

# As Far as the East Is from the West: Islam, Holy War, and the Possibility of Rapprochement

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## Introduction

Some religious traditions are extremely complex and defy attempts to dissect or analyze them. Hinduism, for instance, is extraordinarily convoluted, and the various schools and sects within that heritage seem virtually to be completely different religions. At its core, though, Islamic faith is fairly easy to grasp. This may be one of the reasons why it has had marked success in expanding to cultures foreign to its roots, such as Indonesia and West Africa. We will briefly examine the historical foundations of Islam, its basic doctrines, and the duties required of its devotees. From there we will attempt to determine the meaning of “holy war” in the Islamic heritage, and attempt to decide whether conflict between Islam and Western culture is inevitable and interminable.

## Historical Foundations

Muhammed was born around A.D. 570 in Mecca. Orphaned at the age of six, he was raised by his uncle, Abu Talib. At the age of twenty five, while working as a caravan trader, Muhammed married a wealthy widow named Khadija. In the year 610, he began to receive what he interpreted to be prophetic messages from God, brought to him, as he claimed, by the angel Gabriel. These messages were a call to a monotheistic faith in the one god, Allah, and a new theology based on this belief.

Rejected by most Meccans, Muhammed fled with 150 followers on September 24,

622 (a date known as the *Hijra*, the Flight, now the beginning of the Muslim calendar), to the city of Medina, where he became the leader of the city and commanded a powerful army. After a series of battles against his enemies, Muhammed successfully invaded Mecca in 630 and instituted his faith by mandate on the city. Two years later he was dead, but the Islamic religion continued to flourish.

## Basic Beliefs

The Muslim faith is built on the *Five Pillars of Doctrine* and the *Five Pillars of Practice*. The five doctrinal pillars are belief in the prophets, in the Qur’an, in God, in angels, and in salvation at the last day.

Muslims affirm many prophets, but five are preeminent: Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammed. Of these, Abraham and Muhammed are the most important, Muhammed himself being the crown of the prophets. Jesus is important to Islam, but Muslims do not believe him to be the Son of God, since the Qur’an states that God has no son (Surah 19:35).<sup>1</sup> Muhammed is not worshiped, but devout Muslims contend that one cannot be saved without affirming his role as Prophet.

The Qur’an is the verbatim account of the “revelations” given to Muhammed by Gabriel. Muslims accord to their holy book extraordinary characteristics. Not only is it God’s greatest Word—it is also written in the language Allah himself speaks (Arabic) and is an exact replica of part of a book

that can be found in heaven, known as the *Mother of the Book*. Since orthodox Muslim scholars understand speech to be an attribute of God, many of them believe the Qur'an to be *uncreated*, a virtual attribute of God himself.<sup>2</sup> They thus actually perform an act of religious veneration that conservative Christians are sometimes (wrongfully) accused of doing—the virtual worship of a book. While Muslims reject any notion of an *Incarnation* of God as a human, many of them substitute for that a doctrine of *Inlibration*—God with us in a document.

Islamic theology is radically committed to the oneness of Allah. Muhammed worked out this doctrine in conscious distinction both to the polytheism of traditional Arabic religion and to the trinitarianism of Christians. Allah's dominance over his world is striking in its sweep, so that he causes all events by his direct actions. In the words of one Muslim scholar, "He is actually the only One who does anything. When a man writes, it is Allah who has created in his mind the will to write. Allah . . . then brings about the motion of the hand and pen and the appearance upon paper. All other things are passive. Allah alone is active."<sup>3</sup>

Christians affirm the sovereignty of God over the affairs of men, and many Christians would hold that nothing in history is ever completely outside the plan of God, for he uses even the sinful acts of the wicked to accomplish his will (Acts 2:22-23).

The Lord works out everything for his own ends—even the wicked for the day of disaster.  
The Lord detests the proud in heart.  
Be sure of this: They will not go unpunished (Prov 16:4-5).

These biblical texts make the strong assertion that God is sovereign even in the actions of the wicked, but that is not the same thing as saying that all other agents are passive and that God alone is active. Christians would contend that God does not directly cause humans to commit acts of sin (James 1:13) and that God often pursues his purposes in this world through secondary causation.<sup>4</sup> Islam asserts that Allah is the *primary cause* even of sin and moral evil in the world.<sup>5</sup>

Furthermore, Allah has no interest in entering into a personal relationship with humans, nor does he even have the ability to do so, since his distance from the created world makes such an experience a metaphysical impossibility.<sup>6</sup> There is a vast difference between the Muslim god and the God of the Bible, who is the God and Father of Jesus Christ.

