



# Remembering Uzza

If Islam was explained to me in a pub

Bernard Payeur

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V. 1

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## Front Cover

Assume that the ragged outline of a saxophone player within the silhouette is that of a man playing a mournful melody. The highly stylized face is from a public domain photograph of RCMP veteran Corporal Catherine Galliford.

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## Dedication

On Crescent Street in Montréal there is a two story building with two spacious outdoor balconies. One is an extension of a well-appointed restaurant which takes up the entire top floor; the other, an extension of the first floor Cheers-like bar, only bigger. Beneath it all is a night club where disco went to die and found a new lease on life.

The building, the restaurant, the bar and the disco is called *Thursdays*, or in French "Les Beaux Jéudis," but even its French clientele call it *Thursdays*. *Thursdays* is where I met her.

It was late Tuesday night and the place was not very busy. It was not because it was Tuesday at *Thursdays*. *Thursdays* was usually a party every night of the week, but there was a raging snow storm outside. I was nursing my second gin and tonic when she walked in, the most stunning black woman I had ever seen.

There was the white of her eyes as they searched the semi-darkness that separated her from me; there was her long braided black hair that swung back and forth as she made her way to the bar where I was sitting.

My grateful eyes took in that body with nothing but curves wrapped in a short, tight, white satin-like dress covered with a white mesh-like material that ended in fringes that brushed against and stroked her skin as she walked.

She sat down two stools to my left and crossed her legs, exposing a muscular black-as-coal thigh straining against the white mesh.

Her dress was square cut along the top with only the crest of her ample, perfectly round breasts showing – so close together that you couldn't have slipped a piece of paper between them.

It was only a matter of time before our eyes met, and when they did, I said hi, she said hello. I said bonjour, she said bonsoir. She asked if she could move closer. I said *bien sur*.

She spoke near-perfect French, not that high-pitched, hysterical, pretentious French spoken by Parisian snobs and garçons de café, but a happy, melodious French, not unlike in tone to the English that you might hear on a beach in Jamaica.

With so few of us in the bar the DJ didn't mind, after I slipped him a few dollars, playing a few tunes from my disco days. I asked her if she

would join me on one of *Thursdays'* two dance floors. She chose the one with the disco ball and the circular rotating platform.

I couldn't dance then and still can't, but that was okay, she did enough dancing for the both of us. I was quite happy just to stand there shuffling my feet and watching her.

She danced wildly, she danced gracefully, she danced seductively, moving around the entire space, never taking her eyes off me.

Eventually, still swaying her hips in that sensual sideways motion with just a hint of back and forth action, she moved closer and closer until she was close enough to wrap her hands around the back of my neck and thrust those hips forward so hard that I thought she might have broken something.

When it was time to leave, I offered to walk her to her car. The snow had really piled up. My hotel was just across the street. She asked if she could park her car in the underground parking lot of the Chateau Royale and spend the night. I agreed.

I think it was when we were alone in the elevator that she mentioned that if we got to know each other better, there would be a price to pay. The relationship would evolve, but not that way.

I wanted to know about the world she left behind. I remember the first time I asked her about her home in Africa. We were having dinner at *Thursdays'* second floor restaurant, outside, on the patio, on a warm summer evening. I wanted to hear about the lions, the tigers, the tropical rainforest, the endless summers...

She laughed. Her country was not like that at all. It was dirt roads, arid dusty fields, no wildlife to speak of and, as far as the tropical forest was concerned, there was almost none left.

At other times, not that night, she talked about her family. Her father and mother remained in Africa. She hinted at a relationship that seems to have been her prime motivator in immigrating to Canada and that was to escape a marriage in the Islamic tradition, which she once described as "god-sanctioned rape."

*Remembering Uzza* is dedicated to that young woman from Africa whom I met one snowy night almost twenty years ago who inspired me to go on a voyage of discovery of a religion like no other. The story told here is the culmination of that journey where I imagine her spending an evening in a bar in conversation with patrons talking about what I have learned.

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## A Mournful Acknowledgment

I fondly remember André as my harshest critic and, if *Remembering Uzza* gains a respectable audience share, he will also prove to be the most insightful. We had a falling-out because of some unfortunate remark I made about him being insensitive, which he wasn't, to my wife's difficult journey. As fate would have it, he lost his adored Diane to cancer almost a year before my Lucette left me.

He said he gave up on *Pain, Pleasure and Prejudice* because of all the verses that kept interrupting the narrative. Couldn't I find a way, he said, of telling the story without all the interruptions? Put the verses in an index of some sort at the end of the book, he suggested, and let the reader decide if he wants to know more by going to the source.

At the time, I thought what he was suggesting betrayed a lack of understanding of what was involved.

In August of 2018, Lucette and I moved into a residence where I could provide her with the near constant supervision that her deteriorating lung condition now required and to be with her when the time came. Watching over her was a pleasure which left me free to do other things.

Her knowledge, dedication, intellectual honesty and affection made *Pain, Pleasure and Prejudice*, and everything that came after, possible. Could we do it again, one last time?

She was more than okay with my trying to give form to André's vision. Half-joking, I said she could not leave me until we had completed the first full draft. Two days after it became clear to her that that milestone had been reached, she called the number that was given to her when she was approved for assisted dying and said she was ready. A few days later, on Friday the fifth of July at two in the afternoon, we said our last goodbye.

Thank you, André, for your inspired suggestion. And thank you my beloved Lucette for helping me see it through; all kindness, serenity and love to the very end.

*Bernard*

August 26, 2019

## Foreword

*Remembering Uzza* is meant to make learning about Islam a mostly pleasant experience while not sugar-coating or leaving out the nasty bits. And, is there a better place to get acquainted with a religion that has everyone talking than in the relaxed atmosphere of a favourite pub, in the company of friends and a troubled but engaging young woman, to give you an insider's perspective?

The name Uzza is from al-Uzza ("al" before the name means "the"), the Arab Venus and the most revered of all their goddesses. Pre-Islamic Arabs worshipped al-Uzza, along with al-Lat and Manat who they believed to be the daughters of Allah.

Uzza is a script for our time that has the potential to change the course of things to come. Except for Uzza, and a short appearance by a couple from a neighbouring municipality, all other characters, including Archie the bartender, are modeled on real patrons of a once popular Ottawa nightspot.

The sequel to *The Fractured Nation Interviews* adopts the same play/script format as that milestone publication. Again, the format chosen breaks with Dramatic Play Services and Playwrights Canada and the so-called Standard American conventions for plays. Names of characters are not CAPITALIZED as not to distract the reader with excessive CAPITALIZATION. Only the first letter of the character's Name is in uppercase. The names of the characters still appear in bold.

To keep the conversation between Uzza, Johnny, Gerry, Bob and Archie as unaffected as possible, implicit and explicit references to verses of the Koran and the sayings and actions of the Prophet are explained in a substantial supplement of endnotes. The sequel begins with Johnny limping into his favourite pub. How our hero got his limp made the news. The minimum you need to know, if you have not read *The Interviews*, is part of a news segment being shown on television as Johnny makes his way to the bar.

The conversation is a meandering one. It's in a bar, what did you expect?

## A Bad Case of Dogmatic Distress

*Johnny MacDonald, host of the popular public affairs television show One-on-One with Johnny MacDonald, walks into his favourite pub. It's a slow night. At one end of the bar Gerry and Bob are listening to Archie, the bartender, tell a joke. Just above, and to the side of where they are sitting, is a large television screen, the sound is off.*

*It's Johnny's first visit to Maxies since he was shot outside the television station where he works. Cane in hand, he limps up to the bar. Archie interrupts his joke to greet him and shake hands.*

**Archie:** Johnny, how are you? How have you been? It's been a while. Sit down. I'll get you a beer. Coors Light, right?

**Johnny:** Not tonight. Make it a scotch; no ice, no water. Dalwhinnie if you've got it. And, if you don't mind, I'll just stand.

**Archie:** Does it still hurt?

**Johnny:** What do you think!

*[Just then, the news comes on and there is Johnny walking out of the hospital.]*

**Archie:** Hey Google, sound on!

**Niqab-Wearing Newsreader:** Johnny MacDonald, the well-known host of *One-on-One with Johnny MacDonald*, was released from hospital this morning. As we reported last week, it was while walking home, after hosting a series of controversial interviews about the breakup of Canada, when he was shot by a distraught viewer who, the police say, was suffering from a severe case of *Dogmatic Distress Syndrome* or DDS.

The immediately identifiable cause of his distress was a discussion of a religion's impact on the breakup. The exact cause of the distress we cannot disclose as it would violate the shooter's privacy rights.

The producers of *One-on-One with Johnny MacDonald* have already profusely apologized to MacDonald's assailant for any suffering the opinions expressed by the unusually thoughtless host of *One-on-One* may have caused.

The police, while praising Johnny MacDonald's aggressor for relieving his distress without actually killing Mr. MacDonald, would like to remind viewers that the law now provides harsh penalties for those

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who would deliberately or even inadvertently cause a believer to experience a traumatic religious episode.

If it's not too much trouble, if you are experiencing dogmatic distress because of something said or written about your religion, please call the police and let the law deal with the cause of so much pain and discomfort.

**Archie:** Hey Google, sound off. I will never get used to someone reading the news with their face covered.

**Johnny:** The trailblazer who ushered in the era of in-your-face marketing of your extremist point of view, as an anchor of a mainstream media newscast in North America, was a Canadian woman. In an interview following her performance on Toronto CityNews in 2016, she gushed: "It feels really amazing to be the first hijabi (sic) reporter in Canada, but I certainly hope I'm not the last." And she wasn't, and the hijab gave way to the niqab, the face-covering veil, and so it goes.

**Archie:** What do people who have to read lips do? I know they have captioning on most stations but what if you meet one on the street and you want to ask for directions or something?

**Johnny:** You can usually gauge the depth of a believing woman's faith by how much of her neck, face and hair she leaves uncovered. A woman who covers it all—except for her eyes of course—is an extremist in every sense of the word; a religious extremist, but an extremist nonetheless. Such women will normally be accompanied by a male guardian in public who will tell you where to go. Better to trust your GPS.

**Archie:** How did we go from fighting extremists to giving them the keys to the place?

**Johnny:** We basically surrendered to the extremists when we allowed them to dictate the terms under which they would take the oath of citizenship, such as taking the Oath incognito<sup>1</sup>. Where do you draw the line after that?

---

<sup>1</sup> The governing Liberals have withdrawn a legal effort by the previous Conservative government to persuade Canada's top court to strike down lower judicial rulings that allowed women to wear the niqab at citizenship ceremonies...The case centred on a lawsuit by Zunera Ishaq, a devout Muslim woman who moved from Pakistan to Ontario in 2008.

**Archie:** I get it, and one thing led to another as it always does. What about you? Will you be going to prison?

**Johnny:** No, not this time. As a first offender I will only have to pay a large fine and make another public apology expressing regret for any dogmatic distress that anything I said during *The Interviews* may have caused.

**Archie:** Exactly what was it that pissed off the guy who shot you? We thought it might be because you called the Holy Alliance of Muslim Municipalities the "HAM Alliance."

**Johnny:** I should not have referred to the Holy Alliance of Muslim Municipalities by its acronym H. A. M. M., but that is not why I was shot.

**Archie:** So what was it?

**Johnny:** At one point during my talk with the Ayatollah I said that my first impression of Islam was that it was the creation of a child-like mind. That Islam had a child-like quality about it; a child's certainty in having absolute knowledge of the world around him; a child's intolerance of others who won't play the game by his rules (appendix: Allah, the Eternal Adolescent).

**Archie:** And the Ayatollah agreed with that?

**Johnny:** Yes. He said Allah values children, their innocence, their uncorrupted, simple, unsophisticated view of the world.

**Archie:** So, what was this guy's problem?

**Johnny:** He felt that I insulted the Prophet Muhammad with my reference to a child-like mind.

**Archie:** That's it? And he almost killed you for that! You were not making fun of his beliefs; you were not insulting his invisible friend!

**Johnny:** No, I wasn't, but he thought I was making fun of God's acclaimed last and greatest spokesperson, and that is just as bad, if not worse. Remember the Cartoon Protests?

**Archie:** Who doesn't! I remember seeing really angry people marching in the streets of London, of all places, carrying signs demanding that

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anyone who mocked or insulted Islam be butchered on the spot<sup>2</sup>.

**Johnny:** And no one intervened.

**Archie:** Are you saying that is how we went from prosecuting people who threatened other people, who tried to murder them, to praising them?

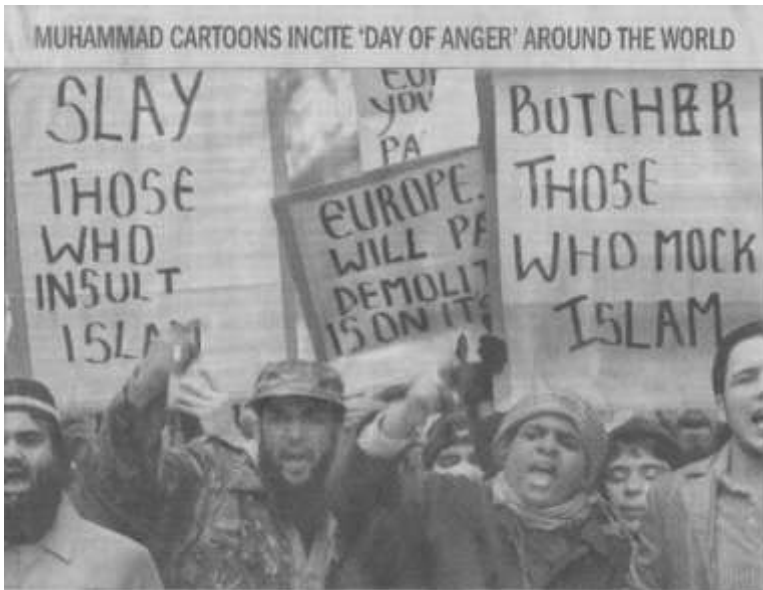
**Johnny:** Not long before the cartoons were published, the London subway and a bus were bombed, killing 52 people and injuring more than 700.

**Archie:** Are you saying the two are related?

**Johnny:** In the minds of British legislators at the time, they had to be. Following these deplorable events, the British Parliament—despite a plea by an alliance of Muslims, Christians and others<sup>3</sup>—saw to it that criticism of the Book which inspired the slaughter, or the man who claimed to have been charged with making its content known to

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<sup>2</sup> “Muslim protesters march towards the Danish embassy in London” *Ottawa Citizen*, Saturday February 6, 2006



<sup>3</sup> We recognize that a free society must have the scope to debate, to criticize, proselytize, insult and even ridicule belief and religious practices in order to ensure that there is full scope – short of violence or inciting violence or other criminal offences - to tackle these issues.

*From a plea by an alliance of Muslims, Christians, humanists and secularists urging the British Parliament to reject legislation limiting the rights to criticize religious beliefs and traditions.*

mankind, was at your peril. It could not of course, at the time, butcher Islam's detractors as the protestors demanded, but it could silence most of them with threats of fines and imprisonment by making any criticism of Islamic scriptures – the Koran and what the Prophet said and did – the equivalent of hate speech.

**Archie:** But this so-called hate legislation did not stop the most dangerous hatred of all, did it?

**Johnny:** Hate legislation, where a religion like Islam is concerned, is a Faustian bargain at best. It is a bargain that the State makes with those who see criticisms of their Faith as justification for murder. The State will silence the critics with fines and threats of imprisonment if the believers will put away their guns, knives and bombs. These laws have nothing to do with stopping the spread of hatred and everything to do with the appeasement of the enemies of freedom of speech and freedom of expression.

**Archie:** So they made a deal with the devil. What else is new?

**Johnny:** As human beings we have a right, and as citizens of a democracy, an obligation, to express an opinion on issues affecting our lives and the lives of our countrymen and women. That right, that obligation includes, must include questioning religious dogma.

**Archie:** You got that right! You know what I mean.

**Johnny:** Of all human endeavors, religion has the greatest potential to change our lives for better or for worse. By giving all citizens the freedom to question the authenticity, the relevancy, the meaning and application of religious dogma, we guard against the worst.

**Archie:** And our idiot politicians did the exact opposite!

**Johnny:** Rather than tackling the worst head-on, the politicians in Britain – and other countries which followed suit – accepted the fundamentalists' argument that a lack of respect for Islam was at the root of the indiscriminate slaughter of men, women and children.

**Archie:** Criticism of the Prophet and his damn book was the excuse, not the cause, everyone knows that.

**Johnny:** Then, except for the believers, not many people read the Koran and almost none the many equally incendiary sayings and example of the Prophet. Definitely not the politicians who voted crippling legislation into law, which allowed Islam to spread its message almost unopposed.



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**Archie:** Like I said: bloody idiots!

**Johnny:** This Munich-like surrender to religious intolerance also proved that terrorism works, and that rewarding aggression, like at Munich, only encourages more of the same, as other Western countries who adopted the British approach to combatting Islamic extremism soon discovered.

**Archie:** But we overcame Munich.

**Johnny:** We will not overcome our surrender to a new generation of fanatics, a capitulation which effectively neutered the most effective weapons against the spread of religious tyranny: freedom of expression and freedom of speech. This surrender is what has brought us to this point where we have religious vigilantes enforcing compliance with the new limits on freedom of speech and the craziness that is DDS.

**Archie:** But this guy who shot you was not a vigilante, was he?

**Johnny:** I don't know, but the police can't take the chance that Islamists who would like nothing better than to be martyred by cops will not seek revenge if they don't treat a co-extremist right. And, they know he has the DDS defense to fall back on if they arrest him, so why risk your life for nothing?

**Archie:** No wonder the cops fell over themselves to praise the guy who shot you.

**Johnny:** Just like the rest of us, they are afraid. Just like the media which masks its fear of offending the followers of the *Religion of Truth* by having hijab- and niqab-wearing women, of the now ubiquitous faith-in-your-face newscast, deliver the news if Islam is even remotely part of the story.

**Archie:** Religion of Truth. Who says?

**Johnny:** Allah, that's who<sup>4</sup>!

**Archie:** Who am I to argue with that guy? So, what's left to talk about now that words have joined sticks and stones as stuff that will physically harm you, that won't get you in trouble with the law or the *faith full*?

**Johnny:** Weather, sports maybe...

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<sup>4</sup> 48:28 It is He Who sent forth His Messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth, that He may exalt it above every other religion. Allah suffices as Witness.

**Archie:** So, Johnny, nice weather we're having. Did you catch the game last night?

## Blame George W. Bush

**Bob:** *[realizes that the guy on television is Johnny; pointing to Johnny he shouts]* Hey! I know you. That was you on television *[moves towards Johnny with his hand outstretched]*.

**Johnny:** *[moves back as if startled]* Do I know you?

**Bob:** No, we've never met. Hey, I just want to shake your hand. My name is Bob.

**Archie:** It's okay, Johnny, Bob's a regular guy.

**Johnny:** Sorry *[shakes his hand]*. Hi, nice to meet you, Bob.

*[Bob, who was talking with Gerry at the other end of the bar, did not hear Johnny's explanation as to why he was shot.]*

**Bob:** What's with you getting shot for hamming it up on a religious TV show?

**Archie:** That's not funny.

**Johnny:** It was not a religious TV show and my getting shot had nothing to do with the regrettable term I used to refer to the Holy Alliance of Muslim Municipalities.

**Bob:** But...

**Archie:** *[seeing that Johnny is showing signs of frustration]* Bob, drop it. I thought you were into porn, not current events.

**Bob:** I watch the news too! I mean, I can see some Jewish people would be bothered if you called their organization that H. A. M. M. thing because they don't eat ham, but that guy was not Jewish, was he?

**Johnny:** It's not only observant Jews who consider ham unclean, or more specifically pork and pork by-products, but those who live by the Koran.

**Bob:** *[surprised]* Muslims don't like ham?

**Archie:** Bob, where the hell have you been? With more religious channels than sex channels, how could you not know that Muslims don't eat ham?

**Bob:** I don't watch religious television, except maybe by accident. And, for your information, most shows about Islam are in Arabic so who knows what the hell they're talking about. They could be encouraging viewers to kill the infidels for all I know.

**Archie:** At least you know you're an infidel.

**Johnny:** Not if he is a Catholic or Protestant, he isn't.

**Archie:** Then what is he?

**Johnny:** Jews and Christians in Islam are unbelievers, not infidels.

**Bob:** Infidels are not unbelievers?

**Johnny:** Yes, they are, but unbelievers are not always infidels.

**Archie:** Now I'm confused.

**Johnny:** Whatever you do, if you ever find yourself in an *M & M*...

**Bob:** You're not talking about the candy, are you?

**Johnny:** Sorry, Muslim Municipality. If you're ever in a Muslim Municipality for no good reason and you get stopped by a religious cop and are asked "what's your religion?" don't say Hindu or Buddhism. Just say you are Christian, then all you will have to do is pay a fine. And for God's sake, don't say you don't believe in any god cause you're not getting out alive.

**Bob:** What the fuck is that all about?

**Gerry:** [*walks over and introduces himself*] Hi, my name is Gerry. I apologize for my ignoramus friend here. [*gives Bob a light punch on the shoulder*] I keep telling Bob he should read the Koran.

**Johnny:** [*somewhat incredulous*] You have read the Koran?

**Gerry:** No, but I have read *Pain, Pleasure and Prejudice* by Bernard Payeur. It's better than the Koran: it's the entire Koran explained in a way that even Bob here would understand.

**Bob:** I read the Bible when I was young. Isn't the Koran just like the Bible?

**Gerry:** No, it isn't, not by a long shot! You've heard about the Koran being all about peace and love?

**Bob:** Sure.

**Gerry:** [*leans over*] It's all bullshit!

**Bob:** Then why do people say it's all about peace and love?

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**Johnny:** Blame George W. Bush. He was the first to describe Islam as “The Religion of Peace” shortly after the 9/11 attacks, to avoid what another politician said was “an explosion of hostility against Muslims” by leaving the impression that the central message of the Koran is all about peace and love; that “Islam... is Christianity with a towel on its head”<sup>5</sup>.

**Bob:** But, what about that other thing you hear all the time, that Allah considers the killing of one person like killing everybody?

