

the Truth about . . .

ISLAM

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Muhammad

Muhammad ibn Abdallah ibn Abd al-Muttalib lived from 570-632. In 610, as the legend goes, he received a revelation from Allah through the angel Gabriel. He was so impressed with himself that he began preaching among his people that he was a prophet, and that **his** God was superior. As so often is the case with men who have a god-complex, no one in his community was impressed. After all, God was already perfect, so how could some impetuous young prophet improve on perfection? When his uncle, Abu Lahab, dissed him, Muhammad threw a temper tantrum. The self-proclaimed prophet cursed his Uncle Abu and his wife in graphic terms which are preserved in the Quran¹.

Muhammad was so pissed off at his Quraysh brethren that he left his hometown of Mecca in 622 and set up camp in nearby Medina, where he had found a more friendly audience. There he formed a band of tribal warriors more responsive to him and his new religion. To pay their bills, Muhammad led his merry band of Muslims on raids against Quraysh caravans.

On one occasion, his raiders got a bit carried away, victimizing a caravan during the holy month of Rajab, during which such activity was forbidden. At first, Muhammad was plenty PO'd, because he had not authorized the Nakhla raid (or any raids) during Rajab. He refused to share in the loot or party with his looters. But as the would-be prophet had a chance to cool off, and as he contemplated the beauty of the bountiful booty his raiders had brought, he began to reconsider his position. Muhammad, in an amazing quirk of fate, just happened to get himself another revelation right about then.

Suddenly, Muhammad decided that Rajab raids weren't really so bad after all. Oh, they

were still bad, but Allah had revealed that there was something much worse. And what might that be? Quraysh's opposition to Muhammad. If those knuckle-dragging citizens of Mecca were not going to accept the obvious fact that he, his very own personal self, was Allah's fair-haired favorite son, and practically a god himself, well then they deserved to suffer the consequences. So there! And now I'll have a go at that booty, thank you very much.

Thus was established an early Islamic tradition. Since Muhammad had invented Islam, and since he was the only reliable source of its teachings, he was free to decide for his followers exactly what those teachings were. Who was going to question him? Well, the Quraysh in Mecca, for one, but look how well that was working out for them. Which led to another early Islamic tradition. Believe in Muhammad or suffer the consequences. Do things his way, or pay the price.

So, Islam was founded on the concept that good is anything that advances the cause of Islam. Or, to put it another way, anything that advances the cause of Islam is good, even if it violates all the other principles people had been taught before, like the Ten Commandments. Similarly, anything that works against Islam, even if unintentionally, is bad. Very very bad. In the course of spreading and enforcing that gospel, Muhammad was free to write his own rules. So, he just made stuff up as he went along. Any time he happened to find himself boxed in by his own rules, he would simply conjure up another "revelation" that just happened to give him exactly what he wanted. Of course, using the euphemism *revelation* made it all nice and official and holy. This collection of revelations was recorded, and the Quran began to take shape according to the whims and fancies of the new prophet.

¹ 111:1-5

Soon after Nakhla, Muhammad led another raid, this time on a large Quraysh caravan coming from Syria. But this time, the Quraysh were ready and waiting for him. When Muhammad saw that his 300 men were facing a force of almost 1,000, the prophet wet his holy pants. He cried out, **O God, if this band perish today Thou will be worshipped no more.** Apparently, the obvious had escaped the attention of the omniscient, omnipotent Thou. Whew, close call! Good thing Muhammad was there for the holy assist.

Muhammad begged Allah to destroy the Quraysh leaders in this battle of Badr, naming them specifically in an elaborate curse befitting a warrior prophet. And Allah obliged the prophet upstart. One warrior presented the liberated head of one of the named Quraysh leaders, and Muhammad was giddy. All the slain leaders were tossed into a pit. (One of them was so fat, he had to be disassembled first). Then Muhammad began taunting the *people of the pit*. One of his goons asked why the prophet was bothering to talk to dead men. Because **they cannot answer me** was his reply. Clearly, such logic could have been inspired only by Muhammad's invisible buddy, Allah.

Yet, somehow it was perceived that **piety** had saved the day for Muhammad and his bloodthirsty followers. It may be difficult for us today to equate cursing enemies, beheading them, throwing them in a pit, then taunting their dead bodies with **piety**. But it's important to remember that men of that day (much like many men of today, actually) were ignorant, gullible, easily misled and manipulated. Why else would they have accepted Muhammad as a prophet? Anyone can claim to be a prophet, and anyone who believes and follows a self-proclaimed prophet is likely to be played for a fool. So, it is not at all surprising that all of

Muhammad's stooges embraced the idea that it was **angels** that had joined the Muslims in battle to smite the Quraysh enemy.

There was so much booty from the Badr battle that those pious Muslims couldn't figure out how to divvy it up without fussing and fighting. It was such a problem that an entire chapter (sura) of the Quran² was devoted to the battle. One of the key points there is that battle booty does not belong to anyone but Allah. But He, being a generous sort of God, wanted only a fifth of it for himself. For, you know, feeding orphans and things like that. The rest was for the warriors to party hearty. Piously, of course.

The battle of Badr put Muslims on the map. They were no longer just an annoying little band of outlaws. They were something the Arabian pagans had to take seriously. Muhammad's startling success forced others to reconsider his claim to be the latest prophet of the one, true God.

But it had profound implications, also, for how Muslims viewed themselves. As Islam was constantly evolving, the battle of Badr produced several basic assumptions in the minds of Muhammad's followers. For example, vengeance does not belong strictly to God, as it (theoretically) does in Christianity. In Islam, vengeance belongs also to Muslims. Anyone who opposes Islam or its followers, or insults them, is the vilest of creatures³, deserving death, without mercy. The bloodier, the more humiliating for the infidel, the better. Beheading was considered quite appropriate.⁴

With the battle of Badr, the principle and practice of jihad was born. Muhammad conducted more raids. And he focused his attention on Jews. When Jews of the Banu Qaynuqa tribe refused to embrace Islam,

² the 8th chapter

³ Quran 98:6

⁴ Quran 47:4

Muhammad laid siege on them, forcing them into unconditional surrender. The prophet issued this command: **Kill any Jew that falls into your power.** Not much has changed since then.

Meanwhile, the Quraysh were plotting their revenge for Badr. At Uhud, the Quraysh's 3,000 men routed Muhammad's force of 1,000. Muhammad himself lost a tooth, a little bit of blood, and a whole lot of pride in the battle. How could that happen? Was Allah a part-time protector? When the Quraysh leaders taunted Muhammad, his response was that **his** dead warriors were in paradise, while the enemy casualties were in hell. Boy, I bet that really hurt those evil Quraysh's feelings.

The Muslims were not about to give up, though. Their faith and fervor were intact. Muhammad vowed revenge. They did have to deal with their dilemma, though. Why had Allah and his angels not delivered them from defeat at Uhud as he had done at Badr? They could hardly blame it on Allah. Therefore, it must have been their own fault, because they had not been sufficiently faithful to Islam. And thus another core principle of Islam was born. Any time things went badly for Muslims, it was because they had been unfaithful. Islamic obedience leads to victory, and disobedience leads to defeat. Islam, after all, means *submission*. The principle was in play at the Battle of Trench in 627. The Muslim victory there was again attributed to Allah's divine intervention.⁵

It all seems simple enough. But one example of the absurdity of this assumption, and Islam in general, is the Islamic reaction to the December 26, 2004 tsunami that devastated much of the South Pacific. While the US and Australia pledged over \$1 billion in aid, the wealthy Arab countries (Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait, Libya, and others) pledged less than 10% as much. Why?

Mostly because in the Islamic mind, the tsunami was punishment for sins committed by both Muslims and infidels in the hard-hit area. Which is even more bizarre logic when we consider the enormous wealth, power, and success of the US and Australia. Is Allah rewarding those infidel-infested nations? Strange that Allah smites the South Pacific so severely, yet smiles on his strongest enemies, leaving their punishment up to a few feckless fanatical failures. What's wrong with that picture? Muslims clearly are not deep thinkers.

Which is not to say they are not cunning, however. In 628, Muhammad wanted to make a pilgrimage to his hometown of Mecca. Why? It wasn't part of Islam. It had been a pagan custom, and that alone would make it anathema to Muhammad, it would seem. But, as I said earlier, Muhammad just made stuff up as he went along, and he wanted to incorporate this pagan custom into Islam. The problem was, the Quraysh controlled the city, and Muhammad, to put it mildly, had become a pariah since he started stealing from them and killing them. (Those narrow-minded infidels!) Muhammad and 1,500 of his closest goons approached the city, where they were met by the Quraysh force, determined to keep them out of Mecca. But instead of fighting, this time they signed the 10-year treaty of Hudaibiyya.

While from a modern perspective, that would appear to be a giant step away from the typical Islamic barbarity toward reason, sanity, and civility, it didn't quite seem that way to Muhammad's warriors. Under the terms of the treaty, Muslims would return home, but they would be permitted to make the pilgrimage the following year. There were other terms not considered favorable to Muslims. The most insulting provision was that Muhammad was not allowed to identify himself as an apostle of God, but

⁵ Quran 33:9

had to use his real name (and that of his father).