### Duty and Salvation in Islam

Though Allah is sovereign, he has created other powers to do his bidding. The Muslim universe is peopled by angels, archangels, Satan, and the *Jinn*, a race of beings half-way between angels and men. Humans are brought into this world in a state of innocence. Of course, they will all eventually commit sins, yet what they need for salvation is not atonement, but a reminder of their duty.<sup>7</sup> Such duty is spelled out in the *Five Pillars of Practice*, the way of salvation in Islam:

1. Repetition of the creed (the *Shahada*). *La ilaha illa Allah; Muhammed rasul Allah*. ("There is no God but Allah; Muhammed is a messenger of Allah.") The mere utterance of this creed makes one a devout Muslim, and one should say it as often as possible.
2. Daily Prayer. Muslims are to pray five times a day, bowing in the direction of Mecca.

3. Almsgiving. Muslims share their possessions with the poor of the community. Begging is not dishonorable, since it is the will of Allah that the beggar is poor in the first place.

4. Fasting. During *Ramadan*, Muslims must fast all day. They may not eat, drink, smoke, or engage in sex until night-fall.

5. Pilgrimage. At least once in life, devout Muslims must make a pilgrimage to Mecca during the month of Dhu al-Hajj. After the pilgrimage, they are known as *Hajji*.

Keeping these five duties qualifies one for heaven, though one must also live a life worthy of Allah in order finally to be saved. Even many Muslims will be lost in the end, for they will not have lived a life sufficiently devout to be pleasing to Allah. In the case of the Muslim who fails to reach paradise, his failure is not due to sin-not-atoned-for, but to his lack of dedication to his faith.<sup>8</sup>

We might well make a couple of observations here about Islamic soteriology. First, pleasing Allah is clearly not an easy task, since he demands extreme levels of devotion to duty. The faithful follower then might well be driven to radical demonstrations of commitment in order to ensure that his god is pleased with him. Second, it also seems clear that this is a religion with little sense of assurance given to anyone, with the exception of the most extreme ascetics or “true believers.”<sup>9</sup> This points up one of the dilemmas of all religions of duty—how much attention to duty does it take to qualify one for paradise? Martin Luther might want to stand up here and point out that even if Islamic theology were true, the way of salvation purely by assiduous attention to task is a hopeless path, since one never knows just how much commitment is really enough.<sup>10</sup>

Though Christians share a common historical heritage with Islam in the bibli-

cal patriarchs, our respective doctrines of God, of Scripture, of Jesus, and of salvation are miles apart. The burden of proof, then, rests on those theologians who contend that Christians and Muslims worship the same God. I would say that we clearly do not.

### **Jihad, Crusades, and Militancy**

After the death of Muhammed, the Caliphs who succeeded him spread their empire and their faith by conquest.<sup>11</sup> There is little doubt that they believed this to be the will of Allah, since the Qur’an gives numerous injunctions to take arms against unbelievers. “Fight and slay the Pagans wherever ye find them” (Surah 9:5). “Fight those who believe not in God nor in the Last Day” (9:29). “When ye meet the Unbelievers (in fight) smite at their necks” (47:4). In addition, Paradise is promised to those who fight such wars: “I will blot out from them their iniquities, and admit them into Gardens with rivers flowing beneath” (3:195).<sup>12</sup>

Muhammed’s followers took such texts literally.<sup>13</sup> In rapid succession they conquered Babylon, Damascus, and Jerusalem. To the East, they conquered much of the Indus Valley and moved to the borders of China. They then proceeded south to Egypt where they made war on the Coptic Christians, a tradition that was vibrant, loyal to Christ, and not inclined to convert. The continuing conflict with the Copts was at times very bloody.<sup>14</sup> Islamic armies swept across North Africa, conquering Spain in A.D. 711. Not content with such successes, in the year 732 the invaders marched north, but were defeated decisively by the Frankish king Charles Martel, grandfather of Charlemagne, at the Battle of Tours.<sup>15</sup> Had Martel lost the battle, it is likely that those of us with a European/British ancestry

would have grown up reading the King James Version of the Qur'an!

