually a power struggle developed as different factions believed their own methods of establishing a successor were better than their rivals...**The major eruption came between those who believed the Caliph should be elected by the Islamic leadership and those who believed the successor should be hereditary, through ‘Ali, Muhammad’s son-in-law, married to his only daughter [by Khadijah], Fatima.**” The former group would become the *Sunni’s*. The latter would become the *Shi’ites*. “[McDowell]

II. THE VARIOUS GROUPS WITHIN ISLAM. There are several groups or divisions, within Islam, two of which are mentioned above:

a. **The Sunni’s.** “Along with the Caliphate controversy, conflict raged on another front, that of law and theology...four recognized orthodox schools of Islamic thought emerged. All four schools accepted the Qur’an, the Sunna i.e. the practice of the prophet as expressed in the Hadiths (traditions), and the four bases of Islamic Law (Shari’a):

- 1) The *Qur’an*,
- 2) The *Sunna*,
- 3) The *Ij’ma* (i.e. consensus of the Muslim community), &
- 4) *Q’yas* (i.e. the use of analogical reason).

Noss explains: “The rapid expansion of Islam confronted Muslims with...complex decisions concerning Muslim behavior...where the injunctions of the Qur’an proved either insufficient or inapplicable. The natural first step...was to appeal to the Sunna (behavior or practice of Muhammad in Medina or to the Hadith that reported his spoken decisions or judgments... (If) this proved inconclusive, the next step was to ask what the Sunna &/or consensus of opinion (I’jma) of the Medina community was, in or shortly after the time of Muhammad. If no light was yet obtainable, the only recourse was either to draw an analogy (Qiyas) from the principles embodied in the Qur’an or in Median precedents and then apply it, or to follow the consensus of opinion of the local Muslim community as...expressed by its Qur’anic authorities.”²

b. **The Shi’ites.** “The **4th Caliph** to follow Muhammad was an early convert and [more importantly] his son-in-law, **Ali**, “married to his only daughter *Fatima*.” He (Ali) was eventually murdered by Mu’awiya, who claimed the Caliphate for himself. “The tragedy that befell the House of Ali, beginning with the murder of Ali himself and including the deaths of his two sons, grandsons of Muhammad, has haunted the **party (Shi’a)** of ‘Ali.” The Shi’ites eventually “developed the

¹ By Rev. Mike Edwards (Originally compiled 1986, Pt. Moresby, Papua New Guinea; revised, Dec. 2008, Baptist Bible College of the Caribbean, St. Vincent, West Indies & expanded Jan. 2010, Panama City, Florida-this 9 page abridged version, Nov 15, Bible Baptist Church, Madison, Ohio). Note: The general outline & vast majority of the information contained in the first 3 pages is taken nearly verbatim from Josh McDowell & Don Stewart, “*Understanding Non-Christian Religions*” Chapter 9: “*Islam*” (Here’s Life Publishers: San Bernardino, California, 1982), pp. 149-180. Other sources are referenced in footnotes throughout. Anything in parentheses () occurs as such in the original sources. Anything in brackets [] has been added by me, as well as all bolding & underlining. *Note: There are several variant spellings of Muhammad’s name, thus two different ones appear in this paper.

² John B. Noss, *Man’s Religions*, (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1974, p. 530, cited in McDowell & Stewart, p. 156).

religious theory, perhaps as an effect of Christian (teachings) about God being in Christ, that every legitimate leader of the ‘*Alids*, beginning with ‘Ali, was an **Imam Mahdi**, a divinely appointed and supernaturally guided spiritual leader, endowed by Allah with special knowledge and insight—an assertion that the main body of Muslims, significantly enough called *ghuluw*, ‘exaggeration,’ rather than heresy.’ (Noss, p. 540, cited in McDowell & Stewart, pp. 155-157). This is important to understand today, since **Iran is Shi’ite**. In the 1970’s the late Ayatollah Khomeini became their leader after the overthrow of the Shah of Iran. “The same militant Islamic fundamentalists were responsible for the assassination of President Anwar Sadat of Egypt.” (McDowell & Gilchrist, p. 136). **Iran’s previous leader, Mr. Ahmadinejad was a firm believer that the 12th or final imam (*mahdi*) is due to come to earth soon-& they believe they can even speed up his arrival by exterminating Israel and helping Islam take over the world! Iran’s current leaders would agree with that.** *No wonder* so many nations are concerned about Iran developing the ability to make nuclear weapons!]. “There are a number of divisions among the Shi’ites themselves. The two most common are the *twelvers* and the *seveners* (Ismailis’) the former, being the largest group, holds that the first 12 caliphs after Muhammad are the only legitimate leaders (descendants) or imams. The *seveners* hold to only seven.” As noted above, the twelvers believe that “eventually the final imam will return before the last judgment & this imam is the ‘Mahdi.’”

