

## **Political Christianity**

**By**

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There are web sites promulgating poisonous information about Islam. Among these are: Middle East Forum; Answering Islam; Political Islam; Jihad Watch ...etc. These web sites claim that Islam is not a true religion but a violent political movement that will devour the world! In their effort to deceive their non-Muslim readers, they promulgate that Islam is not divine but a cult, its founder Muhammad has invented it, Muslims are heretics and worship a black stone in the Ka'ba, and their God - Allah - is a moon god or a monkey god!

Some of these hate mongers after reading the Koran and the Sunna of the Prophet translated in English, and maybe some books in Islamic jurisprudence, think that they became Islamic scholars authorized to issue Islamic judgments! Their judgments are usually wrong and opposing Islamic rules and laws.

Due to their total ignorance in Arabic, they waded in erroneous explanations of Islamic rules thus filling the heads of their readers with falsehood. Most of these sites are in fact implementing an agenda against the religion of Islam and its adherents.

These hate mongers arrogantly claim that political Islam is the babble that will destroy the western world. Due to apparent wickedness, they however neglected the fact that political Christianity and Judaism are the real cause behind the mischief Muslims are facing today.

To be more specific, the American Christian fabric and its association with other local political entities are behind the tribulations the Muslim world is suffering from.

In my article emphasis will be put on the reasons causing political conflict between the United States and the Muslim world. The political and religious fabric of the United States causing such conflict is discussed. Ways of reform are interpreted. Islamic perspectives on the matter are also given.

## **The political and religious fabric of the United States is the reason behind the unrest of the Muslim world**

### **1- Neo conservatives**

The neoconservatives are one of the reasons behind the chaos the Muslim world is suffering from. The neoconservatives are mostly former leftists/liberals who converted to conservatism during the 70s and became influential when Ronald Reagan became President. Some of them are Democrats but most of them are Republicans. Their major concern is foreign policy. They strongly favor US military interventions overseas and becoming the world's policeman. Their core agenda is to reassert US global dominance through an aggressive foreign and military policy. They promoted the Iraq wars and are constantly the instigators for more confrontation with Iran and the Sudan and other Muslim states. They were among the chief instigators of the Kosovo War.

Neo - conservatives are a group of influential writers, commentators and government officials. There are few neo conservatives who could be defined as original thinkers, they are mainly journalists, media pundits from New York intellectual circles, and the people who inhabit Georgetown and the beltway and seek administration places or advisory functions with contractors to government.

In contrast to the old conservatives, the neo conservatives had often come from a liberal Jewish background. Instead of being anti-Semitic, they were rabidly pro-Israel. Many of today's most famous neo cons are from Eastern European Jewish immigrant families, who were frequently on the edge of poverty. The Great depression radicalized many immigrants, and introduced them to the new and revolutionary ideas of socialism and communism.

Neocon ideas were given some weight during Reagan's presidency. In particular, Jean Kirkpatrick was made ambassador to the UN, and often had the president's ear on foreign policy. During the presidency of Bill Clinton, the neocons worked to develop a full plan for foreign policy in the post-Cold War era. Foremost in this plan was the idea that the US, as the world's sole super power, should work to remold the world in its image. This meant spreading free markets and elections. Think tanks were founded, and grand manifestos were written.

When George Bush the son became president, he brought many well-known neocons (Donald Rumsfeld, Dick Cheney, Paul Wolfowitz, Richard pearl, among others), with him into foreign policy roles. The original plan had been to provoke confrontation with China, in an effort to either push China into reforming, or else to lessen China's influence in the rest of the world, thus increasing the power of the US. However, after the 9/11 attacks on the US they switched priorities to the Muslim world. They focused on Iraq and pushed Bush to occupy Iraq under the pretext that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction! The Cheney-Rumsfeld-Wolfowitz axis aimed at using the US power to dominate and reshape the Middle East and, to put into effect the immortal words of Charles Perle, to send a message to America's enemies that "you're next".

After the attack of September 11, Bernard Lewis in his book 'What went wrong?' using subtle arguments, placed the blame on Islam and Islamic traditions for the failure of Middle Eastern societies to develop and modernize like the West. Lewis' book has since been followed by articles and publications, mostly by neoconservative journalists and pundits, who reinforce Lewis' thesis and even blame Islam for the rise of terrorism as well as the rising tension between the West and the Muslim world.

The blame game is led today by neo-conservative pundits who often present Islam as the new villain to be confronted by American military power. They have consistently presented Muslims as incapable of democratic rule, and who espouse values that are antithetical to world peace and religious tolerance.

To ensure that their views are not challenged by academic community, neoconservatives are working hard to undermine academic freedom by intimidating scholars that present a balanced view of the Middle East. Martin Kramer's Ivory Towers and Sand: The failure of Middle Eastern Studies in America, and diatribe against Middle East studies in US universities, and Daniel Pipes' Campus Watch, an organization devoted to smearing professors critical of U.S foreign policy and Israeli's treatment of Palestinians, are two such examples. This campaign is one that aims to intimidate free thinking on Middle East politics and silence voices that challenge their perspective. In addition to that, we must not forget the other on line centers devoted to attack Islam like answering Islam (Sam Shamon), Middle East Forum (Daniel Pipes), Political Islam (Bill Warner), jihad Watch (Robert Spencer) and many others.

These websites are a network of groups and individuals funded by elements within the pro-Israel lobby who are pushing Islam phobia on behalf of Israel. These online websites have been leaders in the indictment of Islam, and each of whom is, not coincidentally, a vocal advocate of Israel and its policies. They are the alligators in the swamp they have created, and are now frantically engaged in distancing themselves from their words and deeds. But sometimes the truth will appear to overshadow the falsehood they promulgate.

From an Islamic perspective those who forge lies against Allah will never prosper. Allah knows what they secrete and what they publish; He knows all the thoughts within the breasts.

Their insolence is only against themselves, a brief enjoyment of this worldly life, then in the end unto Allah shall they return, then He shall tell them what they were doing. Those are they whom in the world to come there is only the Fire; their deeds there will have failed, and void will be their work.

Allah says about those who forge against Him a lie:

And who does greater evil than he who forges against Allah a lie? Those shall be presented before their Lord, and witnesses will say, 'Those are they who lied against their Lord.' Surely the curse of Allah shall rest upon the evildoers who bar from Allah's way, desiring to make it crooked; they disbelieve in the world to come; they are unable to frustrate Him on earth and they have no protectors, apart from Allah. For them the chastisement will be doubled; they could not hear, neither did they see.

Those are they that have lost their souls, and that they forged has gone astray for them; they without doubt will be the greater losers in the world to come (Hûd (18-22)).

Although many of the anti-Islam writers and neo conservative pundits play on the fear of the general public by publishing books for a general audience, others have been done for policymakers under the cover of respected institutions and think tanks, such as the American Enterprise Institute, the Heritage Foundation, and the RAND Corporation. The Rand openly advocates "religion building" as the only way to counter terrorism and anti-Americanism.

Religion building is an invitation to world powers to reform Islam! It is a call for reinterpreting Islam and restructuring Muslim societies so as to counter the rise of militancy in Muslim societies. There is no contention over the need to reform Muslim states in order to get their freedom and establish their democratic civil societies. But Islam is not the cause of the Muslim's underdevelopment, but rather the autocratic ways the dictators were exercising in the Muslim world. Now the dictators are being removed and Muslims are on their way to establish their own democratic civil societies. The Arab spring in the Middle East witnesses such drastic change. The Arab world is now undergoing a political reform without touching the religion. The religion of Islam is complete and needs no reformation.

Instead of reconstructing Islam, the complete religion - the only true monotheistic religion existing now on earth – the American political groups, and Christian cults and factions must not exert their religious and political power on Muslim countries. Their influence must be restricted only to their own people. The Congress must not legislate for other countries as well, but only for its own people and within the American borders.

The zeal of the American Christian Right to reform America and the world by taking it back to the teachings of Jesus is useless if they don't reform the foundation of their religion first by taking it back from the Trinity (the union of Father, Son and Holy Spirit) to the original monotheistic religion of Jesus - pure monotheism. Islam as a universal religion came to tell the Christians that Allah is only One and not three in one or one in three. In Islam the concept of Trinity is considered as glaring polytheism and an unforgivable sin.

Monotheism, the religion of all Prophets including Jesus and the seal of the prophets, Muhammad peace be upon him, is the only religion that Allah will accept on the Day of Resurrection.

The Koran as a universal religion sent to all people, Jews, Christians and Arabs says:

They say, 'Allah has taken to him a son.' Glory be to Him! He is all sufficient; to Him belongs all that is in the heavens and in the earth; you have no authority for this. What, do you say concerning Allah that you know not?

Say: 'those who forge against Allah falsehood shall not prosper.'

Some enjoyment in this world; then unto Us they shall return; then We shall let them taste the terrible chastisement, for that they were unbelievers (Yunus 68-70).

Say: 'O men, the truth (the Koran) has come to you from your Lord. Whosoever is guided is guided only to his own gain, and whosoever goes astray, it is only to his own loss. I am not a guardian over you (Yunus, 108).

However, believing in Allah as One God is only by His leave:

It is not for any soul to believe save by the leave of Allah; and he lays abomination upon those who have no understanding (Yunus, 100).

Islam came to tell the Christians that Jesus is not God or the son of god, but he was just a prophet sent to the children of Israel. He was not crucified, but Allah saved him from the Jews and honored him by lifting him up to Him. Islam came to say to the Christians that there is no original sin, Adam's sin was forgiven, and accordingly, man was born free of sin. Islam came to say to the Christians that salvation is not through vicarious atonement but through believing in the One God, Allah, doing good deeds according to the teaching of the divine Book, then if sins are committed, man is saved by turning to Allah alone in genuine repentance and faith.

Instead of imposing their political and religious agendas upon the world, the Christians have a life time ahead to discuss among themselves the inventions their forefathers made in Jesus' religion after his departure to his Lord, Allah. There is no shyness in religion; the Christian scholars of today must have the nerve to refer to the last divine revelation to mankind, the Koran, as a reference concerning the truth about the nature of Jesus, crucifixion, original sin, and vicarious atonement.