Even Muhammad's goons were not gullible enough to buy the prophet's propaganda that the treaty had been a Muslim victory. It was a humiliating defeat, and they knew it. So, as Muhammad always did in a tight spot, he made up a new set of rules to put a positive spin on disastrous reality.

Under the treaty, Quraysh living in Medina would be returned to Mecca, but Muslims in Mecca would not be returned to Medina. But when a Quraysh Muslim woman in Medina was identified, Muhammad refused to return her. This was the first treaty violation, although both sides would break the rules eventually, ultimately abandoning it altogether. Muhammad's rationalization was a new revelation. (Gee, what were the odds of that?) If a woman is deemed to be a true believer in Islam, it's okay to break the treaty, and Allah is cool with that.⁶

Once again, the message was that if it isn't good for Islam, it isn't good at all. And if it benefits Islam, it can't possibly be wrong or evil. Lie, cheat, steal, kill. As long as it advances the cause of Islam, it's all good. Whatever it takes. The end justifies the means. A Muslim's gotta do what a Muslim's gotta do. Deal with it, infidels!

The Quran

With few exceptions, the Quran is Allah's monologue. It is allegedly Allah's revelations and observations spoken to Muhammad. Most of the subject matter is Muhammad himself, or events in his life, and the earlier Muslim prophets (Abraham, Moses, and Jesus).

The Quran is more like rambling than a coherent narrative. But its message about Muslims waging war against infidels is

perfectly clear. Which is no surprise, given the bloody life and career of Muhammad. That makes the Quran unique among the world's so-called sacred writings. And that makes Muhammad unique among major figures in the world's organized religions.

The Quran includes more than 100 verses exhorting Muslims to wage jihad against unbelievers, and against those who claim to be believers, but don't quite live up to Quran standards. That certainly includes Christians and Jews. And jihad is not optional. There is no need for Muslims to opt in, and there is no way for them to opt out. Except apostasy, which tends to be a particularly fatal personality flaw in the wacky world of Islam.

There are those today who claim that all those jihad verses are merely allegorical, rhetorical embellishment, meant figuratively, not to be taken literally. But it is a lie. It wasn't words that butchered and looted the Quraysh. That was blood on Muhammad's hands, not hyperbole. Bloody jihad is what Muhammad was all about, what gave birth to Islam, what it thrived on, and what it relies on today. Jihad is the highest duty of any Muslim, and failure to oblige Allah's bloody demands is not tolerated in the barbaric world of Islam.

Of course, talking about jihad, reading about it in the Quran is one thing. Actually going out and killing in the name of Allah is quite another. And being willing, even eager, to die while waging jihad, that is something else again. So, Muhammad realized early on that he needed to sweeten the pot a bit. More about how he did that later.

There are those who desperately want us to believe that, in spite of those jihad verses, Islam is really a religion of peace and tolerance. A vital force for good in the world, preaching and teaching equality, brotherhood, and dignity of all men.

⁶ Quran 60:10

Individual Muslims may well believe in those principles, but that is not Islam. They often point to Quran 109:1-6 as proof that Islam takes a live-and-let-live attitude toward unbelievers. Just leave the infidels alone, the Quran seems to be saying. But even there, it is part of jihad. They aren't to be left alone to freely enjoy and practice their own religion. They are to be left alone temporarily for Allah to deal with.⁷ In other words, Allah is saying *don't worry about those infidels just now, because I'll take care of them myself later. And I'm not talking about singing Kumbayah around a campfire, if you know what I mean. Wink, wink.*

Islam apologists also love to point to Quran 2:256. **Let there be no compulsion in religion.** Sounds great. It might be convincing if that's all the Quran had to say on the subject. And it would definitely be a lot more convincing if that's what Muslims actually did. Is that the attitude Muhammad took toward the Quraysh? Is that verse consistent with those 100-plus verses calling for jihad?

And here's another Islamic double whopper with cheese: *the Quran teaches Muslims to fight only in self-defense.* You have to admire Muslims' obfuscation skills. What they don't bother to explain is that any failure of a non-believing individual or country to fully embrace Islam is perfectly legal grounds for undertaking *self-defensive* action. And once that process begins, Muslims are to pull no punches, show no mercy.⁸ The bloody battle must continue until Allah is victorious.

But what does victory mean to Muslims? Not just winning a battle or two. Not just taking control of a country. Islamic victory is nothing less than controlling the entire world, or at least reestablishing the caliphate, which would guarantee ultimate world dominance.

Islam is a religion of peace, Muslims tell us. Yes, it most certainly is. What they don't bother mentioning is their devotion to the principle that peace will be achieved only when Islam is the world's **only** religion. Meanwhile, Muslims are mandated by the Quran to do whatever is necessary to make that dream come true.

It is true that the Quran does include a number of verses which seem to support the kinder, gentler Islam image. Why is the Quran so self-contradictory? In part, because it was written during different stages of Muhammad's illustrious career. The chapters (suras) of the Quran are arranged according to their length, not chronologically. But Islamic theology uses a more meaningful arrangement, dividing suras into two categories corresponding to Muhammad's progress as a prophet. The first category consists of suras originating from Muhammad's experiences in Mecca, when the prophet was still attempting to use his powers of persuasion. The second category consists of suras originating from Medina, when Muhammad's policies and practices hardened and emphasized the need for violence.

It would seem that the two categories would be perfectly consistent and complementary, not contradictory. After all, they were the revelations to Muhammad from the omniscient, omnipotent, immutable Allah. That Allah does not and cannot evolve. The two concepts of Allah are diametrically opposed and mutually exclusive. Muslims can't have it both ways. Either Allah evolves, or he is immutable. Which is it?

As it turns out, Islam **can** have it both ways. How do they pull that off? It's not that difficult in the gullible Western world.

According to Islamic doctrine (naskh), Allah (like a woman), can change his mind. So,

⁷ Quran 73: 10-11

⁸ Quran 2:190-193

Allah's perfect, holy, immutable words from Meccan suras can be modified or canceled by the new and improved Medinan suras. And we Americans don't question or even notice the dichotomy.

According to the doctrine of naskh, greater weight and authority are attributed to the verses that were revealed later. Since Meccan suras precede Medinan suras, the more tolerant Meccan verses are abrogated by Medinan verses whenever there is any sort of conflict or contradiction. The ninth sura was the very last one to be revealed, so it trumps all others. The ninth sura tends to be violent, especially 9:5, known as the *Verse of the Sword*. According to some Islamic theologians, that single verse abrogates at least 124 more tolerant and peaceful verses in the Quran.

So, whenever a Muslim tries to con you with talk of all the peaceful verses in the Quran, ask him / her about the doctrine of naskh. Some theologians are trying to invent new lines of obfuscation to explain that away, too. But not even Muslims are buying it. The plain, simple truth of the matter is that Muslim leaders understand and accept that Allah's orders for them are to engage infidels in a perpetual state of war, with only temporary truces, if that happens to benefit the Islamic cause.

You are probably not in any danger of an imminent attack from your friendly Muslim neighbor or co-worker, but that doesn't mean he / she has no interest in jihad. Islam means jihad, in one form or another, and there is no way to separate the two. Islam without jihad is like pizza without crust. Peaceful Islam is an oxymoron. Muslims don't all take up arms and wage bloody battle, because that is not necessarily the role of every jihad warrior. Some use politics or propaganda as their weapon. But all have a vested interest in the ultimate outcome – reestablishing the caliphate. If an individual truly does not believe in that cause, then that individual is not truly a Muslim.

Non-believers who find themselves facing the committed jihadist have three choices: (1) embrace Islam; (2) embrace death or wage war; (3) accept subjugation, which involves, among other unpleasant things, paying a special tax (called the *jizya*) levied on infidels. According to Quran 2:256, a Muslim is prohibited from forcing Islam on anyone. What that means is simply that an infidel has the option of choosing the prize behind door number three. It is designed to be so harsh that most infidels will quickly reconsider their options and decide to go with one of the first two choices. That's the Islamic idea of tolerance and peaceful coexistence.

If all their attempts at diversion, distortion, deception, and obfuscation have failed, Muslims resort to the claim that Christianity is just as bad as Islam. First of all, even if it were true, that does not mitigate the evils of Islam. Second, Christians would beg to differ with Muslims on that, and any Christian worth his / her theological salt can refute that argument fairly quickly and easily. I'll leave that to Christians. Suffice it to say that we don't have a problem in the world today with Christian or Jewish radicals waging holy jihad and terrorizing non-Jews or non-Christians in a desperate attempt to convert the world by force, if necessary, to their religion. Nor were those religions founded by ruthless, barbaric warriors. Muslims would be wise to not start down that road, because it only helps expose their own hypocrisy and contempt for human life.

