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Conflict Resolution in the Shadow of Islamic Abrogation

Constructive Perspectives Toward Jews, Christians and Others

By Yisrael Ne'eman

Overview

Islam has the tools to curtail Jihadi demands from within. Applying these tools will have a much greater impact on world peace than any attempt to force Islam into a democratic framework, or replace it with secular nationalism. Perhaps surprisingly to non-believers, the solution to the world Jihad offensive and Islamic antisemitism is found in the Koran itself. Having survived fourteen centuries, Islam has the internal strength and latent flexibility to avoid a devastating clash with other cultures and religions. These qualities are critical not only for the future of Islam but for global self-preservation.

Islam was overwhelmingly successful in spreading its message for about a millennium, beginning with its inception in the early 600s. Full faith in Allah, along with commitment to Sharia law and military Jihad were accredited with the continual victory. The end of Islamic dominance may be dated as early as the close of the sixteenth century, or several generations later with the failed siege of Vienna in 1683. The first major setback was the “*Reconquista*” in Spain, which ended in 1492. That was viewed at the time as a temporary check and Christendom was expected to suffer defeat; however, to date, no successful Islamic counteroffensive has ensued. For the past four centuries the Christian West has landed one blow after another on their Muslim rivals, culminating with the break-up of the Ottoman Empire after WWI, the European occupation of large swaths of the Middle East and the development of nation state frameworks in these regions by the mid-twentieth century.

I will make the argument that Islam, like all major religions, is given to numerous interpretations. Bernard Lewis, in his study *What Went Wrong?*,

sees a lack of freedom, discrimination and prejudice within Islamic societies as leading the Muslim world to the failures, frustrations and extremism experienced today. If Muslims intend to improve their own societies, then lashing out at and blaming the West and other cultures for their misfortunes is futile. The suggestion is for Muslims to look inward seeking answers. The current Jihadi solutions feed off of societal failure in present day Islam. In Lewis' conclusion, he admits his perspective is one of a Western observer. Lewis implies the need for a more Western, secular value-based society, admitting this to be a long and difficult path.¹

Edward Said accused Lewis and other Western scholars of "Orientalism" in the 1970s and beyond. Said condemned these researchers as Westerners studying the East, or Orient, as an "object" and, in particular, upbraided such academics for seeing Islam as inferior and inflexible.² Without delving into the academic debate that followed, let it be stated clearly here that Islam is central to its adherents' identity and that it can modify its direction, but such change can only come from within their core of belief and understanding. Foreign pressure affects all people and cultures and Islam is no exception. For true believers, Western coercion forcing an Islamic re-evaluation of its attitude toward non-Muslims will not stand the test of time when compared to change formulated from within firmly established Islamic traditions of interpretation. Devout Muslims define secular nationalism as Western-induced and forced upon Muslim societies under duress.

Conflict resolution must include pious Muslims, thus an Islamic framework is imperative. This chapter will review relevant Koranic quotes and analyze the dangers of continuing on the present path. I will present proposals for using alternative sacred verses to achieve a peaceful outcome to the Islamist clash with the West, Judaism, Christianity and the non-Abrahamic religions and philosophies, particularly those originating in the East. I will make it clear that no one needs to accept Jihadi dictates, regardless of how liberal or "multi-cultural" one's perspective may be. Where issues of morality and ethics are considered we are obliged to seek out the best

¹ Lewis, Bernard, *What Went Wrong?*, Harper Perennial, New York, USA, 2002.

² Said, Edward W., "Afterward," *Orientalism*, Vintage Books, New York, USA, 1994, Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Edition, 2003.

Said was damning in his criticism of Western research of the Orient. In particular when referring to the Middle East he declared, "Orientalism, which is the system of European or Western knowledge about the Orient, thus becomes synonymous with European domination of the Orient" and thereby dismisses most Western study of the region as being jaded, prejudicial and racist at times. Said has valid points but can be charged with very much overstating the case. Said accuses Westerners of overestimating the influence of Islam, while many of his critics believe he down played the significance of religion in the Arab/Muslim world.

solution on the universal plane and eliminate demands for war, whether considered holy or not. The liberal, democratic West must stand its ground firmly while simultaneously suggesting peaceful Islamic alternatives to help bring conflict resolution. Such a move could alter specific Jihadi aspirations, including those of Hamas.

Changes must be undertaken while dealing with the realities of the Western Christian world's economic and technical superiority. Worse yet for Islamists, the existence of the State of Israel for close to seven decades remains a festering sore defying Allah's Divine will. Today's Islam lives within a contradiction of theological challenges that can either be constantly contested through Jihad, or accepted as bequeathed by Divine forces. Islamic leadership and jurists have discretion in decision making but need religious texts to support any judgments handed down. Politics, religion and self-preservation all mix as judicial judgments (*fatwas*) and are seen as crucial in maintaining the continuation of an Islamic society rooted in Sharia law. In our nuclear age, the threat of mass destruction is a powerful motivation for both the West and the Muslim world to find answers for survival and an alternative to Jihadi Islam.

The unorthodox route suggested here is based on quotes from the Koran and will seek an alternative to continued conflict. Moderate statements in the Koran toward non-Muslims and pro-Israelite/Jewish comments abound, yet few vestiges of peaceful intent are noticeable among today's Muslim fundamentalists. There are two primary reasons for this. First, Islamism worldwide is wracked by internal conflict in the battle against the moderates and secular nationalists. The clash is between peaceful Muslims and Jihadi-inspired groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood, which includes the Palestinian Hamas, the Taliban, Al-Qaeda, the Islamic State (ISIS or ISIL) and similar types. Jihadists accuse peaceful Muslims in their home societies of betraying Islam by accepting the present world order. Demands for war are part of the internal debate; demands for violence often increase public support. Second, Jihad activism against non-Muslim societies leads to never-ending war with expected Divine victory over the Western world and other non-Islamic societies. Although this conflict jeopardizes all of humanity, the Jihadists base their behavior on a specific interpretation of Islam whose ideological roots reach back to the seventh century. Today this interpretation is considered "radical" or "fundamentalist," but over the initial millennia of Islamic expansion from the Iberian Peninsula to India and beyond, such a Jihadist perspective was considered quite legitimate and mainstream. As in previous eras, today's Jihadists use "abrogation" or negation to invalidate peaceful verses toward Jews, Christians and other non-Muslims and instead institute Holy War or Jihad in the name of Allah to spread Islam. The key

clause is the neutral Koranic verse 2:106 which remains open for interpretation by the acknowledged Divinely inspired Islamic jurists and commentators:

If We abrogate any verse or cause it to be forgotten We will replace it by a better one or one similar. Do you not know that Allah has power over all things?

This verse contains the origin of a solution. A moderate, conciliatory, co- or multi-existence approach exists side-by-side with the Jihadi interpretation. The moderate approach also has roots in the seventh century, although this understanding is considered a minority opinion held by very few at present.³ We must consider the possibility that this theological perspective can be re-legitimized and re-introduced through a conscious effort directed toward the Muslim faithful and Islamic scholars. To achieve a more peaceful world, a re-emphasis on positive Koranic quotes relating to Judaism, Christianity and others is necessary to override Jihadi claims. This specific theological perspective through the use of “reverse abrogation” contributes to conflict resolution between Islam and others, provided an effort is made by the accepted Islamic authorities to do so. Achieving such a reversal is an uncertain prospect at best. It will require an intensely focused effort, but without a shift in emphasis toward inclusive universalism and away from Jihad, the conflict between Islam and the rest of humanity can be expected to continue. The non-Muslim world needs a moderate ally from within the Islamic clerical elite to abrogate Jihad, achieve conflict resolution and benefit humankind.

