

# Muslim Worldviews and the Bible: Bridges and Barriers

## Part I: God and Mankind

by Rick Brown\*

*\*This article, which will be presented in three parts, was compiled and repeatedly revised over a twelve-year period, using input and feedback from dozens of people. The final and most meticulous peer-review was conducted by Dr. Sobhi Malek, to whom special thanks is due.*

**I**t 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.<sup>1</sup>

People everywhere filter what they read and hear through the grid of their own worldview. The only exceptions are those who have become bicultural to a significant extent and can understand something of how people with another worldview interpret what they hear and see. Thus cross-cultural communicators of God’s Word need to understand the worldview of their listeners before they can communicate with them accurately and effectively. Otherwise the audience will misunderstand the message. For example, if a person’s worldview includes the assumption that a person can avoid sin if he wants, that sins are not consequential unless they outweigh one’s religious works, and that sins can be atoned for by additional good works, then he or she will not understand the need for sacrifice, grace, regeneration, the Holy Spirit, etc.

Similarly, in order to exegete dialogues and actions recorded in the Bible, an interpreter needs to understand the worldviews and cultures of the various people engaged in those dialogues and actions. But beyond this there is a worldview that God progressively reveals through the Bible, as the Biblical prophets and authors seek to correct the errant worldviews of their audiences. This “Biblical Worldview” is the framework of basic beliefs and values that God is seeking to instill in His audience through the prophets and apostles, and most of all through His Word the Christ. In fact, one could say that the principal function of the Bible is to transform the worldviews of its readers.

There are several works that compare Muslim worldviews with modern materialistic worldviews or with western evangelical worldviews, but that is not

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the goal of this study. The objective here is to compare elements of the worldview revealed in the Bible with corresponding elements of worldviews held by various segments of modern Muslim societies. The purpose of this worldview comparison is to highlight those elements of the Biblical worldview which Muslims already share and those which they are likely to misunderstand or reject.

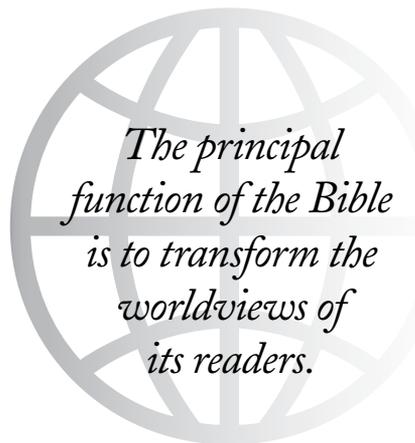
Work on this comparison began in 1994 and was initially based on *Islam and Christianity; A Muslim and a Christian in Dialogue*, by Kateregga and Shenk (1985). Since then it has incorporated insights from many publications and from many experienced observers. The hope is that it will help cross-cultural communicators to understand their Muslim friends and to explain the Biblical message in ways that will penetrate the audience's worldview grid with a minimum of distortion. In other words, the objective of this comparison is to help cross-cultural communicators understand their Muslim friends better so they can communicate with them more appropriately and more accurately.

It would be useful to prepare *another* chart that shows how Christians misunderstand Islam. Such a treatment would begin, not with the Bible, but with an integrated, holistic treatment of Islamic worldview. This would be organized by Islamic categories such as the unity of God (*tawhid*), God's guidance (*huda*), prophethood (*risala*), the people of God (*umma*), the culture ordained by God (*din*), this world (*dunya*), and the hereafter (*'akhira*). It would include more about family, women, community, education, health, social life, politics, and the general outlook on life. It would then indicate how this differs from various Christian traditions. But such a work would require a separate article. Meanwhile it is hoped that the chart below will help Christians understand their friends better and also alert them to problems their friends have understanding the Bible.

Please note that it is not intended or recommended that Christians show a chart like this to Muslims, as this

would just highlight the differences and make them more defensive. A better approach is simply to discuss major questions of worldview, such as the eight questions suggested by VanderWerff (1994:78).

The chart is rather detailed, but this is essential to avoid the misunderstandings commonly engendered by over-generalizations. It is not uncommon, for example, to see where someone has written that "Muslims and Christians share a common faith in God", or where someone else has written that "Muslims and Christians believe in



different gods." Both generalizations are inaccurate, and both lead to unsuccessful dialogue, because the speakers fail to perceive the important similarities and differences that exist in their respective concepts of God.

