***The Doctrines and Pillars of Islam
RO73-01***

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Please open your Bibles once more to our study in Romans 6:6-10. The apostle Paul explains some monumentally important doctrinal truth.

**Christ Died Once-for-All**

We have learned that since believers in the church age are in union with the Lord Jesus Christ through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, at the point of salvation, they share in the benefits of His death for sin, and of His resurrection life. Once Jesus Christ had been raised from the dead, He could never again die for sin. Paul has repeatedly stressed this. He has now been freed from the realm of sin and death forever. The implication of this is that there is no sin left in the universe which has not been paid for which would subject Jesus Christ to death again. That's the important thing to realize. Here is the principle of unlimited atonement. Jesus Christ paid for all the sins of all mankind of all ages in the whole universe. He died once-for-all, consequently. No repeat is possible or necessary.

By the same token, the believer in Christ can never again lose his salvation, because there is nothing that he can do which Christ has not already cared for, and which that initial act of faith in Him did not cover. All sins have been covered. This is unlimited atonement. So, our salvation is secure.

**The Newness of Resurrection Life**

Jesus Christ now lives in resurrection life in respect to God the Father and in respect to the former glory which He had in His deity before He came to earth. He no longer lives in the realm of sin and death on this earth. He lives in the realm of the newness of resurrection life of perfect fellowship with the Father in heaven. It is that newness of resurrection life that we share. It has been through the once-for-all death of Christ, so that His resurrection that followed is permanent and never to be repeated. The position of the believer related to the death of Christ is a position that is matched by his relationship to Christ in His resurrection newness life.

Satan is very serious about creating confusion concerning these facts about the death and the resurrection status of Jesus Christ. He causes unbelievers to fail to grasp the historical basis of our salvation. Remember that we have a time-space salvation. It took place in a place, on a mountain, in a city, in a place on this earth. It was a real event of history. Consequently, it's a matter with which we are related to, not in a mystical way, but in a very real way. God, in a very real way, had to pay for sin. And that's what He did.

When nonbelievers don't understand this, then they reject grace, and they seek to earn salvation by means of human works. So, vast numbers of human beings will end up in the lake of fire who attend church. Vast numbers of religious groups, such as the Mormons, can go no place else but to the lake of fire if they follow the system of works salvation laid out by their prophet, Joseph Smith.

Satan causes believers to fail to grasp the grand consequences of their position in Christ so that the believers lose their rewards – the once-for-all death of Christ; the magnificent resurrection life that we share; and, the fact that that cannot be repeated. It loses salvation for many; and, it loses rewards for believers.

So, we translated verse 10 in this way: "For (as regards to death) He died (He died with respect to our sinful nature) once-for-all. But as regards the life He lives, He lives it continually, with respect to God."

**Roman Catholicism**

We have been trying to relate this to our world today – this particular great truth that Paul sums up here in verse 10. We've already shown you how, in the case of the Roman Catholic system, Satan has perverted this great doctrine in the system of the Mass, where Christ is put through a bloodless sacrifice again and again in order to provide salvation for those who are present. This is a monumental deception of Satan, and it is a great, great blasphemy.

**Islam**

Another expression of this that we began in the last session, and we want to continue, is the perversion of this by Satan in the religious system called Islam. This is very great in the world today. The things that are taking place in Iran today are of very, very vital importance to every believer in this country and around the world. Great things are going to result from what has happened in Iran, and the system of satanic religion of Islam is at the heart of it.

So, what is Islam all about? Well, at the heart of it is the fact that Islam teaches that Jesus Christ never died on the cross; He was never put in a tomb; He was never buried; and, He was never resurrected. It is a beautiful world religion example of this very thing that we're talking about here in Romans 6, that Paul has summarized in verse 10.

**Muhammad**

Let's briefly review what we've learned thus far. Islam was a religion created by a man named Muhammad. Muhammad began this in about the sixth century A.D. He began the religion of Islam in reaction to the idolatry of the Arabs of his day. The word "Islam" means "submission to the will of Allah." Allah is the only God, out of many gods that the Arabs worshipped, that Muhammad decided was the true God.