**Johnny:** But you never hear the rest.

**Bob:** There's more?

**Gerry:** This is Islam, there's always more. After the attacks of 9/11, Muslim community leaders said that those who caused the deaths of thousands in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania were not true Muslims because in a verse Allah said that “whoever kills a soul is like killing all of mankind”<sup>6</sup>, therefore no Muslim could have done this. Since then, politicians of all stripes have taken up the refrain to avoid facing a horrible truth that the very next verse in the series makes perfectly clear: that killing unbelievers is not like killing all of mankind, but a good thing, especially in the most horrible, humiliating manner, because their very existence corrupts the land and stands in the way of Islam's expansion<sup>7</sup>.

**Bob:** Well, I'll be damned.

**Archie:** Ain't that the truth!

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<sup>5</sup> From *The Places in Between* by Rory Stewart, recalling his walk across the breadth of Afghanistan in 2002, from Herat to Kabul. During his journey he will meet a Mullah who will set him straight on the “central message” of the Koran.

<sup>6</sup> 5:32 For that reason, We decreed for the Children of Israel that whoever kills a soul, not in retaliation for a soul or corruption in the land, is like one who has killed the whole of mankind; and whoever saves a life is like one who saves the lives of all mankind. Our Messengers came to them with the clear proofs; but afterwards many of them continued to commit excesses in the land.

<sup>7</sup> 5:33 Indeed, the punishment of those who fight Allah and His Messenger and go around corrupting the land is to be killed, crucified, have their hands and feet cut off on opposite sides, or to be banished from the land. That is a disgrace for them in this life, and in the life to come theirs will be a terrible punishment.

## **No Scarf, No Service!**

*[A slender, dark-haired young woman with a tanned complexion walks up the stairs and makes her way to one end of the bar. Archie comes over to greet her.]*

**Archie:** Hi. How are you? My name is Archie.

**Uzza:** Fine, thank you. My name is Uzza.

**Archie:** Nice to meet you, Uzza. Uzza, that's an Arabic name, isn't it?

**Uzza:** Arab, yes, yes it is; it comes from...

**Archie:** And can I assume you and Allah are like this *[crossing his fingers]*?

**Uzza:** If you mean, am I a Muslim, yes.

**Archie:** Then I can't serve you unless you're wearing a scarf.

**Uzza:** I am sorry...?

**Archie:** Didn't you read the sign?

**Uzza:** What sign?

**Archie:** The sign downstairs that says: "Women must wear a head scarf to be served if their religion requires it."

**Uzza:** But I am not in a city that is part of the Holy Alliance of Muslim Municipalities.

**Archie:** I know, but we often get young men from an M & M coming here for a fruit juice – if you know what I mean – and sometimes they get all upset when they see a woman such as yourself not wearing a head scarf.

**Uzza:** That is their problem.

**Archie:** No, it's your problem! And, did I mention that *it's the law*. One complaint and I could lose my license. They could also take matters into their own hands, and you seem like a nice girl. So, are you going to put on a scarf or not?

**Uzza:** I think I will go somewhere else, thank you very much.

**Archie:** Not only don't you read signs, but you don't hear too well do you? There is no somewhere else!

## 23 No Scarf, No Service!

**Uzza:** In Québec I do not have to wear a scarf!

**Archie:** That is another country. They have a Charter of Values and we have a Charter of Rights.

**Uzza:** Why would that make a difference?

**Archie:** Values are values. They are what they are. Rights are different.

**Uzza:** What do values and rights have to do with my having to wear a scarf to get service?

**Archie:** Everything in these weird times we live in. Rights can be ranked, and, in the Canadian Charter of Rights, religious rights are right up there<sup>8</sup>. It was a gift from the devil himself for people who won't take no for an answer and would even kill to get what they want. They used this guarantee – not to mention pompous declarations about the supremacy of God<sup>9</sup> found in many Western constitutions and charters – and the gullibility of politicians and judges, to carve out for themselves a separate reality where the rule of God is the only rule.

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### <sup>8</sup> FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

2. Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms:

- (a) freedom of conscience and religion;
- (b) freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication;
- (c) freedom of peaceful assembly; and
- (d) freedom of association.

<sup>9</sup> The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms begins with an affirmation with which a substantial minority (if not a majority) of Canadians would disagree, and on which most historians must choke; that doing God's work was uppermost on the minds of those who drafted the British North America Act (BNA) of 1867, with the rule of law a close or distant second.

Whereas Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law:

Nowhere in the British North America Act of 1867 is God even mentioned. The only possible reference to God, and it's a tenuous one, is the proclamation that Canada's government is still subservient to the British monarch, the head of Henry VIII's church:

The Executive Government and Authority of and over Canada is hereby declared to continue and be vested in the Queen.

The "supremacy of God" in the Canadian Charter is a copycat restatement of the "one nation under God" declaration in the American Pledge of Allegiance. The Pledge of Allegiance was written in 1892 by Francis Bellamy (1855-1931), a Baptist minister. It originally did not include the phrase "one nation under God." The good reverend wanted the pledge to apply to everyone, not just those who believed in an all-powerful invisible friend. It was President Eisenhower who, in 1954, convinced Congress to amend the pledge to include "one nation under God."

**Uzza:** If freedom of religion is a person's inalienable right, then it follows that it would also be the inalienable right of the community of believers to whom they belong. It is only logical. But I still do not understand what this has to do with my having to wear a scarf to get served in an establishment that is not in an M & M ghetto?

**Archie:** Let religion in where it has no business, your business, and religion will make your business its business, and that is why you must wear a scarf or leave.

**Uzza:** How is religion now running your business? Please explain.

**Archie:** Municipalities, especially those bordering an M & M, recognize the supremacy of everyone's god in their bylaws which regulate how businesses like mine treat you to avoid problems with vigilantes.

**Uzza:** Good. Who do I complain to about you not wanting to serve me for not wearing a scarf?

**Archie:** You have to be kidding me! If your religion requires you to wear a scarf in public, I am required by law not to serve you if you're not wearing one.

**Uzza:** Why would you assume that?

**Archie:** For crying out loud! Doesn't your religion require you women to cover your face when going out in public? I only ask that you cover your head!

**Bob:** What is this about covering your face in public?

**Uzza:** Only if I have to pee, or whatever, and men might see me. I assume, Mr. Bartender, that your facility has washrooms for women only?

**Archie:** Of course, but what you just said, that is stupid!

**Uzza:** Are you calling the Prophet Muhammad stupid?

**Archie:** Of course not! Only an idiot or someone with a death wish would call your messiah stupid.

**Uzza:** Muhammad was not a messiah but a Messenger of God to whom Allah sent the angel Gabriel to tell him how we must live and how He wants to be worshipped if we do not want Him to send us to Hell to burn for an eternity<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> At forty-something, the merchant Abū al-Qāsim Muhammad ibn Abd Allāh ibn Abd al-Mutalib ibn Hāshim suffered what we might call a midlife crisis; a midlife crisis that



## 25 No Scarf, No Service!

**Bob:** And God wants women to wear a veil if they have to do their business in a coed can, if they don't want to have to do their business in Hell. Sounds like a sensible solution to me.

**Uzza:** That was then, when women had to answer the call of nature in what you refer to as a "coed can" and the wives of Muhammad were no exception.

*[The following dialogue is largely based on what the companions of the Prophet reported he said and did: Bukhari 5.148<sup>11</sup> and 60.318<sup>12</sup>]*

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may have been exacerbated by a severe sunstroke suffered while helping with renovations of the Ka'ba, and from which he almost died. A hadith to that effect:

**Narrated Jabir bin Abdullah:**

When the Ka'ba was rebuilt, the Prophet and Abbas went to carry stones. Abbas said to the Prophet "(Take off and) put your waist sheet over your neck so that the stones may not hurt you." (But as soon as he took off his waist sheet) he fell unconscious on the ground with both his eyes towards the sky. When he came to his senses, he said, "My waist sheet! My waist sheet!" Then he tied his waist sheet (round his waist).

*Bukhari 58.170*

It was after one of these life-threatening traumas that the man who would achieve immortal fame as the Prophet Muhammad received his first visit from the angel Gabriel in a cave overlooking Mecca, where he had gone to spend the night to pray and meditate. The celebrated angel informed him that he had been chosen as God's ultimate spokesperson to deliver the Almighty's final message for mankind as to how He should be worshipped and how humanity must behave, lest His Anger destroy them all. It was all in a book God had authored which He called the Koran, the most accepting meaning being "to recite," which He kept close at hand.

43:4 And, indeed, it is in the Mother of the Book, with Us, lofty and wise.

<sup>11</sup> **Narrated Aisha:**

The wives of the Prophet used to go to Al-Manasi, a vast open place (near Baqia at Medina) to answer the call of nature at night.

Umar used to say to the Prophet "Let your wives be veiled," but Allah's Apostle did not do so.

One night Sauda bint Zam'a the wife of the Prophet went out at Isha time and she was a tall lady.

Umar addressed her and said, "I have recognized you, O Sauda."

He said so, as he desired eagerly that the verses of Al-Hijab may be revealed. So Allah revealed the verses of "Al-Hijab."

*Bukhari 5.148*

<sup>12</sup> **Narrated Aisha:**

Sauda (the wife of the Prophet) went out to answer the call of nature after it was made obligatory (for all the Muslims ladies) to observe the veil. She was a fat huge lady, and everybody who knew her before could recognize her. So Umar bin Al-Khattab saw her and said, "O Sauda! By Allah, you cannot hide yourself from us, so think of a way by which you should not be recognized on going out."

They answered the call of nature along with the men at one of Medina's open spaces set up for that purpose, separated from them by a low wall. One night, Sauda (also spelled Sawda), one of Muhammad's taller wives, was recognized by Umar, one of his companions and future caliph when she squatted, and he made fun of her saying "I see you, Sauda." This was not the first time he had done that. Sauda had had enough and complained to her husband, who was eating at the time. Then and there Allah revealed the verses of "Al-Hijab." Muhammad, just to be clear, added that women had the right to do their business outside just like the men.

**Archie:** Unbelievable! The cowboy mask was so that desert-dwelling women, like the bank robbers in old Westerns, could take care of business without being recognized and not about being holier than thou?

**Uzza:** It is one explanation. And, it is not a mask but a veil, and it has nothing to do with concealing your identity during the commission of a crime, even if some wicked people have used it to do that.

**Archie:** I agree with your Prophet. It's not a crime for a woman to use public facilities and it's also not a bad idea for a woman to conceal her identity if she has to share the privy with perverts.

**Uzza:** The whole discussion about veils in a country with indoor plumbing and women-only washrooms is all very silly.

**Archie:** Silly or not, the religious nutjobs who cruise the bars looking for women breaking Islamic law say otherwise, and we do not want any trouble with these bearded avengers and their masked sidekicks, and the law, the regular law, is on their side.

**Uzza:** Show me the law, please.

**Archie:** I know the law, it's part of a bartender's mandatory religious sensitivity training; but, if you insist. Hey Google, show me the bylaw

Sauda returned while Allah's Apostle was in my house taking his supper and a bone covered with meat was in his hand.

She entered and said, "O Allah's Apostle! I went out to answer the call of nature and Umar said to me so-and-so."

Then Allah inspired him (the Prophet) and when the state of inspiration was over and the bone was still in his hand as he had not put it down, he said (to Sauda), "You (women) have been allowed to go out for your needs."

*Bukhari 60.318*

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about that degree thing [*a bylaw appears on one of the screens near them and Archie starts reading it out loud*].

In the event of a disagreement between a Muslim man and a Muslim woman as to the applicability of one or more Islamic decrees as they pertain to your business establishment and their presence therein, the male's interpretation shall always prevail in accordance with Koran revelation 2:228 which states, in part, 'women have rights equal to what is incumbent upon them according to what is just, although men are one degree above them'<sup>13</sup>.

**Uzza:** But, under any interpretation of Islamic law, I should not even be here, especially without a male guardian watching and approving everything I do and say.

**Archie:** It will probably come to that; it's only a matter of time.

**Uzza:** How depressing. I am sorry. I just came here to relax a bit, so if you would not mind...

**Archie:** You can relax all you want, but not without a scarf.

**Uzza:** I do not have one with me.

**Archie:** That's okay; we keep a few handy, just in case.

**Uzza:** What colours do you have?

**Archie:** What's your favourite shade of black?

**Uzza:** Surprise me.

*[Archie hands her a black scarf]*

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<sup>13</sup> 2:228 Divorced women should keep away from men for three menstrual periods. And it is not lawful for them to conceal that which Allah has created in their wombs, if they truly believe in Allah and the Last Day. Their husbands have the right in the meantime to take them back, should they seek reconciliation; and women have rights equal to what is incumbent upon them according to what is just, although men are one degree above them (what is meant here is that the men have a superior authority). Allah is Mighty, Wise.

## **A Shirley Temple, Anyone?**

**Archie:** What will it be: tea, coffee, orange juice, a glass of water or maybe a glass of milk?

**Uzza:** [*pointing to Gerry and Bob who are drinking beer*] I think I will have what they are having.

**Archie:** I thought you said you had read the sign?

**Uzza:** No, I did not!

**Archie:** Well, if you had, you wouldn't be asking me to serve you a drink containing alcohol.

**Uzza:** I cannot win, can I?

**Archie:** No, you can't.

**Uzza:** Fine, do you have apple juice?

**Archie:** Looks a lot like some white wines we serve, or light beer. Are you sure?

**Uzza:** Yes, I am sure!

**Archie:** It's your funeral. It might be safer if I give it to you in a cup.

**Uzza:** For Allah's sake! Nobody drinks apple juice from a cup except children.

**Archie:** In a water glass then, a small one.

*[Archie brings Uzza an apple juice just as the head of a balding bearded man appears at the top of the stairs leading into the pub. Just behind him is a woman, it is assumed, invisible beneath a head-to-toe bulky black tent-like garment. The eyes behind a face-covering-veil, the niqab, move from side to side like a Cylon's. Black cloves complete the cloak which, except for the eyes, leaves everything to the imagination.]*

*The bearded balding man and the impressive form which towers over him make their way to the bar and stop to survey the range of bottles on shelves in front of a bar-length mirror.]*

**Archie:** Can I pour you a Holy Warrior, my friend? [*Archie knows better than to ask the cloaked figure what it wants and to avoid eye contact even though its eyes, which are no longer darting about, are fixated on him*]

## 29 A Shirley Temple Anyone?

**Balding bearded man:** I AM NOT YOUR FRIEND<sup>14</sup>!

*[The cloaked figure makes its way to the end of the bar where Uzza is sitting. A quick hand grabs Uzza's apple juice and disappears beneath the curtain-like mask.]*

**Bob:** *[leaning over the bar, whispers to Archie]* Is it going to drink Uzza's apple juice?

**Archie:** No, it is just sniffing it, checking for alcohol. That is why I warned her about the colour of her choice of beverage.

**Cloaked figure:** *[returns Uzza's beverage, and in a hoarse whisper which everyone can hear]* Whore!

*[One last look around and both the cloaked figure and the balding bearded man disappear down the stairs.]*

**Gerry:** That was creepy, and what the hell is a Holy Warrior?

**Archie:** You mean the drink?

**Gerry:** Yes.

**Archie:** It's a mix of ginger, grenadine and orange juice.

**Gerry:** Isn't that a Shirley Temple?

**Archie:** Not anymore. And let's not mention it again. It's now a man's drink, the type of drink that men who believe that drinking alcohol is a sin drink, and you do not give a man's drink a woman's name where they come from.

**Uzza:** *[sees this as an opportunity to join the conversation]* Did you know that ginger and grenadine – or grenade, which is French for pomegranate – are mentioned in the Koran as some of the best foods Paradise has to offer?

**Gerry:** Sorry, what did you just say?

**Uzza:** *[raising her voice]* I said that... *[before she has a chance to repeat what she just said, Gerry is next to her]*

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<sup>14</sup> "Allah has warned us in the Koran, do not befriend the kuffar (a derogatory term for unbelievers), do not align yourself with the kuffar; the verses are so many and so numerous I can't recite every one of them."

*From an exhortation made to students from a British madrassa by Abu Yusuf Riyadh-ul-Haq, an Islamic scholar based in the United Kingdom, not to associate with Christians and Jews.*

**BBC documentary, *British Schools, Islamic Rules***

**Gerry:** Hi, my name is Gerry, what is your name again?

**Uzza:** [*hesitantly shakes his hand*] Uzza.

**Gerry:** Nice to meet you, Uzza. So, Allah drinks Shirley Temples. I did not know that.

**Uzza:** Allah does not require food or drink, and you should not make fun of Him.

**Gerry:** Sorry. So how do you know that in Paradise you will have the makings of a Shirley Temple, I mean, eh, a Holy Warrior?

**Uzza:** There is no mention of oranges per se in the Koran, but Allah did reveal in surah 76, ayat 17, "And they are given therein to drink a cup whose mixture is ginger"<sup>15</sup> and in another ayat He revealed to Muhammad that in Paradise there are palm trees and pomegranates<sup>16</sup>.

**Bob:** What's a sir-ah, and what's a hey-at?

**Uzza:** A surah is a chapter of the Koran and ayat means a verse, which is also referred to as a revealed truth or revelation, an immutable fact made known to a mortal by a god.

**Gerry:** Beautiful and can quote God. I'm in love.

**Uzza:** [*is slightly embarrassed but finds Gerry's charm hard to resist*] Muslim children are expected to have read the Koran from cover to cover by the age of seven<sup>17</sup>, and, if they attend a madrassa, that is a

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<sup>15</sup> 76:15 And cup-bearers shall go round them with vessels of silver and goblets of glass,

76:16 Goblets of silver which they measured exactly.

76:17 And they are given therein to drink a cup whose mixture is ginger.

<sup>16</sup> Each level of heaven contains two gardens with much greenery, two gushing springs and in addition to fruit trees such as the drought-tolerant pomegranate, trees ordinarily found in oases, i.e., palm trees.

55:62 And beneath them (the two gardens) are two other gardens.

55:63 So, which of your Lord's Bounties do you both (Jinn and humans) deny?

55:64 Of dark green colour.

55:65 So, which of your Lord's Bounties do you both (Jinn and humans) deny?

55:66 Therein are two gushing springs.

55:67 So, which of your Lord's Bounties do you both (Jinn and humans) deny?

55:68 Therein are fruits, palm trees and pomegranates.

55:69 So, which of your Lord's Bounties do you both (Jinn and humans) deny?

<sup>17</sup> There is a very common ceremony practiced throughout most of the Muslim world called Khatmi-Qur'an. It is the ceremony to recognize and celebrate a child's first full

### 31 A Shirley Temple Anyone?

Muslim school, spend at least an hour every day memorizing the Koran. Since madrassas are no longer subjected to the old provincial educational laws, much more time is spent by children memorizing Allah's words.

**Gerry:** So, Uzza, *[continuing his Sam Malone impression]* when did a good-looking woman like you become a Muslim?

**Uzza:** There are as many beautiful Muslim girls as there are beautiful unbelieving girls.

**Gerry:** Sorry, that is not what I meant.

**Uzza:** I know. I was born a Muslim. A child born to Muslim parents is born a Muslim.

**Bob:** But you're not fat?

**Uzza:** *[taken aback]* WHAT do you mean?

**Bob:** Like that cloaked woman who sniffed your drink. Was she fat, like many of the women who dress like her, or is it just me?

**Gerry:** It's just you, Bob.

**Uzza:** Maybe not...

**Gerry:** WHAT?

**Uzza:** What you called a "cloaked woman" does not get much sun. A home quarantine, combined with clothing that leaves no exposed skin when venturing outside, deprives the wearer of necessary sun exposure, especially in Canada if they don't take advantage of the warmer months to fill up on vitamin D. A lack or shortage of this essential vitamin can lead to a shortened lifespan; but not before experiencing weight gain, headaches, bladder issues, constipation, diarrhea, etc.

**Bob:** Too much information, thank you.

**Uzza:** Muslims come in all sizes, cloaked or not. It is unfortunate that more Muslim women are not aware of the health risks associated with

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reading of the Koranic text in Arabic. Most children complete the first full reading of the Qur'an between the age of four and seven.

It is the mother's responsibility to get her children to the Khatmi-Qur'an. Mosques around the world have the equivalent of Sunday school classes to assist the mother in getting her children "to master the proper pronunciation and to read the text clearly from the first verse to the last."

a lack of sunlight, which may not have been an issue in the sunbaked Arabian peninsula when Allah mandated that women wear what some refer to disparagingly as a portable tent when venturing outside the home. In fact, it may have been a good thing for the time and place.

**Archie:** Maybe it's not that they don't know, but prefer believing in Doctor Allah?

**Gerry:** Archie, be nice.

**Uzza:** [*answering in kind*] Perhaps, but they are definitely not as obsessive as Christian parents who do not believe in blood transfusions even when their children's lives are at stake. Many Muslim women who cover up take vitamin D supplements, of which I am sure Dr. Allah would approve.

**Gerry:** Good one, Uzza!

**Bob:** I heard that if you don't want to be a Muslim anymore they kill you.

**Uzza:** Allah revealed that He preferred a community of believers be slaughtered rather than be allowed to leave Islam<sup>18</sup>. Muhammad said: "If a Muslim discards his religion, kill him." But what of it?

**Bob:** [*not expecting the curt response*] Nothing. Sorry I asked.

**Uzza:** Nehru said that we have to remember the age in which a scripture was written, the vast distance in time and thought and experience that separates it from us, the rituals and religious usage in which it is wrapped and the social background in which it expanded. Many of the problems of human life, he said, have a permanence and a touch of eternity about them, the reason for the abiding interest in these ancient books. But, he warned, they also dealt with problems limited to their particular age<sup>19</sup> that have nothing to do with us and the

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<sup>18</sup> 2:191 Kill them wherever you find them and drive them out wherever they drove you out. *Sedition is worse than slaughter* (emphasis mine). Do not fight them at the Sacred Mosque until they fight you at it. If they fight you there kill them. Such is the reward for the unbelievers.

<sup>19</sup> Looking at scripture then as a product of the human mind, we have to remember the age in which it was written, the environment and mental climate in which it grew, the vast distance in time and thought and experience that separates it from us. We have to forget the trappings of ritual and religious usage in which it is wrapped and remember the social background in which it expanded.



