

Dear Doorkeepers:

Freedom is under attack! There are many things that I do not know about the conflict in which our nation is currently engaged. I know that we have enemies that are seeking to do us harm.

I do know one thing. God loves each of the over six billion people living in the world today. You and I will never meet a person whom God does not love. Further, each person will be alive for ever either in Heaven or Hell, depending on what he did with Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, in this lifetime.

Since September 11, my attention has turned to Islam. Who are the Muslims? Although President Bush has said that what he termed "the first war of the 21st Century" is not a religious war against Islam, Afghanistan, or the Arab peoples, it has raised a number of questions about the Islamic religion. What do Muslims believe? Is it true that most are peaceful? Over one billion people are reported to be under this umbrella. Some have said that the Islamic religion is the fastest growing religion in the world.

### **10/40 Window**

There are six billion people in the world today living in 240 countries and territories. Two of three have not heard the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in a saving sense one time. Primarily, there are no laborers because Christians, in their disobedience and prayerlessness, do not ask God to send forth laborers as Jesus commanded (Matthew 9:35-38, Luke 10:2, John 4:35). There are unsaved people all around us here in the United States who have not heard the Gospel. So, why is it helpful to focus on what is known as the "10/40 Window?" This is the area from 10 ° to 40 ° north of the equator stretching from West Africa to Japan. This area, which was the cradle of civilization, is the primary spiritual battlefield in the world today.

The countries within the 10/40 Window constitute only one-third of the earth's total land area, but account for two-thirds of the world's people. The amazing thing is that the window encloses almost 100% of the world's 1.1 billion Muslims, 800 million Hindus, and 300 million Buddhists. The four billion residents include 97% of the inhabitants of the world's least evangelized nations. The 10/40 Window contains the birthplace of every major non-Christian religion on earth including Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Shintoism, Taoism, Confucianism, Bahai, Sikhism, Judaism, and Jainism.

My interest in preparing this material is to provide helpful background material on Islam, but the Holy Spirit convicted me that the challenge is far more than this one religion. Things are not simple! The darkness of Islam is dominant in a whole band of nations stretched across the top of the African continent, through the Middle East, and then into southwest Asia. Islam, itself, has been the dominant political force in twenty nations. But prayer warriors are needed to focus on the entire 10/40 Window area.

Spiritual strongholds are the invisible structures of thought and authority that are erected through the combined agency of demonic influence and human will. In this sense, they are not demons, but the place where the demons operate. Genuine spiritual strongholds are possessed with both a defensive and an offensive character. The

consequence of this fact is that they will simultaneously resist light and export darkness (doing both at the same time).

From the days of the earliest migrations out of Babel, no other geographic corridor has contained such a concentration of spiritual darkness. The ancient roots of Babylon have never been fully plucked up, and the legacy continues to do violence to the original design and purposes of God, the Creator.

With its teeming population centers daily attracting the attention of demonic powers, the 10/40 Window represents a crucial focal point for mission-minded intercessors. The population is very young, approximately 70% less than thirty years old.

### **Public assertions about Islam**

Our political leaders, including President Bush, are assuring us there is a difference between the radical terrorists who planned and carried out September 11 and ordinary Muslims. Their intention is clearly to attempt to preserve the unity of the nation, which is quite important. This is the reason President Bush made it a point to visit a mosque and, upon leaving, stressed that Islam is a "faith of peace."

Assertions are being made that selfless love is as much at the root of Islam as it is in Christianity. Some maintain that Islam, properly understood, has as much to offer the world as the teachings of Jesus. Further, many maintain that the attack on innocent, non-combatants in war is as repugnant to Muslims as it is to us. Islamic leaders have said that what we've just seen isn't the true fruit of Islam.

Must we nod in quiet acceptance and take these notions at face value? I think not. We need to take time to gather the facts and examine them in the light of biblical Christianity, which is laid out in only one book, God's Word, the Bible. Under the guise of tolerancy, many evangelical Christians join with nominal Christians in moving away from the clear expectations for biblical Christianity. When we do, the result is that we are tacitly agreeing that one religion is as good as another.

