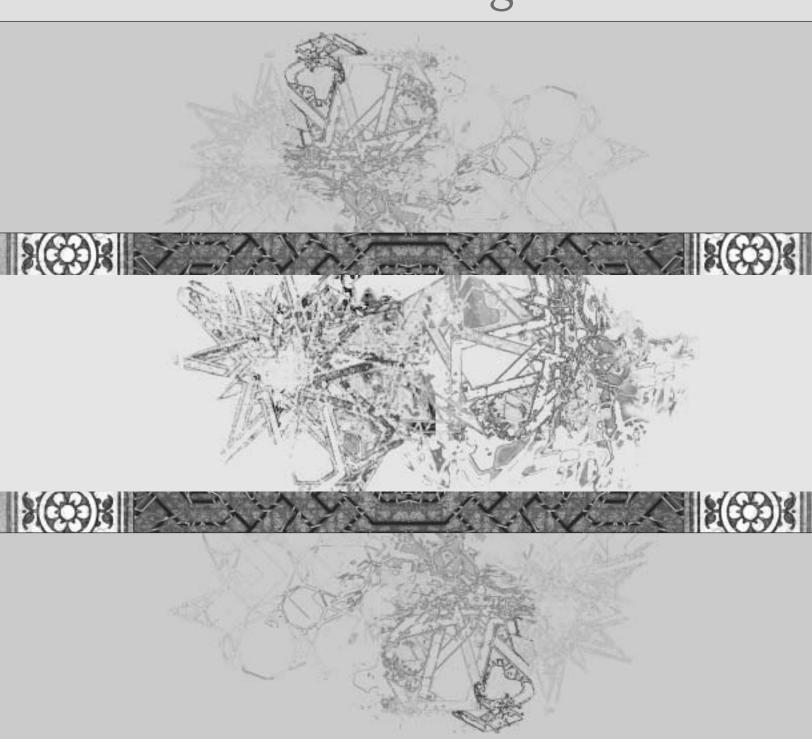


Understanding Islam





A PUBLICATION OF CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY, SEWARD, NEBRASKA

Fall 2004, Vol. 38

Understanding Islam

3	Reflections
	Brian L. Friedrich, President
4	Editorials
7	Muhammad—Saint, Seer, or False Prophet?
	James P. Dretke
II	Thoughts Related to the "Sources" of Islam
	Luther T. Engelbrecht
19	Jihad in Islam: Is Islam Peaceful or Militant?
	And an Initial Christian Response
	Ernest Hahn
30	Book Reviews

Editor

Marvin Bergman, Ed.D., Ph.D.

Editorial Committee

Editorials **Book Reviews** Associate Associate Graphic Design

Managing Editor

Russ Moulds, Ph.D.

Rebecca Fisher, Ph.D.

Daniel Thurber, A.D.

Brian L. Friedrich, M.Div.

William R. Wolfram, M.F.A.

Marlene Block, B.A.



CIRCULATION POLICY-ISSUES . . . in Christian Education (ISSN0278-0216) is published three times a year by the faculty of Concordia University, Seward, Nebraska 68434. ISSUES is sent free to each church, school, district and synodical office in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Copies are also sent to high schools, colleges and universities affiliated with the Synod.

Individuals wishing personal copies may obtain them as follows: Single copy @\$2.00 each; Subscription @\$6.00; 10 or more copies mailed to the same address @\$1.20 per copy. Call 800 535-5494 ext. 7456 or email kthadendeboe@seward.cune.edu

Readers are invited to reprint portions of ISSUES materials provided that the following credit line appears: "Reprinted from ISSUES in Christian Education, Volume 38, No. 2, Fall, 2004, a publication of Concordia University, Seward, Nebraska."



Welcome, President Friedrich!

On July 12, 2004, the Rev. Brian Friedrich became the 10th President of Concordia University, Nebraska. Since joining the staff in 1991, he has served as the Director of the Centennial Campaign and has held several positions in administration and development, most recently as Vice President for Institutional Advancement and Assistant to the President. Previously, he served as the pastor of Peace Lutheran Church, Park Falls, Wisconsin, as the Dean of Chapel and instructor at Martin Luther High School, Maspeth, New York, and as the assistant pastor at Lutheran Church of St. John, Flushing, New York. He is a graduate of Concordia University, St. Paul, Minnesota, and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and is nearing the completion of a doctoral dissertation.

Layout, design and graphics by CONCORDesign of Concordia University, Seward, Nebraska. Illustrator: Rachel Leising

TYPEFACES USED IN THIS PERIODICAL Titles set in 16 point Mrs. Eaves Roman (Imigree of Sacramento). Tracking normal.

Subheads set in 13/13 point Mrs. Eaves bold.

By-lines and author information set in 13/13 point Mrs. Eaves small caps.

Footers and folios set in 11 point Mrs. Eaves.

Feature articles set in 11/13 point Mrs. Eaves.

Three column text set in 9/10 point Mrs. Eaves.

reflections

THE SOUND WAS NEW, but that wasn't unusual. During year one of ministry there had been a steady stream of new sounds in Flushing and Maspeth, New York City: rumbling subways, hissing city buses, blaring taxi cab horns, shrill whistles of New York City's finest, roaring jets bearing down on LaGuardia landing strips. But this sound was different. It was a human: a man's voice intoning a language that filled city blocks with a guttural vibrato. For whom was the song? What was the song's meaning?

In the days that followed I learned a newly established Muslim community had located near the Lutheran Church of St. John in Flushing. The sound was a call to prayer—much like the peeling church bell from my boyhood church in rural Iowa. My first "real life" encounter with the religion of Islam nearly 20 years ago would not be the last. Like many of you, I remember well what I was doing on September II, 2001, when jet airplanes struck the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. On that day the religion of Islam took on an entirely new meaning. Since then a media-induced visual or verbal confrontation with Islam, the religion of nearly one-third of the world's people, is part of daily life in the United States.

What is Islam? Who was Muhammad? What are the sources of Islam? What is Jihad? How should the Christian relate to this fast growing religion? How should the Christian respond to her Muslim neighbors? This edition of *Issues in Christian Education* is dedicated to helping our church and our readers develop a better understanding of Islam and a context in which to respond to the challenge of Islam with the faith in Jesus Christ that fills us.

Recently, I had occasion to visit with a man who is deeply involved with a growing Lutheran ministry in Palestine. He shared that despite the occupation of Palestine by their Israeli neighbors, the ministry is thriving. When I asked how a Christian ministry could thrive in the midst of a predominantly Muslim country world torn by war, he said: "The Palestinians love our school because of the education they receive and because of the values we teach and live in the school." Wow! The teachers in this school where 50 percent of the children are Muslim have found ways through relationships to share the love and action of Jesus Christ.

I'm reminded of Rev. Ted Daniel who years ago told me: "Brian, ministry is relational." And so it is. May this important *Issues* edition help to strengthen our resolve to build relationships with all who do not yet know Jesus Christ—especially our Muslim neighbors with whom we share similar faith roots, but who do not accept that the Vine produced by those roots is Jesus, Lord and Savior of all.

Brian L. Friedrich, President

editorials

Living in an Islamic Galaxy

LIKE A STAR IN A GALAXY lost from view, so Christians in Indonesia are dimmed by the magnitude of Islam.

Indonesia is a country of 220 million people, the fifth largest population in the world. An estimated 90 percent profess Islam as their religion. That means 198 million follow Islam, making it the world's largest Islamic population. The world fears terrorism and terrorist acts taking place in predominantly Islamic countries. Yet, like a galaxy, one or more individual stars seem to stand out brightly.

While numerically Islam is great in Indonesia, there are many instances of Christian acts of love. Where better to minister than where the needs are the greatest? In Indonesia, that means addressing health and education needs, the means whereby we can enter the country to work. The Lutheran Church produces Christian educators through the Concordia University System. Therefore, what better way to reach out to those who have yet to hear the Gospel than through education, meeting both the educational and spiritual needs? Who can better provide the workers than The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod?

Lutheran educators were brought by the LCMS Board of World Missions to Indonesia through an agreement with Sekolah Pelita Harapan, the school of Light and Hope. The Vision is to educate the future leaders who can positively shape Indonesia's future. The Mission is to educate children with a biblical Christian foundation. Pelita Harapan is clearly seen as a prime educational tool for evangelism. Pelita Harapan is one star in the galaxy called Indonesia.

Rumah Kasih Bapa (Home of God the Father's Love) is an orphanage caring for children who came from the Christian-Muslim conflict in Ambon. Education and accommodation are provided for children who lost their parents or whose parents sent them to Jakarta for safety. Several Lutheran teachers assist, tutoring children after completing their regular classroom duties, while others provide financial assistance. Additionally, some work with music, helping the children to witness their faith during church services in local congregations. It is hoped these children take up leadership positions in Ambon upon graduation from university studies and continue to witness to God's mercy in their own province. A second bright spot in the galaxy.

Transmigration is used by the Indonesian government to move people from Java, the most populated island, to other islands in the archipelago. This has caused religious strife because it is mostly Muslims who move to less densely populated Christian areas. Papua is such an area. Once known as Irian Jaya, this province was composed mostly of headhunters four decades ago. Then missionaries came, and the population became predominantly Christian.

However, through transmigration, half of the two million people are not indigenous and are Muslim. Government officials in Papua, who are Christian, have asked for help to establish a Christian education system. The LCMS has recently sent an educational missionary to Papua to establish a teacher training center. There is also an opportunity to establish a school for Papuan children. Education will prepare future leaders. It is through Christian leaders that Papua will be transformed. A third star shining brightly.

Lampung is a village in southern Sumatra. Recently, the Pelita Harapan Foundation built a school to provide secondary education for grades 7–12. The area has pockets of Christians, but the school was built to reach the lost as well as the saved. Most parents in the area are illiterate. This school gives hope for the children's future. Students from Concordia Lutheran High School in Fort Wayne, Indiana, were instrumental in making this dream come true by providing funding for the project. The school is now fully occupied, and plans are underway to double the size of the facility. Star number five, and the light is brighter.

A recent trip to Kalimantan (Borneo) revealed yet another ministry in progress where a congregation on Java decided to build a school in Kalimantan. The area consists of farmers who use a slash and burn technique to clear land for growing rice. The land is so poor that after a few years more land must be cleared because the soil no longer will support continued plantings. Most people are illiterate. This ministry provides pre-schools to teach children during the day and classes for their parents at night. A K-12 school has been built to prepare some students for the university, while others will learn bio-agriculture to improve their farming techniques. The Mission is to make them able to provide not only for themselves, but also to sell their surplus in the market. Star six in a remote area.

How should the church direct its ministry thrust where church planting is not allowed? By using one of the means the LCMS does well. Christian education can be the evangelistic tool through which the Gospel can be spread in Islamic strongholds. When traditional means are no longer possible, the church needs to look at other available means. Let us make a difference. Accept God's challenge, brighten the sky, and spread the Good News through Christian education.

Darrell Van Luchene

Educator-Missionary The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod Tangerang, Indonesia

Don't Avoid Muslims

MUSLIMS ARE MORE INTERESTED in learning about Christianity than one would think. The Qur'an actually presumes the reader has an understanding of many of the Christian prophets (e.g., Adam, Moses, Abraham, and, of course, Jesus) but provides little information, if any,

about them and their lives. A pious Muslim only knows their names in passing, yet desires to know more. Muhammad himself gave his approval to the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, especially the Torah (the five books of Moses) and In'jil (the New Testament). However, the Islamic leaders discourage their people from reading the Holy Bible. This is not surprising considering that the message of Christianity, the Monergism of Grace, contradicts the message of Islam, a Monergism of works. One wonders whether or not Muhammad had thoroughly read the sacred texts himself, since praising the Holy Bible is a critical mistake in the creation of a new religion.

Yet, if Muhammad had given his stamp of approval upon the New Testament (and why would he ever endorse a Holy Book known to be erroneous or manipulated in the slightest degree, which is Islam's major argument against the Christian Scriptures), one would think Muslims would flock to Bible studies, despite the warnings of their Imams. If it wasn't for the power of social stigma, fear, and shunning within their cultures, they probably would. Islam is national identity. To convert and proselytize is treasonable. Accordingly, there is a private reading of the New Testament among many Asian people groups. At Ascension Lutheran Church in Montreal at our community events and ESL classes we make readily available Christian literature which is discreetly snatched by our Muslim neighbours.

We have found the most willing Islamic group to openly study the Scriptures to be the Ahmadiyya, of which there are thousands residing in Western countries due to the persecution they suffer in their homelands. The Ahmadiyya have adopted a "liberal" reading of the Qur'an, encouraging a higher critical approach to the sacred texts. They approach other religions in a Universalist spirit, highlighting their commonalities (i.e., the 2nd table of the Law) as opposed to the differences. Thus, they emphasize worldly peace and find a partner in many "Christian" churches today which emphasize social justice and brotherly love instead of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and His unconditional love for us at the cross (I John 4:10). They also hold to continued revelations of God given through prophecies since Muhammad, possibly making them more open to the Christian "revelation."