c. The Sufi’s. These are Islam’s “*mystics*.” Since legalistic religious observances can become cold and dead, these guys tend to go towards the other end of the spectrum i.e. towards emotion, etc. “(They) have arisen in response to orthodox Islam and to the often loose and secularists view of Islamic leadership during some of its early days under the Ummayyad and Abbasid dynasties.” (McDowell, p. 158) In the [1970s-1980s] the Sufi movement took the West by storm. “Many American cities now have Sufi centers; college bookstores display Sufi material which is eagerly read by young people...Sufism is more respectable in New York City than in many parts of the Middle East!”³ There are several possible etymologies for this term [i.e. *Sufi*] ...The one most usually accepted, however, is (it is) a derivation from the Arabic word *suf*, i.e. wool, referring to the coarse, much-patched garment that the Sufi mystics may wear. Other terms for Islamic mystics which one may hear are dervish [i.e. “whirling dervish”] or fakir...” (Fry & King, p. 120 cited by M&D, p. 137)

d. The Ahmadiya. “As Sufism is the mystical sect of Islam, the Ahmadiya is the rationalist sect.” (McDowell & Stewart, p. 138). “The Ahmadiya (are) a sect founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad at the turn of the 20th century. He began by writing books against the Christian missionaries...but in 1879 began to claim that he was the promised Mahdi, and the Messiah in the village of Qadian in Punjab, India. Over against the general Muslim belief that Jesus was not actually crucified but was raised to heaven...Ahmad claimed that Jesus, after escaping crucifixion, went to Kashmir and died in Srinagar.” (Encyclopedia Britannica, p. 667, cited by M&S). The Ahmadiya are not believed to be true Muslims by many in Islam, and are considered a non-Islamic sect in Pakistan. (M&G, p. 138)

III. CHURCH POLITY. The Islamic religion has very little “church polity.” They have no priesthood and no sacraments. “Mosques, unlike churches, are unconsecrated shelters for prayer.”⁴ “Except for the Sufis, Islam knows only **Exhortation and Instruction** from those who consider themselves, or are considered by others, adequately learned in theology and law... The faith and practice of Islam (is) governed by the two great branches of Muslim learning, **Theology and Jurisprudence**... Muslim **theology** (usually called ‘*Tawhid*’ from its central doctrine of the Unity of the Godhead) defines all that a man should believe, while the **law** (*Shari’a*) prescribes everything that he should do.” (McDowell & Gilchrist, p. 20). **Faith and Duty** is another way of expressing it. “The teachings of Islam are comprised of both **faith** (*Imam*) and practice or **duty** (*Din*).” (M & G, p. 19)

“Unlike any other system in the world today, the *Shari’a* [i.e. law] embraces every detail of human life, from the prohibition of crime to the use of the toothpick, and from the organization of the State to the most sacred intimacies—or unsavory aberrations—of family life. It is the ‘science of all things, human and divine,’[sic] and divides all actions into what is obligatory or enjoined... praiseworthy...permitted...disliked... (or forbidden).”⁵ “The most important and fundamental religious concept in Islam is that of the *Shari’a* which literally means ‘*a path to the watering place*’ but in its religious application means the total way of life as explicitly or implicitly commanded by God.”⁶

³ (George Fry and James King, “*Islam: A Survey of Muslim Faith*” p. 136, cited by McDowell & Gilchrist, p. 136)

⁴ Sam Welles, “*The World’s Great Religions*” (New York, NY: Time Inc, 1957), p. 101.

⁵ Sir Norman Anderson, editor “*The World’s Religions*” (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1976), p. 78, cited by McDowell & Gilchrist, p. 20)

⁶ Encyclopedia Britannica, s.v. “*Islam*” [Chicago, Illinois: William Benton Publishing Company, 1967], p. 664, cited in McDowell & Gilchrist, p. 20.

IV. THE OUR'AN (Koran).

“The Koran is...about four-fifths the length of the New Testament. It is divided into 114 surahs [chapters]. Parts were (recorded) by Muhammad, and the rest, based on his oral teaching, were written from memory by his disciples after Muhammad’s death.”⁷ The surahs are arranged according to length; longer ones in front, shorter ones in the back, becoming progressively shorter. “The early chapters (surahs) of the Qu’ran, reflecting Mohammed’s grim struggle against the Meccans, are characterized by grave warnings of imminent judgment, while the later surahs, of the Medina period, are chiefly directed to regulating the internal and external affairs of the young Muslim community-state, besides narrating the stories of earlier prophets.” (Encyclopedia Britannica, op cit., p. 663). Muslims refuse to approve any translations of the Qu’ran into other languages, so there is no such thing as an ‘authoritative’ translation.

The compiling of the Qur’an. Muslims explain the writing of the Qur’an thusly: “All the surahs of the Koran had been recorded in writing before the Prophet’s death, and many Muslims had committed the whole Koran to memory... In the Caliphate of Othman, all existing copies of surahs were called in, and an authoritative version, based on Abu Bakr’s collection and the testimony of those who had known the whole Koran by heart [sic], was compiled exactly in the present form and order, which is regarded as traditional and the arrangement of the Prophet himself... The Koran has thus been very carefully preserved.”⁸

V. THE ARTICLES OF FAITH. These are the fundamental doctrines of Islam, and every Muslim is expected to believe in them. (Here’s a mnemonic device to help you remember them: “*GASP, Last days, Kiss me!*”):

a. GOD. “There is only one true God and his name is Allah. Allah is all-knowing, all-powerful and the sovereign judge. Yet Allah is not an interacting personal God.” (McDowell & Gilchrist, p. 25) “In the famous Muslim creedal formula the first part reads: ‘*la ilaha illa Allah*’ (i.e. (There is) ‘no god but God.’” (Noss, *Religions*, p. 517). Because the Muslim God is so different from his creatures, it is very hard to know much about him, and he’s not too interested or affected by what his creatures do.