### 33 A Shirley Temple Anyone?

problems that we face. Islamic scriptures, the Koran and what Muhammad said and did may have been relevant then; today, many are a dangerous anachronism.

**Bob:** An anana what?

**Gerry:** What Nehru said about something that belongs to an earlier time. Now, be quiet.

**Uzza:** Like many Muslims who no longer dare admit to it, this I believe. But Islam is still part of my heritage. I will not deny my heritage, if that is what you want me to do. It is what it is.

**Johnny:** *[sensing unease in Uzza, Johnny limps over and introduces himself]* Don't mind them. Hi, my name is...

**Uzza:** You are Johnny MacDonald. It is so nice to meet you.

**Johnny:** You're not afraid to shake my hand?

**Uzza:** Of course not, and I must apologize.

**Johnny:** Apologize for what?

**Uzza:** For you getting shot.

**Johnny:** You did not shoot me, and if you had...

**Uzza:** I mean, apologize on behalf of Muslims who would not do a thing like that. Who believe in freedom of speech even where religion is concerned; especially where religion is concerned.

**Archie:** That is you and who else?

**Johnny:** Archie, shut up.

**Uzza:** I understand why you feel that way, Archie. May I call you Archie?

**Archie:** Sure, why not. Better than Mr. Bartender.

**Uzza:** All my parents wanted when they came to Canada from Pakistan was to live like Canadians. To be able to send their kids to school where God was not omnipresent so that they might learn to think for

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Many of the problems of human life have a permanence and a touch of eternity about them, and hence the abiding interest in these ancient books. But they dealt with other problems also, limited to their particular age, which have no living interest for us now.

*From The Discovery of India by Jawaharlal Nehru, written by the first Prime Minister of India while in British custody in Ahmadnagar in 1944.*

themselves and not be afraid to speak their mind about both the sacred and the profane without the threat of physical harm, or worse. To live under a legal system which at least attempted, even if it was not always successful, to be fair to both sexes without prejudice or bias towards either. To live in a place where women were not considered chattel but persons in their own right, free to choose without regard for the feelings of gods and men. Then it happened.

YOU LET IT HAPPEN!

**Archie:** What happened? What did I do?

## The Enemy Within

**Uzza:** Could I have an adult drink now, please? They are not coming back tonight. If anything, they are waiting somewhere to teach me a lesson. Archie, do you mind [*extends her empty glass of apple juice*]?

**Archie:** When you came in you said you wanted a beer. How about a nice glass of white wine? On the house.

**Uzza:** Just like in heaven.

**Archie:** What do you mean?

**Uzza:** In Paradise there are rivers of wine<sup>20</sup> in which the believers can dip their cups and toast Allah – and, for the privileged class, special wines aged in some kind of container sealed with musk<sup>21</sup>.

**Archie:** Why would Allah outlaw wines here but allow them in heaven?

**Uzza:** There was a time when Allah bragged about wine being one of the signs of His Beneficence<sup>22</sup>. Then wine became a sin in which there was some benefit<sup>23</sup>. Then no benefits at all; wine became an abomination, something the devil concocted<sup>24</sup>.

**Archie:** You haven't answered my question.

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<sup>20</sup> 47:15 The likeness of the Garden which the God-fearing have been promised is this: rivers of water not stagnant, rivers of milk whose taste has not changed, rivers of wine delighting its drinkers and rivers of distilled honey. Therein they have every variety of fruit and forgiveness from their Lord too...

<sup>21</sup> 83:25 They are given to drink from a sealed wine;

83:26 Whose seal is musk...

<sup>22</sup> 16:67 And from the fruits of palms and vines, you get wine and fair provision. Surely, there is in that a sign to a people who understand.

<sup>23</sup> 2:219 They ask you about wine and gambling, say: "In both there is great sin and some benefit for people. But the sin is greater than the benefit." And they ask you about what they should spend, say: "What you can spare." Thus Allah makes clear to you His Revelations so that you may reflect.

<sup>24</sup> 5:90 O believers, wine, gambling, idols and divining arrows are an abomination of the Devil's doing; so avoid them that perchance you may prosper!

5:91 The Devil only wishes to stir up enmity and hatred among you, through wine and gambling, and keep you away from remembering Allah and from prayer. Will you not desist, then?

**Uzza:** A drunk and disorderly believer could have embarrassed Muhammad without intending to and could not be trusted to carry out his orders without fail. Reason enough, I think, for Allah to make sure that did not happen.

**Archie:** But why all the pussyfooting?

**Uzza:** Allah does not pussyfoot, if that is even a word. He may have wanted to wait until Muhammad was strong enough to enforce His decree<sup>25</sup> before making wine an abomination. I do not know. And, can I give you back this damn veil? It only empowers women to do what men want them to do. Where is the fun in that?

**Archie:** No, but you can take it off and keep it close by. And you must promise to put it back on if you see someone come up the stairs.

**Uzza:** I promise.

**Gerry:** And don't worry, I will walk you home or to your car, if you want.

**Uzza:** Thank you, but my being seen with a man other than a husband or close relative will only make it worse.

**Gerry, Johnny, Bob:** *[raising their glasses]* Cheers!

**Uzza:** *[does not raise her glass, nor does she take a sip, but stares straight ahead]*

**Johnny:** Anything wrong?

**Uzza:** You let them in.

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<sup>25</sup> Muhammad extended Allah's prohibition of alcoholic beverages to the containers in which it was served, but had second thoughts about prohibiting jars altogether, except perhaps green jars.

**Narrated Abdullah bin 'Amr:**

When the Prophet forbade the use of certain containers (that were used for preparing alcoholic drinks), somebody said to the Prophet. "But not all the people can find skins." So he allowed them to use clay jars not covered with pitch.

*Bukhari 69.497*

**Narrated Ash-Shaibani:**

I heard Abdullah bin Abi Aufa saying, "The Prophet forbade the use of green jars."

I said, "Shall we drink out of white jars?"

He said, "No."

*Bukhari 69.501*

### 37 The Enemy Within

**Bob:** I thought Archie let them in.

**Archie:** You're not talking about those people, are you?

**Uzza:** Not just them, all of them. People like that should never have been allowed in the country.

**Archie:** But they are your people.

**Uzza:** NO, THEY ARE NOT. They are from another century.

**Archie:** And what century would that be?

**Uzza:** The 7<sup>th</sup> century. They consider Western civilization a mistake that must be rectified by a return to what they consider the good old days when Muhammad and what he said was the Will of God was the law, the only law, the Sharia. You let in those for whom the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, reason itself is a blasphemy<sup>26</sup>.

**Archie:** That explains a lot; the craziness, I mean.

**Uzza:** You let in those who did not come seeking our way of life but to change it, thinking you would change them. Muslims who came here

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<sup>26</sup> **Johnny:** What about the Enlightenment, the philosophical movement of the 18th century that emphasized the use of reason to question accepted doctrines and traditions?

**Muhammad:** You call enlightened a movement that promoted so many misguided, so-called humanitarian reforms. This wicked Enlightenment philosophy was an invitation to question dogma, something the Prophet Muhammad, the peace and blessings of God be upon him, would have considered blasphemy, an affront to Allah The Lord Of Majesty and Bounty.

This shallow philosophical movement, like others that came before and others that would follow, advanced notions that were not that much different than those put forward by these same second-rate Greek philosophers and their wrong-headed notion of human rights.

**Johnny:** Surely the Renaissance, which marked the end of the Catholic Church's dominance in Europe, allowing for a flowering, a renaissance of the arts and sciences was a good thing?

**Muhammad:** The Renaissance, what a foolish mistake. Islam forbids all realistic representations of people or animals. The Prophet, the peace and blessings of God be upon him, said that on the day of Judgment, God will command people to put life into what they have fashioned. They won't be able to do so and God will have a good laugh before condemning them to an eternity in His Hell for disobeying Him. The Renaissance encouraged all those painters and sculptors to create those graven images expressly forbidden by Allah, The Preventer. They even invented perspective to make those images stand out; adding insult to blasphemy. Need I say more?

to escape the shackles of the Sharia are paying the price of your arrogance, a price you will all have to pay sooner rather than later.

**Archie:** I'm paying right now.

**Uzza:** You welcomed this Islamic population into my father's adopted country, you fed them, you housed them, you gave them benefits that others had worked for, you bent over backwards to appease them, you forced everyone to tolerate them, and you encouraged their religion to thrive.

**Archie:** We did that, alright. Maybe we're the crazy ones.

**Uzza:** You gave them economics opportunities not available to more upstanding citizens which allowed them to fund what my father warned was a hidden agenda. They lied to you, they told you they were peaceful and wanted nothing else but to be fine, upstanding citizens and abide by your laws. They accepted your food, your housing, your benefits, your kindness but they never accepted your culture which they viewed as weak and immoral, nor your beliefs which they equated as being anti-Islam.

They now secretly hide and protect the bombers and beheaders within their communities, the so-called Islamic Municipalities into which the authorities dare not venture.

They grew strong on your misplaced generosity and tolerance. One day in the not-too-distant future they will receive the call, in Arabic, from the Muslim hate preachers of the mosques you have so generously allowed them to build so they can preach their Islamic bile and rise up and finish what you started when you let them in<sup>27</sup>.

**Gerry:** Isn't that what spurred the Far Right's attack on mosques, these types of accusations? That, and the proliferation of mosques which gave the paranoid reason to believe that our civilization was vulnerable from within.

**Uzza:** Until Quebec and Christchurch, it was attacks by Sunnis on Shia and Sufis mosques that were all the rage. "All the rage," that is the wrong expression.

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<sup>27</sup> Dialogue beginning with "You welcome this Islamic population" adapted from a response by an individual who goes by the pseudonym Haim Ittah to an Ottawa Citizen story about the Nice truck attack which killed 84 people including 10 children.

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**Archie:** No it isn't. Rage and madmen go together like religion and massacres, and people who do this are usually mad for some god or some other twisted thing or another.

**Uzza:** Believers' deplorable attacks on each other's places of worship became so commonplace that they were no longer front page news.

**Archie:** Then a few non-Muslims started doing to Muslims what they had been doing to each other since I don't know when and they became front page news, as if they started it all.

**Gerry:** It doesn't matter who started it.

**Uzza:** No, it does not. But with Western civilization's propensity to blame itself for everything bad that happens, with the help of self-serving, clueless politicians and a press that should have known better<sup>28</sup>, you did it to yourself. You became, what do you say, a pushover. As French philosopher Jean-François Revel foresaw, "A civilization that feels guilty for everything it is and does will lack the energy and conviction to defend itself."

**Bob:** Are you saying that we should not feel guilty, that the believers were just reaping what they sowed?

**Uzza:** Sorrow at the loss of innocent lives at the hands of extremists, not guilt. And, what the believers reaped was what the Islamists among them have sought from the outset: retaliatory killings that would prove the Koran right about the unbelievers hating them<sup>29</sup>. That it is us against them. We kill them or they kill us. This is the message that both Muslims and non-Muslims should have tried to dispel after mosques were attacked by non-Muslims. Instead, they did the work of

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<sup>28</sup> When I was still a member of what is probably best termed the British Jihadi Network, a series of semi-autonomous British Muslim terrorist groups linked by a single ideology, I remember how we used to laugh in celebration whenever people on TV proclaimed that the sole cause for Islamic acts of terror like 9/11, the Madrid bombings and 7/7 was Western foreign policy.

By blaming the government for our actions ... [they] did our propaganda work for us. More important, they also helped to draw away any critical examination from the real engine of our violence: Islamic theology.

*Hassan Butt, The Observer, My plea to fellow Muslims: you must renounce terror, July 1, 2007*

<sup>29</sup> 3:118 O believers, do not take as close friends other than your own people (other than your co-religionists); they will spare no effort to corrupt you and wish to see you suffer. Hatred has already been manifest in what they utter, but what their hearts conceal is greater still. We have made clear Our Signs to you if only you understand.

the Islamists, one by taking too much responsibility for what happened, the other not enough or none at all.

**Bob:** What's with all the mosques anyway?

**Uzza:** The obvious reason is because they are needed to cater to the spiritual needs of an explosion of believers. Another is to make it easier for every believer, wherever possible, to get the maximum reward points for their prayers, and that is a mosque close to where they live and work, a mosque close enough that the Call to Prayer can be heard<sup>30</sup>. Two other non-trivial reasons for all the minarets has to do with Muhammad telling the believers that Allah will build a mosque in Paradise for anyone who builds one here<sup>31</sup> and Allah telling the wealthy that spending money in His Cause buys them access to Paradise(appendix: God Needs Your Money).

**Bob:** How does a mosque increase one's reward points?

**Uzza:** When you see people rushing into the street to perform the obligatory prayers, it is not only because of the consequences of not praying at the decreed times and in the manner prescribed, but also for the increased reward points that come with praying with a crowd of worshippers<sup>32</sup>. A mosque provides the perfect venue to do that without

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<sup>30</sup> You can do your own Adhan (Call to Prayer) if necessary, and don't be afraid of annoying whoever or whatever may be in the vicinity by raising your voice, for you will need a witness on Judgment Day to testify that he, she or it heard you recite the Call to Prayer if you want to claim additional reward points.

**Narrated Abdul Rahman:**

Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri told my father, "I see you liking sheep and the wilderness. So whenever you are with your sheep or in the wilderness and you want to pronounce Adhan for the prayer raise your voice in doing so, for whoever hears the Adhan, whether a human being, a jinn or any other creature, will be a witness for you on the Day of Resurrection."

Abu Said added, "I heard it (this narration) from Allah's Apostle."

*Bukhari 11.583*

<sup>31</sup> **Narrated Ubdaiddullah Al-Khaulani:**

I heard Uthman bin 'Affan saying, when people argued too much about his intention to reconstruct the mosque of Allah's Apostle, "You have talked too much. I heard the Prophet saying, 'Whoever built a mosque ... Allah would build for him a similar place in Paradise.'"

*Bukhari 8.441*

<sup>32</sup> **Narrated Abdullah bin Umar:**

Allah's Apostle said, "The prayer in congregation is twenty seven times superior to the prayer offered by person alone."

*Bukhari 11.618*



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causing too much inconvenience. Before countries like France lifted their restrictions on mosque construction, parts of the city of Paris, for example, experienced serious traffic jams when the Friday Call to Prayer<sup>33</sup> came with no mosque in the vicinity to run to.

**Bob:** This reward point system sounds a lot like what many stores offer.

**Uzza:** That is because it is not dissimilar.

**Bob:** How do you redeem your reward points?

**Uzza:** You will redeem your points on Judgment Day when they will be weighed against your points for bad behaviour. If your reward points outweigh your bad behaviour points then, you are in.

**Bob:** That would explain all the praying. You never know if you have accumulated enough points to get in.

**Uzza:** That, and the fact that not praying when you are supposed to is a sin. But the most important thing is that God's point system, like the modern reward point system, but even more so, creates brand loyalty and brand awareness.

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Medina and Mecca attract millions of believers every year, not only for the mandatory once-in-a-lifetime pilgrimage to Mecca, but to get the biggest reward of all for saying your prayer in a crowd of like-minded souls.

### **Narrated Abu Huraira:**

Allah's Apostle said, "One prayer in my Mosque (Medina) is better than one thousand prayers in any other mosque excepting Al-Masjid-Al-Haram (the Grand Mosque of Mecca)."

*Bukhari 21.282*

In 2012, the Saudis began work on the Masjid an-Nabawi in Medina, where the Prophet Muhammad is buried. When completed it will not only be the largest mosque in the world, but the largest building, capable of accommodating 1.6 million ultimate-reward seekers.

<sup>33</sup> A number of options were considered to announce to the believers that it was again time to pray, before settling on the Adhan, i.e., the Call to Prayer.

### **Narrated Ibn Umar:**

When the Muslims arrived at Medina, they used to assemble for the prayer, and used to guess the time for it. During those days, the practice of Adhan for the prayers had not been introduced yet. Once they discussed this problem regarding the call for prayer. Some people suggested the use of a bell like the Christians, others proposed a trumpet like the horn used by the Jews, but Umar was the first to suggest that a man should call (the people) for the prayer; so Allah's Apostle ordered Bilal to get up and pronounce the Adhan for prayers.

*Bukhari 11.578*

**Archie:** When a god, if you believe it was a god, with a religion to sell chose a salesman to get it done, He obviously knew what He was doing.

**Uzza:** Muhammad was not a salesman; he was a merchant!

**Archie:** Same diff!

**Uzza:** It was this inspired choice of a person who knew how to take advantage of humanity's cupidity and fears that ensured Islam would be the success that it is today. Muhammad, before he discovered that he had been chosen to speak on God's behalf and implement His agenda, was a merchant, a very successful merchant. He and his Mentor understood advertising before advertising as we know it was understood. They understood how you create brand loyalty and how you get your brand out there; from using women as billboards<sup>34</sup> to houses of worship as imposing monuments to the awesomeness of your brand, visible from almost anywhere.

**Bob:** By billboards, you mean by the way they dress?

**Uzza:** Yes.

**Archie:** They even allowed these billboards in schools. Teachers are role models. My daughter the other day came home from school and asked if she could wear a mask like one of her teachers because good girls cover their face and hair in public.

**Bob:** NO THEY DON'T!

**Archie:** All this Islam in your face everywhere all of the time obviously drove some people nuts. It made them crazy enough to think that by shooting up people they would get the same response that the Islamic State got from flooding the internet with beheading videos: more recruits to the cause.

**Uzza:** If Western governments had been less accommodating of Islam, people might have been more accommodating of Islam, and terrorist attacks by Islamists would have remained our only worry.

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<sup>34</sup> Islamic scholar Tarek Ramadan understood this only too well when he exhorted believing women to invade the public space dressed in traditional Islamic garbs as a part of a campaign to swamp the West with advertising for the Islamic way of life. It was Tariq Ramadan's mother, Wafa al-Banna, the daughter of Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, who instructed her son in the Salafist theology which guides the actions of Islamic State, and which her son would see propagated worldwide, assisted by the non-threatening example of females on parade to conceal the encroachment on the secular of an intolerant brutal ideology.

**Gerry:** How's that?

**Uzza:** Some people believe in the separation of Church and State as deeply as Islamists believe there should be no such distinction. Allowing Islam to blur this line by allowing it to market its ideology everywhere made people uneasy, and rightly so. If governments had held the line against a militant Islam which recognises no man-made boundaries to its expansion and jealously guarded the fragile exception<sup>35</sup> that is Western civilization instead of caving in to bullies, there might have been fewer reasons for people to fear Islam.

**Gerry:** So you agree that Islamophobia is real.

**Uzza:** A fear of Islam is real, and it is not a phobia, as Islamists and their patsies would have you believe.

**Gerry:** By patsies, you mean politicians?

**Uzza:** And many well-meaning people who did not know any better. A fear of Islam is a legitimate fear. Fear is what non-believers who get close and personal with the Koran and Allah's unrestrained visceral hatred and cruelty for their kind will experience, for that is the intent. It is a fear nourished and amplified by the Author's demands of believers when it comes to dealing with those for whom He has nothing but absolute contempt: from avoiding them, to enslaving them, to killing them. Fear is what terrorism in the name of Allah is all about.

**Archie:** And all this time I thought it was love.

**Uzza:** Very funny. Instead of dealing with this fear in a forthright manner, Western governments preferred spreading the Islamic slander that a fear of Islam is an irrational fear, that of Islamophobia, or worse, racism, as if Islam was a race and not a religion.

**Archie:** They're not crazy, you are!

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<sup>35</sup> After centuries of strife, the West has learned to separate religion and politics – to establish the legitimacy of its leaders without referring to divine command. There is little reason to expect the rest of the world – the Islamic world in particular – will follow. We in the West find it incomprehensible that theological ideas still inflame the minds of men, stirring up messianic passions that can leave societies in ruin. We had assumed that this was no longer possible, that human beings had learned to separate religious questions from political ones, that political theology died in 16th-century Europe. We were wrong. It's we who are the fragile exception.

*The Stillborn God: Religion, Politics and the Modern West* (2007), Mark Lilla, professor of the humanities at Columbia University

**Gerry:** When you say the preachers who use the mosques as a cover will rise up, many having already done so, to encourage the believers to step up their attacks on unbelievers, at least you will be okay.

**Uzza:** NO, I WILL NOT BE OKAY! I, and those like me, like my father, will be the first to be butchered, for in the eyes of the Islamists we are heretics.

**Gerry:** I'm sorry to hear that.

**Uzza:** The appeasers and apologists who have helped them will be next to be put to the sword for Islamists will not trust people who have betrayed their own Christian culture.

**Archie:** Serves them right!

**Uzza:** Islamists cherish death more than life itself, especially in the pursuit of their aim to make the world one barbaric Islamic caliphate. Like they did during the Islamic State, they will make the SS look like the Salvation Army. Their alien, violent, intolerant 7th century cult will utterly destroy us because your stupidity knows no bounds. May your children and children's children forgive your utter suicidal folly<sup>36</sup>.

**Gerry:** [*breaking the silence that is the men's response to Uzza's cri de coeur*] So that is what you meant when you said we let it happen.

**Bob:** [*thinking that a joke that Uzza might appreciate might be in order*] I got a joke for you. "What is the difference between a log and an unbeliever?"

**Uzza:** That is a variation of an old NAZI joke about Jews told by Islamists, which I do not care to hear.

**Bob:** [*oblivious*] A log does not scream and moan when you put it in the fire.

**Archie:** That's nasty. What is the NAZI version?

**Bob:** You'll have to ask Uzza.

**Uzza:** If you insist. The Islamist variation seem to have been inspired by a revelation by Allah where He brags about piling unbelievers like

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<sup>36</sup> Dialogue beginning with "The appeasers and apologists" also adapted from a response by an individual who goes by the pseudonym Haïm Ittah to an Ottawa Citizen story about the Nice truck attack which killed 84 people including 10 children.

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logs before casting them into Hell<sup>37</sup>. Where the NAZIs got their inspiration I do not know, but in their version, Jews are compared to pies. The question asked is, "What is the difference between a Jew and a pie?"

