

June 9, 2010

Chapter 1 A Slip of the Mask

Introduction.

“Five seconds later, Jarrah asked, “Is that it” Shall we finish it off? A hijacker responded, “No, not yet. When they all come, finish it off.” The sounds of fighting continued outside the cockpit. Again, Jarrah pitched the nose of the aircraft up and down. At 10:00:26, a passenger in the background said, “In the cockpit. If we don’t, we’ll die!” Sixteen seconds later, a passenger yelled, “Roll it!” Jarrah stopped the violent maneuvers at about 10:01:00 and said, “Allah is the greatest! Allah is the greatest!” He then asked another hijacker in the cockpit, “Is that it? I mean, shall we put it down?,” to which the other replied, “Yes, put it in it, and pull it down.”

“The passengers continued their assault and at 10:02:23, a hijacker said, “Pull it down! Pull it down!” The hijackers remained at the controls but must have judged that the passengers were only seconds from overcoming them. The airplane headed down; the control wheel was turned hard to the right. The airplane rolled onto its back, and one of the hijackers began shouting “Allah is the greatest! Allah is the greatest!” With the sounds of the passenger counterattack continuing, the aircraft plowed into an empty field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania at 580 miles per hour, about 20 minutes’ flying time from Washington, D.C. Jarrah’s objective was to crash his airliner into symbols of the American Republic, the Capitol or the White House. He was defeated by the alerted, unarmed passengers of United 93.”¹

“Allahu Akbar!” “Allahu Akbar!” (“God is greater!” “God is greater!”²) When innocent people die?

This chapter will introduce the Bible’s portrayal of an almost endless spiritual battle between God and satan. The two are never in “direct conflict”; rather, satan wages his spiritual struggle against God by deceiving, tempting, and impacting the apex of God’s creation, humanity. In so doing, satan wounds the heart of God much like a mother is wounded by the pain of her children. Further, satan always wages his war in disguise. He never “shows his face,” but operates unawares “behind” and “through” his instrument.³

Drawing the battle lines. Satan’s first earthly struggle against humanity is pictured in the opening book of the Bible, Genesis, chapter 3. God, after having created the world, places Adam in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it. The man is commanded not to eat from the fruit of a tree in the center of the Garden. If he does, he will “die.” It is satan that masquerades as the crafty “serpent”⁴ whose proclaimed intent is to give Eve the “real story” about the “forbidden fruit” (Genesis 2:17). Satan’s deception is described in Genesis 3:4-5,

The war waged by satan is against God’s children; specifically, against Jews and Christians.

“And the serpent said to the woman, “You surely shall not die! “For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

The woman eats, and so does the man with her; and

satan's deception has placed a wedge between God and man so great that it will take the death of God's own Son to restore it.

The cosmic battle found in the opening book of the Bible is found in the closing book as well – the book of Revelation. *Again, the war waged by satan is against God's children; specifically, against "those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus."*

Revelation 12:7 *"And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. And the dragon and his angels waged war,⁸ and they were not strong enough, . . .⁹ And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. . .¹⁷ And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus." (Emphasis added)*

Here is a quote from Shi'ah Islam scholar, the Ayatollah Ibrahim Amini. The statement is included in the book *Epicenter* by author Joel Rosenberg. The Ayatollah is quoting Shi'ah Islam's teachings on the "Mahdi," the "Awaited One" of Islam who will "rise" at a time of world chaos and lead Shi'ah Islam in world domination. We will learn much more about al-Mahdi in later chapters, but maybe this will help "open your mind" to the possibility of a modern day fulfillment; and to the seriousness of the topic at present:

"When the world has become psychologically ready to accept the government of God and when general conditions have become favorable to the idea of the rulership of the truth, God will permit the Mahdi to launch his final revolution. . . . On seeing the fulfillment of many of the signs promised in the traditions, a large number of unbelievers will turn towards Islam. Those who persist in their disbelief and wickedness shall be killed by soldiers of the Mahdi. The only victorious government in the entire world will be that of Islam. . . . Islam will be the religion of everyone. . . . The Mahdi will offer the religion of Islam to the Jews and the Christians; if they accept it they will be spared, otherwise, they will be killed. . . . It seems unlikely that this catastrophe can be avoided. . . . War and bloodshed [are] inevitable."⁵ (Emphasis added)