### **A fundamental distinction of the Christian faith**

We are quite familiar with the foundational belief in Christianity that holds that access to people's hearts is not by force of military or political power. Rather, it is by the energy of God's Spirit. The explicit teachings of Jesus, as well as His example during His lifetime on earth, affirm that He does not expect His kingdom to be extended by force. When Peter used the sword to cut off the high priest's servant's ear, Jesus restored the ear and explained His way was not to use the sword. We do not believe in forcing others to accept our faith.

We make a terrible mistake when we take up the world's weapons to fight our spiritual battles. Christ does not need our protection. God's battles cannot be won with man's weapons. The weapons we use to fight Satan are never physical, but spiritual (**2 Corinthians 10:4-6; Ephesians 6:10-18**). The Crusaders did not follow this principle.

Not only is this a foundational distinctive of the Christian religion, it is a foundational element that Christianity has brought to western civilization. On the other hand, the foundational distinctive related to the spread of Islam is the opposite. Islam is quite different. The attitude of many Muslims is to spread their faith by the sword or kill the infidels who reject it. Although the term *jihad* is a word that generically means "struggle" in the context of the struggle of the soul against evil, when it is applied to religious war in the name of God, *jihad* becomes a frightening concept that seems to condone the terrorism and mass murder we experienced on September 11.

The Koran (Quran), the sacred book of Islam, advocates the killing of apostates and unbelievers. Muhammad himself led several battles in which many people were killed. He claimed that God had called him to spread Islam with the point of the sword.

History tells us that Muhammad's followers swept across the Middle East and North Africa, conquering everyone in their path and slaughtering Christians. The Islamic hordes then crossed the Sea of Gibraltar and within a few years conquered three quarters of Spain and Portugal. They were finally halted in their effort to subjugate Europe by the French army, led by Charles Martel in the Battle of Tours barely 125 miles from Paris, France (A.D. 732). If Islam had won, Paris would have fallen and with her all the areas already under the influence of Christianity, including the whole of France, the Netherlands, and a part of Germany. Had they been successful, within a short time Islamic soldiers could have crossed into England.

During the seventeenth century, there was a second powerful attempt by the Turks of the advancing Ottoman Empire to take Europe. First, Greece was conquered, then Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria. Part of Romania and most of Hungary followed. By 1683, the Ottoman army had reached the gates of Vienna. In the battle that followed, it was as if the whole fate of Christian Europe was hanging by a thread. Vienna was saved by a miracle. The city's 20,000 defenders had to resist a Muslim army of 300,000 men. Once again, Islam was defeated. Without its defeat, the entire heartland of Europe would have been open to domination by the Ottoman Empire. It was only in the seventeenth century that the military adventures of Islam came to an end.

Even today, it is considered an honorable duty for some Muslims to kill Christians and Jews in the name of their faith.

### **The world of perception**

Every one carries around his own mental map of the world that he uses to judge people and events. The perspective that is brought to any given experience is based on his world of perception. There are times when there are blinders and biases that keep us from seeing things objectively. These must be set aside to be able to examine details of circumstances such as we are in at this time in our history. It is my desire to be fair and objective in looking at the spiritual war in which we are engaged.

My understanding of the Islamic states, overall, is that propagation of any other religion is often either strictly prohibited or severely limited. Some have made witnessing to Muslims a violation of law that results in harsh penalties. There is either a ban or serious limitation on Christian missionaries. Instruction in Islam is mandatory in

all government-assisted schools. Those who become Christians suffer social ostracism. Many, also, experience loss of legal rights, privileges, jobs, and even imprisonment.

There are several experiences that I want to share. As Sue and I have traveled around the world, we have observed individuals off to one side in airports kneeling on their prayer rugs, with faces turned toward Mecca, engaged in prayer.

