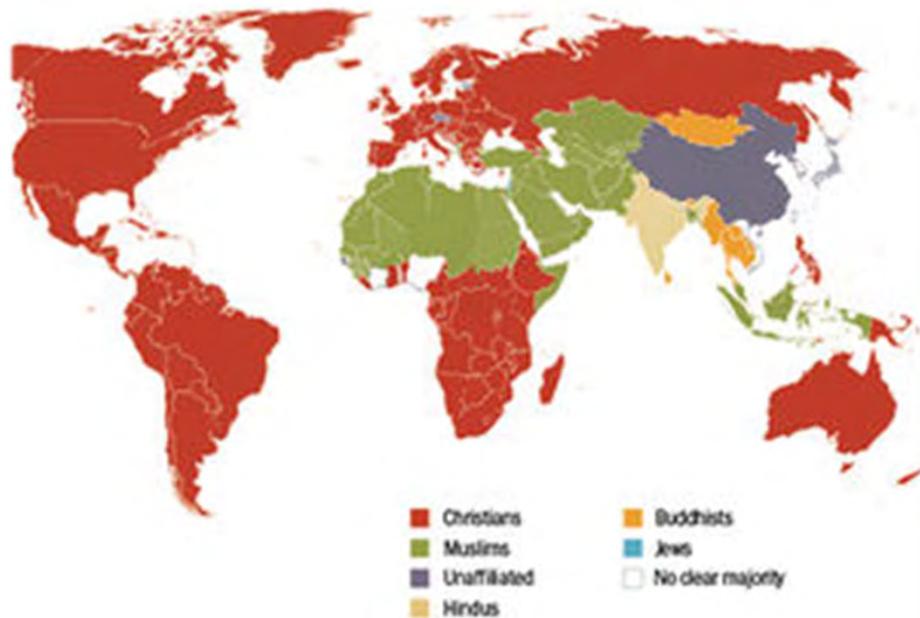


# Mohammed and



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Written by Dr. Frank Kaufmann From the Essentials of Unification Principle



During the past 2000 years there have been two major providential developments: first, the birth and global expansion of Christianity, and, second, the advent of Islam and its dramatic growth into the world's second largest religion. At the end of the twentieth century, almost half the world's seven billion people are either Christian or Muslim, with Islam growing faster than Christianity. There is a dispensational reason for this spectacular growth of Islam, which will be explained in this later.

Ishmael, the elder of Abraham's two sons, could not receive God's blessing when Abraham's position as father of faith was passed to Isaac, the second son. Abraham had made a mistake in the sacrifice of birds and animals, but in his determination to restore that mistake he offered his son as a sacrifice. In the original dispensation, Abraham was to have laid a foundation of faith after which Ishmael and Isaac would have laid a foundation of substance. God's blessing would then have been given to Isaac and Ishmael.





Because Ishmael was not responsible for losing his providential position in Abraham's family, and the blessing that came with it, God's promise to bless him became a commitment to be fulfilled in time. Ishmael, like Jacob, became the father of twelve sons, who became the patriarchs of twelve tribes. These twelve tribes, cousins to the twelve tribes of Israel, were progenitors of the Arabs. The Ishmaelites inherited the burden of a blessing denied, which created a historical base for resentment towards the Israelites.



Since the pattern for giving blessings in the providence of restoration is for God to use Abel as His channel to uplift Cain, the primary providential objective for God has been to establish the position of Abel, so that His blessings could be given to all fallen humanity, centered on Abel.

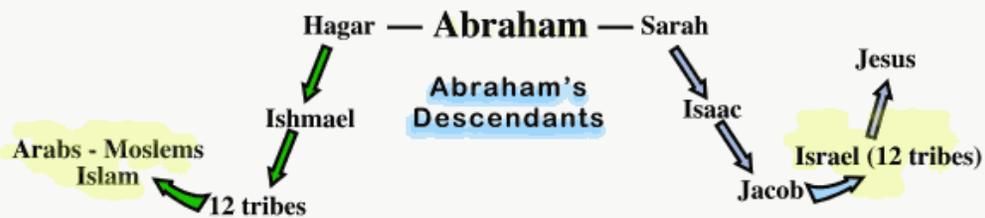
When Jacob, as Abel, was victorious in making a foundation of substance with Esau, the whole of Isaac's family received God's blessing. God chose the descendants of Jacob to expand the foundation for true parents from the individual to national level, because through this lineage they inherited the victorious foundations made in Abraham's family.





The true parents, as universal Abel figures, are to share God's blessing with the rest of humankind, including the Ishmaelites. Thus it was the mission of Isaac's lineage to embrace the descendants of Ishmael and to include them in preparations to receive true parents.

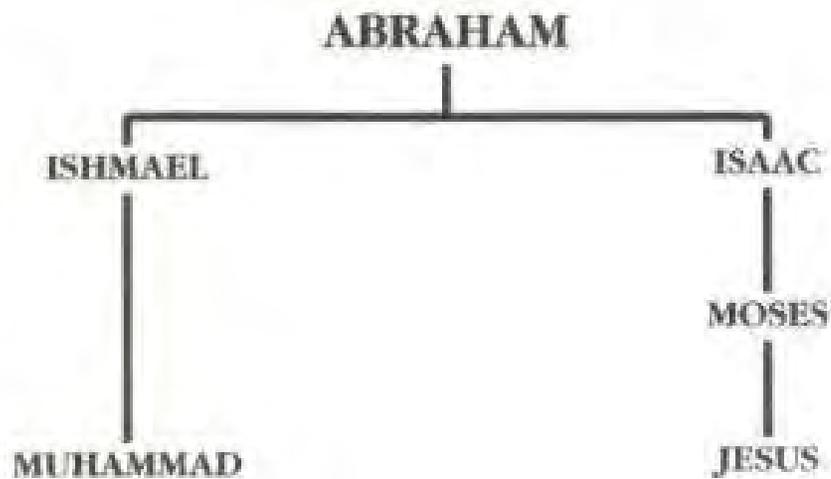
## The Origin of the Middle East Crisis



Ishmael had 12 sons like Jacob. Genesis 25:12-18 says they settled from the east of Egypt (Shur) all the way up to Assyria where the Arab nations are still today. Genesis 37:25-28 identifies the Midianites with the Ishmaelites. Genesis 28:9 links them up with the Edomites through Esau's marriage.