**Archie:** Let me guess; a pie does not scream and moan when you put it in the oven. That is even nastier.

**Gerry:** Uzza, are you comparing Islamists to NAZIs?

**Uzza:** There are parallels between Islamists and NAZIs. They both have a book which proclaims a segment of humankind to be superior to the rest. In *Mein Kampf* it is the superior race; in the Koran it is the superior believers.

**Bob:** Which is worse?

**Uzza:** Both books offer similar recommendations as to what is to be done with inferiors; that they are to be killed or enslaved. The Koran, however, unlike Hitler's book, offers a path to superiority and life. And, if not superiority, life for unbelievers whom it considers close in beliefs, the so-called People of the Book; Jews, Christians and an obscure sect call the Sabians<sup>38</sup>. They have the option of not converting and not being murdered for their insolence if they pay the right-to-continue-breathing tax and do so humbly. Everyone else, it is convert or die!

**Bob:** The right-to-continue-breathing-tax. What the hell is that?

**Uzza:** I am being silly, it is called the Jizya<sup>39</sup>. Most say it is the *Verse of the Sword* which was most responsible for Islam's quick conquest of much of the Middle East and North Africa following Muhammad's death. But, I say it is the Jizya verse. The *Verse of the Sword* with its call

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<sup>37</sup> 8:37 So that Allah might separate the foul from the fair and place the foul, one upon the other, piling them up all together and casting them into Hell. Those are truly the losers.

<sup>38</sup> 2:62 The believers (Muslims), the Jews, the Christians and the Sabians – whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and does what is good, shall receive their reward from their Lord. They shall have nothing to fear and they shall not grieve.

Revelation 2:62 is said to be abrogated by 3:85:

3:85 Whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted from him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers.

<sup>39</sup> 9:29 Fight those among the People of the Book who do not believe in Allah and the Last Day, do not forbid what Allah and His Messenger have forbidden and do not profess the true religion, till they pay the poll-tax out of hand and submissively.

to be merciless with those who refuse to submit to the Will of Allah will lead to Islam's ultimate victory<sup>40</sup>, but it is this revelation imposing a poll-tax on non-Muslims which will make it all possible.

**Bob:** That means, if it's in the Koran, it's a tax imposed by God. Why would God need money?

**Uzza:** That is funny, because that is what the Jews of Medina, who would be the first to have to pay the tax, told Muhammad when informed of this part of Allah's plan.

**Bob:** Wait a minute here. The Prophet lived among the Jews and he wanted to tax them for the benefit of the Muslims?

**Uzza:** It is a long story.

**Johnny:** I would love to hear it, but I have therapy early in the morning. I have to go. It was a pleasure meeting you, Uzza. Maybe we will get together again soon.

**Uzza:** I would like that.

**Johnny:** [*heads for the exit*] Goodbye all. See you tomorrow, Archie.

**Archie:** See ya, Johnny.

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<sup>40</sup> The “Verse of the Sword”, verse 9:5 is said to supersede all other verses on the subject of war and peace.

9:5 Then, when the Sacred Months (these are the four months during which war was prohibited in pre-Islamic times) are over, kill the idolaters wherever you find them, take them [as captives], besiege them, and lie in wait for them at every point of observation. If they repent afterwards, perform the prayer and pay the alms then release them. Allah is truly All-Forgiving, Merciful.

As David Cook, author of *Understanding Jihad* explains: “while its immediate subject (verse 9:5) is the Pagan Arabs—a narrow application sustained by early commentators—later Muslim jurists would use the verse to proclaim a universal jihad against all non-Muslims.”

# The First Holy Homicide

**Uzza:** In Medina lived three Jewish tribes. The Jews of Medina were a wealthy, prosperous community. They were also considered the intellectual class of the city. If it had not been for the Jews of Medina who intervened to shelter Muhammad, who was on the run from his Meccan kin who wanted to kill him for promoting what they considered a hateful intolerant religion, Islam would have been literally dead on arrival.

**Gerry:** Were these the same Jews about whom the Prophet said stones would betray their presence so that the Muslims could kill them?

**Uzza:** That was a Judgment Day prophecy where Muhammad said that before that came about, a mass slaughter of the Jews would take place, and that stones would alert the believers to any Jews, who, to avoid getting killed, hid behind them<sup>41</sup>.

**Archie:** [*under his breath*] And I thought a talking sponge was a bit of a stretch<sup>42</sup>.

**Bob:** Why did the Jews save a guy who hated them that much?

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<sup>41</sup> Narrated Abu Huraira:

Allah's Apostle said, "The Hour will not be established until you fight with the Jews, and the stone behind which a Jew will be hiding will say, "O Muslim! There is a Jew hiding behind me, so kill him."

*Bukhari 52.177*

In a Sahih Muslim authenticated hadith, the trees also are accomplices in the slaughter of the Jews.

Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: The last hour would not come unless the Muslims will fight against the Jews and the Muslims would kill them until the Jews would hide themselves behind a stone or a tree and a stone or a tree would say: Muslim, or the servant of Allah, there is a Jew behind me; come and kill him; but the tree gharqad would not say, for it is the tree of the Jews.

*Sahih Muslim 041.6985*

<sup>42</sup> From *SpongeBob SquarePants*, a popular children's cartoon series where the protagonist is a talking sponge. A reminder of Johnny's impression of Islam as the product of a "child-like mind." If these anthropomorphising rants, which you also find in abundance in the Koran, are not a result of a latent manifestation of childhood fears and fantasies, then Islam has more in common with animism than it dares admit.

**Uzza:** The hate would come later. When Muhammad sought refuge in the oasis city, he was welcomed by the Jews, in part, because he preached that the god of the Old Testament was the one and only God. They even entered into a covenant with him to come to his aid if the Muslims were attacked. In return, he signed a promise of non-aggression.

**Bob:** What happened to make them hate each other?

**Uzza:** The three Jewish tribes of Medina did not see the rise of Islam as a threat to them until Muhammad and his followers developed an appetite for booty and started raiding the caravans that passed by the city on their way to and from Mecca.

**Bob:** And Allah was okay with that?

**Uzza:** Yes. He sent out a revelation to that effect, telling Muhammad and his followers that He had retroactively made it lawful for the believers, for them only, to take spoils, captives, even the food of unbelievers<sup>43</sup>. Muhammad even bragged that Allah had given him, and by extension the believers, the keys to the treasures of the world. He

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<sup>43</sup> 8:67 It is not up to any Prophet to take captives except after too much blood is shed (after the enemy is hard hit and subdued) in the land. You desire the fleeting goods of this world, but Allah desires the Hereafter, and Allah is Mighty, Wise.

8:68 But for a prior ordinance of Allah, you would have been afflicted on account of what you have taken (an ordinance which made it lawful for Muslims to take spoils and captives) by a terrible punishment.

A hair-raising saying of Muhammad about privilege and entitlement confirming what Allah revealed about making stolen goods, one definition of booty, lawful for believers and believers only.

**Narrated Jabir bin Abdullah:**

The Prophet said, "I have been given five things which were not given to any one else before me.

1. Allah made me victorious by awe, (by His frightening my enemies) for a distance of one month's journey.
2. The earth has been made for me (and for my followers) a place for praying and a thing to perform Tayammum (dry ablution i.e. washing oneself before prayer using sand or dust if no water available), therefore anyone of my followers can pray wherever the time of a prayer is due.
3. The booty has been made Halal (lawful) for me (and my followers) yet it was not lawful for anyone else before me.
4. I have been given the right of intercession (on the Day of Resurrection).
5. Every Prophet used to be sent to his nation only but I have been sent to all mankind."



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said: "I have been made victorious with terror, and while I was sleeping, the keys of the treasures of the world were brought to me and put in my hand."<sup>44</sup>

**Archie:** Back the Prophet up for a minute. Did you just say that terrorism leads to victory?

**Uzza:** I did not say that.

**Archie:** No, but he did.

**Uzza:** You could say that.

**Bob:** That means, when Islamists commit acts of terrorism, they are just following the example of the Prophet. It's a religious thing. WOW!

**Uzza:** The terrorism Muhammad talked about was not about getting your neighbour to fear you, but to fear God.

**Bob:** Like I said, it's a religious thing.

**Archie:** Doesn't your religion have commandments about not killing, blowing people to bits to impress other people into becoming Muslims or your brand of believers?

**Uzza:** Islam does not have commandments like the Ten Commandments which are universal in their application (appendix: Pillars of Faith and Belief). There are similar admonitions against killing and stealing and so on in the Koran but they all come with an exception (appendix: Tolerance Abrogated); and the exceptions usually have to do with what you can do to unbelievers, but not to the believers.

**Archie:** Are you saying that if a Muslim steals from another Muslim it is a sin, but if he steals from an unbeliever it is not; if he kills another Muslim it is a sin, if he kills an unbeliever it is not; if he lies to a Muslim it is a sin, if he lies to an unbeliever it is not; if he rapes a Muslim it is a sin, if he rapes an unbeliever it is not. Is that what I'm hearing?

**Uzza:** Sort of. It is simply another form of terror to get you to submit to Allah's Will and avoid all that unpleasantness.

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<sup>44</sup> **Narrated Abu Huraira:**

Allah's Apostle said, "I have been sent with the shortest expressions bearing the widest meanings, and I have been made victorious with terror (cast in the hearts of the enemy), and while I was sleeping, the keys of the treasures of the world were brought to me and put in my hand."

*Bukhari 52.220*

**Archie:** Terror is not an unpleasantness, even when the threat is not carried out. It is a horrible thing to do to people and a bloody crime!

**Uzza:** It is only a crime if you could have gotten someone to submit by less drastic means but chose terror. Allah will not be happy. You really do not want Allah to be unhappy with you. Terror is a last resort.

**Archie:** Not according to the Prophet.

**Uzza:** Whatever Muhammad said or did cannot contradict the Koran and the Koran condones violence only as a last resort. Therefore, if Muhammad said he was successful through terrorism it was because only through terrorism could he be successful in the time that he lived. And he was proven right through the ages.

**Gerry:** But terrorism can't be justified in the age that we live and be the reason why we're toast.

**Uzza:** Consider what has happened since the attack on the World Trade Center and the London subway bombings, the Nice and Bataclan massacres, and the list goes on. Laws have been passed that stifle criticism of the very scriptures that inspired and continue to inspire the indiscriminate slaughter of men, women and children, allowing Islam to advance almost unchallenged to a point where, to use your expression, "we are toast."

**Gerry:** When did the Prophet reach the conclusion that a fear of being killed was the best way to get converts to Islam?

**Uzza:** It all started with a raid that went wrong, perhaps by design. Muhammad arrived in Medina a former merchant with nothing to trade, leading a bunch of men with no marketable skills. Medina was a peaceful oasis city where those who understood how to grow things were in demand, not warriors. How were the believers to survive, and Allah expected them to survive, except by stealing? Raids on unescorted caravans during the months that were not considered sacred and which did not involve killing anyone were not that uncommon, especially by Bedouins. You intimidated your victims into parting with their belonging by a simple show of strength.

**Gerry:** How civilized.

**Uzza:** Robert Montagne, in *La civilisation du désert*, wrote of the pre-Islamic Arabs: "I am not aware in the entire history of civilisation of a more gracious, more loving, more vibrant society than that of the Arabs before Islam ... [it was a time] ... of unbound freedom, lofty

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sentiments, a nomadic and chivalrous way of life, [a land] of fantasy, joy, mischievousness, bawdy impious poetry, refined love-making..."

**Bob:** "Refined love-making." I can go for that.

**Uzza:** There was also a practical reason you avoided killing anyone, for Talion law was the law of the land. You killed anyone and their extended family, their tribe would demand retribution in kind and you did not want that. Anyway, that would soon change, a change Allah approved of which heightened the Jews' apprehension of the people they had saved.

**Bob:** What is Talion law again?

**Uzza:** It means "law of retaliation." It is most commonly expressed as "an eye for an eye."

**Gerry:** Isn't that also what Islamic law is about?

**Uzza:** Talion law made it almost unchanged into the Koran. It is one of the defining differences between Islam and Christianity. You say turn the other cheek; we say slap him right back<sup>45</sup>.

**Archie:** What was this raid that changed everything?

**Uzza:** The Meccans' response to the Muslim raiders was to send larger detachments of armed men to accompany their caravans. This did the trick, forcing Muhammad and the believers to look for softer targets. The softer target that would change everything was a small unescorted farmers' caravan making its way from Ta'if to Mecca.

**Gerry:** Why would Muhammad be interested in a farmer's labour when he lived on an oasis?

**Uzza:** It is possible that the raid, especially the timing of it, was a ploy by the farsighted Muhammad to do away, once and for all, with the interdiction against warfare during the Sacred Months. An interdiction which he could foresee would play havoc with his plans to Islamize (sic) the Peninsula by force.

**Archie:** What are these sacred months?

**Uzza:** Today they are sacred in name only. In pre-Islamic times there was a four-month festival centered on Mecca, a festival referred to as the Sacred Months. The Sacred Months allowed everyone to make their

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<sup>45</sup> 2:179 In retaliation there is life for you, O people of understanding, that you may be God-fearing.

way to Mecca unmolested. During this period, all faiths came together; all wars and all petty quarrels had to stop.

**Gerry:** Again, how civilized.

**Uzza:** That all changed with the first unprovoked murder of an unbeliever. In November 623, having failed to plunder even a single Meccan caravan passing between the Red Sea and Medina, Muhammad decides to attack a non-Meccan caravan plying another route. It is all very hush-hush. Even the men who will carry out the raid do not yet know their ultimate target.

The leader of an eight-man raiding party is given a letter by Muhammad — yes, somebody else probably wrote it — which he is told not to read until he arrives at a famous well two days ride by camel. Two weeks later, they reach their final destination on the trade route between Mecca and Ta'if where they wait for a caravan making its way from Ta'if to Mecca.

There is still a day left in the sacred month of Rajab when they spot four men on their way to Mecca with a cargo of raisins, wine and animal skins. If they wait a day until the end of the sacred month to attack, the small caravan will have reached the precinct of Mecca and will be inviolate.

What to do? Follow Muhammad's instructions, which they believe to be from God or respect God's sacred month? They decide to attack, and one of the four people with the caravan is killed. Amr-ben-al Hadra'mi becomes the first reported murder of an unbeliever by a believer.

When they return to Medina, the story of the murder of Hadra'mi during a sacred month has spread far and wide. A scandal erupts. Believers and unbelievers alike are aghast that anyone would pillage and murder during a sacred month and that this sacrilege would be tolerated. Muhammad's reputation and his quest are at stake.

He is surprised by the uproar but is unperturbed. He orders that the puny plunder for which a man was killed — raisins, wine and animal skins — be set aside and not distributed until he has heard from God. A few days later, the Angel Gabriel delivers revelations from Allah intended to clarify the rules regarding this killing business during a

## 53 The First Holy Homicide

sacred month. In a series of revealed truths, Allah implicitly condones the killing of unbelievers year-round if it will advance His Cause<sup>46</sup>.

**Archie:** And what is His Cause?

**Uzza:** A world governed by the Sharia, which means God's law. The murder of Hadra'mi haunts us, all of us, to this day. His murder and Allah's failure to categorically condemn the killing during a sacred month meant that jihad could be conducted throughout the year. This could have been Muhammad's objective all along, we do not know.

**Archie:** From what you just said, it was. The Prophet wanted the people to kill for him and to have no problem with it, so he made murder on his behalf murder on a god's behalf. He made cold-blooded,

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<sup>46</sup> First, Allah establishes, as a general principal, that killing in retaliation for a killing is allowed during a sacred month; and that killing those who would violate things that are sacred to the believers is justified year-round.

2:194 A sacred month for a sacred month; and retaliation [is allowed] when sacred things [are violated]. Thus, whoever commits aggression against you, retaliate against him in the same way. Fear Allah and know that Allah is with those who fear Him.

Don't let this stop you from spending money and fighting in Allah's Cause, lest you cause your own destruction.

2:195 Spend [money] for the Cause of Allah and do not cast yourselves with your own hands into destruction (do not stop fighting for the Cause of Allah), and be charitable. Surely Allah loves the charitable.

What about killing during the sacred months where there is no apparent provocation or reason, as in the murder of Amr-ben-al Hadra'mi? In a fine piece of hair splitting, Allah both condemns and condones the murder of Amr-ben-al Hadra'mi. In doing so He implicitly, if not explicitly, gives the believers a licence to kill anyone, anywhere, at any time if they honestly believe it will advance the cause of Allah, such as killing those who would "debar people from Allah's Way," which could be anyone, even other Muslims.

He does not stop there! He reminds the believers who would rather live in peace that fighting "is good for you" and that they should kill anyone at any time, even entire communities, if they fear they will leave Islam, the meaning of "Sedition is worse than murder" in revelation 2:217.

2:216 You are enjoined to fight, though it is something you dislike. For it may well be that you dislike a thing, although it is good for you; or like something although it is bad for you. Allah knows and you do not.

2:217 They ask you about the sacred month: "Is there fighting in it?" Say: "Fighting in it is a great sin; but to debar people from Allah's Way and to deny Him and the Sacred Mosque, and to drive its people out of it is a greater sin in Allah's Sight. Sedition is worse than murder." Nor will they cease to fight you until they make you, if they can, renounce your religion. Those of you who renounce their religion and die, while they are unbelievers, are those whose works come to grief, [both] in this world and in the Hereafter. And they are the people of the Fire, abiding in it forever.

premeditated, self-serving murder holy if you murdered those who didn't buy into what he preached.

**Bob:** Holy Homicide, Batman.

**Uzza:** Jihadists and Islamists murder in Allah's Cause, not Muhammad's. They consider the murders they commit morally justifiable because they ARE DONE on God's behalf.

**Archie:** Like I said!

**Uzza:** Islam operates under a different morality than the comic-book Western variety.

**Gerry:** Uzza, how can you call Western morality, which is based on Judeo-Christian values, comical?

**Uzza:** I am sorry. I did not wish to denigrate those values. Quite the contrary. Bob's Batman comment reminded me that in comic books, the battle between good and evil is taken seriously. In real life, it was not, which is why Judeo-Christians values, which consider murder immoral under all circumstances, are about to be replaced by dogma where murder is not only permissible but encouraged.

**Bob:** So, the first holy homicide was a positive thing?

**Uzza:** From an Islamic perspective, yes.

**Bob:** What happened next?

**Archie:** More holy homicides. What do you think?!

## Remember the Alamo

**Uzza:** Before long, Muhammad was informed that a rich caravan would shortly be passing by on its way to Mecca. To protect the caravan from the believers, the Meccans sent the now standard detachment of armed men. Muhammad decides, to use a poker expression, to go all in. This will not be an ordinary raid. They are unbelievers and Allah has decreed that killing unbelievers in His Cause is the right thing to do and let us get on with it. The battle of Badr is the most quoted battle in the Koran and an inspiration for Islamists and others to this day.

**Archie:** How do you spell that?

**Uzza:** English or Arabic?

**Archie:** English, of course.

**Uzza:** I am just having fun with you. You do not know Arabic, the second most popular language in most Western countries, and soon to be number one?

**Archie:** My kids get their regular dose of Arabic in school. When I went to school, it was French you had to learn if you wanted to graduate. So yes, I don't know Arabic, and don't care to.

**Uzza:** Do not get upset. The English spelling is B A D R, and can I have another glass of wine please?

**Archie:** Why not? [*refills her glass*]

**Bob:** So, what was it with bad r and the Jews?

**Uzza:** The believers' victory at Badr, the first real battle of a war which continues to this day in one form or another, only added to the Jews' uneasiness at having rescued Muhammad and his small band from certain death. The believers at Badr defeated a much larger force. An attack that should have been easily repulsed resulted in a dramatic victory for the outnumbered believers.

As in the case of all victories described in the Koran, Allah is quick to take credit, revealing that he sent His angels with swords to strike at the necks<sup>47</sup>, that is, behead the unbelievers.

**Archie:** Beheaders from heaven and not from that other place we all know and love.

**Uzza:** High school.

**Bob:** I think Archie meant Hell.

**Uzza:** I meant high school or maybe college. Not then, but today.

**Gerry:** I get it. You're referring to all those high school and college kids who are the stars of the new pornography that is beheading videos in Allah's Cause.

**Uzza:** It is not pornography. Pornography is a sin.

**Gerry:** The angels at Badr did not need any motivation. Angels do what their boss tells them to do, no matter how atrocious. But, students are not angels; how do you get them to do what angels do?

**Uzza:** Prayers in schools and the Friday sermon played a big part and continue to motivate children of all ages to behave like angels.

**Archie:** Damn madrassas!

**Uzza:** Damn public school system!

**Archie:** Huh...

**Uzza:** Schools whose primary function is to indoctrinate students into Islamic scriptures and where prayers are mandatory and can be heard at all hours of the day cannot help, even when that is not their intent, encouraging students to do what angels do. Instead of doing what the Chinese did and severely limiting the influence of madrassas on young minds, the West extended their reach into the secular school system, thereby making a joke of a secular education and creating more angel imitators in the process.

**Gerry:** You lost me.

**Uzza:** By accommodating prayers and Friday worship within the secular school system, the West made a mockery of a secular education. Everyone who attended was exposed to the bombardment of the word

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<sup>47</sup> 8:12 And when your Lord revealed to the angels: "I am with you; so support those who believe. I will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve; so strike upon the necks and strike every fingertip of theirs."



of God and to the Islamist's credo that any study besides that of the Koran<sup>48</sup> and the sayings and example of Muhammad is doing what the devil wants us to do<sup>49</sup>.

**Archie:** That's enough to convince me – that, and the angels as beheaders – that Islam has it backwards. Either devils are the good guys or, if you believe in the nonsense of what you call revealed truths, the Koran is the work of the Devil to make angels and all that is good, bad.

**Gerry:** Timothy Findley made more or less the same argument in *Not Wanted on the Voyage*, about the devils and their leader Lucifer being the good guys who lost the battle with the bad guys, Yahweh's angels, which is why there is so much misery in the world. He died an old celebrated author. But I doubt you will live to a ripe old age, Archie, if you say the same thing about the Koran having it backwards.

**Archie:** I know. The people at Charlie Hebdo never went that far and look what happened to them<sup>50</sup>. Findley was lucky to live at a time before freedom of expression had to be god-friendly "or else."