### **Nigeria.**

I first became aware of the conflict between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria. During one brief period in the late 80's, we learned that over one hundred churches had been burned by Muslim fundamentalists and a number of Christians killed in the northern part of Nigeria. This has continued over the years.

### **Israel.**

Over the years, we have traveled to Israel. A highlight of our tour in Jerusalem is going to the Temple Mount. This is the ancient Mount Moriah where Abraham went to sacrifice Isaac and where God revealed Himself as Jehovah Jireh, the God who provides. It is the site where Solomon's temple was erected.

The Temple Mount is under the influence Arabs, who follow the Islamic faith. There are two major Islamic edifices located in the temple area, the Dome of the Rock and the Al Aqsa Mosque.

Although there is attention to an effort to have a Palestinian state for the Arabs, Islam is certainly an underlying factor.

### **Indonesia.**

The largest Islamic country is Indonesia. During trips to Indonesia to conduct prayer seminars, I have been personally aware of the danger to practicing Christians. On one occasion, there were policemen outside the Bible college auditorium monitoring my remarks during a prayer seminar.

### **Saudi Arabia.**

Although I have not traveled to Saudi Arabia, we have all read accounts of the restrictions placed upon military personnel during the Gulf War and other Christian travelers in this nation. One cannot speak to a woman in public. Even in conversation with men, Jesus and Christianity are not to be mentioned. Saudi Arabia is considered a friendly Islamic nation. Our Christian soldiers were not allowed to practice their faith.

### **Thoughts on Islam and Terrorism**

One of our **Doorkeepers, Wayne Belt** (TN), shared a very enlightening article attributed to Imad Shehadeh, Th.D., President, Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary. Dr. Shehadeh wrote the article to provide some brief thoughts on Islam and terrorism in order to clear up any misconceptions that his readers might have.

1. "Islam" does not mean "peace." It means "submission." The word for peace in Arabic is "salam" not "islam." Islam refers to slave submission to Allah. Actually, the Quran

lacks the biblical concept of a son's relationship to God as Father. God in Islam is held to be so transcendent that, not only is He wholly other, but He is also wholly apart. Man's duty is to submit, but without being sure of the result of this submission.

2. The word "Allah" is the Arabic word for God. The Bible has used this word, even before Islam, to refer to God. Thus the Arabic New Testament speaks of Christ as the Son of Allah.

3. Though Christians and Muslims speak of the same God (or Allah), God's nature and attributes are entirely different between the two religions. The God portrayed in the Bible is so different from the God presented in the Quran.

4. Not all Arabs are Moslems. The word "Arabs" refers to the Arabic speaking people, while the word "Moslems" refers to those who follow the Islamic religion. There are 19 Arabic speaking countries located in the Middle East and North Africa, and consisting of about 300 million people. While 95% of Arabs in the Middle East and north Africa are Moslems, only 20% of Arabs in the United States are Moslems. This means that 80% of Arabs in the United States are Christian!

5. Most, if not all, Moslem countries hold that the state religion is Islam. This is why Moslems tend to think of the West as "Christian," and of this present conflict as Islam versus Christianity.

6. A Moslem is not allowed to leave Islam or else risk his or her life. At birth, a person is branded either Moslem or non-Moslem depending on one's descent. One's religion is therefore marked on his or her birth certificate, identity card, and/or passport. Furthermore, a non-Moslem can easily become a Moslem, but not the reverse. This is why there are no known visible churches of Moslem converts to Christianity. Converts do exist, but they are in small numbers meeting secretly.

7. There are many decent Moslems who would be against terrorism. Some, if not to Christianity, have at least embraced Christian values. In the case of some American Muslims, some have adopted the values inherent in the US constitution.

Dr. Shehadeh posed the following **FOUR QUESTIONS TO ASK ISLAMIC REGIMES:**

1. The question of Jihad. What is Islam going to do about the potential to rely on terrorism from the Quran since it does teach that the active pursuit of non-Muslims, especially Christians and Jews, with the intent to harm and even kill is acceptable? Note the following verses:

Quran 9:5, known as "the verse of the sword," declares, "Fight and slay the pagans wherever you find them, and seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem."