Any reformation the Christian Right intends to do in the American society (banning abortion, fornication, homosexuality, etc.) will not prosper if they do not purify their religion and restore it to strict monotheism.

Amazingly, the West in several instances declares the importance of reconstructing the religion of Islam. But they must understand that Allah in Islam is the Creator of the world and He alone has complete and direct knowledge of the reality of man and of the world. Only He can

guide man through the complicated course of life and instruct him regarding good and evil. Since Allah alone is the Creator and the Master he has exclusive authority over the universe and man. The ultimate Lawgiver and Master of His creation on this earth is no other than Allah, and His Law has the status of the supreme law. Man can legislate subject to His Supreme Law. Beyond that he has no legislative authority.

A call for external intervention to restructure the Islamic faith is faulty, and is guilty of misreading Islam, and ignoring the sociopolitical reality that gives rise to global terrorism.

Religion building is perilous and untenable. It is a distraction and a blatant attempt to avoid any serious evaluation of the responsibility of world powers for the radicalization of Muslim politics. The rise of radical Islam cannot be explained on the level of religious doctrine.

Radicalization of Muslim politics is directly connected to the rise of the authoritarian regimes in Muslim societies. Authoritarian Middle Eastern regimes that suppress open debate and silence opposition have long enjoyed the support of successive US administrations.”

Islam is in fact has been a positive force, rather than a villain to be arrested and chastised in the development of the modern Middle East. The focus on radical groups perpetrating violence in the name of Islam prevents some analysts from appreciating the centrality of Islamic notions and values in the progress toward a more open society and vibrant culture.

The US foreign policy has been frequently characterized by Muslims as one of inconsistency and double standards – one that supports friendly dictators and corrupt regimes in the Muslim world, while pushing for democratic reform in Eastern Europe; one that defends human rights in China, but ignores them in the Middle East; and one that protests Palestinian violence against Israel, but remains silent in the face of Israeli violence in Palestine. Indeed the politicization of Islam and the rise of anti-Americanism are directly linked to the very efforts that aim at marginalizing Islam and forcing western secularism on Muslim society (1).

The tendency to treat Islam as an anomaly to be evaluated on the basis of different standards than the one used to evaluate Christianity, Judaism and other world religions is irrational and absurd.

## **2- The Christian Right**

The Christian Right is also the cause of the conflict in the Middle East. The Christian Right is a mass movement that has grown by actively involving millions of supporters. The bulk of Christian rightists are evangelical Protestants and their political ideology is rooted in a specific interpretation of Christianity.

The desire of Evangelicals today is to bring faith and politics together. They claim that there is an essential continuity in American history between the puritans of the New England colonies, who saw themselves as agents of Christ, and politicians today who say they are doing the Lord's work.

The Evangelicals also claim that America has always been defined as a Christian nation, even by its founding fathers. But this in fact is a denial of reality because the one and only mention of God in the Declaration of independence is of "Nature's God," who is not defined in any way as a Biblical or Christian God. Nor there any mention of God in the constitution or the Federalist papers, the working documents of the Founders.

It was true that there were practicing Christians among the founding fathers, but also prominent deists like George Washington. Thomas Jefferson admired Christ's teachings, but didn't believe in his divinity, and once described the Book of Revelation which is the key biblical reference for today's Evangelicals as "the ravings of a maniac." (6).

James Madison, another of the founders said, "The purpose of the separation of church and state is to keep forever these shores the ceaseless strife that has soaked the soil of Europe in blood for centuries." And in his famous letter to the Baptists of Danbury, Connecticut, Jefferson used the phrase "Wall of Separation"—a phrase the Puritan Roger Williams had first used 158 years earlier when he was expelled from the Massachusetts Bay Colony for advocating the



separation of church and state. However, the leader of the Religious Right today calls the wall of separation the “wall of shame.”

The American Evangelicals were a socially progressive force in the 19<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. They were in the forefront of the struggle to abolish slavery, made their mark on issues such as prison reform, and later were champions of universal suffrage. Until the mid 1970s, they often voted Democrat, as they did in 1976 for Jimmy Carter, himself a self-described “born again” Evangelical.

Jimmy Carter was seen after a while siding with the IRS on the school tax issue, and in 1979, seething Evangelical anger is channeled into the first major institution of the Religious Right – the Moral Majority led by the reverend Jerry Falwell. The movement described itself as “pro-life, pro-family, pro-moral and pro-America” and declared that its goal was nothing less than to “take America for Christ” and to end the separation of church and state.

The tactics adopted were to become the standard operating practice of the Religious right: the use of wedge issues, such as abortion and gay rights, to hive off social traditionalists from the Democratic Party, and to harness the energy of Evangelicals to the Republican Party.

A year after the Moral Majority was founded; its votes became a key factor in defeating Carter and propelling Donald Reagan into the White House. A seismic political re-alignment had begun and never since had a Democratic presidential candidate won anything but a small minority of white Evangelical votes.

In order to understand the ideology of the Christian Right, we must first understand the theological doctrine known as ‘dispensational pre-millennialism. It is a doctrine propagated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by a defrocked Irish Anglican preacher named James Nelson Darby. Darby made a number of missionary visits to North America in the 1860s and 1870s, and founded a sect known as the Plymouth Brethren. Its belief centers on a literal interpretation of the Bible, and above all of the Book of Revelation.

The pre-millennialists believe that the world is close to the end of time, and before long it will be caught up in a chain of apocalyptic events. First, there will be an event called the Rapture in which the righteous will be swept up from earth to heaven. Those set behind will then suffer a seven-year period of horror under the anti-Christ, who will only be vanquished with the second coming of Christ and the battle of Armageddon. After the slaughter, a victorious Christ establishes his thousand-year kingdom based in Jerusalem.

The leaders of the religious Right favor some form of dominionism – the belief that Christians are mandated by god to take control of political institutions and to subordinate civil law to biblical law. It is a doctrine that takes as its prime source those verses in Genesis that say that man should subdue the earth and establish dominion over it.

An extreme version of the creed, known as Reconstructionism, was propagated by John Rushdoony in the 1960s. Some of its beliefs that the death penalty should be applied on homosexuals.

But where reconstructionism has had its biggest contact is in its advocacy of stealth tactics to break down the barriers between church and state. Christians, it is argued, have a moral value to infiltrate political and social institutions and remove what the movement calls “secular humanists” from office.

By the end of the 1980, stealth tactics were used with great effect. In 1989 Jerry Falwell’s Moral Majority merged into the Christian coalition. Its president was another televangelist, Pat Robertson, but its organizational genius was Ralph Reed, a young man aptly described as having the face of a choirboy, but the political instincts of Machiavelli.

Under Reed’s guidance Evangelicals were encouraged to infiltrate school boards and local government, then to take over Republican committees at the precinct and district level. The aim was to ensure that Christian conservatives, not moderates, are elected as delegates to state and national Republican conventions.

By 1992, they took over the Republican party, and 40% of them believed that the United States was indeed involved in a war for its soul in which the Christians must be called on to save a fallen nation.

What was equally striking was the extent to which the bread – and - butter issues of politics – the economy, health care, and so on – were relegated to sidelines. Instead the focus was on school choice and school prayer, and above all, on issues such as abortion, homosexuality, and sexual permissiveness in its many forms.

The year 2000 was a watershed year in the rise of the Republican Right. At his stage of Christian coalition which had built up a membership of 2 million Americans had fragmented into multiple power centers. Most have their own universities and colleges, their own theological seminaries, their own lobby organizations in Washington, and their own legal centers devoted to challenging what are seen as liberal court decisions. They all enjoy tax-exempt status, the larger one pulling in more than 150 million dollars each.

All these groups form an interlocking and remarkably homogeneous political organization. At its pinnacle is the Council for National Policy which meets two or three times a year, bringing together top Evangelical activists, leading conservative Republicans, dominionist theologians and wealthy donors. The meetings are highly secretive and no minutes are taken. To this day no one knows what Bush said when he addressed the Council in 1999 and, in all probability, won its blessing for his presidential run.

By 2000, the movement had an electoral machine that was unprecedented in number and sophistication. It was in the election of the year 2000 that religion was injected into Bush campaign more than ever before. The Democrats were nowhere near matching George W. Bush's appeal to religious voters, especially to evangelicals who now could rejoice that they had a born-again leader who shared both their faith and their politics. As a result of the Christian coalition's support to Bush, he won the presidential elections in year 2000.

Billy Graham has warned: “It would disturb me if there was a wedding between the religious right and the political right.”

No one realized the importance of pleasing the Religious Right more than Karl Rove, the president’s top political strategist, and no one exploited religion more effectively for political gain. Rove began packing the government with evangelicals and social conservatives. The priority was getting them into agencies and departments such as DFA, Health and Human Services, Justice and Education that deal with priority issues for the Religious Right (6).

As significant as the appointments was a new practice at the White House of consultation with the Religious Right on all initiatives affecting its agenda. Weekly conference calls were held with evangelical leaders, and a religious outreach team was set up in the West Wing to inform Christian conservative leaders of forthcoming presidential events, on occasion to seek their help in drafting legislation.

Much higher profile was the new Office of Faith-Based Initiatives that was also established in the White House. It was designed to be the cornerstone of Bush’s campaign promise of the so-called “compassionate conservatism.” Its major theorist is a former Marxist and Jewish convert to Christianity named Marvin Olasky. Just prior to Bush’s election Olasky explained that poor people, drug addicts and criminals cannot be helped much by government social programs. They must recognize their sinfulness and be redeemed by Christ. Taxpayer’s money therefore must be transferred away from government programs and into church-based charities that offer redemption along with conventional social services.

Through an executive order Bush allowed federally-funded charities to hire their staff on the basis of religion which critics saw as a violation of the constitutional ban on using religious tests for publicly-funded jobs. It also appeared to be a clear breach of the principle of church-state separation.

A perplexing question then arises: who is exploiting whom in this alliance between Republican politicians and Christian conservatives. On

the Faith-Based initiative program, there is solid evidence that it was the politicians manipulating the faith community.

David Kuo is an evangelical with impeccable conservative credentials who became second in command of the White House office of Faith-Based initiatives. Kuo published a book entitled 'Tempting Faith.' He wrote that Karl Rove and others would bestow hugs and kisses on religious leaders then, in private, dismiss them as quote "nuts" and "goofy." According to Kuo, far less money was spent on faith-based initiatives than promised, and much of it went to ostensibly non-partisan events that were designed to win support in key wing states.