The Hadith

Supplementing and complementing the Quran is the Hadith, the traditions of Muhammad. It consists of volumes of stories about the prophet, explaining how certain Quran verses were revealed to him, his solution to controversial issues, etc. In a few passages Muhammad quotes Allah's words which do not appear in the Quran. Such ahadith (the plural of hadith) are known as the *hadith qudsi* (holy hadith), and

they are just as authentic and reliable as the Quran itself. Ranking just below them in authority are the rest of the ahadith, and often they are the only way to make any sense of the Quran text.

I bet you could never guess what many of the ahadith talk about. War! Which further proves that jihad is not optional for Muslims. Muhammad repeatedly emphasized that the highest contribution any Muslim could make to the cause of Islam is to engage in jihad warfare. He warned that failure to do so is a punishable offense against Islam. And he glorifies martyrdom in the name of jihad.

Well, okay, maybe so. But that doesn't mean every Muslim takes all that jihad stuff literally or seriously, does it? I mean, there are an awful lot of Christians who don't interpret every verse in the Bible literally. Same thing with Muslims and the Quran and jihad. Right?

Wrong. Most Muslims worldwide are Sunnis. Sunnis are divided into four major groups: Maliki, Hanafi, Hanbali, and Shafii. One thing they all have in common is their commitment to jihad. So clearly, violent jihad warfare is not something cooked up by a tiny fringe group of Islamic heretics. It is mainstream Islam, and it always has been. Each of the four Sunni schools formulated their laws governing jihad centuries ago, and those laws, while ancient, have never been repealed or superseded. For centuries there has been no questioning the authority of those laws or the basic principles and teachings of Islam.

It is commonly accepted in Islam that the free inquiry (the "gates of *ijtihad*") into the Quran or Islamic traditions (in order to discover or better understand Allah's rulings) is closed. It is settled law, carved in stone. Period. There have been a few suggestions from reformist Muslims to reopen the *gates of ijtihad*, but they have been and will continue to be ignored by Islamic authorities. There may be subtle variations in the way the four groups go

about fulfilling their jihad responsibilities, but their basic understanding of jihad, the central role of jihad in Islam, and its bloody consequences are the same.

That doesn't mean that every Muslim is a terrorist. It doesn't mean that your Muslim neighbors, friends, or co-workers are conspirators in a terrorist plot. There are several reasons for that. For one thing, not all Muslims really understand much about the Quran, which is written in classical Arabic, and is therefore difficult to understand. (Just as not all Christians understand much about the Bible, especially the original Hebrew of the Old Testament or the koine Greek of the New Testament). Muslims are required to read and recite the Quran in the classical Arabic during Muslim prayers, but many of them do so through rote memory without understanding what they are memorizing, reading, or reciting. Although the terms Muslim and Arab are frequently used interchangeably, most Muslims are not Arabs. So many Muslims don't even understand modern Arabic, much less the classical language.

For another thing, Muslims in some areas, especially Eastern Europe and Central Asia, are not as heavily indoctrinated in the ways or necessity of jihad. Or at least they haven't been until recently. Muslim hardliners have been very busy lately correcting that oversight, and they are making progress.

Furthermore, there is more than one way to wage jihad. It is not necessarily in the best long-term strategic interest of Islamic jihad to have every good Muslim immediately rise up, sword in hand, and start whacking off infidel heads. That may come at some point in the process, but that is not the current game plan. Jihad provides for temporary truces, for example, if it is in the best interest of jihad in the long run. For now, Islamic strategists are content to have many Muslims ignorant of the Quran, and not highly motivated to wage bloody war. It is enough to have those souls solidly in the

Muslim camp, even if they don't fully appreciate the implications of that. And it is no doubt in the best interest of Islam right now to have, for example, a large number of American Muslims posing as peaceful, tolerant Muslims. And many of them probably believe that that's exactly what they are. The media and government are always desperately searching for such moderate Muslims to prove that Islam is a peaceful, tolerant religion.

But at some point, every Muslim faces the strong possibility of having to make a choice. Embrace Islam fully, or reject it. Embracing it means jihad, probably bloody, ruthless, merciless war on infidels. Any Muslim who cannot accept that reality faces death for apostasy. Even in areas where Muslims and non-believers do coexist peacefully, like Central Asia, it is not because the Islamic rules of jihad have been changed or reversed or rejected. It's because they simply aren't being enforced, at least for the moment. Why not? Probably simply because Islamic leaders have more important things to worry about right now. It's just a matter of timing and priorities.

Muslims in the US who don't have the stomach for bloody jihad are unmolested for now. There are a few who actually speak out in favor of a peaceful coexistence between Muslims and infidels in the US and elsewhere. But nowhere in the world today is there a significant number of moderate Muslims (those who reject jihad), and their voices are ineffective, if they are heard at all. They all may be called upon at any moment to decide whether they are really Muslims or not. Muslim means jihad. Moderate means apostasy. Apostasy means death. There is no gray area if Islamic fundamentalists are the judges of one's commitment to the Islamic cause.

The Dhimma

The Arabic word *dhimmi* means both *protected* and *guilty*. According to Islamic

law, Jews and Christians are dhimmis. They are *protected* because they have received revelations from Allah. They are *guilty* because they have distorted those revelations and rejected Muhammad. These *people of the Book* (as the Quran calls them), although protected, have historically been treated pretty much the same as other non-Muslims, including Buddhists and Hindus. In theory, dhimmis are allowed by Muslims to live in Islamic states and practice their religion, just with a few strings attached. However, the nature of those strings offers further proof that nothing in the wacky world of Islam is how it seems at first glance.

Umar ibn al-Khattab, caliph from 634-644, was the first to deal with the specifics of dhimmi status. For Christians, it meant making this pact:

We made a condition on ourselves that we will neither erect in our areas a monastery, church, or a sanctuary for a monk, nor restore any place of worship that needs restoration nor use any of them for the purpose of enmity against Muslims.

We will not prevent any Muslim from resting in our churches whether they come by day or night. . . . Those Muslims who come as guests will enjoy boarding and food for three days.

We will not . . . prevent any of our fellows from embracing Islam, if they choose to do so. We will respect Muslims, move from the places we sit in if they choose to sit in them. We will not imitate their clothing, caps, turbans, sandals, hairstyles, speech, nicknames and title names, or ride on saddles, hang swords on the shoulders, collect weapons of any kind or carry these weapons. . . . We will not encrypt our stamps in Arabic, or sell liquor. We will have the front of our hair cut, wear our customary clothes wherever we are, wear belts around our waist, refrain from erecting crosses on the outside of our churches and demonstrating them and our books in public

in Muslim fairways and markets. We will not sound the bells in our churches, except discretely, or raise our voices while reciting our holy books inside our churches in the presence of Muslims.

These are the conditions that we set against ourselves and followers of our religion in return for safety and protection. If we break any of these promises that we set for your benefit against ourselves, then our Dhimmah [promise of protection] is broken and you are allowed to do with us what you are allowed of people of defiance and rebellion.

Well, that seems fair and reasonable, doesn't it? Is that tolerant, or what?

If Muslims wanted to seize and destroy a dhimmi church, a Muslim would simply claim that it was being used to say bad things about Islam. The word of a Christian meant nothing. Case (and church) closed.

This is how non-Muslims were treated for centuries. The rules began to be sporadically relaxed or ignored in the mid 19th century, but it is all still part of Sharia law. Enforcement can become strict again at any time. According to Islam, non-believers in Islamic countries still face three options: embrace Islam, pay the jizya (tax), or die.

The Muslim tax official collecting the jizya would ceremoniously hit the dhimmi on the back of the head or neck to make certain that the infidel fully felt and understood his inferior status. Some Christians were forced to sell their children to Muslims in order to pay their jizya. So, of course, many of the victims decided it was better to convert to Islam. And that's how an overwhelmingly Christian North Africa and Middle East became overwhelmingly Islamic. But some of the dhimmis who wanted to convert to Islam were forbidden. Why? Because Muslims wanted their taxes more than their souls.

In the 19th century the Greeks got so fed up with Islamic oppression that they decided to fight back. One (Muslim) Ottoman chieftan summarized the situation this way:

We have wronged the [dhimmis] and destroyed both their wealth and honor; they became desperate and took up arms. This is just the beginning and will finally lead to the destruction of our empire.

Radical Islamic jihadists today are throwing a temper tantrum because the West has left Islamic countries in the economic and cultural dust. What else are they to do? Admit that they are suffering the consequences of their own barbaric ways? If they were capable of that, they wouldn't be in their current situation. Muslims, to a considerable and frightening extent, don't know how to do anything but fight. That's all they have ever known, and all they care to know.

I think Muslims in America today should be treated according to their own rules. They should be labeled and treated as dhimmis. They should be forced to sign the same sort of agreement Christians and Jews were forced to sign in Muslim countries. They should be forced to abandon Islam and embrace Christianity, or pay a jizya, or die. Perhaps, since we are not quite as barbaric as Muslims, the Islamic infidels should be allowed to escape death by immediately leaving America and returning to a Muslim country. Returning to any non-Muslim country any time in the future would trigger an automatic death sentence. What do you think about that, all you peaceful, tolerant Muslims? How would you like to live by your own standards? Fair enough? Is that tolerant enough for you?