**Bob:** Don't you mean Satan-friendly?

**Archie:** Shut up!

**Uzza:** It does not matter, Archie. What matters is that the believers not only succeeded in getting governments to enforce, to use your expression, "god-friendly freedom of expression," but to make everywhere welcoming of God including what had previously been a god-free zone, the secular public school. In doing so, it downgraded

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<sup>48</sup> In a comparison of believers and criminals, Allah makes the claim that His Koran contains everything that anyone could care to study.

68:35 Shall We consider those who submit like those who are criminals?

68:36 What is the matter with you; how do you judge?

68:37 Or do you have a Book in which you study?

68:38 Wherein there is whatever you choose.

<sup>49</sup> Any study beside that of the Quran is a distraction, except the Hadith and jurisprudence in the religion. Knowledge is what He narrated to us, and anything other than that is the whispering of the Satan.

*Al-Qaeda*

<sup>50</sup> On January 7, 2015 gunmen shouting Allahu Akbar! (Arabic for "God is great") shot dead 12 people at the Paris offices of the magazine Charlie Hebdo for satirizing God's self-proclaimed last and greatest spokesperson, the Prophet Muhammad, and his fanatical followers.

reason in favour of dogma, thereby making its eventual triumph over reason a foregone conclusion<sup>51</sup>.

**Gerry:** Whitney Houston said it best in song: "Teach your children well and let them lead the way"<sup>52</sup>. But we didn't do that, did we, teach them well?

**Uzza:** From an Islamist's point of view, we did very well!

**Gerry:** How could we have been so stupid?

**Uzza:** Canadians were not stupid but bonasse; they could not help themselves.

**Bob:** Bone ass; that sounds painful.

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<sup>51</sup> It is both a truism and a cliché that children are the future. Where that future will be shaped is in the classroom.

The public non-denominational school system is both the strength and the Achilles' heel of our democratic collectives. The strength can be found in schools where children are still taught that the human journey is a journey in the pursuit of knowledge through scientific enquiry and critical thinking. Each generation being responsible for taking that additional step in the direction of the elusive, ultimate truth, which, if ever discovered, would mean the end of the human journey as we know it.

The empirical pursuit of knowledge about our universe and our place in it, a gift from the Greeks of antiquity rediscovered during the Renaissance and the period known as the Enlightenment, is facing a serious challenge from those who believe that this journey ended long ago and that we should now simply worship and wait for the promised reward for our uncritical acceptance of revealed truths, immutable facts communicated to a mortal by a god...

Most, if not all, religions would like nothing better than to transform classrooms into centers of religious indoctrination instead of education. [Government everywhere] appear more and more willing to support faith-based initiatives that seek to eliminate a child's last refuge from the incessant bombardment of the word of God: the secular school system...

Can democracy, the advancement of science, civilization itself survive too many generations raised to blindly follow instructions from humanity's alleged all-powerful, capricious, invisible friend?

If children are not exposed to and learn to appreciate the values inherent in a secular, democratic society free from religion's more nefarious influence, what hope is there that our democratic, pluralistic form of government will survive the generations raised on a steady diet of God's Words?

*From Teach Your Children Well, Bernard Payeur, Boreal Books, 2013*

<sup>52</sup> Teach Your Children Well

Children are our future

Teach them well and let them lead the way

*Greatest Love of All by Whitney Houston*

*Lyrics by Michael Masser and Linda Creed*

**Uzza:** It means to be kind to the point of being foolish, and pain is usually the result.

**Archie:** That was Canada alright!

**Uzza:** Others, like the French, got us to where we are because, in their arrogance, they thought they could control the message if they institutionalized it. They could not. The message is in an alien dialect and, unlike the Chinese, they were unwilling to put limits on Allah's "glorious Arabic."

**Gerry:** Uzza, are you saying that the spread of Islam and Arabic went hand-in-hand? That we could have limited one by limiting the other?

**Uzza:** If not the spread, the damage. Allah will not listen to prayers not spoken in His patented Arabic<sup>53</sup>, the language of the Koran.

**Bob:** So that is why every Muslim is required to learn Arabic.

**Uzza:** That is one reason. It also strengthens the bonds between believers, putting even more distance between them and the unbelievers. Many of Islam's rituals, customs, even the way Islamists dress – and Allah and Muhammad make no bones about this – are meant to do just that, to avoid contamination while projecting an air of superiority in belief. And let us not forget the immense tactical and strategic advantage of having every believer speak in a language they all understand, while their opponents are hampered by a Tower of Babel of tongues and have to depend on scarce, not-always-accurate interpreters to be able to fathom not only the believers' intentions but that of their own allies in a fight for survival.

**Bob:** I still don't understand what saying prayers in school have to do with believers wanting to take the unbelievers' heads off.

**Uzza:** But they are related.

**Bob:** Prayers are prayers. Big deal!

**Uzza:** In Islam they are a big deal for the believers and should be an even bigger deal for unbelievers, for the prayers are mainly about them. Prayers in Islam involve repeating verses from the Koran, including the verses that reek of hatred for unbelievers and which

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<sup>53</sup> 26:192 And this (the Qur'an) is the revelation of the Lord of the Worlds;

26:193 Brought down by the Faithful Spirit (Gabriel),

26:194 Upon your heart (Muhammad), so that you might be one of the warners;

26:195 In manifest Arabic tongue

appear on almost every page of what is a short holy book, by holy book standards, at about 1/10 the size in words of the Bible. You are about to be smothered by a religion that tolerates no equal<sup>54</sup> and you do not even know the significance of its most basic rituals: the daily prayers and the Friday sermon.

**Bob:** Sorry I asked.

**Gerry:** What about the sermon?

**Uzza:** The sermon can be in whatever language and is subject to laws regarding hate speech, if you dare to bring it up<sup>55</sup>.

**Gerry:** At least that part everyone can understand.

**Uzza:** Not always. Remember the Alamo?

**Bob:** Uzza, you've had too much to drink.

**Uzza:** "Remember the Alamo" was a way of reminding people about why they should hate the Mexicans during Texas' fight for independence from Mexico. It meant something to those who understood what the cry was all about and nothing to those who knew nothing about the famous battle.

**Gerry:** [*getting Uzza's drift*] But the believers won the battle of Badr?

**Uzza:** It does not matter. If I say "Remember Badr" or even more evocative battles to come where Jews and Christians are the targets, I am telling, reminding those who know their Koran who they should hate and who they must subdue, if not behead, when the opportunity arises and they are at their mercy.

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<sup>54</sup> 3:85 Whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted from him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers.

<sup>55</sup> A Toronto-area school board is cautioning its staff and students to be vigilant after an inflammatory video was found circulating online offering a \$1,000 reward for a recording of Muslim students using hate speech in Friday prayers ...

In the video, Mr. Johnston claimed that hate speech in the Friday prayers would be in Arabic and would go unchecked by staff supervisors. But the Peel board countered by saying that the sermons are in English.

*Reward video latest wrinkle in Peel board's religious tensions, The Globe and Mail Published Friday, Mar. 31, 2017.*

Nowhere is the cluelessness of the people making the decisions pertaining to devotions to Allah during schools hours on school property more evident than in the Peel School Board's response to Mr. Johnston's incendiary challenge, that "the sermons are in English."

## 61 Remember the Alamo

**Bob:** With all the more humane ways you have today for religious fanatics to kill people, why all the beheadings?

**Uzza:** Imitation, in Islam, is the sincerest form of worship and how you best honour Muhammad, whom Allah praised as a good example to follow if you do not want to go to Hell<sup>56</sup>.

**Gerry:** How do you stop the Friday school sermon preachers from using expressions whose message of hate and invitation to murder in Allah's Cause is so cleverly camouflaged?

**Uzza:** [*raising her voice*] EASY! DON'T ALLOW RELIGION IN SCHOOLS!

**Archie:** A bit late for that, isn't it?

**Uzza:** A secular education free from the bombardment of the word of God was our only hope of undoing the damage done at home. Instead, we made sure the damage was permanent.

**Archie:** How?

**Uzza:** The Friday sermon can be a source of diabolic inspiration and a confidence booster for those in the know, but it is Islamic prayers in schools which do the most damage by reinforcing a child's confidence in the revealed truths he or she read or mouthed under the not-always-gentle tutelage of his or her mother<sup>57</sup>. Revealed truths are reason's opposite; they cannot coexist. One must triumph over the other. By allowing prayers in schools supposedly dedicated to teaching children to think for themselves, we facilitated the triumph of dogma over reason.

**Bob:** What exactly is this thing done at home that is so bad?

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<sup>56</sup> 33:21 You have had a good example in Allah's Messenger; surely for him who hopes for Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah often.

<sup>57</sup> **Life in jail for son's murder over Koran studies**

A mother who beat her seven-year-old son to death when he failed to memorise passages from the Koran has been jailed for life, for a minimum of 17 years. The judge said she had beaten him for three months leading up to his death, adding: "The cause of the beating was your unreasonable view that he wasn't learning passages quickly enough."

*BBC January 7, 2013*

# Home School

**Uzza:** There is a very common ceremony practiced throughout most of the Muslim world called Khatmi-Qur'an. It is the ceremony to recognize and celebrate a child's first full reading of the Koranic text in Arabic. Most children complete the first full reading or mouthing of the Qur'an between the age of four and seven. It is the mother's responsibility to get her children to the Khatmi-Qur'an.

**Archie:** No pressure there!

**Uzza:** Mosques around the world have the equivalent of Sunday school classes to assist the mother in getting her children "to master the proper pronunciation and to read the text clearly from the first verse to the last."

**Gerry:** I understand where that could be a problem.

**Uzza:** Reading the Koran, children as young as four years old receive a premature sex education skewed by Islam's concept of morality as part of their religious indoctrination. Children who should be enjoying Babar the Elephant or Cinderella instead get an error-filled explanation of procreation where a woman's role is relegated to providing "a secure place" for Allah to place a man's sperm from which He will fashion a human being (appendix: Allah and the Beginnings of Life).

**Archie:** That would explain those smug men you see on the street with their covered receptacles in tow. You never know when you will need one. Sperm spilled anywhere but in Allah's designated receptacle is a sin I presume?

**Uzza:** If you are referring to masturbation, yes. Reading the Koran, children learn that their mother cannot refuse their father's demand to use them as a receptacle<sup>58</sup>. If she does, not only can she be beaten, but she will probably be charged with his sin if he is forced to make love to himself.

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<sup>58</sup> 2:223 Your women are a tillage for you. So get to your tillage whenever you like. Do good for yourselves, fear Allah and know that you shall meet Him. And give good news to the believers.

**Bob:** Woody Allen said that masturbation is having sex with someone you love and therefore you should not knock it.

**Archie:** He also said that if God did not want us to masturbate, he would have given us shorter arms.

**Uzza:** A much greater sin than making love to yourself is men making love to other men. Reading the Koran, children learn that homosexuals are to be despised for committing what Allah repeatedly damns as “the foul act”<sup>59</sup>.

**Gerry:** Allah knows nothing about love. To Him it’s all about the sex. It is sex and love together which makes the experience the wonderful thing that it is, whether it be between a man and a woman or people of the same gender.

**Uzza:** That is so right, but it is not what children reading the Koran get to appreciate. They learn to crave sex without love as they get familiar with Allah’s Paradise, which is all sex and no love. A place where men will fornicate to their heart’s content with people who, only a few seconds earlier, were complete strangers or on-the-spot manufactured facsimiles: the infamous houris. Then again, why would children, when they get older, want to experience love with what the Koran describes as deceitful, weak-minded inferiors consumed with lust for the male body as exemplified in Allah’s retelling of the story of Joseph, son of Jacob (appendix: Allah On Sexual Assault)? Left to their own devices, women would bring chaos to the orderly world of the Koran, which is why Allah has made their fathers, brothers, uncles and, later, their husbands their masters.

**Bob:** Why do women put up with it?

**Uzza:** Perhaps for the same reason millions of women voted for a man like Trump, and those who came after who were like him, and who treated them like dirt but promised to protect them from those who would treat them even worse. For believing women, worse is Allah

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<sup>59</sup> 29:45 Recite what has been revealed to you of the Book and perform the prayer. Prayer surely forbids the foul act and abomination. Allah’s remembrance is greater and Allah knows what you do.

27:54 And Lot, when he said to his people: “Do you commit the foul act, while you perceive?”

29:28 And (remember) Lot, when he said to his people: “You are committing the foul act (sodomy) which no one in the whole world ever committed before you.”

burning them in Hell if they disobey the men to whom He has given ownership rights.

**Bob:** Better to suffer in silence here than scream in agony later for an eternity.

**Uzza:** Children who read the Koran are warned not to take unbeliever as friends; they only wish them harm. If they do, God will be very angry<sup>60</sup>. Still too young to understand the horror of what they are being asked to do, children will read and repeat what will become a persistent refrain for the rest of their lives, words which encourage them to become martyrs and mass murderers in pursuit of a book's persistent message to rid the world of unbelievers.

**Gerry:** The medium is the message. McLuhan would be impressed that the most effective medium ever would turn out to be a book, and not a very good one at that<sup>61</sup>.

**Uzza:** It is the abject cruelty that sinks the Koran beyond redemption; that makes it an especially bad book for children. Children who read the Koran are exposed to acts of sadism that would make the Marquis de Sade cringe, like Allah boasting He will replace burnt skin with fresh skin to ensure the pain of burning never diminishes<sup>62</sup> or that He will roast a critic of Muhammad, a fellow by the name of Abu Lahab, with his wife, tethered like a dog, forced to fetch the firewood He will use to roast her husband in front of her<sup>63</sup>.

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<sup>60</sup> 3:28 Let not the believers take the unbelievers for friends, rather than the believers. Whoever does that has nothing to do with Allah, unless you guard against them fully! Allah warns you to beware of Him (warns you of His anger); and unto Him is the ultimate return!

<sup>61</sup> There is, of course, much that is wise and consoling and beautiful in our religious books. But words of wisdom and consolation and beauty abound in the pages of Shakespeare, Virgil and Homer as well and no one ever murdered strangers by the thousands because of the inspiration he found there. The belief that certain books were written by God (who, for reasons difficult to fathom, made Shakespeare a far better writer than himself) leaves us powerless to address the source of human conflict, past and present.

*Sam Harris, author of the New York Times bestseller, End of Faith, W. W. Norton, 2004*

<sup>62</sup> 4:56 Those who have disbelieved Our Signs, We shall surely cast them into the Fire; every time their skins are burnt, We will replace them by other skins, so that they might taste the punishment. Allah indeed is Mighty and Wise!

<sup>63</sup>

### 111 The Fibre

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

1. Perish the hands of Abu Lahab, and may he perish too;



**Archie:** What an a...! I can't say it.

**Uzza:** It is in the actions of a boastful pitiless torturer, fascinated by fire and the joy it brings when he uses it to inflict pain, that we get another inkling, probably the strongest, of a child-like mind behind the pain. For example, you could imagine a child naming a toy that annihilates people with fire, the Smasher; not a mature person, let alone a god.

**Bob:** Is the Smasher like a really big flame thrower?

**Uzza:** More like a crawling flame, a flame that crawls up people stretched out on pillars as it burns its way to their hearts<sup>64</sup>.

**Bob:** Creepy!

**Uzza:** And then there are the people who this child-like pain impresario will dress in garments of fire, which will melt their skins and whatever they had for lunch, while hot water is poured over their heads<sup>65</sup> and someone or something beats their heads with an iron bar<sup>66</sup>.

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2. Neither his wealth nor what he has earned will avail him anything.

3. He will roast in a flaming fire,

4. And his wife will be a carrier of fire-wood,

5. She shall have a rope of fibre around her neck.

64

#### **104 The Backbiter**

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

104:1 Woe unto every backbiter and slanderer,

104:2 Who amasses wealth and counts it diligently.

104:3 He thinks that his wealth will make him immortal.

104:4 Not at all; he shall be cast into the Smasher.

104:5 And if only you knew what is the Smasher.

104:6 It is Allah's kindled Fire,

104:7 Which attains even the hearts.

104:8 Upon them it is closing in;

104:9 On pillars stretch out.

<sup>65</sup> 18:29 And say: "The Truth is from your Lord. Whoever wishes, let him believe; and whoever wishes, let him disbelieve." We have prepared for the wrongdoers a Fire whose canopy encompasses them all. If they call for relief, they will be relieved with water like molten brass which scalds the faces. Wretched is that drink and wretched is the resting-place!

<sup>66</sup> 22:19 Here are two adversaries who dispute about their Lord. To the unbelievers, garments of fire shall be cut up and over their heads boiling water shall be poured;

22:20 Whereby whatever is in their bellies and in their skin shall be melted.

And when they ask for something to drink, it will be more boiling water which will “rip up their bowels”<sup>67</sup>.

**Bob:** Why would parents want their children to read stuff like that?

**Uzza:** Allah, in a revelation, warned the believers to guard themselves and their families from becoming fuel for His Fire<sup>68</sup>; and the only way you can do that is learn to fear Allah and do what He tells you. It is to save their children from such a horrible fate that parents get them to read the Koran as soon as they can mouth the words and learn what Allah expects of them and what He will do to them if they fail to comply.

**Bob:** As the songs says, sometimes “You've gotta be cruel to be kind”<sup>69</sup>.

**Archie:** Maybe, but why teach children to be cruel to other people, who, unlike God, mean them no harm? And, what is this about “becoming fuel for His Fire”?

**Uzza:** Allah’s fire is self-sustaining because unbelievers are both the combustible and the combusting.

**Archie:** What the fuck? Excuse my French.

**Uzza:** I think it is safe to assume that, due to the frequency of calling unbelievers fuel for His Hell<sup>70</sup>, it is people who are Allah’s favourite combustible.

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22:21 And for them are iron rods (to beat their heads with).

22:22 Every time they want, in their gloom, to get out of it (the Fire), they are brought back into it. [And it is said to them]: “Taste the agony of burning.”

<sup>67</sup> 47:15 The likeness of the Garden which the God-fearing have been promised is this: rivers of water not stagnant, rivers of milk whose taste has not changed, rivers of wine delighting its drinkers and rivers of distilled honey. Therein they have every variety of fruit and forgiveness from their Lord too. Are they to be compared with those who dwell in the Fire forever and are given to drink boiling water which will rip up their bowels?

<sup>68</sup> 66:6 O believers, guard yourselves and your families against a Fire whose fuel is people and stones; its overseers are harsh, terrible angels who do not disobey what Allah commands, but will do what they are commanded.

<sup>69</sup> "Cruel to Be Kind" by Nick Lowe and Ian Gomm, first released as a single in 1979.

<sup>70</sup> 2:24 If you do not do that, and surely you will not, then guard yourself against the Fire whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the unbelievers.

3:10 As to the unbelievers, neither their riches nor their children will avail them anything against Allah; in fact, they shall be the fuel of the Fire.

Other gods whose existence Allah vociferously denies will be joining the unbelievers in Hell to burn and be burnt in return.

**Gerry:** That's enough, Uzza. We've heard enough!

**Uzza:** You have to admire the genius of someone creating a Hell that is self-sustaining. People on fire burning other people and being burnt in return by other people being consumed by flames, and all the while, Allah, like a chef at his barbecue, replacing the skin of the people He is roasting...

**Gerry:** Please, Uzza. We were having a good time, everything considered, and this is ruining it.

**Uzza:** So you do not want to hear about what a child reading the Koran will be told about Judgment Day?

**Gerry:** To me, the Koran's description of Judgment Day is, in many ways, worse than what Allah revealed will happen to people in Hell. So, no.

**Bob:** But I do.

**Uzza:** Gerry's right. If you want more creepy stuff, Bob, and I mean real creepy stuff that kids should not have to read, pick up a copy of the one act-play, *Alice Visits a Mosque to Learn about Judgment* by the author of *Pain, Pleasure and Prejudice*. You will not be disappointed.

**Archie:** Maybe the Koran should be restricted to adults only with a warning for graphic sex, violence and other things.

**Uzza:** You will not get an argument from me. What happens to the mind, to the personality of a child who commits, must commit to memory not only the horrible verses we have talked about, but others that are even more impressive in their attention to detail when it comes to the deliberate, cold-blooded application of torture?

**Bob:** What Allah does to unbelievers reminds me of what Itchy does to Scratchy on the Simpsons; and from what I can tell, the kids who watch it are alright.

**Uzza:** Perhaps. In the Koran, Allah's sadism is a more persistent, fantastical vision of torture, pain and never-ending suffering with which any child can relate. It is the stuff of nightmares. And let us not forget that this is a god who proclaims to be the embodiment of compassion and mercy doing horrendous things to human beings, not a mouse being cruel to a cat. What kind of warped understanding of

the concept of mercy and compassion will children be left with after reading about how the Compassionate One takes obvious pleasure in the punishment He inflicts<sup>71</sup> on those who refuse to believe in His Book and His precious Fire<sup>72</sup>?

**Gerry:** That warped understanding of compassion: that people to whom a god would do these horrible things are not deserving of compassion in this world or the next. That is scary.

**Uzza:** For a non-believing adult, Allah's brutality and what goes on in His Hell<sup>73</sup> may seem like the plot of some of the more violent cartoons aimed at kids, nothing to worry about. For believing children it is real, and not the product of a cartoonist's imagination. Somewhere in time and space, Allah is actually doing to real people what some children

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<sup>71</sup> 11:105 The day (Judgement Day) it comes, no soul shall speak without His Leave. Some of them shall be wretched, some happy.

11:106 As for the wretched, they shall be in the Fire; they shall have therein groaning and moaning;

<sup>72</sup> 52:13 On the Day they will be driven into the Fire of Hell by force.

52:14 "This is the Fire which you used to deny.

52:15 "Is this magic or do you not see?

52:16 "Burn in it. Bear up or do not bear up; it is the same for you. You are only rewarded for what you used to do."

<sup>73</sup> Hell may be Allah's pet monster. A monster which will have to be dragged to its assigned position on Judgment Day.

89:21 No; when the earth is demolished completely.

89:22 And your Lord comes, together with the angels, in rows upon rows;

89:23 And Hell is brought forth on that Day. Then man will remember on that Day; but wherefrom will remembrance come to him?

How that will be done according to Muhammad:

Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: The Hell would be brought on that day (the Day of judgment) with seventy thousand bridles and every bridle would be controlled by seventy thousand angels.