However, in discussion with the Ahmadiyya, and in attempt in sharing the Gospel with them, one is confronted with a radically different world view. The notion of sin as a Christian understands it, an utter corruption of our human nature, is puzzling to them. One Ahmadiyya missionary with whom I was in discussion was unable to grasp the concept of justification by grace, that Jesus actually takes away the guilt of our sin.

What became quickly evident to me was a "low" view of sin. And a low view of sin means a low view of grace. For Muslims God is essentially conceptualized with a scale measuring one's good deeds and bad deeds. A pious Muslim, fulfilling to the best of his abilities the five pillars, will in all likelihood "make it" to heaven. The ancient Roman Catholic mantra agrees:

ALL 2004

"If you do your very best, almighty God will do the rest." However, one can never be too sure about salvation, since, after all, it depends on the will of a Calvinistic Allah. Accordingly a humble Muslim would confess that it is not only by works that we are saved, but also by grace, the gracious will of Allah. Thus the Qur'an calls Allah "the Gracious One."

In avoiding the Jewish error of justification through complete reliance upon following the Law, one of the more recent Ahmadiyya prophets, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian acknowledges that grace is something given without reward for any action (Ahmad 62).* However, because that sounds too frighteningly Christian if one were to follow the logical conclusion of such a claim (i.e., of God being truly gracious in the matter of salvation), they contradict it by labeling Islam "the people of the middle" (Ahmad 68 and Sura 2:144), a compromised position which boasts to be not too heavy on the Law, as are the Jews, and not too heavy on Grace as are the Christians. Yet if God's grace is nothing other than His unconditional favour towards man, it requires a unilateral effort on God's side to save man. To allow for any Pelagian effort on man's part undermines the fact that God is indeed, in the truest sense of the notion, the "Gracious One." This is not a question of semantics. If we are saved "by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace" (Romans II: 6). There is no middle ground in grace. It is, by definition, unconditional. Either God is gracious or He is not. If He is, then that means that we are not saved by any works of ourselves, and need to trust upon His infinite mercy. Grace is grace when we admit that sin is utter corruption before God in body, mind, and soul.

My missionary friend not only had a problem grasping sin and grace, but also the fact that the sin we have gathered needed to go somewhere. He could not accept the reality of sin and its weight as something actual, spiritual, and physical. Some non-sacramental Protestants have similar difficulties as Jesus is understood as simply a visual expression of love, as opposed to the atoning sacrifice for sin.

Directing the eyes of the Ahmadiyya to prophecies of the Messiah's nature and death in Isaiah and the numerous biblical typologies, motifs and foreshadowings of the Anointed One from Nazareth, is perhaps not as helpful as an in-depth investigation of the Old Testament worship system of sacrificial atonement. The pinnacle event of the "Scape Goat" on the highly important Day of Atonement/Good Friday clearly demonstrates to inquiring Muslims that our sin must "go somewhere," and that God provides the place, in this four-legged pre-figuring of Jesus Christ, which is provided by the "Gracious One" with no work required of the people. God on earth working through physical means accomplishing divine things is found not only in the Holy In'jil, but has already been clearly displayed in the Torah.

Christians should not avoid controversial subjects with Muslims, such as the deity of Christ, or the Trinitarian nature of God, or the Incarnation. Because of the Old Adam,

we Christians often flee from these topics, in angst of offending or frightening the Muslim neighbour (some popular literature encouraging evangelical Christian dialogue with Muslims instills this fear by devising sophisticated strategies advising one to emphasize the commonalities of the two religions, that Jesus is the greatest of prophets, shying away from the fact that He is also God made flesh). But rather we must patiently and simply show these lost sheep from the Scriptures, from the Torah, the whole Truth, in good Lutheran fashion. A religious conversion has nothing to do with how well we can convince them, argue with them, or flatter them. Yet it has everything to do with the Almighty God graciously working through the Word when it is taught in truth and purity. May each of us be courageous enough to boldly proclaim His message of salvation to the eager ears of a Muslim.

*Ahmad, Mirza Ghulam of Qadian. The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam (translated by Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan). London: Islam International Publications Ltd., 1996.

> The Rev. Harold Ristau Ascension Lutheran Church Montreal, Quebec, Canada

My Perspective

As a second language speaker I am astounded by the meticulousness of the English language when it comes to meaning. For example, consider how many words one can choose from to express a level of knowledge on a particular subject. I am aware of it. I am familiar with it. I understand it. I comprehend it. I grasp it. Today, the subject is Islam. With sound information our present lack of understanding can result in an educated perspective. A more comprehensive grasp of Islam would enable us to confront our stereotypes and consider Muslim-Christian relationships.

A word on stereotypes. I cannot count how many times people approach me as though I were the mouthpiece of the Slovak nation. What does this mean? People often conclude that my opinions and beliefs are the same as the opinions and beliefs of my countrymen and vice-versa. It is my experience that treating one individual as a spokesperson for another culture is a mistake. As the brain tries to file incoming information from all around us, it is compelled to create general patterns or standardized mental pictures—stereotypes.

For instance, what comes to mind when the word Islam is mentioned? Jihad. Arab terrorism. Islamic fundamentalism. Consider another example. Many mosques are attended by more than one ethnic group including South Asians and African-Americans, which contrasts our common perception of an Arab-speaking mosque. As much as we see Muslims as immigrants, many of them were born in America pledging their allegiance to this country. Do we think of them as patriotic?

Because of our stereotypes we have put Muslims in one bag and labeled it "Islam." The label itself generates fear. As a result, we have turned on our defense system, which is made evident in our attitudes, judgments, and prejudices. If the stereotypes are floating in the air like bacteria, many of us will get infected unless we take effective preventive measures.

There are Muslims who battle stereotypes every day. Muslims throughout the world have condemned the violence of radicals, reiterating that the acts of a few do not represent the religion as a whole. I remember reading that Muslims cried having been saddened and hurt by the tragic loss of lives in recent events such as 9/II. As a response, some donated blood within their communities to help save lives. This does not mean that the Islamic faith is now to be accepted by Christians, but it gives us an example of the common ground that exists between Muslims and Christians—the common ground called humanity.

A word on Muslim-Christian relationships. At a recent parent-teacher conference I could not help but notice that a Muslim mother was wearing traditional dress that covered her whole body, but the nine-year-old daughter was wearing blue jeans, a nice shirt according to Western fashion—but also her headscarf. There I was, witnessing a tension between cultures, and a thought crossed my mind. Perhaps we underestimate the fact that one's religion can undergo changes just like one's clothing, language, or traditions.

We feel the tension when we are trying to defend what we hold true. As we interact with people of different religions, our beliefs are being questioned. Knowing what we believe is fundamental. Knowing what others believe can become beneficial because God sends us on a mission even though we might ask, "Me, an evangelist?" This mission stems out of his love. It is noteworthy that Herman Melville, who is considered one of the greatest American writers, stated, "We see how elastic our stiff prejudices grow when love once comes to bend them."

Last week when I picked up my husband from work, one of his co-workers was outside kneeling on the ground, praying. I was strangely stirred. Soon I realized that Muslims are a part of our small community. Would I be able to carry on a conversation with this man who was dutifully praying to a god other than the God of Christianity? Knowing what he believes would be valuable especially since this man does not know Jesus Christ who is the way, the truth, and the life.

Last words. Many Muslims are making attempts to explain the teachings of Islam to prevent the public from misunderstanding them. They simply tell about their religion. Not to convert others but to inform them. Information is good. In fact, information invites us to progress from a state of awareness to a state of understanding, which opens doors to opportunities. As a second language speaker living in a foreign country, I am not only learning about the English language, but I am also engaging in conversations with people. For these conversations to take place I have to confront my stereotypes by educating the mind.

Radoslava Fiala

Secondary Education Student Concordia University, Nebraska



JAMES P. DRETKE

Muhammad—Saint, Seer, or False Prophet?

TO SOME, Muhammad is the greatest prophet of all time, the final prophet.

To some, he is the greatest man who ever lived, "the Perfect Man."

To others, he was a womanizer and a terrorist, a false prophet and a fraud.

Muhammad, a Brief History

BORN ABOUT 570 A.D., Muhammad grew up as an orphan. His was a primitive Arab society that had little respect for women. In fact, baby girls were often killed because of the shame brought upon the family. Like ancient Egyptians, Romans, and Greeks, the Arabs in his part of the world worshiped many gods.

Mecca, Muhammad's hometown, was an important link in the trade between Yemen and Syria. Goods from Africa, India, and the Far East were collected and carried by camel the 40–50 day, roughly 1,000 mile journey north to Damascus. These large camel caravans carried valuable commodities like myrrh and pearls, frankincense and cinnamon, pepper,

DR. JAMES P. DRETKE SERVED AS A MISSIONARY AMONG MUSLIMS IN WEST AFRICA FOR 20 YEARS AND THEN BECAME THE DIRECTOR OF THE ISLAM IN AFRICA PROJECT IN NAIROBI, KENYA. HE NOW SERVES AS THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE ZWEMER INSTITUTE LOCATED ON THE CAMPUS OF CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, FORT WAYNE. INDIANA.

nutmeg, cloves, coffee, and perfumes from the fields, suppliers, and harbors of ancient Saba to the markets of Damascus along well-established trade routes. Along the way were Mecca and Yathrib, 200 miles to the north, later to be renamed Medina, meaning "City," short for Medinat-an-Nabi, "City of the Prophet."

We do not know how often Muhammad made the long three-six month caravan journey, but we do know that he became the trusted lieutenant of a lady caravan operator, Khadija, who later married him. At that time, he was, according to contemporaries, about 25 years old, and she was age 40. Muhammad did not take another wife during her lifetime.

The Mediterranean World in Muhammad's Time (570–632 A.D.)

By the time Muhammad arrived on the world scene, great changes had taken place in the complex political and religious world surrounding the whole Mediterranean. The once-powerful armies of Egypt and Rome were absorbed into the mighty army of Constantinople, sometimes called "the Eastern Roman Empire," which did regular battle with the armies of Persia. By the end of Muhammad's life, these two superpowers were greatly weakened, exhausted by their long ongoing warfare. The military vacuum thereby created opened the way for Muslim armies to stream out of Mecca and Medina to conquer first Jerusalem, then Damascus, Egypt, and eventually all of North Africa. Many Muslim-conquered cities were places in which the Apostle Paul had lived and worked in Asia Minor.

The political scene was only part of a very complicated picture of the Mediterranean world and beyond. By the time of Muhammad, the religious geography of the world had changed dramatically from the time of Christ. The Christian Church had started out as a persecuted minority, persecuted by both the Jewish culture out of which it came and the Roman-Greek culture into which it was gradually making inroads. By 600 A.D. it was an empire-sponsored religion and consequently, a bearer of considerable political clout in its own right. The Roman Empire wielded its political and religious power with both good and bad results.

The whole process of intimate church-state relations began under Constantine. It began by what seemed an innocent gesture, calling leaders of the church together for the express purpose of building unity. The first of many such church councils was at Nicaea, 325 A.D., and by the time Muhammad made his first caravan trip to Damascus, there had been five such councils, each defining in varying ways the person of Christ and the Holy Trinity.

Unhappily, because the Church was connected to the State, anyone who disagreed with council decisions had to bear the wrath of the State. This wrath ranged from torture to imprisonment to banishment to death. Because of uncertainty over the punishment that could be levied, Christians who felt strongly on one issue or another simply packed up and moved outside the reach of the Emperor. Among the available safe havens were the caravan routes. It seems that many "heretics" chose this option because they could also make a living along these routes by serving the needs of visiting caravans.

It is not surprising, then, that the kind of stories Christians and Jews would tell around the caravan campfires at night would subsequently appear in Muhammad's preaching.

Muhammad, the Preacher

IT WAS ABOUT 610 A.D. when Muhammad began preaching. Early Muslim biographers and the *Hadith*, a large body of literature that records many of the things that Muhammad supposedly said and did, tell us that he was a very spiritually sensitive man. He would often spend quiet meditation time in a cave. One day he stood up to preach words similar to what we know as the First Commandment, "Thou shall have no other gods before Me." There was an urgent note in his message because, as he proclaimed, God would soon call men to judgment.

While some hearkened to Muhammad's preaching, others took serious objection as he was challenging much of what was important in Meccan society—from respecting and worshiping a host of deities to the economic fabric of the community. Once each year, Arabs from a wide area laid down their weapons and traveled to Mecca for pilgrimage rites

at the Ka'ba. This worship center, with a black stone as a cornerstone, was said to have housed 360 idols, one for each day of the year. Muhammad's people, the Quraysh, were the caretakers of this building and the providers of lodging and food for the pilgrims, an economic windfall for residents of Mecca.

As opposition arose to Muhammad's preaching, he came to see himself more and more as a prophet in a long line of prophets that began with Adam, continued through Noah, Moses, David, and Jesus, along with many others. He discovered that his opposition was no different than that which earlier prophets had experienced. They, like Muhammad, rejected by their people, had to preach stronger and stronger warnings of judgment, of which led to severe consequences for all who rejected the message. Thus, more and more of the stories Muhammad heard along the trade routes came to serve a practical purpose in his preaching.

Eventually these sermons were collected into one book, the *Qur'an*. This, the holy book of Muslims, is held in deepest reverence and is memorized and recited in its original classical Arabic all across the many tribes and languages that embrace Islam today.

