

Misinterpretation of Islam

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Mushir: Fed. Shariat Court of Pakistan

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Published in Daily News, Pakistan on 08-04-2011

1. Spread by the Sword:

Jihad of Muslims for spreading Islam is a popular allegation created by Medieval European Christian clerics as a justification for that series of horrible war called the Crusades. Islam, being as equally concerned about the quality of this life and that of the hereafter, has regulated Jih'ad. Qur'an says:

"Fight in the cause of Allah with those who fight you, but do not disobey limits; Allah does not love transgressors" (2:190).

War is permissible only in self-defense, and under well-defined limits. Its main aim is to restore peace and freedom for the people; women, children, the elderly and the infirm should not be molested, nor trees and crops cut down, nor peace withheld when the enemy comes to terms. A Hadith expresses this golden principal:

"Do not oppress, and do not be oppressed".

Can Orientals prove that through sword Rasulullah(S) converted any? He raised sword for political act, not a religious one; all Ghazwaat(battle) he fought were originally in defense of Muslims and their territory, not for the spreading of the Islam. Practically speaking then, how does one explain the rapid expansion of Islam from Spain to China, within a century, after the demise of Rasulullah (S)? How did 10 or 20,000 Arabs conquer the entire world along with strict injunction of Qur'an?

"There is no compulsion in religion"?

The Roman and Persian Empires collapsed so dramatically, not just because they were already in decline, but, because the Muslims offered a brilliant alternative to the gross materialism and injustice which differentiated those civilizations. Islam conquered hearts, not forts. Those early Muslims set a splendid example by their actions and people were naturally inclined toward Islam, which produced such remarkable men and women. Two prominent examples which attest to Islam's non-violent expansion are the conversion of Indonesia-Malaysia and the Mongols. No Muslim Army ever set foot in Indonesia, one of the largest Muslim Populations of the world. Indonesians and Malaysians entered into the fold of Islam by the influence of the Talim and characters of traders, merchants, teachers and spiritualists from overseas. The Mongols destroyed half of the Muslim world before they settled down as its undisputed conquerors. Yet within a century they too embraced Islam. The conquerors were conquered by this flexible religion.

When the Ottomans had reached the banks of the Danube, they had conquered Bulgaria and the north of Greece, and had twice defeated armies sent by Europe to save the Eastern Empire. On May 29, 1453, only a few years after Manuel's death, his capital, Constantinople (Istanbul) fell to the Turks, putting an end to the Empire that had lasted

for more than a thousand years. For centuries, the Muslims ruled Greece. Did the Greeks become Muslims? Did anyone even try to convert them by swords? On the contrary, Christian Greeks held the highest positions in the Ottoman Empire. The Bulgarians, Serbs, Romanians, Hungarians and other European nations lived under Ottoman power with their Christian belief, without any pressure. The Albanians and Bosnians converted to Islam, but no one can prove that they converted due to undue influence. They adopted Islam to attain the chain of benefits and enjoy the fruits from the Ottoman Court.

In 1099, Crusaders invaded Jerusalem and started massacre of Muslim and Jewish inhabitants indiscriminately, in the name of the Jesus. At that time, 400 years into the occupation of Palestine by the Muslims, Christians were still the majority in the country. Throughout this long period, no effort was made to impose Islam on them. Only after the removal of the Crusaders from the country, the majority of the inhabitants started to adopt Islam and Arabi language - and they were the forefathers of most of today's Palestinians.

Jews are helpless to present evidence of any effort to enforce Islam on them. Under Muslims, the Jews of Spain flourished unprecedentedly. They handled offices as ministers, poets, scientists. For centuries in Spain under Muslim rule, the Christians and the Jews were free to practice their own religion in their Synagogues. In fact Christians and Jews are regarded as privileged people and are mentioned with respect in the Qur'an as "People of the Book". In Muslim Toledo, Christian, Jewish and Muslim scholars contributed jointly and translated the ancient Greek philosophical and scientific texts. That was, indeed, the Golden Age of Muslims. How would this have been possible, if Rasulallah(S) decreed the "spreading of the Islam by the sword"?

What happened afterwards is even more important. When the Catholics re-conquered Spain from the Muslims, they instituted a reign of religious terror. The Jews and the Muslims were presented with a cruel choice: to become Christians, to be massacred or to leave the land. Where did the hundreds of thousand of Jews, who refused to leave their faith, escape? Almost all of them were received with open arms in the nearest Muslim countries. The Spanish Jews settled all over the Muslim world, from Morocco in the west to Iraq in the east, from Bulgaria (then part of the Ottoman Empire) in the north to Sudan in the south. Only honest Jews who know the history have a gratitude to Islam, which has protected them. It was Muslims only who secured their generations, while the Crusaders persecuted them, many times.