One could believe there is no hope for peace since Jihad and Islamic extremism grew out of the “abrogation” of conciliatory verses in the Koran while emphasizing conflict-oriented dictates. Yet, extremism can be reversed. Not all Islamic scholars, either in the distant past or in the modern period, follow “abrogation.” Since 9/11 the debate has intensified.⁴ Most significantly Chapter 9 in the Koran is belligerent and warlike in the extreme, invoking punishment against the People of the Book and others deemed as enemies. Chronologically it appears toward the end of the Koran and

³ Prof. Khaleel Mohammed of San Diego State University, the Egyptian intellectual Tawfik Hamid, the Canadian Indian Muslim professor Salim Mansur, the Italian imam and professor Abdul Hadi Palazzi and the independent thinking Muslim “refusenik” Irshad Manji can be seen as representatives of this group.

⁴ Bukay, David, “Peace or Jihad? Abrogation in Islam,” *Middle East Quarterly*, Fall 2007, retrieved November 14, 2011, www.meforum.org/1754/peace-or-jihad-abrogation-in-islam.

abrogates the previously prescribed positive characteristics attributed to and peaceful commands given regarding Jews and Christians. The suggestion here is to engage in conflict resolution through the emphasis on peace-seeking passages and a re-interpretation of the Koran. Being guardedly optimistic, it is my belief that the overwhelming majority of the 1.5 billion Muslims worldwide do not seek a war of infinite duration with all other peoples. Still extremist Islamic interpretations are making the most inroads within peaceful Muslim societies. One can be led to believe that no religiously acceptable alternative exists to the Jihadist perspective, since none is truly being provided from within the Islamist world.

Unfortunately, pro-Western secular regimes in the Middle East are often corrupt and repressive toward Islam as a way of life and therefore do not present an alternative for the devout. The average Muslim finds secular regimes offensive, and although he may not be a Jihadist at the outset, he becomes open to such ideals after feeling the threat of foreign and particularly Western influences. Any challenge to the Jihadi, antisemitic, anti-female, anti-Western and xenophobic worldview pressed by Islamist radicals must come from the Koran, which is the ultimate Islamic source. The West can only provide a partial solution through secularization, material well-being and the temporary military containment of Jihadism. None of these efforts alter basic understandings within Islam, but rather they lead to increased conflict. In times of societal stress, Jihadism will return unless an Islamic theological solution is provided at its source. Only a reformed pluralistic Islam, accepting of other world cultures and religions can defeat Jihadism. The winner of the ideological battle in the arena of Islamic thinking today will be the policy makers in tomorrow's Muslim states. Change must come from within, through a victory of the reformers.

The solution lies in reinstating and highlighting the previously abrogated conciliatory or positive Koranic verses toward Jews, Christians and others. Using the same tools, warlike interpretations must be downplayed, ignored and finally nullified or abrogated. Conflict resolution must begin with the Muslim recognition of the rights of the Jewish People to life and equality. Viewed universally, we are not speaking of a narrow nationalist conflict between Palestinians and Israelis in the eyes of diocentric, devout Muslims. The conflict is perceived as a global zero-sum game, one with Islam pitted against Judaism and world Jewry only as a first step. The true struggle continues with the subjugation of all humanity. For the Jihadists, the Jews must be destroyed and the world subjected to Islamic rule (see Chapter II on "Ideologues" sub text on Sayyid Qutb).

Chronologically, the earlier chapters written in the Koran are favorable toward the Israelites/Jews. They date from the early period of Mohammed's

revelations from 610-624 CE, prior to the outright Jewish rejection of Mohammed as a prophet. Originally Mohammed and his followers prayed toward Jerusalem and sought alliances with the Arabian Jewish tribes. Only after his disappointments in dealing with the Jews did the early Muslims become anti-Jewish (see Chapter I “Negative Image of the Jew in the Arab Muslim word”). Yet the Koran remained ambivalent and positive statements toward the Jews were neither edited nor removed. Even in the later chapters there are reminders of previous positive insights of Allah’s relationship with the Israelites/Jews. To re-emphasize my argument, the abrogation clause is fully relevant, allowing for human interpretation and intervention to be achieved through either conflict/conquest or reconciliation. In particular regarding Hamas and its *Covenant*, today’s Muslims face a dilemma when making a choice between war and peace with the Jewish People, whether in Israel or in the Diaspora. The Islamic world can choose peace, reinforcing such a policy decision with verses from the Koran.

Positive Attitudes Toward Israelites/Jews in the Koran⁵

Islamic Endorsement of the Israelite Covenant at Sinai

If previous Islamic scholars decided on Jihad and battle against the People of the Book while eliminating all positive mention of them in the Koran, today’s Islamic scholars can decide against Jihad and subjugation of the People of the Book in favor of conflict resolution based on Koranic passages, in particular the pro-Jewish, pro-Sinai covenant verses. One may ask why this was not done. One reason is that Jews were seen in a negative light; to acknowledge the legitimacy of Jewish nationalism in the Middle Eastern heartland is to deny a 1,400 year-old tradition. Israel, Jews and the West continue playing convenient scapegoat roles when Muslims seek answers in connection with their own societal dysfunctions. In traditional Islam supporting or defending the Jews would be akin to treason. It would involve a significant change in perspective, but Israel’s existence today, after numerous wars, could be interpreted as the realization of Divine will.

The Israelite Exodus from Egypt plays a major role in the Koran, and is mentioned numerous times in many contexts. Most often the Koran follows the *Tanakhic* (Hebrew Scriptures or Old Testament) narrative closely, both in its positive and critical attitudes toward the Children of Israel. For instance, the Koranic verses 10:90-93, 28:43-49, 46:12, 45:16-17 and 2:122 are positive as shown below:

⁵ All quotes are taken from the Penguin Classics *The Koran* with translation and notes by N. J. Dawood, reprinted in 1977. Here the Koran’s chapters or suras obviously retain their original numbering but are organized in chronological order.

We led the Israelites across the sea, and Pharaoh and his legions pursued them with wickedness and hate. But as he was drowning, Pharaoh cried: 'Now I believe that there is no god save the God in whom the Israelites believe. To Him I give up myself.'

'Now you believe!' Allah replied. 'but before this you were a rebel and a wrongdoer. We shall save your body this day, so that you may become a sign to all posterity: for most men give no heed to Our signs.'

We settled the Israelites in a blessed land and provided them with good things. Nor did they disagree among themselves until knowledge was given them. Your Lord will judge their differences on the Day of Resurrection (Koran 10:90-93).

The Egyptians drown when pursuing the Israelites after Moses split the Red (Reed) Sea as recounted in much greater detail in the Book of Exodus Chapter 14. Allah then "settled the Israelites in a blessed land" the reference being to the "Promised Land" or "Land of Canaan" and later referred to as the "Land of Israel." Entering the Promised Land corresponds to the Book of Joshua in the Hebrew Bible.

Continuing onward, there are the parallels of the holiness of God's word as revealed in both the Torah⁶ and the Koran as quoted below:

And after we had destroyed the previous generations We gave Moses the Scriptures as a clear testimony, a guide and a blessing for men, so that they might give thought.

You [Mohammed] were not present on the western side of the Mountain when We charged Moses with his commission, nor did you witness the event. We raised many generations after him whose lives We prolonged. You did not dwell among the people of Midian, nor did you recite to them Our revelations; for We sent forth to them other apostles.

You were not present on the Mountain-side when We called out to Moses. Yet We have sent you forth as a blessing from

⁶ Torah is the term used for the first five books of the Hebrew Scriptures or "*Tanakh*." Other terms for Torah include the Pentateuch or the Five Books of Moses. It is here the Israelite Exodus from Egypt is recounted.

your Lord to forewarn a nation to whom no apostle has been sent before, so that they may take heed and may not say, when evil befalls them on account of their misdeeds: 'Lord, had You sent us an apostle, we should have obeyed your revelations and believed in them.'