**The Koran**

The main Scriptures of the Muslims is the book called The Koran, which is the recitation of Muhammad. The Koran was produced while Muhammad was supposedly receiving revelations from God through the angel Gabriel. And when Muhammad was receiving his revelations, he was in a catatonic fit, and he was foaming at the mouth, which in the Bible is a pure sign of demon possession.

**The Greatest Prophet**

Muhammad is viewed as the greatest of God's prophets, above Jesus Christ, though Jesus Christ is viewed by Islam as the only sinless prophet.

Well, as you know, we told you last time that Muhammad was a camel driver, and he was on many caravans. In fact, someone last week told me that he used to deal used camels, and he had a used camel lot downtown Mecca. I don't know whether that's true or not, but that's what I was told. He married this terrifically wealthy widow, 15 years older than he was, but that ended his camel driving days. So, he sold his used camel lot and the whole thing. And he went into the religious business instead, which he found much more lucrative.

**Mecca and the Hegira**

Mecca in Saudi Arabia became the holy city of Islam. This was the result of the Hegira of Muhammad, where Muhammad had to flee for his life because of the reaction of the merchants of Mecca against his religious system. It was a system of great morality, which shows you, again, that hell is going to be filled with moral people, but not born-again people.

So, Muhammad had to flee for his life from Mecca. This was on July 12 in the year 622. That's the beginning of the religion of Islam. Whenever you see the Islamic calendar, it's always reckoned from this date. It is put in the format of A.H. after an Islamic date, meaning Anno Hegira – in the year of the Hegira.

Islam was terrifically attractive to the Arabian world. In 80 years, they covered more territory than Rome did in 800 years. They conquered more territory and influenced more territory in 80 years than Rome did in 800 years. Islam spread everywhere. Remember that it's a political structure based on a theocracy. You cannot separate politics and religion when you talk about Islam. The two go together.

The Islamists are divided into the two main groups: the Sunnites; and, the one that is in the news today – the Shiites. Ayatollah Khomeini is a Shiite. These are the ruling ones. These are the ones that are in authority power now.

**The Sufi**

Understanding Islam is going to give you a great deal of understanding of what Satan is doing in the world today in Iran and in the Mideast conflict. So, let's look at the religion of Islam. These Muslims belong to certain religious orders. I'll just mention these in passing. One is the Sufi. The Sufis are mystics of Islam. They engage in esoteric practices. They emphasize the imminence (the closeness) of Allah to such an extent that they're practically pantheists, so that God is in everything. The Sufis are very, very strong on the imminence of God. They have various fraternal organizations. One of the fraternal organizations of the Sufis are the Dervishes, who worship by whirling. You've heard about the whirling dervishes.

**The Wahhabi**

Another group into which the Islams are divided is the Wahhabi. The Wahhabi group emphasizes the opposite of the evidence of God: the transcendence of God; the distance of God; the omnipotence of God; the power of God; and, the separateness of God. And they emphasize it to the extent that God is practically unknowable. They are very orthodox.

**Ayatollah**

The leaders of Islam carry certain titles. One of them you've been hearing about in the news. The title "ayatollah" is given to a very few of the Muslim clergy – the most elite and the most revered, because what this title says is "a reflection of God." In truth, it is a refraction of God. It is a great distortion of God – not a reflection of God at all. It's a monumental refraction. But this title, ayatollah, means that you are one of the elite clergy. And the current Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, that we are hearing about in the news, and the frenzy over him as a holy man is because he is viewed as a particular reflection of God. So, every time you see the white bearded one on the television, remember that you're looking at an ayatollah which the Muslims view as practically God Himself. That's why you see this frenzy of trying to reach up and touch him, and why he puts his hand on someone, or he'll just hit someone in passing. To have been touched by an ayatollah, the reflection of God, for a Muslim is almost a certainty of salvation.