b. ANGELS. “The existence of angels is important to Islamic teaching. Gabriel, the leading angel, appeared [sic] to Muhammad... *Al-Shaytan* is the Devil, and most likely a fallen angel or *Jinn*. *Jinn* are those creatures between angels and men which can be either good or evil... Each man or woman also has two recording angels—one who records good deeds, the other his bad deeds.” (McDowell & Gilchrist, pp. 25-26)

c. SCRIPTURE. Muslims believe that four books are inspired, but they contend that three of them (the portions of the Bible) [*why am I not surprised?*] are “corrupted.” With that caveat understood, the books they consider Scripture are: 1) The Pentateuch (1st five books of Moses, i.e. the *Torah*), 2) The Psalms (*Zabur*) of David, 3) The Gospel of Jesus (*Injil*), and 4) The Qur’an.

d. PROPHETS. The six greatest, as far as Muslims are concerned are: Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad. Not surprisingly, they consider Muhammad to be the last and greatest prophet.

e. LAST DAYS. “The last day will be a time of resurrection and judgment. Those who follow and obey Allah and Muhammad will go to the Islamic heaven, called ‘*Jannah*’ (Paradise), a place of pleasure. Those who oppose them will be tormented for a time in hell...”

MUSLIM HEAVEN: “...the books kept by the recording angels will be opened; and God as judge will weigh each man’s deeds in the balances. Some will be admitted to Paradise, where they will recline on soft couches quaffing [drinking] cups of wine handed them by the Huris or maidens of Paradise, of whom each man may marry as many as he pleases; others will be consigned to the torments of hell. Almost all, it would seem, will have to enter the fire temporarily, but no true Muslim will remain there forever” (Anderson, p. 81, cited by McDowell & Gilchrist, p. 26). “Far more than the Bible, the Koran is vivid and explicit (perhaps in metaphor) about the delights of heaven and the terrors of hell—the former featured by gardens, fountains, flowing wine and lovely virgins, ‘the Houris [sic], with large dark eyes, like pearls hidden in their shells’; and the latter by ‘coverings of fire...pestilential winds and ...scalding water.’” (Welles, p. 101)

⁷ Kenneth Boa, “*Cults, World Religions and You*” (Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1977), p. 52.

⁸ Mohammed Marmaduke Pickthall, trans., “*The Meaning of the Glorious Koran*” (New York: Mentor Books, n.d.), p. xxviii.

f. **BELIEF IN GOD'S DECREES or KISMET** i.e. the doctrine of “Fate.” Islam is well known for its fatalism. “From this concept comes the most common Islamic phrase, roughly translated as, ‘It is Allah’s Will.’” (McDowell & Gilchrist, *Understanding Non-Christian Religions*, p. 168). For example, when over 1400 people were killed in a stampede in July of 1990 at Mecca during a Hajj, King Fahd of Saudi Arabia [where Mecca is located] said: “It was God’s will, which is above everything. It was fate. Had they not died there, they would have died elsewhere and at the same predestined moment.”⁹

VI. THE “FIVE PILLARS” OF ISLAM. Whereas the above doctrines are the cardinal *beliefs* of Islam, the following are *observances* or *rituals* that *every* good Muslim observes. (Another memory hook: “*CPA Fast Pill War*”)

a. **THE CREED (Kalima)**. “*There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is the prophet of Allah.*” “It is mandatory that during his lifetime each Muslim must say this creed at least once correctly and with heartfelt conviction. In practice, however, the devout Muslim speaks it many times a day.”¹⁰

b. **PRAYER (Salat)**. “The practice of prayer (*salat*) five times a day (upon rising, at noon, in mid-afternoon, after sunset, and before retiring). The worshipper must recite the prescribed prayers (the first surah [see below] and other selections from the Koran) in Arabic while facing the Ka’aba [black box-shaped building] in Mecca. The *Hadith* (book of tradition) has turned these prayers into a mechanical procedure of standing, kneeling, hands and face on the ground, and so forth. The call to prayer is sounded by the Muezzin (a Muslim crier) from a tower called a Minaret, which is part of the Mosque (the place of public worship). (Boa, p. 53, cited in McDowell & Gilchrist, p. 27)

Content of Surah 1: “*In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Praise be to God, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds; Most Gracious, Most Merciful; Master of the Day of Judgment. Thee do we worship, and thine aid we seek. Show us the straight way, the way of those on whom Thou has bestowed Thy Grace, those whose (portion) is not wrath, and who go not astray.*”¹¹

c. **ALMSGIVING (Zakat)**. “Muhammad, himself an orphan, had a strong desire to help the needy [sic]. The alms were originally voluntary, but all Muslims are now required to give one-fortieth of their income for the destitute. There are other rules and regulations for donating produce, cattle, etc. . . . Since those to whom alms are given are helping the giver to salvation, they feel no sense of debt to the giver. On the contrary, it is the giver’s responsibility and duty to give and he is to consider himself lucky he has someone to whom he may give.” (McDowell & Gilchrist, p. 27)

d. **FASTING (Ramadan)**. Faithful Muslims will fast from dawn to sundown every day for a month (note: the month rotates, since they have a 9 month calendar). “The fast develops self-control, devotion to God and identity with the destitute. No food or drink may be consumed during the daylight hours; no smoking or sexual pleasures may be enjoyed either” (M & G, p. 27). Most Muslims eat two meals a day during Ramadan: Just before sun up, and after sundown.

