

# Muslim Worldviews and the Bible: Bridges and Barriers

## Part II: Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the Age to Come

by Rick Brown

It is well-known that Muslims and Christians tend to misunderstand each other. When trying to explain their beliefs to one another, they usually end up “talking past each other.” In part this is because of unrecognized differences in worldview. The same problem arises when people first encounter the Bible, since they try to interpret Scripture through the filter of their traditional worldview. But the very purpose of the Bible is to challenge traditional worldviews and transform them, leading to faith and understanding.

Part I of this series outlined Biblical themes regarding God, creation, angels, spirits, mankind, God’s rule, and mankind’s predicament. It compared these themes with viewpoints common to various Muslim subcultures and noted the relationships. Part II continues this approach with attention to the person and work of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, prophets, revelation, salvation, misfortune, the Kingdom of God, paradise, and the end of this age. Where the viewpoints of Muslims are already in alignment with a Biblical theme, this is indicated in the middle column with an equals sign ‘=’. Similarities are marked with an ‘~’. Both could be considered “bridges.” More obvious differences are marked with an ‘x’ or an ‘X’, where ‘X’ is more serious than ‘x’. “Barriers” occur where well-entrenched aspects of worldview are in conflict with the worldview revealed in the Bible. These mismatches can lead to a distorted hearing of the message or to a complete rejection of it. Barriers are represented in the chart with a ‘|’ or ‘||’ or even ‘|||’, indicating increasing degrees of obstruction to comprehension and belief. There is an important class of worldview differences which may be called “door-openers” or “points of appeal,” and these are marked with ‘>’. These are Biblical viewpoints that are attractive to Muslims once they have understood them.

The hope is that this comparison will lead Christians to a greater understanding of Muslims and of the difficulties Muslims have in understanding the Biblical message, so that Christians may dialogue with Muslims more knowledgeably and more effectively. For Muslims who believe in Jesus and the Scriptures, this chart could possibly alert them to assumptions they might want to reconsider. It would not be helpful, however, for Christians to give this chart to prebelievers, since it could just highlight the barriers for them and make them defensive. Christians also inherit worldviews that derive from their own cultures and traditions, and the Bible challenges elements of these worldviews as well. So Christians might want to ensure that their own worldviews are aligned with the Bible before trying to help others understand the Biblical revelation.

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## Some Major Biblical Themes

### *Jesus Christ*

The coming of the Christ (Messiah) was foretold by the prophets, as recorded in the Old Testament.

There were shadows or forerunners of Christ in the Old Testament.

Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary and did many miracles.

Jesus Christ was a prophet.

Jesus Christ was without sin.

Jesus Christ is the eternal, creative Word of God, incarnate in human form. He is God's supreme message and self-revelation to man.

*Jesus is called Christ (the Messiah) because he is the holy, eternal Savior-King over God's Kingdom.*

*Other Messianic titles from the Bible include "The Son of Man", "The King of the Jews", "The Son of David", "The Savior", and "Lord".*

*"The Son of God" is a special Messianic title in the Bible, affirming Jesus' unique relationship with God in his role as the Savior and Lord of all.*

*Jesus Christ is God and reveals what God is like.*

*Jesus Christ died on the cross as the only perfect sacrifice for sin. This sacrifice benefits all who accept Jesus as Lord and Savior. He is their advocate before God Almighty.*

God's love for mankind and Christ's love for God are demonstrated in the willing sacrifice of Jesus.

*God was honored when Jesus obeyed him even to the cross.*

*Jesus Christ rose from the dead.*

The resurrection of Jesus demonstrated that he is the Messiah, the righteous Son of God, who has conquered sin and death and will come again to rule and judge all mankind.

Jesus Christ ascended to heaven.

*Jesus has been given all authority in heaven and on the earth; he rules and expands his kingdom from heaven.*

## Corresponding Muslim Viewpoints

### x *the Messiah 'Isa son of Mary*

~ The coming of Jesus was foretold by the prophets.

(no such concept)

= Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary and did many miracles.

= Jesus Christ was a prophet.

= Jesus Christ was without sin.