Someone recently asked me if I really believed that all Muslims support the "terrorists." I responded, "No. Absolutely not." They then asked me if I really thought American Muslims would join in any "world wide jihad." Again, I responded, "No. Don't think so." I then stated, "The question is not whether American Muslims will participate in jihad. The question is whether or not they will "submit to it." Notice the quote from the Ayatollah above. *"On seeing the fulfillment of many of the signs promised . . . , a large number of unbelievers will turn towards Islam."* What the Ayatollah is saying is that Muslims around the world who do not presently support "jihad" will see the success of jihad as the "favor of Allah"; and just like the Muslims of the 7th and later centuries, they will join the jihad because they will interpret it as the will of Allah. "Those who do not submit," ("persist in their disbelief"), quotes the Ayatollah, *"shall be killed by the soldiers of the Mahdi."* Millions of American Muslims will not support jihad. Shi'ah Islam's prophecy is that they will die along with the "unbelievers" (infidels). "War and bloodshed are inevitable."

Satan Always Masquerades Behind Another. The Old Testament book of Ezekiel recounts a

revealing charade. There, satan masquerades behind a “king” - the King of Tyre, who likens himself to God (Ezekiel 28:2). The text states, “*You were in Eden, the garden of God . . .*” (v 28:13). Geographically, Tyre was located on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea (near modern day Beirut, Lebanon). Eden was thought to be located near the Euphrates River in what is now modern day Iraq.⁶ How can the text refer to Tyre in Eden since they are geographically at opposite extremes in the Middle East? The King of Tyre is only a representative of who God was really rebuking.

Ezekiel 28:11 “. . . , 'Thus says the Lord God, "You had the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. 13 "You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: the ruby, the topaz, and the diamond; 14 "You were the anointed cherub who covers, And I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of God;. . . . 15 "You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, . . . 16 . . . you were internally filled with violence, and you sinned; therefore I have cast you as profane from the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, . . . 17 "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; . . .”

Satan is not mentioned in the passage; but, he is “behind” the King. The clue the Bible gives us is found in Ezekiel 28:2, “. . . , say to the leader of Tyre, 'Thus says the Lord God, "Because your heart is lifted up And you have said, 'I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods,. . .” We find the same occurrence in other Biblical passages. In the Garden of Eden, the serpent’s temptation of Eve are with these words: “. . . you will be like God. . .” In Isaiah 14, the King of Babylon likens himself to God: Isaiah 14:13 “*But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly 14 . . . ; I will make myself like the Most High.*” Look at Isaiah 14:12: “*How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, . . .”* The passage is not about the King; rather, it is about satan who operates behind the King, putting thoughts in his mind. Whenever we find one likening himself to God, we can pretty much rest assured that satan is behind him, whispering in his ear!

The late Dr. Lamar Cooper, Professor, Perkins School of Theology for over 20 years,⁷ states the following about the King of Tyre in Ezekiel 28,

“Who then was the person whose character was like the king of Tyre that fulfilled the elements of vv 12-17? The serpent was known for his craftiness (Gen 3:1), his deceit, and his anti-God attitude (3:4), leading humanity to sin (3:6-7). Elsewhere he is presented as a deceiver (Rev 12:9; 20:2), an instigator of evil (John 13:2,27), one who seeks worship as a god (Luke 4:6-8, 2 Thess 2:3-4), and one who seeks to get others to renounce God (Job 2:4-5). He appears as an angel of God (2 Cor 11:14) Therefore, the conclusion that the figure behind the poetic symbol is the serpent (also known as the adversary, the devil, Satan; Rev 12:9) is a logical one. . . . The sinister character of the mastermind behind God’s enemies is not always recognized. The real motivating force behind the king of Tyre was the adversary, the satan, who opposed God and his people from the beginning.⁸ (Emphasis added)

Satan always works “behind” or “through” another. He never shows his real face.⁹ One of the clearest examples is found in the 13th chapter of Revelations. There, a “beast,” appears from the “sea.” As we will see in future chapters, this “beast” is not a literal “beast” but is symbolic of

a “deity” that leads a false religion that will one day have dominion over the world. Notice from whom the beast gets his power and authority.

Revelation 13:2 *And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority. 3 . . . And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; 4 and they worshiped the dragon, because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?"* (Emphasis supplied)

Satan always works behind another. He never shows his real face.

Satan is the “dragon” (Revelation 12:9) who gives the beast his power. Verse 13:2 states that the “*dragon gave him his power and his throne and his great authority.*” Satan is the force behind the beast, and he acts through the beast as he “stands” behind him.