Gosh, is that too harsh? Poor mistreated Muslims in America. So picked on, they whine. All that dhimmi stuff was a long time ago. It wouldn't be fair to treat Muslims today the way Muslims treated others centuries ago. Even then it wasn't really all that bad. Jews were actually treated worse

in Christian countries than in Muslim countries, weren't they? No. Nice try, but not true. To the extent that Jews were not treated harshly, it was simply because Muslims wanted Jews to continue paying the jizya and serving their Muslim masters in countless other ways. As long as Jews continued to play that role, Muslims were not eager to harm literate, industrious Jews. How many Jews choose to live in Islamic countries today? How many are even allowed to?

But, hey, let's let bygones be bygones, shall we? Forgive and forget. After all, Sharia law is not fully in effect anywhere except Saudi Arabia (where no religion other than Islam is tolerated at all) and Iran. Still, nowhere in the Islamic world do infidels enjoy equal status with Muslims. Muslims are working feverishly throughout the world to reestablish Sharia law. And they are making progress. Even here in the US.

Women

Most Muslims insist that Islam treats women very well. Better, in fact, than they are treated in the West. If they are treated badly in some Islamic countries, by the Taliban for example, that is a function of culture, not Islamic teachings. Egyptian Dr Nawal el-Saadawi says: **Our Islamic religion has given women more rights than any other religion has, and has guaranteed her honour and pride.** That would come as quite a surprise to Muslim women throughout the world, especially in Saudi Arabia.

Harvard professor of women's studies and religion, Leila Ahmed, says: **[Muslim scholars] are in the early stages of a major rethinking of Islam that will open Islam for women. [We] are rereading the core texts of Islam – from the Koran to legal texts – in every possible way.** Really? Why? If Dr Saadawi is right, there is hardly any need, because the Quran is already extremely kind and generous toward women. If there is a problem, according to prevailing Islamic

wisdom, it stems from cultural influences, not from Islam itself. So, why would Muslim scholars be scrutinizing the Quran and legal texts, when they really should be negotiating better treatment for women with Saudi Arabian and Taliban officials?

Maybe we should take a look for ourselves at those core texts of Islam. We aren't Muslim scholars, but let's just see what we can dig up. Let's see here . . .

Quran 4:34 – **Men have authority over women because God has made the one superior to the other.**

Quran 2:223 – **Your women are tilth [field], to be used by a man as he wills.**

Quran 2:282 – **Get two witnesses, out of your own men, and if there are not two men, then a man and two women, such as ye choose, for witnesses, so that if one of them errs, the other can remind her.**

Quran 4:3 – **If ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly with the orphans, marry women of your choice, two or three or four; but if ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly with them, then only one, or a captive that your right hands possess, that will be more suitable, to prevent you from doing injustice.**

Quran 4:11 – **Allah thus directs you as regards your children's inheritance: to the male, a portion equal to that of two females.**

Quran 4:34 – **Good women are the obedient, guarding in secret that which Allah hath guarded. As for those from whom ye fear rebellion, admonish them and banish them to beds apart, and scourge them.**

Wow. One has to seriously question whether Egyptian Dr Nawal el-Saadawi has ever actually read the Quran. Or, if she really thinks Islam has given women more rights than any other religion, maybe she has never actually read anything about any other religion. Or maybe she just thinks we are so gullible that we will simply take her word for it and not do a little homework. Darn, she almost got away with it, too. It's just a few pesky authors that spoil it for Muslim apologists. Like, for example, *The*

Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam (and the Crusades), by Robert Spencer, on which this blog series is primarily based.

So, what do all those verses mean? Women are inferior to men, and men rule over women. Notice, for example, that Allah's words in those verses are directed at men exclusively. Women, it seems, aren't even worth speaking to, according to Allah. Women are property, to be used, controlled, and exploited as men see fit. A woman's word is only half as reliable as a man's word. A woman's inheritance is only half as much as her brother's. Polygamy is good. Raping slave girls is good. Beating a disobedient wife is good. And, of course, the husband decides what qualifies as *disobedient*.

I just have a sneaking suspicion that Egyptian Dr Nawal el-Saadawi doesn't want you to know what the Quran really says. Because what she says and what the Quran says are totally different. Oops. And this brief glimpse into the core teachings of Islam blows that whole **cultural** myth out of the water, too. Oppressive, harsh, brutal treatment of women is not just something the Taliban cooked up on their own. They are simply following the teachings of the Quran. All of which tends to lead to the conclusion that nothing a Muslim says is to be considered reliable, even a learned, respected Muslim like Egyptian Dr Nawal el-Saadawi. Muslims seem to have all the veracity of an American politician, lawyer, or used-car salesman.

Muhammad's most beloved wife, Aisha, had these words of advice to Islamic women: **O womenfolk, if you knew the rights that your husbands have over you, every one of you would wipe the dust from her husband's feet with her face.** Who is a more reliable source, Aisha or Egyptian Dr Nawal el-Saadawi?

Quran 24:31 – **[Women must] lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and**

ornaments except what must ordinarily appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers . . . So, this is not just some cultural invention of the Taliban, it is fundamental Islamic teaching. And the following story shows how strictly it is enforced.

A group of 15 school girls went to class in Mecca in March 2002. They had covered themselves appropriately, but once inside, since there were no males in the school, they took off their outer garments. When a fire started in their building, the girls were not allowed to leave the burning building, because they were not covered appropriately, according to the Quran. Police and firemen tried to open the doors and let the girls out, but they were stopped by the muttawa, Saudi Arabia's religious police. Egyptian Dr Nawal el-Saadawi apparently was not aware of that incident.

Child marriage was common in Arabia in the 7th century. One might think that Allah, being so great and all, would have frowned upon such a practice. One might think that Allah, being so great and all, would have taken advantage of a golden opportunity to put an end to such an evil custom, at least among Muslims. After all, he had his brand spanking new prophet writing the Quran, and all Allah had to do was *reveal* to Muhammad that child marriages are forbidden in Islamic law. But that just isn't how Allah rolls, apparently, even though he is . . . great. (Just ask any Muslim).

Or maybe Muhammad was a wee bit distracted that day during elementary Allah revelations. The prophet's favorite wife married him when she was only six years old, and the marriage was consummated when she was nine. So, as a CYA measure, child marriage is clearly sanctioned in Quran 65:4. The context of that verse is divorce, not child marriage per se. But Muhammad explains that before a Muslim man can get a final divorce, he has to make sure the soon-to-be ditched wife is not

pregnant. That means waiting three months after the woman's period stopped menstruating, or if she has never menstruated yet. That means children.

Okay, but that was a long time ago. Child marriage isn't allowed in Islamic countries today, is it? It is not only allowed, it is encouraged, and it is widely practiced. Ayatollah Khomeini told his followers that marrying a girl before she begins menstruating is a "divine blessing", and he strongly advises fathers to get their daughters married off and out of the house before they start menstruating. Iranian girls can get married at age nine with parental consent, or age 13 without their parent's permission. Over half of the teen girls in Afghanistan and Bangladesh are married.

These child marriages lead to increased domestic violence. In Egypt, more than a fourth of married adolescents have been beaten by their husbands, and 41% of those were beaten during pregnancy. It's about the same in Jordan. At least 90% of all Pakistani wives have been struck, beaten, or sexually abused. Common offenses (not that the husbands are required to explain or justify themselves) include cooking a meal that isn't up to expectations, or failure to have a boy baby. (The nerve of some women!) Are you getting all this Egyptian Dr Nawal el-Saadawi?

Muhammad was all for domestic violence, too. When some of the guys mentioned that their women were getting bolder, Muhammad instructed them to beat their wives. When the wives complained to Muhammad, he was quite upset. With the women, that is. He was not at all sympathetic to them, and he advised them that when their husbands beat them, no one should ask him to explain why. Are you listening, Egyptian Dr Nawal el-Saadawi?

Wives are never permitted to refuse their husband's sexual advances, no matter the time of day or night. Women, with few exceptions, are not permitted to travel outside their city. They may not even be allowed to leave the home. If a woman in Saudi Arabia is found walking in public, unless she is accompanied by her husband or a close relative, she is subject to arrest for prostitution or other immoral conduct.

The alternative to wife-beating is divorce. In the wacky world of Islam, there's no need for high-priced divorce lawyers, or protracted, bitter court battles. All the Muslim husband has to do is say "I divorce you" and it's a done deal. No such thing as alimony in Islam. The best the wife can hope for is an arrangement by which there is no divorce, but she agrees that the husband is no longer required to support her, she is no longer required to have sex with him, and he is free to marry another woman.⁹

Of course, the divorced couple may remarry, as apparently often happens after the hubby cools down a bit and realizes he misses her and maybe acted a bit too hastily. But there are limits. After he has divorced her three times, she is not permitted to marry the big lug a fourth time unless and until she has married someone else first. And she can't get away with a sham marriage; it has to be properly and fully consummated, or it doesn't count. (That was one of Muhammad's brilliant inventions. Oops, I mean *revelations*.) The result is a strange practice of temporary marriages. It appears there is no shortage of Muslim men who are willing, out of the goodness of their heart, and their profound respect for women, to marry a desperate divorced wife for one night. It's easy to see how such an experience might help bring the troubled couple closer together. (Did I mention that the world of Islam is wacky?)