e. **THE PILGRIMAGE (HAJJ, or HADJ)**. At least once in a Muslim’s lifetime he is expected to either go, or send someone representing him, to Mecca. “It involves a set of ceremonies and rituals, many of which center around the Ka’aba shrine, to which the pilgrimage is directed.” (M & G, p. 27)

The Ritual of the Hajj: “Three main rituals are prescribed...first... the sevenfold circumambulation [walking around] of the Ka’aba. Starting at the Black Stone, the pilgrims run around the building three times quickly and four times slowly, pausing on each circuit to kiss the meteorite, or if the throng is too great [normally], to touch it with hand or stick. Next comes the Lesser Pilgrimage, in which the pilgrims must trot seven times across the valley between the low hills *Safa* and *dMarwa*, in commemoration of Hagar’s frantic search for water for her infant son Ishmael. Finally comes the Greater Pilgrimage to the Mount of Mercy in the Plain of Arafat, where from noon to sunset the pilgrims ‘stand before God.’ This is the climactic ceremony. He who misses it has missed the *hadj*. A jubilant exodus en masse from the plain, a night in the open, an animal sacrifice, then three days of feasting follow. With one final circumambulation of the Ka’aba, the pilgrim’s duty is fulfilled. For him, earth holds no greater joy.” (Welles, *World’s Great Religions*, p. 105)

⁹ “*The Post-Courier*” (Papua New Guinea), Thursday, 05 July, 1990, p. 7.

¹⁰ Philip H. Lochhaas, “*How to Respond to Islam*” (St. Louis, Missouri: Concordia Publishing House, 1981), p. 16.

¹¹ “*The Holy Qur’an*” translation and commentary by A. Yusuf Ali (Amana Corporation: Brentwood, Maryland, 1983), pp. 14-15. [some have been taken from a 2008 edition published by Tahrike Tarsile Qur’an, Inc., Elmhurst, New York. [I think Spencer & Caner’s quotes are probably from Pickthall or Dawood’s translation?-mwe]

f. **JIHAD (Holy War)**. This is a sixth duty often associated with the “five pillars” of Islam. “This duty requires that when the situation warrants, men are required to go to war to spread Islam or defend it against infidels [non-Muslims]. One who dies in a Jihad is guaranteed eternal life in Paradise, and is considered a *Shahid*, i.e. a martyr for Islam.” (McDowell & Gilchrist, p. 28) Note: It isn’t just slitting throats or blowing yourself up! It can take many forms, including spreading false propaganda (e.g. CAIR & such groups), working in high positions in governments, immigrating as “refugees” in order to get into other countries e.g. Syrians currently coming by the thousands, etc.

VII. A BRIEF CRITIQUE OF MUHAMMED & SOME OF ISLAM’S DOCTRINES & TEACHINGS:

- a. **MUHAMMAD**. “*Why does the life of Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, matter today?* ...Here’s why the life of Muhammad matters: Contrary to what many secularists would have us believe, religions are not entirely determined (or distorted) by the faithful over time. The lives and words of the founders remain central, no matter how long ago they lived...for the religious man or woman on the streets of Chicago, Rome, Jerusalem, Damascus, Calcutta, and Bangkok, the words of Jesus, Moses, Muhammad, Krishna and Buddha mean something far greater than any individual’s reading of them...through the words (& actions) of Muhammad and Jesus, we can draw a distinction between the core principles that guide the faithful Muslim and Christian.”¹²
- 1) **Muhammad was an extremely violent man**. Spencer writes: “First basic fact: Muhammad ibn Abdallah ibn Abd al-Muttalib (570-632), the prophet of Islam, was a man of war. He taught his followers to fight for his new religion. He said that their god, Allah, had commanded them to take up arms. And Muhammad, no armchair general, fought in numerous battles. These facts are crucial to anyone who really wants to understand...what has led to the rise of the global jihad movement.”¹³ Others, such as Geisler & Saleeb have also documented the many battles and wars that Muhammad was involved in. There was even at least one instance where he had a female poet assassinated for a poem she wrote against him. Yet on Muslim TV stations in the Middle East they hypocritically call Jews pigs, dogs, etc. Bit of a double standard! No wonder today’s Muslims riot, burn, loot & kill innocent people-*they’re copying their founder Muhammad*.
 - 2) **Muhammad was an extremely immoral man**. It appears that Muhammad was faithful to Khadijah, his first wife, until her death. However once she was gone he engaged in polygamy in a big way, adding woman after woman to his harem. He had given an earlier “revelation” in the Quran stating that Muslim men could only have up to four wives [as long as they treat them equally].¹⁴ However once Muhammed began taking more wives after Khadijah’s death he conveniently received a fresh “revelation” from Allah that told him it was ok for him to have as many wives as he wanted!¹⁵ He even received a “revelation” telling him it was ok for his adopted son to divorce his wife Zainab so that he (Muhammad) could marry her, since he had taken a fancy to her!¹⁶ Muhammad would eventually wind up with at least 13 wives & concubines. He even married one girl when she was only 6 years old (consummating the marriage when she was nine).¹⁷ He took twelve of his wives during the last nine years of his life, fathering numerous daughters (no sons lived past infancy). In light of that, Islamic protests against Western moral decadence are “*the pot calling the kettle black*” and

¹² Robert Spencer, “*The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam*” Regnery Publishing, Inc., Washington, D.C., 2005, pp. 3-4.