Satan Always Uses a Disguise. In Matthew 16, Jesus and his disciples are together as Simon Peter, the leader among the twelve, has just proclaimed Jesus to be the “Son of God” (Matthew 16:16). Jesus replies to Peter, affirmingly, by stating, *"And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it."* Matthew 16:18.

The very next verses recount Jesus’ warning to his disciples that He must go to Jerusalem where He will suffer, be killed, and rise from the dead on the third day. Here is Simon Peter’s immediate response to Jesus followed by Jesus’ words to Simon:

Matthew 16:22 *"And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You."²³ But (Jesus) turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God’s interests, but man’s."* (Emphasis added)

Amazing. Simon Peter (the “Rock” upon which the Church is built) becomes the mouthpiece of satan to tempt Christ outside the will of God, i.e., to avoid death on the cross, the very purpose that Christ was born to fulfill (John 12:27). Satan is so adept at his deception (and Simon is so predisposed as to what Jesus’ true mission is (Luke 24:21)), that Simon becomes satan’s mouthpiece without even knowing it.

Earlier in this chapter, we presented the story of the serpent tempting Adam and Eve in the Garden (Genesis 3). Satan is actually not named in Genesis 3. The serpent is, but satan is not. It is not until the 12th chapter of Revelation, the last book of the Bible, that satan is “linked” with the serpent of Genesis 3. Revelation 12:9 states, *"and the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world. . ."* Why does the Bible delay naming the serpent until the last book of the Bible? Because satan never reveals himself; that is his nature. He deceives. He lies. In fact, he is the “father of lies” (John 8:44). If satan disguised himself as a serpent in the opening book of Genesis, if he used Simon Peter, the “rock” upon which the Church is built, to tempt Jesus in the New Testament, what will be his instrument to do likewise in the Last Days? That is what this book is all about. What will be the masquerade of the Prince of Darkness in the Last Days?

Satan Craves to be Worshiped as “God.” What satan desires most is the worship that belongs only to God. In Matthew 4, Jesus has been fasting in the “wilderness” for 40 days and nights, in preparation for the beginning of his ministry. Satan joins Jesus for the purpose of tempting Him to abandon His mission to humanity. The first two temptations are unsuccessful. The third and final temptation is satan’s effort to “give it his last, best shot.” The temptation goes as follows:

Matthew 4:8 “*Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory;*⁹ *and he said to Him, “All these things will I give You, if You fall down and worship me.”*¹⁰ *Then Jesus said to him, “Begone, Satan! For it is written, “You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.”*”

Satan was willing to give away all of “his kingdoms” and all of “their glory” for one thing: *worship*.

Satan was willing to give away all of “his kingdoms” (John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11) and all of “their glory” for one thing: *worship*. Why is this so important to satan? Because when satan is worshiped, he places himself in the place reserved for God.

Now, return with me to Revelation 13. Notice how the text reveals the importance of worship to satan:

Revelation 13:2 “*And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority. . . . they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?”. . . 8 And all who dwell on the earth will worship him,”* (Emphasis supplied).

Satan has given the beast exactly what he offered Jesus (but Jesus rejected in Matthew 4), i.e., satan’s power, his throne, and his authority. Why is satan offering his most precious possessions to another? *To be worshiped in the place reserved for God:*

Satan craves to be worshiped – *even when the world does not know it is worshiping him; and, even if he only receives worship while he “stands” behind another – in this case, the deity of a false religion, whom the scripture only refers to, symbolically, as the “beast.”*

So where might we look for satan’s masquerade in the Last Days?

2 Corinthians 11:14 “*And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.*”

What might be satan’s “angel of light”?

Islam - a Religion of Peace or Destruction? Is Islam really a religion of peace, justice, and tolerance as many of its adherents profess, or is the peace, justice, and tolerance (that does occur in its name), a “mask” that covers the real identity of the creator of the faith? Father Theodore Hesburgh is President Emeritus of the University of Notre Dame. He is the namesake for TIAA-CREF’s “Hesburgh Award,” and served as Notre Dame University’s President for over thirty-five years.¹⁰ I quote this well respected and very spiritually minded man only to show the

depth of confusion and disagreement about the things that we see and hear about Islam. Here is what he stated in a recent interview:

"We at Notre Dame are trying to bring in some top Muslim scholars who can put out the true story of the Muslim religion, speak about its goodness, not its cruelty or its aggressiveness. I think that would be a great favor to the Muslim religion, rather than come through as a religion led by these bomb throwers." . . . "I think the religion thing is completely overdone," he said. "It seems to me the very worst people are standing to represent the religion." And, many believe, masking their cause in religious rhetoric."¹¹ (Emphasis added)

Pope Benedict XVI in 2006 at a speech at Regensburg University in Germany mentioned (did not quote) 14th century Byzantine emperor Manuel II Paleologos. Manuel II's actual statement over 600 years ago went this way:

"Show me just what Muhammad brought that was new and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached."¹²

The reason why I quote the Pope is not because I agree with the Pope's mentioning of the name of the Byzantine Emperor (or to imply that the Pope disagrees with Father Hesburgh's statement, because Vatican officials expressed immediate regret over offending the Muslims¹³), but rather to use it as an example to show the problem that Islam has. Islamists around the world were outraged at the Pope's statement. One Internet website included this posting, "You and the West are doomed."¹⁴ Another stated (by video), "We will conquer Rome like we conquered Constantinople."¹⁵ Another reported, "Istanbul is the capital of Turkey, not Constantinople." Enraged protestors marched in Indian and Pakistani controlled sectors of Kashmir; and in Indonesia, they burned an effigy of the pope and flags of the United States, Germany, and Israel. An Italian nun was shot and killed in Somalia after an Islamic cleric there condemned the Pope's speech. An Italian diplomat and his wife were killed in Morocco, and Morocco recalled its ambassador to the Holy See in protest of the pope's remarks.¹⁶ Does that sound like the response of a peaceful, just, and tolerant religion?

See if the following sounds like "rhetoric" from the "worst people" of Islam or whether it represents the true teachings of the Qur'an (Islam's "holy book")? The statement is from the former Jordanian *Minister of Religious Endowment*, Sheik Ali Al-Faqir, from his recorded message on Arabic TV, Al-Aqsa TV. His statement is a summary of the Islamic belief of a coming "Islamic conquest of Rome" and the world:

"Sheikh Ali Al-Faqir: "We must declare that Palestine, from the [Jordan] River to the [Mediterranean] Sea, is an Islamic land, and that Spain - Andalusia - is also the land of Islam. Islamic lands that were occupied by the enemies will once again become Islamic. Furthermore, we will reach beyond these countries, which are lost at one point. We proclaim that we will conquer Rome, like Constantinople was conquered once, and as it will be conquered again."

Interviewer: "Allah willing."

Sheik Ali Al-Faqir: "We will rule the world, as has been said by the Prophet Muhammad. [...] We will face a battlefield that is broader and stronger. Its beginnings were in Palestine, in Iraq, in Afghanistan, . . . What has begun will be completed. It will not stop. . . . "The Zionist

*entity reached completion, and it is beginning to decline, until it will wane and come to its end. Similarly, America has occupied, thundered, and foamed with rage, and proclaimed, like Pharaoh, 'I am your supreme God,' but it will come to its end, and they have begun to realize that their end is near. We have begun to read in American and European newspapers that 'our glory is on the wane, and there is nothing we can do about it.' This morning on Al-Jazeera TV, I saw American scientists and strategic theoreticians, who said that America would soon come to its end. They said it before about the USSR, and, indeed, it has come to its end, and we say now that America and the EU will come to an end, and only the rising force of Islam will prevail."*¹⁷

So whom do we listen to? Here is another quote on the opposite side of the aisle. This one from Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, while visiting Lehigh University in Pennsylvania on July 14, 2008:

"Dalai Lama: 'Wrong, Unfair' To Call Islam Violent
CBS News Interactive: About Islam BETHLEHEM, Pa. (AP)

*The Dalai Lama said Sunday that "it's totally wrong, unfair" to call Islam a violent religion. The Tibetan spiritual leader, appearing at Lehigh University in Pennsylvania, offered a defense of Islam in response to a question about the rise of violent religious fundamentalism. He added that he has made a point of reaching out to Muslims since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.*¹⁸

Who do we believe? It really doesn't matter how many times we hear that Islam is a religion of peace whether spoken from the mouths of the scholars of Islam, or read in the headlines of the next issue of the New York Times, or spoken by modern spiritualists such as the Dalai Lama or Father Hesburgh. The actions of Muslims in the name of Allah, Muhammad, and Islam shout so loud that we can't hear what the religious leaders are saying.