~ Jesus was a word sent from God (a phrase with uncertain meaning)

X Jesus and he alone is called the Messiah, but the meaning of this title is uncertain.

X (no other Messianic titles and no Messianic concept)

|| The Christians claim that God slept with a woman and had Jesus as an illegitimate offspring, but this is blasphemy. Anyone who says that goes to hell. Jesus however is near to God, is prominent in this world and the next, and gives the final verdict on matters of dispute.

|| Jesus was only a prophet; he was not like God, and was not divine in any way.

||| Jesus did not die; someone else died in his place. There is no sacrifice that can atone for sin. No one can help man at the judgment.  
Popular: The annual sacrifice can atone for the sins of the previous year. Special sacrifices can substitute for potential misfortunes and are appropriate before using a new building, etc.

| It would have been shameful for God to have allowed his prophet Jesus to be killed, but it would be honorable for Jesus or anyone to sacrifice his life in service to God.

> Although martyrdom is valued, God would never allow his prophets to be badly mistreated.

| Jesus did not die or rise from the dead.

| Jesus ascended without death and resurrection. He will come again to rule and make everyone Muslims, then he will die.

~ Jesus ascended into heaven in his normal body, without dying and rising.

>| Jesus does not rule and is not feared. Only God has power to harm or benefit. God can, however, designate someone as his viceroys (*khalifa*) over the earth.

<i>Petitions to God may be made on the basis of one's standing in Christ ("in the name of Jesus Christ"). They may be addressed to Jesus himself.</i>	Orthodox: One cannot make petitions to Christ or to God in Christ's name. This would be <i>shirk</i> , the worst of sins. Popular: One can address petitions to Jesus and to other prophets and saints.
Jesus will return to earth from heaven at the end of this age.	~ Jesus will return near the end of history.
Jesus will judge the living and the dead.	When Jesus returns, he will break crosses and force everyone to become Muslims. After the resurrection God, not Jesus, will judge all people.
<i>Jesus will establish his universal kingdom over heaven and earth.</i>	Jesus will proclaim and demonstrate that Islam is the true religion and will become part of the universal <i>Umma</i> .
Jesus will rule forever.	x Jesus will die and be buried.
<b>The Holy Spirit</b>	<b>The Spirit of God</b>
<i>The Holy Spirit is God and has all the attributes of God.</i>	Orthodox: The Holy Spirit is the angel Gabriel. God does, however, have a life-giving spirit which he breathed into Adam and Jesus when he created them. Shi'ite: The Spirit of God brings blessing to people. Sufi: The divine secret ( <i>as-sirr ul-'ilâhî</i> ) or divine accompaniment works in the lives of godly people.
God gives life to mankind through his Spirit.	~ God created life in Adam and in Jesus through the work of his Spirit.
The Spirit of God convicts people of sin and leads them to Christ.	x (no such idea)
<i>The Spirit of God indwells believers in Christ and enlightens and guides them and makes them more like Christ.</i>	> God guides us by giving us law. There is no spiritual indwelling, no sanctification.
The Spirit of God empowers believers to overcome the sinful nature and to live in a manner pleasing to God.	> (no such idea)
The indwelling Spirit of God allows fellowship with God and allows the church to be a community of God.	> (no such idea)
<b>Prophets</b>	<b>Prophets</b>
A prophet is someone whom God calls to speak his message to people.	~ A prophet is someone whom God calls to warn people to repent and observe his laws.
An apostle of Christ is someone sent by God to spread the Gospel and establish the church.	X An apostle of Christ ( <i>hawâri</i> ) is one of his close companions.
(Jesus and certain prophets were apostles sent by God. Heb 3:1; Lk 11:49.)	x An apostle ( <i>rasûl</i> ) is a someone to whom God has sent down laws for a "people of the book" to follow. God sent down to each of the main apostles a book of law and gave them political authority over a people.
<i>A prophet is inspired by the Spirit of God, but he uses his own language and manner of speech to deliver the message.</i>	God sends down to the apostle the exact words to speak to the people. The prophet could be in a fit and understand nothing.
Jesus Christ foretold the coming of the Holy Spirit.	x Jesus Christ foretold the coming of Muhammad.
There have been false prophets, whom God has not sent, and there will be false prophets and antichrists.	~ There have been false prophets, and there will be false prophets, especially <i>Al-Masikh ad-dajjâl</i> , the false Christ.
<i>A true prophet not only directs people to obey the Creator, he is also attested by miracles such as foretelling events which come to pass and praying for people to be healed.</i>	> Most major prophets were attested by miracles, but the last prophet, Muhammad, was attested by the quality of the verses he uttered in the Qur'an, which is the greatest miracle.