Why Christians forget the military expedition of the Turks, who almost conquered Vienna, but they provide them liberty, otherwise entire Europe was under them. This time again a religious robe is spread to cover the nudity of economic interests; a dacoit's mission becomes a Crusade. Frighten west continued campaigned against Muslim world, especially Iran and Turkey. Turks are again knocking on the doors of Europe, this time peacefully, as Turks Muslims know alert very well.

2. Worship Muhammad:

It is general misinterpretation by many non Muslims that Muslims worship Muhammad as Christians worship Essa (Jesus). It should be clear that Muslims offer Ibadah only for Allah, who is the Creator. The principle of Islam is clear:

“I witness that there is no God except Allah and I witness that Mohammad (S) is His Rasul.”

The word ‘Muslim’ comes from the root Salaam, from which the word Islam is also derived. Islam means the conscious and willing surrender or Taat and Taslim-total submission with devotion to the will of Allah, and thereby the means to achieve peace. Muslim means one who submits, or surrenders before Allah. Therefore, an expression such as ‘Mohammadan’ or ‘Mohammadanism’ is totally misleading and absolute sacrilegious. Muslims love Mohammad (S) as Rasul of Allah, who guide the Ummah through Qur’an, which changed the world. It is wrong that Muslims believe any human as divinity or worship stone like Hajar al Aswad. They never worship any human or idol; they only pay respect Hajar al Aswad as sacred. They offer Sajdah towards the direction of Kabah, as dictated by the Sun’s position and their attention is focused on one direction, Kabah at Makkah, to signify the faith of Muslims in Tawhid. Allah and God of Jesus as per Christian faith or Yahweh, described in the Bible is same.

3. Religion of Arabs:

It was the Hikmah of Allah that He selected Arabia as a fountainhead of Islam and Arabs as a nation, who responded the answer to the ‘clarion call’ first. No one can doubt that they did that job admirably. Yet, unlike all previous Scriptures, the Qur’an was not meant to be confined to one race or a particular nation. As Qur’an says:

“Truly, this is no less than a Message to (all) the worlds – to whomever among you will to go straight”. (81:27:28)

Islam is the logical conclusion to the development of religions. It is a non-sectarian, non-racial, non-strict, universal religion. It is a Divine Truth of Unity, designed for all Humans. Islam’s concept of the unity of Ummah is clear in the Haj, at Makkah. It is there that millions of Muslims from every corner of the globe bow down together to obey their Creator.

4. Middle ages Backward:

The ‘modern’ view of Islam by the Western World is generally quite a medieval one, understood in terms created in the main by Western Scholars, firm to convince themselves and everybody else that Islam is of no real importance, or, at best, a poor copy of Christianity. The truth is that it is Islam which, having raised the Arabs out of their ignorant and illogical lifestyle, provided guidance and wisdom for the Muslims to establish a civilization based on reason, Aqidah, tolerance and Justice. While Christen world was suffering heavily in darkness, the Muslim world providing light and understanding by encouraging Talim and Tarbiyyah. They were Muslims who laid the foundations for the ultimate European Renaissance. Besides their contributions to literature, art and architecture, the Muslims created or developed whole new areas of enterprise, including: optics, geography, astronomy, medicine, chemistry and

agriculture. The list of Muslims accomplishments is amazing and modern world can not deny this fact that current scientific approach is based on medieval Muslim researches.

Another aspect of Islam which generates a lot of not careful thinking amongst non-Muslims is the question of punishment. The concept of punishment in Islam is based on the philosophy of prevention rather than on the physical or psychological infliction of pain. Criminals think very seriously about committing offences, when the consequence may be the loss of a hand or public caning. Judicial parts of Law of Islam are concerned with maintaining the rights of the innocent, and not with protecting the guilty. It is no wonder that in societies where crime is out of control, jurists are re-thinking their attitude regarding the Laws of Islam and some are quite vocal in suggesting that it would be good selection to adopt major parts of it.