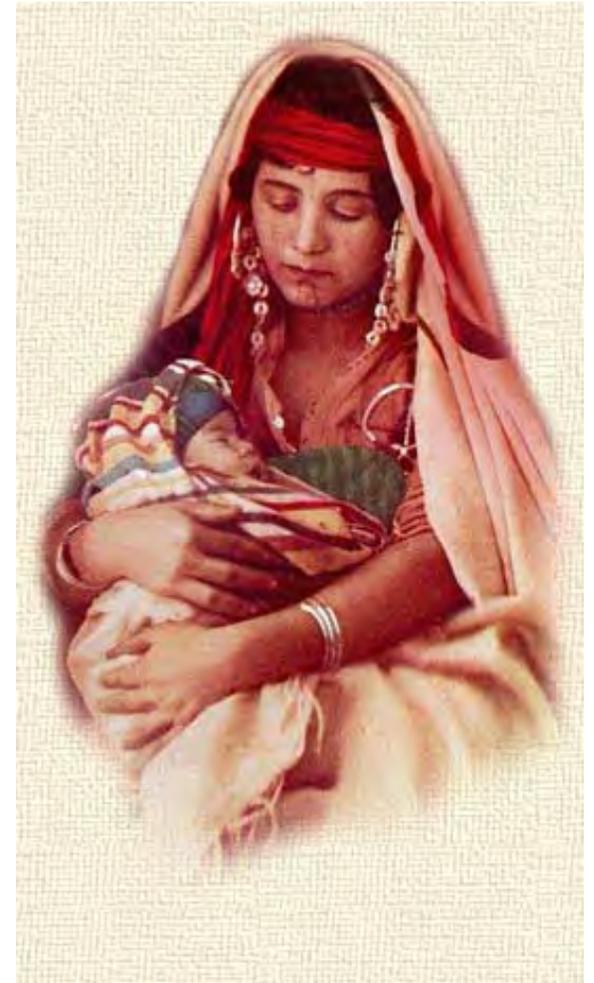
Jacob, Abraham's grandson through the promised son of Isaac, also had 12 tribes and gained the new name of their father: Israel. Israel is, of course, the same nation embroiled in the Middle East conflict today. The animosities of the Arabs against the Jews continues to this day.

By participating in the providence in this manner, the Ishmaelites would earn God's blessings and their resentment towards the Children of Israel would dissolve. However, this cooperation did not come about and the relations between Arabs and Jews have remained problematic to this day. Only through true parents giving true love to the offspring of both sons of Abraham can the historic conflict between them be finally resolved.



Because the providence of restoration is always focused on the pivotal mission of laying a foundation for true parents, the central historical path to that objective is where God is most active with humankind. So it was after Abraham's family. Naturally, God gave special love and guidance to the chosen people because through them the whole world was to be restored. Consequently, both the Bible and the Koran focus their attention on the central figures in the lineage of Jacob (Joseph, Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, etc.), up to and including Jesus.

Because of the providential importance of Ishmael, there were points along the path of Jacob's descendants where God's concern for Ishmael's lineage is clearly evident in His efforts to bring the two lines of Abraham's family together. For example, when Moses was sent into exile from Egypt, he was protected by an Arab farmer, Jethro, and married his daughter, Zipporah, making a family base for the two sides to join in a common providence. The prolongation in the providence after Moses delayed any progress in the unity between Jews and Arabs.

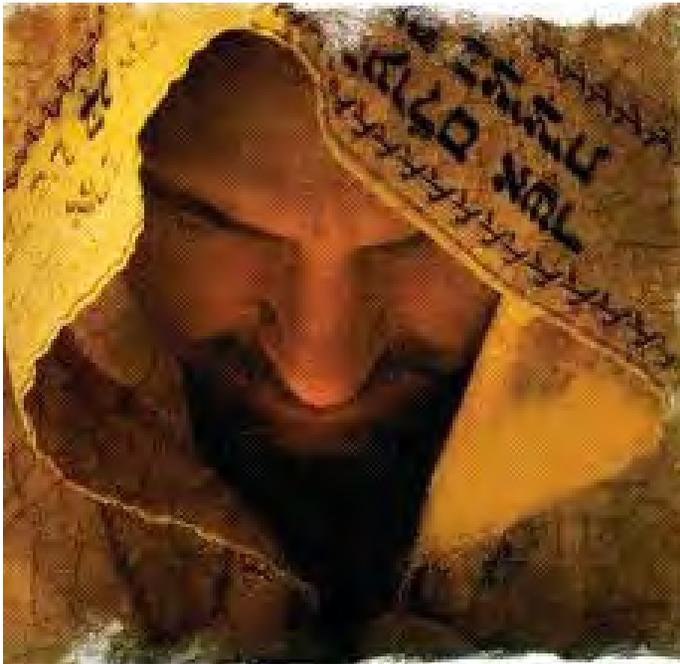




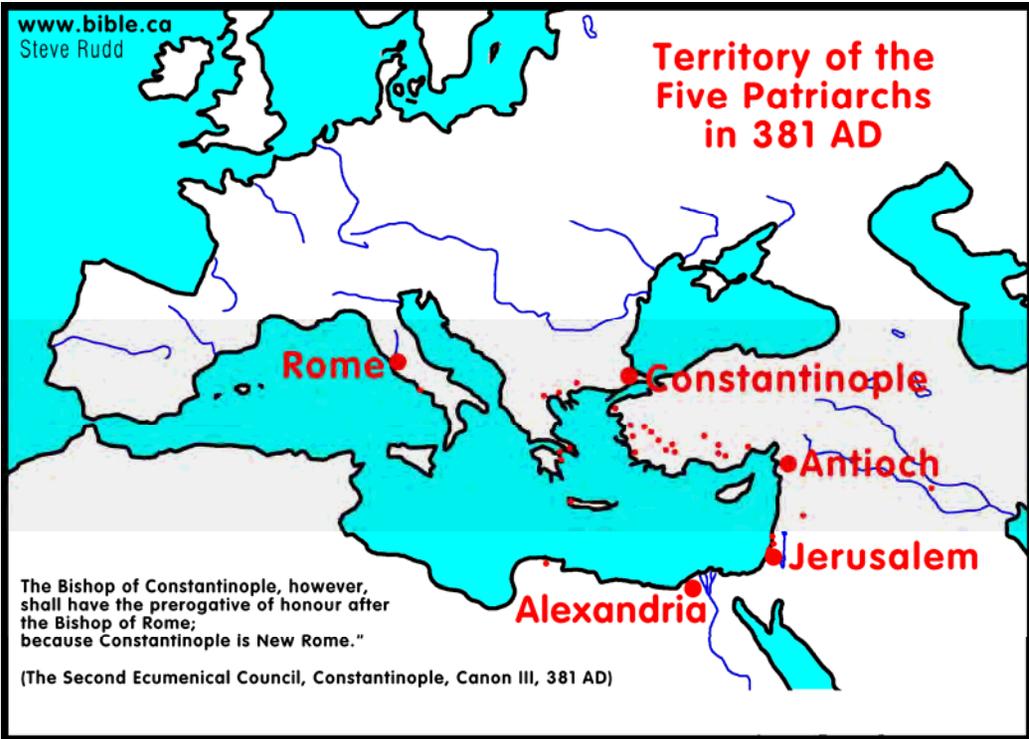
Throughout the era of the judges, the Abel position was not properly established in distinction from the Cain world of Canaan. When the circumstances were finally right for Israel to stand as the Abel nation, Solomon failed to unite his people with God and the law of Moses, preventing the Israelites from fulfilling Abel's mission. Specifically, Solomon and the Queen of Sheba could have been a couple that brought the two lines of Abraham's family together, but this possibility was rendered moot by the corruption of Solomon's faith.