Muhammad, Head of State

THE II4 CHAPTERS of the Qur'an, much shorter in length than the New Testament, are listed as being preached in Mecca or Medina. These two cities represent significant divides in Muhammad's life. The Meccan sermons are calls to reject all forms of polytheism and worship God alone. To worship anyone or anything apart from God is *shirk*, to many Muslims the greatest possible sin.

When the opposition to Muhammad and his small group of followers increased, Muhammad concluded it was time to move away from Mecca. Thus, he and his almost 200 followers migrated to Medina. This move in 622 A.D. is called the *Hijra*, or "flight." It wasn't so much a fleeing for one's life situation, as it was a carefully organized secret move. Another intriguing fact is that Muhammad had been invited to help resolve some serious tribal disputes in Medina, a request that attests to the kind of reputation he had achieved by

this time. The move from Mecca to Medina marks the real beginning of Islam as a religious system. Muslims look upon the *Hijra* as "the Pentecost" of Islam.

During the next eight years, by a combination of political shrewdness, raiding of caravans, and military strikes, Muhammad was able to build a small, but powerful city-state that was able to attack and conquer Mecca. This remarkable feat, accomplished in 630 A.D., dramatically changed everything. When this happened, Muhammad destroyed all the idols in the Ka'ba. He then totally reinterpreted the pilgrimage from being an act of homage to those idols into being a remembrance of the great test Abraham was asked by God to face, namely, the sacrifice of his own son.

After returning to Medina, Muhammad seriously went about the task of nation building. This is why the Medina chapters of the Qur'an deal much with the subject of law as it applies to all kinds of relationships from inheritance to marriage and divorce, from the division of spoil in warfare to how to worship and serve God. Much of Islamic law, patterned after the law given by Moses, was later incorporated into a much larger concept, now the central focus for Sunni Muslims, the Sharia. The Sharia might be summarized as God's constitution for man, although unlike the Torah, it is not codified.

Muhammad, Memory and Legacy

As the pages of history have unfolded, the Muslim memory of who Muhammad was and what he was able to accomplish has been greatly expanded and embellished. To most Muslims he is the greatest man that ever lived, the perfect abd, "slave" of God. To Sufis, Muslim mystics, he is "the Perfect Man," a true saint, holy above all others for he personifies what it is to be a Muslim, a true "submitter" to God.

Having honed his army into a fearful fighting force that would tolerate no disloyalty, Muslim armies were set to go out and conquer the world, a task that began not long after Muhammad's unexpected death in 632 A.D.

In his rise to power, he could be both ruthless and extremely kind. He seems never to have forgotten his beginnings, for he spoke much about caring for orphans and giving to the poor. At the same time, this man who had faced so much opposition in his rise to the top came to a point where he would no longer tolerate any opposition. In fact, the last sermons of the Qur'an (Chapters 48, 8, 9, and 5) speak of "God and His apostle," almost as if they were one. "God and His apostle" announced time and again that no opposition would be tolerated. This is such a different Muhammad than the pleading-for-a-hearing Muhammad of the early chapters of the Qur'an.

Muhammad from a Christian Perspective

How to look at and perceive Muhammad is a big problem for us as Christians! On the one hand, the Bible gives us serious warning to be on the lookout for false prophets. On the other, the Great Commandment and the Great Commission challenge us to love all men for the sake of Christ, making disciples of them, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them everything Jesus taught us.

A more careful study of Muhammad than we are able to present in this short essay reveals a man who became obsessed with *jihad*, "holy war" against all opposition. This way of life and Muhammad's usage of force stand in such sharp contrast to Jesus who, when surrounded by enemies, told Peter to put his sword back in place. Whatever conquering Jesus would do, He was going to accomplish by love.

On different occasions, however, even with his intolerance to any opposition whatsoever, Muhammad preached a tolerant view towards Christians and Jews, whom he seemed to admire as "People of the Book." He seems to have held them in great honor for the sake of God who first honored them by giving them revealed books, the Law to Moses, the Psalms to David, and the Gospel to Jesus. In Muhammad's eyes, the high privilege accorded Jews and Christians by having "Messengers" sent to them was now through him being given to the Arabs and eventually, to all mankind.

Whatever conclusions we reach about Muhammad and whatever attitudes we develop about him, the simple reality is that we do not have to relate to him. But, we do need to relate to his followers, the Muslims who are now our neigh-

bors, co-workers, and countrymen and the other Muslims, more than a billion, scattered out across the world.

Any one of us can probably build a strong argument against Muhammad's prophethood by emphasizing his intolerance, exploiting his polygamous relationships, and condemning his marauding raids on innocent and helpless caravans. We need to research these matters for our own individual reassurance that Christ is truly "the Way, the Truth, and the Life." When it comes to relating to our Muslim neighbors, however, that kind of polemic has no place in our presentation to them of Jesus and His life-changing love. As I wrote on another occasion, "This is what is at stake in our witness—the acceptance or rejection of our risen Lord Christ. He has 'the words of eternal life.' The readiness with which a Muslim listens to our message may quite conceivably be determined in part by reactions to what attitudes we reflect toward Muhammad and the Qur'an" (Dretke 1979:182).

When introducing the subject of Muhammad to Muslim acquaintances, you will generally find a very deep admiration for his life and his accomplishments. You, as a witness for Christ, will not get very far in carrying on the conversation and attempting to build a trust relationship with your Muslim friends if you go about your task by trying to tear down their admiration for Muhammad. Let their admiration stand, and in fact, see if you can't come to appreciate some of his gigantic achievements yourself. After all, he stepped into a world that was worshiping many gods, and he challenged that world to worship God and Him only. You will not be very successful in your Christian witness if you begin by attacking Muhammad. By giving a positive testimony to who Jesus is and what He did for humankind, you give your Muslim neighbor the freedom to draw his own conclusions and make his own evaluations about Muhammad as contrasted to Christ.

In fact, it is God's love alone that breaks down barriers! "God has poured out His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us ... while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:5,8). "We love because He first loved us," and "whoever loves

God must also love his brother" (I John 4: 19,2I). God's forgiving love is overpowering! In forgiving sin, it breaks down hatred, animosity, fear, and hostility and builds in their places bridges of common concern, trust, joy, hope, kindness, and service.

For Further Study

Note: Each of the authors below has written useful, thought-provoking chapters on the life and work of Muhammad. As you will note, Muslim writers do not camouflage their esteem and strong respect for Muhammad, who is, in their estimation, the last and final prophet.

Bill Musk's contribution deals with folk Islam, Islam as practiced at a popular level. He shows how Muhammad and his name are frequently invoked for "protection."

The "World of Islam" CD is a very valuable volume of book resources dealing with Islam, ranging from a copy of A. Yusuf Ali's Quran translation to Samuel Zwemer's *The Moslem Christ*.

The listed Web sites, some Muslim, some Christian, are only a sampling of the vast number of useful resources on the Web. If investigating a Muslim Web site, it will not take you long to recognize the deep awe and admiration Muhammad's followers hold for him.

End Notes

Dretke, James P., 1979. A Christian Approach to Muslims. Pasadena, California: William Carey Library. Farah, Caesar E., 2000. Islam (6th Edition). Hauppauge, New York: Barron's.

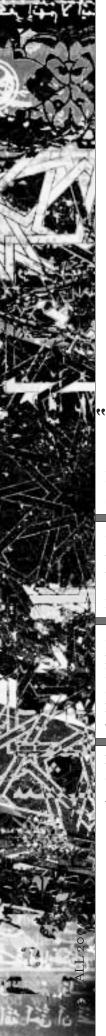
Musk, Bill A., 1989. The Unseen Face of Islam. United Kingdom: Monarch Publications.

Rahman, Fazlur, 1976. *Islam* (2nd Edition). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Watt, W. Montgomery, 1957. Muhammad, Prophet and Statesman. New York: Oxford University Press. World of Islam, Resources for Understanding, 2000. A CD published by Global Mapping. Web site: gmi.org

Web sites:

- al-islam.com
- answeringislam.com
- answeringislam.org
- answering-christianity.com
- answering-islam.com.
- bibleandquran.com
- islamicity.com
- islamworld.net



LUTHER T. ENGELBRECHT

"Sources" of Islam

Introduction

SEVERAL INTRODUCTORY NOTES:

In this article I shall be building on the articles in the Winter 2000 edition of Issues in Christian Education, particularly the summary by Dr. Hahn and the discussion by Pastor Duncan of the "incarnational approach" in communicating with Muslims through a "contextualized ministry."

I assume that most readers are highly educated and committed followers of Jesus and professionals of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod who view Muslims not as curiosities but as God-loved people, and who are looking for resources to make personal contacts with Muslims more meaningful and effective.

Although Islam is a highly structured faith/ life system, with specific required beliefs and duties, there is much variety in individual

In 50 years of ministry, the Rev. Luther T. Engelbrecht has served as a missionary among Muslims in India and as a pastor in the Pacific Northwest. He also has been involved in human care, educational and administrative ministries at various levels and now makes his home in Seattle. (ltengelbrecht@webtv.net)

Muslims' understanding of what Islam means to them. While equipping themselves with some general knowledge of Islam, Christians should avoid most assumptions about the Muslims with whom they discuss matters of faith and life. Most Muslims have assumptions about Christians, too, including often little more than misunderstandings about the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Cross. Effective communication on both sides requires that we get beyond any assumptions and approach each other with humility and respect. We may find ourselves more willing to do that than they (we do have different models to follow; may God the Holy Spirit empower us to "bite our tongues" on occasion, as our Lord did!). In my opinion, there are few places in the world better suited for peaceful and effective communication between Muslims and Christians than the United States and Canada. And there is no better time than now to reach out with friendship and understanding to our fellow citizens who follow Muhammad.

■ When discussing matters of faith and life with Muslims, we must be aware that most of them have not had the equivalent of "Confirmation" instruction or the preparation for the Bar/Bath Mitzvah. They may indeed know all 99 of God's "Beautiful Names" in Arabic (or whatever their mother tongue), and they surely know the details of their required duties: When, in what direction, and how to prepare for and carry out the five daily prayers; when, where, and how the hajj/pilgrimage is to be carried out; the timing of Ramadan and its no-no's regarding food, drink, sexual intercourse, and the like. However, they are usually ill prepared to discuss "doctrinal" matters or to make "personal testimonies" of their faith in terms familiar to us.

It is good to have at least one general resource on Islam. My own favorite is *Islam* by Fazlur Rahman, a faithful and learned Pakistani Muslim with whom I had the privilege of sharing a one-on-one reading course at the University of Chicago while on furlough. I am much indebted to his insights. While I believe that it is best for us to learn about Islam from professing Muslims, I should note that the works written or edited by John L. Esposito are much respected by Muslims.

- Keeping the assumed readership in mind, I shall be noting some elements of our faith and experience, not as comparisons, which are indeed too often "odious," but as parallels on two different "tracks"/"rails," with the caveat that "derailing"/de "textualizing" them often results in serious misunderstanding and misrepresentation. I hazard these parallels only because I believe that, rightly used and understood, they can provide useful insights in the process of communication.
- A combination of the length of this article and the limits of my knowledge and experience will inevitably result in some serious oversimplifications. Let the informed reader beware and be kind.
- I am writing in late Spring 2004. The period between now and publication and the months thereafter will probably be one of the most crucial in the history of relations between Muslims and Christians and in the lives of the citizens of Iraq and Afghanistan. The mood of these days is very much upon me as I write. I am trusting that the journal of a distinguished academic institution can publish opinions that are the writer's and not necessarily the publisher's, and about which there may well be considerable valid difference of opinion and expression also among the respected readers. This author confesses that there is only one God, one Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, one Gospel, one way of being made right with God now and eternally which we have been called and sent to share with Muslims.

The Way of Faith and Life

THE "SOURCES," "roots," "foundations" (this last in harmony with the term "pillars," referring to Islam's required duties/actions) of Islam provide the authoritative base for Muslims' beliefs and practices as enshrined in the sharī 'ah. This is often described as the Islamic law code, which in one sense it is; but it is quite different from any other code so described. The Arabic word means "the way to the water." Fazlur Rahman describes it as the ultimate expression of the practice or "Function" of Islam, embracing all its aspects. For Muslims, it fits somewhat into the context of Deuteronomy: God's loving provision for the good life for both believing individuals and the believing community, "wellness" for both.

The rigid monism of orthodox Islam's view of God tends to eliminate or mitigate all forms of dualism: good and evil, the divine and the demonic, sacred and secular, Right Hand and Left Hand, Law and Gospel, threat and promise, religion and politics, essence and accidents, spiritual and material, ideal and real, etc., finally leaving only the Creator and the created along with the designated right way and wrong way of faith and life for human beings:

Surah I:6–7: Guide us to the Straight Way. The Way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace, not (the way) of those who have earned Your Anger (such as the Jews), nor of those who went astray (such as the Christians). [from an "amplified" version of the Qur'an published in Riyadh; compare Psalm I:6].