The chart presents many aspects of a Biblically engendered worldview in the left-most column and compares them with corresponding viewpoints from various worldviews held by Muslims today. Italics have been used to highlight significant aspects of the Biblical worldview which Muslims often misunderstand. Biblical Christians in dialogue with Muslims will want to take care with the way they explain these points of their worldview and will want to monitor what their friends are understanding from their remarks.<sup>2</sup>

People from Christian backgrounds who are in dialogue with Muslims about Biblical Christianity would do well first to disentangle the worldview being communicated by the Bible

from the modern worldviews of their own cultural background.<sup>3</sup> They might find it helpful to examine the left-most column of this chart, which attempts to present an overview of Biblical worldview.<sup>4</sup> Once they are clear in their own minds with regard to the Biblical worldview, they can be in a position to differentiate between Biblical and Muslim worldviews.

Since one of the goals of this article is to promote understanding of the worldviews of Muslims today, the chart seeks to represent Muslim beliefs and practices as they are currently practiced and observed, especially within the Sunni tradition. It is not simply a reflection of the Qur'an, Hadith, and their ancient commentators, although these have been consulted. Rather it is a compilation of participant observations drawn from many books (see the partial bibliography) and from the many experts and experienced people who have commented on this chart and have suggested improvements. Their names are too many to mention here, but God knows them all. "May His blessings be upon them."

In many places the chart distinguishes among the views of orthodox Sunnis, popular Sunnis (i.e., folk Islam), Shi'ites, and Sufis. Regrettably, limits on space prevent inclusion of the distinctive viewpoints of smaller sects, such as Salafis, Wahhabis, Alawis, Ismailis, Ibadis, Zaidis, Sufis, Zikris, Ahmadis, and radical Sunni Islamists (followers of Sayyid Qutb). In addition, the treatment of twelver Shi'ite beliefs is regrettably sparse and provides no distinction between popular and orthodox Shi'ite beliefs and practices. Specialists in Shi'ism and these sects are invited to send feedback to the author, as are specialists in mainstream varieties of Sunni Islam.

Popular views run a spectrum that includes folk Muslims, secular Muslims, and Bedouin, but in the chart they are classed together as "popular." Folk Muslims, for example, tend to be much more concerned with averting demons and evil and with gaining supernatural favors, and

they view rituals, both Islamic and traditional, as means to these ends. Secular Muslims practice few rituals, but their religious concepts and terminology are often those of popular Islam. Bedouin hold to traditional values of family honor that predate Islam, and this gives rise both to radical hospitality on the one hand and to honor killings on the other.

There is also a range of Sufi worldviews but only the two most distinct varieties have been noted, namely “practical” (or “orthodox”) Sufis and “philosophical” Sufis.<sup>5</sup> All of them seek mystical experiences of God, but practical Sufis remain within the conventions of Islamic law and theology, except for those who invoke the intervention of saints, while philosophical Sufis have some unorthodox views with features of pantheism and antinomianism.

This comparison, therefore, is between a single worldview which is progressively revealed in the Biblical message (although not embodied in the cultures of the biblical world or the world today) and several worldviews embodied in a variety of modern Muslim cultures. The reader will appreciate that this has required making a number of generalizations regarding both the Biblical worldview and the Muslim worldviews.

The narrow central column of the chart indicates the relationships between elements of the Biblical and Muslim worldviews. In some ways this column is the most important part of the chart, because it indicates barriers, points of appeal, and common ground. Views held in common are often called “bridges”; they are symbolized as ‘=’. Similarities are marked with an ‘~’. 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

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important class of worldview differences which may be called “door-openers” or “points of appeal” (marked with ‘>’). These are Biblical viewpoints which are attractive to Muslims once they have understood them. The following list highlights the Bible’s main points of appeal to Muslims:

- God’s holiness, integrity, and realiability;
- God’s goodness, love, and care for His people, both male and female, young and old;
- God’s benevolent guidance of history towards good ends as he works through events to oppose evil, to train his servants in righteousness and truth, and to fulfill his good purposes for his people;
- The portrait of Jesus Himself: His kindness, devotion, wisdom, power, and ongoing reign as Savior and King;
- The high standard of interpersonal relations described in the Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere;
- The love and forgiveness exhibited by true followers of Jesus;
- The offer of personal forgiveness and acceptance by God;
- The offer of assured and complete salvation from hell and acceptance into God’s kingdom;
- The offer of a personal relationship with God, fully realized in the next life;
- The offer of inner cleansing and renewal through God’s Holy Spirit;
- The offer of grace to live a godly life through the strengthening and guidance of God’s Holy Spirit;
- The offer of power to resist and repel Satan and evil spirits in Jesus’ name;
- The logical consistency and literary cohesion of the Bible;

- Conviction by the Holy Spirit that the Bible is true and relevant to one’s life and salvation.