There were no further opportunities until Jesus himself came as the true father of humankind. In his words and deeds he frequently emphasized that his mission was not just to save the Jews but to save all people. This is the mission of true parents. At his birth, three kings from Arab and Persian lands came to serve Jesus, suggesting the possibility that God was opening the way to bless the descendants of Ishmael through Jesus.



However, when he was rejected by the Israelites, he was prevented from fulfilling this mission and could not transmit God's blessings to the Israelites or the Ishmaelites. However, because Jesus himself was victorious over Satan on the cross and successfully completed a spiritual foundation for true parents, Christians were put in the position to inherit responsibility for laying the foundation for the true parents - and the mission of the Israelites.



The first 400 years of the Christian era offered followers of Jesus an opportunity to indemnify the first 4000 years of the providence (Adam to Jesus in scriptural time). However, at the end of this period, the church entered a time of serious fracture, dividing into five major ecclesiastic sees as well as many smaller groups.

### The Worldwide Spread of Christianity, About 1700



On a foundation of unity they would have been able to expand their witness successfully throughout the world, making worldwide preparations for true parents. (This did not occur for many centuries, until, after the church had been purified through the Protestant Reformation, it sought to evangelize the entire world.)



The most important people to be embraced by Christianity in the crucial fifth and sixth centuries were the descendants of Abraham's sons, Ishmael and Isaac, because they had been chosen to lead the restoration. The shortcomings in Christianity meant that it could not work with either the Jews or the Arabs to build a foundation for true parents.



Because of the problems associated with failed responsibilities in their own history with God, the Jews entered a long, dark era of suffering. Meanwhile, God sent a prophet to uplift the descendants of Ishmael, whose blessing had not been realized since God had first promised it to their ancestor Abraham.

# *The Mission of Mohammed*

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God chose to bless the Ishmaelites directly and set up a providence to complement and counterbalance Christianity by sending the prophet Mohammed to the Arabs. Historically, Islam is the only major prophetic religion to appear since Jesus gave birth to Christianity. This makes Mohammed the last of the Abrahamic prophets.

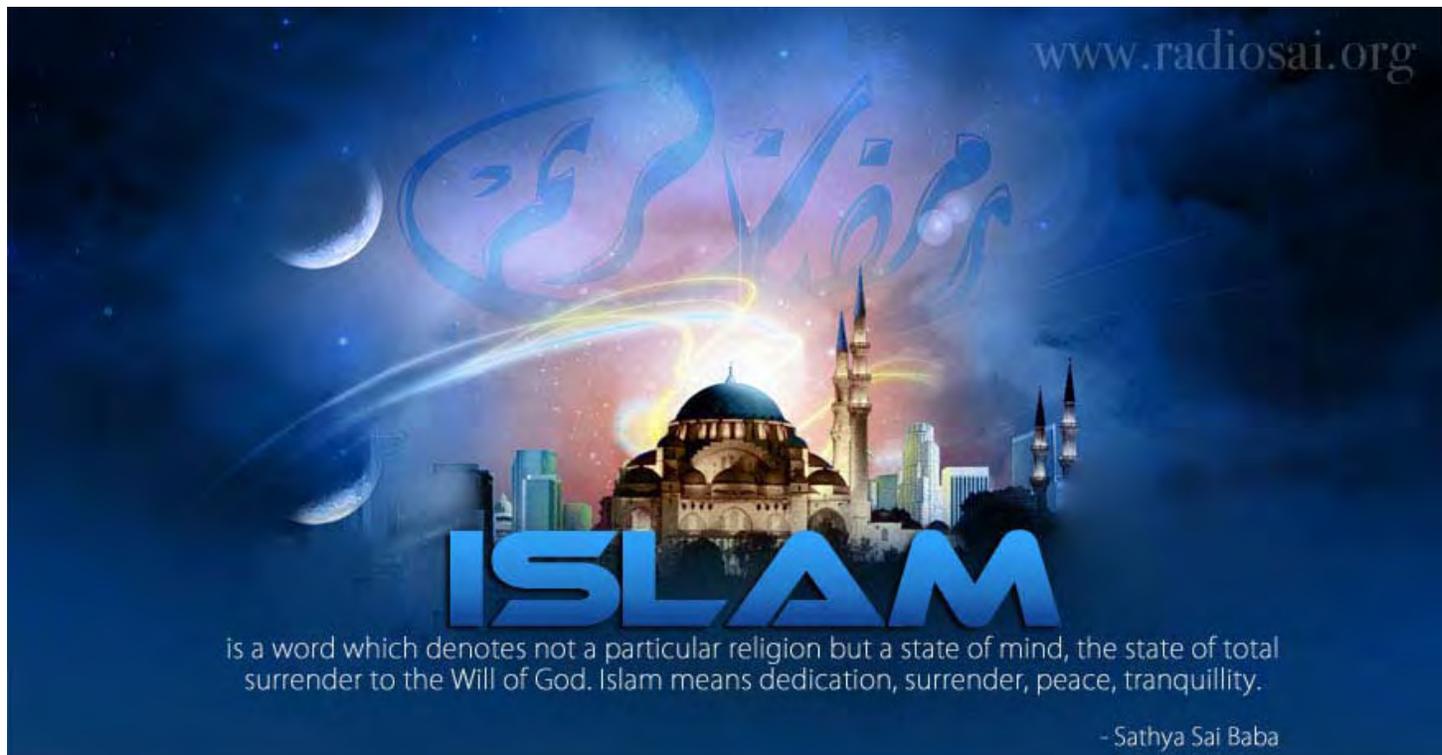
لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

THERE IS NO GOD  
BUT ALLAH  
AND  
MUHAMMAD  
IS THE MESSENGER  
OF ALLAH

Mohammed's mission was to purify the lineage of Ishmael, to separate it from idolatry and to provide it with a clear understanding of God's truth so that it could fulfill a providential role in preparing for true parents. In this way, Mohammed would lay a foundation for true parents with Ishmael's descendants, bringing them directly into the orbit of the central providence of restoration.



Mohammed's teaching, inspired by revelations, was a radical critique of the polytheism of his native Mecca and a validation of the Jewish and Christian prophets and scriptures. Among the basic doctrines he introduced to his people, he emphasized monotheism, God's ideal for the creation, human responsibility, the human fall, punishment for sin and an eventual end to the world of evil. He also demythologized Jesus, stressing that he was a man, not God; and he contradicted the notion that it was God's will that Jesus die on the cross.