**Mullah**

Another title that the clergy carry is the word "mullah." That doesn't mean money. The word "mullah" means "master;" that is, a master of the Koran and of the Islamic precepts.

**The Shah Reza Pahlavi**

Now the current conflict in Iran is between this powerful clergy made up of the ayatollahs and the mullahs (it is made up of this powerful clergy group) against the former Shah, the Shah Reza Pahlavi. The people of Iran are steeped in the concept of monarchy. That is very important to them. And it is an amazing thing that the Shah has fallen.

The reason for this is because Shah Pahlavi decided to move away from the basic concepts of Islam. Remember that in Islam, the religious system and the political system are tied together. You can't separate them. And the Shah recognized that his people were living back in feudal times; that his people were still back in the Middle Ages; and, that they were a benighted people. Well, once they got the oil money (once they got the means with which to change things), the Shah decided to westernize Iran, and to bring personal dignity and freedom to the individual citizen of Iran.

**Jimmy Carter**

He immediately realized that at the core of his problem was the powerful Muslim clergy of the ayatollahs and the mullahs, because they controlled the social life; they controlled the religious life; and, they control vast financial holdings within the country. And previously, nothing could be done about it. But now that the money of the oil wealth was in the hands of the government through the Shah, pressure was brought upon the Muslim clergy. And this is what brought the rage of the Muslim clergy against the Shah. Then, the communists seeing that this was what they needed, grabbed hold and began running with it and promoting it. A monumental thing fell into the hands of the communists. A monumental advantage; a windfall; and, an unbelievable thing came into the hands of the communists two years and two months before the shah fell. And that is that in the United States, there came into power, to the office of President, Jimmy Carter.

**Human Rights**

And with Jimmy Carter came in, for one reason or another, a spirit; an idea; and, a concept which was called human rights. This is not human rights in countries like Russia that can tell us where to head in and cloud us back. But for people like Idi Amin, and for the people that are pretty helpless, we started muscling them. I'll give you the details of that later. I'm just going to summarize for you that, when the communists caught the spirit of the human rights program that was coming through from Washington, they said, "That's our ticket," because lo and behold, out of the administration in Washington, there began to be pressure exercised against the shah, such that if he wanted our continued military hardware, and our continued military know-how and guidance, he was to take the pressure off the people that he had put in prison, and that he had removed, like the ayatollah into exile – the people who were fighting his westernization Paul.

The shah understood his people. He understood the nature of their struggle. He understood what kind of people they were, and the feudalism out of which they were coming, and the fact that he was moving toward freedom.

**Henry Kissinger**

I read in the last issue of the Trilateral Commission, a publication which was called "The Trialogue," an interview with Henry Kissinger. The interviewer asked Henry Kissinger about this issue of the human rights policy of the United States. Kissinger said, "I think that is a dangerous thing (something to this effect), because you put yourself in the position where you show very quickly that either you've got some strength, or how weak you are, and you can bring great devastation into countries as a result of pressing this human rights issue if you prove to be weak in backing it up."

The reporter said, "Like Iran?" And Kissinger said, "Yes, Iran is definitely an example."

So, here's no less a person than Henry Kissinger, who was well aware of the fact that what has happened in Iran was directly the result of the United States government, and the details of that are horrendous indeed.

However, it all came around that human viewpoint concept. Remember that human good is loathsome evil with God coming out of the sin nature. And the human good of the human rights program that is flowing out from Washington now has brought down the one friend, the one stabilizing element, that the free world needed in the Mideast east. And the consequences are monumental. The most dangerous man in the world today is the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

Now, here's the reason that the communists were able to exploit this conflict between the Muslim clergy and the Shah. I'm reading from "The Review of the News,” February 21st, 1979 issue. The article is entitled "How Jimmy Carter Betrayed the Shah: "Under the direction of its able monarch, Iran had been transformed in a single generation from a near feudal agricultural society to an urbanized, burgeoning, industrialized, and modern country with an increasingly Western character. This program of industrialization was carried out under the personal direction of the Shah. His plan was to make Iran a technologically-advanced, economically-diversified, and self-sustaining nation, so that in the next century, when the oil ran low, Iran would not go into an economic decline and return to the dark ages.