5. Anti-Christian:

The Christian world has generated a lot of heat, but little light, in its assessment of this controversial issue. Medieval Christen clergy presented Rasulullah (S) as the anti-Christ. This erroneous belief became enshrined in European literature in epics such as "The Song of Roland" and more emphatically in Dante's "Inferno" and Milton's "Paradise Lost". It became part of what might be called the 'collective unconscious' of Christianity, and contributes in part to the reflexive Western view that Islam is medieval, backward, and so on. A Muslim cannot be a Muslim without believing in Essa (A.S.) (Jesus); in his miracles; in the Bible, as a previous sacred Book, in the Talim of Essa (A.S.), which he provided to the Jews to guide them; and in his complete submission to Allah's will. Islam's point of departure from Christianity is the Aqidah that Essa (A.S.) (Jesus) is a Nabi of Allah and not His son in a literal sense. Qur'an says:

- I. "O followers of the Book! do not exceed the limits in your religion, and do not speak (lies) against Allah, but (speak) the truth; Maseeh Essa, son of Mariyam, is only Allah's Rasul and His word, which He communicated to Mariyam and spirit from Him; believe therefore in Allah and His Anbiya, and say not, Three. Desist, it is better for you; Allah is only one: for be it from His glory that He should have a son; whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is His; and Allah is sufficient Protector. (4:171)
- II. "Certainly they disbelieve who say: Surely Allah, He is the Maseeh, son of Mariyam; and the Maseeh said: O Children of Israel! Serve Allah, my Lord and your Lord..... Certainly they disbelieve who say: Surely Allah is the third (person) of the three; and there is no God but Allah...." (5:72-73)
- III. "Maseeh, son of Mariyam is but a Nabi; Anbiya before him have indeed passed away; and his mother was a truthful woman; they both used to eat food. See how We make the communication clear to them, then behold, how they are turned away". (5:75)

There are further references regarding Essa (A.S.) and other Anbiya in the Qur'an and one Surah is known by the name Mariyam. The Aqidah regarding Creator in Islam is based on Tawhid, confirming the first Commandment in the Old Testament:

"I am the Lord, your Rubb. You shall have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20).

In fact, the Trinity as a theological idea is an ancient pagan belief, based on worship of the Sun”.

6. Unfair with Woman:

Woman is one of the favorite currently topic under discussion by the West, Church and their children NGOs. Without knowing the Laws of Islam regarding women, they are shading tears before media. They tried unsuccessfully to prove that Islam is an unfair in its treatment of women with statements such as:

Muslim women have no souls

Muslim men have four wives

Women can be released simply by saying “I give you Talaq” and so on. What, then, is the Muslim view of woman? Surah an Nisa-4 deals with women, orphans, family rights; share in succession, Nikah and social problems. Its first Ayah says:

“O mankind! be careful of (your duty to) your Lord, Who created you from a single being and created its mate of the same (kind) and spread from these two, many men and women; and be careful of (your duty to) Allah, by whom you demand one of another (your duty to) Allah, by whom you demand one of another (your rights), and (to) the ties of relationship; surely Allah ever watches over you”. (4:1)

While it is not possible to deal with half the world in a few words, the following point is considerable and important:

“Women are the twin-halves of men”, Rasulullah (S) declared. The meaning of "the twin halves of men," emphasized the idea that their role in society is complementary to that of men. Rasulullah(S) declared that the most valuable thing in the world is a virtuous woman. They deserve respect and care because they bear children

Face physical discomfort in the birth process, (a woman who dies in childbirth is considered a Shaheed)

Nurse babies (The Qur’an encourages breast feeding)

Generally administer to the daily welfare

Gave Talim to the infant.

For such valid reasons Rasulullah(S) said:

“The mother is the Faculty”, and “Jannah lies beneath the mother’s feet”.

A Hadith says:

"If a daughter is born to a person and he brings her up, giving her good education and training in various arts of life, I shall myself stand between him and hellfire."

Women are men’s companions. Men and women are meant to reciprocate peace, security and comfort. Nikah is to be based on this natural desire. Men have a duty to maintain their wives but not vice-versa. Of all things permitted Qur’an advice:

“Talaq is the most disliked”

When a couple declares their intention to Talaq, ‘preventive’ measures are set in action. Firstly, there is the waiting period: it must be confirmed that the woman is not pregnant, by waiting for the appearance of the next menstrual cycle. (If she is, then the husband is bound to maintain her and the infant until feeding has been completed). This

gives both parties time to reconsider while reconciliation moves are made by arbitrators from each side.