Mohammed's teachings formed the core message for believers in Islam, which means total surrender to God. He taught that everyone who so surrendered was a Muslim, with Abraham specifically mentioned as an early Muslim. Through Islam, Mohammed brought unity to the disparate tribes of Ishmael, establishing a civilization that carried God's blessing to the Arabs and all others who adopted the Muslim faith.



Mohammed's mission and teaching were also a judgment on the vicious factionalism of Christianity in the sixth and seventh centuries, when minor differences in doctrine led to entire churches being anathematized and cast out from the Christian fold. Those Christians -- Arians, Nestorians, Monophysites, Iconoclasts - who had sincere objections to the Orthodox doctrines and practices, were not treated by the dominant church as brothers in the Christian family, but rather as enemies.



Feeling no love from the church, they turned in droves to Islam, in which the critique of certain Christological and Trinitarian doctrines and the worship of icons reflected some of their views. Many of their insights were truthful, and God wanted them preserved and publicized, not quashed by an all-powerful orthodoxy.

# *The Mission of Islam*

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Since God is one and His will is one, the mission for all religions is also one. Religions vary because of the differences in the time and place of their founding, but they all exist for a common mission, to lead fallen humanity back to God. Since fallen nature can only be removed completely through true parents, all religions work to prepare humanity to receive true parents. Because of common ancestral roots, Islam, on the one hand, and Judeo-Christianity, on the other, share parallel, fraternal missions. They should cooperate like two brothers working together to prepare the way for true parents.



In any family there are differences between the children. When harmonized, this diversity is what makes a family delightful and enriching. The differences between Christianity and Islam reflect differences in their backgrounds and providential roles. They should cooperate harmoniously for the common purpose of God.



Unfortunately, though, the history of their relations has been far from harmonious. All too often they have fought each other instead of working together. For cooperative relations to prevail, there must be real mutual understanding as to what role each is playing in God's overall providence. With true understanding, differences can be seen as complementary strengths rather than irreconcilable contradictions.

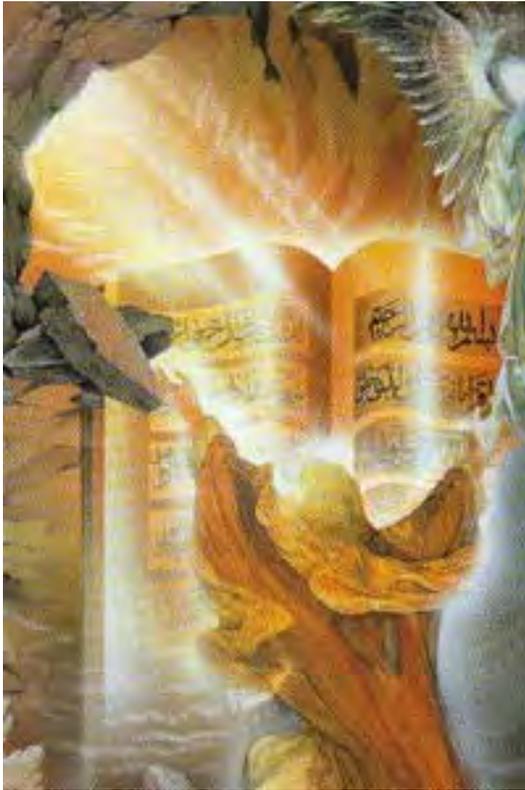
# *Mohammed and the Koran*

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Mohammed was born in 570 and spent the first forty years of his life preparing for his prophetic mission. Surrounded by the idolatrous people of Mecca, in western Arabia, he sought the truth of God, which was revealed to him by the angel Gabriel. The revelations he received were presented to him as the culmination of the prophetic tradition reaching all the way back to Adam.



They accepted the revelations of previous prophets and then added a body of instruction covering major theological issues and spelling out clear guidelines for a life of faith.



These revelations were given to Mohammed over a 21-year course, beginning in 610. The first twelve years he spent in Mecca under most adverse conditions because the Meccans persecuted him and his followers severely, forcing several to flee into exile in Abyssinia on two separate occasions. Several times Mohammed was driven to the brink of despair, but he never gave up his mission and eventually his real worth was recognized by tribes of nearby Yathrib. Seventy elders from Yathrib invited Mohammed to assume leadership over their town, to resolve tribal disputes and establish order among their people.



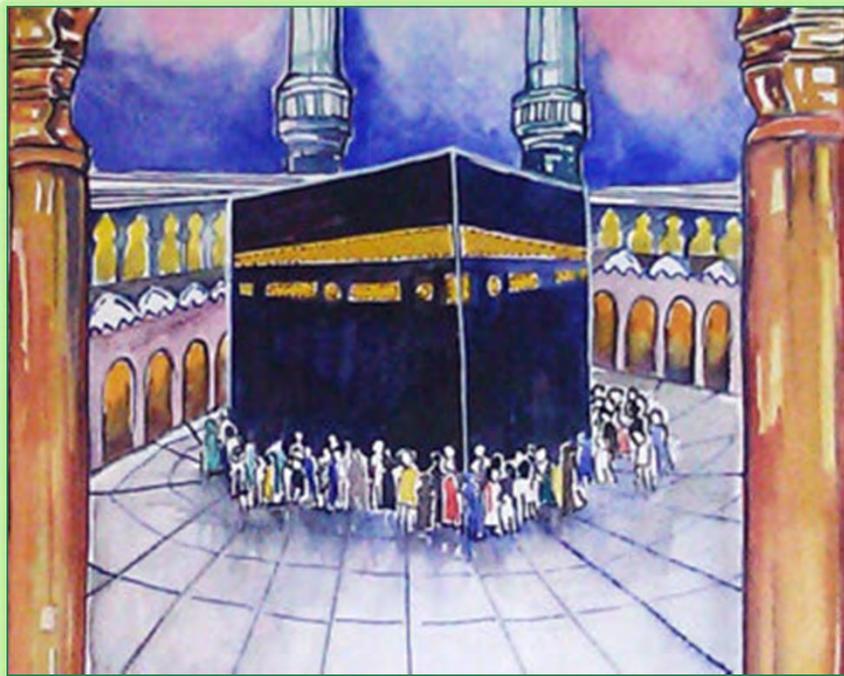
In 622 Mohammed and his followers emigrated from Mecca to Yathrib. In many respects the move was an escape from confinement, and the prophet himself had to hide in a cave for three days while angry Meccans sought him out. The liberation and emigration of the early Muslims was similar to the liberation of the Israelites from Egypt, also accomplished after three days of separation from their enemies. Because of its significance to Muslims, the Islamic lunar calendar takes 622 as its first year. For Muslims it is considered year one hijary (of the emigration).