"There can be no question that the Shah took his position as a ruling monarch very seriously, shouldering moral and economic responsibility for the emerging Iranian people. Clearly, he tried to bring to Iran the best of what Western societies had to offer, and not merely in the material sense. Among the Western concepts and developments he had written into law in Iran, were the principles of religious toleration; separation of church and state; and, expanded legal and political rights for women. Education was provided for both women and men. And an advisory parliament was set up to which, over the years, additional powers were granted. These programs were anathema to the fanatical elements of the Shiite Muslim clergy who had come to exercise vast power over the peasants because of their enormous land holdings. As in Western Europe during the 13th and 14th centuries, persons attempting to ensure their salvation had bequeathed land, houses, jewels, and money to the Shiite mosques, monasteries, and religious centers. With richness and temporal possessions came temporal authority. But that the heart of the Shiite clergy's power was control of land in an agricultural society where the economic strength, and forced piety and obedience to the religious orders.

"All of the Shah's efforts at industrialization and modernization were therefore viewed as a direct threat to the Shiite mullahs, who easily rationalized this as an attempt by the Christian countries to subvert Islam by technology. The resulting hatred of the West led the Shiite clergy to collaborate with the Soviet Union and the communists in Iran. The Shah particularly cut into the power of the Shiite clergy with a land reform program in which large estates, including those of the Shah and his family, were broken up and given to landless tenants. The compensation paid to both the secular and clerical landowners never made up, in their view, for loss of the power they once held over their former tenants.

"Thus, the Shah was seen as a man to be destroyed by the West-hating Shiite Muslim clergy, their fanatical followers, and the Marxists and communists organizing among the Iranian intellectuals, students, and industrial workers."

So, if you understand the position of the Islamic clergy, it is very illuminating as to what is happening in Iran today and how the shah was brought down.

**Jesus Christ**

The thing we are interested in is what does Islam think of the Lord Jesus Christ? That's the crux of the issue. To them, Jesus was a prophet of Allah, but he was subordinate to Muhammad. They reject entirely the deity of Jesus Christ. They consider it the greatest of sins to suggest that Jesus Christ was God. They reject the claim, consequently, that Jesus Christ was God's Son. Muslims always speak of themselves as the slaves of God. They never speak of themselves as the children of God. God has no wife, so He has no children – that is the human viewpoint logic. Therefore, He cannot be the Father of Jesus Christ. The Muslims teach that Jesus never died. Therefore, He could never have been resurrected. They say that because Jesus Christ was the sinless prophet, which they do not claim for Muhammad, that Jesus Christ could not have died, and that Allah would not have permitted him to die. Consequently, Allah took Jesus Christ, the sinless prophet, alive into heaven. The man who was crucified on Calvary was a man who looked like Jesus Christ, but it was not Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus Christ is not viewed, therefore, as the Lamb of God sacrificed for the sins of mankind.

Yet, strangely enough, when Muslims make their pilgrimage to Mecca, one of the things they do there is offer an animal sacrifice, symbolic of who knows what. The Islamic clergy teach that Jesus Christ is going to return from heaven in the last days, in order to preach Islamic doctrine; the whole world will become Muslim; and, then Jesus Christ will die, and He will be buried in Medina next to Muhammad. If you have opportunity to visit Medina, you may go look today at the grave site which is being prepared for Jesus Christ. Islam says, "He never died. He went to heaven alive. He's coming back to die."