Islam has a long heritage of spreading its influence at the point of the scimitar.<sup>16</sup> Offensive and deliberate militarism, then, commanded by the holy book, is part and parcel of Muslim heritage and is one of the ways in which the faith is spread and enforced. Not everyone in a conquered land was forced to become Muslim. Monotheists such as Christians and Jews could assume the status of protected minorities, or *dhimmis*, and retain their faith heritage. But they did so only under very severe restrictions, religiously, politically, and culturally.<sup>17</sup>

Such a method of religious expansion depends on several key factors. First, Muhammed himself fused religion and state together into a seamless unity. In Medina Muhammed was prophet, political leader, judge, and commander-in-chief. This meant that the state and its military could (and should) carry out the interests of the religious establishment. It is important to note that such an arrangement is actually grounded in the "revelatory claims" of the founder of the movement.<sup>18</sup>

A second factor that helps to legitimize Islam's militaristic method of expansion is its lack of a doctrine of original sin. This means that the imams (teachers), caliphs, and other key figures who agitate for such expansion cannot ultimately be accused of doing so for malicious purposes. Expansion serves the will of Allah, no matter how it is done. One Muslim scholar has defended such approaches by arguing that "this fight is waged solely for the freedom to call men unto God and unto His religion."<sup>19</sup>

One other issue is important in understanding Islamic use of militarism. Some Muslims hold that the end of the ages will

dawn in a massive conflict between Islam and the rest of the world. This final Jihad will precipitate the last hour of history and the dawn of a new age. It does seem to be the case that some Muslims who engage in terrorist activities see themselves as part of this eschatological struggle. Here again, faith seems to give legitimacy to military or even terrorist actions.

Whenever these issues are discussed, the debate eventually turns to the history of Christian militarism. It is certainly a fair issue for discussion. Furthermore, non-Christians are quick to point out that in the Old Testament God sometimes commanded the Israelites to go to war and occasionally even enjoined them to exterminate a whole population. If this is the case, do Judaism and Christianity rest on any kind of moral high ground in their criticism of Islam's brutality?

Let's take the Old Testament situation first. It is true that God ordered Israel to battle. However, on many occasions God instructed Israel to abstain from bloodshed or to be just and equitable in conducting war. And in those rare instances where Israel was told to exterminate an enemy, there was always a clear reason why this was necessary. Samuel instructed Saul to destroy the Amalekites utterly (1 Samuel 15), for they were a vicious enemy that had been set on destroying Israel from the time of the Exodus, and they were a people so wicked that God had determined to eliminate them from the earth in judgment (cf. Jer 16:4; 18:21; Amos 9:10; Ezek 26:11; 2 Chron 29:9). At times, God even used heathen nations, such as Babylon, to do his bidding in judging his own people Israel. So, for the protection of Israel, and in acts of judgment, God sometimes, though rarely, gave such orders. Israel had no ground, though, for assuming that it had

*carte blanche* to assault anyone it wished, even any pagan nation it wished, as the prophets condemned inhumane and immoral kinds of war (Amos 2; 2 Chron 28:9-11; Hos 1:4).<sup>20</sup> Moreover, God condemns the nation that depends on armaments for security (Pss 33:16, 17; 44:6; 60:10-12; Isa 31:1-3; 37:23-36).<sup>21</sup>

What about the history of Christian militarism? First, we must all humbly admit that Christians have sometimes killed the proponents of other religions, and even each other, in acts of supposed obedience to God. Some of what the Pope's forces did in the Crusades was horrifying. So, we ought to make our confession and honestly admit that the atrocities have been perpetrated in the name of Christ, though it is impossible to know how many of these perpetrators were actually "Christians" in the biblical sense of that term. Having made our confession, though, let's ask whether this is really parallel to the militarism of Islam. I contend that it is not, for several reasons.

First, war against "infidels" in general is commanded in the holy book of the Muslim faith itself, and faithful Muslims, it would seem, would be called upon to obey such commands in certain situations. The Bible gives no such general mandate for war against unbelievers. Second, the founder of Islam used war to seize power in Arabia in his own day. The founder of Christianity did no such thing. Third, the history of Muslim missions is bound up with the history of military conquest. While this has sometimes been the case in Christianity, the overwhelming majority of the history of our mission work has nothing to do with military victories.<sup>22</sup>

So, is Islam inherently militaristic or terroristic? It seems undeniable that it is committed to the use of force to make its

way. That is consistent with its holy book, with the practice of its founder, and with the history of its faith. What about terrorism? Many Muslims repudiate terrorism, but many, perhaps most, do not. A poll showed that seventy-eight percent of Palestinians supported the attacks on September 11.<sup>23</sup> It is also the case that few highly visible Muslim leaders denounced the attacks. Looking closely at the texts in the Qur'an that enjoin Jihad, it is not hard to see how a people who see themselves as oppressed, and who believe themselves to be the tools of Allah, could find a way to justify horrible acts of terror, perhaps largely as demonstrations of extreme asceticism or devotion to the cause of their god. Perhaps here, as much as anywhere, the moral uprightness of the Lord Jesus shines brightly through the fog of man's religious idolatry.