Once in Yathrib, which was renamed Medina (The City), Mohammed set about creating a theocratic state according to the revelations he had received in Mecca and continued to receive in Medina. In addition to explaining God's will for humankind, the revelations provided detailed instructions for leading a God-centered life and the fulfillment of human obligations to God and fellow human beings. After Mohammed's death, these revelations were collected in 114 Suras, or chapters, and compiled as the Koran, which means literally the Reading (of truth).



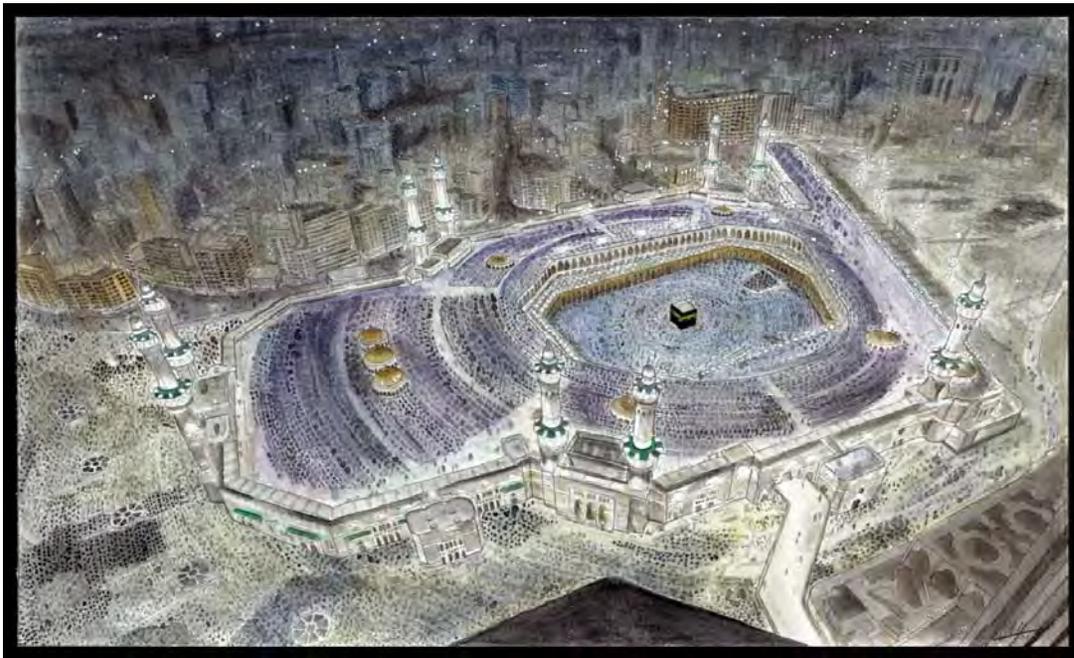
The Koran adds to the material in biblical scriptures about many of the figures in the providence of restoration, often providing its own emphasis. It stresses throughout that there is only one God, not many, as the Meccans believed, and makes it very clear that Jesus was a man and not God. It also says that Jesus was victorious over death. It shows that each person is responsible before God for his actions, which is the basis for the law of indemnity. The rewards for living a faithful life are spelled out in appealing terms, while the terrible punishments for disobedience to God are presented in graphic detail.

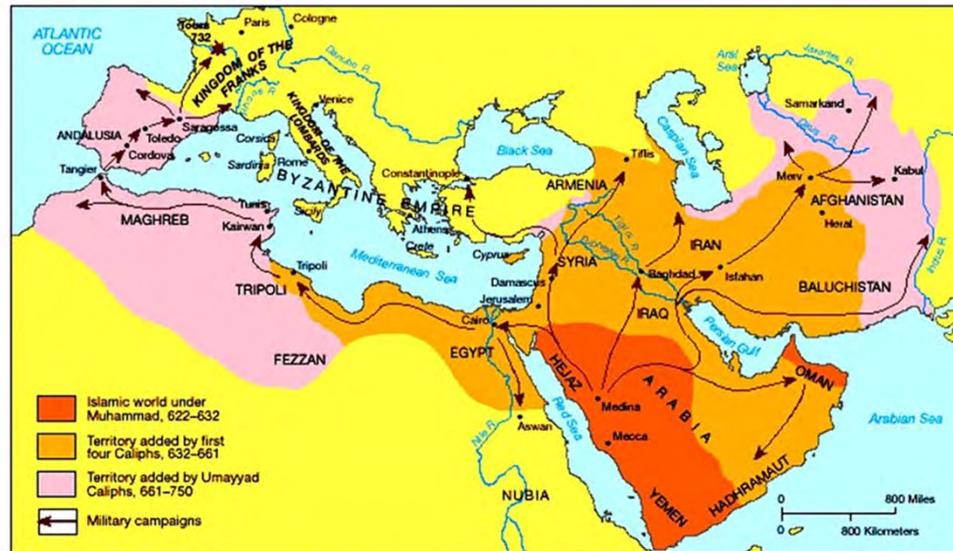


Further, Islam provides a believer with a basic five-fold path for the fulfillment of his or her responsibility: confession of faith in God and Mohammed; prayer five times a day; tithing one-fortieth of one's wealth; fasting annually throughout the lunar month of Ramadan; and making the pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in life. These "five pillars of Islam" have guided hundreds of millions of believers throughout the world in leading faithful lives.

# *The Expansion of Islam*

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 *The Spread of Islam. The rapid spread of Islam created within a century a unified cultural and economic zone from India to the Atlantic Ocean within.*

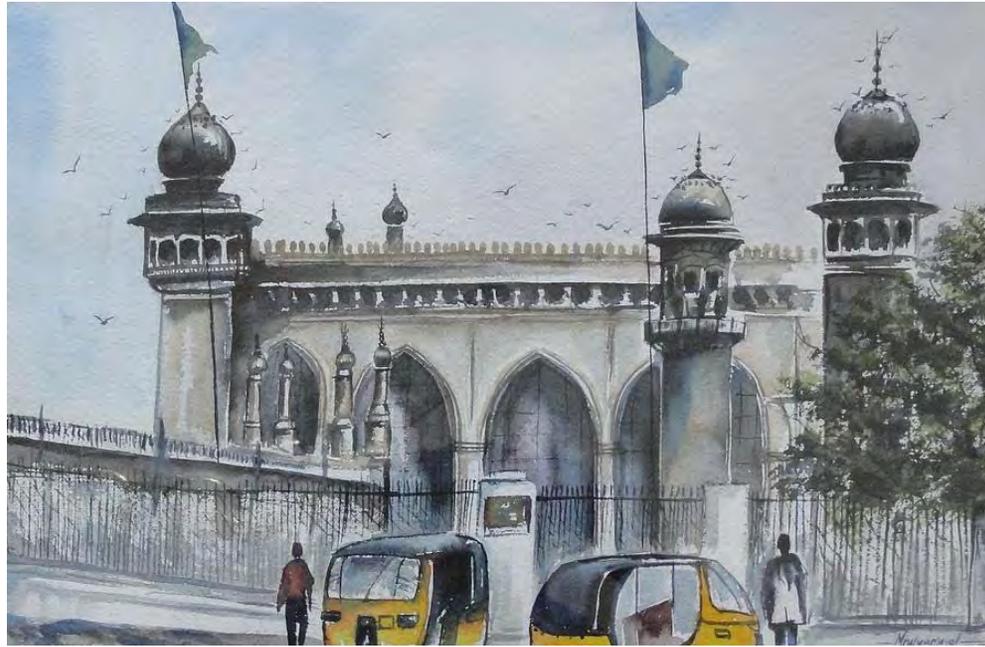
Mohammed was not only a prophet but also a very successful leader. During his brief decade of leadership in Medina he succeeded in uniting the disputatious tribes of Arabia under the banner of Islam. This national foundation for Islam enabled the new religion to explode out of the Arabian Peninsula after his death (632), and in little more than a century it spread all the way to the borders of France in the West and China in the East.