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 those who want to do chronological Bible storying or who want to study a selection of the most appropriate Scriptures with their friends, this comparison should help inform the selection process by identifying bridges, barriers, and points of appeal. Early stories or passages can build on bridges, while others can hammer repeatedly at the barriers. It is recommended, however, that any selection process seek to encompass passages which together present all of the biblical themes, so that one does not misrepresent the counsel of God.

### *Endnotes*

<sup>1</sup> For more on worldview as a communicative filter, see Brown 2002; Hesselgrave 1991, 1997.

<sup>2</sup> In addition, since most Muslim communities are primarily oral cultures, dialogue can be enhanced by utilizing communication styles appropriate for oral communicators. For more on that see Brown 2002, 2004.

<sup>3</sup> For guidelines see Weestra 1999.

<sup>4</sup> Of course, the main aid to gaining a biblical worldview is the repeated reading of the Bible, including footnotes which provide contextual background. Repeated cycles through a panorama of the Bible facilitates a hermeneutical spiral of increasing understanding and assimilation. For more on that see Hesselgrave 1997 and Brown 2002.

<sup>5</sup> Other terms include “sober” versus “intoxicated” Sufis, “orthodox” versus “pantheistic” Sufis. None of these distinctions is exactly the same. But common to all Sufis is the hope of having a personal experience with God.

**Some Major Biblical Themes****God**

God is eternal, immutable, and self-sufficient. =

God is omnipotent, all powerful ~

God is omniscient; He knows all things =

God is omnipresent =

God transcends this world. =

*God is also immanent in this world.* x

*God is holy, good and blameless; He never violates His own principles.* >

Because God is holy; he loathes sin. *Sin distances people from God.* x

God is reliable; He will fulfill His promises and prophecies. >

God makes covenants to define his relationship with groups of people. x

*God is one, without equal, but reveals Himself to us as three persons (from Latin *persona*): the Most High (the Father), His Word (the Son), and His Spirit (the Holy Spirit). (So among the eternal attributes of God are fellowship, harmony, love, and communication, yet with one will.)* |||

*Christ is the divine, eternal Word of God expressed in fully human form, revealing to mankind what the invisible God is like. He was born of the Virgin Mary after Mary had received the Spirit of God. He is also called "the Son of God."* |

*The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God Himself, with which He gives life to mankind, communicates with His people, cleanses their hearts, inspires them with His love, and enjoys their company.* >

**God and Creation**

God created all things in six days. =

**Corresponding Muslim Viewpoints****God**

God is utterly transcendent but sees all.

Sufi: God may be experienced in ecstatic moments (*hâlât khâṣa*) during sessions of repetitive chanting.

> God can do anything, but He will not change what he has decreed for a person, and He would not tarnish his dignity by being incarnated as a man. He does not limit Himself to any predictable behavior or standard of justice, yet He is just in whatever He does.

x God is unaffected by sin.

> God does not make many promises, and one does not know what to expect from Him.

x God made the Children of Israel agree to a covenant, but they were unfaithful to it. God does not define his relationship by covenants.

||| God is absolutely one and indivisible, without equal, without associates, without "persons". Love and fellowship are not important attributes of God. Christians are said to worship three gods: Allah, Jesus, and Mary.

Sufi: God is reaching out to mankind.

| Christ is "a word" from God and a "spirit" from God, born of the Virgin Mary after Mary had received the Spirit of God, but Christ is neither pre-existent nor divine. It is the Qur'an which is the eternal, uncreated Word of God. God neither begets sons nor adopts them.

> When God created man, he breathed into him from his Spirit.

The "Holy Spirit" is the angel Gabriel.

Orthodox Sunni: there is no role for the Spirit of God.

Shi'ite: The Spirit of God is a source of blessing.

**God and Creation**

= God created all things in six days.