⁹ Quran 4:128

An interesting Shiite variation on that theme is temporary wives. It's like any other Muslim marriage except it includes a time limit. Generally, the marriage is expected to last three nights, after which the (temporarily) happy couple may stay together or go their separate ways. In practice, it usually doesn't last that long. But, in any case, it's a nice way for Muslim men to find temporary female companionship. When you think about it, it's really nothing more than Islamic-sanctioned prostitution. But it just sounds so much more pious if it's blessed by Muhammad and Allah. (Which should start some mental wheels turning in Christian minds. If Christians could (and did) find verses in the Bible proving that God sanctioned slavery, surely creative theologians can find a verse or two proving that God sanctions prostitution. But I digress).

Of course, Muhammad himself had no need of such things as temporary wives. He had wives out the wazoo. And he still wanted more! No problem. The normal limit on the number of wives didn't apply to Muhammad. Why? It just so happened that right about the time Muhammad was wrestling with the whole issue of how many wives he could marry, Allah happened to mention¹⁰ that Muhammad (but not the other guys) could take as many wives as he wanted. Isn't it amazing how Muhammad always seemed to be in the right place at the right time to get exactly whatever he wanted from Allah? What a lucky guy!

Polygamy flourishes wherever Islam flourishes. It is so common among Muslims in Britain that the Brits considered incorporating it into their tax code. And the proliferation of polygamy, even in the West, is further proof that in the wacky world of Islam, women are considered property. They are objects to be used by men. They do not have equality with men in any sense.

Perhaps nothing exposes the cruelty of Islam toward women more than the way Muslims deal with rape. As pointed out earlier, a woman's testimony in court is worth only half that of a man. But that's only in cases involving property or property transactions. In other cases, a woman's testimony means nothing at all. In other words, in most cases the only reliable witnesses are men. In the case of sexual misconduct, four male witnesses are required to corroborate a woman's charges. And it isn't enough that a man know what happened, he must have been an **eyewitness** to adultery, fornication, or rape. Since men tend not to invite a bunch of buddies over to watch him rape a woman, it's virtually impossible for a woman rape victim to prove her case in Islamic court.

In areas governed by Sharia law, men are free to rape at will. As long as they are clever enough to avoid having witnesses, all they have to do is deny the charges, and they are free to rape again, and again. But it gets even worse for women. If she alleges rape, but cannot provide the required four male eyewitnesses, she has in effect admitted adultery. Three-fourths of the women imprisoned in Pakistan are there because they are **rape victims**. It is a similar situation in Nigeria.

Egyptian Dr Nawal el-Saadawi appears not to be profoundly ignorant. Therefore, I can only conclude that she is a liar. But, that too is a fundamental part of Islam. It is no surprise that Islam is not crazy about the idea of educating women. In Pakistan, in February 2004, Islamic hardliners were so apoplectic over the prospect of female education that they burned down eight girls' schools during a five-day period. Egyptian Dr Nawal el-Saadawi has betrayed the Muslim women she should be helping to liberate.

¹⁰ in Quran 33:50

As though all the abuses described above aren't enough to expose Islam for the barbaric religion it is, here is one more bit of proof. The grand sheikh and imam of al-Azhar, Muhammad Sayyed Tantawi, is, according to a BBC report, *the highest spiritual authority for nearly a billion Sunni Muslims*. According to Tantawi, *female circumcision is a laudable practice that does honor to women*. (Easy for a man to say). It is practiced by Muslims in and around Egypt, primarily. The basis for the practice seems to be more practical than religious. The thinking is, apparently, that a circumcised female is less likely to commit adultery. So, once again, it is strictly for the benefit of men.

Isn'tlam

All is fair in love and war and Islam. Muslims have nothing comparable to the Ten Commandments. In their indefatigable march toward world domination, anything goes in Islam. If it is beneficial to the Islamic cause, it's allowed. In fact, it's encouraged. In fact, it's expected.

Telling the truth is absolutely essential for all good Muslims. But, as it turns out, that's only when dealing with other good Muslims. When dealing with infidels, go ahead and lie all you want to. Allah is cool with that. He demands it, if it helps the cause. Especially in battle.¹¹

And, along with sanctioned deception is the Islamic principle of political assassinations. That's perfectly acceptable, too, in battling infidels. Shiites have embraced these principles more enthusiastically than Sunnis, but both sects have practiced them throughout Islamic history.

One implication is that we simply cannot trust anything Muslims say. To them, deception is simply one more arrow in their

quiver, and it is practiced as easily and naturally as Christians shaking hands. Muslims are taught and trained to say anything that they think will help the cause of Islam. (That might help explain the blatant lies of Egyptian Dr Nawal el-Saadawi.)

It's a similar situation when dealing with theft. Stealing can easily get a Muslim's hand chopped off. But, again, that applies only when stealing from a fellow Muslim. When dealing with infidels, go ahead and steal as much as you can. You need only look at Muhammad's own actions for proof of that.

What about murder? Muslims will tell you that's a big no-no, and for proof, they love to point to Quran 5:32 – **Whosoever killeth a human being for other than manslaughter or corruption in the earth, it shall be as if he had killed all mankind, and whoso saveth the life of one, it shall be as if he had saved the life of all mankind**. Okay, there you go. Muhammad and all Muslims are definitely against murder. Case closed.

Well, not really. What Muslims don't bother to mention is that those words of Allah were directed at Jews, not Muslims. Allah was telling the Children of Israel in no uncertain terms to behave themselves and to not go around stirring up trouble against Muslims. But Muslims, on the other hand, operate under a different set of rules. Quran 9:5 and 2:191 make it clear that Muslims are **expected** to kill infidels. Slaying non-believers is just another arrow in the Muslim's quiver. You need only look at Muhammad's own actions for proof of that.

But does that include innocent (noncombatant) bystanders as well as those actively working against Islam? Immediately after the 9/11/2001 attacks, Muslims in the US rushed to assure us that Islam forbids killing innocents, and that the vast majority

¹¹ Quran 3:28

of Muslims consider the killing of 3000 Americans that day a crime against humanity, in violation of Islamic teachings. But that depends on who gets to decide who is and is not “innocent”. No one, for example, in Israel is considered innocent, not even women and children. They are guilty simply because they are there. What about Americans? We all participate in our government, our economic system, our culture, and in most cases our religions. So, to radicals like bin Laden, all Americans are guilty. Moderate Muslims say they don’t agree with that conclusion. But then, they would say that, wouldn’t they, whether that’s what they really believe or not?

By now it is clear that Islam isn’t like other religions. As a further illustration of the obvious, let’s consider C S Lewis’ book, *The Abolition of Man*. It is a collection of examples from all the major religions of the teachings and principles they share. Some of the ideals, philosophies, principles they all have in common are: duties to parents, elders, ancestors, children, and posterity; the Law of Good Faith and Veracity; and the Law of Magnanimity. Similar moral and ethical responsibilities are assumed by a wide variety of civilizations and cultures. Lewis draws from diverse sources, including the New Testament, Confucius’ *Analects*, and writings of Australian aborigines. He does not, however, use any quotations from the Quran or other Islamic sources. Not because he had anything against Islam, or because he wasn’t familiar with it. He didn’t use Muslim quotations because he couldn’t find any that fit his criteria. They are missing from Muslim texts. They just aren’t there. They aren’t there, because Muslims don’t share those moral values.

So, when Muslims try to tell us that Islam is similar to other religions (only better), don’t believe it. The most cursory study of Islam clearly proves that Muhammad is unique among prophets, and Islam is unique among major organized religions. A religion of peace? No, Islam isn’t.

The Golden Age of Islamic Culture

The great contributors to Islamic literature are most notable for their lack of Islamic character. Few of them seem to have been inspired by Islam, and many of them were open Islamic heretics.

Islamic law prohibits music. It also outlaws artistic displays of the human form. Not surprisingly, Islamic culture did not produce anything comparable to Western musical and artistic traditions. When Muslims created impressive music or art, it was in spite of Islam, not because of it. Even today, Muslim leaders such as Iran’s Ayatollah Khomeini adamantly oppose all music.

Science and culture flourished in the Islamic world during the Middle Ages. But it was not developed because of Islam. It was produced by non-Muslims. For example, Islamic culture typically gets credit for the astrolabe, but it was developed long before Muhammad. Yes, there was a time when Islamic culture was more advanced than that of Europeans, but that was during the period when Muslims drew from the achievements of the Byzantine and other civilizations. Once Muslims had taken all they could from Byzantium and Persia, and Jews and Christians had been converted or subdued, Islamic culture began a steep decline. Islam is still in that prolonged period of intellectual stagnation. Today, there is hardly any trace left in the Islamic world of Islam’s Golden Age, when Muslims led the world in math and science.