Consider another statement by a cleric of Islam in two live broadcasts on Hamas' Al-Aqsa TV on February 4th and 14th, 2010:

Special Dispatch No. 2845 . . . Egyptian Cleric Wagdi Ghneim on Hamas' Al-Aqsa TV: 'We Pray to Allah That We Be Terrorists, If Terror Means Jihad'

“ . . . We are a nation that excels in the production of the art of death. . . I will die anyway, so I should be creative to make sure my death is for the sake of Allah.” Later, he said: "Brothers, we pray to Allah that we be terrorists, if terror means Jihad for the sake of Allah."¹⁹ (Emphasis added)

The importance of this statement is in the “who” that is making it, and also, in the recurrent nature of the basic theme. The theme is from the Qur'an and it doesn't matter what we call it or how we label it. Because it is founded upon the Qur'an, it will reappear no matter what name we use to describe it.

The constant redefining of terms by our politicians is something most Americans are used to. Consider this statement by John Brennan, Deputy National Security Adviser for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism, in a speech on Wednesday, May 26, 2010, where he stated that

the term “terrorist” or “jihadist” should not be used to describe (“violent extremists”):

“During a speech at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, John Brennan described violent extremists as victims of “political, economic and social forces,” but said that those plotting attacks on the United States should not be described in “religious terms.” He repeated the administration argument that the enemy is not “terrorism,” because terrorism is a “tactic,” and not terror, because terror is a “state of mind” -- though Brennan’s title, deputy national security adviser for counterterrorism and homeland security, includes the word “terrorism” in it. But then Brennan said that the word “jihad” should not be applied either. “Nor do we describe our enemy as ‘jihadists’ or ‘Islamists’ because jihad is a holy struggle, a legitimate tenet of Islam, meaning to purify oneself or one’s community, and there is nothing holy or legitimate or Islamic about murdering innocent men, women and children,” Brennan said.”²⁰ (Emphasis added)

I suppose, according to Egyptian Cleric Wagdi Ghneim (above), it doesn’t matter what America calls the Islamists; it will not stop their actions, violent or otherwise, for the sake of Allah. According to the Cleric, it was Muhammad that stated that Islam would one day rule the world, and jihad should continue to be waged until the entire world is “Islamized.”

Secretary Brennan also stated that the “extremists” are not “jihadists” or “terrorists,” but “victims of “political, economic and social forces” (see above quote). Does the following summary of a recent failed bomb incident in Great Britain sound like the perpetrators are all “victims of . . . social forces”:

“NBC News and news services updated 8:09 p.m. ET, Sun., July 1, 2007

LONDON - British security sources tell NBC News that two of the five suspects in custody in connection with three recent terror incidents in Scotland and London are medical doctors and one may have assembled the bombs. Authorities also said they believe that most, if not all, of the suspects come from Middle Eastern countries, including one from Iraq.”²¹

There is a reason why this book (and those similar to it) is written under “pen name.” Islam knows no boundaries when it comes to real or perceived “insults” to Islam’s Messenger, Muhammad. These insults are frequently followed by some type of violent retaliation by Muslims which necessitates the concealment of one’s identity for personal safety. Consider what happened to a second grade school teacher, Gillian Gibbons, in Sudan, in 2007, when her 6-year old students unintentionally insulted Muhammad by naming the class teddy bear, “Muhammad”:

Sudan jails British ‘teddy’ teacher for 15 days. Nov 28, 2007. KHARTOUM (AFP) — *Sudan on Thursday jailed for 15 days a British teacher charged with insulting Islam by allowing children to name a teddy bear Mohammed and ordered her deportation, her lawyer said. Gillian Gibbons, a 54-year-old mother of two, had faced jail, flogging and a fine after she allowed her six and seven-year-old pupils to give the toy the same name as the Muslim prophet. . . . “The 15-day sentence will run from the time of her arrest on Sunday, after which she will be expelled from the country,” lawyer Kamal Jazuli said after a marathon seven-hour hearing. . . . The maximum sentence for breaching Article 125 of the penal code -- publicly insulting or degrading any religion, its rites, beliefs and sacred items or*

humiliating its believers -- is six months in jail, 40 lashes and a fine. . . Abdulatif added. "She was arrested for five days for her own safety because Muslims felt that their faith had been attacked." . . . Lawyer Jazuli told journalists that Gibbons said in court that "it was not she who named the bear but the pupils." "If I offended anyone, I'm sorry. If I had any intention to offend Islam I would have been better off to have done it in Britain," Jazuli quoted Gibbons as saying.²²