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*Aaron, Job, Isaac, Lot, and Ezra are not generally considered to be prophets, and certainly not Adam and Alexander the Great.*

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Petitions should be made directly to God, without requests to dead prophets, apostles, or saints for their intercession.

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Images and statues of people and other creatures are forbidden, especially if they are to be venerated. (In practice, some churches venerate statues and icons, and even Protestants allow images and statues of Jesus, prophets, apostles, saints, famous people, etc...)

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### **Knowledge of God**

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God reveals his character to people through creation, prophets, Scriptures, his Spirit, and most of all through his incarnate Word, Jesus Christ.

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Many attributes of God can be perceived through observation and reflection on what he has created.

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The Scriptures were written by prophets and by apostles of Christ who were inspired by God. They received a message or insight from God and expressed it in their own language and style, as is evident from their different styles.

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Knowledge is transmitted by transferring information and fostering understanding. *Regeneration by the Holy Spirit in response to faith in Christ is a prerequisite to understanding spiritual matters.*

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Most religious knowledge concerns the character and ways of God as revealed in the record of his activities in history, in the nature of his commandments, and especially in his self-revelation in Jesus Christ.

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*The Scriptures show a progression in revelation and in the history of salvation, culminating in the work of Christ and the establishment of his kingdom. There is a succession of covenants as well, but there is no cancellation of some passages by others.*

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The Scriptures consist of books written by over thirty servants of God who were inspired by the Spirit of God. They expressed God's message accurately in their own language and style. Traditionally the Bible is divided into the Old and New Testaments. The Old consists of the Law of Moses, the books of the Prophets, and the writings, including the Psalms.

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X These are generally counted among the prophets, along with others called Hud, Salih, Shuaib, Dhu-Kifil.

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= Orthodox: same

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X Popular: Appeal is made to dead saints to intercede or even to intervene, and *baraka* (blessing, power) is sought from their tombs and relics. In West Africa and parts of North Africa, many people seek guidance, blessings and intercession from living Islamic scholars called "marabouts."

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~ Statues are forbidden. Images of prophets are forbidden unless they do not show the face (particularly the eyes). In stricter circles, images of all living things are forbidden. Popular Shi'ite: Images of prophets and saints are allowed.

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### **Knowledge of God**

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>| God does not reveal himself; he only reveals his laws. God is unlike anything man can see or imagine.

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> God is utterly unknowable, at least in respect to his attributes. But everyone is born with some sense of God and his law, as well as faith and submission; that is, they are born Muslims.  
Sufi: An advanced Sufi can apprehend knowledge (*ma'rifa*) of God.

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| God wrote the Scriptures in heaven before creation, then sent portions down to his apostles, most notably Abraham, Moses, David, Jesus, and Muhammad. They received the words of God and merely recited them to their audiences.

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X Knowledge is transmitted by transferring information.

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x Most religious knowledge consists of God's laws and doctrines, as revealed in the Qur'an and the Hadith.

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X The prophets all brought the same message: the unity of God, the revelation of his laws, the call to follow his laws, the warning of the day of judgment, and the promise of rewards for the pious and the punishment of unbelievers. Nevertheless, the Qur'an cancels previous books, and many of the later passages of the Qur'an cancel earlier passages.

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X The Scriptures consist mainly of the *Tawrât* (Torah), *Zabûr* (Psalms), *Injil* (Gospel or NT), and *Qur'ân*, which were written by God and sent down to his apostles through an angel or other means. The Jews, however, have changed their book and the Christians have corrupted the Injil.