God made the seventh day holy, a day of rest and remembrance, for on that day he ceased from his work. (By the time of the New Testament, Jews observed it as a day of both rest and religious observances. Most Christians make Sunday a special day of religious observances.) The true Sabbath rest is entered, however, by relying on the work and grace of Christ.	x	On the seventh day God sat on His throne, but He was not tired and did not need to rest. Statements about God "resting from his work" are demeaning to God, since God does not get tired. God does not require a weekly day of rest for people, but Muslims should cease work for the Friday prayers.
<i>God created all things through His Word, Who is Christ.</i>		God created all things through his knowledge.
<i>God created the earth entirely good, without evil.</i>	X	God created the earth as it is now. He created mankind as good, although weak and in need of guidance. Individuals may become evil through unbelief and sins.
God created Adam from dust of the earth and breathed life into him from His breath (=His Spirit) and so Adam became a living soul.	=	God created Adam from a lump of clay and breathed life into him from His spirit.
God created Adam and Eve as pure and innocent, but Satan tempted them to distrust God and disobey his command, and this caused them to become sinful, shameful, and estranged from God.		God created mankind pure and innocent, but they forgot God's command. People are still basically good but forgetful of God's commands.
<i>Death and suffering are tragedies which entered the earth because of man's sin. God can utilize sinners and suffering for his good purposes, but He does not generally cause people to sin.</i>	X	God created the earth to have death and suffering. Death is God's will for man and his mercy to society.
<b><i>The Angels, Satan, Evil Spirits</i></b>		<b><i>The Angels, Satan, Evil Spirits</i></b>
God created angels as spirit beings with supernatural powers.	=	God created angels as spirit beings with supernatural powers.
The angels serve God as messengers to intervene on earth and to praise Him.	=	The angels serve God as messengers to intervene on earth and to praise Him.
Angels intervene for the sake to God's people.	>	Angels accompany people and record their good and bad deeds. One should greet his angels after performing the ritual worship.
(No such idea.)	x	God created angels from light.
(No concept of Jinn at all.)	X	The Jinn stem from a pre-Adamic race, which God created from smokeless flame or from the fire of desert wind.
Satan was a glorious angel; he and his angels opposed God and were rejected by God.	x	Satan became proud and disobeyed God by refusing to bow down to Adam. Satan and his demonic soldiers were rejected by God. Satan is classed among both angels and jinn, but like the jinn and unlike the angels, Satan was made of fire.
Satan is the enemy of mankind and seeks to spoil their relationship with God. He entices people to distrust God and to disobey his commands.	~	Satan entices people to sin.
Satan enticed Adam and Eve to eat the forbidden fruit.	=	Satan enticed Adam and Eve to eat the forbidden fruit.
Demons are of uncertain origin, but some--if not all--are fallen angels.	x	The demons ( <i>shayâtin</i> ) are of uncertain origin but are thought to be rebellious jinn.
Satan and his angels entice people to distrust God, to abandon His guidance, and to follow them instead.	~	Specifically, Satan and demons entice people to disbelieve in God and to neglect His laws. Sometimes they appear in human form to lead people astray.
Satan accuses sinners and he or his demons can inflict the punishment God has ordained for their sin, even death; thus he manipulates people by the fear of death.	X	Orthodox: Satan and demons have no power to benefit, harm or kill; only God can do that. Popular: Demons cause serious harm to people.