Quran 3:85 states, "If anyone desires a religion other than Islam, never will it be accepted of him; and in the hereafter he will be in the ranks of those who have lost."

Quran 66:9 and 9:73 declare, "O Prophet! Strive hard against the unbelievers and the hypocrites, and be firm against them."

Quran 5:33 states, "Those that make war against Allah and his apostle and spread disorders in the land shall be put to death or crucified or have their hands and feet cut off on alternate sides, or be banished from the country."

Quran 8:68 states, "It is not for any prophet to have prisoners until he has made wide slaughter in the land."

Though early in his career, Muhammad recited verses that were kind to non-Muslims (e.g., Quran 2:62; 2:256), later in his life, his language changed. His last words commanding harm to non-Muslims are said to abrogate those verses commanding kindness (see below on the Quranic doctrine of abrogation of verses). It is said that non-Muslims will be forgiven only if they turn to Islam and practice Islamic religious duties. No matter how Muslims try to explain away the above verses, terrorists use them so that to them the end justifies the means. It is verses like these that form the basis for one of the fundamental tenets of Islam: Jihad. Accordingly, Islam's ultimate goal is to enforce worldwide submission to the Quran at whatever cost. What we label as terrorists is simply a group of people who obey the Quran. Yet, what makes things more complicated is that Muslims in the world today are either ignorant of the teachings of the Quran, or they hide it.

2. The question of reciprocity. Why is it that Muslims are allowed to establish mosques and Islamic centers in the western world, when the same privilege is not granted to Christians in many Muslim countries? For example, there is not one single church in Saudi Arabia. Christians there gather either in embassies or associated cultural centers or military bases. In contrast, in the US, there are 3,500 mosques, and growing at the rate of 4 to 5 a week! Wherever Islam spread it has closed the doors behind it. No wonder that today the Middle East and North Africa, the home of the early church, is most needy mission field.

3. The question of democracy. Why is there no democracy in the Arab world that insures with action, not simply words, basic human rights? On the one hand, and contrary to what Islamic leaders declare to the West, the voice of Arab Christians and other non-Muslim groups are not heard, and they are persecuted and not given rights on equal par with Muslims. On the other hand, searching Muslims themselves are not allowed to question or criticize their religion but are locked in it, with the threat of severe persecution and death for leaving the Muslim faith. Muslims who have converted to Christianity remain hidden out of fear. Today there is not one single visible church of Muslim converts in the entire Arab Muslim countries. This lack of true democracy has resulted in the absence of any common ground for dialogue or constructive cooperation between Muslims and non-Muslims in facing political, social, economic, and religious challenges.

4. The question of truth. According to the quranic doctrine of abrogation, God is supposed to have made Muhammad forget some verses and then replaced them by others. Quran 17:86 declares, "If it were Our will We could take away that which We have sent thee by inspiration: then wouldst thou find none to plead thy affair in that matter as against Us." Thus it is said that the responsibility for verses being erased from Muhammad's memory lies on God Himself. Quran 13:39 adds, "Allah doth blot out or confirm what He pleaseth." According to this well known doctrine in Islam, when God replaces a verse, the latter version is a better and improved one, and may even contain opposite instructions.

Quran 2:106 says, "None of Our revelations do We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, but We substitute something better or similar: knowest thou not that Allah hath power over all things?" Furthermore, man is not to allow this teaching of abrogation to cast doubt upon the reliability of Muhammad.