Muslims get credit for tremendous advances in the field of medical science. But it was a non-Muslim who paved the way. Belgian physician and researcher Andreas Vesalius published the first accurate description of the body’s internal organs, complete with detailed anatomical drawings. Such drawings and the dissection of human bodies were prohibited by Islam.

Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi introduced Europeans to the joys of algebra. But the basic principles upon which his work was based were discovered centuries earlier. Muslims are credited with the concept of zero, but they simply built on others' work from centuries past. Muslims did not invent "Arabic numerals" either. They came from pre-Islamic India. Al-Khwarizmi's pioneering work in math led to much more work in math and science in Europe, but not in the Muslim world.

Why? Because Europe encouraged intellectual thought and innovation. Islam stifled it. That is due in large part to Sufi Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, who suppressed much Islamic philosophical and scientific advancement. But it is also a product of the Quran itself. According to Islam, Allah is absolutely free, not subject to consistent, rational laws of nature. Such suggestions were blasphemous, because they suggested Allah was limited in some way, even if by natural laws of his own creation. Europe, meanwhile, embraced the concept of consistent, rational, natural laws, which could be discovered, and that made scientific investigation worthwhile.

Islam does deserve full credit for a couple of achievements, however. It was largely because of Muslim control of the land trade routes to Asia that Europeans like Christopher Columbus were so eager to find an alternate trade route across the Atlantic. Those European Christians were also eager, of course to find new Christian converts. Also, it was because of Muslim expansion at the expense of the Byzantine empire that many Greeks fled to the West. This was great for the West, but it created a brain-drain in the Islamic world. It's ironic that these two great Islamic "achievements" were merely unintended consequences of the violent, wacky world of Islam.

Paradise

Not surprisingly, Muhammad found it difficult to motivate his fellow jihadists to volunteer for suicide missions. So, the warrior-prophet had to up the ante. Since he was making up Islam as he went along, he simply invented an illusion of Paradise that he knew his gullible, malleable minions would find attractive. In fact, Muhammad had such an active imagination that his Paradise myth was absolutely irresistible to many jihadists.

The basic plot was simple enough. If a jihadist was victorious in battle, he enjoyed a share of the booty for his efforts. If he died in battle, however, he enjoyed even more booty. So much more, in fact, that many warriors were **eager** to go directly to Paradise, without passing GO or collecting their \$200. Surviving battle was no longer their primary focus, because their life on earth was pretty pathetic, at best, compared to the Paradise that awaits Muslim martyrs.

And just what was it that Paradise promised? Paradise is to a Muslim jihadist what Santa Claus is to an American child. Whatever you want. And what did Muhammad's men want? Spiritual maturity? Eternal love, wisdom, and fellowship with Allah? Nah! Boring! What they wanted was what they didn't have, and most likely never would have on earth. Gold, pearls, silk, green cushions, beautiful carpets, thrones with plenty of gold and jewels, golden dishes, fruit, meat, water, milk, and wine. Water? Doesn't sound like a big deal to us, but it was scarce in Muhammad's world. Wine? Doesn't the Quran frown on alcoholic beverages? Muhammad soon had an answer for that. Paradise wine was okay, because it didn't cause intoxication. One might wonder what would be the point of having wine in Paradise in that case, if you couldn't get a decent buzz going. But, this was Muhammad's myth, so he could tell it any way he wanted to. And the way he told

it, no one in Paradise would ever run short of these supplies.

Not bad. But still not good enough. What really got those young potential martyrs' imaginations (and hormones) riled up was women. (Or boys, if that just happened to be the way a jihadist rolled). Voluptuous virgins, modest maidens, untouched by Muslim hands, and all hot to trot. Each eager to let the fledgling martyr have a go at her.

Wait a minute. Boys? Doesn't Islam frown on homosexuality? Yes, but in the case of Paradise, it was okay.

Hold on a minute. Doesn't Islam strongly condemn suicide? Yes, but embracing a martyr's death during jihad isn't considered suicide. Anyway, who has time to worry about details like that? Virgins are calling!

What 14-year-old Muslim boy, facing a life of poverty, wouldn't find Islamic Paradise a compelling alternative? Sure, they could make it to paradise eventually, even without becoming a jihad martyr, but why wait? Better to die in holy battle and take the express elevator. Nothing much going on down here on earth anyway. Those that are left behind would think of the martyr as a hero forever, and it might even be worth money to the family. Such a deal!

Are Muslims really that gullible? Yes.

One might wonder how much fun Paradise would be for those virgins? Doesn't sound like such a great deal for them. Maybe Egyptian Dr Nawal el-Saadawi could explain that one for us.

Spread of Islam

The Middle East, North Africa, and Iran are considered the heart of the Islamic world, and they have been for centuries. But there was a time when they were predominantly

Christian. How did those Christian areas become Muslim areas? By force.

As Muhammad and his warriors united the scattered tribes of Arabia into a Muslim community, they began to set their sights on Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. They didn't go forth as missionaries, however, spreading the good news about Islam. Those Christian areas were not clamoring for a new prophet or a new religion. They were not attracted to Islam by its charismatic prophet or its inspiring spiritual message. Islam did not sell itself. Just as Muhammad had done from the very beginning of his *propheteable* career, he spread Islam by force. And so did his warriors after Muhammad's death.

Wherever Muslims went, Christians were slaughtered or enslaved. Christians were not converted to Islam, they were coerced into Islam, or they were killed. Caliph Umar said so quite bluntly in this question he posed to an underling: **Do you think that these vast countries, Syria, Mesopotamia, Kufa, Basra, [Egypt], do not have to be covered with troops who must be well paid?** Do you think there would have been a need for troops if Christians freely embraced Islam? None of those countries had attacked Muslims, or threatened to. Most Christians had never even heard of Islam before its barbaric invaders arrived.

Other Muslim raiders expanded Islam's bloody reach into Europe and North Africa, yielding more booty and slaves for Allah. (Did I mention that Allah is great? He sure as hell is!) The non-Muslim majorities under the rule of Islam gradually diminished in size due to Muslim discrimination, oppression, and harassment. Yielding to Islam was their only hope for a decent life.

Charles Martel (*the Hammer*) managed to stop the Muslim invaders in France at Tours in 732. Muslims didn't give up, though. In 792 Hisham, the ruler of Muslim Spain, organized a new attempted invasion of France, and jihadists throughout the world

flocked to lend a hand. They were not successful. In 848 another Muslim army invaded France. They weren't successful, either. But both efforts were Muslim-based, they both did considerable damage, and they preceded what we call the *Crusades* by about 300 years.

So, contrary to modern Muslim mythology, the Crusades did not mark the beginning of hostilities between the Christian and Muslim worlds. That hostility started with Muhammad himself, and was expanded by his minions shortly after his death.

It's important to understand that not one square mile of territory in the wacky world of Islam was ever incorporated into the Islamic world without the use of Muslim force. In other words, Muslims stole every bit of the land they now claim as theirs. So, while they desperately need us to pretend that history begins with the Crusades, it most certainly does not. And their own *crusades* were not defensive, but **offensive**. Christian churches were looted, monks were terrorized, and nuns were violated. Christians who survived suffered second-class dhimmi status.

And Muslims were never satisfied. No matter how many lands they conquered, it was never enough, and they never gave up pushing Islam farther and farther into non-Muslim areas, focused on eventual world domination. That is Islam, religion of peace. Peace that comes when there is no resistance left anywhere in the world. It is only in light of this that one can begin to understand the Crusades.

Large-scale jihads did end after 1683. Not because they had given up on their dream of world domination. Not because Muslims had become pacifists and rejected the jihadist doctrines of Islam. It was simply because the Islamic world didn't have the strength to continue. That began to change when oil was discovered in the Middle East.

Of course, there is Quran 2:256, which says that **there is no compulsion in religion**. So Muslims characterize their relentless campaign not as forcing others to accept Islam, but simply forcing others to accept Islamic law, culture, and social customs. The religion just happens to be part of the package. It is difficult to imagine any group more adept at rationalization, obfuscation, and deception than Muslims. No matter what kind of word games Muslims use to divert, deflect, absolve, and excuse, the plain, simple truth is that, according to Muhammad, Allah instructed him (and his followers) **to fight against the people until they testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah**. No Muslim sect has ever renounced that principle, or the goal of Muslim world domination, or the commandment to use, under certain circumstances, armed warfare to achieve it.

Muslim Brotherhood theorist Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966) put it this way:

It is not the function of Islam to compromise with the concepts of Jahiliyya [unbelievers] which are current in the world or to co-exist in the same land together with a jahili system. . . . Islam cannot accept any mixing with Jahiliyyah. Either Islam will remain, or Jahiliyyah; no half-half situation is possible. Command belongs to Allah, or otherwise to Jahiliyyah; Allah's Shariah [law] will prevail . . .

