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ISLAM IS NOT A PEACEFUL RELIGION

Tom's Perspectives
by Thomas Ice

Most of you have most likely heard the recent public declarations coming from all quarters that Islam is a peaceful religion. From President Bush, to most religious leaders, to the average American calling in to a talk radio program, we are hearing that Islam is a peaceful religion. It is said that Osama bin Laden and the Taliban represent an extremely radical Muslim fringe that is not really a representative interpretation of true Islam. It may be that such an assessment is, to a small degree, more extreme than historic Islam. However, it is certainly not true that Islam is in any way a peaceful religion, especially toward outsiders.

ISLAM MEANS SUBMISSION

First of all, we should know that Islam means “submission,” not peace. This does not imply mere voluntary submission but includes a forced submission where subjects will not comply. Historically Islam is not known for its peace movements, but for a uniquely Arab word we all know as “jihad,” which means an offensive war intended to lead to the conversion of the infidel to Islam or his annihilation. Dave Hunt notes:

Islam is fighting a holy war for control of the world! That war was begun by Mohammed himself in the seventh century and is still carried on today by his faithful followers through terrorism. The terrorists are not radicals or extremists, as the media continually labels them. Instead, these are Islamic fundamentalists who are true to their religion and the teachings of the Koran and who follow faithfully in the footsteps of their great Prophet, Mohammed. As one former Muslim and Islamic scholar has said:

We must never imagine that such Muslims are being unnecessarily wicked. They are simply being faithful to their religion. The fact is never hidden as to the attitude a good Muslim should have towards Christians and Jews. In fact, much of the incitement to violence and war in the whole of the Quran is directed against the Jews and Christian who rejected what they felt to be the strange god Mohammed was try to preach.¹ (Emphasis added.)²

It appears that the fundamentalists versions of Islam are closer to historic Islam than those who are followers of so-called modern “mainstream” Islamic expressions. Non-fundamentalist Muslims are the ones who have changed historically and moved away from the historic Islam. I will provide more information supporting this claim throughout the remainder of this article.

ISLAM’S GLOBAL JIHAD

In an excellent book, written by a convert from Islam to Christianity, Abd El Schafi has documented from the Koran and widely accepted Muslim scholarship that Islam has

always been and continues to be a religion spread by force, not through peaceful means or persuasion. His book, *Behind The Veil: Unmasking Islam* is the work of a team of Christian converts from Islam that base their research and conclusions on the work of nothing but mainstream Muslims, both ancient and modern, from Saudi Arabia, Egypt and other Middle Eastern Islamic countries.³ El Schafi says,

Muhammad and his successors initiated offensive wars against peaceful countries in order to impose Islam by force as well as to seize the abundance of these lands. Their objective was to capture women and children and to put an end to the poverty and hunger from which Arab Muslims suffered. So, Islam was imposed upon Syria, Jordan, Palestine (Jerusalem), Egypt, Libya, Iraq, Iran, all of North Africa, some parts of India and China, and later Spain.⁴

For those familiar with Muhammad's rise to power will also realize that Islam rose to the fore as a result of military conquest upon the so-called "holy land" of the Arabian Peninsula. El Schafi adds the following information about the militant nature of historic Islam in the following:

Undoubtedly, the concept of an offensive war to spread the faith is a genuine Islamic concept; it is known as a Holy War for the sake of God. We will see what Muslim scholars have explicitly determined that this is the essence of Islam. They also indicate that if sufficient military power is available to Islamic countries, they ought to attack all other countries in order to force them to embrace Islam (as well as all the Caliphs who succeeded him) called for holy wars. All scholars and lawyers acknowledge that.⁵

DIRECT QUOTES FROM THE KORAN

Anyone with even a casual acquaintance with Islam knows that the Koran is the authoritative scripture for the Muslim. Yet observe the many direct quotes from the Koran advocating militancy toward the non-Muslim. There are probably more that could be cited, but these are some that this novice was able to glean from Islam's Holy Book.

But when the forbidden months are past, then fight and slay the Pagans wherever ye find them. And seize them, beleaguer them. Lie in wait for them in every stratagem of war; but if they repent, and establish regular prayers and practice regular charity, then open the way for them: For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Surah 9:5)⁶

Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and His Apostle, nor acknowledge the Religion of Truth, even if they are of the people of the Book, until they pay the *Jizya* with will submission, and feel themselves subdued. (Surah 9:29)

Go forth, light-armed and heavy-armed, and strive and struggle with your goods and your persons, in the Cause of Allah. (Surah 9:41)

The infidel is to be “killed or crucified, or have their hands and feet on alternate sides cut off, or will be expelled out of the land . . . and in the hereafter theirs will be an awful doom.” (Surah 5:33)

Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you, but begin not hostilities. Lo! Allah loveth no aggressors. And slay them wherever you find them, and drive them out of the places whence they drove you out. . . . But if they desist, then lo! Allah is forgiving, merciful. (Surah 2:190-92)