*Sahih Muslim 40.6810*

How the monster will literally be brought to heel when it's all over.

**Narrated Anas:**

The Prophet said, "(The people will be thrown into Hell (Fire) and it will keep on saying, 'Is there any more?' till the Lord of the Worlds puts His Foot over it, whereupon its different sides will come close to each other, and it will say, 'Qad! Qad! (enough! enough!) By Your 'Izzat (Honor and Power) and YOUR KARAM (Generosity)!' Paradise will remain spacious enough to accommodate more people."

*Bukhari 93.481.*

may fantasize about but eventually dismiss, as they grow older, as immoral, sadistic behaviour, given time away from the Koran.

**Gerry:** But that is not what is happening.

**Bob:** The children you are talking about already know everything about Badr. Is there anything else we should know?

## Critics Are for Killing

**Uzza:** It was at Badr that Muhammad first informed his followers of the concept of life in the grave after he was seen shouting at dead Meccan corpses that had been thrown down a well after the battle. He explained that dead people cannot talk but they can hear.

**Archie:** That sounds a lot like zombies.

**Uzza:** It does, when you think of it. Islam teaches that our existence has four stages: life in the womb, life in the world, life in the grave where the undead can be found, and the afterlife. Islam teaches that when a person dies, his zombie essence, to use your expression, sinks into the ground. Even Muhammad will not escape life in the grave.

**Bob:** After all he did for God; I almost feel sorry for the guy.

**Uzza:** Do not! Muhammad is more fortunate than most as he is visited many times a day by angels who bring him the blessings of the living. Whenever you hear a person say "SALLALLAHU 'ALAIHI WA SALLAM" – in English, "May the blessings and the peace of Allah be upon him" – whenever Muhammad's name is mentioned, an angel, some say, visits him in his grave to tell him that so-and-so sends his blessing.

**Archie:** "Many times a day..." If every Muslim sends only one blessing on any given day, that's more than a billion and half visits a day. That is [*taking out a cellphone to do a quick calculation*], that is more than 17,000 long-winded "bless you"s every second of every day.

**Uzza:** That may be why some say that the angels tell Allah that so-and-so has sent his blessings on Muhammad and for a god like Allah, who sees and hears everything, listening to a billion conversations simultaneously, even a million what you called "bless you"s per second, would not escape His attention, especially when bestowed on the apple of His eye<sup>74</sup>.

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<sup>74</sup> That Muhammad was the apple of Allah's eye is evident in revelations such as the following where Allah expresses His love for him and where He threatens to do serious damage to anyone who would harm him or cause him distress.

33:56 Allah and His angels bless the Prophet. O believers, bless him and greet him graciously, too.

**Gerry:** But why bother asking Allah to bless his pet prophet who should not have any trouble getting into Paradise, being His latest and greatest?

**Uzza:** Because a verse in the Koran tells the believers to do just that<sup>75</sup>. They do it not to help Muhammad get into Paradise – as you pointed out, he does not need anyone's help to get there – but to help themselves. Muhammad said that for every blessing bestowed on him, Allah forgives the *blessor* ten sins<sup>76</sup>.

**Archie:** That would explain why all those TV preachers can't complete a sentence without sending the Prophet their blessing.

**Uzza:** [*laughing*] I should not laugh, but that is funny.

**Gerry:** What about the ordinary undead, Uzza? Do they get daily visits to relieve the boredom of years, thousands of years for many, below ground with nothing to do, nothing to read?

**Uzza:** If a person dies a believer and is literally in Allah's good books, they are provided with a spacious grave, a cave below ground complete with curtains and a bed. Every day an angel will visit them to open the curtains and show them Paradise, their destination on Judgment Day.

**Archie:** And the unbelievers? I can't wait to hear about their hole-in-the-ground.

**Uzza:** An unbeliever's grave will be a cramped space with walls constantly closing in on them, making every breath a laboured one. And every day an angel will come to visit them and open the curtains to show them where they will spend an eternity on fire, Hell!

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33:57 Those who cause Allah and His Messenger any injury, Allah has cursed them in this life and the life to come and has prepared for them a demeaning punishment.

Muhammad never knew his father who died before he was born. His mother passed away when he was six or seven years old. When you read the Koran, especially the verses such as the aforementioned, you can't help thinking that Allah was the type of father a fatherless child might imagine.

<sup>75</sup> 33:56 Allah and His angels bless the Prophet. O believers, bless him and greet him graciously, too.

<sup>76</sup> Anas bin Malik said:

"The Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) said: "Whoever sends salah upon me once, Allah (Subhanahu-wa-Taala) will send salah upon him tenfold, and will erase ten sins from him, and will raise him ten degrees in status."

*Sunan an-Nasa'i Book 13 Hadith 1298*

**Gerry:** Psychological and physical torture combined to achieve maximum terror. Who would have thought of that?

**Archie:** A BLOODY SADIST, THAT'S WHO!

**Uzza:** Muhammad said that we would faint in terror if we could hear the screams of those being tormented in their graves.

**Archie:** That is insane!

**Bob:** Aren't sadists insane people?

**Uzza:** GOD IS NOT A SADIST, and neither is Muhammad. And neither is insane.

**Archie:** Could have fooled me.

**Uzza:** Muhammad was a product of his time and what he revealed was simply what people believed then. What is insane is that suicide bombers are encouraged by Islamists – and we let them – to believe that martyrs skip the life-in-the-grave part and go directly to heaven to enjoy all it has to offer because Allah said that those who die in His Cause are with him in Paradise well provided for<sup>77</sup>, not in the grave<sup>78</sup>.

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<sup>77</sup> 3:169 And do not think those who have been killed in the Way of Allah as dead; they are rather living with their Lord, well provided for.

<sup>78</sup> On May 22, 2017, an Islamic terrorist detonated a homemade bomb filled with shrapnel as people were leaving the Manchester Arena following a concert by Ariana Grande, killing twenty-three people, including the attacker, and wounding 139, more than half of them children. The following is from a debate between two Muslim clerics, Dr. Jamal Rifi and Sheikh Mohammad Tawhidi, hosted by Australia's Channel Seven following Manchester Arena massacre in which the two argue the role religion played in the attack.

Tawhidi on the radicalisation of the Manchester bomber and his generation:

Basically we need to be very realistic when dealing with this matter. You have a twenty-two year old who gets radicalised over two, three sermons in a Friday mosque gathering ... this age is an age when someone would expect people to be going out, having fun. But no, we have a large number of youth that are being radicalised. This happens because of the books that we have, the Islamic scriptures that we have; they push the Muslim youth to believe that if you go out there and kill the infidels, that's how you will gain Paradise.

On the massacres being a continuation of a very old war:

For the past one thousand four hundred years we have had a religion of war, that is exactly what we have had, this is not something I am imagining, these are facts. We've had many wars.

How did Islam spread from Saudi Arabia down to Indonesia and Bosnia, all spread by the sword. We had many wars. For someone to come and say that Islamic scriptures have nothing to do with it, I mean, that's against the facts, that's not true. Islamic scriptures are what is pushing these people to behead the infidels.



## 73 Critics Are for Killing

**Archie:** That has to be a real incentive for believers who are into instant gratification, houris and all.

**Uzza:** That is not funny!

**Archie:** No, it isn't!

**Bob:** So, the Jews were not spooked by the Prophet admitting to the existence of zombies.

**Uzza:** The idea of life in the grave has its roots in Jewish folklore. Muhammad admitted as much to his child-bride Aisha who said she heard the story about people tortured in their graves from some old Jewish women, only to be told by her husband that they were telling the truth<sup>79</sup>.

**Bob:** If the Jews were not spooked by zombies, why be scared by the believers attacking and plundering another caravan, which you said is what they did all the time?

**Uzza:** Badr was different. A rag tag bunch of believers had defeated the equivalent of regular army troops. It was a real confidence booster and that confidence was reflected in what Muhammad did next, which made the Jews apprehensive.

**Archie:** Real nasty things, I'll bet.

**Uzza:** The victory at Badr, and the prestige and plunder that came with it, emboldened Muhammad to silence his most vocal and persistent critics: the poets. The first poet to be killed was al-Nadr. The Meccans had praised his verses as superior to those of Muhammad. When he

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Let me tell you something, the people that are beheading, that mister, the person that killed the young girls in Manchester did so believing he was going to dine with the Prophet Muhammad that very night, that is what the Islamic scriptures tell them.

<sup>79</sup> **Narrated Aisha:**

Two old ladies from among the Jewish ladies entered upon me and said "The dead are punished in their graves," but I thought they were telling a lie and did not believe them in the beginning.

When they went away and the Prophet entered upon me, I said, "O Allah's Apostle! Two old ladies" and told him the whole story.

He said, "They told the truth; the dead are really punished, to the extent that all the animals hear (the sound resulting from) their punishment."

Since then I always saw him seeking refuge with Allah from the punishment of the grave in his prayers.

*Bukhari 75.377*

spotted al-Nadr among the prisoners captured at Badr, Muhammad had him beheaded on the spot.

**Archie:** And they call him the Prophet of Mercy<sup>80</sup>. What garbage!

**Uzza:** Next to die was the poetess Asma bint Marwan<sup>81</sup>. She was stabbed to death while sleeping with an infant suckling at her breast.

**Bob:** Holy shit! That's really horrible!

**Archie:** Yeah, and it took one fucked-up holy shit to do something like that.

**Gerry:** Don't you mean "unholy" shit?

**Archie:** NO!

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<sup>80</sup> Muhammad acquired the unlikely moniker Prophet of Mercy after the fall of Mecca when he publically spared the lives of some of his opponents while quietly having those with no protectors assassinated, e.g., poets, female singers and apostates. Other vulnerable human beings for whom the Prophet of Mercy had no compassion were women and girls who committed illegal intercourse, even when the less than self-evident crime resulted in a pregnancy.

One of the more wretched decisions of the Prophet of Mercy:

Malik related to me from Yaqub ibn Zayd ibn Talha from his father Zayd ibn Talha that Abdullah ibn Abi Mulayka informed him that a woman came to the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and informed him that she had committed adultery and was pregnant.

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said to her, "Go away until you give birth."

When she had given birth, she came to him. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said to her, "Go away until you have suckled and weaned the baby."

When she had weaned the baby, she came to him. He said, "Go and entrust the baby to someone."

She entrusted the baby to someone and then came to him. He gave the order and she was stoned.

Al-Muwatta 41.41.1.5

<sup>81</sup> "Have you slain the daughter of Marwan?"

This was the word that was first heard from the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him.

When Umayr replied that the job had been carried out with success, Muhammad said, "You have helped God and His apostle, O Umayr!"

When Umayr asked if he would have to bear any evil consequences, the apostle said, "Two goats won't butt their heads about her."

Muhammad then praised Umayr in front of all gathered for prayer for his act of murder, and Umayr went back to his people.

*Ibn S'ad*

## 75 Critics Are for Killing

**Uzza:** The Jewish poet Abu Afak was also killed while he slept<sup>82</sup>. After every murder the assassins would go to the Mosque to inform Muhammad and be praised for what they had done at his insistence. Two other poets of note who were killed on his orders or urging were Ka'b bin Al-Ashraf<sup>83</sup> and Abu Rafi<sup>84</sup>.

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<sup>82</sup> He waited for an opportunity until a hot night came, and Abu Afak slept in an open place. Salim b. Umayr knew it, so he placed the sword on his liver and pressed it till it reached his bed. The enemy of Allah screamed and the people, who were his followers rushed him, took him to his house and interred him.

*Ibn S'ad, a companion of the Prophet*

<sup>83</sup> **Narrated Jabir bin Abdullah:**

Allah's Apostle said, "Who would kill Ka'b bin Al-Ashraf (Ka'b, a poet, who wrote poems lampooning of Allah's Messenger) as he has harmed Allah and His Apostle?"

Muhammad bin Maslama (got up and) said, "I will kill him."

So, Muhammad bin Maslama went to Ka'b and said, "I want a loan of one or two Wasqs of food grains."

Ka'b said, "Mortgage your women to me."

Muhammad bin Maslama said, "How can we mortgage our women, and you are the most handsome among the Arabs?"

He said, "Then mortgage your sons to me."

Muhammad said, "How can we mortgage our sons, as the people will abuse them for being mortgaged for one or two Wasqs of food grains? It is shameful for us. But we will mortgage our arms to you."

So, Muhammad bin Maslama promised him that he would come to him next time. They (Muhammad bin Maslama and his companions came to him as promised and murdered him. Then they went to the Prophet and told him about it.

*Bukhari 45.687*

<sup>84</sup> **Narrated Al-Bara bin Azib:**

Allah's Apostle sent a group of Ansari men to kill Abu-Rafi. One of them set out and entered their (i.e. the enemy's) fort. That man said, "I hid myself in a stable for their animals. They closed the fort gate. Later they lost a donkey of theirs, so they went out in its search. I, too, went out along with them, pretending to look for it. They found the donkey and entered their fort. And I, too, entered along with them.

They closed the gate of the fort at night, and kept its keys in a small window where I could see them. When those people slept, I took the keys and opened the gate of the fort and came upon Abu Rafi and said, 'O Abu Rafi.'

When he replied me, I proceeded towards the voice and hit him. He shouted and I came out to come back, pretending to be a helper.

I said, 'O Abu Rafi', changing the tone of my voice.

He asked me, 'What do you want; woe to your mother?'

I asked him, 'What has happened to you?'

**Archie:** I'll bet if cartoonists had existed they would have suffered the same fate.

**Uzza:** Islamists consider Muhammad the personification of the perfect human being whose every action is to be emulated as closely as possible. He used targeted assassination to silence his critics and advance Allah's Cause. Therefore, from an Islamist's point of view, they are simply doing what Muhammad would do if he were still here to those who made fun of his perfection or Allah's revelations.

**Bob:** I thought only God was perfect?

**Uzza:** That Muhammad is considered the most perfect of human beings does not mean he is as perfect as God. However, when you question the perfection of what Islamic scriptures proclaim is the greatest prophet of all times sent to correct the errors of those who came before, you are impugning God's choice as His last and greatest spokesperson. When Muhammad had his critics killed, it was not because he was insulted but because they had insulted God.

**Gerry:** So, a tradition that started with the Prophet murdering his critics was not because he was thin-skinned but to protect God's reputation for perfection.

**Archie:** I don't buy it.

**Uzza:** [*getting angry*] Muhammad was not yet born when Hypatia of Alexandria was set upon by crazed monks. Cheered on by Cyril, the Christian bishop of the city who she had criticized, "they dragged her from her carriage and into the cathedral, where they stripped her; gauged her eyes out, skinned her alive, and tore her to pieces with jagged tiles ripped from the mosaics"<sup>85</sup>. What does your god tell you about not complaining about the speck in another man's eye while ignoring that large piece of wood in your own?

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He said, 'I don't know who came to me and hit me.' Then I drove my sword into his belly and pushed it forcibly till it touched the bone. Then I came out, filled with puzzlement and went towards a ladder of theirs in order to get down but I fell down and sprained my foot.

I came to my companions and said, 'I will not leave till I hear the wailing of the women.'

So, I did not leave till I heard the women bewailing Abu Rafi, the merchant of Hijaz. Then I got up, feeling no ailment, (and we proceeded) till we came upon the Prophet and informed him."

*Bukhari 52.264*

<sup>85</sup> Cahill, *Mysteries of the Middle Ages*, p. 29.

**Gerry:** [*calmly*] If I remember my history, Hypatia died in the fifth century, the beginning of the Dark Ages.

**Uzza:** And that is where we are going back to, thanks to your stupidity. At least Muhammad knew exactly what he was doing, and Islamists are following his example and achieving the promised victories.

**Gerry:** What could we have done differently when our politicians were falling over themselves to prove that they were the most tolerant and passing laws to prove it?

**Uzza:** God's first instruction to Muhammad was to read<sup>86</sup> and he would be successful. And he did, and what he was told to read was the Koran.

**Bob:** But I thought the Prophet could not read or write?

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<sup>86</sup> 96:3 Read by your Most Generous Lord, 96:4 Who taught by the pen.

## **The Medium and the Message**

**Uzza:** Muhammad was a very successful merchant and that is evident in the mercantile aspect of many of his sayings and example and in Allah's revelations. An illiterate merchant would have been taken to the cleaners by the people he dealt with, but that is the miracle of Muhammad, the successful merchant and the most successful prophet of all times, if you believe in miracles. Muhammad told the angel Gabriel that he could not read, so the angel recited the Koran to him. But that is not the point I am trying to make.

**Archie:** Are you saying that we should read the Koran?

**Uzza:** If the British population had read Mein Kampf and accepted that the author meant to carry out what he said he would do given the opportunity, do you not think Chamberlain would have been less inclined to pander to a sociopath? If more Germans had taken Hitler's rants seriously, chances are he would never have been made Chancellor. If more people had read the Koran and accepted that the author meant to carry out what He revealed in easy-to-understand "clearly expounded" verses<sup>87</sup>, chances are Western civilization would not be staring into the abyss.

**Archie:** It's a bit too late for that now, too.

**Uzza:** Mein Kampf is banned, but not the Koran. There is nothing stopping you from reading it and learning a few verses, if only to save your life when they come for you.

**Archie:** For what?

**Bob:** To take your head off like they did at Badr. Can we get back to that battle and what happened next?

**Archie:** In a minute. Uzza, I always thought that it was Allah who taught the Koran to Muhammad. Now you are telling us that it was an angel all along.

**Uzza:** Yes. You could consider Gabriel the Messenger to the Messenger.

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<sup>87</sup> 11:1 [This is] a Book with Verses which are elaborately formulated and clearly expounded from the Wise, the All-Aware.

**Archie:** So, Muhammad never spoke to God directly, nor God directly to him?

**Uzza:** I did not say that. Gabriel used to visit Muhammad on a regular basis, usually at night, which is why some have speculated – and there is a saying of Muhammad to that effect – that much of the Koran was delivered in dreams.

**Bob:** The Koran was all dreamt up?

**Uzza:** I did not say that either, although we have an authenticated account of a companion of Muhammad, when asked by a believer to show Muhammad receiving a communication from above, pulling open a tent flap to show a snoring Muhammad<sup>88</sup>, and a saying from Muhammad himself where he asks a jealous wife to be kind to Aisha because Allah only sends revelations when he is in bed with her<sup>89</sup>.

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<sup>88</sup> **Narrated Safwan bin Ya'la bin Umaiya** from his father who said:

"A man came to the Prophet while he was at Ji'rana. The man was wearing a cloak which had traces of Khaluq or Sufra (a kind of perfume). The man asked (the Prophet), 'What do you order me to perform in my Umra (the lesser pilgrimage)?' So, Allah inspired the Prophet divinely and he was screened by a place of cloth.

I wished to see the Prophet being divinely inspired.

Umar said to me, 'Come! Will you be pleased to look at the Prophet while Allah is inspiring him?'

I replied in the affirmative.

Umar lifted one corner of the cloth and I looked at the Prophet who was snoring. (The sub-narrator thought that he said: The snoring was like that of a camel).

When that state was over, the Prophet asked, "Where is the questioner who asked about Umra? Put off your cloak and wash away the traces of Khaluq from your body and clean the Sufra (yellow color) and perform in your Umra what you perform in your Hajj (i.e. the Tawaf round the Ka'ba and the Sa'i between Safa and Marwa)."

*Bukhari 27.17*

<sup>89</sup> **Narrated Hisham's father:**

The people used to send presents to the Prophet on the day of Aisha's turn.

Aisha said, "My companions (i.e. the other wives of the Prophet) gathered in the house of Um Salama and said, "O Um Salama! By Allah, the people choose to send presents on the day of Aisha's turn and we too, love the good (i.e. presents etc.) as Aisha does. You should tell Allah's Apostle to tell the people to send their presents to him wherever he may be, or wherever his turn may be."

Um Salama said that to the Prophet and he turned away from her, and when the Prophet returned to her (i.e. Um Salama), she repeated the same, and the Prophet again turned away, and when she told him the same for the third time, the Prophet said, "O Um Salama! Don't trouble me by harming Aisha, for by Allah,

**Bob:** You mean, Allah interrupted the Prophet while he was having sex to talk about the Koran?

**Uzza:** No, silly, after, when Muhammad and Aisha had drifted off to sleep.

**Bob:** That had to be some girl for God to make an exception to communicating with the Prophet with a female next to him, and to wait until they were finished doing whatever they were doing before getting in touch.

**Uzza:** That Aisha was special was revealed early on. In another dream of Muhammad, before they were married, Allah showed her to him when she was still a baby, meaning that they were meant to be together. That it was Allah's Will<sup>90</sup>.

**Archie:** You mean, the Prophet dreamt of babies before he married one?

**Uzza:** Aisha was not a baby! She was six when they got married and nine when they first had sex<sup>91</sup>.

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the Divine Inspiration never came to me while I was under the blanket of any woman amongst you except her."

*Bukhari 57.119*

<sup>90</sup> **Narrated Aisha:**

Allah's Apostle said to me, "You were shown to me twice (in my dream) before I married you. I saw an angel carrying you in a silken piece of cloth, and I said to him, 'Uncover (her),' and behold, it was you.

I said (to myself), 'If this is from Allah, then it must happen.'

*Bukhari 87.140*

<sup>91</sup> **Narrated Ursa:**

The Prophet wrote the (marriage contract) with Aisha while she was six years old and consummated his marriage with her while she was nine years old and she remained with him for nine years (i.e. till his death).

*Bukhari 62.88*

Aisha's recollection of her wedding day would suggest that she was not yet a teenager when she joined Muhammad on the matrimonial mat.

My mother came to me while I was being swung on a swing between two branches and got me down. My nurse took over and wiped my face with some water and started leading me. When I was at the door she stopped so I could catch my breath.

I was brought in while Muhammad was sitting on a bed in our house. My mother made me sit on his lap. The other men and women got up and left.

The Prophet consummated his marriage with me in my house when I was nine years old.



**Archie:** Like I said...

**Uzza:** *[ignores him]* And, as I was saying, the angel Gabriel used to visit Muhammad at night (appendix: The Night Muhammad Punched Aisha), and sometimes during the day<sup>92</sup>, with the latest of Allah's revealed truths, which Muhammad committed to memory and repeated word-for-word to his followers the next day or during the Friday sermon.