Founder of the Pakistani political party Jamaat-e-Islami, Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi (1903-1979), said:

[Non-Muslims have] absolutely no right to seize the reins of power in any part of God's earth, nor to direct the collective affairs of human beings according to their own misconceived doctrines. [If they do] the believers would be under an obligation to do their utmost to dislodge them from political power and to make them live in subservience to the Islamic way of life.

There you have it. No ambiguity. Are there those who truly believe that Islam should and can peacefully coexist with non-believers? I hope so, and I wish them well. But they are not true Muslims. We have been told repeatedly that Islam has been hijacked by jihadists. Simply not true. If there actually are Muslims who reject jihad as described and practiced by Muhammad, they are the ones who have hijacked Islam.

The Crusades

By the beginning of the Crusades, Muslims had captured two-thirds of the Christian world. Their conquest of Jerusalem in 638 marked the beginning of centuries of Muslim aggression and Christian persecution. Finally, the Byzantines had had enough, and they changed from a defensive to an offensive posture. They set out to recapture some of their lost territory. They regained Crete, Cilicia, Cyprus, Antioch, and parts of Syria.

According to Islam, any land ever held by Muslims belongs to Allah forever, so Muslims throughout the world responded to calls for jihad to fight back against the Byzantine forces. Their success was limited because the Shiite and Sunni sects didn't play well together. In 1001 Byzantine emperor, Basil II, negotiated a 10-year truce with the Shiite caliph, Abu Ali al-Mansur al-Hakim. Basil soon learned that Muslims cannot be trusted.

In 1004, under the caliph's orders, Christian churches were destroyed, crosses were burned, church property was seized, and Jews suffered a similar fate. Over the next decade 30,000 churches were destroyed, and waves of Christians converted to Islam as an act of self-preservation. Among the churches destroyed was the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. That was the traditional site of Christ's burial, and the tomb was destroyed as well. Christians were forced to wear heavy crosses around their necks, and Jews were forced to wear

heavy blocks of wood in the shape of a calf. The message was clear: embrace Islam or get out.

The ill-tempered caliph chilled out a bit eventually, and returned much of the Church property. The Byzantines were allowed to rebuild the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in 1027. But over the next several decades the Byzantine Empire, which had once included southern Italy, North Africa, the Middle East, and Arabia, was reduced to little more than Greece. The Church of Constantinople had wanted nothing to do with the popes. But now the new Byzantine emperor was desperate, and he reached out for help.

That is how the First Crusade came about. Muslims characterize it as Western predatory imperialism. But it was simply Pope Urban II's response to a plea for help from the victims of **Islamic predatory imperialism**. It was a defensive move, forced by Islamic aggression. It was not a crusade to convert Muslims to Christianity or exterminate them; it was a crusade to remove Islamic rule from Christian lands and try to avoid further Muslim attacks and encroachment.

The Crusades took the form of pilgrimages, with European Christians making their way to the Holy Land for religious purposes, determined to defend themselves against Muslim attacks. Not all the Crusaders were pure of heart or motive, but the purpose of the Crusades was not for personal gain. Land retaken was to be returned to the Byzantine Empire. Crusaders typically sold their own property to raise the cash for the journey, and they knew there was a good chance they would never be able to return. Some Crusaders did profit, but most did not expect to gain from the Crusades, and they returned home empty-handed.

It must be emphasized that nothing in Pope Urban's plans for the First Crusade suggested converting Muslims to Christianity by force. Only a century after

the first Crusade did Christians attempt to convert Muslims, and they did that not by force, but through Franciscans, who were not very successful. When Christian kingdoms and principalities were established in the Middle East, they allowed Muslims a great deal of freedom to build new schools and mosques and worship as they pleased. Some probably adopted parts of the dhimmi laws already established there by Muslims, so they likely were subjected to discriminatory taxes and restrictions, but Jews and Muslims did not have to suffer the same sort of daily harassment through punitive dress codes, etc. Such dhimmi practices were never assimilated into Christian doctrine or law.

Ibn Jubayr (1145-1217), a Spanish Muslim, observed in the 1180s, on his way to Mecca, that Muslims in Christian lands controlled by the Crusaders had it better than Muslims in Islamic lands. Muslims, as a rule, preferred to live in lands controlled by Crusaders!

Muslims today would have us believe that the Crusaders were barbarians, cruelly attacking a superior, peace-loving, advanced Muslim civilization. Pigshit. Nor did the Crusaders establish European colonies in the Middle East, as Muslim mythology asserts.

The Crusaders' siege of Antioch dragged on for months. Muslim forces were arriving from Jerusalem, but troops which the Byzantine emperor had promised were turned back, because the emperor decided Antioch was a lost cause. The Crusaders were furious, and they felt (rightfully) betrayed. So, they no longer felt obligated to keep their agreement with the emperor. When they finally, against all odds, took Antioch from the Muslims, they set up their own governments, rather than considering Antioch part of the Byzantine Empire. They set up their own state governments to protect those areas for Christians in the Holy Land. They were not Western European colonies; they were not governed

from Western Europe; there were no economic agreements or arrangements with Western European rulers; the Crusaders did not send money to Western European rulers; and there was no large-scale Western European emigration to Antioch. Many of the Crusaders even stopped thinking of themselves as Europeans.

On July 15, 1099, following a five-week siege, the Crusaders entered Jerusalem. What followed was a bloody massacre for which Christians will forever be condemned, and rightfully so. Their conduct in no way reflected the teachings and values of Christianity. But, just to add a bit of perspective, it was common practice and in accordance with accepted warfare conduct to sack a city following a siege. That was the price a city expected to have to pay for not surrendering. Some say the Crusaders promised leniency, then broke their promise once inside the city. Some say the Crusaders did in fact allow many Jews and Muslims to safely leave the city. The truth is not known. But we do know that the Crusaders killed and looted without restraint. The story has been embellished and exaggerated through the centuries, but the established facts are ugly enough.

One fact that Muslims conveniently overlook is that this was not the beginning of hostilities between Christians and Muslims. Muslims prefer to start history with the sack of Jerusalem in 1099. But how did Muslims come to be in control of Jerusalem in the first place? How did Muslims come to be in control of any land anywhere in the world? By using the same barbaric type of warfare used by the Crusaders in Jerusalem. Why were the Crusaders there in Jerusalem in the first place? Because Muslims had for generations conquered Christian lands through bloody warfare and looting, much as the Crusaders demonstrated in Jerusalem.

Crusader conduct in Jerusalem was recognized as a crime, and it was not typical Crusader or Christian behavior. For

Muslims, however, the very same conduct would have been perfectly acceptable, in full accordance with Islamic teachings, and cause for celebration even today. That's the difference between the two religions. For Christians, this was a shameful departure from their values. For Muslims, it was simply business as usual. One bit of proof (aside from abundant historical fact) is that it wasn't until much later that it even occurred to Muslims that there was a great deal of useful propaganda to be gained by suddenly getting huffy about the sack of Jerusalem. Islamic hypocrisy knows no bounds, and it thrives today in the form of a moral double standard.

Another shameful departure from Christian values was when a group of Crusaders got sidetracked on their way to the Holy Land, and decided instead to kill and plunder Jews in Germany. When word of this reached the Middle East, many Jews decided to join with Muslims and fight against the Crusaders. A similar episode played out 50 years later during the Second Crusade. None of it was consistent with the purpose of the Crusades, or with Christian teachings, or even with common sense. Muslims treated Christians and Jews pretty much the same way (badly), making them natural allies. Instead of joining forces, these Crusaders turned on their Jewish friends, forcing them into the role of an enemy. Again, however, this was not the norm for the Crusades.

But it plays into the hands of Muslim propagandists who claim that, while the Crusaders were bloody, savage beasts, Muslim conquerors were kind toward the conquered, just, tolerant, and therefore welcomed with open arms. One popular example of the stark contrast is Saladin, the Muslim who conquered Jerusalem in 1187. Unlike the Crusaders, Saladin did not massacre the inhabitants of Jerusalem. What Muslims don't mention, however, or want you to know, is that massacre was Saladin's *modus operandi*, and he had every intention of butchering the people in Jerusalem just as he did in all the other

cities he conquered. It wasn't kindness or civility that prevented him. It was the threat by the Christian leader in Jerusalem that he would destroy the city himself before Saladin could enter it unless the Muslim warrior agreed to control himself.

So, in a sense, the Muslim apologists are correct that Saladin's conduct in Jerusalem demonstrates a sharp contrast between Christianity and Islam. The slaughter there was a departure from Christian values and sanctioned Crusader conduct. Muslim restraint there was a departure from Muslim doctrine and practice.

There were actually many crusades. But by *the Crusades* we generally mean a series of seven campaigns of Western European Christians against Muslims in the Holy Land. The First Crusade was called in 1095 and began in 1099. The Seventh Crusade ended in 1250. By 1291 all conquered cities were back under Muslim control.