Kuo resigned in despair and he writes in his book about what it was like to work in the faith office: 'We were good people forced to run a sad charade to provide political cover to a White House that needed compassion and religion as political tools.'

The elections of 2004 marked the peak of the Religious Right's power. The Republicans were now in control of the White House, both houses of Congress, a majority of state governorships and state assemblies.

Again it was a majority largely crafted with the votes of religious Americans, especially those of white Evangelicals. Seventy-eight percent of them voted for a president whom they saw as both their spiritual and political leader.

In the Congress, about 45 Senators and 180 representatives received 80 to 100 per cent approval ratings from Religious Right, and stood ready to push its agenda.

Republicans in the House of Representatives quickly introduced the so-called Constitution Restoration Act. The law could have virtually exempted the states from the First Amendment. It did so by stripping federal courts of their power to rule on cases where state or local governments acknowledge God "as sovereign source of law, liberty and government. The law passed in the House but was stalled in the Senate.

Another act was introduced making it legal for churches to collect money for political campaigns. It was defeated but still won the support of 40% of House members for what by any standard was a flagrant violation of the principle of church-state separation.

At the state level, too, religious radicalism was much in evidence. The Texas Republican Party adopted a platform formally declaring that America is a “Christian Nation.” Its leader solemnly announced that God “is the chairman of this party.”

After 9/11 the traditional foreign policy of the United States that takes into account multilateralism and playing cooperatively by international rules, was replaced by an aggressive unilateralism that to a remarkably degree placed America in the role of judge, jury and executioner in global affairs.

American Evangelicals had been the biggest cheerleaders for Bush’s administration and have played an important role in shaping US policy.

George W. Bush has talked of being divinely guided, and he has suggested that American troops in Iraq are on a providential mission! The values the troops are said to be fighting for are depicted as universal ones: in Bush’s words, “Not America’s gift to the world but Almighty God’s gift to every man and woman.”

On another occasion Bush has stated that “We have a calling from beyond the stars,” sending an apparently unambiguous message that America is a nation chosen to do god’s will.

The president who once memorably said, “I don’t do nuance,” laced many of his speeches with biblical imagery. There are frequent references to “evil-doers”; talk of pursuing the “evil ones in their caves,” and warning that other nations are “either with us or against us” in a battle of good against evil.

Bush constructed therefore a Manichean struggle, where Sons of Light confront Sons of darkness, and all must enlist on one side or the other, without possibility of neutrality, hesitation or middle ground.

### **3- Alliance between the Christian Right and the neo-conservatives**

Both neocons and Christian rightists had close ties with the Reagan administration, and this was the period when the neocon-Christian Right alliance was really hammered out. They both helped the Reagan administration promote anticommunist militarism in the 3<sup>rd</sup> world. This support involved a combination of lobbying, fundraising, propaganda work, and direct involvement through the Reagan administration.

Throughout the Cold War, anticommunism had been a crucial point of unity between the neocons and the Christian Right. When the Soviet Union collapsed, this anticommunist glue no longer held and the conservative coalition started to fall apart especially around foreign policy. The neocons argued that the US should continue to have a strong interventionist policy to promote democracy around the world. But other rightists, who called themselves paleoconservatives, disagreed. Paleocons such as Pat Buchanan argued that the US should now avoid foreign entanglements, oppose free trade, stop supporting Israel, and sharply limit immigration from non-European countries. Paleocons also promoted an explicitly Christian form of moral traditionalism with strong white nationalist undertones. They accused the neocons of being empire builders and closet liberals. Neocons accused the paleocons of being isolationists and anti-Semites. This conflict started in the 1980s and erupted strongly in 1990-1991 with the building to the first US-Iraq war.

The Christian Right was closer to the paleocons on social policy issues. They shared the paleocons critique of immigration, globalization, and free trade. Some big Christian Right groups opposed corporate globalization measures such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), but others supported them. But Christian Right leaders themselves also supported a strong US global presence, and like neocons, they were strongly committed to the State of Israel.

Christian rightists support Israel – specifically, right-wing Zionism, because they believe that a strong Jewish state is part of God's plan for the End Times – the final struggle against Satan. As part of this apocalyptic vision, most Christian rightists believe that all Jews and

other unbelievers will be killed unless they convert to Christianity, the “true” faith. This means that the Christian Right is both pro-Zionist and anti-Semitic.

George W. Bush’s election to the White House in 2000 marked another shift. Both neocons and Christian rightists had been mostly excluded from the administration of George Bush Senior and that of Bill Clinton, but George W. Bush welcomed them. Neocons were appointed to several key second-tier posts in the Defence Department and other agencies. The Christians Right’s main representative in the Bush administration was Attorney General John Ashcroft.

After September 11, neocons presented an idealized picture of the US as united, determined and virtuous, with a strength rooted in her glorious free enterprise system. They dismissed any criticism of the war on terrorism as unpatriotic.

The Christian right response was more complex. They declared that the 9-11 attacks happened because the US had turned away from God. They cited abortion, homosexuality, and secularism as examples of American sinfulness, but also consumerism and greed. Most of the Christian Right groups rejected Islam as a false religion, demonized “radical Islam” (3).

In conclusion, although the Christian Right has focused on domestic social issues in building a mass movement, the Christian Right leadership has also put a lot of emphasis on foreign policy, and foreign policy has been key to their alliance with the neocons. They have overlooked significant differences between them to further their core goals, and to amass political power.

In the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, the neo-conservatives have used the anniversary to talk about the Arab Spring and the democratization of the Middle East: Egypt and other countries are likely to fall into the hands of “Islamists”, but there is cause for hope if we were in charge! Islam fascism will likely prevail in Egypt and across the Arab World, but yet remains a hope for the liberals and democrats to prevail, but if they don’t, which is likely, they would have if



we the vanguard party of the global democratic revolution had been listened to!

This new wave of conspiracy-minded hate-mongers promulgated by the neoconservatives, and their enmity to Islam, in addition to their past interference in other countries' affairs as they did with Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as the blind support to Israel on the expense of the Palestinians, show clearly that it is neo-conservatism, not Islam, that is the heir and successor to 20<sup>th</sup> century totalitarianism.

#### **4- TAKING AMERICA BACK FOR CHRIST & THE CHURCH**

The aim of these men is quite clear: "to take back the nation for Christ" - not just spiritually but politically. And in this there is an underlying and growing sense among these leaders of a besieged Christian community which nonetheless feels it has a divine mandate from God to rule the world, including the United States.

And again, while these men would deeply resent the comparison, the parallel here to what they are doing now to what the mullahs of Iran did in 1978 is sobering.

For example, Kenneth Copeland, one of the leading figures in the evangelical world, writes, "This country belongs to God ... He's the One who brought the United States of America into existence. He had a special purpose for it ... He raised it up, and it's not going to be taken away from Him.

Bill Hamon, pastor of one of the largest evangelical churches in the country, writes, "A new government must be established, a new way of life for ... millions of people.

Malcolm Smith writes: "... the Church ... (must) presently overthrow these (secular) powers of darkness and establish His kingdom on earth.

And exactly what kind of future do these men see, and what are they planning? Speaking at a large conference of over 1,000 people in Kansas City, Bob Jones - who has at one time or another been associated with John Wimber of Vineyard Fellowships International, one

of the "prime movers" behind Catholic-evangelical union - said: "As we see the day approaching there's going to be a cleansing ... there's going to be a purging ... coming forth ... and everyone that's living under the immorality cover ... will be brought down. And God's new breed will come forth.

These kinds of phrases should give anyone pause who is familiar with the "artful" phrasing associated with the Holocaust.

Pat Robertson's view of the future is every bit as ominous for "outsiders" and "dissenters." He writes about "enforcement measures" in the coming Christian Kingdom in his book, *The Secret Kingdom*, "... for domestic tranquility there must be a police force and a system of justice capable of bringing sure and swift punishment upon those who rebel against society.

And Robertson isn't just talking about criminals, but dissenters from the "soon to be reestablished" Christian culture.

Gary Potter, president of Catholics for Christian Political Action, says, "When the Christian majority takes over this country, there will be no satanic churches, no more free distribution of pornography, no more abortion on demand, and no more talk of rights for homosexuals. After the Christian majority takes control, pluralism (i.e., multiculturalism) will be seen as immoral and evil and the state will not permit anybody the right to practice evil.

And be clear here, these men are not talking about the sweet, heavenly "bye-and-bye," but the actual seizing of political authority by Christians in the "here and now."

Professor Allen D. Hertzke of the University of Oklahoma writes: "... the center of gravity is shifting. The growing national prominence of the Catholic Church and the remarkable growth of evangelical and fundamentalist congregations represent a major cultural movement. The social conservatism of these churches, along with their growing political assertiveness and sophistication, has slashed at previous ideological and partisan alignments. Thus long-term effects on American political parties may result from the dynamics of church life in America. The

Democratic Party, for the moment, seems institutionally wedded to a posture that symbolically and substantively appears to reject the cultural conservatism of many Catholics, evangelicals and fundamentalists, as well as many members of mainline Protestant denominations. The religious factor, indeed, may (ultimately) contribute ... to a (political) realignment in America and the results of the 1994 election seem to confirm Hertzke.

## **5- BRINGING THE KINGDOM OF GOD TO EARTH**

The eschatological thinking or doctrine of "end times," of these men sheds further light on what they are ultimately aiming at. The doctrine of the "end of days" being preached today in both evangelical and Catholic charismatic communities pictures the "end of days" - which they believe we have essentially entered - as a time of great economic dislocation, political chaos, and military turmoil. Both Catholic and evangelical communities teach that in order to end this disorder and turmoil, the church must unite. Furthermore, they teach that the union of Christendom must occur before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Finally, they teach of a great "latter-day" revival which will break out as a result of the re-unification of the church.

This represents a "sea change" in conservative Christian thinking. While it is true that in the past Christians have talked about "ruling and reigning" on the earth, that talk had been largely confined to the spiritual future some time after Christ's Second Coming - whenever that might be.