And now that they have received from Us the truth they ask: 'Why is he not given the like of what was given to Moses?' But do they not deny what was given to Moses? They say: 'Two works [the Torah and the Koran] of magic supporting one another!' And they declare: 'We will believe in neither of them' (Koran 28:43-49).

God gave Moses the Scriptures, or Torah, on Mount Sinai. The Koran makes clear Mohammed was "not present on the Mountain-side when We called out to Moses." Revelation was first given to the Children of Israel through Moses well before Mohammed appeared on the scene. In Judaism the "Sinai motif" is particularly significant as Divine revelation is not only awarded to an individual such as Moses or the Patriarchs before him, but rather is passed down as a mass event obligating the entire People of Israel.

Allah sent Mohammed "to forewarn a nation to whom no apostle has been sent before." He is the Messenger to the Arabs, many of whom did not follow him. Rather the pagan Arabs declared their disbelief that both the Torah and the Koran were revealed from God. Mohammed insisted the Koran was the Muslim interpretation of the Torah verses. The same pagan deniers condemned both the Torah and the Koran as "two works of magic supporting one another!" And next:

Yet before it [the Koran] the Book of Moses was revealed, a guide and a blessing to all men. This Book confirms it. It is revealed in the Arabic tongue to forewarn the wrongdoers and to give good news to the righteous (Koran 46:12).

The Torah was received before the Koran and once again there is a positive correlation between these two Divinely revealed texts. The awarding of the Koran to the Arabs is compared with the giving of Torah at Sinai, both monumental events in the annals of humankind according to the above Koranic verse. To make clear the importance of the "Sinai motif," the Children of Israel have been "exalted" above the other nations as seen below in verses 45:16-17 and 2:122:

We gave the Scriptures to the Israelites and bestowed on them wisdom and prophethood. We provided them with good things and exalted them above the nations. We gave them plain commandments: yet it was not till knowledge had been vouchsafed them that they disagreed among themselves from evil motives. On the Day of Resurrection your Lord Himself will judge their differences (Koran 45:16-17).

Children of Israel, remember that I have bestowed favours upon you and exalted you above the nations. Fear the day when every soul shall stand alone: when neither intercession nor ransom shall be accepted from it, nor any help be given it (Koran 2:122).

The Israelites were given the Scriptures, prophecy, wisdom and the commandments. Although disagreements erupted among the Israelites themselves, often due to “evil motives,” it is not the place of men to judge them.

Allah will judge them on the Day of Resurrection.

The recognition that Allah “exalted them above the nations,” is clear reference to the definition of the Hebrew “*sgula*,” meaning a “treasure” or “virtuous” people as recounted in Exodus 19:5. The Israelites were chosen and chose to accept the covenant with God. In essence, by using the Israelite example, Allah is urging the Arabs to accept his covenant with them through the Koran. This Islamic covenant recognizes the agreement between the Israelites and Allah, and does not nullify it or allow for human judgment as for whether the Israelites are adhering to their part of the agreement or keeping God’s laws.

Here is a further emphasis on the firm connection between the previous revelation of the Torah to the Israelites and the new revelation of the Koran to the Arabs, as recounted in 40:53-54, 29:46 and 32:23-25.

We gave Moses Our guidance and the Israelites the Book to inherit: a guide and an admonition to men of understanding. Therefore have patience; Allah’s promise is true (Koran 40:53-54).

Be courteous when you argue with the People of the Book, except with those among them who do evil. Say: ‘We believe in that which is revealed to us and which was revealed to you. Our God and your God is one. To Him we surrender ourselves’ (Koran 29:46).

We gave the Scriptures to Moses (never doubt that you [Mohammed] will meet him) and made it a guide for the Israelites. And when they grew steadfast and firmly believed in Our revelations, We appointed leaders from among them who gave guidance at Our bidding. On the Day of Resurrection your Lord will resolve for them their differences (Koran 32:23-25).

The Israelites received the “Book” or Torah as a guide, just as at a later time Muslims received the Koran to show them the correct direction. Muslims believe Allah is the same God of Israel, and are obligated to accept the Israelite Torah in addition to their own holy scriptures, the Koran. Honest disagreements between Jews and Muslims must be dealt with in a courteous manner, showing the proper respect. Once again, should the Israelites disagree among themselves, “On the Day of Resurrection your Lord will resolve for them their differences.” As mentioned above, it is Allah’s domain to judge or settle disagreements among the Israelites, by inference adherents of Islam have no part in God’s relationship with the Jews.

Upon accepting the Torah and sealing the covenant at Sinai, the trek continues with both blessings and aid from God alongside His condemnation of the Israelite failure to fully show faith. The Koranic quotes below are in tandem with the account given in the Torah.

Children of Israel! We delivered you from your enemies and made a covenant with you on the right flank of the Mountain. We sent down manna and quails for you. ‘Eat the wholesome things with which We have provided you and do not transgress, lest you should incur My wrath, We said. He that incurs My wrath shall assuredly be lost, but he that repents and believes in Me, does good works and follows the right path, shall be forgiven. But, Moses, why have you come with such haste from your people?’

Moses replied: ‘They are close behind me. I hastened to You so that I might earn Your pleasure’ (Koran 20:80-84).

Next we will read Koranic scripture verifying full Muslim acceptance of the “covenant” between God (Allah) and the Children of Israel. The covenant promises the Land of Israel, or Canaan, to the Israelites. The covenant was first made with Abraham, then Isaac, and Jacob, until it was solidified at Mount Sinai not only with Moses, but with all of the Children of

Israel. The covenant is everlasting as God (Allah) does not go back on His word.

Bear in mind the words of Moses to his people. He said: 'Remember, my people, the favours which Allah has bestowed upon you. He has raised up prophets among you, made you kings, and given you that which he has given to no other nation. Enter, my people, the holy land which Allah has assigned for you. Do not turn back, or you shall be ruined.'

'Moses,' they replied, 'a race of giants dwells in this land. We will not set foot in it till they are gone. Only then shall we enter.' Thereupon two God-fearing men whom Allah had favoured said: 'Go in to them through the gates, and when you have entered you shall surely be victorious. In Allah put your trust, if you are true believers.'

But they replied, 'Moses, we will not go in so long as they are in it. Go, you and your Lord, and fight. We will stay here.'

'Lord,' cried Moses, 'I have none but myself and my brother. Do not confound us with these wicked people.'

He replied: 'They shall be forbidden this land for forty years, during which time they shall wander homeless on the earth. Do not grieve for these wicked people' (Koran 5:20-26).

This story is similar to the one it claims to recount in the Torah, found in Numbers 13-14, though it is greatly abridged. The twelve tribal leaders were sent to spy out the land, only two, Joshua and Caleb came back with a good report. The other ten had no confidence of victory when entering "the holy land which Allah has assigned for you," to quote the Koran. As punishment, the Israelites were then forced to wander in the desert for forty years before entering the Land. During that time the older defeatist generation would die out and be replaced by those born in freedom.

Israel and the Promised Land in the Koran

Continuing onward, not only are we reminded of the destruction of Pharaoh's forces in the Red (Reed) Sea, but the Israelites are instructed to live in the appointed land. There is a continuation of the promise, or covenant, as it is prophesied all of Israel will assemble together in the Promised Land in the "hereafter," - meaning an "ingathering of the Exiles"

at the End of Days and in the afterlife as related in Koran Chapter 17 “The Night Journey” paralleling Exodus 30:5 in the *Tanakh* or Hebrew Scriptures.⁷

Pharaoh sought to scare them out of the land: but We drowned him, together with all who were with him. Then We said to the Israelites: ‘Dwell in this land. When the promise of the hereafter comes to be fulfilled, We shall assemble you all together’ (Koran 17:103-104).