**Bob:** What is a revealed truth again?

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Neither a camel nor a sheep was slaughtered on behalf of me.

*Tabari IX:131*

The fact that her wedding was not celebrated, the meaning of "Neither a camel nor a sheep was slaughtered on behalf of me," may also be an indication that Muhammad was not proud of what he was about to do or that his people did not approve of their 50+ tribesman marrying and having sex with a child.

<sup>92</sup> **Narrated Abu Huraira:**

One day while the Prophet was sitting in the company of some people, (The angel) Gabriel came and asked, "What is faith?"

Allah's Apostle replied, "Faith is to believe in Allah, His an-gels, (the) meeting with Him, His Apostles, and to believe in Resurrection."

Then he further asked, "What is Islam?"

Allah's Apostle replied, "To worship Allah Alone and none else, to offer prayers perfectly to pay the compulsory charity (Zakat) and to observe fasts during the month of Ramadan."

Then he further asked, "What is Ihsan (perfection)?"

Allah's Apostle replied, "To worship Allah as if you see Him, and if you cannot achieve this state of devotion then you must consider that He is looking at you."

Then he further asked, "When will the Hour be estab-lished?"

Allah's Apostle replied, "The answerer has no better knowledge than the questioner. But I will inform you about its portents. 1. When a slave (lady) gives birth to her master. 2. When the shepherds of black camels start boasting and competing with others in the construction of higher buildings. And the Hour is one of five things which nobody knows except Allah."

The Prophet then recited: "Verily, with Allah (Alone) is the knowledge of the Hour." (31:34)

Then that man (Gabriel) left and the Prophet asked his companions to call him back, but they could not see him.

Then the Prophet said, "That was Gabriel who came to teach the people their religion."

Abu 'Abdullah said: He (the Prophet) considered all that as a part of faith.

*Bukhari 2.47*

**Uzza:** What you commonly refer to as verses. Revealed truths are immutable facts revealed to a mortal by a god. The Koran is a collection of revealed truths.

**Bob:** That would mean that a saying of the Prophet is not a revealed truth?

**Uzza:** As you can expect, an observation made by a person tutored by the angel Gabriel carries some weight. A saying, a story reported as the truth, or even an action of Muhammad that has been authenticated as being genuine by scholars, such as the tent flap story, carries as much weight as a revelation if it does not contradict the Koran. That is why the more than fourteen thousand authenticated sayings and example of Muhammad along with the more than six thousands revelations of the Koran are the basis of the Sharia, God's Law.

**Bob:** Can we get back to the interesting stuff?

## Archie Loses It!

**Uzza:** You want interesting stuff! One night, Gabriel showed up, not to deliver another batch of communications from Allah but with a flying horse, telling Muhammad to get on it and ride it to Paradise. God wanted to talk to him personally.

**Bob:** A flying horse! Couldn't God have just beamed him up?

**Uzza:** But then people would not have believed him; these people believed in flying horses.

**Gerry:** Does this horse have a name?

**Uzza:** Yes, al-Burak.

**Archie:** This is crazy.

**Uzza:** In Greek mythology you have Pegasus, the flying stallion with wings that Bellerophon rode in his attack on the Chimera.

**Archie:** Yes, but this flying horse of the Prophet is an article of faith, right? To the believers, al-Burak the flying horse is not a myth?

**Uzza:** If Muhammad said he rode a horse with wings to Paradise for a private meeting with God, you have to believe that it happened; to deny it is to risk being labeled a heretic and killed on the spot.

**Gerry:** I don't remember reading about a flying horse in the Koran.

**Uzza:** The only reference in the Koran to this trip to Paradise is about a night journey between two mosques<sup>93</sup> during which the traveller is set upon by throngs of what are believed to be the jinn<sup>94</sup>.

**Bob:** You mean genies?

**Uzza:** The caricature of the genie is undoubtedly based on this creature of the Koran. Of all the inhabitants of the Koran, jinns – Allah refers to them collectively as the jinn – are the most fascinating. Like men, He

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<sup>93</sup> 17:1 Glory be to Him Who caused His servant to travel by night from the Sacred Mosque to the farthest Mosque, whose precincts We have blessed, in order to show him some of Our Signs. He is indeed the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.

<sup>94</sup> 72:19 And that when the Servant of Allah (the Prophet Muhammad) got up calling on Him, they almost set upon him in throngs.

created the jinn to worship him, not to feed Him<sup>95</sup>. Jinns can be persuaded to do good if given the proper incentive. Some less-than-cooperative jinn, with a little prodding from Allah, helped Solomon build the first temple<sup>96</sup>. Some became believers after listening to Muhammad recite verses from the Koran<sup>97</sup>. They even have a chapter of the Koran named after them: surah 72, *The Jinn*. If some jinns are more perverted than others, it is because of humans who spent time with them and told them that Allah could not raise the dead<sup>98</sup>. Some

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<sup>95</sup> 51:56 I have not created the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.

51:57 I do not desire provision from them, and I do not want them to feed Me.

<sup>96</sup> 34:12 And We subjected the wind to Solomon, blowing in the morning the space of a month and in the evening the space of a month; and We smelted for him the fount of brass. Of the jinn some worked before him, by the Leave of his Lord, and whoever of them swerved from Our Command, We shall make him taste the punishment of the blazing Fire.

34:13 To fashion for him whatever he wished of palaces, statues, basins like water-troughs and immovable cooking-pots. "Work thank-fully, O David's House; for few of My servants are truly thankful."

<sup>97</sup> 72:1 Say (Muhammad): "It was revealed to me that a company of jinn listened; then they said: 'We have indeed heard a wonderful Qur'an;

72:2 "It guides to rectitude; so we believed in it, and we shall never associate anyone with our Lord;

The Koran is not clear, but the verses heard by these jinn, judging by their response, was probably about Allah denouncing those who would say he had consorted with a female or ever had a son, i.e., Jesus.

72:3 "And that He, may our Lord's majesty be exalted, has not taken a consort or a son;

The jinn who happened upon Muhammad reciting verses from the Koran now considered themselves Muslims; they now thought it foolish to have been disrespectful or to have believed that Allah would reveal anything but the truth.

72:4 "And that our fools used to speak impertinently of Allah;

72:5 "And that we thought that neither mankind nor the jinn will impute to Allah any falsehood;

Allah may have told Muhammad to say what he already knew.

#### **Narrated Abdur-Rahman:**

I asked Masruq, "Who informed the Prophet about the Jinns at the night when they heard the Qur'an?"

He said, "Your father Abdullah informed me that a tree informed the Prophet about them."

*Bukhari 58.199*

<sup>98</sup> 72:6 "And that some individual humans used to seek refuge with some men of the jinn, and so they increased them in perversion;

The jinn, like Muhammad, once thought that Allah could not raise the dead.

even had the nerve to say that jinns have a connection with Allah, that they are kin<sup>99</sup>. It does not matter; they will all be lumped together on Judgment Day to be judged<sup>100</sup>.

**Bob:** That is unreal!

**Archie:** That is ridiculous.

**Uzza:** You do not often hear imams preaching about the jinn. They are a bit of an embarrassment. Believing in the jinn is like believing in ghosts: you cannot see them, but you have to believe that they are there.

**Bob:** Just like believing in God. You can't see Him, hear Him or smell Him but you know He's there. Does that mean, to be a Muslim is to believe in ghosts?

**Uzza:** Jinns are not ghosts.

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72:7 “And that they thought, as you thought, that Allah will not raise anybody from the dead;

<sup>99</sup> 37:158 And they alleged a kinship between Him and the jinn, whereas the jinn know very well that they will be summoned.

37:159 May Allah be exalted above their allegation.

37:160 Except for Allah's sincere servants.

37:161 Surely, neither you nor what you worship,

37:162 Against Him can ever turn anyone;

37:163 Except he who will be roasting in Hell.

<sup>100</sup> 6:128 And on the Day when He shall gather them all together [saying]: “O, company of jinn, you have misled a great many men.” Their supporters among men will say: “Lord, we have profited much from each other and we have attained the term that you assigned for us.” Then He will say: “The Fire is your resting-place, abiding therein forever, except as Allah wills. Your Lord is truly Wise, All-Knowing.”

6:129 And thus We cause some of the evildoers to dominate the others, because of what they used to do (the evil they committed).

6:130 O company of jinn and men, did there not come Messengers from among yourselves to you, reciting to you My Revelations and warning of seeing this Day of yours? They will say: “We bear witness against ourselves?” They were deluded by the earthly life and will bear witness against themselves that they were unbelievers.

6:131 That is because your Lord would not destroy cities on account of their people's wrongdoing without warning them (by sending a Messenger to them).

Orderly processing of sinners, jinn and men, will be the order of the Day.

6:132 And to all are assigned ranks according to what they have done; and your Lord is not unaware of what they do.

**Bob:** But you just said...

**Uzza:** I said, like believing in ghosts. Pre-Islamic Arabs believed in the existence of the jinn and this may explain their significant presence in the Koran.

**Archie:** How do you create something you can't see? And how do you prove you've created anything when normal people have never seen one?

**Uzza:** From fire. He created them from fire, and you can see fire.

**Archie:** If jinns are like fire, what is it that's burning?

**Uzza:** I do not know. I do not even know if they are like fire. Just that Allah says he created them from fire<sup>101</sup>.

**Archie:** I'm sorry, Uzza, I didn't mean to put you on the spot. It's hard enough trying to explain what our invisible so-called friend in the sky looks like, let alone the invisible things he claims to have created.

**Bob:** Do jinns behave like genies, and when you capture one do they grant you three wishes?

**Archie:** If you're going to try to catch one, you better be wearing oven mitts.

**Uzza:** [*hesitatingly*] No. The jinn spent most of their time between heaven and Earth near the lowest of the seven heavens, eavesdropping on Allah's conversations with his angels and reporting to soothsayers who employ them about God's plan for the future.

**Bob:** So soothsayers can see them?

**Archie:** Fortune-tellers are not normal people.

**Uzza:** The most famous soothsayer in Islamic traditions is the one whom Muhammad's father Abdallah consulted about the cost to renege on his promise to God that if he granted him ten sons, he would sacrifice the tenth in gratitude.

**Archie:** Too bad he didn't.

**Uzza:** Too bad for you.

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<sup>101</sup> 15:26 And We have created man from potter's clay, moulded out of slime.

15:27 And the jinn We created before that from blazing fire.

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55:15 And He created the jinn from tongues of fire.

**Bob:** I don't get it.

**Archie:** The tenth son had to be the one who would grow up to become the Prophet Muhammad.

**Bob:** Oh!

**Archie:** So how much did Allah demand to release Abdulla from his pledge?

**Uzza:** Not Abdulla, Abdallah. The jinn who flew the mission reported to his employer that he had overheard Allah in a conversation with His angels about Abdallah's plight and that a hundred camels would suffice. That is still how Sharia law sets the cost of a human life, should the family of a person killed by another demand blood money instead of capital punishment. Muhammad, in his last sermon, warned that anyone who asked for more than a hundred camels was from the age of ignorance<sup>102</sup>.

**Bob:** And that's in the Koran?

**Uzza:** The Koran sanctions blood money payments<sup>103</sup>; it does not set the amount.

**Archie:** Wish I had a jinn in my employ.

**Bob:** To hear what God has to say about you?

**Archie:** To tell God what I think of him.

**Uzza:** Good luck with that. It is only the odd jinn that make it past the barrage of rocks, what we call comets and shooting stars, thrown by angels to get them to keep their distance<sup>104</sup>, even if there are many of

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<sup>102</sup> And intentional murder shall be punished according to talion law; where the murderer's intention is not clear and the victim is killed using a club or a stone, it will cost the perpetrator one hundred camels as blood money. Whoever demands more is a man from the time of ignorance.

*From a translation of the Muhammad's last sermon by Islamic scholar and author Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah's [1908-2002]*

<sup>103</sup> 2:178 O believers, retaliation for the slain is prescribed for you; a free [man] for a free [man], a slave for a slave and a female for a female. But if he is pardoned by his brother (the aggrieved), usage should be followed (capital punishment would be replaced by blood-money) and he should pay him (the aggrieved) liberally and kindly. This is remission and mercy from your Lord. He who transgresses after that will have a painful punishment.

<sup>104</sup> 72:8 "And that we reached out to heaven, but we found it fill with mighty guards and comets;

them, as Muhammad discovered when he was swarmed<sup>105</sup> on his way to Paradise on the back of al-Burak to confer with God.

**Archie:** I need a drink. This is too weird.

**Uzza:** I thought bartenders did not drink when on duty.

**Archie:** What can I say? Islam is driving me to drink on the job. Besides, it's only us here.

**Bob:** Exactly how far is heaven that a flying horse can get there in one night, with time to spare for its rider to visit God, and return home that same night, I assume?

**Uzza:** The Koran places Paradise just above the clouds held up by invisible pillars<sup>106</sup> anchored to a flat Earth (appendix: The Earth Is Flat) floating on a sea of mud<sup>107</sup>. A short flight for a horse like al-Burak, even if he did not fly there directly but made a detour to Jerusalem.

72:9 “And that we used to sit around it eavesdropping; but whoever listens now will find a comet in wait for him;

<sup>105</sup> 72:18 And that mosques are Allah’s; so do not call, besides Allah, upon anyone else;

72:19 And that when the Servant of Allah (the Prophet Muhammad) got up calling on Him, they almost set upon him in throngs.

<sup>106</sup> Heaven is help up by invisible pillars anchored on a flat Earth.

31:10 He created the heavens without pillars that you can see and laid down in the earth immovable mountains, lest it shake with you, and scattered throughout it every variety of beast. And We have sent down water from heaven, thereby causing it to grow in it every noble [kind of plant].

31:11 This is Allah’s Creation; so show Me what those apart from Him have created. Indeed, the wrongdoers are in manifest error.

Knowing this, Allah's revelation that He keeps the sky from falling makes sense.

22:65 Do you not see that Allah has subjected to you what is on earth and the ships which sail in the sea at His Command? And He keeps the sky from falling to the ground, save by His Leave. Allah is Gracious and Merciful to mankind.

Heaven and Earth are made of the same materials, which would explain the need for pillars to stop it from crashing to the ground.

21:30 Have the unbelievers not beheld that the heavens and the earth were a solid mass, then We separated them; and of water We produced every living thing. Will they not believe, then?

21:31 And We set up in the earth immovable mountains lest it should shake with them; and We created therein wide roads, that perchance they may be guided.

21:32 And We made the sky a well-guarded canopy; and they still turn away from its signs.

<sup>107</sup> Dhul-Qarnayn, in the Koran, “is believed to be Alexander the Great” writes Fakhry. Alexander walked a flat Earth to where the sun set in a sea of mud where he found



**Archie:** And getting weirder by the minute.

**Gerry:** Why Jerusalem? Why not take the more direct route with Paradise not much more than five miles up, nothing that a flying horse in his prime could not easily cover?

**Archie:** Gerry, are you serious? Do you actually believe any of this?

**Gerry:** It has nothing to do with what I believe but what Uzza believes. And what Uzza believes, I want to hear about.

**Uzza:** Thank you, Gerry, you are very kind. What I am telling you is what Islamists proclaim to be true, and what Islamists believe to be the truth is what we all must eventually profess to believe if we want to live.

**Bob:** Good enough for me. But why did the Prophet fly to Jerusalem first, then up to heaven?

**Uzza:** When he got to Jerusalem, Muhammad landed on an outcrop of rock where he rested al-Burak and over which the Dome of the Rock was built after the Muslim conquered Jerusalem, consecrating it as the third holiest site in Islam after Mecca and Medina.

**Bob:** The Prophet flew to Jerusalem to consecrate a rock. That is crazy!

**Uzza:** He did not fly to Jerusalem to sanctify anything. Others did that. He flew to Jerusalem to meet with the prophets of the Bible before his important meeting with God. His meeting with Moses, in particular, would prove extremely valuable in his negotiations with the Almighty.

**Bob:** I guess it would make sense for their graves to be located in Jerusalem. Still, meeting with the undead before meeting with God, that took guts.

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“wrongdoers,” a euphemism in the Koran for unbelievers, whom he will torture then kill, the meaning of “then he will be returned over to his Lord” revelation 18:87, to be tortured some more.

18:83 And they ask you about Dhul-Qarnayn. Say: “I will give this account of him.”

18:84 We established him firmly in the land and We gave him access to everything.

18:85 And so he followed a course;

18:86 Then, when he reached the setting-place of the sun, he found that it sets in a spring of black mud and found, by it, a people. We said: “O Dhul-Qarnayn, either you punish them or show them kindness.”

18:87 He said: “As to the wrongdoer, we shall torture him; then he will be returned over to his Lord, Who will punish him a terrible punishment.

**Uzza:** He did not meet with them in their graves. He met with them as he made his way up to the seventh heaven for the meeting with God. The Hebrew prophets are alive and well in that area of Paradise just above Jerusalem.

**Gerry:** That sort of makes sense.

**Archie:** NO, IT DOESN'T! And, Uzza, didn't you just say that jinns fly to the first level of heaven to listen to God's conversations with his angels, not the seventh?

**Uzza:** Maybe when God speaks, His voice is heard everywhere in Paradise.

**Archie:** If He is that loud we would also hear him down here, wouldn't we? And, didn't you just say that everyone, including the greatest of them all, must spend time in the grave until Judgment Day?

**Uzza:** Yes.

**Archie:** So, what are these lesser fortune-tellers doing in heaven?

**Uzza:** [*taken aback*] I am no scholar. I have not spent a lifetime making sense of these things, and prophets are not fortune-tellers.

**Archie:** If the shoe fits. [*not letting up*] The people of Jerusalem must have been surprised when a man on a flying horse landed there? The Prophet must have been the talk of the town?

**Uzza:** There were no witnesses to Muhammad's landing or takeoff. We only have his word that the trip actually took place.

**Archie:** Why am I not surprised.

**Bob:** I assume the Prophet made it past the swarm of genies, I mean jinns, and made it to Paradise in one piece.

**Uzza:** Yes, he did, and when he got to the second level he spotted Jesus in conversation with John the Baptist.

**Archie:** I'll bite. What does Jesus look like?

**Uzza:** Muhammad was obviously enthralled with his trip to Paradise, and it was a busy time with all he had to do in one night. In one account of his trip, Jesus has lanky hair and is of medium height and moderate complexion. In another, Jesus has curly hair and a broad chest. And, in yet another, Jesus has a red face as if, according to Muhammad, he had just experienced a difficult bowel movement.

**Bob:** Whoa, too much information.

**Archie:** From the Prophet's description, it could be anybody.

**Bob:** Forget Jesus, what does God look like?

**Uzza:** Muhammad does not say.

**Archie:** Go figure.

**Gerry:** What was so important that God could not entrust Gabriel with the negotiations?

**Uzza:** It had to do with the number of prayers. God initially told Muhammad that He wanted everyone to pray fifty times a day.

**Archie:** Fifty times a day! You have to be kidding.

**Uzza:** That is more or less what Moses told Muhammad when he met him again on the way down. Moses told Muhammad to get back up there and tell God that it was unrealistic. After bouncing between Moses and God a few more times, God finally agreed to five prayers a day. Moses still thought this was too much, but Muhammad refused to ask God for a further reduction, and that is how, according to the man himself, the five daily prayers required of all Sunni Muslims were set (appendix: Negotiating the Prayers).

**Bob:** What about the Shias?

**Uzza:** They agreed with Moses, I guess, and combined the night prayer and the after sunset prayer into one and the noon and afternoon prayer into one for a total of three prayers a day.

**Archie:** Forget the prayers. This is nuts. This is absolutely friggin nuts. A guy who took his dreams for reality flies into the middle of what has to be one of the largest cities in the Middle East on a horse with wings, tethers it to a rock in the middle of town and nobody notices. He then gets back on the same horse, and still nobody notices, to fly to Paradise, which is held up by invisible pillars which nobody has yet to walk into or planes crash into, to be swarmed by ghosts on his way up to meet with people who should be living a zombie-like existence underground, not above it, in what has to be a massively honeycombed Earth to provide individual caves for the undead since Adam and Eve, or earlier if you believe the Earth is more than 6,000 years waiting for Judgment Day, before his meeting with the big guy, whom he can't describe, to negotiate, spurred on by Moses of all people, the number of prayers God expects his followers to perform every day.

**Gerry:** Breathe, Archie, breathe.

**Archie:** It's a bloody fairy tale, and not a very good one at that. A fairy tale for which people have been murdered in the hundreds of millions, most by people using only knives and swords. Think about that. And more millions, you are telling us, are about to meet a similar fate as the Islamists attempt to bring a war started to convert the planet through terror to a bloody end.

**Gerry:** Archie, relax.

**Archie:** Next, you will be telling us that Islamists, our enlightened self-righteous would-be murderers, believe in witches on flying brooms?

**Uzza:** [*sheepishly*] I am sorry, but yes; maybe not the flying broom part, Allah was not that specific. In the Koran, witches and sorceresses are referred to as "those who blow into knotted reeds"<sup>108</sup>.

**Archie:** I've heard enough!

**Gerry:** I haven't.

**Bob:** And neither have I.

**Archie:** I thought you wanted to know about what happened to the Jews after the battle of Badr?

**Bob:** Later, this is more interesting.

**Archie:** Fairy tales usually are.

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<sup>108</sup> 113:1 Say: "I seek refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak,

113:2 "From the evil of what He has created,

113:3 "And the evil of the darkness when it gathers,

113:4 "And the evil of those who blow into knotted reeds (witches or sorceresses),

## Who Are You Calling Stupid?

**Uzza:** I have talked too much. Maybe I should leave.

**Archie:** I'm sorry; it's just that sometimes the stupidity of the Arabs just pisses me off.

**Uzza:** ARABS ARE NOT STUPID! I am not Arab, but I know they are not stupid, just like the vast majority of Muslims, who, by the way, are not Arabs, and are also not stupid. If Muhammad had not revealed the Koran when he did, an Arab, not a Jew, would probably have discovered relativity, and long before Einstein did.