Now, however, the emphasis is that the "church" must take control before Christ's return. The process has been totally reversed! - and this new thinking is being widely embraced to justify extremely militant and even cruel and barbaric action against gays, abortion providers, advocates of women's rights, etc. - illegal action and civil disobedience with the imprimatur of God upon it.

And that's not the end of it. Both communities further teach that Christian union - the "in-gathering," as Catholics refer to it - will be accomplished by great "signs and wonders," intense "praise and

worship," prayer, fasting, "spiritual warfare," and finally the appearance of "Apostles and Prophets." Al Dager, an observer of this scene writes: "Since the late seventies and early eighties especially, there have been increasing references within the ... (unity faction of evangelicalism) identifying specific people as 'apostles and prophets', and many leaders are supportive of each other in those roles. It is said that the decade of the eighties revealed the prophetic ministries, and the nineties will reveal the apostles. As a result, many of the alleged prophets have been made known, but as of this writing there have been few apostles identified, and then generally in vague terms. For instance, certain men, have been designated apostles over certain types of ministries (e.g. Larry Lea as apostle of prayer, Oral Roberts as apostle of healing, etc.).

"Although some are more visible than others, these leaders are showing up on the same platforms in varying numbers and orders. They are on a constant circuit, conducting leadership conferences for pastors and teachers from around the world, and spiritual warfare rallies for anyone and everyone they can reach.

"At leadership conferences pastors and teachers are instructed in the latest methods of church growth (and political activism) ... Armed with that knowledge, the pastors take what they've learned and implement it in their congregations in order to teach the people how to take dominion over their cities, how to institute proper worship and praise in order to move God and to receive power, how to work miracles, signs and wonders, how to bind (evil) spirits (how to exert political influence).

These conferences have been going on now for some time. For example, take one early meeting - a "Unity Conference" that occurred in July of 1985. Charles Green, Emanuele Cannistraci, and John Gimenez organized the meeting in Denver, Colorado with the express purpose of "networking" various Christian ministries and denominations together for political action. The meeting attracted pastors and leaders from many different "streams of ministry," including Kenneth Copeland, Charles Simpson, Bob Mumford, John Wimber, etc. The specific purpose of the meeting was to produce a unity of ministry which would lead to: "... the restoration of the church in power, unity, and glory ..." and "the

reformation of society under the Lordship of Jesus Christ" - and the results of these conferences are now at last beginning to be felt throughout the country. Clearly, they have burst the bands of religion, and are now impinging upon the country politically.

In all of this, of course, the matter of "Christian Unity" is central to the "grassroots" constituencies of both the evangelical and Catholic communities. It animates and enlivens both. It is the core around which all their eschatological doctrines revolve. And, once again, they are not talking about "structural unity," but "movement unity."

Regarding this "unity," Francis Frangipane, one of the more important "grassroots" evangelical leaders - who has also been accorded the title of "prophet" by many charismatics - writes, "This scattering and dividing process among the Lord's sheep has gone on long enough. Jesus has set His heart to bring healing and unity to His Body."

Again, Frangipane writes, "Let us lay our lives down in committed faith, that in our lifetimes, on this earth and in our communities, the corporate church of Jesus Christ will be restored, united and holy!"

Finally, Frangipane says, "Indeed, right now, in the context of humbling ourselves and submitting our hearts to His will, we are participating in being 'gathered together', And this process will progressively increase until the barriers between brethren are melted by the overcoming nature of Christ's love. Before Jesus returns, we will truly be 'one flock' ... . We will be a holy and blameless sheepfold.

And where does all this lead? Frangipane answers: "... this warfare shall culminate in the church's establishment of the Lord's Kingdom on earth.

Thus, the unity of the church is not an end in itself, but merely a necessary step in the long path towards the church's domination of the world. Both evangelical and Catholic communities foresee the ultimate union of secular and spiritual power here in planet earth in the hands of the church - and this is what will usher in the return of Christ. Catholic scholar and writer, Yves DuPont, writes: "We see the outlines of a new social and political order ... the state will no longer be separated from the church."

Well known evangelical leader Sam Fife says, "... Jesus is setting up His kingdom here on earth ... . We are the rulers of this planet - it's time we take over." And finally, George Hawtin writes, "But the saints of the most High shall take (seize) the kingdom (meaning the earth), and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever."

## **6- The Reconstructionists are also getting into the act**

Old line Protestants, such as the "Reconstructionists" of the Dutch Reformed and Presbyterian Churches are also getting into the act. And the juncture at which they meet the evangelicals and the Catholics is the necessity of unified Christian political activity to take the nation back for Christ. Writing in the Journal of Christian Reconstruction, Presbyterian pastor Kenneth J. Gentry, Jr. declares: "The whole creation awaits the godly dominion of the New Creation Saints of God." Gentry here is not talking about the "sweet bye and bye," but the political "here and now."

Dave Hunt writes concerning this phenomenon, "Although they are not charismatics, Reconstructionists are working with such groups because charismatic television and radio networks provide an effective means of propagating related Reconstructionist beliefs. Gary North has openly acknowledged using the charismatics to this end. On their part the charismatics are apparently happy with their new partners because the Reconstructionists provide the intellectual and academic credibility that has (sometimes) been in short supply within the charismatic movement.

"Gary North is convinced that a Reconstructionist partnership with the ... charismatics' telecommunication system will transform the whole shape of American religious life ... He (North) goes on to say: 'the growing alliance between charismatics and Reconstructionists has (caused) ... critics (to) worry about the fact that ... (the charismatic) infantry is at last being armed with Reconstructionism's field artillery. They should be worried. This represents one of the most fundamental realignments in U.S. Protestant Church history'." And North isn't just blowing smoke when he says that those who fall outside the new Christian "World View" should be apprehensive. For example, Reconstructionists contend:

\* In winning a nation to the gospel, the sword as well as the pen must be used.

\* The divorce problem will be solved in a society under God's law because any spouse guilty of capital crimes (adultery, homosexuality, Sabbath desecration, etc.) would be swiftly executed, thus freeing the other party to remarry.

\* Parents would be required to bring their incorrigible children before the judge and, if convicted, have them stoned to death.

\* A godly nation must keep the Sabbath to have God's blessing, embracing not only a weekly observance, but the observance of the sabbatical year of rest ... This is a legal, national duty and requirement ... For the nation to deny the Sabbath is to deny God.

\* In a Christian society the death penalty is still appropriate for the crime of worshipping another god on the Lord's day". - are they saying here that Jews, Muslims, Hindus, etc. should be put to death? (9).

It seems that irresistible forces are now "in play" - both in Christendom and in the country at large - which appear to be propelling us all, believers and unbelievers alike, down a ghost-like river, the course of which seems to be etched out in the events of our time by the finger of some unseen apparition - and the current seems to be growing at every twist and turn of its course, a course which may be taking us in a direction from which there may be no turning back once we're fully caught up in its flow.

With every election, the country moves ever more rightward, and Christianity and the churches become ever more enmeshed in rightwing political activity. To many Christians, of course, the reasons for becoming involved politically seem compelling - how else, it is asked, do we stop the country's drift into anarchism and disintegration?

But Christians must pause and ask themselves, is this what Christianity is all about? - seizing control of the country and forcing righteousness on the citizenry at the point of a gun? Where will such thinking ultimately take us? - are we creating some kind of Fourth Reich where all those

who disagree with us will be ostracized? The way to hell is paved with good intentions! - and more murder and slaughter have been carried out in the name of God than we as Christians might care to admit. Maybe there's a good reason why secularists and unbelievers are afraid of Christians; maybe that's why they refuse to be drawn to Christ - they can't hear His gentle voice calling them over the din and slaughter we have created (9).

## **7- War against Islam - Is it a holy war?**

On several occasions, Bush has publicly rejected the notion that the US is involved in any holy war. His aides said he misspoke himself when he used the word 'crusade' to describe the war on terror.

The sad truth is though that vast numbers of Muslims do see the US as engaged in a crusade against Islam, large numbers of Evangelical Americans welcome the idea of America as a crusader nation waging a holy war.

The great American journalist Walter Lippman had a warning for US leaders. He said that, "the tendency to transform our mundane and secular matters into religious and moral dogmas is an old and bad habit of the human race."

It is a habit that has resurfaced with a vengeance under the Bush administration. In the post-9/11 world however, it is Islam that emerges as the new "evil empire" for the religious right.

After Spt. 11, If you have listened to the media, you would have regularly heard Muhammad denounced as the anti-Christ. You would have heard the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan depicted as a clash of religion and civilization, and you would have heard American soldiers described as a Christian army doing God's work. Franklin Graham, the son of Billy Graham, denounced Islam as "a very wicked and evil religion."

The comments of the Religious Right and Bush's own declarations about a godly mission seemed to confirm the fear of many Muslims that the US was indeed fighting a religious war. Those fears stoked the fires



of radical Islam, and by all accounts brought in a flood of new recruits to the cause of Jihad. They also had a deeply damaging impact on Washington's effort to enlist moderate Muslim support for its actions in the Middle East.

### **8- Military support of the war**

Another striking example is the case of General Jerry Boykin. Boykin would appear in uniform at Evangelical churches preaching that America was at war with Satan. In one of more than dozen sermons, he said the US would prevail over the Muslim because "my God is bigger than his" and jihadists will be defeated" if we come to them in the name of Jesus. "And for good measure, Boykin added that Bush had been appointed by God, suggesting that the president has a divine mandate to wield the sword in the Middle East. Asked about these comments, Donald Rumsfeld made light of the matter by saying that America is a free country and every one can express his views freely, while Bush simply said he didn't share Boykin's views.

### **9- Evangelical support of the war**

Opinion polls showed it was the 60 million Evangelicals who were among the strongest supporters of Bush's administration, providing a moral and religious blessing for both the war on terror and the Iraq intervention. The support was partly based on dispensational premillennialism which sees the world spiraling towards apocalypse.

Opinion polls showed that a huge number of Evangelicals saw the attacks on the World Trade Center as the fulfillment of biblical prophecy. 9/11 was a sign of the approaching of Final Judgment as well as punishment for the secularism and immorality of US society.

Evangelicals also believe that the war in Iraq was predicted in the Bible! The theologian Michael Lerner says the fundamentalism of many American Evangelicals "fits neatly with a politics of militarism, xenophobic nationalism, and support for US domination over other countries."