<p><i>Those who are in Christ can effectively resist Satan and be delivered of demons through the name of Christ and their position in Him, through the power of the Holy Spirit that is within them, and through the Word of God. Those outside the Kingdom are subject to Satan's tyranny and have little effective means to resist demonic evil. Some are even deceived to worship demons.</i></p>	<p>&gt; Orthodox: God causes demons to accompany and mislead those who disbelieve, but others are also tempted. A Muslim can prayerfully affirm that he "takes refuge in Allah from the accursed Satan." Popular: Demons are a danger for everyone. By various rites, verses, and talismans one can hope to ward off their evil influences or at least appease them.</p>
<p><b>Mankind</b></p>	<p><b>Mankind</b></p>
<p><i>God made man in His own spiritual image, with some of his attributes, so that man can have fellowship with God. (Examples include awareness of God, moral consciousness, and the abilities to love, laugh, create, ponder, and communicate with language.)</i></p>	<p>  Orthodox: God gave man spiritual qualities, but God is entirely unlike man; not only is He non-physical, He is not a person and not a spirit. Sufi: God made man in His spiritual image. Phil. Sufi: Man is not really distinct from God; it just appears so until the veil is lifted from his vision.</p>
<p>God put man in authority on the earth and told him to obey Him.</p>	<p>= God honored Adam and made him his viceroy (<i>khalifa</i>) over the earth.</p>
<p>Adam and Eve doubted God's guidance and ate the forbidden fruit.</p>	<p>=</p>
<p>The garden of Eden was on earth. It is not identified with paradise.</p>	<p>X The garden of Eden was probably not on earth. It is the same as paradise.</p>
<p>Mankind fell from the previous spiritual condition, and since then, <i>man is born with a sinful nature.</i></p>	<p>   Adam repented and was forgiven. There was no spiritual fall, only a physical fall from the heavenly paradise to earth. Man continues to be born with a good nature, free from sin, although he is weak and forgetful of God's laws.</p>
<p><i>All people sin. Sin disqualifies a person from paradise.</i></p>	<p>  The classes of sin include inadvertent slips (<i>zallât</i>), lapses (<i>hafwât</i>), offenses (<i>dhunûb</i>), and transgressions (<i>'âthâm</i>). All people (except Jesus and perhaps some prophets) commit offenses (<i>dhunûb</i>), but if they repent they are forgiven. They are punished for unforgiven offenses by spending time in hell. Not all people, however, commit transgressions (<i>'ithm</i>), and it is only this (<i>'ithm</i>) that permanently disqualifies a person from paradise, and then only if God chooses not to forgive it. God has kept prophets and saints from transgression. Some say that everyone has a kernel of transgression in their hearts.</p>
<p><i>The main reason people sin is because their fallen human nature (called "the flesh") inclines toward sin.</i></p>	<p>  The main reason people sin is because they are weak and forgetful of God's laws. Orthodox: Ultimately, every good or evil action is the result of God's predestination. Those whom He guides fulfill His requirements. Popular: When wronged, people generally blame the wrongdoer rather than God. Phil. Sufi: People sin because they do not focus their minds on God as the Absolute and Only Reality, and instead attribute value to physical things.</p>
<p><b>God and Mankind</b></p>	<p><b>God and Mankind</b></p>
<p>God is merciful, gracious, and provident toward mankind.</p>	<p>= God is merciful, gracious, and provident toward mankind.</p>
<p>God calls all people to follow his laws, but He allows some people to rebel and go astray.</p>	<p>~ God calls all people to follow his laws, but He causes some people to go astray.</p>
<p>God loves all people, including those who do not love Him.</p>	<p>  God loves his followers and slaves but hates His enemies.</p>

<i>God's love includes a genuine concern for people's well-being, including a concern to rescue them from sinfulness and folly.</i>	>	God's love is a reward to those who please Him.
<i>God delights in righteousness and grieves over sin and evil.</i>	>	Orthodox: God is not moved or influenced by what man does or feels, but He responds to it as He wills.
<i>God desires personal fellowship with people. His greatest desire for them is that they should love Him and trust His love for them forever.</i>	>	Orthodox: God does not have personal fellowship with man.
	~	Sufi: One can experience God in chanting rituals. A saint is close ( <i>wali</i> ) to God.
		Phil. Sufi: God desires that people love Him and realize that they have no separate reality apart from Him.
<i>God establishes covenants with people as a way of defining a relationship with them. These agreements rest on His promises, on His nature and give people an opportunity to obey Him.</i>	X	God's relationship with mankind is determined by his election and their obedience to his laws, which are eternal and not determined by covenants.
<i>Because of man's sin, fellowship with God was broken and remains hindered.</i>	X	Orthodox: Fellowship is impossible because of God's transcendent nature. Phil. Sufi: Lack of union with God is caused by failure to recognize Him as the only absolute reality in all things.
<i>In the New Covenant, God forgives people and gives them the power to obey.</i>	X	God can keep people from sinning but does so only for prophets.
<i>God is knowable and has a relationship with his people through His Spirit, which indwells those who belong to Jesus Christ. They can draw closer to God by relying on Him, by studying/meditating on His Word, by worshipping Him, by spending time with Him in prayer, and by being attentive to the indwelling Holy Spirit and by accepting His chastening.</i>	>	Orthodox: There is no possibility for man to experience God because of His absolute transcendence. Popular: One can seek God's favor and presence by reciting God's own words, the Qur'an, in God's own language (Classical Arabic). Sufi and popular: God can be experienced by chanting His name ( <i>dhikr</i> ) until ecstasy ( <i>wajd</i> ) is reached. Phil. Sufi: Ultimately, the advanced Sufi can come to realize that he is not separate from God .
<b>God's Rule</b>		<b>God's Rule</b>
God's power is absolute, but <i>his rule is self-limited. He allows man some freedom of choice</i> and works to influence those choices and to teach mankind to choose well. Example: God allowed Adam to name the animals.	>	God's power and rule are absolute. He decrees every deed, whether good or bad. Man has no freedom of choice. Example: God taught Adam the names of the animals.
God sets the dates of one's birth and death, etc.	=	God sets the dates of one's birth and death, etc.
Before creation, God planned the general course of history, including the means of salvation. He remains actively in control of human events and history, ensuring that His promises are fulfilled, His Kingdom established, and His people saved and sanctified.	>	God decreed everything before creation and now watches it unfold. There is an end to history, and the goal of a universal <i>Umma</i> , but little sequencing of events to achieve that goal, and little purpose to history and its events.
In accord with His will, God may change the course of events in response to prayer, repentance, etc.	>	Orthodox: Fate cannot be changed. Everything is already written. People have no power of choice. Popular: When opportunity allows, Muslims do in fact exercise choice and pray for God to intervene, but they resign to fate when things do not work out.
<i>People are slaves to their sinful nature and in subjection to the kingdom of darkness until they are set free by Christ and enter the Kingdom of God. They then relate to God as sons, with an obligation to obey Him as their Father.</i>		All people are slaves to God, but Muslims are those who acknowledge this servitude and submit to it.