And then, as quoted below in Chapter 7 the persecuted Israelites were rewarded “dominion over the eastern and western lands which We had blessed,” a clear reference to the Holy Land both east and west of the Jordan River, thereby fulfilling the word of the Lord.

We gave the persecuted people dominion over the eastern and western lands which We had blessed. Thus your Lord’s gracious word was fulfilled for the Israelites, because they had endured with fortitude; and we destroyed the edifices and towers of Pharaoh and his people (Koran 7:137).

And finally there are the initial passages in the “Night Journey” Chapter 17 discussing the First and Second Temples in Jerusalem, both of which were destroyed, the former by the Babylonians and the latter by the Romans. This is the solid affirmation in the Koran of the existence of both sanctuaries.

Glory be to Him who made His servants go by night from the Sacred Temple to the Farther Temple whose surroundings We have blessed, that We might show him some of Our signs. He alone hears all and observes all.

We gave Moses the Scriptures and made them a guide for the Israelites, saying: ‘Take no other guardian than Myself. You are the descendants of those whom We carried in the Ark with Noah. He was a truly thankful servant.’

‘Twice you shall commit evil in the land. You shall become great transgressors’.

⁷ The Hebrew Scriptures or “*Tanakh*” used for references and quotes are from *The Jerusalem Bible*, English text revised and edited by Harold Fisch, published by Koren Publishers Jerusalem, Ltd., Jerusalem, 1969.

And when the prophecy of your transgression came to be fulfilled, We sent against you a formidable army which ravaged your land and carried out the punishment with which you had been threatened.

Then We granted you victory over them and multiplied your riches and your descendants, so that once again you became a numerous people. We said: 'If you do good, it shall be to your own advantage; but if you do evil, you shall sin against your own souls.'

And when the prophecy of your second transgression came to be fulfilled, We sent another army to afflict you and to enter the Temple as the former entered it before, utterly destroying all that they laid their hands on.

We said: 'Allah may yet be merciful to you. If you again transgress, you shall again be scourged. We have made Hell a prison-house for the unbelievers.'

This Koran will guide men to that which is most upright. It promises the believers who do good works a rich reward, and threatens those who deny the life to come with a grievous scourge (Koran 17:1-10).

Mohammed made his "Night Journey" from the Sacred Temple (Mecca) to the Farther Temple (understood to be Jerusalem) thereby connecting the two in holiness according to the first verse. The central narrative of ancient Israelite-Jewish history followed immediately, as noted above. Moses received the Scriptures and the covenant at Sinai. The Israelites arrived in the Land and built the Temple, only to see it destroyed twice, due to evils committed by the people. This is perfectly in line with Jewish understanding. The First Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians and rebuilt after the return from exile as noted in the *Tanakh* - Books of Ezra and Nehemiah, while the Second Temple was destroyed by Rome and never rebuilt. The Muslim Dome of the Rock was erected on the site of the Temples and stands to this day; however, the Koran never mentions Jerusalem by name. The Koranic claim of a prophecy concerning the destruction of both the Temples is not found in the *Tanakh* or Hebrew Scriptures, although the destruction of the First Temple is recounted. The Koran speaks of such prophecies, but

for sure well after the fact since the Koran was compiled only in the seventh and eighth centuries CE.⁸

What is significant, and in line with reward and punishment, is found in the fifth Book of Moses, or in the Torah, “Deuteronomy” Chapters 4-11 and 28. The Koran reaffirms this perspective in the last verses of the above quote. With righteousness there is a full redemption for the Israelite descendants as seen below in Deuteronomy 30:1-5.

And it shall come to pass when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, into which the Lord thy God has driven thee, and what return to the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; that then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, amongst whom the Lord thy God has scattered thee. If thy outcasts be at the utmost parts of the heaven, from there will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from there will he fetch thee: and the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee more than thy fathers.

The choice between good and evil continues to be laid out before the Israelites in the next few verses, Deuteronomy 30:6-20, with the people being given free will. To reiterate, the promise of resurrection for the Israelites/Jews in Deuteronomy 30:5 and a return to the Promised Land is reinforced by the Koran 17:103-104 as quoted previously. Righteousness is to be rewarded and evil will be punished. The Koran fully concurs in 17:10 (above) and adds the need for rabbinic guidance below in Koran 5:44.

There is guidance and there is light, in the Torah which We have revealed. By it the prophets who surrendered themselves to Allah judged the Jews, and so did the rabbis and the divined; they gave judgment according to Allah’s scriptures which had

⁸ The Christian Scriptures (New Testament) discuss the prophecy of Temple's destruction, however there are numerous disagreements as to when these were recorded in the Gospels or even when the Gospels were written—before or after 70 CE. Such a discussion is beyond the scope of this work.

been committed to their keeping and to which they themselves were witnesses (Koran 5:44).

Allah judges the Jewish People by their adherence to Torah. The prophets, rabbis and Divined surrendered themselves to the Torah. When viewing modern Israel it certainly would appear that the Zionist leadership over the past century or so provided the correct guidance as the State of Israel was established in the Land of Israel through a Jewish return to the Holy Land. When considering the numerous above quotes the Israelites/Jews are keeping the covenant both according to the Torah and the Koran. The re-establishment of Jewish sovereignty in the Land of Israel can be taken as proof that the Jews have found favor with Allah.

More Exodus narratives exist in Koranic verses 20:9-94, 7:103-160 and 2:47-63, although they do not strictly follow the *Tanakh*. Koranic recollections concerning the Israelite prophets as well as Kings David and Solomon are found in Koran 38:17-35 and 27:15-44.

These texts bring forth the question: how can a believing Muslim deny Allah's involvement in physically redeeming the Jews in their ancient homeland, the Land of Israel, today in the modern period? The Jews must have been righteous to earn redemption and an "Ingathering of the Exiles," otherwise Allah would not allow for such an eventuality as He is by definition in Islam, the ultimate "Good."

Changing Islamic Attitudes Toward Christians and Christianity

Although not discussed in depth in the previous chapters, the Koranic perspective toward Christianity is also ambivalent. Christianity is under attack due to the doctrine of the Trinity, and deemed as less than monotheistic. Jesus is seen in a positive light, a prophet or holy man, but certainly not as the Son of God. Like the Jews, Christians are People of the Book and all restrictions directed by the Charter of Omar, payment of the *jizya* tax from Koran 9:29 and Jihadi exhortations apply. Because Christianity was virtually non-existent in the Arabian Peninsula during the seventh century, the early Muslims had little contact and no wars with Christians until after Mohammed's death in 632. The Arab invasion of the Byzantine Empire marked the beginning of the clash with Christendom. The early affinity, admiration and respect shown for the Children of Israel/Jews were not extended to the Christians. On the other hand, the direct clash and feeling of betrayal Mohammed and the early Muslims felt toward the Jews after the Battle of the Trench in defense of Medina have no corresponding historical event in the Muslim-Christian relationship. With Christianity, Muslims have less identification and reduced disappointment.

In the end Christians and Jews were grouped together as People of the Book, but the most intense positive and then reactive negative feelings were reserved for the Jews. From both sides of the spectrum these same emotions were greatly moderated toward Christians, making the ambivalence less sharp but extant nonetheless. Negative stereotypes began with the Jews and were later passed on in a more subliminal manner to the Christians. Any Jewish rehabilitation based on Koranic verses will certainly aid the Muslim relationship with Christendom. Add to this an emphasis on positive comments from the Koran and the same nullification or abrogation will work to the benefit of Christians as well as Jews.