### **10- Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the Christian Right**

The religious Right has had a much more direct and damaging influence on U.S. foreign policy. The millions of Evangelicals, who believe in the dispensational pre-millennialism, are sometimes called Christian Zionists. They believe that the cataclysmic events heralding the second coming will all happen in the territory of Biblical Israel, the territory that stretches from the Nile to the Euphrates. This land, they claim, was covenanted by God to the Jews and must be reclaimed by Israel before the second coming can happen and before Jesus can build his kingdom in Jerusalem. Many Christian Zionists even believe that the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, one of Islam's holiest sites, must be destroyed as a pre-condition for Christ's return.

Now if you hold these views the political implications are clear: trading land for peace, the longstanding premise of any peace deal between the Palestinians and Israel is a heresy.

Because of the strength of their numbers, and their passionate commitment to Israel, the Christian Zionists have become an extraordinarily powerful force on Israel's behalf—in many ways even more powerful than AIPAC, the American Israel Public Affairs lobby.

Over the past 22 years, the Christian Zionists have created literally dozens of pro-Israel organizations, notably the Stand for Israel Movement and CIPAC, the Christian Israel Public Action Committee.

They raise each year around two hundred millions of dollars to sponsor Jewish immigration to Israel, and to expand Israeli settlements on the West bank and the Golan heights. These too are pre-conditions in the eyes of pre-millennialists for the End-Days to unfold and for Judgment Day to happen.

Evangelicals also organize pro-Israel solidarity rallies and distribute videos that encourage the faithful to pray for Israel's victory over its enemies. The deceased Jerry Falwell said, "The Bible Belt is Israel's only safety belt right now." There is no safety belt for Palestinians.

Many Christian Zionists feel that Palestinians should simply be brushed aside by destiny, and be transferred to Jordan or some other Arab country.

The huge donations the Religious Right give Israel each year for building settlements on the Palestinian land, results in occupying the Palestinian land by force, demolishing their houses, expelling Palestinian families to barren lands and keep them there without shelter, and then those who oppose such evil treatment are killed without mercy under the pretext that they were terrorists threatening the security of Israel.

In addition to the Israelis who are guilty of committing such ceaseless human crimes, the Religious Right shares with the Israelis the guilt of such crimes as well.

In Islam those who unjustly hurt innocent believing men and women, bear on themselves a calumny and a glaring sin. They suffer the penalties of a double guilt; their own sins and the injuries they caused to the oppressed.

The Koran says in this respect;

And those who hurt believing men and believing women, without that they have earned it, have laid upon themselves calumny and manifest sin (Al-Ahzâb, 58).

For their part, successive Israeli governments have welcomed an alliance with Evangelical Christians, and do all they can to cultivate it. A special section in the Israeli embassy in Washington was set up to cement ties with Evangelicals.

Major Jewish organizations in the U.S. also welcomed an alliance of convenience with such a fervently pro-Israel community. But many American Jews feel their interests are not well served by the religious Right assault on the wall of separation between church and state. The last thing they want is for America to be formally defined as a Christian nation.

In November 2005, Abe Foxman, Director of the ADL and Rabbi Eric Yoffie, president of the Union for Reform Judaism, criticized the religious Right for its bigotry. Remarkably, they were quickly silenced by

other Jewish leaders, and by threats from Evangelicals that they might withdraw their support for Israel.

American Jews also wonder whether Christian Zionists are anything more than fair weather friends. After all, in the Apocalyptic “End Days”, as prophesied by the Evangelicals that two thirds of the Jews will die in the Battle of Armageddon, and the remaining third will have to choose to convert to Christianity.

The choice “die or convert” is obviously not the most appealing one for Jews, even if they believe, as they do, that evangelical scenarios are nonsense.

### **Foreign Policy and the Views of the Religious Right**

It didn't matter to the White House, however, whether Evangelical views are nonsense or not. What mattered was that their votes were far too important for their positions on Israel to be ignored. As a consequence, George W. Bush has rarely taken any position on the Arab-Israeli conflict without taking into account the views of the Religious Right.

In 2002, George Bush initially urged Ariel Sharon to withdraw from key West Bank towns that Israeli troops had reoccupied when the second Palestinian uprising began. But within forty-eight hours, Bush suddenly reversed himself and gave a green light to the re-occupation. What had happened was that Evangelicals had flooded the White House with a hundred thousand e-mails and phone calls. And Karl Rove and other presidential advisors were not about to alienate the most important constituency in the Republican Party.

A similar reversal happened when Bush's press spokesman expressed concern over Israel's assassination of Sheik Ahmed Yassin, the spiritual leader of Hamas. His statement provoked another firestorm of Evangelical protest and another volte-face -- this time an endorsement of Israel's policy of selective assassination -- a policy that violates the Geneva Conventions and which the U.S. was alone in supporting in the UN Security Council.

In Congress, more than a hundred members of the Religious Right are active Christian Zionists. They oppose final status peace negotiations with the Palestinians, and dismissed the now defunct Road Map process.

Before being forced to resign on corruption charges, Tom DeLay, the House Majority leader, stated that “the time has come to drop the empty pretence that we ( the U.S) can serve the region as a mere (peace) broker.” On a visit to the Golan and West Bank, DeLay stunned observers by saying: “I don’t see occupied territories. I see Israel.”

It’s widely believed that Bush only agreed to sign on to the Road Map peace process because of pressure from Tony Blair. Blair rightly judged that the U.S. could hardly improve its image in the Muslim world without making at least a token effort in favor of justice for the Palestinians.

It is true that Bush has made some strong declarations in favor of a Palestinian state, which, on the surface, appear to run counter to the view of the Christian Right. So far though it has been a purely rhetorical commitment. Over the eight years Bush spent in the White House, it cannot be said that he has invested any real energy or effort towards advancing the two-state solution.

Indeed he has acquiesced in the building of Israel security wall that divides the West Bank, and he has quietly given a green light for the steady expansion of Jewish settlements there that make a peace agreement less likely every day.

Bush has said that Israelis have the right to make territorial adjustments -- code words signifying that they don’t have to return to their pre-1967 borders, the so-called Green Line. It was also made clear at the outset of his administration that, unlike his father, George W. Bush would never use economic levers to pressure Israel to make concessions to the Palestinians. Again, to do so would be to jeopardize the support of literally millions of his Evangelical voters.

So what we see in this context is the Religious Right having a very direct role in shaping American foreign policy. And once again, in my view, an obscurantist theology and sectarian worldview has hurt

American interests and in all probability drawn more recruits to the cause of Jihad.

Many in the Muslim world wondered about the extent to which the Bush administration (Bush, Ashcroft, members of the senior military and Congress) was influenced by their Hard-line Zionist Christian Right roots and supporters. The tendency of some Christian fundamentalist missionaries to celebrate the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan as an act of God, and rush to convert Muslims exacerbated the belief that American foreign policy was fulfilling a Christian fundamentalist agenda.

## **9- The conservative protestant leaders attack the religion of Islam**

After the event of September 11, the attack on Islam by the conservative Protestant leaders: Franklin Graham, Benny Hinn, Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, Jimmy Swaggart, Chuck Baldwin and others became more frequent.

### **a- Attack by Peter Ruckman**

Even before the sad events of Sept. 11, a Christian preacher called Peter S. Ruckman launched a series of impudence and obscenity against Allah the Lord of Creation, Muhammad the seal of the Prophets, and the Koran the last divine revelation to mankind. Ruckman called the Prophet the foulest names imaginable.

In a Christian journal called "Bible believer's Baptist" dated July, 2001, under the title "The Noble Koran vs. The Holy Scriptures (Rom. 1:2)", Ruckman claimed that he read the Koran more than thirty times and became fully aware of its contents. His supposed comprehension and intelligence came up however with the following impudence: "The Koran was dictated by an illiterate Arab through a period of about twenty-three years. He was a fleshy, sensual epileptic who often went into frenzies and foamed at the mouth like a camel....At fifty-two years he married a nine-year-old and added her to his thirteen-wife harem, he left nine widows at his death and went to a Paradise where he could get a score of beautiful, black-eyed virgins added to his fourteen "legit" wives....I have overstated nothing and slandered no one. This demoniac "rag head" encouraged killing all Christians and Jews; in obedience, his

followers practiced mutilation and torture of prisoners, the killing of the males, the concubinage of their wives, and the enslavement of their children. Since Muhammad was primarily interested in sex and violence (a TV setup) he threw the New Testament out of the tent flap as soon as he saw it, for it did not recommend polygamy and even advised against it."

Even thus speak the ignorant who know not. Allah is all aware of Ruckman's insolence and on the Day of Resurrection He will judge his ugly deeds. He will have no defender from Allah. Humiliation will cover his face, and on him will be a penalty terrible. He will taste the torment of the fire.

b- Attack by Franklin Graham:

Franklin Graham appeared on the NBC Nightly News, commenting on Islam. He allegedly said:" The God of Islam is not the same God. He's not the son of God of the Christian or Judeo-Christian faith. It's a different God, and I believe it [Islam] is a very evil and wicked religion." This statement is confusing because Graham seems to imply that Jews believe that Jesus is the son of God -- a belief that is contrary to historical Jewish belief. He continued: "I don't believe this is a wonderful, peaceful religion. When asked by NBC News to clarify his statement, Graham repeated his charge that Islam, as a whole, is an evil. "

c- Attack by Benny Hinn:

Benny Hinn proclaimed to thousands of Christians at the American Airlines Center in Dallas, TX that "We are on God's side. This is not a war between Arabs and Jews. It's a war between God and the devil." Several conservative Christian ministers from the Dallas area, who shared the podium, clapped and nodded their approval. Later, a few of them said that the line between Christians and Muslims is the difference between good and evil. They are playing on the emotions of the people.

**d- Attack by Pat Robertson:**

Robertson's 700-Club regularly features highly inflammatory programming that promotes bigotry against Muslims.

In September 18, 2002 American Muslims watched a ridiculous play. The stage was Fox News Channel and the main actors were the foul mouthed racial bigot, Pat Robertson and his interviewers, Sean Hannity and Alan Colmes. The program was an example of how the network promotes anti-Muslim hate. On that program, host Sean Hannity seemed to encourage televangelist Pat Robertson in his venomous attack on Islam and on Prophet Muhammad.