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The Gospel is the good news of the establishment of God's gracious Kingdom through Christ Jesus, the eternal King. It was announced by Christ, as recorded in four "Gospels".	x The <i>Injil</i> is a book that God sent down to Jesus. Some say it was taken back to heaven with him.
Jesus fulfilled the legal requirements of the Old Covenant on behalf of his people, and God made a new covenant with his followers by the perfect sacrifice of Jesus for their sins. They are therefore no longer under the Law of the Old Covenant. Nevertheless, the Old Testament remains a valuable witness to truth and to the will and nature of God and to his purposes for mankind.	> God's law is eternal and unchanging. The Qur'an expresses God's law the best, and it has cancelled previous scriptures.
<i>The Christian Scriptures are reliable for faith and practice. They have the power to change the hearts and minds of those with ears to hear.</i>	> The Christian Scriptures came from God but they have been altered and enlarged, mostly in regard to the prophecy of the "Ahmed" to come in John 14:16. Therefore they should be avoided. In practice, the whole Bible is avoided.
God's perfect, eternal Word is Christ, the Living Word Whom he sent to exemplify his will and character, etc.	Christ is a word from God, but God's perfect, eternal Word is the Qur'an, which he sent down to inform man of God's law.
Those who sincerely seek the truth of God will eventually come to see and believe it. They will see that Christ spoke the truth and is who he said he is.	x Muslims who look for the truth objectively are viewed with alarm and may be considered doubters and apostates.
The Epistles are reliable and authoritative for believers.	The genuine traditions (hadith) are reliable and authoritative for believers.
The Bible has a rich message; people continue to discover new aspects of its meaning and message, especially through the application of historical-linguistic exegesis.	x The correct interpretation of the Qur'an has been handed down from medieval scholars; individual exegesis is prohibited. Some Wahhabis disagree. Philosophical Sufi: Independent exegesis ( <i>ijtima'</i> ) is both permitted and necessary (for scholars alone).
<i>The Bible is beneficial only to the extent that it is understood and believed.</i>	X The Qur'an is most beneficial if it is chanted with correct pronunciation, regardless of whether it is understood, although understanding is also good. Popular: Written verses from the Qur'an have power to cure disease, exorcise demons, or ward off evil. They may be displayed, worn, burned or consumed.
There are no requirements about the format of Scriptures or their handling.	X Scriptures should be published in a dignified format, meaning hardbound with a dignified script and ornately decorated covers. The text of Scripture should be set apart by framing it with a special border. Except for verse numbers, anything extra-textual should be outside the frame, including section headings and notes. No illustrations should be included alongside the text. The book should be handled by believers who are ritually clean and kept above the waist. It should be stored on an elevated and dignified location, and no other book should be placed upon it.
<b><i>Salvation from Mankind's Predicaments</i></b>	<b><i>Salvation from Mankind's Predicaments</i></b>
God shows his goodness and grace to mankind by providing the things man needs for life and salvation and especially by giving instructions to guide him into blessings now and paradise hereafter.	= (same)