The word "way" is used with a variety of meanings in the Old Testament, including the faith/ life style of the believer (Deuteronomy provides proof for this; there is also the Rabbinic "The Proper Way"/halakhah). The New Testament continues the Hebrew use with two additional special uses: Jesus as "The Way"/he hodos, and as a descriptive of the "(new) way" of the baptized who follow that Way (Acts). So also in Islam there is the generic way of life (sirāt: Surah I) which can be variously described: the complete way which pleases God and benefits those who "walk" in/on it (shari ah, with God as its Subject), and the exemplified way (sunnah, with Muhammad as its subject: "The Way made Flesh"). Jesus the Messiah is "The Word made Flesh" (as for Muslims the Qur'an is "The Word made Book"). Our Lord also was the great Exemplar to be "imitated" (as was St. Paul also in a secondary sense), but above all He is for us and for all the Only Way to the Father and His gift of wholeness and life, both now and forever. (He is certainly a better way than "the third use of the Law"! We do indeed follow a Person, not a system. We call ourselves a syn-hodos/synod; is Jesus the Way we truly share today rather than being in lock-step on the "way" of synodical traditions and convention resolutions?). The three diverse contexts of the so-called "Abrahamic religions" provide much instruction related to similarities and differences, often with the similarities being more apparent than real:

halakhah Torah: Moses

hē hodos Gospels: Jesus Sharīʻah/sunnah Qur'an and Traditions: Muhammad

Islam as a Religion of Law/Works

FROM THE BEGINNING the emphasis in Islam (beyond the assertion of God: al-Ahad, essentially one, and al-Wahid, the Only One worthy of absolute trust, obedience, and worship; Muhammad as the ultimate and definitive Prophet of God; and the certainty of the Last Day, an event of awesome threats and promises) has been on Din/practice rather than $Im\bar{a}n/doctrines$. This is in contrast with the classic traditional Missouri Synod emphasis on ("pure") doctrine rather than discipleship, understanding Jesus rather than following Him (except, of course, concern about the Sin that led to every other sin: the Dance!). "In our circles" there was little respect for Pietists, and who cared that the Baptists and Methodists were offended by kegs of beer at church picnics and clouds of cigar smoke (pipes were reserved for Calvinists) at Church Council meetings, pastoral conferences, and the like. (I know it's a stereotype, but . . .)

As Sanctification has been a major concern from Blessed Martin onwards, so proper beliefs have always been a matter of major concern among Muslims. The Islamic emphasis on religious practice has caused some uninformed persons to describe it as "a religion of law/ works" (typically lumped with all other "non-Christian" religions). To a degree that is true, but it is a vast oversimplification and misrepresentation when it is understood in the context of Christianity and "works" as the means of "salvation." In contrast to the mostly negative "Ten Commandments," the required religious duties in Islam are positive and specific and do-able. I am not aware of the concept of the Law in Islam as something unfulfillable by humans in their present state. Islamic duties are challenging (sharing I/40th of your entire worth each year and fasting from dawn to sunset for a month each year are not easy), but the Qur'an (S.87:8) gives God's assurance to Muhammad and his followers: "We will make it easy for thee (to follow) the simple (Path) [another version: the easy way]." A footnote explains:

"God's grace will make (the Muslim's) path easy." Some Muslims ask whether the "God of Justice" could require something that can't be fulfilled. The sharīʿah is "straight," a challenge requiring assisting grace but not beyond being successfully "walked."

Muhammad described himself as "a Warner," with stern warnings for those who rejected God and himself, but wonderful promises for all who "believe and do what is right" (cf. Peter in Acts 10:35 in a very different context). A related Quranic footnote reads: ". . . the warning itself is full of Mercy; for it gives the highest hope to the repentant sinner who turns and comes to God." Is Islam a religion of "works"? All people will be judged on the Last Day, with scales carrying their lifetimes' totals of good and bad deeds ("I was hungry . . ."). For Muslims (and, as God wills, possibly even for others, including especially Christians) a "bad deed" (except for apostasy and "associating" unworthy beings/ objects with God) is always accounted as "one," while a "good deed" carries a value of from ten to 700 (as recorded in one of the "Authentic Traditions" of al-Bukhari).

God can indeed "tip the scales." One's eternal welfare, for Muslims, depends finally on the will of God (and I can't recall meeting a Muslim who was really worried about it, not being driven by the guilt/shame that obsesses so many Jews and Christians, including "gracealone" Lutherans!). God's predominant names for them are ar-Rahman ar-Rahim, the One who is by nature and by practice merciful. Mercy is exercized chiefly in forgiving sins; though, with God's absolute control over creation and history understood by orthodox Muslims, "sin" is not the radical revolt and state of the Holy Bible and is not worthy of God's radical response in the Incarnation and the Cross. God's "grace" is part of the Muslim's daily conversation ("How are you?" "It is the grace of God" is the common greeting form after "as-salāmu 'alaykum"/"wa 'alaykum as-salām," a greeting much used as well by Christians in India, though not notably in America).

For us separation of grace and mercy as well as justice from God's love expressed in the Incarnation and the Cross have to be regarded as "cheap." But the profound context of Islam should not be cheapened. In Islam the law plays no adversarial role as in the lex that semper accusat (the law always accuses), a concept for which my Jewish rabbi friends demand much explanation and even then regard as subtly "anti-Judaic"). Our contexts in this matter are worlds apart. In Islam God is indeed ultimate mercy, but only those who affirm that "There is no god but The God, and Muhammad is the Apostle of The God" could really claim to qualify for that mercy. And it's only those who have that faith and specifically intend to express that faith in the appropriate works who can hope to fulfill God's purpose for them in their lives. Is Islam simply "a religion of works"?

To reiterate, as I understand it, it is "faith": the intentional affirmation of the unity and sole worshipability of God as taught in the final and definitive Message (the Qur'an) revealed through and exemplified by the final and definitive Messenger (Muhammad) that is of the greatest significance in the relationship between God and human beings in Islam. The ultimate decision regarding the eternal disposition of humans lies in the Will of God rather than in the Works of said humans. The "context" for both "faith" and "works" is, of course, Islam. Another of al-Bukhari's "Authentic Traditions" reads as follows: "The Prophet said, 'Do good deeds properly, sincerely, and moderately [!], and receive good news, because one's good deeds will not [sic] make him enter Paradise.' They asked, 'Even you, O God's Messenger'? He said, 'Even I, unless and until God protects or covers [!] me with His pardon and His Mercy.'"

A Note on Shi'ism

SINCE SOME 88 PERCENT of the world's Muslims are thought to be Sunnis (with reliable data notably lacking), I am concentrating on their view of the Sources and related matters. The Shi'is share the Sunnis' dependence on the Qur'an and the *Hadīth/*Traditions, with slight but significant differences. One of the truly significant differences between the

two expressions of Islam, however, involves the other two Sunni Sources: Ijmā'/Consensus and Qiyās/Analogy. Basic to this difference is the Shi'i belief that the Prophetic Office did not terminate with Muhammad, as Sunnis believe, but has continued in the "Imams," the first being Muhammad's first cousin and son-in-law, 'Ali, followed by his and Fatimah's sons, Hasan and Husayn, and their designated male descendants until A.D. 874, when, according to most Shi'is, the Twelfth Imam, while still an infant, went into "hiding." Subsequently, the Imamate is exercized indirectly through Ayatollahs, scholars who are qualified as mujtahids and thus may apply ijtihad/exertion (of the intellect in addressing matters of the faith-mental jihad). The "gate/ door" to this sort of creative intellectual exercise was "closed" in Sunnism centuries ago, resulting in taqlīd/"dead orthodoxy" and abhorrence of bid'a/"innovation." (Sound familiar? It's something like the so-called seven last words of the Church: "We've never done it that way before!").

The community organization in Sunnism is basically horizontal, "tribal," "congregational," based on the individual mosque and lacking larger structures (local, regional, national, international). Since it has no sacrificial system to be conducted and controlled by a "priesthood," it is lacking that as well and even boasts about it. Of course, the 'ulema'/"learned" in the Qur'an and the Hadīth (roughly the equivalent of the Gospel "scribes"/teachers of the Law/Bible scholars) play an important role in the interpretation and application of the sharī 'ah (apart from the civil and criminal legal system).

On the other hand, Shi'ism is more vertical, with a distinctly clergy-type element, a hierarchy, beginning with the mullah in the individual mosque and extending upward and outward through the ranks to the ayatollahs and the grand ayatollahs and finally to the Imam. The process by which the upper echelons of this hierarchy are chosen or designated is not clear to me. It is clear that in present-day Shi'i Iran there is a highly structured parallel religious hierarchy which dominates and controls the political structure. Any political constitutional provision remains subject to that "higher power" (even in Sunni Afghanistan the admirable constitutional provisions have been overridden by

Taliban-type remnants in the land). The point is, Sunnism organizationally seems more open to political "democracy" as understood in our society than is Shi'ism.

The implications of this for Iraq are enormous. Unique to Shi'ism, a minority in most of the Muslim world and often persecuted by Sunnis both politically and socially, is the tactic of taqiya/"permissible dissimulation" (a classic case of the end justifying the means), an expression of which could be in operation in response to the occupying authorities in Iraq today. Just what price the Grand Ayatollah al-Sistani will have to pay for his cooperation with those authorities remains to be seen, unless he is possibly "dissimulating" and just playing for time, going along with the authorities so as not to delay the handover of sovereignty to the Iraqis, at which time the Shi'is will take the necessary steps to ensure that their numerical superiority will receive its due. All the maneuvering in connection with the provisional constitutional statement (by al-Sistani as well as Ahmad Chalabi), with elements clearly unacceptable to the Shi'is, causes real concern about just what the final document, forged without fear of the threatened American vetoes, will look like (likely radically different from the preliminary document in application if not in text, though you will have to check that out). Already, e.g., women in the Shi'idominant areas of Iraq as well as in the Sunnidominated Fallujah have fewer freedoms and "rights" in mobility and dress as well as possibly occupations than they did under the "secular Ba'athist" regime which Saddam Hussein

inherited, with its hybrid legal system including elements of French law. The final outcome of our good, even noble, intentions remains to be more clearly seen in 2005 and thereafter. At this point we can resort only to conjecture with concern, since a return to the Islamic Sources with a strict application of the shari 'ah for all or even most of the citizens of Iraq (with the Sunni Kurds least likely to go that route) is not something that most of us see as desirable, certainly not after what the process has cost our dear land so much in lives, treasure, reputation, and future security.

Development and Authentification of the Sources

THERE IS SOMETHING deep in the human psyche that craves assurances, "blessed" assurances, security enhanced by a sense of superiority. Sometimes it is guarantees and warranties and claims about being the best product of its kind. In religion it is very often related to the "sources" of authoritative information about God and us. To meet our needs these sources need to be totally reliable, accurate, and trustworthy. In negative terms that is sometimes expressed as "inerrant" or "infallible," though those terms tell us more about what they are not than what they are. Martin Luther might regard this sort of assurance as more of a sign of a Theologia gloriae/Theology of Glory, where things really are what they seem to be, than a Theologia crucis/Theology of the Cross, where the truth is concealed under its opposite. The following is a rough schema of where different groups look for religious truth:

THE SOURCES

(Totally reliable Divine Guidance for Religious Beliefs and Actions)

ISLAM

SHI'I

SUNNI

QUR'AN

HADĪTH

(Muhammad and his "Companions," including his wives) IJMA'

(consensus of the 'ulema'/learned)

IMĀMS (now "Hidden") Ayatollahs

QIYAS (analogy)

CHRISTIANITY

ROMAN CATHOLIC

OLD TESTAMENT

(Alexandrian - Canon - Palestinian)

NEW TESTAMENT

(Jesus, His Apostles, and their "Companions") The First Five "Ecumenical" Councils

Subsequent Councils

"Concordia"

The Pope (ex cathedra)

Conventions(in America)

LUTHERAN

Canon Law

Casuistry

Note: The "totally reliable" a.k.a. "inerrant" and "infallible" does not apply to all of the above elements.

The above-noted pattern of Sunni Sources was arrived at after a rather involved process involving basically "consecrated" intelligence and the consensus of the community of the "learned." The "daughters," the Qur'an and the Hadīth, then took precedence over their "mothers," limiting their role in the subsequent authority structure of Islam. Sunnis tend to see the situation as follows: The Holy, Noble, Glorious Qur'an validated itself as verbatim the eternal, uncreated Words of God. (The problem of having another entity, of God, but not God, has proved vexatious for the 'ulema', though not the ordinary Muslim. That is their problem; we have several challenges of our own.)

The unchallenged "miracle" of the Qur'an was the validating "sign"/semeion/Wunderzeichen claimed by Muhammad, although his followers claimed that he performed many miracles, some resembling those performed by Jesus and affirmed in the Qur'an. The self-validated first and primary Source validated the secondary Source.

As noted by Dr. Hahn, Muhammad validated the $ljm\bar{a}$ by assuring his faithful and learned followers that they would never "agree on an error." The validated secondary Source in turn validated the tertiary Source, closing the list of the totally valid, inerrant, infallible Islamic Sources.

The role of *Qiyās* is limited to intellectually valid and practical applications of the first three, in descending order.