¹³ Spencer, *ibid*, p.4.

¹⁴ The Quran, Surah 4:3 “If ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly with the orphans, marry women of your choice, two, or three, or four; but if ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly (with them). Then only one, or (a captive) that your right hands possess. That will be more suitable, to prevent you from doing injustice.” -To refute polygamy cf. Gen. 2:24; Dt. 17:16-17; Isa. 54:5-6, etc

¹⁵ The Qur’an, surah 33:50-51 “O Prophet! We have made lawful to thee thy wives to whom thou hast paid their dowers; and those whom thy right hand possesses out of the prisoners of war whom God has assigned to thee; and daughters of thy paternal uncles and aunts, and daughters of thy maternal uncles and aunts, who migrated (from Mecca) with thee; and any believing woman who dedicates her soul to the Prophet if the Prophet wishes to wed her—this only for thee, and not for the believers (at large); We know what We have appointed for them as to their wives and the captives whom their right hands possess—in order that there should be no difficulty for thee. And God is Oft-Forgiving Most Merciful. Thou mayest defer (the turn of) any of them that thou pleases, and thou mayest receive any thou please: and there is no blame on thee if thou invite one whose (turn) thou hadst set aside...” [The Qur’an, Abdullah Yusuf Ali, pp. 1121-23].

¹⁶ “When it came time for Zainab to be married [originally], Muhammed felt she should marry Zayd, his adopted son. Zainab and her brother rejected the idea. Zayd had been Muhammed’s slave before the adoption. However, Muhammed insisted that Allah had revealed that Zayd must marry Zainab. Allah even sent Qur’anic verses to affirm his desire for the match: ‘It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when a matter has been decided by Allah and His messenger, to have any say in their decision; and whosoever disobeys Allah and His messenger has most clearly gone astray’ 9surah 33:36) ...Several months after the marriage, Muhammed visited the home of Zayd and Zainab. Zayd was away, but Zainab invited Muhammed to enter. Her turned away from her, muttering, ‘Praise be to God who directs our hearts.’ Later she told Zayd what had occurred and he immediately went to Muhammed. ‘O Prophet, my father and mother are your ransom. Perhaps you like Zainab. I can leave her.’ Muhammed replied to Zayd, ‘Hold on to your wife.’ Zayd insisted, ‘O Messenger of God, I can leave her,’ to which Muhammed replied, ‘Keep your wife.’ Later however Muhammed fell in a trance and received a revelation from Allah informing him that Zayd should divorce Zainab and that Muhammed had permission to marry her... (Surah 33:37). When Zayd divorced his wife and Muhammed married Zainab, she was thirty-five, and Muhammed was fifty-eight.” [Caner, pp. 41-42].

¹⁷ “Muhammed, at the age of fifty-one, received a revelation from Allah informing him that Aishah would be his wife. Although the revealed bride was only six years old at the time, her father, Abu Bakr, agreed to an immediate marriage. Abu Bakr was Muhammed’s best friend and confidant...Whether at her father’s request or by Muhammed’s decision, the union was not consummated until Aishah was nine (Sahih Bukahri 7.62.64).” [Ergun Mehmet Caner, “*Voices Behind the Veil*”, p. 38].

ring very hollow. [That is in *no way* to excuse the moral degeneracy of today's western culture, which God and His Word condemn!].

b. SOME MAJOR DOCTRINAL ERRORS OF ISLAM:

- 1) **DENIAL THAT CHRIST IS GOD'S SON.** Islam vehemently denies that God has a son. But the Bible unquestionably and repeatedly teaches that truth. Morris comments: "There are many today (especially Muslims, Jews, and Christian 'liberals') who are monotheists, believing in one supreme God but rejecting the deity of Christ. They argue that the doctrine that Jesus was the unique Son of God was invented by the early Christians and that the God of the Old Testament had no Son...The fact is, however, that there are a number of Old Testament verses that do speak of God's only begotten Son....First, there is God's great promise to David: '*I will set up thy seed after thee, ...I will be his Father, and he shall be my son...thy throne shall be established forever.*' (2 Sam. 7:12, 14, 16). Consider also the rhetorical questions of Agur. '*Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?*' (Prov. 30:4). Then there are the two famous prophecies of Isaiah, quoted so frequently at Christmastime.: '*Behold, a (literally "the") virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel (meaning "God with us") (Isaiah 7:14). 'For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given:...and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace' (Isaiah 9:6). Perhaps the most explicit verse in this connection is...'The LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my son' (Psalm 2:7). Then this marvelous Messianic psalm concludes with this exhortation: '*Kiss the Son...Blessed are all they that put their trust in him*' (Psalm 2:12)."¹⁸ Cf. Heb. 1:5-6, 8: "*For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he said, And let all the angels of god worship him...unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom.*" The Psalm 2 prophecy which calls Christ God's Son [which in OT times was a coronation formula used by kings as they handed their reign and rulership over to their sons], is referred to by Paul in Acts 13. There he clearly states that God crowned His Son king when Christ rose from the dead (Acts 13:28-33). No more powerful evidence for both Christ's Sonship and his deity [i.e. that He is God] could be found than that. Finally, the apostle John [often called "*the apostle of love*"] makes perhaps the strongest statement of all, declaring that anyone who "*denieth that Jesus is the Christ...(and) denieth the Son*" is an "*antichrist (and) hath not the Father...*" (I John 2:21-23). So if you deny that Jesus Christ is God's Son, then John declares that you do not know the true God, have no relationship with Him and are a false teacher on your way to hell! Blunt words, but true nonetheless! And as one has said, "*Better a bitter truth than a sweet lie.*"*
- 2) **DENIAL THAT CHRIST IS GOD.** The Bible teaches that Christ is God in many ways: a) **He claimed to be God** (e.g. Jn. 5:17-18; Ex. 3:14-15 cf. 8:58; 10:30; 14:9, etc.); b) **He was called God by the apostles** (e.g. Jn. 1:1 cf. v.14; 20:28; Rom. 9:5; Gal. 1:1; Phil. 2:6; Titus 2:13, Heb. 1:8 cf. Ps. 45:6, etc.); c) **He is given many, many names and titles that belong only to God** (e.g. Rev. 1:8 & 21:6 cf. 22:13; Jn. 8:58; Heb. 1:8; Rev. 1:17-18; II Pet. 1:1; Acts 2:36 cf. v. 39; 16:31 cf. 34); d) **He possessed attributes that only God possesses** (Heb. 1:8 cf. Micah 5:2 & Ps. 90:2; Jas. 1:17 cf. Heb. 13:8; Jn. 1:3, 10, 15; 2:24-25; Col. 2:3 & 9, etc.); & e) **He accepted worship and possessed glory that only God has** (Jn. 5:23; 9:38; 17:5 cf. Isa. 42:8 & 48:11; Heb. 1:6 cf. Ex. 20:1-6, etc.). Muslims claim that they greatly respect Jesus, calling him a "*prophet*" and constantly saying & writing "*Praise be upon him*" [PBUH]. However, as Lewis pointed out many years ago, Jesus did not claim to be just a great teacher or prophet. He claimed to be God! He either was who He claimed to be, Lord of all, or He was a liar or lunatic. If the Bible accounts are true—and I unequivocally assert that they are!—then Islam is false.
- 3) **DENIAL OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.** Within Islam there are two views propounded: 1) Christ was never crucified i.e. that another took his place, or, 2) He died but never rose again. Both views are wrong. The evidence that Christ was crucified and that he literally, physically rose from the dead is powerful and irrefutable. That fact is evidenced by the bankrupt alternatives often advanced by atheists, Muslims, liberals, Jews, etc., to explain away the resurrection [e.g. the "*swoon*" theory; the "*wrong tomb*" theory; & the "*stolen body*" theory). Apart from the hundreds of eye witness testimonies to His resurrection (I Cor. 15:4-9), another subtle evidence often overlooked is the fact that while the Gospels mention the empty tomb,

¹⁸ Henry Morris, "*God's Son in the Old Testament*" (in: "*Days of Christmas*", Institute for Creation Research: Dallas, TX, 2009), p. 5.

from then on the rest of the books of the New Testament and the public discourses given by various apostles and church leaders speak only of the resurrection. Why? **Because the empty tomb was an undeniable fact that no one challenged!** (e.g. Lk. 24:13-35; Acts 1:22; 2:23-32; 4:2, 10, 33; 5:29-30; 10:40; 13:29-37; 17:18, 31-32; 24:15-22; 26:8; I Cor. 15; etc.) The Jewish leaders even paid money to the Roman soldiers to lie about what happened because they had no alternative. [see Josh McDowell “*Evidence That Demands a Verdict*”, “*More Than a Carpenter*” & “*A Ready Defense*”; Frank Morrison “*Who Moved the Stone?*” etc.]

- 4) **DENIAL OF THE BIBLE AS THE INERRANT WORD OF GOD.** Followers of Islam claim to respect and reverence parts of the Bible. In reality thought they claim that the various sections have been corrupted and are filled with errors and changes, making them worthless. However a serious, fair-minded study of the Bible and its contents will thoroughly refute that idea. The scientific, historical & prophetic accuracy of the Bible is absolutely incredible and only explainable by concluding that it is what it claims to be, i.e. the infallible, inerrant Word of the one true and living God!