### **Islam, Christianity, and "Western Culture"**

I must address one last issue before concluding this examination: Can Islam, Christianity, and Western culture coincide peacefully? Christianity has given rise to a culture in the West, a culture that has been at odds with Islam in one way or another since the days of the seventh-century caliphs. One of the chief sources for the conflict between the two cultures lies in the fact that both lay claims to universality and exclusivity. With the exception of historic Judaism, Christianity and Islam are the only two major world religions that make such a claim. Conflict, then, was inevitable, and such conflicts have been frequent in history.

There are other points of division between Muslims and the West that are at least as profound as the differences between Islam and the Christian religion.

It is to these cultural and historical differences that many Muslim scholars and activists have pointed in the wake of the September 11 attacks. Muslims resent America's stand with Israel in the last half-century, a stand that has often pitted American materiel and moral encouragement against Arab Muslims. But the reason for the resentment coming from the East is much deeper than that. Traditional Muslims, for instance, detest the secularizing trends in the West, and virulently oppose the importing of such tendencies to their own cultures. Their revulsion is not limited merely to the influence of Western art forms, morals, and cuisine (Britney Spears, Playboy magazine, and McDonalds restaurants), but even to Western technology, since many Muslims are convinced that there is no such thing as *selective* Westernization.<sup>24</sup>

Muslim philosopher Sayyid Qutb contends that early on, Western civilization drove a wedge between God and culture, at least in comparison to Islam's blending of the two, and because of this, Muslims must resist the lure of the West, root and branch.<sup>25</sup> This eventual conquest of Athens over Jerusalem in the Western tradition has produced a society based on freedom, says Qutb, but such freedom carries the seeds of its own destruction. In contrast, he argues that Islam represents a society based on virtue, rather than freedom. The only hope for Muslims is to resist the temptation to follow the West in any way whatsoever and to take decisive action against the enemy and do whatever is necessary to resist the incursion, including engaging in war and acts of sabotage and terrorism.<sup>26</sup>

Christian evangelicals will be the first to admit that Western culture is constantly exposed to the danger of a return to moral, spiritual, and cultural barbarism due to

its insistence on freedom as a basic value. Evangelicals have also been on the forefront in denouncing the evidences of decay of the Western tradition that seem to abound in our time.<sup>27</sup> But thoughtful westerners will realize that the Islamic "solution" to the cultural problem is a chimera, and one that holds promise only for those who are inclined to accept all of the tenets of Islam. Everyone else would remain under the resolute hand of Muslim clerics, and one does not have to look very deeply into the cultural institutions of Islamic countries, even the more "free" countries, to find much that is objectionable in this regard.

Dinesh D'Souza has recently argued that the source of Western power and the reason why Europe and America became the dominant political and economic systems in the modern world was due to the confluence of the three streams: science, democracy, and capitalism.<sup>28</sup> Though Islam was once the world leader in scientific inquiry, it abandoned the search for such knowledge, since such a quest was inimical to its doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of Allah.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, genuine scientific work is predicated on the notion of progress in knowledge. But this idea, too, is inconsistent with the views of many religions of the world, including Islam, though it is thoroughly in keeping with the Christian conviction that God has a divine plan for man, and that history will proceed in a linear fashion from creation till the *Parousia*. Scientific progress, then, is the secularization of this Christian doctrine, but such secularizing does not necessarily entail the absence of God, as Alexander Pope's epitaph on Isaac Newton makes clear:

Nature and Nature's Law  
lay hid in Night  
God said, Let Newton Be,  
and all was Light.<sup>30</sup>

Scientific progress, then, though “secularized,” was not intrinsically de-theologized, but made to work on a level that did not require a priesthood or clerical council for its administration.