In many parts of the world, Islam succeeded in introducing monotheism where Christianity had proved unsuccessful in the same endeavor. One reason for this comparative success was Islam's singular focus on God, in contrast to the Christian emphasis on Jesus and a teaching encumbered by a number of hard-to-understand theological concepts. In addition, there were many Monophysite and Nestorian Christians who, being alienated from the trinitarian Orthodox Church, found Islam congenial to their beliefs.



The dramatic expansion of Islam, from the individual to the family, tribal, national and global levels, demonstrated a pattern of growth which is parallel in some respects to the Principle model of the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. To establish a global foundation for the kingdom, a national foundation is needed; to win the world you must first win a nation.



Thus once Mohammed had united Arabia under Islam, the new religion could move to a worldwide level very rapidly. The Kingdom of Heaven, which is the dominion of true love, will begin with one family and then expand to one clan, one tribe and one nation. From that nation God's domain will expand to the whole world.



The expansion of Islam was marred by the use of force against others, including believers of other faiths. This and other impurities in the practice of the faith (such as hypocrisy) by some Muslims were carried with Islam through the waves of its growth. This caused resentment against Muslims that in some cases lingers to this day.



Islam was to be disseminated through service and love and not by the force of arms. God is a God of love, not violence and warfare. His representatives must emulate Him. The Kingdom of Heaven will spread through example, teaching and service, guided by love alone. Such expansion will always respect individuals and communities for their unique character and personal beliefs.

# *Islam and Christianity*

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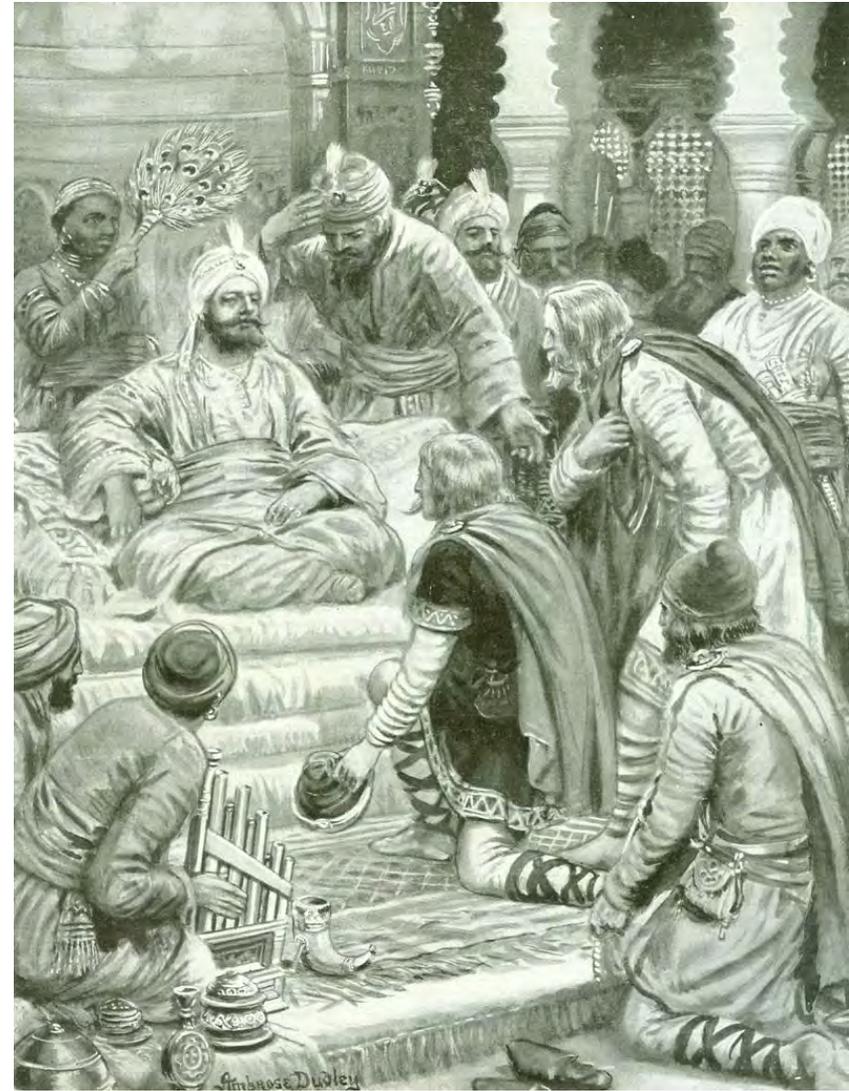


Jesus' course resulted in a spiritual victory and therefore the expansion of Christianity was on a spiritual level; the victory of Mohammed was spiritual and physical and therefore the expansion of Islam took place on the spiritual and physical levels. Differences between the two in the spiritual dimension reflected the two men's different missions, Jesus having been sent as the messiah and true parent, Mohammed as a prophet to prepare for the coming of true parents.



Since Christianity and Islam had parallel missions in preparing a foundation for true parents, there should have been a cooperative relationship between them in history. However, because of resentments and misunderstanding on both sides, this was rarely the case. Nevertheless, history reveals God's efforts to get the two brother religions to work together.

When the United Christian Kingdom was established by Charlemagne (800), the United Islamic Empire was at its zenith under the Abbasids. Harun Al Rashid was the Caliph in Baghdad (786-809), overseeing a brilliant flourishing of science and literature in his extensive domain. The two leaders exchanged gifts, but no substantial cooperation was initiated, although there were many good reasons for Christendom, which was dominant north and east of the Mediterranean Sea, and Dar Al Islam, concentrated to the south and east of the Mediterranean, to join hands in developing the world they knew.