<i>Man can be saved from his predicament by God's grace through faith in Christ alone. Acceptance by God is an unearned gift.</i>	>	Orthodox: If God wills, one can be saved from his predicament by believing in God's Unity and obeying his guidance. Philosophical Sufi: By revelation and concentration an advanced Sufi can become the perfect man ( <i>qutb</i> ).
God provides man with revelation about himself and about his will for man through the Bible's record of his activities, judgments, and messages. <i>God reveals himself through his incarnation in Jesus Christ, and through the indwelling Holy Spirit.</i>		God provides man with revelation about his unity and laws for man through the Qur'an and the sayings and example of the Prophet, but God does not reveal himself. He remains beyond conception or characterization, although the 99 names suggest something about him.
Jesus Christ taught and exemplified the perfect life as God desires it, and this way of life is further explained in the Epistles.	>	Muhammad taught and exemplified the ideal life as God desires it. Yet there is a significant contrast between the life exemplified by Jesus and that of Muhammad.
<i>Faith in Christ involves personal trust and commitment to him, as well as repentance from what displeases him. True faith gives rise to works of love.</i>	x	Faith involves assenting to the revealed doctrines, especially God's unity. Saving faith should involve belief from the heart and result in submission to God's revealed laws.
Repentance involves recognition and regret of personal sinfulness and a resolution to lead a life pleasing to God.	x	Repentance involves recognition and regret for individual sins and a resolution to abstain from them and obey God's law.
<i>By faith in Christ, man can be regenerated and receive a new nature. Without regeneration and the grace of God, man cannot do what God requires. Law is weak because man's flesh (nature) is weak and sinful.</i>	>	There is no regeneration. Knowledge of God's law and fear of his punishment are sufficient to make a person submissive and compliant with the Law.
<i>By faith in Christ, man can receive the indwelling Spirit of God, to guide him and to give him power (grace) to resist sin.</i>	>	Power to resist sin comes only from conducting ritual prayers regularly and from fearing hell fire. God guides through fate rather than through his Spirit.
When people repent of sin and personally accept Jesus as the Christ, their Lord and Savior, <i>God accepts them into his Kingdom and treats them as his sons.</i> They are saved by God's kindness and power through personal faith in Jesus Christ.		Man can please God by believing in the main of faith, by performing the main religious duties, by resisting temptation, and by submitting to God's laws as his slave. People can never be sons to God, but they can be close to God and beloved of him.
<i>Jesus Christ allowed himself to be killed and became the perfect, atoning sacrifice for the sins of those who believe in him, who are thereby freed from condemnation to hell and given assurance of forgiveness and paradise.</i>	>	There is no sacrifice for sin and no savior. God may forgive whomever he wants to forgive. There is no assurance. Martyrdom in the cause of Islam, particularly in battle, is the only way of ensuring salvation for oneself and family.
When one has submitted to Christ as Lord and been freed from condemnation, he is freed from the power of the accusation and oppression of Satan, although he can still be tempted.	x	Orthodox: Satan has permission to lead astray all who are not true servants of God, but he does not rule, oppress, or kill. Popular: Satan causes harm and intimidates.
On the Day of Judgment, Satan and his hosts will be cast into the fire of hell.	=	On the Day of Judgment, Satan and his hosts will be cast into the fire of hell.
<i>In the age to come, the earth will be renewed and freed from corruption, death, and evil.</i>	X	The earth will not be regenerated or repopulated.
By accepting Christ and receiving the Spirit of God, man can have partial fellowship with God now, and full fellowship after death.	x	Fellowship with God is not possible, neither now nor after death. God's throne is in the seventh heaven, not in paradise.
<i>Good deeds please God and benefit man, but they do not earn grace, forgiveness, or eternal life.</i> They do not cancel sins.		If God wills, one's good deeds will outweigh his bad deeds and bring him material blessings now and paradise in the end.

***Illness, misfortune, and failure***

Prosperity and poverty, illness and health, misfortunes and disasters may all have natural or supernatural causes, but God takes special care of those who love and obey him.

God frequently blesses his own people with spiritual prosperity without giving them material benefits. Spiritual blessings are more important than material blessings because they are eternally enduring.

God keeps the followers of Christ from being overwhelmed by illness and disaster, but instead of protecting them from all problems, he supports them in dealing with problems.

God does directly intervene in the lives of his people to help them in many ways, often in response to their prayers. He actively works in their lives so that their life experiences progressively improve their character and their relationship with him.

Christ heals many who request healing from him in faith. his power defeats the power of Satan.

Envy (the evil eye) is a sin, but it does not magically cause harm to the object of the envy. In general, though, Satan can make envy and other sins an occasion to cause harm.

***The Kingdom of God and the Church***

God is establishing a Kingdom on earth in which he is bringing people into compliance with his will.

*The Kingdom of God* is God's establishment of the Messianic Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven among those who accept Jesus as their Messianic King. Until the consummation of this Kingdom at the return of Christ, God tolerates a limited amount of sin and rebellion.

The Kingdom of God is administered by the Messiah, the promised King. He will rule forever, bringing all of nature into willing compliance with God's will. All supernatural power and authority in heaven and on earth has been given to him.