About Muhammad Robertson said: " This man was an absolute wild-eyed fanatic, he was a robber and a brigand. And to say that these terrorists distort Islam, they are carrying out Islam. I mean, this man [Muhammad] was a killer. And to think that this is a peaceful religion is fraudulent." Robertson also called Islam "a monumental scam." He also went on to say that Islam "is not a peaceful religion that wants to co-exist. They want to co-exist until they can control, dominate and then, if need be, destroy."

About the Koran Robertson said: "The Koran is strictly a theft of Jewish theology."

#### **e- Attack by Jerry Falwell**

The deceased Jerry Falwell called Muhammad, a 'terrorist'.

#### **f- Attack by Jimmy Swaggart**

Televangelist Jimmy Swaggart referred to the Prophet Muhammad as a sex deviant, pervert and pedophile. He also called for the expulsion of all Muslim university students in the United States and for profiling of airline passengers with a diaper on their head and a fan-belt around their waist.

Of American Muslims, Swaggart also said: 'We ought to tell every other Muslim living in this nation that if you say one word, you're gone.'



I wonder, who is pervert, the best of creation, the Messenger of mercy and peace to all mankind, or this moron televangelist who was caught with a prostitute in 1986?

In 1986, evangelist Jimmy Swaggart began on-screen attacks against fellow televangelists Marvin Gorman and Jim Bakker. He uncovered Gorman's affair with a member of Gorman's congregation, and also helped expose Bakker's infidelity (which was arranged by a colleague while on an out-of-state trip). These exposures received widespread media coverage. Gorman retaliated in kind by hiring a private investigator to uncover Swaggart's own adulterous indiscretions with a prostitute. Swaggart was subsequently forced to step down from his pulpit for a year and made a tearful televised apology in February 1988 to his congregation, saying "I have sinned against you, my Lord, and I would ask that your precious blood would wash and cleanse every stain until it is in the seas of God's forgiveness." (4).

Swaggart was caught again by California police three years later in 1991 with another prostitute, Rosemary Garcia, who was riding with him in his car when he was stopped for driving on the wrong side of the road. When asked why she was with Swaggart, she replied, "He asked me for sex. I mean, that's why he stopped me. That's what I do. I'm a prostitute." (5).

g- Attack by Chuck Baldwin

While worshipping at the Islamic Center of Washington, Bush remarked, "Islam traces its origin back to God's call on Abraham. And Ramadan commemorates the revelation of God's word in the Holy Koran to the prophet Muhammad."

Chuck Baldwin commented: "Does Mr. Bush not realize that the Holy Bible, not the Koran, is the one and only written revelation of God to man? Is he that ignorant of the Christian teaching? Or, was he deliberately denying Christian doctrine in order to curry favor with his Muslim hosts?"

The ignorance of Chuck Baldwin was so deep that he doesn't know or foolishly ignores that the Koran was descended upon Muhammad after

nearly 530 years from Jesus? Doesn't he know that the Koran is a Book of guidance and enlightenment? A book expressing clearly the very Word of Allah as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad and protected for all time against falsification.

Allah said about the Koran:

If We had sent down this Koran upon a mountain, thou wouldst have seen it humbled, split asunder out of the fear of Allah. And those similitudes – We strike them for men; haply they will reflect (Al-Hashr, 21).

Is Chuck Baldwin so ignorant that he doesn't know that the Koran is a universal Message to the whole world and not just the Arabs?

We have sent thee not, except to mankind entire, good tidings to bear, and warning; but most men do not know it (Saba', 21).

Chuck Baldwin and his like must understand that Allah has sent the Koran to raise it over all other religions which oppose it, though the disbelievers be averse.

It is He who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth, that he may uplift it above every religion, though the unbelievers be averse (As-Saff, 9).

O people of the book (Jews and Christians)! There hath come to you Our Messenger, revealing to you much that you used to hide in the Book, and passing over much (that is now unnecessary). There hath come to you from Allah a (new) light and a perspicuous Book. Wherewith Allah guideth all who seek His good pleasure to ways of peace and security, and leadeth them out of darkness, by His Will, unto the light, guideth them to a Path that is straight. In blasphemy indeed are those who say that Allah is Christ, the son of Mary..." V:15-19

## **10- False Prophets**

Benny Hinn "stated clearly that he had seen saints ("dead saints") and that they talked to him, gave him instructions, and told him they were praying for him. This is clearly necromancy or communication with the

dead. He went further to state that his necromancy was Biblically supported by Jesus Christ's experience on the Mount of Transfiguration when Moses and Elijah talked to the Lord."

Literally hundreds of thousands of people are being influenced by this man's heretical teachings.

Pat Robertson like most charismatic televangelists claims to receive additional revelation from God, and on regular and consistent bases. In fact he even claims that God speaks to him in an audible voice. He also apparently considers himself a prophet! In several occasions, he has made prophecies which did not come to pass. He also claimed that God chose him "to usher the coming of My Son'!

In his book, 'The Secret Kingdom', Robertson claimed God gave him a revelation of eight universal laws, and that God is bound by these laws and has no choice but to obey them. He also claimed that Jesus had appeared to him in a vision and told him that he has been appointed a modern day John the Baptist to "usher in " his coming. Further he says that Jesus specifically told him he wanted him to get the first television shots of his return to earth.

The teachings of these false prophets are extremely dangerous to spiritual health. A new generation of Word of Faith ministries is being grown, with more and more error and heresy. It continues to drift further and further into darkness.

As spiritual adultery increases in the church, false prophets will flourish as highly sought after speakers, and as Christians accept more of these false teachings indiscriminately, many will fall away, believing in a phony faith.

Jesus said about these false prophets:

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves (Matthew 7: 15).

We read in the Bible:

From the least to the greatest, all are greedy for gain; prophets and priests alike, all practice deceit (Jeremiah 6:13).

The Koran also says about false prophets:

And who can be more unjust than he who invents a lie against Allah, or says: 'A revelation has come to me' whereas no revelation has come to him in anything; and who says, 'I will reveal the like of what Allah has revealed.' And if you could but see the wrongdoers are in the agonies of death, while the angels are stretching forth their hands (saying): 'deliver your souls! This day you shall be recompensed with the torment of the degradation because of what you used to utter against Allah other than the truth. And you used to reject His signs with disrespect (Al-An'am, 93).

Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, is the seal of the prophets. No real prophets will come after him. Jesus in his second coming will not be considered as the last of the prophets because he has already completed his mission. Jesus in his second coming will judge by the Koran, the one unified book guarded by Allah until the Day of Resurrection. Religion with Allah is only Islam and Jesus will continue to promulgate the Message of Islam until the end of his life on earth.

It is a fact that during the last 1400 years no man has emerged whose life and work bears even the slightest resemblance to that of a prophet. Nor has any one presented a book, which could be remotely considered as divine communication. Still less has there been a man to claim legitimate authority as a lawgiver for mankind.

The Koran says:

Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the last of the Prophets. And Allah has knowledge over everything (Al-Ahzab, 40).

The question then arises: how does a televangelist, who is supposedly involved in non-profit work, manage to create such a fortune for himself?

Televangelists think that their entertainment is so important that it is worth billions of dollars from their audiences. In order to validate the worthiness of their television programs, hosts invite prophecy ministers who claim to have divinely given prophecy that will dazzle audiences. But, we already know that God sealed prophecy, so whatever the minister has to say is just more theory. But, the prophecy minister tries to convince the audience that he is a really special person who has an in with God.

So, what compels ministers to claim that they have a special in with God so that God gives prophetic revelations only to them?

One answer is that ministers need to make a living. Income of ministers is determined by donations and book sells. A minister that is just entering the religious industry might decide he could make a good living as a special man to whom God gave prophetic understanding. Special prophetic understanding would be his hook. In advertising terminology, he would be using a main selling point for a target market.

These false prophets after being poor became extremely rich, after being modest and humble became arrogant and overbearing.

Televangelist Joyce Meyer said that she should not have to defend how she spends the ministry's money. "We teach and preach and believe Biblically that God wants to bless people who

serve Him, so there is no need for us to apologize for being blessed.”

Christianity in America became a business. The extravagant wealth of the televangelists was mentioned in many articles and several newspapers. They were called “greedy televangelists and wolves in sheep’s clothing.” Their extravagant wealth which included stylish sports cars and private jets, luxurious houses and family compounds, ranches and estates, exaggerating salaries and earnings, flashy jewelry, hotels, diamond mines, and extravagant life style - was mentioned in detail.

Among those mentioned are Paul Crouch and his wife Janish Crouch; Joel Osteen; John Hagee; Joyce Meyer; Pat Robertson; Creflo Dollar; Juanita Bynum; Robert shuller; Rodney Howard - browne; Benny Hinn; Paula and Randy White; James MacDonald; Oral Roberts; Jim and Tammy Bakker; Mike Murdock; James Eugene; Robert Tilton (2).

Allah said in the Koran about the rabbis and monks who amass wealth and do not spend it in the way of Allah:

O believers, many of the rabbis and monks indeed consume the goods of the people in vanity and bar from Allah’s way. Those who treasure up gold and silver; and do not expend them in the way of Allah - give them the good tidings of a painful chastisement, the day they shall be heated in the Fire of Gehenna (Hell) and therewith their foreheads and their sides and their backs shall be branded: ‘This is the thing you have treasured up for yourselves; therefore taste you now what you were treasuring (Al-Tawba, 35).

The question then arises: Is evangelical Christianity on the verge of collapse?

Christian commentator Michael Spencer describes himself as a post-evangelical reformation Christian in search of a Jesus-shaped spirituality. Spencer has an interesting view of the American evangelical movement. According to an article in the Christian Science Monitor, Spencer says:

“We are on the verge – within 10 years – of a major collapse of evangelical Christianity. This breakdown will follow the deterioration of the mainline Protestant world and it will fundamentally alter the religious and cultural environment in the West.”

Spencer thinks that within two generations, evangelicalism will be a house deserted of half its occupants. (Between 25 and 35 percent of Americans today are Evangelicals.) In the ‘Protestant’ 20th century, Evangelicals flourished. But they will soon be living in a very secular and religiously antagonistic 21st century.