Fight against such of those who have been given the Scripture as believe not in Allah nor the Last Day. . . . Go forth, light-armed and heavy-armed, and strive with your wealth and your lives in the way of Allah! (Surah 2:29, 41)

Those who believe do battle for the cause of Allah; and those who reject the faith do battle for the cause of evil. So fight ye against the friends of Satan. (Surah 4:76)

MUHAMMAD AND THE ORIGIN OF ISLAM

It should not be surprising in the least to those familiar with the Koran and those with a knowledge of the genesis of this militant religion, that Islam was planted by Muhammad with the sword, not a philosophy or ethic of peace. El Schafi provides the following synopsis of the bloody beginnings of the Islamic religion:

Even the Muslim reader will be astonished to learn how cruel and brutal Muhammad was as he tortured his captives with fire, then killed them and took their wives as bond maids and wives for himself as well as for his companions. Had anyone dared to write defamatory poetry about him, the poet would have been assassinated whether a centenarian or a nursing mother. . . .

Following Muhammad’s death, his companions fought each other in relentless, savage wars. Competing for authority and out of deeply rooted hatred, Muhammad’s relatives and closest friends sacrificed and slaughtered on another. . . .

All these historical facts are agreed upon by all Muslim scholars and historians according to the references which will be mentioned in detail.

No wonder that we see Moslems these days fighting with each other. In fact, these wars and hostilities spring from the heart of the teachings of Islam since it calls for the use of force to combat wrongdoing, as Muhammad’s relatives did with one another. It was Muhammad who said that “whoever sees an abomination must straighten it with his hands.”” Saddam Hussein repeated and relied upon this saying of Muhammad in his attack on Kuwait’s

ruling family. Muslim brotherhood in Egypt depended upon this saying when they killed Anwar El Sadat.⁷

Muhammad founded Islam with the sword. His followers maintained Islamic rule with the sword. Subsequent generations have always spread Islam's oppressive rule beyond the Arabian Peninsula with the sword. One cannot be a true follower of Islam without holding to the tenants of the Koran, which also advocates forced submission to its rule. How can anyone who knows much about Islam deny this?

SECULAR WESTERNERS

Why are so many in the United States and the West inclined to want to believe that Islam is a peaceful religion and not the militant movement that desires to conquer the world through Jihad? In general, it is most likely because of liberal enlightenment beliefs that dominate their mindset. Just as liberals change Christianity from something that includes the literal Word of God in the Bible that has occurred literally in history to the words of man that contain human ideas and universal human ethics. Western Muslims are often "liberal," by Middle Eastern standards, in their interpretations of Islam. Just as liberal "Christians" deny direct biblical statements and reinterpret Christianity as something that they want it to be, so also do Muslims, primarily in the West. It is only in this way can anyone could attempt to represent Islam as a peaceful religion.

Obviously there are political motives behind President Bush and his administration that have given rise to their many statements that Islam is a peaceful religion. Yet such is simply not the case. If our American administration is going to truly defeat Islamic terrorism, they are going to have to face the fact that it is driven by a historic Muslim belief in holy war as a means of spreading their religion.

CONCLUSION

Biblical Christianity does not advocate the use of the sword to spread its message of forgiveness from sin by faith alone in Christ alone. The Bible advocates propagation of its message through the preaching of the gospel and verbal persuasion. Of course, Christians have the secret weapons of prayer and the Holy Spirit that works behind the scene in conjunction with the preaching of the gospel.

Is Christianity a religion of peace? Christianity is a religion of peace to those who come to know the grace of God through belief in the gospel message. Christianity is a peaceful religion in that Scripture does not advocate the spread of its message in any way through the sword, but with words only. However, the Bible clearly does teach that God, not mankind, will judge those who reject the gospel message of Jesus, His Son. Paul says the following in 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10: "For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who

have believed—for our testimony to you was believed.” Maranatha!

ENDNOTES

¹ *The Orange County Register*, January 9, 1995, NEWS 8.

² Dave Hunt, *A Cup of Trembling: Jerusalem and Bible Prophecy* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1995, pp. 196-97.

³ Abd El Schafi, *Behind The Veil: Unmasking Islam* (no publisher cited, 1996), pp. 3-5. Since no publisher or address is cited in the book, apparently to protect the author, I would recommend anyone interested in this excellent book obtain it from where I got my copy: The Berean Call, P O Box 7019, Bend, OR 97708-7019.

⁴ El Schafi, *Behind The Veil*, p. 31.

⁵ El Schafi, *Behind The Veil*, p. 31.

⁶ All quotes from the Koran are taken from A. Yusuf Ali, *An English Interpretation of the Holy Quran with Full Arabic Text* (Kashmiri Bazar, LaHore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf Publishers and Booksellers, 1975).

⁷ El Schafi, *Behind The Veil*, pp. 7-8.