As discussed above, negative comments about Christians in general revolve around the Islamic rejection of the Christian belief that Jesus is the Messiah and Allah is only one part of the Trinity; see examples below in the Koran Chapter 4 and two quotes from Chapter 5:

People of the Book, do not transgress the bounds of your religion. Speak nothing but the truth about Allah. The Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary, was no more than Allah's apostle and His Word which He cast to Mary: a spirit from Him. So believe in Allah and His apostles and do not say: 'Three.' Forbear, and it shall be better for you. Allah is but one God. Allah forbid that He should have a son! His is all that the heavens and the earth contain. Allah is the all-sufficient Protector. The Messiah does not disdain to be a servant of Allah, nor do the angels who are nearest to him. Those who through arrogance disdain His service shall all be brought before Him (Koran 4:171-172).

Unbelievers are those who declare; 'Allah is the Messiah, the son of Mary.' Say: 'Who could prevent Allah from destroying the Messiah, the son of Mary, together with his mother and all the people of the earth? His is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and all that lies between them. He creates what He will and has power over all things' (Koran 5:17).

Unbelievers are those that say: 'Allah is the Messiah, the son of Mary.' For the Messiah himself said: 'Children of Israel, serve Allah, my Lord and your Lord.' He that worships other gods besides Allah shall be forbidden Paradise and shall be cast into the fire of Hell. None shall help the evil-doers.

Unbelievers are those that say: 'Allah is one of Three.' There is but one God. If they do not desist from so saying, those of them that disbelieve shall be sternly punished (Koran 5:72-73).

In addition, verses 17:111, 18:1-5, 19:88-92 and others admonish Christians for believing Allah has a son. However, there are also positive comments about Christians, in particular Muslim theological support for belief in the Gospels. This does raise a contradictory point, however, since the Gospels are the basis of the Christian claim that Jesus was and is the Messiah. On the other hand, such a juxtaposition of two opposites coming from Allah in holy writ may allow for some form of acceptance of the Christian understanding of Jesus' Messianic role. Allah can never be wrong therefore there must be some validity to the New Testament claim that Jesus is the Christ, born of a human mother, the Virgin Mary. See the quotes below from Koranic Chapters 5, 3 and 6:

If the People of the Book accept the true faith and keep from evil, We will pardon them their sins and admit them to the gardens of delight. If they observe the Torah and the Gospel and what is revealed to them from Allah, they shall be given abundance from above and from beneath (Koran 5:65-66).

The need to "observe" the Torah and Gospel is repeated again in 5:68. Jews and Christians can receive their just reward if they follow their Holy Scriptures.

Say: 'We believe in Allah and what is revealed to us; in that which was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael, to Isaac and Jacob and the tribes; and in that which Allah gave Moses and Jesus and the prophets. We discriminate against none of them. To Him We have surrendered ourselves (Koran 3:84).

We gave him [Abraham] Isaac and Jacob and guided them as We guided Noah before them. Among his descendants were David and Solomon, Job and Joseph and Moses and Aaron (thus are the righteous rewarded); Zacharias, John, Jesus and Elias (all are upright men); and Ishmael, Elisha, Jonah and Lot. All these We exalted above Our creatures, as We exalted some of their fathers, their children, and their brothers. We chose them and guided them to a straight path (Koran 6:84-87).

Note that positive comments about Jesus and the Gospels are usually accompanied by accolades for the Torah, the Patriarchs, Hebrew prophets and/ or kings. In 5:82 discussed in earlier chapters Christians may be seen as adversarial, but are looked upon as behaving much better than the Jews. "That is because there are priests and monks among them; and because they are free from pride."

Chapter 19 entitled "Mary" is most important for understanding the Koran's rendition of the birth of Jesus. First John was born to Zacharias as recounted in the Gospels, while simultaneously there is the "annunciation" of the birth of Jesus to the Virgin Mary, as seen in Luke Chapter 1 of the New Testament. In the Koran, Mary gives birth next to the trunk of a palm tree, eats dates and drinks water from a brook; a story not told in the Christian scriptures. She (Mary or Miriam) is also said to be the sister of Aaron, showing confusion between the two separate characters of the Bible. Islamic scholars do not take the verse literally but rather see it as indicating Mary's righteousness. There is no theological clash up to this point, but there is afterward as recounted in 19:34-19:38.

Such was Jesus the son of Mary. That is the whole truth, which they are unwilling to accept. Allah forbid that He Himself should beget a son! When he decrees a thing He need only say: 'Be,' and it is.

Allah is my Lord and your Lord: Therefore serve Him. That is the right path.

Yet the Sects are divided concerning Jesus. But when the fateful day arrives, woe to the unbelievers! Their sight and hearing shall be sharpened on the day when they appear before Us. Truly, the unbelievers are in the grossest error (Koran 19:34-38).

Later in "Mary," verses 19:88-92 emphasize the crime of believing Jesus to be the Son of Allah, "Those who say: 'The Lord of Mercy has begotten a son,' preach a monstrous falsehood, at which the very heavens might crack, the earth break asunder, and the mountains crumble to dust. That they should ascribe a son to the Merciful, when it does not become Him to beget one!"

The issues with Christians in today's world are not only over matters of theology. The continuing battles against Christendom and the West are a continuation of the Muslim invasion of Spain and southern France in 732 and the later penetration through the Balkans with the attempt to capture

Vienna, the last time in the seventeenth century. The Crusader invasion in the Middle Ages is seen as the commencement of the Western onslaught against Islam, continuing into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries and presently resulting in the secularization, and thus weakening of Muslim societies. Islamic Jihadism places itself in never-ending world conflict with the Christian West in what truly can be termed a “Clash of Civilizations,” while the Jews are accused of being involved in eternal conspiracies and subterfuge.

To prevent universal conflict, Muslim leadership must emphasize points of agreement concerning Christianity, in particular the above quotes calling on Christians to adhere to their Gospels. This is somewhat different than finding common ground with the Jews and the Sinai motif, the covenant and the centrality of the Land of Israel. A Koranic argument can be made for the covenant and Jewish claim to the Land of Israel while the Gospels are Allah’s word, even if Jesus is not considered the Messiah.

Non-Western, Non-Abrahamic Faiths

Finding common ground with polytheists, atheists and idolaters is much more difficult for Muslims than finding a shared understanding with Jews and Christians. Non-Western, non-Abrahamic faiths are often viewed only in a negative light. Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism and other Eastern religions and philosophies are not mentioned in the Koran. The attitude toward them as non-believers is adversarial. Still, one quote exists which may be helpful. In verse 2:256 the Koran begins, “There shall be no compulsion in religion.” This verse is extremely useful in nullifying Jihad against the non-Abrahamic faiths, even though idol worship is condemned in the immediate following lines of 2:256, “True guidance is now distinct from error. He that renounces idol worship and puts his faith in Allah shall grasp a firm handle that will never break. Allah hears all and knows all.” And then these non-believers are condemned to hell.

The question arises as to what are “faith in Allah” and the definition of “idol worship?” If Islamic jurists determine “faith in Allah” as belief in the same one central power of creation of all beings, then this definition would prove to be inclusive of a great number of religions and philosophies. With an acceptance of Jews and Christians as legitimate equals, such a moderate and liberal understanding may be projected upon other groups as well. Unfortunately, in earlier centuries, Hindus lived under Muslim rule in the Indian subcontinent for hundreds of years and in many cases suffered

miserably.⁹ There is further support for a tolerant position if one engages in “*ijtihad*,” defined as Islamic independent thinking or reasoning. Such use of *ijtihad* is demonstrated when considering this passage from Koranic verse 4:135 even if the topic at hand does not refer to those of other faiths:

Believers, conduct yourselves with justice and bear true witness before Allah, even though it be against yourselves, your parents, or your kinsfolk. Whether the man concerned be rich or poor, know that Allah is nearer to him than you are. Do not be led by passion, lest you should swerve from the truth. If you distort your testimony or refuse to give it, know that Allah is cognizant of all your actions.