And finally, from Saudi Arabia, the birthplace of Islam (actually, the stories are endless. I could go on and on with example after example (I haven't even mentioned the cartoons of Kurt Westergaard in Copenhagen and the many threats upon his life.²³)):

Saudi Arabia's Judiciary Defends Verdict Sentencing Rape Victim to 200 Lashes and Jail Time. Wednesday, November 21, 2007, Associated Press. RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — *The Saudi judiciary on Tuesday defended a court verdict that sentenced a 19-year-old victim of a gang rape to six months in jail and 200 lashes because she was with an unrelated male when they were attacked. The Shiite Muslim woman had initially been sentenced to 90 lashes after being convicted of violating Saudi Arabia's rigid Islamic law requiring segregation of the sexes. But in considering her appeal of the verdict, the Saudi General Court increased the punishment. It also roughly doubled prison sentences for the seven men convicted of raping the woman, Saudi news media said last week. The reports triggered an international outcry over the Saudis punishing the victim of a terrible crime. But the Ministry of Justice stood by the verdict Tuesday, saying that "charges were proven" against the woman for having been in a car with a man who was not her relative. The ministry implied the victim's sentence was increased because she spoke out to the press. "For whoever has an objection on verdicts issued, the system allows an appeal without resorting to the media," said the statement, which was carried on the official Saudi Press Agency.²⁴*

The woman was ultimately pardoned by the King of Saudi Arabia – *not because her sentence was unjust* – but in the “best interests of the people of Saudi Arabia.”²⁵ A woman is raped by seven men, and she is sentenced to 200 lashes! Islamic law (called “sharia”) stipulates 90 lashes because she was in the company of an unrelated male friend (not one of the rape assailants); but the judges gave her an extra 110 lashes because her lawyer took her case public. How is it possible for a rape victim to be sentenced to 200 lashes and the basis for the decision is the holy book of a religion? And what does it tell us about the holy book when its religious leaders see justice being served through such a sentence?

“What does it tell us about Islam when its religious leaders see justice being served through such a sentence? It tells us that at its root, *Islam, and its religious law is evil.*

Will the Real Islam Please Stand Up! So who really represents the true teachings of Islam? The issue is not really about majority rule, or even what we “want” Islam to represent, but what does the Qur’an (Islam’s “holy book”) and the Hadith teach (the “Hadith” are narrations of the original words and deeds of Muhammad as reported by Muhammad’s closest followers and leaders (for Shi`ahs, the sayings include the sayings of Imam Ali and the Twelve Imams of Shiism))? In chapter

three following, we will look at a few of the over 100 verses in the Qur’an on the specific

question of the meaning of, "jihad." For now, we will close this chapter with a summation by author Ibn Warraq:

"Islam Itself is Not Moderate. To pretend that Islam has nothing to do with Terrorist Tuesday is to willfully ignore the obvious and to forever misinterpret events. Not all Muslims or all Arabs are terrorists. Nor are they implicated in the horrendous events of Tuesday. There may be moderate Muslims, but Islam itself is not moderate. There is no difference between Islam and Islamic fundamentalism: at most there is a difference of degree but not of kind." - Ibn Warraq, "Statement by Ibn Warraq on the World Trade Center Atrocity" (September 21, 2001).²⁶ (Emphasis added)

The Darkness will One Day Reveal the Truth for Us. This writing seeks to identify the hand of satan in the Last Days and the Antichrist/false prophet through whom he will wage a final jihad. One passage that will be referenced in later chapters is 2 Thessalonians 2, a passage that prophesies of the coming Antichrist/false prophet and the god he stands for. Here are selected verses from this chapter:

2 Thessalonians 2:3 "Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, . . . 6 And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he will be revealed. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way."

Verse 2:6 states that "in his time he will be revealed." The "he" refers to the Antichrist/false prophet and the religion he stands for. Verse 2:7 adds "the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way." Here is what this verse means: darkness is already working in humanity. The evil of our world is only part of that darkness. There is a darkness that is deeper than the evil in our world. It is the darkness that blinds the hearts and minds of humanity to keep them from coming to God through His Son, Jesus Christ, the "light of the world." (John 3:19-20; 8:12). 2 Thessalonians 2:7 is prophesying of a time when the "restraint" to darkness will be lifted; and darkness will become darker. The lines between "good" and "evil" will be more distinct, clearer; and, the religion of the Antichrist/false prophet will become more visible by the darkness within it. Darkness will overtake it. The next verses state:

2 Thessalonians 2:9 "that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, 10 and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. 11 For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, 12 in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness."