Democracy is, of course, a Western idea, but one that is thoroughly consistent with a Reformation understanding of human nature.<sup>31</sup> Since all are depraved, it would be unwise to place any final authority in the hands of a single ruler or even of an elite. Rather, there need to be checks and balances within the institutions of government and between the people and their chosen leaders. Such an idea does not wash in most orthodox Islamic schemes, which are often based on the rule of elite clerics and princes, though in some cases (Turkey, for instance) there are some elements of democratic reform in place.<sup>32</sup>

Capitalism, the market economy, has become the dominant economic system in the West, and has led to unparalleled prosperity, generally, in countries where it has been entrenched for a significant period of time.<sup>33</sup>

While capitalism *per se* is not a biblical idea, the notions of hard work, entrepreneurship, receiving value for one's labor, owning possessions that can be handed down to one's progeny, and the conviction that the calling of someone to a trade or to be a merchant—all of these are found abundantly in the Bible. The diligence and resourcefulness of a Caleb who, though an old man, girded his loins and took possession of the land is considered in the Bible to be a salutary thing, even the mark of God's blessing (Josh 14:6-15). In addition, Jubilee Laws (Leviticus 25) serve the two-

fold purpose of eliminating permanent slave classes and of preserving family inheritances from being lost due to debt. It is clear that God endorses the entrepreneurial spirit and ownership of property, as long as they are not managed in an unjust manner. The form of development of this in Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* is, of course, a thoroughly Western idea, but one still with implicit connections to biblical ideals.

The confluence of these three great ideals has produced Western culture.<sup>34</sup> It is certainly possible that this great stream of tradition could take an anti-Christian turn around some bend of the river. And in fact it often has. We are today fighting an internecine war to see if unfettered freedom will win out over virtue. I believe that the decline of the West is not inherently inevitable. Perhaps we can learn from Islam that our commitment to freedom must be carried out with the recognition that when we abandon the commitment to virtue, freedom will become the next casualty.

The question is whether Islam and the West can ever come to a *rapprochement*, considering that these ideals are basically antithetical to the Muslim conception of God, authority, and morality. Time will tell. It will not be easy. Mutual respect is needed, but such respect seems unlikely to be mutual any time soon, given the current state of temper in the Islamic world. In the meantime, we ought to do the best we can to clean up our own house, and to share the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ with all of the winsomeness and boldness that are consistent with its claim to being the only hope of the world.

#### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>In addition, the Qur'an claims that Jesus denied that he was divine, Surah 5:116-

117; see also Fazlur Rahman, *Islam*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979) 26-29.

<sup>2</sup>Kenneth Cragg, *Muhammed and the Christian* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1984) 82-83.

<sup>3</sup>Quoted in Norman Geisler and Abdul Saleeb, *Answering Islam: The Crescent in Light of the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995) 39.

<sup>4</sup>See the discussion on this matter in two recent works: John Frame, *The Doctrine of God* (A Theology of Lordship; Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2002) 119-160; John S. Feinberg, *No One Like Him* (Foundations of Evangelical Theology; Wheaton: Crossway, 2001) 625-776.

<sup>5</sup>Muslims do not all agree on the extent of Allah's sovereignty, but the position I have presented here is the most common interpretation. See Winfried Corduan, *Neighboring Faiths* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1998) 93.

<sup>6</sup>George W. Braswell, Jr., *Islam: Its Prophet, People, Politics and Power* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1996) 45.

<sup>7</sup>Surah 2 of the Qur'an is a discussion of Adam's sin. After his initial displeasure with Adam, God relented so that there was no final judgment, but the forgiveness was based simply on God's determination not to judge, not on an objective means of atonement.

<sup>8</sup>Susan Haneef, *What Everyone Should Know about Islam and Muslims* (Chicago: Kazi, 1979) 37-38.

<sup>9</sup>Corduan tells of meeting a Muslim man in Singapore who objected to this notion, claiming that "as long as he kept his thoughts on Allah and

obeyed his commandments every second of every day, he could be sure of his salvation" (Corduan, 92, italics in original).

<sup>10</sup>Luther actually did say that Islam was essentially a religion of works and the sword. See Martin Luther, *On War against the Turks*, trans. C. M. Jacobs and R. C. Schultz (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967) 177.

<sup>11</sup>It needs to be said that they did not always encounter heavy resistance, as some of the "Christian," Zoroastrian, Jewish, and other religious cultures they engaged were decaying and ripe for change.

<sup>12</sup>See also Hadith 4:254-255, in which al-Mughira replied to the query why these Arabs were making ready to do battle, "The Lord of the Heavens and the Earths . . . sent to us from among ourselves a Prophet, the messenger of our Lord, has ordered us to fight you until you worship Allah alone, or give tribute" (quoted in Braswell, 73).