Nevertheless, *Christ's Kingdom is not a political body in this present world*. Until he returns, Christ rules from the unseen world, influencing events on earth.

This Kingdom started small but is growing in the earth. In general, only a minority of people will enter it. When Christ returns, he will form a new government over all the earth and remove those who have rejected his rule.

*Jesus is the Messiah King who administers this Kingdom*. He is Lord over all people.

Christ rules in the hearts and lives of his people.

***Illness, misfortune, and failure***

X Prosperity is a sign of the blessing of God. Illness, poverty, misfortune and failure generally have spiritual causes.

x Material prosperity is always due to God's blessing.

> There are many malignant supernatural beings and forces operating in the world that are a constant threat to man. Allah is more powerful than any of these beings and forces, which in any case he created, but he has left it to lesser beings to provide help against them. Humans are therefore obliged to consult with those specialists who can deal with these beings.

Popular: The causes of illness, misfortune, and failure can be determined by ritual specialists to whom God has given special insight into these matters. These specialists then advise their clients of the measures then need to take to regain health and success.

x The evil eye is dangerous.  
Popular: The evil eye is a major source of evil; its harm can be intentional or not. Some people harm almost anything they look at.

***Dar al Islam and The Umma***

X God is establishing Islam on earth and causing all people to submit to his laws.

X (No such concept. The Kingdom (*malakūt*) of God is his absolute sovereignty, but more commonly the term is used for the unseen world of jinn and magic.)

x The *Umma* should be administered by a succession of Caliphs. The *Umma* observes and enforces the Law, but cannot change it. Eventually Jesus will return to rule and to decide all issues on which people dispute.

X The *Umma* is the rightful government of this world.

> The *Umma* should bring everyone into submission to Islam and establish an Islamic government, so that Islam can be practiced in purity. People of the book may be tolerated as second-class subjects.

| Jesus was a prophet, not a ruler.

X The *Umma* observes and enforces Islamic law.

One enters the Kingdom by accepting Christ as his Savior-King and being thereby born again and forgiven, etc.		A non-Muslim enters the <i>Umma</i> by saying the confession of faith ( <i>shahada</i> ) that there is no god but God ( <i>Allah</i> ) and that Muhammad is a messenger of God. He must also submit to Islamic law ( <i>shari'a</i> ). Children of a Muslim father are born into Islam.
Initiation into the kingdom is through baptism. One may be baptized if he has repented of sin and confessed Jesus as his Lord and Savior.	x	Initiation into Islam is through saying the confession of faith and receiving a ritual bath ( <i>ghusl</i> ).
One may testify to his faith in Christ and his membership in the Kingdom by observing the Lord's supper.	x	One testifies to his faith and his membership in the <i>Umma</i> by repeating the confession of faith.
Those whom God brings out of the dominion of sin and into his Kingdom are called the "Church", as well as other terms. Their real citizenship is not in this world, but in heaven.	x	Those who submit to Allah and his prophet, as prescribed in Islam, enter the <i>Umma</i> .
Although <i>the benefits of the Kingdom of God</i> will not be fully realized until Christ returns, the benefits are partially available in this age to those who are in Christ. These include the fruit of the spirit, gifts of the spirit, fellowship with God, peace that passes understanding, and assurance of salvation.	>	There is no foretaste of a supernatural life in this present earthly existence. This life holds many trials for true Muslims, and only infidels enjoy this world.
<i>The struggle of the Kingdom of God is not against people and governments but against the supernatural kingdom of darkness</i> (Eph 6:12).	X	The struggle of the <i>Umma</i> is against all people and governments who resist Islam, who are therefore the realm of war ( <i>dār ul ḥarb</i> ).
Local assemblies of those in the Kingdom of Christ are also called churches. God helps them serve one another in different ways through the power of his Spirit.	x	Churches and mosques are buildings used for religious rites.
<i>The core social unit in the Kingdom of God is the local body of believers</i> (church, congregation, fellowship, assembly, etc.).	x	The core social unit in the <i>Umma</i> is the extended family.
Those in the Kingdom (in Christ) are all brothers and sisters.	x	Muslims are considered brothers, but blood relationships remain the most important ones.
Only a minority of people enter the Kingdom.	x	Whole countries can be in the <i>Umma</i> .
Some from every tribe, tongue, nation, and people will enter the Kingdom. Those chosen may retain, in this life at least, most of their cultural and linguistic diversity. <i>No particular culture or language is favored above others.</i>	X	The whole world should be brought into submission to Islam, and eventually to a common Islamic culture and a common language, Classical Arabic, but this will not be completed until Christ returns and kills all who refuse to submit to Islam.
<b>Paradise</b>		<b>Paradise</b>
<i>Followers of Christ enter paradise after their death. Paradise is in heaven.</i>	>	Those predestined by God will enter paradise after the resurrection and the judgment and a period of time in hell. Paradise is not in heaven. Only Muslim martyrs go directly to paradise upon their death.
Those entering paradise have been regenerated and progressively transformed on earth, and they are fully sanctified and glorified in paradise.	>	Those in paradise are similar to how they were on earth; there is no moral transformation of their nature.
Paradise is a beautiful, harmonious place where there is no suffering. <i>The greatest pleasure of paradise is close fellowship with God.</i>	X	Orthodox: Paradise is a beautiful place; its chief pleasures are food and sex. <i>Philosophical Sufi: The chief pleasure is the removal of the illusory veil of being separate (distinct) from God.</i>