Spencer adds that his collapse will herald the arrival of an anti-Christian chapter of the post-Christian West. Intolerance of Christianity will rise to levels many of us have not believed possible in our lifetimes, and public policy will become hostile toward evangelical Christianity, seeing it as the opponent of the common good.

Why is this going to happen?

Spencer answers: “Evangelicals have identified their movement with the culture war and with political conservatism. This will prove to be a very costly mistake. Evangelicals will increasingly be seen as a threat to cultural progress. Public leaders will consider them bad for America, bad for education, bad for children, and bad for society.”

Spencer thinks that the evangelical investment in moral, social, and political issues has depleted America’s resources and exposed their weaknesses. Being against gay marriage and being rhetorically pro-life will not make up for the fact that massive majorities of Evangelicals can’t articulate the Gospel with any coherence. Evangelicalism doesn’t need a bailout. Much of it needs a funeral.

Spencer however, holds out some optimism for the future of Christianity:

“We can rejoice that in the ruins, new forms of Christian vitality and ministry will be born. I expect to see a vital and growing house church movement. This cannot help but be good for an evangelicalism that has made buildings, numbers, and paid staff its drugs for half a century.”

## **11- Tea Party hates Islam and Muslims**

Does the Tea Party hate Muslims? Certainly if they are not actually anti-Arab Islamophobes, then they are doing nothing to challenge this portrayal of themselves as religious bigots, not to mention racists.

Judson Phillips, the founder of the Tea Party Nation, does not mince words when it comes to his views on Islam and the people who practice the faith. "A majority of Tea Party members, I suspect, are not fans of Islam," Phillips said. "I, personally have a real problem with Islam. With Islam, you have a religion that says kill the Jews, kill the infidels. It bothers me when a religion says kill the infidels. It bothers me a lot more when I am the infidel."

Phillips sent out an email asking voters of Minnesota's 5th Congressional District to vote for Republican candidate Lynn Torgerson, and against Rep. Keith Ellison (D-Minn.) because he is a Muslim:

“There are a lot of liberals who need to be retired this year, but there are few I can think of more deserving than Keith Ellison. Ellison is one of the most radical members of congress. He has a zero rating from the American Conservative Union. He is the only Muslim member of congress. He supports the Counsel for American Islamic Relations, Hamas and has helped congress send millions of tax to terrorists in Gaza.”

And he refuses to backtrack <http://dailycaller.com/2010/10/27/tea-party-nation-founder-a-majority-of-tea-party-members-are-not-fans-of-islam/> from his anti-Muslim statements. "I am not going to apologize because I'm bothered by a religion that says kill the infidel, especially when I am the infidel," said Phillips on the Tea Party Nation website. "Should we vote out Keith



Ellison just because he is a Muslim? No. But his beliefs define his character and his character is a central issue." Meanwhile Phillips denied on the Last word with Lawrence O'Donnell that he believes Muslims should be barred from holding public office.

Rep. Ellison responded to Phillips in the Washington Post, noting that religious tolerance is a deeply rooted American value: "Americans want unity, inclusion, and a spirit of generosity--not hate, bigotry, and fear. We cannot allow the politics of fear to drive our political discourse," the congressman said. "I issue a call to civility, and urge Americans to reject the divisive rhetoric of Republican Tea Party leaders like Judson Phillips; including calls for my defeat solely because of my religion." Ellison also noted that some people may not share his political views.

"This is OK. In America, we cherish our diversity of views. But an American's religion is their own business and no one should be excluded based on considerations like religion, race, sex, etc.," he added.

On her website, Torgerson displays her own brand of blatant Islamophobia. On immigration she says "The thing we most need to protect against is to prevent the immigration of radical Islamists into our country. And, it needs to be emphasized that they are not going to tell us that they are radical Islamists." She adds that "we must cease allowing radical Islamists to immigrate into the United States. They wish to institute Sharia Law, Islamic Law, in the stead of the United States Constitution." On Iran, Torgerson says that "even President Obama supports sanctions against Iran. Opponent Ellison is not even backing his own President on the Iran issue. Opponent Ellison appears to be putting his allegiance to radical Sharia Law, like his radical Islamist friends at CAIR ahead of the interests and security of we Americans."

## **12- Republicans attacking the religion of Islam**

There's no member of the Republican freshman class in Congress more outspoken than Florida Rep. Allen West.

Since he was elected, West has become a strong voice on Capitol Hill for fiscal restraint, socially conservative values — and responding to the threat posed by Islamic extremists.

On the topic of Islam, West has been particularly controversial. He calls it not a religion but a "theocratic political ideology" that's a threat to America.

Republican presidential Tea Party candidate, Newt Gingrich whose image was seriously damaged in 1997 when he was fined \$300,000 for ethic violations announced in May of 2011 that he would seek the Republican nomination for president in 2012. In order to beg for the Jewish votes he announced that the Palestinians are an invented people.

"Remember, there was no Palestine as a state. It was part of the Ottoman Empire," Gingrich said. "And I think that we've had an invented Palestinian people, who are in fact Arabs, who are historically part of the Arab community. And they had a chance to go many places and for a variety of political reasons, we have sustained this war against Israel now since the 1940s," the GOP candidate said. "I think it's tragic."

The Palestinian Authority and the PLO, incidentally, explicitly recognized Israel's right to exist in 1993. But Gingrich and Israel of course deny not only Palestine's right to exist in actual fact; they deny Palestinians the right to exist—in history, in culture, in textbooks, and of course in the most important state of them all: in a state of their own.

Gingrich's cynical efforts to attract attention to himself with divisive and destructive statements will not help his presidential ambitions, since they are aimed at putting the peace between Israel and the Palestinians that Americans yearn for even further out of reach than it is today."

Gingrich's announcements are apparently cynical, destructive, racist and a cheap stunt to get votes.

Gingrich showed his ignorance in even simple politics. He should have known that the vast majority of American Jews and the Israeli government are committed to a two-state solution in which Israelis and Palestinians live side-by-side as neighbors and in peace. Many in Israel

support the idea of an independent Palestine alongside Israel and recognize the Palestinian struggle for independence.

Gingrich also called Palestinians "terrorists." The comments struck at the heart of Palestinian sensitivities about the righteousness of their struggle for an independent state. Applying the label "invented" suggests that the Palestinian quest for independence is not legitimate.

Gingrich comments were apparently made for political gains. It is a cheap attempt to get more votes. Gingrich by his irresponsible and destructive announcements sold America's interests by denying international Law and democratic principles.

What's good for America is secondary to the extremists like Gingrich and those who listen to him. The only thing that matters to him is to implement an extreme right-wing agenda.

Gingrich and those who believe him — represent a clear and present danger to the United States of America and they must be stopped before it is too late.

Willard Mitt Romney is an American businessman and politician. He was the 70th Governor of Massachusetts from 2003 to 2007 and is a candidate for the 2012 Republican Party presidential nomination.

Mitt Romney rapped President Obama before a group of Jewish Republicans on the issue of the U.S. relationship with Israel.

Romney, who's been sharply critical throughout the primary campaign of Obama's handling of Israel, fired up attendees of the Republican Jewish Coalition at the group's conference in D.C.

"I don't think he understands America," Romney said, and promised, as he did in the most recent debate: "I will travel to Israel on my first foreign trip. I will reaffirm as a vital national interest Israel's existence as a Jewish state."

"In three years in office, he hasn't found the time or interest to visit Israel, our ally, and our friend." he said.

Romney *et al.* are vying with each other in their belligerency toward Iran. If any of them ever makes it to the White House, he will have far

more executive authority to wage war than any governing Islamist party ever would in the emerging Arab parliamentary democracies. And given the American arsenal, he would have far more power to cause human catastrophe (as in Iraq).

Michele Bachmann has a rather bizarre view of the protests which swept the Arab world starting in January, and which so far have led to the downfall of three dictators.

Michele Bachmann condemned the Arab Spring and blamed President Obama for allowing it to happen by “showing weakness” and by compromising the United States’ relationship with Israel.

“Why you think there was an Arab Spring”, she asked at a GOP fundraiser at a local barbecue restaurant. She went on to tie the uprisings to what she described as signals from the White House that America was abandoning Israel.

Republican presidential hopeful Herman Cain says President Barack Obama has been on the wrong side of nearly every situation in the Arab world and the United States has mishandled the uprisings in the region.

Other Republicans, too, were tough on Obama's handling of Libya, Egypt and Yemen during debate on foreign policy. Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich says the United States wrongly dumped overnight an ally in Syria, while Mitt Romney says it is time for the regime of Syrian President Bashar Assad to end.

Rep. Ron Paul of Texas says it would be wrong for the United States to take active stands in the region. He says it's up to each country to determine its future.

Herman Cain said during GOP debate on foreign policy that President Barack Obama's reaction to the Arab Spring, the democratic uprisings in several Arab countries earlier this year, has allowed the movement to go in the wrong direction -- a surprising statement against democratic movements.

"You have to look at Libya, Egypt, Yemen and all of the revolutions that are going on and how the administration has mishandled them," he said. "As a result, this has gotten totally out of hand."

He said the revolution in Egypt, where citizens ousted long-time President Hosni Mubarak, could strain relations between the United States and Egypt, and he warned against the increased power of opposition group the Muslim Brotherhood, which formed a political party earlier this year.

"Our relationship with Egypt may not survive," he said. "It turned out that the opposition was more of the Muslim Brotherhood, which could end up with a majority of control of this new government."

People of the United States and the whole world must understand the truth about Islam. They must not believe those who are trying to deceive them by interpreting Islam as a religion of backwardness and violence. The hostile media and the several websites attacking the religion of Islam are in fact implementing political agendas designed to ruin the Muslim world. The political and religious fabric of the United States as mentioned above plays a major role in such conflict.

In a nutshell, Islam is the religion of all mankind. It dates back to the age of Adam and its message has been conveyed to man by God's Prophets and Messengers including Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad. God addresses this issue in the Quran with regard to Prophet Abraham, saying:

"Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was an upright Muslim who did not worship others besides God." (Quran 3:67).