- 5) **A WRONG VIEW OF SALVATION: BY WORKS INSTEAD OF BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH.** As noted above, Islam is all about “*Faith and Duty.*” Perform the required religious exercises required of you, follow the laws and commandments laid down in the Qur’an, Hadith & other authoritative pronouncements. If you do them right and basically your good outweighs your bad, you get to go to paradise. The Bible, of course, teaches the totally opposite. We can do nothing to earn or merit heaven, “*all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*” (Isa. 64:6) and “*in our flesh dwelleth no good thing*” (Rom. 7:18). Salvation is an absolutely free gift (e.g. Eph. 2:8-9; Tit. 3:5; Rom. 3:28; 4:5; Gal. 2:16; etc.) paid for through the sinless life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and obtainable by repenting of our sin and placing all our faith in His substitutionary sacrifice and atonement for sin. In doing so we are given Christ’s righteousness. “The Allah of the Qur’an requires good works, but the Yahweh of the Bible requires faith in Jesus Christ (John 3:16).”¹⁹

- 6) **THE GOD OF ISLAM (ALLAH) & THE GOD OF THE BIBLE ARE DEFINITELY NOT THE SAME!** Muslims often claim that Allah is just another name for the same God that Christians worship. By doing so they hope to build a bridge to try and establish common ground, with a view to eventually making converts. Do not buy into that lie. A number of the sources listed at the end of this paper thoroughly refute that bogus assertion.²⁰ But one simple fact should suffice here. **A missionary to Muslims has pointed out that there is more about God being a God of love in just twelve verses in the first epistle of John (I Jn. 4:7-19), than there is in the entire Qur’an!** *The God of Islam is NOT a God of love.* He is detached from his creation. He is a fatalistic god. He is not a loving god, but a god of duty and demands. The Muslim “Allah” & the Christian “God” are *light years apart* and utterly irreconcilable. “Although some people equate Islam’s Allah with Christianity’s Yahweh, Christians and Muslims who have studied the two religions deny that these views of God are even remotely alike.”

- c. **WOMEN IN ISLAM. Gender Inequality...in spades!** (Some facts Muslims would rather you not know about)
 - 1) **Wives may be beaten by their husbands; women are worth half the value of men.** Muslims, including female converts to Islam make claims such as “[I] have found greater respect as a woman by converting to Islam” & “Our Islamic religion has given women more rights than any other religion has, and has guaranteed her honour and pride.”²¹ I’m not sure what planet they are living on! “In court, a Muslim woman’s testimony is worth half as much as that of a man. (Qur’an, Surah 2:282). Islamic legal theorists have restricted the validity of a woman’s testimony even further by limiting it to, in the words of one Muslim legal manual, ‘cases involving property, or transactions dealing with property, such as sales.’ Otherwise only men can testify.”²² Other Qur’anic teachings: “Women are inferior to men, and must be ruled by them: ‘Men have authority over women because God has made the one superior to the other’ (Qur’an, Surah 4:34)...The Qur’an likens a woman to a field (tilth), to be used by a man as he wills: ‘Your women are a tilth for you to cultivate so go to your tilth as ye will’ (Surah 2:23)...[The Qur’an] allows men to marry up to four wives, and have sex with slave girls also (Surah 4:3). It rules that a son’s inheritance should be twice the size of that of a daughter: ‘Allah thus directs you as regards your children’s

¹⁹ Caner, “*Voices Behind the Veil*”, p. 22.

²⁰ e.g. Caner & Caner, “*Unveiling Islam*” p. 243.

²¹ Spencer, “*The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam*”, p. 66.

²² Spencer, p. 74

inheritance: to the male, a portion equal to that of two females' (4:11). It tells husbands to beat their disobedient wives: 'Good women are the obedient, guarding in secret that which Allah hath guarded. As for those from whom ye fear rebellion, admonish them and banish them to beds apart, and scourge [beat] them' (4:34)." (Spencer, p. 67) Not surprisingly, according to one study, "The Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences has determined that over 90 percent of Pakistani wives have been struck, beaten, or abused sexually—for offenses on the order of cooking an unsatisfactory meal. Others were punished for failing to give birth to a male child²³ [though only the father carries the male chromosome-so if anyone should be "blamed," it should be him!]. And since Islam strongly encourages girls to marry at extremely young ages [see #3 below], one is not shocked to discover that "In Egypt 29% of married adolescents have been beaten by their husbands; of those, 41 percent were beaten during pregnancy. A study in Jordan indicated that 26 percent of reported cases of domestic violence were committed against wives under 18."²⁴

- 2) **The majority of those who will be in hell are women!** "The Prophet [Muhammad] said: 'I was shown the Hell-fire and that the majority of its dwellers were women who were ungrateful.' It was asked, 'Do they disbelieve in Allah?' (or, 'Are they ungrateful to Allah?') He replied, 'They are ungrateful to their husbands and are ungrateful for the favors and the good (charitable deeds) done to them. If you have always been good (benevolent) to one of them and then she sees something in you (not of her liking), she will say, 'I have never received any good from you.' (Hadith 1.2.28). The Prophet said, 'I looked at Paradise and found poor people forming the majority of its inhabitants and I looked at hell and saw that the majority of its inhabitants were women' (Hadith 4.54.464) ... Then I stood at the gate of the Fire and saw that the majority of those who entered it were women.' (Hadith 7.62.124) ..." (*Voices*, pp. 89-90)