According to the self-proclaimed Muslim “*refusenik*” Irshad Manji and Professor Khaleel Mohammed, the above verse can be universal in the acceptance of others.¹⁰ Lest one forget, Allah metes out punishment in the next world, as noted below, and if the Prophet Mohammed’s task “is only to give warning” then any demand to conduct Jihad due to religious differences is neutralized.

Know that Allah is stern in retribution, and that He is forgiving and merciful. The duty of the Apostle [Mohammed] is only to give warning. Allah knows all that you hide and all that you reveal (Koran 5:98-99).

He knows the visible and the unseen. He is the Mighty One, the Merciful, who excelled in making of all things (Koran 32:6-7).

Although not particularly explicit, one finds non-coercive and conciliatory verses toward all humanity in the Koran, where each individual has his own reckoning before Allah. Allah created everyone and everything, meaning the

⁹ For numerous examples, see Bostom, Andrew, (ed.), *The Legacy of Jihad: Islamic Holy War and the Fate of Non-Muslims*, Prometheus Books, Amherst, New York, USA, 2005.

¹⁰ Manji, Irshid, *The Trouble with Islam Today*, 2003, St. Martin’s Griffin, New York, 2003, Introduction by Khaleel Mohammed and p. 1.

Irshid Manji, quote on p. 3, “I am a Muslim Refusenik. That doesn’t mean I refuse to be a Muslim; I refuse to join an army of automatons in the name of Allah. I take this phrase from the original refuseniks - Soviet Jews who championed religious and personal freedom... Over time, though, their persistent refusal to comply with the mechanisms of mind control and soullessness helped end a totalitarian system.”

entire world. He is infallible and therefore His creations are excellent, but humans must choose the correct direction. This begs the question: what mortal has the right to judge another, whether he is Muslim or not? Islamic attitudes toward the People of the Book can be quite accepting while the attitudes toward the non-Abrahamic religions need not be hostile.

Decision Making in Political Islam and Hamas

Whether Islamic jurists decide to advocate for Jihad or decide in favor of universal peace and acceptance of other religions and philosophies is the central question today. For believers, decisions about interacting with the world are seen as dictates or inspiration from Allah, but in reality these decisions are simply policy determination and implementation. War or peace is the choice of Islamic leadership throughout the world. As can be seen, both options exist in the Koran. Ultimately Muslims will have to resolve if they desire eternal Jihad, or if Islam is willing to take its place as one of the world's peace-loving religions. To avoid physical conflict, Muslims interested in attracting new adherents must follow a policy of persuasion, not coercion. Irshad Manji explains that Muslims have free will to interpret the Koran, a text "at war with itself" due to its never-ending contradictions. As she puts it, "The decisions that Muslims make are ours alone. They cannot be laid at God's feet."¹¹ Such a broad statement refers to attitudes toward Jews, Christians, pagans, women, homosexuality, and, most significantly, world Jihad with dire consequences for everyone if the Holy War option is chosen.

In order to avoid misunderstanding concerning the non-Islamic West, Far East, Russia and many others, it must be made crystal clear to all Muslims that choosing the Jihadi path will only lead to death and destruction on a level comparable to the German–Japanese defeat of World War II. Such a threat will not deter the true Jihadists, but it may very well undermine further support for their cause. Those considering the Jihadi direction may decide on a more moderate path for reasons of self, national and religious preservation. It is in their interest not to have a Jihadi-led society.

Hamas is part of this picture. The antisemitic, Jihadi *Hamas Covenant* is viewed as an alliance with Allah, a sacred document. But if theological emphasis by Koranic commentators can be redirected and parts nullified or abrogated without violating Islamic legal dictates, then *The Hamas Covenant* becomes increasingly irrelevant. Muslims will view Jews and others in a more favorable light and Jihad could become a policy of the past. However not all issues will be resolved through Islamic abrogation or reinterpretation. Too much of the *Covenant* adopts Czarist and Nazi antisemitism, revealing

¹¹ Ibid. pp. 36-38.

solutions similar to both. A rejection of European antisemitism by Muslim jurists as “foreign” or “in contradiction” to Islam will be necessary. The *Covenant*, also known as the “Charter of Allah,” would become insignificant and ready for burial. First there must be a broadly accepted abrogation of Jihad and discrimination, then in the aftermath the death of *The Hamas Covenant*. Conflict resolution between the Israeli/Jewish People and Palestinians/Muslims will take a giant step forward. Unfortunately such a scenario is quite optimistic and apparently depends more on Western policies in the global struggle against Jihadi Islam than any conscious move by Muslims to change the emphasis to different verses from the Koran.

Western Tolerance of Jihadi Islam

To the Jihadist mindset, the West is weak and has a credibility problem, because it defends Islamist intolerance through its obsession with “multiculturalism.”¹² Multiculturalism is a liberal attitude where everyone shows tolerance for everyone else. The issue is the definition of “tolerance” and its limitations. Tolerance is defined in *Webster’s Dictionary* as “sympathy or indulgence for beliefs or practices differing from or conflicting with one’s own” while “toleration” is defined as “the act of allowing something.”¹³ Such “tolerance” by definition leads to a broad accommodation of everyone else’s culture and beliefs, even if certain people, religions or groups are considered to have customs or encourage behavior considered inferior or completely unacceptable by these same Western rationalist thinkers. We are familiar with the terms “universalism” and “relativism” emanating from the West. Universalism asserts all religions and cultures have shared positive values and behaviors, while relativism insists there are many religions and cultures, each deserving equal respect for their truths. As Manji points out¹⁴ the only tolerance mainstream Islam demands is for itself and not for others. Jihadi Islam is infinitely worse, using understanding and tolerance for its behavior as a weapon against the West.

I will take this a step further. Western scholars identified with the supposedly “liberal” multi-cultural and anti-Orientalist schools can be broken down into two camps. The first are those who demand not only understanding but also support for Jihadi ideals, often defined as some form of “liberation,” while being fully cognizant of the fact that Jihadi Islam has no tolerance for anyone except other Jihadis. In my mind, these intellectuals, who invariably consider themselves “liberal” in their worldviews, are

¹² Ibid. pp. 199.

¹³ “Tolerance,” *Merriam Webster*, retrieved July 9, 2015, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/tolerance>.

¹⁴ In Manji’s work, *The Trouble with Islam Today*, this is the overriding theme.

hypocritical and deceitful, claiming “tolerance,” but believing themselves superior to all others because of their “openness” and denial of moral/ethical boundaries when confronting “evil.” Any such determinations are considered prejudicial value judgments. They rarely condemn the Jihadi demands and actions discussed in this work. These liberal Jihadi sympathizers prefer living in the West, far from such Islamist societies. They are known to make a visit or two to show support. They often explain Jihadi Islam as a reaction to Western imperialism or provocations. Such types in the West forgive Islamist exhortations demanding the destruction and/or subjugation of other people, while excusing brutal behavior as disconnected from Islamist interpretations. This intellectual group does not suffer under the heavy hand of Jihad. They blatantly hide behind the right to freedom of speech and the “liberal” banner while allowing the Islamist program for the destruction of Western civilization, beginning with Israel and quite often Jews in general.¹⁵

In an effort to prevent its own annihilation, the West must avoid situations where it is expected to tolerate and even promote another society’s intolerance—be it Jihadist Islam or any other ideology. If the entire West were to argue for cultural or moral relativism to promote tolerance of Jihadi Islam, the result would be collective suicide.