Textual criticism of the Qur'an is unlikely in the current situation and has limited and probably not significant possibilities in any event, in my opinion (most of the variants were destroyed and much involved different readings resulting from the "defective" Arabic script noted by Dr. Hahn).

However, the matter of the "Validated Traditions" is far more open and has been for many years. This is partly the result of the process by which the *Hadīth* were validated because of the proliferation of reports about what Muhammad said and did, permitted, and disallowed, including many that were obviously tendentious. The actual report, the *matn*/matter was felt to be too sacred to touch. So emphasis was

laid on the isnād/the "chain" of transmitters of the "matter" from Muhammad to the time the validated traditions were verified. This resulted in until-that-time-unprecedented assembling of biographical details involving character, time, and geographical locations to ensure that there could be no "break" in the "chain" of transmitters by virtue of two "links" not being mature and present at some time in same place. A flaw in perceived character would invalidate a "link" as well. This process resulted in validating the traditions that apparently contradicted each other and, in any event, for some, raised the necessity/desirability of scrutinizing the actual "matter." (This involves Islamic "holy ground." Salman Rushdie and his brilliant stylistic tour-de-force, The Satanic Verses, found that treading on any part of that sacred territory can be hazardous to your health/ life. I have been reminded that the formation of the New Testament canon, a process in which the source/authorship [somehow "Apostolic"] was often emphasized over the text, resulted in major challenges to "Fundamentalist" rationalization.)

The Sources in the Future

THE DOMINANT FIGURE in the world of Islam during the last several years has been Osama bin Laden (Saddam Hussein being a very minor figure indeed). Wahhabism traditionally directed its rigorous, zealous reforming, cleansing efforts towards "erring" fellow Muslims, efforts at first limited in scope until enlarged with the help of American-generated petro-dollars. The Taliban regime in Afghanistan, directed toward Afghanis and oppressive but not itself basically "terrorist," was a good example of the expanding Wahhabi infection spreading perhaps most significantly into the Muslim-majority former Soviets, the chief source of the infection probably being the "ultra-conservative"/reactionary madrasahs financed by Saudi wealth in poverty-stricken Pakistan, our faithful ally. Osama's driving force is fear, well-founded fear, of the effect of Western, specifically American, culture especially on Muslim youth, mostly but far-from-exclusively male. This fear has almost nothing to do with Christianity,

FALL 2004

though "the West" is generally regarded as "Christian" (would that it were so!).

The combination of fear and fanaticism is all too prone to cause believers to cross the line into terrorism, in this case causing Muslims to commit acts condemned by their own faith. Wahhabi-type inner-directed, fear-fueled expressions we might remember occurred in "Reformed" Geneva and iconoclastic Puritan England (and fear-and-Law-driven elements in Missouri!). Carlstadt and Zwingli as well as Oliver Cromwell might well have approved of the shelling of the ancient Buddhist "idols" by the Taliban.

The steadily growing post-World War II cadre of western-educated Muslims, especially Arabs, constitutes another kind of infection in Muslim lands, the final effect of which remains to be seen. I was an honorary member of the several-hundred-strong Iranian Students Association at UCLA while on furlough in 1960–61. The Irani men and women were sponsored by the Shah, and the Ayatollah Khomeini put an end to that. I often wonder what has become of my wonderful, fun-and-life-loving Iranian Muslim friends, who associated so well with "Yanks."

An article in the September 15, 2003, issue of Newsweek noted that "after hundreds of years, the doors to change have been opened wide in the Muslim world." It is in the area of the Sources that significant changes can be expected, or at least hoped for, in the years ahead. The basic Islamic beliefs and duties are unlikely to change, but a change in the application of the Sources could lead to significant developments within the Muslim umma/worldwide community concerned with gender, economics, politics, relations with "the People of the Book," careful critical study of the Sources themselves, etc. Once again, there is little likelihood that even critical study of the Qur'an and the Hadith will result in significant changes in them. However, a change in the climate of fear may result in a climate in which "opening the door" to the use of God-given intelligence/ ijtihad will result, as in the early days, in developments in Ijma', making use of the considerable potential and basis in the Qur'an and Hadith for growth and appropriate change to

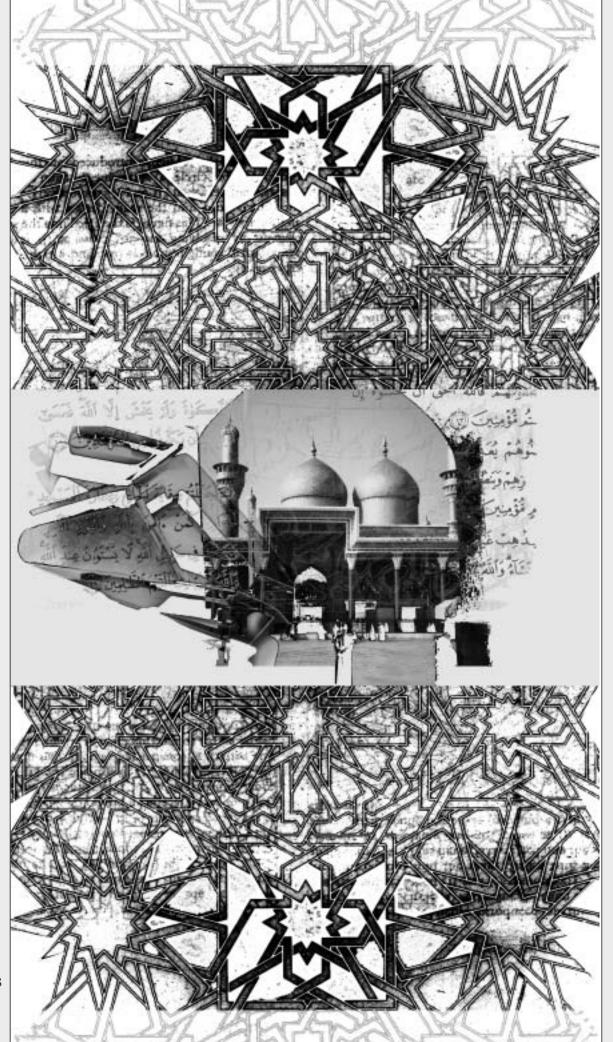
help present-day Muslims in the vast variety of present-day situations in which they find themselves to respond in authentically Islamic and meaningful ways, at peace in a multi-cultural, "multi-religious" world. It is only in such a climate, I believe, that Muslims will be able to hear the Voice of Jesus, sounded forth in modest and meaningful ways, saying: "Follow Me, and I will lead you to the Father, to freedom, and to eternal life!"

Conclusion

MUSLIMS BELIEVE that the Ultimate Source has provided totally reliable Sources for explicit information and instruction in the elements to be believed (fides quae) and the required actions which demonstrate and authenticate those beliefs. For me these constitute something that is quite impressive and worthy of a considerable degree of respect, respect which, I understand, some of my fellow believers regard as a sign of disrespect for our own faith. Years of close association and friendship with faithful, loving Muslims have perhaps tempered my attitude.

What Islam's Sources do not provide, what I feel is "lacking" in them most of all, is provision for a truly personal and intimate relationship (koinonia) with the Triune God as God's gift of grace through faith (fides qua). For Muslims God is the Absolute Other, whom they regard with the absolute dependence, trust, and obedience that we, too, associate with "faith." But they would never dare to address that One as "Father," nor are they able to accept that God could condescend to share humanity with His creatures, a sharing which was caused by agape/love, which demonstrated agape in action, and which on the Cross proved that agape while revealing it to be the defining essence of God. "Wir sind Bettler; das ist wahr!" ("We are beggars, that's true."), beggars who possess and are possessed by the greatest and most precious Treasure of all, a Treasure for Whom we are in debt to those who so far have been deprived of Him, often by our selfishness and ignorance and unconcern. It is time for a change, and time is short. It is indeed getting late, and what Martin Franzmann called "the eschatological itch" needs scratching!

Soli Deo Gloria!



ERNEST HAHN

Jihad in Islam: Is Islam Peaceful or Militant? And an Initial Christian Response

Introduction

How often, especially after September II, 2001, you may have read or heard that:

Islam means peace.

Islam is a religion of tolerance. It rejects violence and promotes religious and racial harmony.

The word "jihad" does not mean holy war. Our enemy is fanaticism, not Islam.

Or how often you may have heard or read that: Islam is intolerant, militant, supports terrorism.

The claims differ greatly. Our intention here is to consider these claims, especially on the basis of Islam's sources, and to provide an initial Christian response to them.

DR. ERNEST HAHN SERVED AS A MISSIONARY IN INDIA FOR 25 YEARS AMONG MUSLIMS AND HINDUS. HE IS THE AUTHOR OF Muslims: How to Respond. LIVING IN MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO, HE AND HIS WIFE GRETA ARE ENGAGED IN PHILOXENIA/HOSPITALITY, A MINISTRY AMONG ASIANS WHICH PROMOTES UNDERSTANDING OF DIFFERENT CULTURES AND RELIGIONS. (e.hahn@sympatico.ca)

Jihad literally means "to strive," "to struggle." Muslims have recognized the following kinds of jihad: I. The greater jihad: the struggle of the self with evil; the struggle to control the body's members. 2. The lesser jihad: physical struggle, often associated with fighting and killing. It occurs in the Qur'an most frequently with the meaning of "warfare," often coupled with "fi sabil Allah" (in the way of Allah). Technically, it is war against non-Muslims only, since Muslims are forbidden to fight Muslims.

This statement seeks to focus on jihad as warfare in Islam and, at least, to touch on its significance for the Muslim community throughout the history of Islam. To accomplish this, we turn to Islam's source materials (which virtually the total Muslim community has recognized as foundational for any serious formulation and understanding of Islam, its beliefs and its practices, including jihad): the Qur'an (God's eternal and inspired Word revealed through Muhammad), the Hadith (Muslim Canonical Tradition, the Way of the Prophet Muhammad, who is the recipient of the Qur'an and its primary interpreter), and the Shari'ah (Islamic Law as shaped especially by the Qur'an and the Hadith). Jihad as warfare is a pivotal concern for the Qur'an, the Hadith, and the Shari'ah.2 All Islamic legal schools deal with it.

But before we turn to Islam's source materials, let us grasp two fundamental assumptions with which traditional Islam has operated throughout its history and which will provide us with an Islamic context for a clearer understanding of jihad's significance:

- Islam is a total way of life. It knows no separation of church and state, of sacred and secular.
- Islam condemns all polytheism and idolatry, affirming that God alone is God. It is the culmination of all God's previous revelations (Judaism and Christianity included), it supersedes them, and virtually renders them obsolete. Islam is now God's sole revelation and religion for all humanity, Muhammad is God's final prophet, and the Qur'an is God's final book. World sovereignty is the sole prerogative of Islam.

Jihad in the Qur'an

FIRST WE TOUCH on the Qur'an's presentation of jihad as warfare, what it is and how it relates to Muhammad, his ministry, and the Muslim community.

Muhammad's Ministry in Mecca.

Generally, Muslims have recognized that Muhammad began his ministry among his own people (the Arabs) in and around Mecca in A.D. 610. For 13 years he faithfully proclaimed that God alone is God. Yet his followers were few and mostly of lower status. With Muhammad they endured opposition, ridicule and even persecution. Still, throughout this period he responded with restraint. In fact, the Qur'an itself documents how he was to respond to rejection and abuse. The following are a few examples:

So proclaim that which thou art commanded, and withdraw from the idolaters (15:94; cf. 15:94–99; 73:10; 90:17; 67:2; 17:54).³

Call unto the way of the Lord...and reason with them in a better way... (16:125-127).

Repel evil with that which is better (23:96).

All of the above passages are Meccan passages, i.e., passages Muhammad received while he proclaimed Islam in Mecca. As long as he remained in Mecca, he responded to his enemies peacefully and with restraint. He never responded militantly. It provides a fine resource of Quranic references to demonstrate that Islam is peaceful, non-violent!

Muhammad's Ministry in Medina

IN A.D. 622 MUHAMMAD moved from his home in Mecca to Medina, where Arab tribes had invited him to reside and where they became members of the new Islamic movement. So important is this event in Islamic history—it is called the *hijrah* ("emigration")—that it marks the beginning of the Islamic era.⁴

In Medina Muhammad quickly assumed both religious and political leadership over the whole Medinan community. Soon after he arrived in Medina, he received the first of many Quranic passages (called Medinan passages) which directed him and the Muslim community to fight in the cause of Allah against their enemies. The Qur'an alludes to Muhammad's conflicts with the Arab polytheists throughout Arabia, with the People of the Book (Jews and Christians) and with the hypocrites (Arab polytheists who feigned conversion to Islam: cf. 49:14). The earliest extant Muslim biographies of Muhammad detail Muhammad's numerous military struggles. 5 It is these conflicts which serve as the seeds for the traditional Islamic divisions of society into I. the House of Islam and the House of War; and 2. the Muslim Community; the People of the Book (Jews and Christians, cf. 9:29,30; they could become Muslims or maintain their present religion under Islamic rule as a humiliated people); the Polytheists (who could become Muslim or accept death or slavery).