- 3) **Girls regularly marry at extremely young ages** [8-12 at consummation is very common!]. "[In Afghanistan] The Taliban has encouraged families to marry off their daughters as young as eight years old... When the Islamic Republic came to power [in Iran] in 1979, its resurgence of Islamic fundamentalism nullified the Family Protection Law, and nine-year-old girls were legally eligible for marriage [with parental permission, thirteen years old without parental consent]. Why so young a minimum age? The answer is that Muhammad himself took Aishah, the six-year-old daughter of his closest advisor, Abu Bakr, as his third wife. He cohabited with her from the time she was nine... the Hadith of Sahih al-Bukhari, the collection of hadiths most widely accepted by Islamic scholars, says that Muhammad was in his fifties when he consummated the marriage with his nine-year-old bride... Arab custom held that a girl who had her first... cycle was considered an adult. Aishah reportedly came of age at age nine, which made her able to consummate her arranged marriage with Muhammad and move to his home. Because Muhammad's life is to be emulated, faithful Muslims in Iran and numerous other countries have followed the precedent... In many parts of the Muslim world the marriage of child brides is supported... The notion that marrying daughters off as child brides was only a seventh-century practice is clearly mistaken. The marriage of child brides is alive and well in the twenty-first century."²⁵ "Ayatollah Khomeini told the Muslim faithful that marrying a girl before she began menstruating was 'a divine blessing.' He counseled fathers: 'Do your best to ensure that your daughters do not see their first [period] in your house.'"²⁶

- 4) **"Temporary Marriages?!"** "Islam is extremely inventive for men who believe they cannot be impartial (to multiple wives), giving the option known as 'temporary marriage' or *mut'a*. Temporary marriages are personal contracts between a man and a woman, who may be an acquaintance or even a stranger. In it the man offers the woman a sum of money in exchange for a designated period of marriage. The man provides her with housing and all other necessities. In exchange, she commits to satisfy his [physical] demands whenever he wants, without hindrance. She is exclusively his for the duration of the contract. When the contract expires, the man can either pay her and release her or renew the contract for another term... The custom of *mut'a* is complex and has wide variations in the different sects of Islam... every Muslim knows the Shi'a sect [Shi'ites] practices this contractual marriage, but Sunni Muslims do not, in spite of its admissibility in the Qur'an. The Qur'an definitely sanctions it, and Muhammad not only agreed to it but also practiced this type of liaison." [Surah 5:87 cf. Hadith 7.62.130; 7.62.52; 9:86.91; 7.62.13. see Caner, "Voices", pp.76-78, 114, 150-51]

²³ Spencer, p. 70, citing an Amnesty International study.

²⁴ Spencer, p. 69, citing Bushell, p. 12.

²⁵ Caner, "Unveiling Islam," pp. 110, 135-137

²⁶ Amir Taheri, "The Spirit of Allah: Khomeini and the Islamic Revolution" (New York: Adler and Adler), 1986, pp. 90-91, cited by Spencer, "The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam", p. 69.

- 5) **Why so little about rape in the Muslim world?** “Women who are raped are [usually] charged with ‘adultery or fornication,’ known as *zinah*. To prove that there was truly a forced rape and not just consensual fornication, the victim must produce four honorable Muslim males who witnessed the actual act. (!) Of course, this is impossible, so the perpetrator cannot be punished. The fault for the crime is (then) charged to *the victim*, who has confessed to unlawful sexual relations just by alleging that a rape occurred. For the woman, the suffering extends beyond the physical violation to the intense shame and reproach of society and her subsequent isolation due to the stain on her family name.” (Hawkins in Caner, “*Voices*”, p. 100) “This peculiar and destructive stipulation had its genesis in an incident in Muhammad’s life, when his wife Aisha[h], was accused of infidelity...Muhammad...(said): ‘Why did they not produce four witnesses? Since they produce not witnesses, they verily are liars in the sight of Allah’ (Qur’an 24:13).”²⁷
- d. **IS ISLAM A “RELIGION OF PEACE?”** **The simple answer: No!** The Qur’an is filled with scores of verses exhorting Muslims to kill non-believers, cut their heads off, etc. [e.g. Surah 3:28; 47:4; 48:29; 8:60; 9:29; 60:4; etc.]. In addition, many statements in the Hadith [a multivolume collection of the teachings and sayings of Muhammed] exhort’s followers of Islam to fight, kill, maim, and otherwise subjugate—forcibly if necessary—those who will not accept Islam, believe in Allah, & follow Muhammed. Muslims today often quote 2-3 verses from the Qur’an that seem to imply that Muslims are peaceful and for free thinking [e.g. “*there should be no compulsion in religion...*”]. **However:** 1) those very few verses were superseded by over a hundred verses demanding war, Jihad, fighting, violence, etc., once Muhammed gained military superiority, 2) Muslims state: “*Islam is not a religion, but a way of life*”, so the above verse has no relevance, since they don’t consider Islam just a “religion”, 3) Like Communists, followers of Islam often declare “we are for peace.” But for a Communist, “peace” means when the whole world becomes Communist! Similarly, for a Muslim “*peace*” is when the whole world becomes Muslim! Until then anything goes, to accomplish that goal **i.e. the converting of the entire world to Islam!** [Note: For further info & quotes from the Qur’an, see my 14 page paper, “*Is Violence and Terrorism a part of Islam? The truth about Muhammad, Islam & Jihad.*”].

SOME RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

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²⁷ Spencer, “*The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam*”, p. 74.