The second camp are those Western intellectuals who adopt the attitude of a superior father figure, interpreting Jihadist behavior as “posturing,” as if one were dealing with a child who really does not mean what he is saying. These academics hold universalism and relativism in holy esteem. The Islamists’ believe Allah ordains their position, and hence there is no room for negotiation. Yet these Western scholars project their own values onto the Islamic Jihadists, convinced of their own righteousness and superiority, usually of the secular type. They often explain Jihadi demands such as those held by Hamas as negotiating positions.¹⁶ This specific group of scholars

¹⁵ Such pro-Islamist “scholars” include Steven Salaita, Mark LeVine, Asad Abu Khalil, Joseph Massad, Noam Chomsky and John Esposito among others. This group is anti-Western, viciously anti-Israel and in many cases outwardly antisemitic. Through their actions and positions taken in justifying hard-line radical Islamic interpretations, such as those of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas, Hezbollah and extremist Islam, this author believes they have lent credibility to Islamic State atrocities. All these organizations work off the same Sharia law principles including the need for Jihad.

¹⁶ Among these are also the “Mainstream Protestant” churches which deplore the “Palestinian plight” and blame all ills on Israel. In general they also believe in “Replacement Theology,” whereby the Jews and the covenant are replaced by Christianity. Islam has the same ideology replacing Judaism, Christianity and their scriptures. This group adopts a secular, liberal attitude to Arab/Islamic violence;

does not accept or even consider that other people and cultures may think and view the world differently but constantly equate Western and especially Israeli security responses with Jihadi Islamist offensive actions.¹⁷ It is difficult for these Westerners to accept that Islamists truly believe Allah has called them to spread the message of Islam by force if necessary. Enshrining non-violence as a transcendent value, these generally secular, liberal intellectuals are convinced that virtually everyone, including proclaimed Jihadists, do not truly mean to use violence to impose their religion, culture and values. In essence these left wing intellectuals tolerate Jihadi violence while condemning the right of Israel and the West to self defense. Liberal non-violent ideals are completely rejected by Hamas and Jihadi Islam as pertains to their own mode of operation. However Jihadis fully embrace these leftist understandings when demanding full surrender by their non-Muslim victims. Their potential prey is expected to accept a self imposed *dhimmization* or face the wrath of Allah's Jihad. Without using violence or the threat of violence, the Islamists cannot succeed. For Jihadis there are no mistaken civilian casualties, only the intent to destroy and/or subjugate all others. As the ardently secular philosopher Sam Harris makes abundantly clear, tolerance toward Jihadis is immoral.¹⁸ It must be said outright, such "tolerant" liberalism is just one more form of Orientalism where Western scholars view "Easterners" as an "object" and impose their secular, Enlightenment values on the adherents of Islam. Jihadist Islam will only adopt the persuasive approach toward converting others to Islam as a first step when inviting non-Muslims to accept their said-to-be "true religion." Let us recall that to convert out of Islam is punishable by death. Upon refusing the invitation to convert to Islam, coercion through Jihad is the answer (see Chapter II "Ideologues" and Koran 9:4-14). There is no dialogue in Jihadi Islam.

By accepting the "multi-cultural" or "cultural relativist" perspective of the need to accept or even engage with the Jihadi ideals contained in the Muslim Brotherhood-Hamas doctrines we are led to the Islamic State (ISIS/ISIL)

one of forgiveness, especially when perpetrated against Israel. On the other hand, Israel comes in for general condemnation while there is understanding and even outreach toward Hamas and Hezbollah, despite the fact that these organizations do not see Christians as their equals. Other Islamist groups with similar ideals persecute Christians worldwide, the Islamic State being the most extreme example.

¹⁷ Herf, Jeffrey, "A Pro-Hamas Left Emerges," *The American Interest*, retrieved August 5, 2015, <http://www.the-american-interest.com/.../a-pro-hamas-left-emerges>.

In addition see Chapter V of *Hamas Jihad*, and the positions taken by Gunning, Jensen and Nepp as examples.

¹⁸ For a fuller discussion of this issue, see Sam Harris, *The End of Faith*, W.W. Norton, New York, USA, 2004, in particular Chapter 4, "The Problem with Islam."

atrocities. What began as an Islamist ideal will end with its physical implementation. Yes, the road is often indirect and Jihadi outcomes are also influenced by other factors, but these are minimal in comparison to the Jihadi commitment. We must face reality—if the Jihad concept did not exist there would be no Islamic State. Jihad should not be confused with national territorial disagreements, which may erupt in violence but are limited in scope. These do not involve world conquest or extermination of others. Anyone willing to show “understanding,” in the sense of empathy, and engage in dialogue with the non-negotiable demands for Jihad (the *dhimma* status and the forced conversion of infidels) gives legitimacy to Jihadi ideals. Those showing empathy encourage extremism and are accomplices to the crimes committed in the name of Islam through Jihad.

Such “liberal” behavior is akin to the appeasement policies of the British government and especially the Labor party’s efforts at non-judgmental attitudes and even outreach toward Adolf Hitler and the Nazi regime during the 1930s. True pacifists, the British Laborites attempted to take “the moral high ground” against total evil and the ultimate immorality. Often condemning the British and French governments, they tried to fully “understand” the Nazis and even came close to justifying German aggressive actions until the eve of WWII.¹⁹ The existential issue here is that such hypocritical, self-destructive perspectives have a chance of becoming policy in the West today. By taking the supposed moral high ground while invoking rational superiority, this ultra-universalist approach expresses sympathy for dictators, murderers and Jihadist policies following the misguided principle that “no one has the right to judge another.” At best we have a dangerous amoral policy here, lacking all foundations for ethics and morality.

Hence, no moral high ground exists when there are no red lines forbidding wanton murder of pagans/idolaters and for those *dhimmis* allowed a conditional survival to suffer the destruction of their essential human rights, such as freedom and equality. What does exist is a superiority complex and an attempt at secular godliness whereby all are equally loved, cared for and defended regardless of behavior. Appeasement only leads to annihilation at the hands of one’s adversary, or a late realization that battle is unavoidable, as was the case in WWII. If an individual or political party advocated murder or extermination of a group or a society, Westerners would consider it incitement. Yet, when emanating from Islam these demands are not only “understood,” they are included within the acceptable domain of cross-cultural and interfaith exchanges. It takes a group such as the Islamic State

¹⁹ For a more comprehensive rendition of how liberals approach the issue of war see Michael Howard, *War and the Liberal Conscience*, Oxford University Press, England, 1978.

to cause most Westerners to see Jihadist ideals as falling outside the realm of tolerance and multi-cultural dialogue.²⁰ Even here there are exceptions. Unfortunately the viciously anti-Western pro-Islamist said-to-be “scholars” in Middle Eastern studies academia continue to lay all responsibility for Islamic terrorism on the American government and people. Their constant excuses include “workplace” violence, alienation, cultural prejudice and the pressures of Islamophobia against Muslims as catalysts for even the most sadistic, inhuman Islamic State inspired attacks against innocent civilians as was the case in Paris and San Bernardino.²¹ As shown in previous chapters, extremist Islamic behavior is embodied within Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas doctrine, yet the West “tolerates” it. Hence, any dialogue or conversation between the people of the globe and Islam must begin with the demand to jettison Jihadi world conquest and all laws concerning the *dhimma* status. The acceptable avenue to achieve such a change is to engage in “reverse abrogation” and to seek the answers which are found in the Koran.