The apostle Paul says, "He died. He died once-for-all. He will never die again. There is nothing that He could need to die for again. He has been resurrected. That resurrection will never be reversed any more than that death will be reversed. And you, who are joined to Him, share in that death. There is nothing that you would ever have to pay death for; there is no sin that you have not had covered; you have resurrection life; and, you can never reverse that resurrection life. That's the glorious message of the Word of God, in contrast to this darkness that has descended upon the Arabian world – a darkness which now has the power of oil money, and which is bringing the world to the edge of the antichrist's tribulation world, step-by-step-by-step. It will go more rapidly now than it would have gone with the shah in power, you may be sure.

**Islam's Hold on Muslims**

The hold of Islam on its people is in certain very specific areas. These are very well-summarized in the "Sudan Interior Mission" publication called "Africa Now." I'm reading from the January / February, 1979 issue from an article called "From the Muslims' Side of the Fence." It sums it up in this way:

1. **Traditional**

"Islam's tenacious hold on its people has many facets – first, traditional. Among many Eastern peoples, the group is the significant unit – not the individual. Muhammad built on this, substituting the religious relationship for the blood relationship among Arabs. This loyalty to the group is an unforgivable sin expressed ultimately in the Islamic law of capital punishment for apostasy.

1. **Ethical**

"Secondly: ethical. Islamic law, supplemented by traditions, comprises a complete code governing every action of life. It is a system of natural ethics tightly woven into the culture. A Muslim convert once said to me, 'As a Muslim, I knew what I had to do. But as a Christian, there is no set of rules. How do I know what to do?'

1. **Social**

"Third: social. Islam is a social system relating to political as well as religious spheres. It takes in all classes, races, and colors. The life of the individual and the life of the nation cannot be divorced from religion. It would seem, in fact, that one can be a Muslim, at least outwardly, whether one is religious or not.

1. **Psychological**

"Fourth: psychological. To the Muslim, the sanctions of Islam have the stamp of authority and antiquity. The weight of their own mass is, in itself, a barrier to hearing gospel witness. There is a psychology here which promotes a following of custom as it exists, rather than an attempt to reach an understanding faith. This accounts for the strong admixture of myth and fantasy, as well as remnants of animism, which prevail among many followers of Islam, especially in Africa.

1. **Solidarity**

"Fifth: solidarity. The urge to solidarity within Islam comes not so much from a reasoned line of conduct, but from fear of harm to the group. Reaction against any outside or divisive force is instinctive. The strength of this feeling is often demonstrated by individuals who are willing to face death themselves because of belief contrary to Islam, but who cannot bear to bring social ostracism on their families.

1. **Economic**

"Finally, the sixth hold is economic. Again and again, missionaries here Muslims state that they are willing to accept Christianity, but are not able to do so because it would mean their loss of livelihood. In many countries, a convert to Christianity can expect to lose his job, or have his business boycotted, or, as a student, to lose government subsistence with studies."

**The Basic Doctrines of Islam**

There are five basic doctrines that make up the religion of Islam.

1. **Allah is the One True God**

Number one has to do with Allah; that is, that Allah is the one true God. This is the central doctrine of Islam. And it is so simple that it easily attracts belief. Christians are accused of being polytheists with their Trinity. As a matter of fact, that Trinity among the Muslims is often viewed as being a worship of Father, Son, and Mary. But the concept of the Trinity is anathema to the Muslims. Their first basic doctrine is that Allah is the one true God.

1. **Muhammad is God's Prophet**

The second basic doctrine is that Muhammad is God's prophet. They have many prophets. I think there are something like 24 prophets that are referred to in the book of the Koran, but Muhammad is the last and the greatest voice of God. He, therefore, is superior to Jesus Christ, the sinless prophet, because he comes after.

1. **The Koran**

The third basic doctrine has to do with the Koran. The Koran is the most important of four sacred books. You will remember that the Muslims accept the Pentateuch of Moses as a sacred book. They accept the Psalms of David as a sacred book. And they accept the gospels of Jesus as sacred books. But the Koran is the supreme revelation of God. They say that the Koran was written before the foundation of the world, and that it is uncreated. This gives them a little bit of a problem, because if something is uncreated, that's deity. So, the book itself becomes God, in effect. Yet the Koran, like the Book of Mormon, is shot-through with contradictions and errors. It is not inerrant as the Scriptures are. But nevertheless, the Koran is the heart bloodline of the Islamic system.