The following are a few of the Medinan passages which refer to jihad as military struggle in the Qur'an:

Sanction is given unto those who fight because they have been wronged . . . $(22:39; cf. 22:39-41).^6$

The (true) believers are those only who believe in Allah and His messenger and afterward doubt not, but strive with their wealth and their lives for the cause of Allah. Such are the sincere (49:15).

Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you, but begin not hostilities. Lo! Allah loveth not aggressors. And slay them wherever ye find them, and drive them out of the places whence they drove you out, for persecution is worse than slaughter. And fight not with them at the Inviolable Place of Worship until they first attack you there, but if they attack you (there) then slay them. Such is the reward of disbelievers. But if they desist, then lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. And fight them until persecution is no more, and religion is for Allah. But if they desist, then let there be no hostility except against wrongdoers.

The forbidden month for the forbidden month, and forbidden things in retaliation. And one who attacketh you, attack

FALL 2004

him in like manner as he attacked you. Observe your duty to Allah, and know that Allah is with those who ward off (evil). Spend your wealth for the cause of Allah... (2:190–195; cf. 2:216–218; 2:244; 8:38-40; 8:65,66; 4:84; 5:33–35; 61:4).

Then, when the sacred months have passed, slay the idolaters wherever ye find them, and take them (captive), and besiege them, and prepare for them each ambush. But if they repent and establish worship and pay the poor-due, then leave their way free . . . (9:5).

Fight against such of those who have been given the Scripture as believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, and forbid not that which Allah hath forbidden by His messenger, and follow not the religion of truth, until they pay the tribute readily, being brought low. And the Jews say: Ezra is the son of Allah, and the Christians say: The Messiah is the son of Allah. That is their saying with their mouths. They imitate the saying of those who disbelieved of old. Allah (Himself) fighteth against them. How perverse are they! (9:29,30; see also 9:73,123; 4:89,91; 47:4–9).

As for jihad's motivation and benefits:

O ye who believe! Shall I show you a commerce that will save you from a painful doom?

You should believe in Allah and His messenger, and should strive for the cause of Allah with your wealth and your lives. That is better for you, if ye did but know.

He will forgive you your sins and bring you into Gardens underneath which rivers flow, and pleasant dwellings in Gardens of Eden. That is the supreme triumph.

And (He will give you) another blessing which ye love: help from Allah and present victory. Give good tidings (O Muhammad) to believers (61:10–13; cf. 9:19–22; 9:111; 2:154; 2:243–245; 47: 4–6; 3:195; 4:95).

From the above Meccan and Medinan verses Muslims have understood that there is a chronological progression in Muhammad's ministry from peaceful proclamation only in Mecca to peaceful proclamation supported, if needed, by the sword in Medina. This was not to suggest that God had changed His mind and that peaceful proclamation of Islam had ceased. It simply meant that when Muhammad entered Medina, initially he was allowed to defend himself against his enemies with the same weapons they used to attack him and eventually was ordered even to fight all idolaters.

The well-known 20th century Egyptian scholar, Sayyid Qutb, notes four stages in the development of jihad: I: While the earliest Muslims remained in Mecca before fleeing to Medina, God did not allow them to fight; 2. Permission is given to Muslims to fight against their oppressors; 3. God commands Muslims to fight those fighting them; 4. God commands the Muslims to fight against all polytheists. He views each stage to be replaced by the next stage in this order, the fourth stage to remain permanent. To justify the universal and permanent dimensions of jihad he cites the following passages:

They ought to fight in the way of God who have sold the life of this world for the life of the Hereafter; and whoever fights in the way of God and is killed or becomes victorious, to him shall We (God) give a great reward . . . (4:74–76). . . . and fight them until there is no oppression and the religion is wholly for God . . . (8:38–40).

Fight against those among the People of the Book (Jews and Christians) who do not believe in God and the Last Day, who do not forbid what God and His messenger have forbidden, until they are subdued and pay jizyah (tax on non-Muslims) . . . (9:29–32).

But, as we sometimes hear, does not Islam teach that jihad as physical warfare is solely defensive? True, a few voices in earlier Islamic history and even more voices from the 19th century onwards have held this opinion. No doubt, today also many Muslims in the West espouse this opinion, though one might wonder how familiar some of them are with the source materials and history of Islam. Sayyid

Qutb, however, pours scorn upon those who view jihad as solely defensive:

... They are ignorant of the nature of Islam and of its function, and that it has a right to take the initiative for human freedom.

Thus wherever an Islamic community exists which is a concrete example of the Divinely-ordained system of life, it has a God-given right to step forward and take control of the political authority so that it may establish the Divine system on earth, while it leaves the matter of belief to individual conscience.⁸

He then cites, during the early advance of Islam, the Muslim response to the Persian general, Rustum, after Rustum enquired why the Muslim leaders had come to Persia with their army:

God has sent us to bring anyone who wishes from servitude to men into the service of God alone, from the narrowness of this world into the vastness of this world and the Hereafter, and from the tyranny of religions into the justice of Islam. God raised a Messenger for this purpose to teach His creatures His way. If anyone accepts this way of life, we turn back and give his country back to him, and we fight with those who rebel until we are martyred or become victorious.⁹

So also the distinguished contemporary Pakistani scholar, Fazlur Rahman, while recognizing the extensive presence of jihad in the Qur'an, rejects

the stand of those modern Muslim apologists who have tried to explain the jihad of the early (Muslim) Community in purely defensive terms.¹⁰

According to the Encyclopaedia of Islam, "the fight is obligatory even when the unbelievers have not started it." In the words of Rudolph Peters the "ultimate aim of jihad is 'the subjection of the unbelievers' and 'the extirpation of unbelief'." All of these authorities simply echo Islam's fundamental assumption that world sovereignty must be in the hands of Muslims.

Still, others may ask, is there not a possible conflict, perhaps even a contradiction, in the Qur'an between its peaceful and militant passages? Or, at least, cannot Muslims choose, between the two, which to follow? In fact, the Qur'an itself addresses this problem in general:

Such of Our revelations as We (Allah) abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring (in place) one better or the like thereof. Knowest thou not that Allah is Able to do all things? (2:106; cf. 16:101)

On the basis of these verses there arose within the Muslim community the principle of Quranic interpretation, called naskh ("abrogation"), which stipulated that earlier peaceful verses could be abrogated by later verses, i.e., in the case of jihad the earlier Meccan verses were abrogated by the Medinan verses. It is well known that many Muslim scholars in the early history of Islam contended that Qur'an 9:5, sometimes called "the verse of the sword," abrogated a host of peaceful passages in earlier portions of the Qur'an.

Furthermore we should note that at the time of Muhammad's death most of Arabia had submitted to Islamic sovereignty. In accordance with Quranic directive and with logical consistency Muhammad's faithful successors dutifully carried on Islam's expansion. Within a century following Muhammad's death Islam had moved westward across North Africa into Europe and eastward as far as present-day Pakistan, a military accomplishment that perhaps remains unparalleled up to that time in history. 13

Jihad in the Hadith

ISLAM'S HADITH (TRADITIONS) COLLECTIONS, the second important source of Islam, devote considerable space to jihad. Almost one-third of the fourth of nine volumes of Bukhari, Islam's principal collector of Hadith, focuses on jihad as physical war. ¹⁴ The following are a few examples:

Narrated Abu Musa: A man came to the Prophet and asked, "A man fights for war booty; another fights for fame and third fights for showing off; which of them fights in Allah's Cause?" The Prophet

FALL 2004

said, "He who fights that Allah's Word (i.e., Islam) should be superior, fights in Allah's Cause." ¹⁵

Al-Miqdam b. Madikarib reported God's messenger as saying, "The martyr receives six good things from God: he is forgiven at the first shedding of his blood, he is shown his abode in paradise, he is preserved from the punishment in the grave, he is kept safe from the greatest terror, he has placed on his head the crown of honour a ruby which is better than the world and what it contains, he is married to seventy-two wives of the maidens with large dark eyes, and is made intercessor for seventy of his relatives."

Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah transmitted it.¹⁶

Worth noting here also is the fact that 66 pages of the Introduction to the nine volumes of the widely distributed *The Translation of the Meanings of Sahih al-Bukhari* is a 19-page essay, "The Call to Jihad (Fighting for Allah's Cause) in the Holy Qur'an" by Sheikh Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Hamid, Sacred Mosque of Mecca. The author writes in his concluding appeal to his readers:

So it is incumbent upon us (Muslims) to follow the path which Allah's Messenger (Muhammad) adopted to avoid polytheism and heresy in all its shapes and to take the Holy Qur'an and the Prophet's Traditions as torches in front of us to guide us. We have to teach our brethren and convey the Message to non-Muslims all over the world as much as possible in order to save them from the Hell-fire. We have to prepare ourselves to stand in the face of our enemy and to possess the means of power and to participate in the progress of useful industries in order to protect our religion and be powerful enough to face our enemy, as Allah, the Elevated says in Surat al-Anfal (8:60): "And make ready against them all you can of power, including steeds of war (tanks, planes, missiles and other weapons, etc.) to strike terror into the (hearts of) the Enemy of Allah and your enemy, and others beside, whom you may not know, but whom Allah does know. Whatever you shall spend in the Cause of Allah, shall be repaid to you, and you shall not be treated unjustly."¹⁷

How many terrorists would appeal to this verse "to strike terror in the enemy"?

Jihad in the Shari'ah

THE SHARI'AH, based on the Qur'an and the Hadith, is God's Law, distinct from all human codes of law. It is God's indispensable link between Himself and His people (ummah), the manifestation of His divine will for Muslims and for those non-Muslim minorities (or majorities) under the domination of the Muslim community. All Muslim schools of Shari'ah acknowledge the presence and importance of jihad as warfare. The following is a cogent example:

When the Mussulmans enter the enemy's country, and besiege the cities or strongholds of the infidels, it is necessary to invite them to embrace the faith, because Ibn Abbas relates of the prophet that "he never destroyed any without previously inviting them to embrace the faith." If, therefore, they embrace the faith, it is unnecessary to war with them, because that which was the design of the war is then obtained without war. The prophet, moreover, has said, "we are directed to make war upon man until such time as they shall confess there is no god but one GOD; but when they repeat this creed, their persons and properties are in protection."-If they do not accept the call to the faith, they must then be called upon to pay jizyat, or capitation-tax; because the prophet directed the commander of his armies so to do; and also, because by submitting to this tax, war is forbidden and terminated, upon the authority of the Koran. (This call to pay capitation tax, however, respects only those from whom the capitation tax is acceptable; for as to apostates and the idolaters of Arabia, to call upon them to pay the tax is useless, since nothing is accepted from them but embracing the faith, as it is thus commanded in the Koran.)18

Summary

NUMEROUS MECCAN passages from the Qur'an uniformly indicate that while Muhammad resided in Mecca, he preached Islam patiently and peacefully, avoiding physical warfare with his enemy. Probably few would challenge this fact. Given this fact, then, it becomes understandable that some Muslims, claiming that Islam means peace and avoids violence, are able to substantiate their claims with Meccan passages from the Qur'an. So let all, Muslims and non-Muslims, recognize this 13-year period of peace which endured until the Hijrah, noting also that Muslim traders and brotherhood movements have peacefully spread Islam in many areas of the world, quite apart from the sword.

It is just as clear, however, as Muslims generally have understood, that after the Hijrah Muhammad resorted to the sword in support of his ministry, at first by the permission and later by the command of God. True, a few Muslims in the past, and more at present, have described this warfare as defensive only. On the other hand, all the recognized source materials for jihad have led their traditional Muslim expositors to acknowledge a development of jihad by stages during the ministry of Muhammed, a jihad which is both defensive and offensive, a jihad which the Muslim community is to pursue until the end of time. What it has signified in the past and signifies at present for masses of Muslims is well summarized in a statement by the world-renowned Ibn Khaldun (A.D. 1332–1406), Islam's great historian, sociologist and philosopher:

In the Muslim community, the holy war is a religious duty, because of the universalism of the (Muslim) mission and (the obligation to) convert everybody to Islam either by persuasion or by force. Therefore, caliphate and royal authority are united in (Islam), so that the person in charge can devote the available strength to both of them at the same.¹⁹

It is also reflected in the Muslim salutation at the tomb of Muhammad:

Peace be upon thee, O Apostle. We witness that thou hast truly delivered the message, that thou hast striven in the way

of God until God glorified His religion and perfected it.20

Herein lies the Islamic priority of the peaceful proclamation of God's unity and sovereignty and, if circumstances demand it, the enforcement of the peaceful proclamation through "striving in the way of Allah" upon those who resist the peaceful proclamation.

Is this, then, to say that Islam is intrinsically violent and supportive of violence?²¹ Is one to attribute the New York Trade Center catastrophe directly to Islam? Surely there are masses of Muslims who, consciously or unconsciously, reject terrorism and even the military face of Islam associated with jihad in Islam.22 And surely even if they recognize the historical reality of jihad in traditional Islam, it is still theirs to reject its present validity because, they feel, jihad ought to have been a temporarily imposed duty only and is now obsolete and in need of reinterpretation.²³ In any case, it is ultimately God's prerogative to judge the terrorist and his act, as well as his intention and source of inspiration.