As the Crusades wound down, Islamic jihad geared up again. The Crusaders were pushed westward, and they found themselves fighting (and losing) for Europe itself instead of the Holy Land. So, one could hardly characterize the Crusades as a success.

But they may not have been a total failure, either. They stemmed the tide of Islamic encroachment in Europe long enough to allow European culture to flourish. Most philosophical and scientific exploration took place in Christian Europe. That would not have been possible under Islam. Without the Crusades holding Islamic jihad in check, there likely would have been no Leonardo de Vinci, Michelangelo, Mozart, Bach . . .

Islam Today

Many people who call themselves Christians do not know much about Christianity. They only go to Church, if at all, on holidays, like Easter, or maybe to

Christmas mass. Evangelical Christians think they understand the Bible pretty well. But they don't. Even if they have memorized lots of verses, they usually don't understand what those verses really mean. What's more, ministers typically like it that way. They don't want members of their congregation doing a lot of independent Bible study or asking too many difficult questions. Why? Because **they** want to be seen by the congregation as the chief source of religious information and spiritual guidance. Sure, they encourage Bible study, but it is carefully controlled to keep going over the same old worn-out Bible stories and Christian clichés. Ministers, priests, and other church leaders will tell their flock whatever they need to know, and questions are to be directed to them, not to independent study. That gives the church leaders control, authority, and stature. That's what they want.

I suspect it is pretty much the same way with Islam. Few Muslims are able, or even inclined, to study the Quran in its classical Arabic language. Many who call themselves Muslims are illiterate. They believe whatever their family tells them about Islam, or whatever they hear in the mosque. They, like Christians, are gullible and easily manipulated and controlled.

That explains why many Muslims are considered *moderates*. They don't have any personal interest in violence or jihad or terrorism. And it isn't difficult at all to come up with a few verses from the Quran or other Islamic texts that support whatever it is they decide to believe and practice. They like to believe and want us to believe that terrorists like bin Laden do not represent true Islam. Those radical jihadists have hijacked Islam, which is really a peaceful, tolerant religion.

The problem is, those moderate Muslims are wrong. Jihadists like bin Laden are, in fact, the real Muslims, and the moderates are the ones who have hijacked Islam and made it into something which it is not. All

you have to do to prove that is look at the life of Muhammad. Look at what he did. Look at what he said. Look at what the Quran says. Look at what Muslim leaders say today to Muslim audiences. Look at history. There is nothing moderate about Islam. It began with bloody aggressive warfare and looting. It expanded through aggressive bloody warfare and looting. Without bloody warfare, looting, imperialistic expansion, ruthless theft of Christian lands, and merciless oppression of Islam's victims, there would be no Islam. Islam without war is like ice cream without cold.

Of course, moderate Muslims cannot understand that and would never believe it. But Christians will not accept the truth either. Why? Partly, because they are afraid that if they speak freely about the truth of Islam, they will find themselves at war with all of Islam, not just the most radical jihadists within it. They are afraid that even the moderates will become radicalized and take up arms against us infidels. And they are right. All it takes to radicalize a moderate Muslim is a bit of fiery jihadist rhetoric from an extremist Islamic leader, and maybe some infidel insult to Islam (real or imagined) to stoke the flames of Muslim self-righteous indignation.

Is there a chance it could work the other way? Maybe moderate Muslims can talk sense into the radicals? Never. Radical jihadist Muslim extremists are fully committed to the cause of world domination by Islam. And they have the Quran on their side. When it comes right down to it, every Muslim may face a day of decision. If they are really a Muslim, they must be prepared to join in bloody jihad if and when it is necessary. If they are unwilling to do that, they are infidels. In fact, they are worse than Christian infidels, because once a Muslim, always a Muslim. The only cure for apostasy is death.

Do moderate Muslims understand that? No. Would they still choose to be Muslims even if they did? Yes. How could they do

otherwise? Choosing to drop out of Islam is not like a Christian deciding not to go to church any more, or being converted to some other religion. Muslims are **compelled** to embrace their religion by family, friends, and religious leaders. Doing otherwise would immediately make them guilty of apostasy, which is very harshly punished. At the very least, they would be a pariah within the Muslim community. Muslims have no choice but to at least go through the motions of Islam, even if they are not enthusiastic about it.

That's why moderate Muslims will not forcefully speak out against radical extremists, even if they personally have no interest in bloody jihad and believe it is wrong. To do so would alienate them from their families and / or incur the wrath and retribution of committed jihadists.

So we in the West are content to stick our heads in the sand. Moderate Muslims are trapped. Jihadists are the clear winners. They, for the most part, don't even need to draw their swords these days. All they have to do is claim Islamophobia, religious discrimination, hate speech, bigotry, or Western imperialism. PC-minded Westerners fall all over themselves catering to Muslims' every whim just to prove that they are not Islamophobic. They eagerly embrace Muslims' cherry-picked examples of Western "injustices" against the poor, oppressed Islamic world.

CAIR (Council on American-Islamic Relations) board chairman Omar Ahmad summed it up pretty nicely for us when he told an audience in 1998: **Islam isn't in America to be equal to any other faith, but to become dominant. The Koran should be the highest authority in America, and Islam the only accepted religion on earth.** And how do Muslims plan to pull that off? Partly through education, indoctrination, and politics. Thanks to PC-minded American useful idiots, Muslims are making astonishing progress.

So, the current jihad isn't necessarily going to be all that bloody. PC-minded Americans are so ignorant and gullible that they may just be manipulated into submission. But, the sword is always an option, and it will be used if necessary.

Of course, I could be all wrong. I'm no expert on Islam. Maybe I have no idea what I'm talking about. Maybe I'm just full of infidel crap.

So, let's listen to someone who knows a thing or two about Islam. Surely you consider the Ayatollah Khomeini a reliable Muslim source. Forget about everything I've been saying. Let's let this great Muslim leader set the record straight.

Those who know nothing of Islam pretend that Islam counsels against war. Those [who say this] are witless. Islam says: Kill all the unbelievers just as they would kill you all! Does this mean that Muslims should sit back until they are devoured by [the unbelievers]? Islam says: Whatever good there is exists thanks to the sword and in the shadow of the sword! People cannot be made obedient except with the sword! The sword is the key to Paradise, which can be opened only for the Holy Warriors! There are hundreds of other [Quran] psalms and Hadiths [sayings of the prophet] urging Muslims to value war and to fight. Does all this mean that Islam is a religion that prevents men from waging war? I spit upon those foolish souls who make such a claim.

Hmmm. It seems that peaceful moderate Muslims are not exactly on the same page as all the great Muslim leaders. But there are plenty of Muslims in America who **are** on the same page. We ignore them at our own peril. How many Muslims actively agree with Khomeini? We have no accurate way of measuring. Partly because Muslims are hardly in a position to speak freely, whether they agree or not. They are going to alienate either Muslims or Americans no matter what they say. Furthermore, Muslims are taught to lie. It's in the Quran. Telling

lies to non-believers is perfectly okay in Islam. It is encouraged. As long as it benefits Islam in the long run. We cannot get reliable information on this subject from Muslims. Yet, they have a tendency to give themselves away, eventually. Unfortunately, by then, it is often too late for infidels.

The only effective weapon Americans have is learning the truth about Islam, and speaking openly about it, no matter what the repercussions. Most Americans, unfortunately, are not the least bit interested in learning the truth about anything. Those few of us who do know the truth are, with very few exceptions, either too afraid to speak the truth, or we are restricted by our employers.

Kumbaya¹²

What if a Christian were to say something like this: *Islamists are filthy. They are scum. They are on the same par as urine, shit, dead bodies, dogs and pigs.*

I suspect Muslims would not particularly care for the tone. I suspect Christians or anyone else would agree that it's pretty darn over the top. It is.

Grand ayatollah Sayyid ali Sistani, great Iraqi Shiite leader, said the very same thing about non-Muslims. According to him, the entire body of a non-Muslim is just as *unclean* as the items I mentioned above. But when he said it, it was no big deal.

Sistani is considered by many in the West a moderate, a reformer, a voice of reason, and a hopeful force for democracy. He is

well respected throughout the Western world.

After all, he is simply echoing the message of the Quran (98:6).

If that's the view of one of the good, peace-loving Muslims, imagine what the Islamic radical jihadists think of us Kafir.

Oh well, let's not make a big deal out of it or anything. We all know that those Muslims are peace-loving, tolerant folks. When they say that infidels are literally shit, they mean it in the nicest possible way, no doubt. That's why they can say things like that without raising an eyebrow, while if a Christian says it, it could easily lead to war.

Can't you just feel the Muslim love? Kumbaya. But don't step in it.

¹² Meaning "Come by here". It is an African-American spiritual song from the 1930s. It enjoyed newfound popularity during the folk revival of the 1960s and became a standard campfire song in scouting and other nature-

oriented organizations. The song was originally associated with human and spiritual unity, closeness and compassion, and it still is in many places around the world.

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