Muslim men are permitted more than one wife (to a maximum of four) with certain instructions. In some circumstances it is highly beneficial. For example:

War may have decimated the male population, leaving numerous widows and children without financial means. It is permissible to take such a woman as a wife to safeguard her and maintain her welfare and that of her family. Naturally, the man must be in a position to be able to support more than one wife, because according to Islam, each wife is entitled to have whatever the other(s) have, (House, Car, Clothes, Jewelry, etc.) Injunctions of Quran are clear:

“Do Nikah with such women as seem good to you, two and three and four, but if you fear that you will not do Adal (between them), then (do Nikah) only one....” (4:3).

Most Muslims interpret this to mean: marry only one wife, for you will never be able to be completely fair to all to them.

Islam permits polygamy as an alternative to situations, which may force a husband to immoral acts, which is legally allowed in the West. A husband may be forced to seek a second wife in the following situations:

- A. Inability of the wife to bear children and the couple choose not to seek divorce.*
- B. Prolonged debilitating illness of the wife, where she is unable to provide sexual satisfaction to her husband, or carry on her responsibilities in relation to the family.*
- C. Prolonged physical separation due to war, travel, etc.*

Polygamy was practiced by all the prophets of the old and their followers. In the early days of Islam, as a result of successive wars against pagans, there was a great shortage of men and an over supply of women. Polygamy was the only honorable way to provide the women, particularly the widows and orphans, with food, shelter, and protection. Thus, many moral and social ills were avoided.

Hij'ab is a sign of pride for women signifies her value like pearl in shell. It provides protection to women to become sex toll, as she is in the West and Westernized societies, unfortunately. Teachings of Islam condemned women beauty contests, her role as fashion models etc. Islam never restricted this philosophy of Hijab only for women, but instructed men to practice modesty in behavior, to cover and protect their private parts, wear modest dress and protect themselves to harm women through any evil manner.

Rasulullah(S) and Islam have been the target of many an unfounded criticism in this respect. It was Rasulullah(S) who has raised the status of woman after she was abased in all the previous cultures. Today, all the rights which women in societies other than Islam enjoy are a direct result of their struggle which were grudgingly allowed them. On the contrary, following rights were granted women more than 1400 years ago by Islam:

- I. Spiritual equality (Qur'an 3:196; 33:36; 57:13)*
- II. Right of inheritance (4:8, 12, 13 & 177)*
- III. Mehar is compulsory right of wife on husband to pay her prior to establish sexual reunion, as personal property of wife (4:5 & 25). She has Shariah right to demand*

Mehar as per the financial status of her husband and no one has right to fix her Mehar against her wishes.

- IV. Marriage is illegal if she is forced to do against her will. (4:20)
- V. Right of termination of her marriage. (2:228)
- VI. A woman has been invested the right of ownership of property by virtue of her own initiative (4: 33) for her welfare.
- VII. A very beautiful aspect of a Muslim woman is that she, in spite of her wealth which she may acquire, is not expected to spend for the welfare and well-being of her family. This responsibility is vested in her husband (4:35), although she may patronize to help in sharing the responsibility. (4:5; & 25)

As per Qur'an, relationship of husband and wife is considered a divine bounty through love, kindness and comfort. (7:190; 16:73; 30:32)

Tolerance less religion:

No need of any detail argument on this point more while following Ayah announced clearly:

There should be no compulsion in religion. Normal behavior stands out clearly from error (2:256)

This Ayah explained that sword has no role in spreading Islam. Accusation of the enemies of Islam that it was spread by the force of sword has no base. Why not Orientals prove these charges with solid evidences? Above Ayah announced that Islam does not give power to anyone to force any person or section which may be disturbing to the other party. Islam never provide an idea regarding suicide bomber, which is created unfortunately by a Muslim group of political aims. All Major Muslim Schools strongly rejected the distorted views regarding suicide bombers. Islam condemned terrorism, unlawful acquisition of property of others, and causing harm to innocent human beings. Islam rejects all forms of violence. Qur'an says:

"Any one who has saved one life, has saved the whole mankind, and any one who has killed a human being, except in case of murderer or mischief (maker) on earth, it is as if he has killed the whole mankind." (5: 32)

Islam is the speedy rising religion in the first world and other parts despite unpleasant propaganda by the Zion media. While Christian clergy failed to stop spreading Islam in the West, they demonstrated their hostility with Qur'an by burning it. People from all walks of life continue to enter into the fold of Islam. They encounter rejection, resistance, hostility from their families, friends, and the employers, but it does not discourage them in following Islam, the religion of peace and justice.

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