1. **Angelic Beings**

The fourth meaning doctrine for you to understand the system is angelic beings. There are many intermediary beings – angels, good and bad. And a ruler of the demons is called Iblis or Shaitan. They call him Shaitan, which, of course, is a corruption of Satan. So, there are many good and bad angels in the Muhammadan system. Actually, what has happened is that they carried over what was already a practice among the Arabians. Part of their polytheism was worshiping these good and evil spirits, and they have carried them over into their system so that they practically are secondary subsidiary gods.

1. **Day of Judgment**

The fifth basic doctrine of Islam is a day of judgment. In this day, there will be a resurrection, and there will be a destiny to heaven and hell. What happens on this day of judgment? The old human viewpoint idea of a scale on which good works and bad works are going to be balanced? That's the system. And it is purely man's religion. Heaven for the Moslem is viewed as a place of great sensual delight and gratification. A jihad is a holy war, and any soldier who dies in a jihad goes automatically to heaven.

This is an old idea that the devil cooked up a long time ago. During World War II, this was the problem in the Pacific War. The Pacific War faced us with an enemy in the form of the Japanese, who believed that if they died in battle fighting for the emperor, they automatically went to heaven. The devil sold this same idea to the Japanese, and that it made it a very, very ferocious enemy to have to fight in the South Pacific. And the same thing happens when Moslems go on the war in a jihad. They are a horrendous, horrendous force to try to fight. They are a very, very formidable military force because if you die, you go to heaven.

These are the five main doctrines that Muhammad taught. All Muslims learn this. This is what they structure their basic beliefs on.

1. **Kismet**

However, there is a sixth doctrine called kismet. Kismet means "fate." At the heart of Islam is the concept of fatalism. No matter what you want to do, it's all determined. Whatever you think you want to do, it doesn't make any difference. It's all determined. The mentality of the Muslims is absorbed with this concept of kismet – that he is a slave to a destiny that he cannot control.

That is so different from the Scriptures, which teaches that the first divine institution that God brought about was in the Garden of Eden – the institution of human responsibility, and of privilege of making choices. And when God told Adam and Eve, "Don't eat of this tree (the knowledge of good and evil). You can make the choice to do so, or to not to do so." Choice, privilege, and responsibility – that's what the Bible talks about. The Bible does not have this fatalism that is inherent in the Islamic system.

And this fatalism sits like a dark cloud that broods upon the mentality of a Moslem that just drives him up the wall. No matter what he tries to do, and no matter how he tries to handle his problems, he always comes back to this fatalism that he can't do anything about.

**The Basic Pillars of Islam**

Here are the five practices of the Muslims. You should know these because you're seeing this on the television cameras, and it'll help you to understand and relate yourself to this force, which is moving across the world like a whirlwind now. These five basic practices, or sometimes they are called "pillars" of Islam.

1. **The Creed**

Pillar number one is the creed – the recitation of the creed. The creed is the Shahadah, or sometimes it is referred to as the Kalimah. The creed is simply this: "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his prophet." That's the simple, distinctive creed of Islam. It is so simple. It is so easy to say. It is so easy to grasp. It is like a magnet that has drawn people to Islam just because of this basic, simple statement of creed.

If you are a Muslim, this has to be repeated several times a day, loudly and with conviction. You don't just repeat it to yourself like a silent prayer. Several times a day, if you are a Muslim, to be in good standing, and to expect to go to heaven, you must stand up and say, "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his prophet." Talk about going on record – that is going on record.