Quran 16:101 declares, "When we substitute one revelation for another, and Allah knows best what He reveals, they say, 'Thou [Muhammad] art but a forger': but most of them understood not." Thus, authentication for the truth of Muhammad's claims is not required, and does not extend beyond the alleged claim to a miraculous poetic style. This doctrine of abrogation has extended so far as to dismiss all previous revelation, vis-a-vis the Bible. Thus the Quran has re-written biblical history with stories and accounts that contradict the Bible. To deal with the contradiction between the Bible and the Quran, Muslims throughout history have claimed that the Jews and Christians have corrupted their Bible so that the original Bible no longer exists. No matter what evidence for the truth and reliability of the Bible is provided, Muslims refuse to face the possibility of the truth of the present Bible as we know it. This has resulted in the general deep lack of commitment for seeking truth or for seeing the value of truth.

Then, Dr. Shehadeh posed **QUESTIONS THAT WE SHOULD ASK OURSELVES:**

1. The question of identity. Do we really understand the deep heart of the average Muslim today, especially the Arab Muslim (the one closest to the Quran because of the Arabic language)? On close examination, one finds that Arab Muslims have an identity problem. They see themselves as having been humiliated by Israel's conquering the land of Palestine from them. They see that their large number of one billion has been unable to defeat the small six million Jews in the land. They see their countries divided, backward and way behind the West. As a result, they cling to the one thing they have which the West does not: Islam. This means that in dealing with the future, the West must realize that terrorism has religion at its roots and its justification. Though not all Muslims think like this, the problem is that the Quran can be used as justification for terrorist activities against the West.

2. A question of wisdom. In light of the above, we must be careful not to rely on military action alone to stop terrorism. We must be sure to address the religious element and not only the political one. We need to be extremely patient and loving to go beneath the deepest of layers to understand where the root problem is in Muslim thinking. Muslims are uncompromising and they react more violently when threatened

or attacked. An anonymous friend put it this way, "Unless the world's religious leaders -- Jewish, Christian and Muslim -- could find common ground in the disposition of the Holy Land, the conflict would escalate as it has." To be honest, I am concerned that military actions may cause more problems in the long run. I strongly support President Bush's repeated declaration that the fight is going to be very long. Actions such as freezing the financial sources and stepping up security in travel are right on target. Other such non-military moves may be more effective than military action. But more so, it is time to challenge the Muslim world and its leaders with the questions outlined above. These questions strike at the heart of our future human existence.

## **Conclusion**

Both Christianity and Islam are both "exclusivist" religions. Both teach that theirs is the only one right way to God. The fact that Muslims are monotheistic and say there is no God but Allah may lead one to believe that Allah is simply another name for God. The ambiguity, however, disappears when Muslims affirm that Mohammed is his prophet. Christians, however, know that Jesus said flatly: "No one comes to the Father, but by Me" (John 14:6).

Each individual must choose to believe or disbelieve the Bible's clear affirmation that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Christ's death was in accord with the fixed intention of God. Through death Jesus offers us forgiveness and cleansing. He suffered gladly, knowing His suffering was for you and me. But He did not stay dead; the Resurrection proves that Jesus is God's Son. Let's remember the Resurrection, and make our daily choices for, rather than against, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The harassment of Muslims, or any minority religious groups, is both unbiblical and obnoxious. That does not mean, however, that we must compromise our principles. Neither must we be passive in the face of religious error that is leading people to hell. David's battle cry when the Israeli army was being intimidated by a taunting Goliath could well be our own: "Is there not a cause?" (**1 Samuel 17:29**)

We can no longer sit on the sidelines. We must have watchmen on the walls who will never hold their peace day nor night (**Isaiah 62:6**). We need intercessors who train their signs on world evangelization. Information is needed in order to pray intelligently and to ensure that prayers will have a genuine impact on the spiritual battle being wage. Detailed information is valuable to intercessors because it leads to fervency. The effectual fervent prayers of righteous men and women avail much (**James 5:16b**). A goal is to gather information to supply the kind of specificity that intercessors need and to sustain the vigil at the Throne of Grace.

I am including **600** from my book, *Intercession: Prayer as Work* in which I have given some suggestions about how to pray for world evangelization. Next month, I plan to speak more of the spiritual warfare, which the present crisis illustrates.

Yours in Calvary love,  
J. Gordon Henry