Yet, at the same time, if jihad is a concern for society (Muslim and non-Muslim), it is imperative that society examine Islam's source materials and the understanding of the great expositors on the subject. The majority of the Qur'an texts themselves clearly identify jihad as physical warfare in Islam and, Islamically, God's way of establishing the Kingdom of God on earth. They hardly require to be interpreted metaphorically, even as Islam's great empires clearly demonstrate and, not least, its initial expansion led by Muhammad himself and followed by his four righteous successors. Likewise, from the Hadith and the earliest biographies of Muhammad it is just as evident that the early Muslim community understood these Quranic texts to be taken literally. Historically, therefore, from the time of Muhammad onwards, jihad as physical warfare in support of the message of Islam has been a reality for the Muslim community. Hence it comes as no surprise when even terrorists easily appeal to these source materials to justify their actions, not to speak of their teachers who teach the theory and the art of terrorism.

Nor, it may be added, should it cause surprise that many other Muslims today seriously oppose its violent implications and seek out new interpretations. For this we may be grateful.

Then, what about the Muslim claims that Islam means peace, that it is in harmony with other religions, that it rejects violence? No doubt, for Muslims Islam may mean peace in its traditional Muslim sense, i.e., insofar as they, the non-Muslims, have submitted to the conditions Islam imposes upon them. However, Islamically speaking, Islam has never meant peace for idolaters unless the idolaters abandon idolatry and embrace Islam. Nor, Islamically, has Islam meant peace for the People of the Book (Jews and Christians), unless the People of the Book submit to Islamic political rule and the dhimmi conditions which the Shari'ah imposes upon them as the People of the Book. Thus, Muslims must clarify the nature of Islam's peace, for whom and under what conditions Islam means peace, and how Islam promotes racial and religious harmony with other races and religions. Likewise, if jihad does not mean holy war, let Muslims explain why not and what it does mean. Surely, if by Islamic definition the primary purpose of jihad is the extension and defense of Islamic dominion, it also includes, under the shadow of war, the invitation to the enemy to submit to Islamic rule, perhaps even to embrace Islam itself, or to fight. Islamically, the invitation is compulsory and naturally precedes any battle. Truly, both word and sword are integral to jihad, yoked equally and working in harmony.

A Christian Response

BUT WHO ARE THE CHRISTIANS to complain about jihad when they themselves have engaged in their own forms of jihad, on occasions even against other Christians! Have they forgotten the Crusades? Contrast how Jews and Christians thrived under Muslim rule in Spain with how the Christians later drove Muslims and Jews out of Spain. And what about European imperialism, colonialism, and the occupation of Muslim lands?

However Muslims and others respond to the above episodes of history, clearly they can compile their own lists of injustices perpetrated by Christians. That they were perpetrated in the name of the Messiah makes them that much more shameful and reprehensible for Christians.

What, then, does the New Testament teach about physical warfare and the Kingdom of God?²⁴ Initially, we note that Jesus Himself clearly distinguishes between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Caesar: "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's" (Matthew 22:21).

With the coming of Jesus the Messiah the Kingdom of God has come. He comes not to abolish God's Law but to fulfill it (Matthew 5:17). He summarizes the Law as love for God and love for the neighbor:

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the greatest and first commandment. And the second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets (Matthew 22:37–40).

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus elaborates on what it means to love one's neighbor:

You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy." But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect (Matthew 6:43-48).

Jesus as the Messiah sets an example of love when He Himself, the Master, washes the feet of His servants (John 13:1–17):

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends (John 15:12, 13).

The disciples of Jesus are to love with the greater love, even as Jesus has loved His disciples by dying for them. He also says:

If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it (Matthew I6:24,25; Matthew IO:39; Mark 8:35; Luke I7:33; John I2:25).

Especially relevant to our whole concern is Jesus' own definition of His Messiahship (=Kingship) in terms of servanthood and self sacrifice, and His rejection of resorting to the sword against those who reject Him and His message when

- I. He (a Jew) rebuked His disciples (Jews) for suggesting that He destroy the Samaritans (the enemy) who had rejected them (Luke 9:51–56). No doubt, the angry disciples were aware of His power! How effective—and sweet—even a small dosage of revenge, clinically executed! More so when executed against the Samaritans, Israel's despised enemy! It is this context of mutual contempt between Samaritans and Jews which lends deeper significance to Jesus' "Good Samaritan" parable, i.e., for the Jew how could any Samaritan be good, even better than a Jew? (cf. Matthew 6:43-48 above)
- 2. He rebuked His disciple Peter for rejecting His prophecy that He, as the Messiah, must suffer, be killed and rise from the dead (Mark 8:27–33).
- 3. He told His power-hungry disciples, while they were contending for status, that "the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45), just as the Prophet Isaiah has prophesied. Here, clearly, Jesus suggests His death has redemptive meaning for others.
- 4. He, in the Garden of Gethsemane, rebuked Peter for defending Him with his sword:

"Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?" (John 18:11)

5. Jesus, during His trial before the Roman governor Pilate, stated: "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here (John 18:36).

The New Testament testifies to Jesus' resistance to constant temptations throughout His ministry, whether from Satan (Matthew 4:I—II), from "the people" (John 5), or even from Jesus' own disciples (Mark 8:3I—33), to abandon His Heavenly Father's will for Himself as Messiah and for the advent of the Kingdom of God. Do we see all these temptations coalescing and culminating as He, the Messiah, actually hangs naked on a cross, a spectacle of pathos, shame, and derision?

Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!" In the same way the chief priests, along with the scribes, were also mocking him among themselves and saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also taunted him (Mark 15:29–32).²⁵

Yet, given His power, who would doubt that He could have come down from the cross! His disciples clearly understood His power. What they misunderstood was how His power was to be used! It was His Father's will that He so be baptized (=drowned) and drink the cup (of suffering and death) for which He had come: He had come to heal the sick, to be the friend of sinners. He had come not to destroy but to save, to redeem. How often it has been said-and how often it bears repeating!—that God's love, not nails and ropes, held Jesus on the cross! To lay down one's life for one's friends: Greater love has no one than this. What Jesus taught, He lived, and what He taught and lived, He taught His disciples to live and to teach. How much Christians, too, need to remember that Christian ethics are inextricably woven into

and defined by Jesus' Cross and Resurrection from the dead! Who Jesus is, what He has done, and the manner of His invitation to us to follow Him are wonderfully summarized in the New Testament's early hymn of praise:

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, Who though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, But emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:5-II).

Truly, both sovereignty and service characterize the Messiah's person and are equally yoked in His ministry on earth. Their motivating power is God's love and holiness. For Jesus' bewildered disciples it all came together when they saw Jesus risen from the dead. Then, they realized, through Jesus' death, death itself had died. Everything in the New Testament points to the death and resurrection of the Messiah and the coming of God's Holy Spirit as the source of the disciples' conversion, their new understanding, their new hope and unflagging courage in proclaiming the Christian Gospel. These same Gospel events became the heart of the disciples' message that changed the hearts of so many others throughout the Roman Empire. Even with all its weaknesses, the Church rapidly spread throughout the Empire, with virtually no support from the Empire's political, economic, or social institutions and, in fact, despite the Empire's continual persecution of the Church for about 300 years. There is no other explanation for its spread. For our purposes here it is significant that throughout the New Testament's account of the Acts of the Apostles and the spread of the Church no disciple of Jesus appeals to the sword in

support of the defense or advancement of the Kingdom of God and the Church.

In brief, Jesus' disciples are to follow Jesus as the Way. They are to have the mind of Jesus the Messiah, to look at the world, the people of all nations, and even their own enemies through the eyes of Jesus. They will share God's message of reconciliation, forgiveness of sin, new life, and eternal peace through Jesus with all. Their motivation will be His love, and their means His means.

On the basis of the New Testament there is no place for the sword for advancing the Kingdom of God!

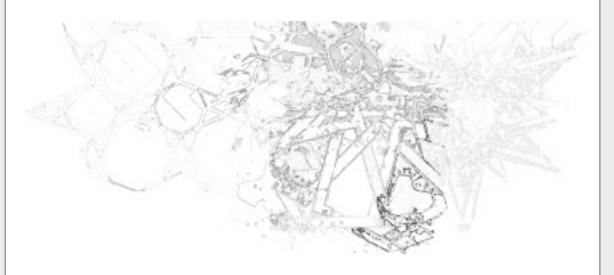
Notes

- I Or "on the path of Allah" or "for the cause of Allah."
- 2 To understand Islam it is imperative that one understands the Shari'ah, Muslim Law. Perhaps nothing so engages the scholars and their differing interpretations of Islam in our rapidly changing world today as the status and interpretation of the Shari'ah and its application for contemporary society. For a detailed exposition of the manifold aspects of jihad see Majid Khadduri, War and Peace in the Law of Islam (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1966), especially "The Doctrine of Jihad," 55-73. He also discusses Shi'ah and Kharaji understandings of jihad.
- 3 Quaranic quotations are taken from M.M. Pickthall, *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran* (New York: The New American Library, n.d.). Pickthall was an English convert to Islam.
- 4 Does the event and its timing help define Islam?
- 5 See especially Alfred Guillaume, The Life of Muhammad, A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah (London: Oxford University Press, 1955).
- 6 Guillaume, Ishaq's Sirat (Biography) Rasul Allah, 212, 213 identifies these verses as the first verses in the Qur'an to sanction jihad.
- 7 See especially Sayyid Qutb, Milestones, Revised Edition, especially ch. 4, "Jihad in the Cause of God" (Cedar Rapids: Unity Publishing House, n.d.) 53–76, in which Sayyid Qutb also acknowledges his debt to Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, a follower of Ibn Taymiyya who was a distinguished scholar of the Hanbali legal school. Like Ibn Taymiyya and the more extremist Wahhabi Movement (also aligned with the Hanbali school) Sayyid Qutb declared jihad against Muslims whom he considered apostates. The following Quranic translations are by Sayyid Qutb.

- 8 Sayyid Qutb 76; see also 73. His rationale and a resolution to the tension between Islamic world sovereignty and the often cited Qur'an 2:256 ("There is no compulsion in religion"): Only Islamic sovereignty and the Shari'ah can offer the requisite justice that allows all people genuine freedom of conscience and choice. It might well be noted here that Muslims frequently quote Qur'an 2:256 as Islam's declaration of freedom in religion. But how absolute is this freedom? From our discussion on jihad it should be clear how Islam through jihad imposes severe limitations on the freedom of both non-Muslims and Muslims.
- 9 Sayyid Qutb 71. See also the Hadith collection, The Translation of the Meanings of Sahih al-Bukhari, Muhammad M. Khan (New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan, 1984) Vol. 4:115–122.
- 10 Fazlur Rahman, Islam (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979) 37.
- II E. Tyan, "Djihad," Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1965).
- 12 Rudolph Peters, "Jihad," *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1987) Vol. 8:88–91. One wonders, in the light of the immediately above cited evidence, how Jamal Badawi, a prominent Canadian Muslim leader, teacher and debater, is able to contend that jihad is "permitted only in self-defence or against tyranny and oppression—not as a tool to promote Islam" (*Macleans*, "The Will to Fight and Die," Feb. 11, 1991, 39). Or how Dr. Abdelwahab Boase is able to state "that jihad in the military sense does not have as its object the propagation of religion" (*Arabia* "Distorting the Image of Islam," July, 1986, 78). See also "Jihad in the Shari'ah" and Ibn Khaldun's comments below.
- 13 According to the great Muslim jurist, Shaybani (Kitab al-Siyar al-Kabir, I, 14,15), "Allah gave the Prophet Muhammad four swords (for fighting the unbelievers): the first against polytheists, which Muhammad himself fought with; the second against apostates, which Caliph Abu Bakr fought with; the third against the People of the Book, which Caliph Umar fought with; and the fourth against dissenters, which Caliph Ali fought with" (Majid Khadduri 74). All students of early Islamic history are familiar with the Wars of Apostasy in Arabia, in which Abu Bakr, Muhammad's successor, crushed the Arab tribes who insisted on apostatizing from Islam immediately after the death of Muhammad. It is also well known that when Muslims invite non-Muslims to embrace Islam, they are to warn them that