Since there is only One God and humankind are one species, the religion which God has ordained for human beings is one. He did not prescribe one religion for the Jews, another for Indians, yet another for Europeans, etc. Human spiritual and social needs are uniform, and human nature has not changed since the first man and woman were created. Consequently, no other religion is acceptable to God besides Islam, as He clearly states in the final revelation:

“Surely God’s religion is Islam...” (Quran 3:19)

Muslims do not believe in a god of their own, but in the only God of the universe, the Creator – Allah. They believe in all that He has imparted to them in the Koran, and all that was imparted to Abraham and Ishmael, Isaac and Jacob and to the tribes of his twelve sons and in what was imparted to Moses and to Jesus. Muslims believe in all that was imparted to all the prophets from God, they do not discriminate one of them from another, and they conform their will to God’s blessed will; God is the heart of their purpose.

The Koran says:

Say you: “We believe in God, and in what has been sent down to us, and sent down on Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac and Jacob, and the Tribes, and that which was given to Moses and Jesus and the prophets, of their Lord; we make no division between any of them, and to Him we surrender (Al-Baqarah, 136).

In essence Islam amounts to a consciousness of the will and plan of God and a joyful submission to that will and plan. Allah’s plan and will is that ‘No god there is but He, the Omnipotent the Wise.’ Allah bears witness that none has the right to be worshipped but He, and the angels and those having knowledge also give this witness. God always maintain His creation with justice,

Allah bears witness that there is no god but He, and the angels, and those having knowledge; He maintains His creation in justice. There is no god but He, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise (Al-Imran, 19).

If anyone wants a religion other than that (pure monotheism), he is false to his own nature, and he is false to God’s will and plan. Such a one cannot expect guidance, for he has deliberately renounced guidance. Any other system of faith other than pure monotheism shall not be accepted of him and shall be a great loser in the Hereafter.

God says in the Koran:

Whoso desires another religion than Islam, it shall not be accepted of him; in the next world he shall be among the losers (Al-Imran, 85).



Every human being is born with an innate consciousness of God.

The Koran says:

And when thy Lord took from the children of Adam, from their loins, their seed, and made them testify, 'Am I not your Lord? They said, 'Yes, we testify' – lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection, 'As for us, we were heedless of this,' or lest you say, 'Our fathers were idolaters aforetime, and we were seed after them. What, wilt thou then destroy us for the deeds of the vain-doers?' (Quran 7:172).

The Prophet explained that when God created Adam, He took from him a covenant at a place called Na'maan on the 9th day of the 12th month. He then extracted from Adam all of his descendants who would be born until the end of the world, generation after generation, and spread them out before Him to take a covenant from them also. He spoke to them, face to face, making them bear witness that He was their Lord. Consequently, every human being is responsible for belief in God, which is imprinted on each and every soul. It is based on this inborn belief that God defined the purpose of mankind's creation in the Koran:

"I have not created jinn and mankind except to serve Me." (Quran 51:56).

Thus, the essential purpose for which humankind was created is the worship of God. However, the Almighty is not in need of human worship. He did not create human beings out of a need on His part. If not a single human worshipped God, it would not diminish His glory in any way, and if all of humankind worshipped Him, it would not increase His glory in any way. God is perfect. He alone exists without any needs. All created beings have needs. Consequently, it is humankind that needs to worship God and man is instructed to show gratitude to God by glorifying Him (10).

In the Quran, God says:

"Glorify the praises of your Lord..." (Quran 15:98).

In glorifying God, man chooses to be in harmony with the rest of



creation which naturally glorifies its Creator. God addresses this phenomenon in many chapters of the Quran. For example, in the Quran, God states:

“The seven heavens and the earth and whosoever in them is, extol Him; nothing is, that does not proclaim His praise, but you do not understand their extolling. Surely He is All-Clement, All-Forgiving.” (Quran 17:44).

If we acknowledge our Creator, and that He created humankind to serve Him, the next question is, “How? How do we serve Him?” No doubt, this question is best answered by the One who made us. If He created us to serve Him, then He expects us to function in a particular manner, if we are to achieve our purpose. But how can we know what that manner is? How can we know what God expects from us?

Allah has told us in the Qur'aan the stories of the earlier and later generations and the creation of the heavens and the earth. He has explained in detail what is permissible and what is forbidden, the basics of good manners and morals, the rulings of worship and dealings with others, the lives of the Prophets and the righteous, and the reward and punishment of the believers and disbelievers. He has described Paradise, the abode of the believers, and He has described Hell, the abode of the disbelievers. He has explained in the Koran all things man needs for his own salvation.

"And We have sent down on thee the Book (the Koran) making clear everything, and as a guidance and a mercy, and as good tidings to those who surrender" (to Allah in Islam) [al-Nahl 16:89].

In other words, Allah has created death and created life that He may test His servants which of them is best in deed, and whether their deeds agree with His words (teachings of the Koran and the Sunna of the Prophet). Creation therefore, is not in mere sport, or without a purpose. The present life is clearly given to enable man to spend wisely his temporary journey on earth for everlasting happiness in the eternal world hereafter.

The Koran says:

Blessed be He in whose hand is the Kingdom – He is powerful over everything – who created death and life, that He might try you which of you is fairest in works; and He is the All-Mighty, the All-Forgiving (Al-Mulk 1, 2).

The main purpose of the Message of Islam is to re-establish the oneness of Allah on earth. The Oneness of Allah, known as tawhid, is the first and paramount purpose of the Islamic faith. Islam's Message has been restored and enforced in the last stage of the religious evolution by God's last Prophet and Messenger Muhammad.

The Message of the Oneness of Allah has been the chief characteristic of all religions brought by all the Messengers of Allah. This is because every religion sent from Allah was nothing but Islam - submission to Allah alone - by obeying His commandments and implementing His laws.

We sent no Messenger before you without revealing to him, "There is no god but Me, so worship Me (alone)" (Al-Anbiya 21:25).

With the passage of time, however, this message brought by all the Messengers about the Oneness of Allah became distorted by the influence of diverse beliefs and myths

When Moses came as a Messenger to the children of Israel, he came with the message of the Oneness of Allah, but the children of Israel, before and after Moses, corrupted this concept and changed the meanings of the words from their intended meanings. They made Allah into a national deity of the Israelites, the Lord God of Israel, who helped them against the worshippers of other gods. Furthermore, they ascribed to "the Lord God of Israel" many falsehoods, for example, by claiming that they were the sons of God and His beloved, that He would not punish them for their sins, that Ezra was a "son of God," that He had sons who took the daughters of men as their wives and that the children of these unions were giants, and that the Lord God was afraid they might become gods like Him, and consequently He came down and

caused them to speak different languages in order to destroy their unity. They also alleged that Jacob once fought with the Lord, hitting Him on His thigh. And they claimed that He walked in the shade of the garden and enjoyed the coolness of the breeze, and so on. All of such tales, singly as well as together, corrupted the pure concept of the Oneness of Allah.

Allah says in the Koran:

Some of the Jews pervert words from their meanings... (Al-Nisa', 46).

Jesus, peace be Upon him, came with the Message of the Oneness of Allah, but Christians ended up with a belief in the Trinity. They still claim that the Godhead is One entity divided among three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and they exhibit a variety of beliefs among various denominations concerning the nature of the person called the Son. In spite of their claim about the 'Unity of the Godhead,' the variety of concepts and interpretations prevailing among various denominations prove that their claim is false. The Christians took Jesus the son of Mary, as their Lord and took monks and rabbis as lords in legislation.

The Koran says:

They have taken their rabbis and their monks as lords besides Allah, as well as the Messiah son of Mary, whereas they were commanded to worship only One God. There is no god but He! Glory be to Him, Who is far above anything to which they may ascribe a share in His Divinity! (Al-Tawbah 9:31).

The tremendous, most heinous and unforgivable sin in the sight of God is to incorporate with Him other deities (i.e. all the false deities: Jesus as god or the son of God, Satan, idol, graves, stone, star, sun, pope, priest, rabbi, angel, human being, Messenger, saint... etc) in worship. Never shall Allah forgive such a sin, but forgives He all else to whom He will.

Allah forgives not that partners should be set up with Him (in worship), less than that He forgives to whomsoever He will. Whoso associates

with Allah anything has indeed forged a mighty sin (Al-Nisa', 48).

Thus the Islamic concept is the only concept resting on the foundation of a complete and pure belief in the Oneness of Allah, and that, among all the belief systems existing today, Islam can be characterized by this distinction.

The Message of Islam is universal, it is meant for the entire world and anyone who accepts it becomes a Muslim. Some people mistakenly believe that Islam is just a religion for Arabs, but nothing could be farther from the truth, since in actuality over 80% of the world's Muslims are not Arabs! It is easy enough to see that Muslims come from all different races, ethnic groups and nationalities. From the very beginning, Islam had a universal message for all people. This can be seen in the fact that some of the early companions of the Prophet Muhammad were not only Arabs, but also Persians, Africans and Byzantine Romans. A Muslim is a person who freely accepts to base his beliefs, values and faith on the will of Almighty God.

Allah commanded the people of the Book (Jews and Christians) to believe in the Koran as a divine Book sent to all mankind.

You who have been given the Book, believe in what We have sent down, confirming what is with you before We obliterate faces, and turn them upon their backs, or curse them as We cursed the Sabbath-men, and Allah's command is done (Al-Nisa', 47).

In the past, even though we don't see it as much today, the word "Mohammedans" was often used as a label for Muslims. This label is a misnomer and is the result of either willful distortion or sheer ignorance. One of the reasons for the misconception is that Europeans were taught for centuries that Muslims worshipped the Prophet Muhammad in the same way that Christians worship Jesus. This is absolutely not true since a Muslim is not permitted to worship anyone or anything besides Almighty God. The Muslim is a pure monotheist, he doesn't associate partners with God in worship. This is done by declaring that 'there is no god except one God and Muhammad is the Messenger of God.' In a broader sense, anyone who willingly submits to the will of God is a

Muslim. Thus, all the prophets preceding the prophet Muhammad are considered Muslims.

There are Muslims however, who are not submitting at all to the will of God and there are Muslims who are doing their best to live an Islamic life. One cannot judge Islam by looking at those individuals who have a Muslim name but in their actions, they are not living or behaving as Muslims. The extent of being a Muslim can be according to the degree to which one is submitting to the will of God, in his beliefs and his actions.

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