God, to achieve His purposes through or for his saints & prophets, may allow them to suffer, but not more than they can endure with His strengthening and comfort, and He will reward them later, sometimes in this life but assuredly in the life to come.		God prospers those who believe & obey, but he also allows people to suffer as fated. Popular: God allows people to suffer more than they can endure.
<b><i>Mankind's Predicament</i></b>		<b><i>Mankind's Predicament</i></b>
Man has misconceptions about God.	=	Man has misconceptions about God.
Man has misconceptions about God's requirements.	~	Man is forgetful of God's laws.
<i>Evil exists among mankind because of man's sinful nature and its consequences. Satan can cause evil directly to lawbreakers deserving punishment, which is everyone on earth. God can also use evil circumstances to discipline and train his people.</i>		Evil exists because God created it and wills it. God allows Satan to mislead those people whom God wants to destroy, but Satan has no power to harm, nor does anyone else.
A sin is a shortcoming in one's relationship with God, such as a failure to trust Him and love Him with all one's heart. Thus all people fall short almost all of the time and are unworthy to live with God in his holy kingdom.	x	A sin is a violation of one of God's laws, such as swallowing one's saliva during the day in Ramadan. The only relationship one can have with God is to obey His laws and perform the religious works that God requires. One has no duty to God beyond that.
<i>Man is by nature a hopeless sinner, unable to comply with all of God's requirements.</i>		Orthodox: Man is forgetful but good; he only needs instruction in order to comply with all of God's requirements. Phil. Sufi: Man is confused by what seems to be real but isn't, and fails to realize that within him is the Perfect Man, which is a projection or image of the Divine Being, from which he is not really distinct.
<i>Because of man's sin, he is unsuitable for the Kingdom of God and is condemned to hell.</i>		Only great sinners and those who refuse to submit to Islam are condemned permanently to hell; most Muslims will pass through hell and then go to paradise. Nevertheless, God has already consigned to hell whomever He wanted, and there is nothing anyone can do to change it.
Man needs fellowship with God, but because of his sin, he is estranged from God and unable to enjoy fellowship with Him.	X	Orthodox: There is no fellowship between God and mankind. It is not possible and God does not desire it. The only relationship is that of master and slave.
<i>Man needs deliverance from the tyranny of his sinful nature, but he is unable to free himself.</i>		Man needs right guidance, but God sometimes allows Satan and others to mislead him.
<i>Man wants life, but because of his sin, he is spiritually dead and doomed to die physically.</i>	X	Physical death is not the result of sin. There is no concept of spiritual death.
<i>Man can do nothing of himself to make himself righteous and acceptable to God.</i>		By right guidance and observing God's laws man can please God.
<i>The mortal judgment on sin can only be borne by the death of a perfect substitute, since a sinful substitute would need to die for his/her own sinfulness, but no man is without sin.</i>		No one can be a substitute to bear the judgment for the sins of someone else, but ablutions may wash away sin, and fasting and alms may atone for them.
<i>Because of sin, the natural world suffers from death and corruption.</i>	x	Man's sin did not affect the natural world.
<i>Because of sin, he is under the sway of the accuser, Satan, who lords it over the world.</i>		Man suffers from the temptations and doubts whispered by Satan. His activity is not the result of sin.

***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)*