<sup>13</sup>Some Muslims, such as Zaid Shakir, interpret Jihad in metaphorical fashion, but this has not been the traditional interpretation. See Rudolph Peters, *Jihad in Classical and Modern Islam* (Princeton: Markus Wiener, 1996).

<sup>14</sup>Under Caliph el Hakim (AD 996-1021) 3,000 churches were destroyed, thousands of Copts martyred, and thousands more made to apostatize (*The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, s.v., "Coptic Church" [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997]). Some Monophysite writers saw the Islamic invasion as God's judgment against

the Orthodox for their theology (Braswell, 253).

<sup>15</sup>Earle E. Cairns, *Christianity through the Centuries*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996) 167.

<sup>16</sup>Braswell argues that, since the Muslim invaders often allowed Christians and Jews to retain their faith, though under harsh restrictions, it is not completely accurate that they did missions by war. While he has a point, and we ought to recognize that not all conquered peoples were forced to bow in the mosque, often those who refused to convert were not treated well by their captors. There are of course exceptions to this rule. See Braswell, 263.

<sup>17</sup>Kenneth Cragg and R. Marston Speight, *The House of Islam* (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1988) 82.

<sup>18</sup>Scholar Muhammad Hamidullah argues that the executive sovereignty of Islamic nations belongs to God, that their legislative focus comes from the Qur'an, that judicially they must treat all men equally, and that culturally the Qur'an and its teachings must be preeminent (Hamidullah, *Introduction to Islam* [Paris: Centre Culturel Islamique, 1969] 156-158). This seems clearly to legitimize a sort of theonomic focus for Muslim countries.

<sup>19</sup>Quoted in Geisler and Saleeb, 126.

<sup>20</sup>Bloesch has a fine discussion of this point, though his overall assessment of the role of war leaves something to be desired. See Donald G. Bloesch, *Freedom for Obedience: Evangelical Ethics for Contemporary Times* (San Francisco: Harper and Brothers, 1987) 305, and his wider discus-

sion, 287-315.

<sup>21</sup>See the excellent treatment in Peter C. Craigie, *The Problem of War in the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978).

<sup>22</sup>Christian mission work has sometimes followed on the heels of colonial expansion, but has not usually been part and parcel of that expansion.

<sup>23</sup>Joseph Lelyveld, "The Mind of a Suicide Bomber," *New York Times Magazine*, 28 Oct 2001, 50.

<sup>24</sup>Ibrahim Abu-Rabi, *Intellectual Origins of Islamic Resurgence in the Modern Arab World* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1996) 133-172.

<sup>25</sup>Samuel Huntington has famously argued that with the decline of communism, the major ideological conflicts in the future will be between the different religious traditions with their divergent ontologies and systems of ethics. See Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* (New York: Touchstone Books, 1997).

<sup>26</sup>Dinesh D'Souza, *What's So Great about America?* (Washington: Regnery, 2002) 20-23.

<sup>27</sup>Carl F. H. Henry, *Gods of this Age or God of the Ages?* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994) 1-58.

<sup>28</sup>D'Souza, 60-64.

<sup>29</sup>He cites the work of Muslim scholar al-Ghazali in support of this claim (*ibid.*, 62).

<sup>30</sup>Alister McGrath, *Science and Religion: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999) 16.

<sup>31</sup>See, for instance, Nathan O. Hatch, *The Sacred Cause of Liberty: Republican Thought and the Millennium in Revolutionary New England* (New

Haven: Yale, 1977) 97-138; Edmund S. Morgan, *Inventing the People: The Rise of Popular Sovereignty in England and America* (New York: Norton, 1988) 38-54. For a similar Catholic presentation, see Michael Novak, *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* (New York: Madison, 1982) 81-95.

<sup>32</sup>Even Braswell, whose phenomenological analysis of Islam is often very Muslim-friendly, acknowledges that most Muslims prefer some sort of monarchical or theocratic rule (Braswell, 126-129).

<sup>33</sup>For a fine and balanced presentation of biblical economic issues, see John Schneider, *Godly Materialism: Rethinking Money & Possessions* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1994). Treatments such as those found in Blomberg and Sider are seriously problematic. Craig L. Blomberg, *Neither Poverty Nor Riches: A Biblical Theology of Material Possessions* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999); Ronald J. Sider, *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*, rev. ed. (Dallas: Word, 1997).

<sup>34</sup>D'Souza, 66.