<i>The End of this Age</i>		<i>The End of this Age</i>
Before the resurrection, there will be many signs.	=	Before the resurrection, there will be many signs.
The antichrist will appear with false signs and wonders.	~	<i>The antichrist (ad-Dajjāl)</i> will appear with false signs.
The Beast will brand unbelievers with a sign on their faces.	=	The Beast will brand unbelievers with a sign on their faces.
Gog and Magog will appear.	=	Gog and Magog will appear.
There will be signs in the heavens: smoke, the sun darkened.	~	There will be eclipses.
Jesus will return to earth.	=	Jesus will return to earth.
<i>Jesus will come to gather his people and to judge the earth. Those who belong to Christ will be raptured to meet him as he returns.</i>		Jesus will come to restore people to Islam and then die. God, not Jesus, will be the judge on the last day.
There will be a resurrection of those who died belonging to Christ. They will join the throng that was raptured to meet Jesus and receive their rewards. Some people understand the book of Revelation to teach that this throng will inhabit the earth for 1000 years, under the rule of Christ, before the resurrection of the rest of mankind.	X	There will be a general resurrection.
The dead who did not belong to Christ will be resurrected and eventually be judged according to their deeds; they will be condemned because they have rebelled against God. They will have no salvation because their names are not in the book of Life. (By rejecting the King they forfeited the Kingdom.)	X	All people will be judged on the Day of Judgment. God will double the good works of his servants, then their good works will be weighed against their bad works. Ultimately, God may forgive or condemn anyone, but he will not forgive those who associate another being with him.
Those whom God finally rejects will “perish” in the lake of fire (hell).	~	Those whom God rejects will be tortured in the hell fire; they will be neither dead nor alive.
Those who are in hell are spirits of the dead, whereas the saved are resurrected beings with glorious, immortal bodies.	X	All people are resurrected with the same kind of bodies. Those who are in hell are half dead, or else they suffer frequent death and resuscitation.
Satan and the other fallen angels will be cast into hell.	=	Satan and the demons will be cast into hell.
The earth will be destroyed.	=	The earth will be destroyed.
There will be a new earth and heavens, in which God dwells with his people, and they enjoy loving fellowship with him.	>	Those whom God guides will be assigned to one of several different places in paradise, still separated from God.
<i>The saved do not go to hell; there is no exit from hell.</i>	>	(Almost) all believers go to hell for punishment before going to paradise. Some say that one day of sin in this life is punished with a thousand days of torture in hell. Others say a hundred days of torture for each sin. <b>IJFM</b>

### ***Bibliography of Works Consulted***

*Editor’s Note: Due to space limitations, the bibliography will appear at the end of part III of this article. However, you can download the bibliography at [www.ijfm.org](http://www.ijfm.org)*