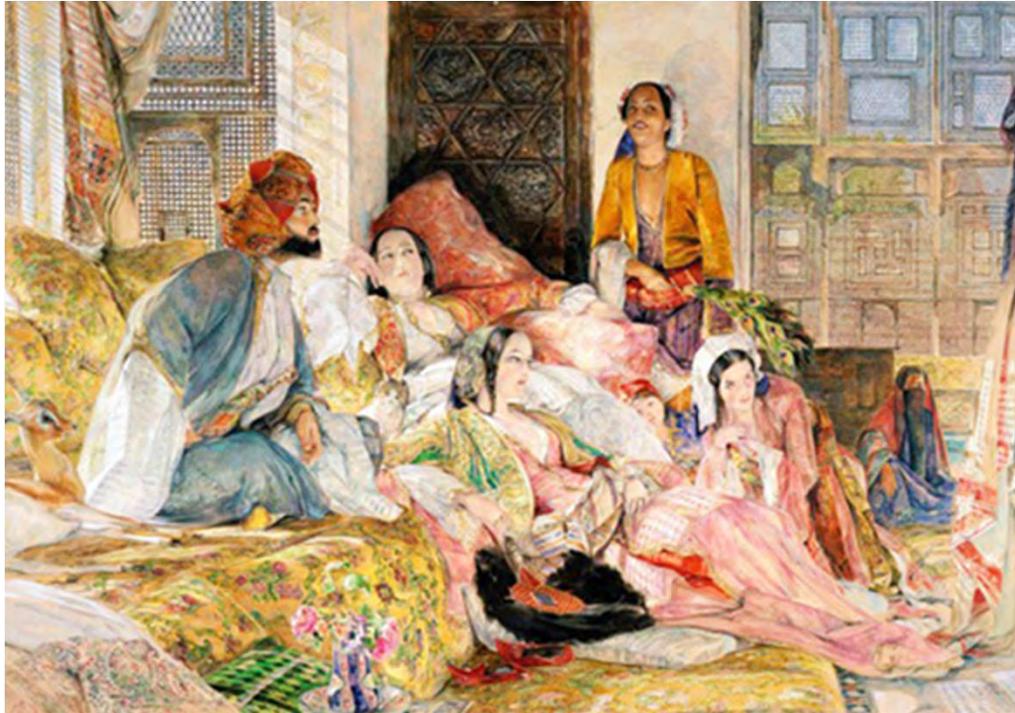




However, distrust and enmity poisoned the relationship and soon the two religions were at each other's throats. The Popes in Rome launched a series of crusades against the Muslims, adding to the Christian and Muslim blood already shed during the expansion of Islam. The crusades set the two religions on a collision course that has characterized their relations ever since.



Muslims say the Bible contains misrepresentations of God's word, distorted by Jews and Christians, while Christians see nothing in the Bible to anticipate the coming of Mohammed, and consequently reject Islam. Thus, continued conflict, based on mutual misunderstanding and suspicion, has soured the relations between Christianity and Islam, greatly hampering God's providence for both religions.



When the United Christian Kingdom failed to lay a foundation for true parents because of disunity, it divided into the kingdoms of the East and West Franks, beginning the 400 years of divided kingdoms. In the history of Islam, the United Islamic Empire of the Abbasids gradually began to fall apart as pieces broke away under leaders who increasingly rejected the supremacy of Baghdad and claimed parts of the Muslim territory as their own.



The caliphate fell into serious decline from the mid-tenth century and was overtaken by conquering Seljuk Turks in the mid-eleventh century. The Turks, in turn, were conquered two centuries later (1258) by Hulagu's Mongols, who put an end to the Abbasid caliphate.



The caliphate had an important symbolic value in representing continuity of Muslim leadership after Mohammed's death, since the prophet left no male heirs. The first four (orthodox) caliphs to succeed Mohammed, Abu Bakr, Omar, Othman (who compiled the Koran) and Ali, could not set up a lasting and universal tradition because of contentious forces within the Islamic community.



An anti-Ali faction wrested the caliphate from him by force, establishing the Umayyad caliphate in Damascus (661), only to have it taken away a century later (750) by the Abbasids, based in Baghdad. The North African Fatimids claimed the caliphate from Baghdad after they conquered Egypt (969), and eventually, in 1517, the Ottoman Turks moved the caliphate from Cairo to Constantinople when they conquered Egypt. The caliphate finally died out when the Ottoman Sultanate collapsed and the year-old Republic of Turkey renounced it in 1924.



One result of the internal divisions within Islam was the creation of two main branches, the predominant Sunnis and minority Shias. Sunnis recognize the four orthodox caliphs, whereas the Shias recognize up to an additional eight caliphs or imams (depending on the sect), out of the lineage of Ali, the fourth caliph. For the Shias, Ali holds particular importance as inheritor of Mohammed's central position in the faith and as a model Muslim.



The disunity in Christendom, leading to the decline and eventual exile of the Pope, was mirrored in the Islamic world by disunity leading to the decline and virtual demise of the caliphate. In Christian history, this decline was arrested only once a corrective movement, the Protestant Reformation, took hold after Martin Luther spearheaded efforts to reform the Roman Catholic church in 1517.



In Islamic history, decline and disintegration were halted and the Muslim world was reunited under the Ottoman Empire when the Turks conquered Syria, Egypt and the holy cities of Mecca and Medina in 1517, beginning 400 years of Turkish rule. Their vast empire extended south from its center in Turkey to encompass the Arab world, west through the length of North Africa and into East and Central Europe, and east into Central Asia. The Ottoman Empire did not parallel the Protestant Reformation as a force for spiritual renewal, but it helped preserve Islam as a unified religio-political power that fostered the spread of monotheism.



By 1517, the Islamic world had reached the threshold of the final 400 years of global preparation for true parents, an era that saw a transformation of the world on all levels and presented Islam with the challenge of fulfilling its providential destiny by working side-by-side with Christianity for the preparation of the world to receive true parents. To fulfill this purpose, Muslims and Christians alike have to transcend traditional suspicions and animosities for the sake of God's will, which encompasses all humanity.

# *Lessons from Mohammed's Life Course*

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First:

God judges and supplements religions until they fulfill their purposes. If Judaism had fulfilled its mission and accepted Jesus, there would have been no need for Christianity.

If Christianity had completely incorporated and applied the teachings of Jesus there would have been no need for Islam (the promise to Ishmael would have been fulfilled through the mission of the victorious messiah). God sent Mohammed as a judgment for Christians after they failed to fulfill God's will, and the revelations in the Koran were given to Mohammed to supplement those in the Bible.