If somebody becomes a Christian, what do you think happens, in a Muslim country, right off the bat? In a Muslim society right away, they notice that Abu Kameel over here is no longer standing up and sounding the creed off several times a day out loud. And that's a dead giveaway that here is somebody who is an apostate. And if Ayatollah Khamenei has his way, and Iran becomes an Islamic republic, when they discover that about a person who will be executed. That is a capital crime under Islamic theology.

This creed is preferably to be recited in Arabic. And there are many places (there's a place I know of in Chicago) where Muslims are taught how to recite this creed in Arabic. That is the way it is supposed to be said.

1. **Prayer**

Then the second pillar or practice of Islam is prayer. That's called the Salah. It is to be done five times a day. You pray when you rise in the morning; you pray at noon time; you pray in the mid-afternoon; you pray after the sun has set; and, you pray just before retiring. All Muslims are required to pray in this way. These prayers are prescribed prayers. These are not prayers that you speak from your heart to God your Father. These are prayers that are prescribed. They are the old recitation prayers. And they are done in Arabic, facing Mecca. Mecca, you remember, has a place which has the Kaaba, the shrine that houses the black stone supposedly given to Abraham. And the pilgrims who go to Mecca, making their once-a-lifetime pilgrimage, go to the Kaaba to kiss the black stone. And that is as blarney as the one in Ireland.

In any case, the prayers have to be five times a day, and when you do it, you face east. It's a mechanical procedure. Sometimes you stand; sometimes you kneel; and, sometimes you have your hands flat on the ground with your forehead touching ground. You've seen pictures of them doing that. It's an entirely mechanical procedure. You come to prayer as the result of a call by a man who is called the "muezzin." The "muezzin" is the Muslim crier who calls the Muslims to prayer from a place called a minaret, which is simply a tower. You've seen this in Muhammadan architecture. Islamic architecture has the minaret, the tower, which is part of the mosque, which is the place of worship. So, the "muezzin" climbs the tower, and he sounds forth the call to prayer. And wherever the Muslim is, and whatever he's doing: he stops; he gets in the appropriate position; and, in Arabic, he recites his mechanical prayers.

1. **Almsgiving**

The next pillar is the practice of almsgiving. Almsgiving, or "zakat," as it's called in the Arabic, was once a voluntary tax based on one-fortieth of a man's income and holdings. It produced a beggar class in the Arab world like you wouldn't believe, because this class substitutes on alms. This is the welfare program of the Arab world, and it was built into Islam. That's why travelers in Muslim countries are forever being approached and harassed for alms. There are always urchins coming, and running along, and saying, "Baksheesh, baksheesh." This is a religious exercise. That's wonderful when you can go up and ask people for a handout in the name of your religion. It pleases God for you to ask for a handout. We caught on to that doctrine in Washington a long time ago. And we praise God with "baksheesh" programs all over the place. Well, it has its beggar class as a result.

1. **Fasting**

Next is the month of fasting. It's called the month of Ramadan. Because the Muslim culture is built on a lunar calendar, the month of Ramadan keeps coming different places in the year. But during this month, you fast for the whole month. It is very important if you think you're going to go to heaven, and enjoy that sensuous place that the Muslims anticipate. For one month you do not eat during the daylight hours. At night, that's a different thing. But during the daylight hours, you do not eat and you do not drink anything.

Now, the guideline is when you can tell the difference between a black thread and a white thread, then you have to start fasting. When it becomes so dark that you can't tell the difference between a black and white thread, then you can hit the feast table. So, it's not really too bad. You just start eating at night instead of during the day. But I think it's a really nice, very fine, considerate arrangement of Allah to work it out for them so it's not too inconvenient.

1. **The Pilgrimage to Mecca**

Then, of course, there is a fifth pillar and that's the old pilgrimage to Mecca, the "Hajj." Once in a Muslim's lifetime, he is required, if at all possible, to make this pilgrimage to visit Mecca, the place from which Muhammad had to flee for his life in the Hegira. And there he visits the Kaaba, and he kisses the black stone, and he offers his sacrifice. He performs several very tedious rituals.