When darkness becomes darker, the religion of darkness will reveal itself by its darkness. In the process, God will save some because they will find their way to the Light, the True Light, Jesus Christ. Those who are not saved will be given over to the darkness they have chosen.

Conclusion. "Allahu Akbar!" "Allahu Akbar!" "God is greater!" "God is greater!" Allah's

greatness in the death of the innocent reveals the presence of darkness.

We end this chapter where we began; just another location in the world.

“Bomber strikes Shiite pilgrimage, killing 40 in Iraq. By Solomon Moore Published: February 24, 2008. BAGHDAD: *A suicide bomber detonated amid a crowd of Shiites making pilgrimage to the Shrine of Imam Husayn in Karbala, Sunday, killing at least 40 people and injuring more than 100. Witnesses said they heard a shrill cry of "Allahu akbar! Allahu akbar!" followed by a massive explosion that ripped through the throng of Shiite wayfarers. . . . "Flesh and blood went everywhere, bodies were flying in the air," Khadem said. "Most of them were young people. Many of them were women and their children. Kids. Most of the victims were volunteers, locals who were serving the pilgrims."*ⁿ²⁷

A slip of the mask is all we need to see who is really behind the mask.

Summary of Key Ideas in Chapter 1	
Point 1	A spiritual enmity between God and Satan begins in Genesis 3 and continues until the closing chapters of Revelation. Satan wages this war against God by attacking God's children; as he does, he "wounds the heart of God."
Point 2	Satan wages this spiritual war in masquerade. He never "shows" himself, but always operates "behind" and through others. He is always in disguise, and his disguise is so complete that even those through whom he works do not know he is present.
Point 3	Satan craves to be worshiped. He will do whatever it takes to receive that worship, even if he receives it "behind" another.
Point 4	Islam is not a religion of peace; rather, it is a religion of destruction. Regardless of what some might say, the actions of Muslims reveal the real nature of the religion. It just takes a "slip of the mask" to be able to see the real darkness beneath the mask.

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1 *The 9/11 Commission Report, Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, Authorized Edition*, p. 13 1-4.

2 "Allahu Akbar." In *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam*, edited by John L. Esposito. Oxford Islamic Studies Online, <http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e129> (accessed 26-Mar-2010).

3 It is not the purpose of this writing to present a theology of "satan." However, some introduction needs to be made of this writer's interpretation of his role in scripture, and specifically, in the Last Days. When I describe a continuous "spiritual battle" between God and satan, I do not mean to propose that the forces of good and evil are somehow equal. God and satan are not equal. God is all powerful, all knowing, and in control of all things (Acts 17:26, Job 12:23, Ps 47:7-8; 66:7). Satan is not. The prophet Daniel describes God and His nature as follows: Daniel 2:20-22 "*Daniel answered and said, "Let the name of God be blessed forever and ever, For wisdom and power belong to Him. 21 "And it is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings; He gives wisdom to wise men, And knowledge to men of understanding. 22 "It is He who reveals the profound and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness, And the light dwells with Him."*

"Satan" in the Hebrew language literally means to be or act as, "the accuser" (Job 1:6, Zach 3:1-2) or as "adversary." (*Expository Dictionary of Bible Words: Word Studies for Key English Bible Words Based on the Hebrew and Greek Texts*). Satan exists. Literally, and for all time. God created him to be eternal. If God created satan to be eternal, then God is limited by His own actions. When satan is ultimately judged for his activities against God, he will not be "annihilated," i.e., destroyed into nothingness. Rather, satan will live for eternity, in judgment. As such, he will suffer, forever, in the "Lake of Fire" at the close of the Age (Revelation 20:10).

As accuser, satan accuses humanity before God of their unrighteous acts. For example, satan accuses the righteous man, Job, by telling God that Job's trust in God is related to his prosperity. Take away his prosperity and Job will curse God (Job 1:6ff), accuses satan. Satan does likewise for all humanity as depicted in Revelation 12. There, Satan loses his "voice" as accuser and is "thrown down" from heaven at the death of Jesus Christ for the sins of humanity (Revelation 12:9). The scripture says that satan was "overcome" by the "power of the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony" (Revelation 12:11), and in his being "overcome," satan loses his voice as accuser..