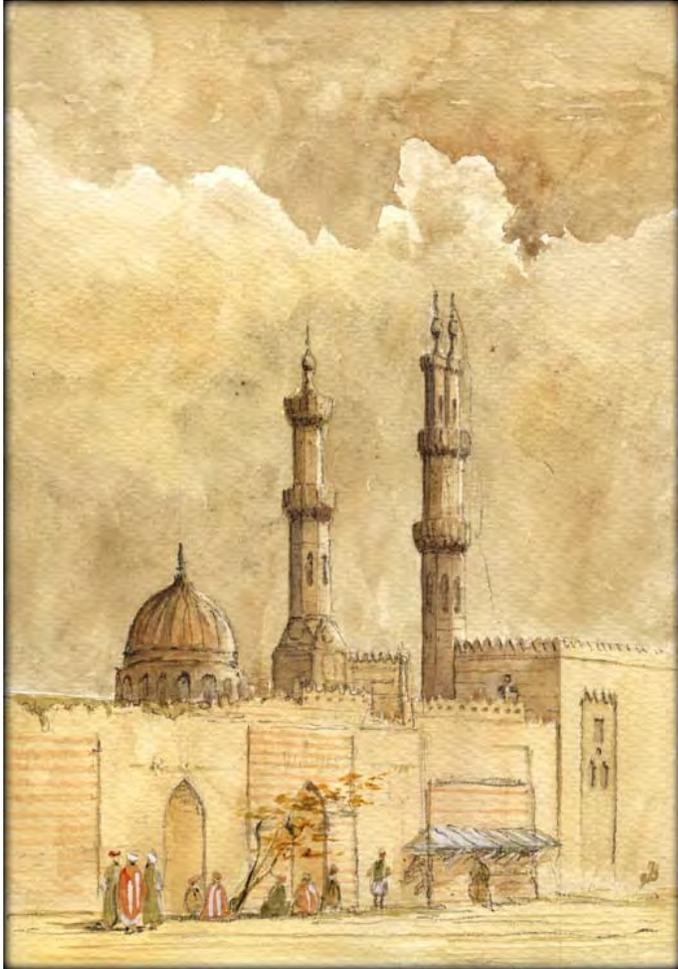


## Second:

Religions vary in content and emphasis depending on their missions. God used Mohammed to bring truth and a way to restoration for many millions of people all over the world, people who without Islam would lack a deep and comprehensive understanding of God and how to be reconciled to Him. Christianity is strongly focused on the messiah and how to receive salvation through him

Islam's focus is more towards the practice of religious obligations for justification before the one true God. Eastern philosophies and religions have their own emphases. The differences in focus translate into differences in culture. Since all religions are inspired by God to prepare humanity to receive true parents and fulfill the three blessings, their diversity offers fallen humans, coming from various cultural backgrounds, many paths to oneness with God. Thus the different religions have different but complementary missions to fulfill within God's global providence of restoration.





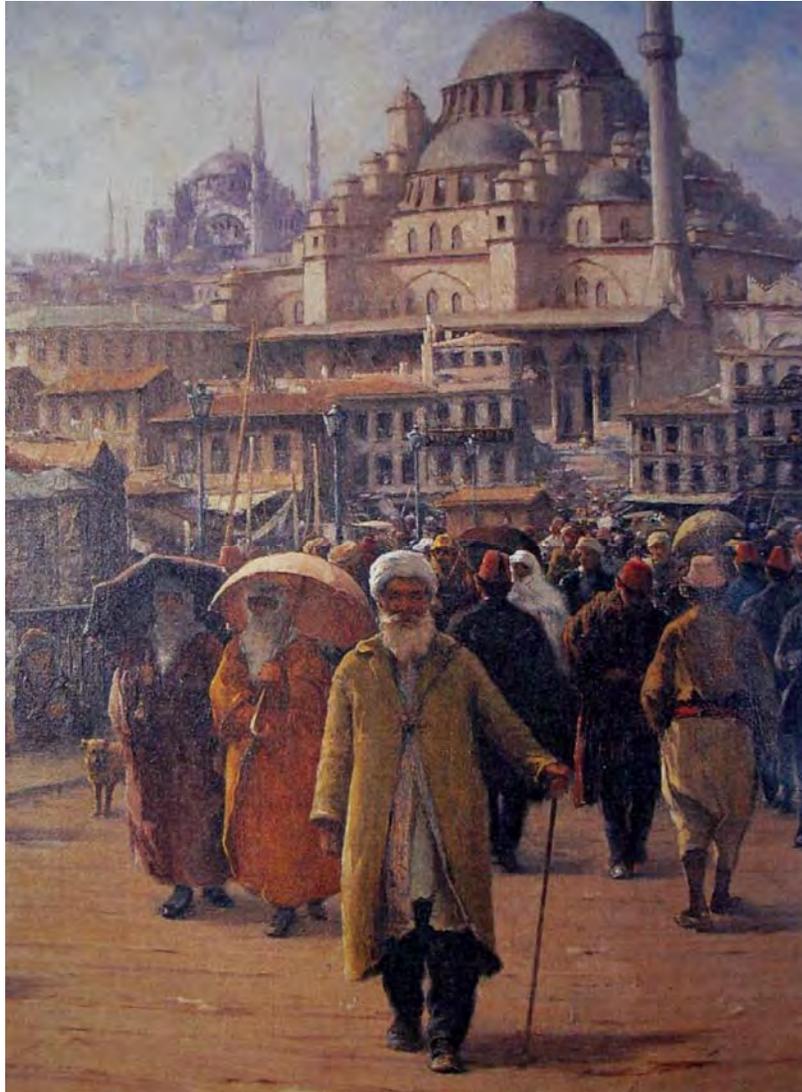
### Third:

Islam established a model for expansion on the prophetic level which parallels in some respects the model of expansion of the Kingdom of Heaven. By persuading first individuals and families in Mecca, then tribes in Yathrib/Medina, and, finally, the whole nation of Arabia to accept his prophet hood and leadership, Mohammed laid a successful foundation for the expansion of Islam to the worldwide level. Through this achievement, Mohammed pioneered a global providence to be perfected on the messianic level by true parents.

#### Fourth:

The prophetic foundation is to prepare believers for the coming of true parents. The Jews inherited the prophetic foundation of the patriarchs in Abraham's lineage up to the time of Malachi to prepare them for Jesus. Muslims inherited the Judaic foundation plus the prophetic foundations of Jesus and Mohammed to prepare them for the true parents to come.





### ***Conclusion***

Mohammed was a successful prophet and statesman who in the brief span of 21 years went from persecuted-visionary to ruler of Arabia. His success made Islam a powerful tool for the providence and the second largest religion in the world. However, Islam was blessed by God not merely to fulfill His promise to bless Ishmael, but, more importantly, as part of His overall dispensation of restoration. Therefore Islam's mission can only be completed in conjunction with God's work in other religions, especially Judaism and Christianity.



The next chapter will look closely at the 400 years after 1517 to show how these four centuries were the second period of global preparation for true parents, an era in which both Christianity and Islam became worldwide religions exerting unrivaled influence over human affairs, and how both faced challenges from science and materialism in the final stages of preparation for the establishment of God's Kingdom of Heaven on earth.