The United States has been unsuccessfully bogged down battling Jihadi Islam for well over a decade. Washington has few on-the-ground allies in its battles against the Taliban in Afghanistan, and those who support the US send only small troop contingents. Pakistan is at times engaged in operations against the Taliban, yet it does its best to keep America at arm’s length. Many say “collateral damage,” the accidental killing of civilians, within Pakistan exacerbated the rift between Washington and Islamabad. It is well known that Jihadists and Taliban sympathizers who opposed the secular regime of President Zardari infiltrated the Pakistani ISI intelligence service. The rift with the US exists for decades. In 2011, the ISI apparently knew of Osama

²⁰ The Islamic State is regularly dismissed as not representing Islam. The Obama Administration’s policy statements often fall into this mentality. Others dismiss ISIS as “insane.” Europeans are in a dilemma because of successful Islamic State recruitment on their continent and the rising suspicions that such vicious behavior is connected to certain Islamic ideals. Furthermore, the appeal of the Islamic State, al-Qaeda and other fanatical groups is spreading, and not only among Muslim youth. The Paris and the San Bernardino, California attacks in late 2015 may bring a re-evaluation of the situation whereby Western politicians and security officials will be forced to publicly define such extremism as originating from a specific interpretation of Islam. This is yet to be seen as of this writing.

²¹ Stillwell, Cinnamon, “Academia on San Bernardino Attack: No Jihad Here,” *The Middle East Forum: Promoting American Interests*, December 11, 2015, accessed December 29, 2015, <http://www.meforum.org/5712/us-professors-san-bernardino>.

bin Laden's whereabouts long before US Special Forces killed him.²² By 2013, the Islamist-dominated regime led by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif became an even less reliable ally in battling Islamic terrorism. This is a clash of theology and ideology between Islam and the West. Collateral damage is unfortunate, but serves only as an excuse by Islamic regimes, even moderate ones, not to cooperate with the West in curtailing the Jihadists.

Most recently, the supposed success in containing the Iranian march toward nuclear weapons and Middle East domination by the six world powers²³ and the EU only emboldened Tehran and other Islamists to continue their battle against liberal democracy. When the West fails to relay a sharp anti-Jihadi message, it encourages more Jihadi aggression. Unchecked Jihadi ideals lead to their manifestation. With the present July 2015 agreement strongly endorsed by President Obama,²⁴ Iran's nuclear program is said to be on hold for the next decade, but what of their imperial interests throughout the region? Iran projects power through its forces and proxies in Iraq, Syria, Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Houthis in Yemen, despite certain limited new sanctions imposed to halt these activities. With the cancellation of the main body of sanctions due to the nuclear deal, Iran can be expected to fund conflict throughout the Middle East and simultaneously spread Khomeinist ideological demands for the destruction of Israel, the US and eventually the West in general. Military conquest or Jihad goes hand in hand with ideological indoctrination throughout the region. There are those who define American policy fantasies of peace with Iran as "delusions."²⁵ We must be brutally honest, in the long run no one should expect the Iranians to keep their agreement with the West to limit nuclear development.

One only needs to recall the crisis experienced in the 1930s when the Japanese captured Manchuria and the coastal areas of China, while the

²² "Inter-Services Intelligence in Afghanistan," *Wikipedia*, retrieved December 29, 2015,

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inter-Services_Intelligence_activities_in_Afghanistan.

Reidel, Bruce, "Pakistan, Taliban and the Afghan Quagmire," *Brookings Institute*, August 24, 2013, retrieved August 5, 2015,

<http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2013/08/26-pakistan-influence-over-afghan-taliban-riedel>.

²³ The countries involved are the USA, Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany.

²⁴ Whether the agreement with Iran was ever to be ratified by the US Congress was of no real significance. Russia, China, Europe as a whole and the United Nations can all be expected to lift sanctions and do business with Tehran. Tens of billions of dollars will flow into the Iranian economy with or without the US.

²⁵ Karsh, Ephraim, "Obama's Middle East Delusions," *Middle East Quarterly*, Winter 2016, retrieved December 29, 2015,

<http://www.meforum.org/5685/obamamiddle-east-delusions>.

Germans annexed Austria and shortly afterwards the British and French allowed the Nazis to move into Czechoslovakia. Eastern and even Western European countries found themselves under fascist and pro-Nazi regimes. Once German victories were consolidated, governments in Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria allied themselves with Hitler against the Soviet Union. In France, the pro-Nazi Vichy regime opposed the British and Americans. Such fanaticism was and is contagious. In the end, the Allies were victorious, but not before the massive destruction incurred during World War II and the Holocaust. The cost was enormous for all states involved, in particular Imperial Japan and Nazi Germany.

Such a war must only be a last resort. It involves the complete defeat of the previous society in a “total war” whereby the devastation is so overwhelming the erstwhile power elite and their ideals become discredited beyond rehabilitation. The victors then impose their values and way of life on the defeated. World suffering would have been reduced dramatically had Nazi and Japanese Imperial ideologies been discredited from the outset. Unfortunately the West chose “tolerance” and the policy of “appeasement.” Throughout the post-war years of 1945-90, capitalist democracy flourished in West Germany and, before reunification, Stalinist communism dominated the East. After Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan was relegated back to the beginnings of democratic government under American tutelage. Thanks to the Marshall Plan for Europe and reconstruction projects in the Far East, Japanese and German “militarism” were converted into the obsession to rebuild their economies, most specifically in the construction of industrial might. All this occurred only in utter defeat when no options remained.

World Islam may very well face the prospect of total destruction should Jihadism win the day. Devastation would ensue, but none can promise the rebuilding of those societies. For years the West had serious disagreements over coordinating sanctions policy against President Ahmedinejad and the Ayatollah regime in Iran, despite the clear evidence pointing to the Iranian development of nuclear weapons and the continuing threat to exterminate the State of Israel and dominate the Persian Gulf. For twelve years, there were sanctions and although there is now an agreement the question is, who truly trusts Tehran to hold up its part of the bargain? The recently elected “moderate” President Rouhani and extreme right wing Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei continue to make clear the Iranian intent to keep all nuclear facilities and mobilize for Israel’s obliteration. Unfortunately, the mere act of negotiating with Iran recognizes and even legitimizes the Iranian theological demand for Israel’s obliteration and world Shiite Islamic domination. The West faces a dilemma in deciding whether to increase sanctions, not knowing whether Iran is a potential friend or continuing foe. As of this writing, the

world powers have decided to work with Iran and hope to curtail Tehran's plans for regional domination.

Due to the high cost in lives lost and mangled, societal disruption and material damage, it is best not to become entangled in wars to contain Jihadi Islam. However, the military option must always remain on the table. No doubt a preferable approach is to foster the rise of a moderate Islam based on interpretation emphasizing the Koran's conciliatory verses toward Jews, Christians and, by extension, the world. Many will dismiss the idea of moderate Islam as wildly unrealistic or, at best, overly optimistic. Yet it defies logic to avoid the internal conflict within Islam while simultaneously applying external pressure to induce change. Most importantly, Muslims themselves must be convinced that a peaceful resolution of their conflicts with the West is the only way to a better future for themselves. Muslims must ask themselves why Islam is in such crisis worldwide. Are they defying Allah's will through the previous abrogations in Islam? Working within Islamic interpretation is not a Western cultural *jahili* invasion, but rather an authentic way to arrive at a *modus vivendi* to guarantee the survival of all peoples and religions, including Islam. With the continually expanding disasters upending the Islamic world, Muslims need to ask themselves whether some form of "reverse abrogation" may be an acceptable answer to their woes.

Yisrael Ne'eman teaches courses on Israel, Jewish History and the Middle East at the International Schools in the University of Haifa and the Technion.