As adversary, satan is God's chief demonic opponent (1 Chr. 21:1; Job 1:6 ff.; 2:1 ff.; Ps. 109:6; Zech. 3:1, 2). (See Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, p. 448). He is the spiritual force that possesses and gains power only as he successfully deceives and tempts humanity not to follow God or to be reconciled to God through Christ. Satan functions as the "antichrist" when he deceives humanity away from the Only Begotten Son (1 John 2:18-22) who is humanity's "Reconciler" to God (Isaiah 53:6, 2 Corinthians 5:18). Satan is the "father of lies" (John 8:44) because he takes the truth of God and reshapes and changes it so that it "corrupts" God's original intention.

An example of Satan as adversary is found in the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden. Satan's power over Adam and Eve in the Garden occurred only when Eve (and Adam) acted upon satan's enticement to partake of the "beauty" of the forbidden fruit. Thus, satan "deceived" Adam and Eve in the Garden and earned the description of "deceiver" that stayed with satan throughout scripture. The Apostle Paul continues this description with slightly changed words as he states, "2 Corinthians 11:14 "*And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their deeds."* And, finally, Revelation 12:9 states, "*And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him."*

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The all powerful God, however, determines the extent to which satan exerts his power and deception against humanity. In the book of Job, satan is permitted to act against Job, but limited in terms of what he can do to Job: Job 1:12 "*Then the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him."* Likewise, satan can be resisted in spite of his power of deception, James 4:7, "*Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you."*

As it relates to the Last Days, satan, knowing his time is short (Revelation 12:12), opposes God by pouring out his wrath against the children of God, i.e., the "true Israel," and those who hold to the testimony of Jesus (Revelation 12:17). God limits satan's wrath by providing for the physical rapture of the saints, by protecting the "true" Jews during the Tribulation (Revelation 7:3, 9:4; Romans 9:27, 11:25), and by providing for the eternal security of believers during the Tribulation (Revelation 13:7-8). Finally, in the Last Days, the hand of a sovereign God will even allow satan's darkness to become darker when a person yields to it:

2 Thessalonians 2:8 "Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming [the 2nd coming of Christ]; 9 that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, 10 and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. 11 For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, 12 in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness."

4 Actually, the serpent is not identified as satan until much later in the Biblical context. See Revelation 12:9; 20:2.

5 Rosenberg, Joel C. *Epicenter*, p. 122.

6 *Rose Book of Bible Charts, Maps & Time Lines*, p. 20-21.

7 [http://www.upumc.org/pages/cooper_school\[1\]](http://www.upumc.org/pages/cooper_school[1]) (accessed January 21, 2008).

8 Cooper, Lamar Eugene, Sr., *Ezekiel, New American Commentary*, p. 268.

9 The only Biblical example of satan "showing his face" is when he is in council with God (and others) in heaven about Job (Job 2:4-5), and with Jesus in the wilderness just before the beginning of Jesus' ministry (Matthew 4).

10 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theodore_Hesburgh (accessed May 31, 2010).

11 <http://www.wndu.com/home/headlines/13789262.html> (accessed January 18, 2008).

12 <http://www.cwnews.com/news/viewstory.cfm?recnum=46474> (accessed January 18, 2008).

13 http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2006-09-15-pope-protest_x.htm?POE=NEWISVA (accessed May 31, 2010).

14 <http://www.kavkazcenter.com/eng/content/2006/09/18/5623.shtml> (accessed February 20, 2008).

15 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6SDpblB0Bc> (accessed February 20, 2008).

16 Baltimore Sun, September 19, 2006, p 12A.

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- 17 http://www.memritv.org/content/en/tv_channel_indiv.htm?id=175 (accessed March 13, 2010).
- 18 <http://cbs5.com/national/Dalai.Lama.Islam.2.770989.html> (accessed March 6, 2010).
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<http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2010/05/27/counterterror-adviser-defends-jihad-legitimate-tenet-islam/>
(accessed May 31, 2010).
- 21 <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/19522388/> (accessed May 31, 2010).
- 22 http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5h_njm8Ajlby6tbW3jwvtKnMPnko (accessed January 17, 2008).
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- 25 <http://www.cnn.com/2007/WORLD/meast/12/17/saudi.rape/> (accessed January 18, 2008).
- 26 <http://www.positiveatheism.org/hist/quotes/quranframe.htm> (accessed February 29, 2008).
- 27 <http://www.iht.com/articles/2008/02/24/mideast/iraq.4-228314.php> (accessed February 28, 2008).