The pilgrimages have been funded by the oil money. This is part of what Muslim governments (Islamic governments) have been doing with this oil money. They've been paying for people to be able to have that once-in-a-lifetime, necessary act of the pilgrimage to Mecca.

1. **The Jihad**

There is a sixth pillar of Islamic culture, and that is the one I've already told you about the jihad – the holy war. This is a religious war against infidels on the part of Muslims. This was sanctioned in the Koran. Soldiers who die in a jihad automatically go to heaven.

**Circumcision**

There are other Islamic practices that you may be acquainted with because of the fact that Abraham's first son, Ishmael is the father of part of the Arab world. Ishmael was circumcised when he was 13, so that's when Muslims circumcise their male children.

**Veils for Women**

The women are required to wear the veil that comes all the way down to the ankles. . . And if you've been following the news, they have another revolt in Iran now. After the shah got through bringing in his western clothing: his blue jeans; his slacks; and, his comfortable clothes, and these black sack dresses went out, now the ayatollah is telling the ladies, "Get rid of your Western clothes, and get back into the veils." And they're telling him: "Hang it on your nose, ayatollah, we're not going to do it." So, they're leading a revolt. They're in antagonism, and now he doesn't know what to do about that because it's not too bad when men revolt, but when women revolt, now you really have something on your hands. He can handle those other revolutions, but he's tearing his beard out now. I thought his beard looked a lot thinner to me the last time I saw him. But in any case, he's going to have a sweet time getting these girls back into the veils, I'll tell you for sure, because they have learned a better way of life.

**Polygamy**

The system of polygamy (that Joseph Smith took over from Islam) was instituted by Muhammad. But Muhammad put a restraint of four wives at one time. You could shift them out of position, or move a new one up, but at any one time, they were allowed only four wives. Muhammad didn't keep his own rule. He had quite a few, just as Joseph Smith did.

**Morality**

Muslims are to abstain from alcohol; from gambling; and, from certain foods like pork, because of the Old Testament dietary laws against pork. Of course, none of those things are bad things to do. They're done on the basis of morality to secure some eternal privileges and blessings, which they won't.

**Special Festivals and Feast Days**

They special festivals and special feast days.

**Sin**

The thing about Islam is that it makes no provision whatever for the problem of human sin and the preservation of the integrity of God relative to taking people into heaven who are sinners. Allah has done nothing for man that has cost Allah anything. Personal salvation, therefore, is always in doubt for the Muslim. He doesn't really know where he's going. The truth of the matter is that he's going to the lake of fire. He doesn't have any salvation. Salvation is based on a works system, and on surrendering to the will of Allah, and to accepting the fatalistic concept that is inherent in that. There's no personal relationship to God at all. We are not His children. They do not view themselves as His children. He is not their Father. There is no basis for resurrection in Islam, though they expect it. Angels and demons of the Islam system really become practical polytheism.

Muhammad's life itself was one series of bloodshed and of violence, in contrast to the life of Jesus Christ. A Muslim has no personal hope, and no personal relationship with God. Women in Muslim countries have few rights. They can be easily divorced. Stealing, lying, gambling, and drinking have reached epidemic proportions among Muslims.

The whole system is based on Satan's perversion of the grand truth of Romans 6:10: "For in that He died once for all, He (the Lord Jesus Christ) died unto our sinful nature once-for-all. But in that he lives, He lives in respect to the glory that He once shared with God the Father." That is our hope. That is our glorious truth.

As you listen to what is happening in the world, in the Middle East, remember that the system of Islam is at the heart of what is taking place there. And remember that the system is based upon the very thing that Paul condemns in Romans 6:10: "He's alive, and He will never be dead again." All of the sincerity of the Muslims is taking them straight into the lake of fire. If you follow their same error, and if all the hope that you have is based upon some dead Christ rather than one who is alive and forever alive, your doom will be the same as theirs.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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