- according to the Shari ah the punishment of apostasy from Islam is death.
- For a poem of praise of Muhammad, his army and jihad, see Guillaume 587,588.
- Can we speak of Islam's expansion as "invasion" and "occupation," Islam's empires as "imperialistic" and Islam as "colonial"?
- 14 The Translation of the Meanings of Sahih al-Bukhari, Vol. 1: xxiv—xliii.
- 15 The Translation of the Meanings of Sahih al-Bukhari, Vol. 4:50.
- 16 Mishkat al-Masabih, Vol. 1:814.
- 17 The Translation of the Meanings of Sahih al-Bukhari, Vol. 1:xlii.
- 18 The Hedaya, Commentary on the Islamic Laws, Vol. 2:143, 144. Those who pay the tax jizya (t) are the Dhimmis (The People of the Book: Jews and Christians). For their low status under Muslim rule, see "Dhimma," Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam (Ithica: Cornell University, 1953).
- Ibn Khaldun, The Mugaddimah, trans. By Franz Rosenthal (New York: Pantheon Books Inc., 1958) Vol. 1:473. According to Ibn Khaldun Islam's universality and "obligation to gain power over other nations" distinguishes Islam's jihad from the holy war of other religions. As to the importance of jihad he states: "Although the personal exercise of the office of judge was to have been the task of (the caliphs), they entrusted others with it because they were too busy with general politics and too occupied with the holy war, conquests, defense of the border regions, and protection of the center. These were things which could not be undertaken by anyone else because of their great importance..." (Vol. 1:454). For further observations on jihad, including his assertion that revenge is man's motive for war, see Vol. 2:70-73.
- 20 Kenneth Cragg, Muhammad and the Christian (Maryknoll: Orbis Books: 1984) 26. A very useful volume, not least for its discussion on jihad. See especially "The Political Equation" 33–52.
- 21 For a provocative discussion in the form of a "case history" (Islam in Iran at the time of the Shah and the Revolution vs. the Church in Iran, the assassination of converts from Islam, and the status of Christian mission activity) see Kenneth Cragg's "Editor's Postscript" in Bishop Dehqani Tafti's The Unfolding Design of My World (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2000) 257–266. During the revolution the son of the Bishop was murdered and, on one occasion, the Bishop himself narrowly escaped being killed.
- For the Ahmadiyya Movement, which virtually dissociates jihad from its traditional Islamic meaning

- of warfare and its history, see "Ahmadiyya," Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam (Ithica: Cornell University, 1953). (Many Muslims and some Muslim nations consider this movement to be non-Islamic.) In any case some current extreme expressions of jihad surely do not conform to the traditional rules and regulations of jihad. Moreover, Islam has always opposed suicide.
- 23 Thus the moderate Muslim Sa'id al-Ashmawy, former chief justice of Egypt's supreme court, in his popular article in Readers Digest, Jan. 1996, 25-28. He says: "Actually the Koran's call to arms, or jihad, relates to a specific episode when the Prophet prepared to attack his enemies from the city of Mecca. It was never intended as a prescription for permanent warfare...." Another contemporary Egyptian scholar, Mahmud Shaltut, criticizes the traditional Islamic doctrine of abrogation as a valid principle for Quranic interpretation. For this latter comment see Rudolph Peters, Jihad in Medieval and Modern Islam (Leiden: Brill, 1977) 26. The Sudanese scholar, Mahmoud Mohamed Taha, has contended that Meccan Islam alone (not Medinan Islam) qualifies to be the substance of a relevant and universal religion today. He understands the Medinan textual abrogations (naskh) of Meccan texts to be temporal only. Given this understanding, he says, Muslims can develop a new Shari'ah which
- is based on the morality of Meccan (earlier) Islam and which would abandon the various forms of discrimination that characterize Islam's present Shari'ah, including discrimination against women (Mahmoud Mohamed Taha, *The Second Message of Islam*, Translation and Introduction by Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im [Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1987] 21–25. For his comments on jihad see 132–137. His stance, considered by the Sudanese government as blasphemy, eventually cost him his life.
- 24 This is not to forget the indications of violence in the Old Testament.
- 25 The Qur'an's principal reference to the crucifixion of Jesus reads: "And because of their (the Jews) saying: We slew the Messiah Jesus son of Mary, Allah's messenger-they slew him not nor crucified, but it appeared so unto them...; they slew him not for certain. But Allah took him up unto Himself" (4:157,158). Though Muslim interpretations of these verses widely differ, generally Muslims have accepted that God rescued Jesus: Before Jesus was put on a cross, God took him to heaven and someone else, made to look like Jesus, was crucified. The rationale: How could God allow Jesus' enemies to triumph over Jesus, His faithful prophet, let alone allow him to suffer and die the shameful and accursed death of crucifixion! How vivid here the difference between Muslim and Christian understanding of "the power and wisdom of God"! (See Kenneth Cragg, Muhammad and the Christian, 46.)



book reviews

No God But God: A Path to Muslim-Christian Dialogue on God's Nature

van Gorder, A. Christian Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2003

A comprehensive knowledge of Islam is a requirement for any Christian-Muslim dialogue. Many chances to reach out to Muslims have gone begging when Christians have tried to dialogue with Muslims without even a cursory idea of their beliefs. The historical perspective of debate between Islam and Christianity is rooted in the inception of the Islamic religion when Muhammad debated the Christian beliefs with the Christians of Najran. In more modern days, Ahmed Deedat, a Muslim from South Africa, was once the champion of the Muslim world for his incisive and sometimes degrading portrayal of Christianity. The Christian world also has produced some extremists who enjoy baiting Muslims. The book is a balanced view of what a Christian must know before jumping into a dialogue.

Christian van Gorder has the confidence that a balanced Christian-Muslim dialogue can take place if a more in-depth study of Islam is undertaken by those who would work with the Muslims. This is a basic truth. Gorder has detailed the major aspects of the religion of Islam which any debater should know. In the chapter, "The concept of God in Islam and Christianity," the author addresses many subjects which lie at the core of Christian-Muslim relationships. Likewise, the chapter on "Portrait of Jesus in Formative Islam" is a very detailed and in-depth exposition of the Muslim mind on how it perceives Jesus Christ as opposed to what a Christian thinks. At various places in the book, the author makes reference to Christian scholars who, according to him, are responsible for a militant and aggressive approach towards Islam, thereby encouraging reciprocation and opposition.

While the Hadith is mentioned, what the author possibly leaves out of this lucid discussion is an exposition of the Hadith, the voluminous books on the sayings and the actions of the prophet Muhammad. These have been written over a period of time, and all the sayings and actions of Muhammad are verified by at least three or four witnesses which include some of his closest followers as well as his favorite wife Ayesha. For Muslims, the Hadith is as important as the Qur'an, and the injunctions of the prophet just before his death have had far reaching consequences.

The author writes in a style which is difficult for one who has a rudimentary knowledge of the Islamic religion. The quotations from the Qur'an and the Hadith as well as Islamic theologians may titillate minds to carry out an in-depth study of the Islamic religion prior to getting involved in dialogue. It is also essential to note that a deep understanding of the Islamic culture would go a long way in ministering to Muslim populations. To give some examples, putting the Bible on the floor will not get you very far in a conversation with a Muslim, for they have the utmost respect for holy books. Having a dog in the house while a Muslim is present is not advisable, since for them the dog is an unclean animal. Hospitality is a sign of great respect for a guest; its absence would mean that you don't want the person to come back or that he is inferior to you.

Ministering to Muslims is the need of the hour. Seven million Muslims call America their home. The population is growing fast due to a high birth rate. Gorder has written a wonderful book which can be used as the basis of study for congregations who want to accept the challenges to reach out to the Muslims at their doorsteps. A word of warning-people would be well advised to have an ethnic person well versed in Islamic studies as part of the group when carrying out study leading towards outreach. There are many nuances and socio-cultural impressions which are alien to a Western mind.

Javed Khan

Brigadier General (retired), Pakistan Army Development Director People of the Book Lutheran Outreach Detroit, Michigan www.poblo.org

Captain America and the Crusade against Evil

Iewett, Robert and Lawrence, John Shelton Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003

Robert Jewett and John Lawrence provide a stimulating and useful analysis of U.S. civil religion and its impact on the nation's role in international affairs. They argue that two incompatible traditions have emerged in the U. S.: zealous nationalism and prophetic realism.

Zealous nationalism has contributed to a "crusading tendency" in foreign relations which emphasizes the use of military force in the form of "holy war" (i.e. jihad) to destroy evil adversaries to secure peace. The U.S. is a millennial nation, innocent and virtuous, whose mission is to root out evil. The use of force is not the last option. Because our enemies are viewed as the embodiment of evil, they are to be killed or converted. There's no middle ground. One element of zealous nationalism which Jewett and Lawrence develop is the myth of the nation being saved by a superhero (thus the inclusion of comic book character, Captain America, in the title) who goes beyond legal structures to destroy evil. This phenomenon, they believe, centralizes and expands power and sets aside democratic values.

Zealous nationalism, they contend, has roots in biblical tradition. In the Exodus the Egyptian army was annihilated, as were many of the Canaanite enemies. The Deuteronomic tradition taught that the righteous nation would be victorious against enemy powers, no matter what circumstances it faced. Apocalyptic themes in contemporary conservative theology in the U. S., with its absolutist orientation which eschews compromise and international cooperation and talks of a cataclysmic battle between the forces of good and absolute evil, give renewed strength to zealous nationalism. Furthermore, the historical experience of the U. S.-millennial themes, Manifest Destiny, and the tendencies to perceive international relations in good versus evil terms—has profoundly reinforced this tradition.

Lest Jewett and Lawrence be accused of singling out only the U. S. for this form of zealotry, they explain clearly how similar attitudes are pervasive in radical expressions in Judaism and Islam.

An alternative, prophetic realism, avoids sentiments of self-righteousness and a "chosen-nation" mentality. Its biblical roots are expressed in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, Hosea, and ultimately by Jesus, who preached not in terms of a chosen nation but of a kingdom for sinners and outsiders. In U. S. history, prophetic realism found some of its finest expression in the words and attitudes of Abraham Lincoln. Prophetic realists see evil and limitations in all human activity and believe that the eradication of evil is impossible in this world. They reject the demonization and dehumanization of the opponent and argue instead for negotiations and partial steps toward a more just national and international society. The authors clearly prefer prophetic realism; for them, it offers greater hope for dealing

Jewett and Lawrence have written a thoughtful and stimulating theological and historical interpretation of U.S. civil religion. While the book suffers at times from disjointed organization and repetitiveness, it proffers a constructive use of history. The writers call us to a reflective examination of our past which can lead us to analyze, discuss and debate contemporary problems in a more constructive manner. Their reading of certain portions of the Old Testament most likely will not sound familiar to many Issues readers, but their ideas are worthy of consideration. While they do not use the vocabulary of a two-kingdoms approach of Lutheran theology to God's rule, that is essentially their perspective. It should be congenial to those who understand church and society from this stance.

> **Jerrald K. Pfabe** Professor of History Concordia University, Nebraska

The War on Terrorism and the Terror of God

Griffith, Lee

Grand Rapids, Michigan:William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002

"One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter." The act of terrorism can be vilified or justified depending on one's perspective. In *The War on Terrorism and the Terror of God*, however, Lee Griffith redefines terror to deal solely with the act itself. Any act designed to produce fear and chaos is terrorism whether done by the United States or the guerrillas in Nicaragua.

The majority of Griffith's book was written before September II, 2001. Except for two paragraphs in the preface and a postscript at the end, Griffith does not mention 9/II or its consequences. Instead, by analyzing pre-9/II terrorism, Griffith presents a thorough account of terrorism in political, ethical, and theological spheres. The strengths of Griffith's book are his thorough analysis of political events and his presentation of ethical dualism. However, when he transitions into the theological analysis in his book, his pacifist bias strongly affects his interpretation to the point where most Lutherans would strongly disagree with his conclusions.

Coming from the view that creating terror is always wrong no matter who does it, Griffith speaks harshly against United States foreign policy. By using demonization and creating a sense of urgency, the United States government has manipulated its people into thinking an act of terror by the U.S. is an act of justice. He would probably be just as critical of the prison abuse and war in Iraq today. Griffith's perspective forces readers to look beyond the surface and consider the sins we may be committing ourselves.

Also, Griffith critiques the idea of ethical dualism, which believes there must be a balance of good and evil in the world. By using this theory the United States and other powerful forces justify the use of terror to balance out the violence of "terrorists." The Cold War, for example, was a race to get nuclear technology before the communists did when such weapons should not have been developed in the first place.

While Griffith is consistent in his application of ethics, his reading of Scripture is inconsistent and occasionally faulty. For example, Griffith would prefer that Christians deny an interpretation of Joshua where the migrating Israelites are commanded to slaughter the Canaanites. Griffith argues that the Israelites didn't have to destroy everyone, because God is a God of love not of terror and wouldn't command such things. Griffith suggests a revision of Scripture based on archaeological evidence of a slower migration of Israelites who settled among the Canaanites.

Second, Griffith extrapolates far beyond the biblical text when talking about the prophet Ezekiel and God's pacifist motivations (II8-II9). Griffith argues that Ezekiel is put in jail because Pashtur, a temple priest, is protecting an evil Israelite government that misuses God to justify its devilish policies. Unfortunately, there is no evidence of that motivation in the text.

Third, Griffith believes that there is a hell and people will go there, but hell exists to show how good God is. Shortly after judgment day, God, who is anti-terror, will free everyone from hell and take them to heaven in an act of ultimate mercy. Griffith's conclusion has no biblical basis, and his claims undermine his theological credibility.

While Griffith is not a biblical scholar, he does offer useful perspective for Christian consideration. He questions the use of God to defend earthly terrorism and provides a nice comparative study on the Bible's use of "fear not" when all the other religions were advocating "fear." The War on Terrorism and the Terror of God presents a thoughtful explanation of pacifism that is lacking among the voices of society today. The comprehensive nature and his solutions to "solve terrorism" give Christians much to ponder as we struggle to remain in the world but not of it.

Bethany Nummela 2004 Graduate of

Concordia University, Nebraska Graduate Student, Concordia Seminary St. Louis, Missouri