**Gerry:** How so?

**Uzza:** The pagans Muhammad was trying to convert had a very modern outlook on the nature of our existence. When told that it was Allah who caused them to grow old and die, and if they worshipped Him and only Him, He would bring them back to life and admit them into His Paradise, they said this was nonsense. They told anyone who would listen that there was only this life and that it was destroyed by the passage of time; what we know today as entropy. When Allah heard this, He repeated what they said in His Koran and accused them of not knowing what they were talking about. He said they were only "conjecturing"<sup>109</sup>.

**Gerry:** Conjecturing correctly, as it turned out.

**Bob:** What has the discovery of this entropy got to do with relativity?

**Uzza:** [*looking at Bob, then at Archie*] And you call Arabs stupid. Entropy is all about the impact of the passage of time, which Einstein identified as the fourth dimension.

**Bob:** Who are you calling stupid?

**Uzza:** It was nothing. I did not mean it. [*turning to Gerry*] If Allah had not insisted that what we now know as entropy was nothing but

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<sup>109</sup> 45:24 They say: "There is nothing but this our present life. We die and we live and we are only destroyed by time." However, they have no certain knowledge of this; they are only conjecturing.

conjecture, an Arab would undoubtedly have discovered relativity long before Einstein did. They were that smart!

**Archie:** What happened?

**Uzza:** Is it not obvious?

**Archie:** But if I said it I could be arrested.

**Uzza:** And I could be killed. The Koran asks us to believe with certainty in what it contains<sup>110</sup>. To believe with certainty in revealed truths is to abandon our ability to reason and arrive at logical conclusions. The result of this capitulation to what the pre-Islamic Arabs called nonsense was the Arabs of T. E. Lawrence.

**Bob:** Are we talking about Lawrence of Arabia?

**Uzza:** Yes. As much as he loved and admired the courage and perseverance of the Arabs with whom he fought against the Turks, he never understood their outlook on life. What he wrote about them in *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* is a sad testament to what happens to even the brightest when scriptures overwhelm the mind. "They were a people of primary colours, or rather of black and white..." he wrote, "a dogmatic, narrow-minded people... they only knew truth and untruth, belief and unbelief... they never compromised... their imaginations were vivid, but not creative"<sup>111</sup>.

**Gerry:** But Muslims, Arabs and Persians in particular did make substantial contribution to science, astronomy and mathematics in particular?

**Uzza:** That was mostly during the short-lived Muslim Renaissance.

**Bob:** There was a Renaissance before the Renaissance?

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<sup>110</sup> 45:20 This (Qur'an) is an illumination for mankind, a guidance and mercy unto a people who believe with certainty.

<sup>111</sup> They were a people of primary colours, or rather of black and white... They were a dogmatic people, despising doubt, our modern crown of thorns. They did not understand our metaphysical difficulties, our introspective questioning. They only knew truth and untruth, belief and unbelief, without our hesitating retinue of finer shades. This people was black and white not merely in clarity, but in apposition. Their thoughts were at ease only in extremes ... they never compromised; they pursued the logic of several incompatible opinions to absurd ends, without perceiving the incongruity. They were a limited, narrow-minded people, whose inert intellect lay fallow in curious resignation. Their imaginations were vivid, but not creative.

*T.E. Lawrence, Seven Pillars of Wisdom*

## 95 Who Are You Calling Stupid?

**Uzza:** Between the 8th and 10th century, when Islam was in its infancy, there emerged an Islamic school of thought largely influenced by Plato and Aristotle, whose works – and those of other Greek philosophers – were translated into Arabic<sup>112</sup>, and which became known as Mu'tazilism or Philosophy of Rationalism, or simply Islamic Philosophy. The most emblematic philosopher of the period, al-Kindi, wrote: "We should not be ashamed to acknowledge truth from whatever source it comes to us, even if it is brought to us by former generations and foreign people. For him who seeks the truth there is nothing of higher value than truth itself."

**Bob:** WOW!

**Uzza:** Mu'tazilites argued that the Koran should not be taken literally, and that human reason was more reliable than scriptures.

**Bob:** WOW again!

**Uzza:** The leaders of the believers of the time, the most noteworthy being Caliphs al-Ma'mun, Mu'tasim Billah and Wathiq, actively supported this sensible open-minded interpretation, allowing it to thrive until dogma reasserted itself with a vengeance and revelation again smothered reason.

**Gerry:** That is really too bad.

**Uzza:** For both you and us. Today, the man most responsible for Mu'tazilism is reviled by Islamists and al-Ghazali, the man most responsible for its demise, is celebrated as one of the greatest thinkers of all times. It is not a coincidence that most of Islam's substantial contributions to the advancement of science were from this period when Mu'tazilism was accepted by the Caliphate as a legitimate Islamic school of thought.

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<sup>112</sup> The motives of the translators [of Greek works in science and philosophy into Arabic] and their patrons, the [Abbasid] caliphs, may have been partially practical; medical skill was in demand, and control over natural forces could bring power and success. There was also, however, a wide intellectual curiosity, such as is expressed in the words of al-Kindi (c. 801-66), the thinker with whom the history of Islamic philosophy virtually begins:

We should not be ashamed to acknowledge truth from whatever source it comes to us, even if it is brought to us by former generations and foreign people. For him who seeks the truth there is nothing of higher value than truth itself.

**Gerry:** That would also explain why the Muslim world, which constitutes 21 percent of the world's population, has produced only 10 Nobel Prize laureates, with only two in the physical sciences, physics and chemistry, while the Jews who constitute about .02 percent of the world's population have taken an incredible 892, 22 percent of all Nobel prizes given out to-date.

**Uzza:** Depressing, is it not?

**Bob:** Not if you're Jewish.

**Uzza:** [*makes Uzza smile, if only for an instant*] Not to be overlooked are the requirements of an Islamic education where priority is given to learning Arabic and attempting to memorize the Koran in its entirety; the negative impact on critical thinking is just as damaging, if not more, than the time not available to non-religious subjects, which Islamists consider very much a pre-occupation of the ignorant, as is time not spent at prayer or glorifying Allah. If excessive worship is the answer, the world may eventually owe Islam an enormous debt.

**Archie:** I apologize. What I took for stupidity is simply, from your explanation, the result of indoctrination. But, surely, the preachers and the so-called Islamic scholars who believe in flying horses, a flat Earth and Paradise a few miles up are not praying with a full set of beads.

**Uzza:** The imams and scholars are the smartest of the smart. I doubt very much that they believe in what you said is a fairy tale. They know that religion is not so much about belief but about control, control over people who want to believe – and that is most of us – that there is more to our existence than meets the eye.

**Gerry:** Then you agree with Marx that religion is an opiate exploited by people who would rule over us.

**Archie:** That would explain why the faithful tend to be immune to a slow-burning planet. They're all stoned on religion.

**Uzza:** That is funny, what you just said Archie, but also what Gerry said, because that is almost exactly what the leaders of Mecca said to Muhammad when he told them he was sent by God to instruct them on how to behave: that he wanted to rule over them<sup>113</sup>.

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<sup>113</sup> 38:6 And the dignitaries among them went forth saying: "Go on and be steadfast regarding your gods. This is indeed a matter premeditated (Muhammad.... [wants] to subjugate us and rule us as his subjects, *Moududi*).



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**Gerry:** Speaking of who said what. An author whose work I read a long time ago wrote that religion was invented when man first became aware that he was mortal and could not deal with it. Unable to accept death for what it was, man made death a rite of passage, not an end, but a new beginning.

**Uzza:** If religion was invented to allay a fear of the end of existence, then Islam probably took it the furthest, making death something you yearn for. And where martyrs are concerned, something they would do ten times over, Muhammad said, because of the dignity Allah bestows on martyrs<sup>114</sup>.

**Archie:** Ah, the dignity of it all. Makes you want to puke.

**Uzza:** One of the most effective battle cries of the Koran, and there are many, is about this yearning for death: "You were yearning for death before you actually met it. Now you have seen it and you are beholding it"<sup>115</sup>, Allah said. The suicide bomber is a modern reminder of the effectiveness of Allah's siren-like call to martyrdom<sup>116</sup>.

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### <sup>114</sup> Narrated Anas bin Malik:

The Prophet said, "Nobody who enters Paradise likes to go back to the world even if he got everything on the earth, except a Mujahid who wishes to return to the world so that he may be martyred ten times because of the dignity he receives (from Allah)."

*Bukhari 52.72*

Dignity and better accommodations:

### **Narrated Samura:**

The Prophet said, "Last night two men came to me (in a dream) and made me ascend a tree and then admitted me into a better and superior house, better of which I have never seen. One of them said, 'This house is the house of martyrs.'"

*Bukhari 52.49*

<sup>115</sup> 3:143 You were yearning for death before you actually met it. Now you have seen it and you are beholding it.

<sup>116</sup> The first mention of martyrdom!

3:140 If you have been afflicted by a wound, a similar wound has afflicted the others (the unbelievers). Such are the times; We alternate them among the people, so that Allah may know who are the believers and choose martyrs from among you. Allah does not like the evildoers!

The role of martyrs made clear:

3:141 And that Allah might purify the believers and annihilate the unbelievers.

Martyrs will be the first to enter Paradise.

3:142 Or did you suppose that you will enter Paradise, before Allah has known who were those of you who have struggled, and those who are steadfast.

**Archie:** More like sirens. This yearning for death is really a yearning for sex, isn't it? For normal people there is nothing dignified about that.

**Uzza:** Allah bestowing dignity on martyrs is probably Muhammad's way of saying martyrs get more sex. Sex is Allah's way of gaining and rewarding the loyalty of men, of getting men to do His bidding. Having concluded that men aspire to no higher ideals than to fornicate their brains out, He promises them sex in spades in this world and even more in the next if they do as they are told in this one.

**Archie:** And the only way he gives them sex in spades in this one is by giving women no say in the matter. Am I correct?

**Uzza:** Allah said that "men are in charge of women"<sup>117</sup> and can beat them if they do not behave as the Koran demands<sup>118</sup>, and that includes if they refuse their husband's request for intimacy, the inalienable right of every man guaranteed by the Book. A revealed truth of Allah is that women are like fields to be ploughed at the plowman's discretion<sup>119</sup>.

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<sup>117</sup> 4:34 Men are in charge of women, because Allah has made some of them excel the others, and because they spend some of their wealth. Hence righteous women are obedient, guarding the unseen which Allah has guarded. And those of them that you fear might rebel, admonish them and abandon them in their beds and beat them. Should they obey you, do not seek a way of harming them; for Allah is Sublime and Great!

<sup>118</sup> The Koran in revelation 4:34 grants the husband the right to beat his wife, but it is a saying of Muhammad that pretty much guarantees the wife-beater immunity from prosecution.

**Narrated Umar ibn al-Khattab:**

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: A man will not be asked as to why he beat his wife.

*Abu Dawud 11.2142*

<sup>119</sup> 2:223 Your women are a tillage for you. So get to your tillage whenever you like. Do good for yourselves, fear Allah and know that you shall meet Him. And give good news to the believers.

Another (not widely held) interpretation of this revelation is that it is not about sex on demand but who gets to decide what position.

**Narrated Jabir:**

Jews used to say: "If one has sexual intercourse with his wife from the back, then she will deliver a squint-eyed child." So this Verse was revealed: "Your wives are a tilth unto you; so go to your tilth when or how you will." (2.223)."

*Bukhari 60.51*

A reported saying of Muhammad belies this interpretation.

Ali reported God's messenger as saying, "When a man calls his wife to satisfy his desire she must go to him even if she is occupied at the oven."

*At-Tirmidhi*

## 99 Who Are You Calling Stupid?

Brides acknowledge this debasing truth from above, that they have no more rights than a parcel of dirt when it comes to sex and procreation, when they sign the mandatory pre-marital agreement granting their husband-to-be complete control over what Allah and Muhammad refer to as her "private parts"<sup>120</sup>.

**Archie:** Meaning their husbands cannot be convicted of rape, no matter what.

**Uzza:** Not under the Sharia. Then again, if you believe that women are harlots yearning to be dominated sexually but will not admit to it, you are just giving them what they secretly desire.

**Bob:** So, it's not just men whom Allah believes are obsessed with sex?

**Uzza:** With so many women gravitating to Islam out of their own free will knowing what to expect, Allah may be right on both counts<sup>121</sup>. But I think we are better than that.

**Gerry:** So do I.

**Archie:** I never thought I'd hear you say that, Gerry.

**Gerry:** There is a difference between pursuing and wooing the object of your affection and treating her like the wonderful person she is, in the hope you can come to an understanding, and not like a manufactured facsimile with no more rights than an inflatable doll.

**Bob:** No more self-abuse and inflatable dolls because the girlfriend has a headache. Sex on demand, I could go for that.

**Uzza:** And many men do. Sex may be Islam's greatest draw.

**Archie:** What's in it for the other women?

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<sup>120</sup> **Narrated Uqba:**

The Prophet said: "The stipulations most entitled to be abided by are those with which you are given the right to enjoy the (women's) private parts (i.e. the stipulations of the marriage contract)."

*Bukhari 62.81*

<sup>121</sup> **Young. British. Female. Muslim.**

While less than 2 per cent of the population now attends a Church of England service every week, the number of female converts to Islam is on the rise.

At the London Central Mosque in Regent's Park, women account for roughly two thirds of the 'New Muslims' who make their official declarations of faith there – and most of them are under the age of 30.

*The Sunday Times, May 29, 2010*

**Uzza:** What other women?

**Archie:** Like the masked women you see on television who defend Islam. They scare me more than the men. They are so in-your-face!

**Uzza:** The veiled women; and you have answered your own question.

**Archie:** How's that?

**Uzza:** Some women, just like many men, enjoy bullying people, especially men. They too feed on the fear they instill in the people they intimidate. For the veiled women you say intimidate you, you are an inferior and many take pleasure, I am sure, in the fear they instill in you by standing up for a religion that uses terror as a means to an end.

**Archie:** Why would they consider me an inferior?

**Uzza:** You are an inferior as far as Islam is concerned, an inferior in faith who must inevitably be made to submit to Allah's Will, or be killed.

**Bob:** But didn't you just say that women are inferior to men?

**Archie:** And didn't Allah say that women were so stupid that they could not remember things as well as men, which is why a woman's testimony is worth less than that of a man<sup>122</sup>?

**Uzza:** Both Allah and Muhammad are in agreement; women are not very smart<sup>123</sup>, with Muhammad going as far as comparing them to

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<sup>122</sup> If revelation 2:282 had been interpreted as Allah stating that women were not good at business, this would have been the lesser of two evils. Unfortunately, it has been taken as meaning that women require more witnesses in different court proceedings that have nothing to do with commercial or financial transactions, such as accusations of adultery or sexual assault (*underlining mine*).

2:282 O believers, when you contract a debt for a fixed period, write it down. Let a scribe write it for you with fairness. No scribe should decline to write as Allah has taught him. So let him then write and let the debtor dictate. He should fear his Lord and not diminish the debt in the least. If the debtor is feeble-minded or weak or ignorant, then let his guardian dictate with fairness. And call to witness two witnesses of your men; if not two men, then one man and two women from such witnesses you approve of, so that if one of them (the two women) fails to remember, the other will remind her. The witnesses should not decline [to testify] when they are called upon [to do so]. So do not be averse to writing down the debt, be it small or large, as well as when it is due. This is more equitable in Allah's sight, more suitable for testimony and less likely to rouse your doubts. If it is an instant transaction among yourselves (involving no debt); then it is no offence if you do not write it down. And let there be witnesses when you sell one to another; but neither the scribe nor the witness should be harmed, because if you do that, it is an act of transgression. Fear Allah; Allah teaches you. He has knowledge of everything.

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donkeys and asses<sup>124</sup>. Their lack of prowess is one reason Allah put men in charge. Another reason Allah made them lifetime wards of men, again according to His spokesperson, is that women are inferior in faith as evident by their periods<sup>125</sup>, during which she is shunted aside during religious services and observances.

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### <sup>123</sup> **Narrated abu Said al-Khudri:**

The Prophet said, "Isn't the witness of a woman equal half that of a man?"

The women said, "Yes."

He said: "This is because of the deficiency of the woman's mind."

*Bukhari 48.286*

<sup>124</sup> Nowhere is the low esteem and contempt in which Muhammad held females more evident than in the hadiths about women interfering with a man's prayers. A sample:

### **Narrated Aisha:**

The things which annul the prayers were mentioned before me. They said, Prayer is annulled by a dog, a donkey and a woman (if they pass in front of the praying people).

I said, "You have made us (i.e. women) dogs ...

*Bukhari 9.490*

Ikrimah reported on the authority of Ibn Abbas, saying:

"I think the Apostle of Allah said: 'When one of you prays without a sutrah (a barrier), a dog, an ass, a pig, a Jew, a Magian, and a woman cut off his prayer, but it will suffice if they pass in front of him at a distance of over a stone's throw.'"

*Abu Dawud 2.704*

Aisha said [to Muhammad]: "You have made us equal to the dogs and the asses."

*Sahih Muslim*

### <sup>125</sup> **Narrated Abu Said Al-Khudri:**

Once Allah's Apostle went out to the Musalla (to offer the prayer) of Id-al-Adha or Al-Fitr prayer. Then he passed by the women and said, "O women! Give alms, as I have seen that the majority of the dwellers of Hell-fire were you (women)."

They asked, "Why is it so, O Allah's Apostle?"

He replied, "You curse frequently and are ungrateful to your husbands. I have not seen anyone more deficient in intelligence and religion than you. A cautious sensible man could be led astray by some of you."

The women asked, "O Allah's Apostle! What is deficient in our intelligence and religion?"

He said, "Is not the evidence of two women equal to the witness of one man?"

They replied in the affirmative.

He said, "This is the deficiency in her intelligence. Isn't it true that a woman can neither pray nor fast during her menses?"

The women replied in the affirmative.

**Bob:** What does menstruation have to do with anything?

**Uzza:** I do not know, it is just another obsession of Allah and Muhammad where women are concerned, and further proof that females, in both intellectual and physical attributes, leave a lot to be desired.

**Archie:** Let me get this straight. Both God and His Prophet said that women are stupid and infirmed. That means to be a believing woman you have to agree that you are stupid and suffer from a repugnant disease which you acquired upon reaching puberty.

**Uzza:** No, only that you are not as smart as a man. As to the restrictions placed on them during their time of the month, it is just something they have to put up with; they do not have to believe that they are impure. This is just something that Allah and Muhammad, like so many gods and their spokesmen before them, who did not understand the role menstruation plays in the reproductive cycle, made up, as far as I am concerned, to further diminish our sex.

**Archie:** Fine, but if they agree they are stupider than me, what gives them the right to lord it over me?

**Uzza:** They may be inferior in beliefs to a believing man, but they are superior to every unbeliever and that includes all of you, and that is all that matters. Which is why they are entitled, from their perspective, to bully you and get the satisfaction that their husbands, brothers, uncles and fathers must get from bullying them. To bully you, with their approval I might add. Bullying, women being the main beneficiary, is endemic in Islam. It begins at home and spreads from generation to generation and within the umma.

**Archie:** Bullying is beneficial?

**Uzza:** It does get people to behave like Allah intended and the unbelievers to be wary of denying Islam whatever it wants. From an Islamist's point of view, as Martha Stewart used to say, "and that is a good thing."

**Archie:** A good thing, my ass!

**Bob:** What is an umma?

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He said, "This is the deficiency in her religion."

*Bukhari 6.301*

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**Uzza:** It is the community of believers. It is just another transliteration of an Arab word, and a very evocative one at that, that you see imams use during their sermons, and believers, when talking among themselves in a language other than Arabic, as a reminder that it is us against them.

**Bob:** Transliteration, what's that?

**Uzza:** It is basically spelling a word in the alphabet of another language so that you can pronounce it.

**Archie:** When you said that, as far as Islam is concerned, we are inferiors in beliefs who must be dealt with one way or another; is that what they mean when they say Islam is a supremacist religion?

**Uzza:** For Islamists, absolutely.

**Archie:** Is that like the superior race?

**Uzza:** No, but the methods used to achieve their goal by both claimant to a greater right to life and the bounty of this world<sup>126</sup> are not dissimilar.

**Bob:** [*in a whisper*] Are we talking genocide?

**Uzza:** The greatest mass murder of an indigenous people may not have been committed by Hitler, Mao or Stalin but by the Mughals.

**Bob:** What are Mughals?

**Uzza:** Not what, but who. Mughals is the name given to Muslim invaders and rulers of much of the Indian sub-continent. Indians believed in more than one god; they were and are polytheists. The

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<sup>126</sup> Hitler, in *Mein Kampf*, looked to the East for what he called *lebensraum*, literally “living space” for the master race. This living space was to be acquired through extermination, enslavement and sterilization of non-Aryan races. It was the moral duty of every NAZI to ensure the survival of the master race by whatever means at his or her disposal.

35:39 It is He Who made you successors in the lands. Then he who disbelieves, his unbelief will recoil upon him; and their unbelief will only increase the unbelievers in contempt in the sight of their Lord. No their unbelief will only increase the unbelievers in perdition.

Will the practitioners of the master religion, one day, with the authority granted them by the Koran as “successors in the lands,” see it as their religious and moral duty to cull a starving planet to ensure not only the survival but the supremacy of the master religion and those who believe? Will this piece of entitlement dogma lead to even greater atrocities than when it was the alleged superior race which laid claim to exclusivity of living space?

Koran is clear on the concept: polytheists are the worst<sup>127</sup>, they must convert or die, and tens of millions of them were slaughtered by the Mughals<sup>128</sup>, not having the option of the People of the Book to pay a ransom to keep on breathing and worshipping their gods.

**Bob:** Were the Jews of Badr worried that they too would be killed for their beliefs?

**Uzza:** Yes and no.

**Archie:** What kind of answer is that?

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<sup>127</sup> 9:113 It is not for the Prophet and those who believe to ask for forgiveness for the polytheists even if they are near relatives, after it becomes clear to [the believers] that they are the people of the Fire.

<sup>128</sup> Based on Muslim chronicles of the period, and the demographic calculations done by historian K. S. Lal in his book *Growth of Muslim Population in Medieval India*, it is estimated that between 1000 CE and 1500 CE, the population of Hindus decreased by 80 million. For much of that period the death rate among Hindus exceeded their birthrate. If the eminent historian's estimates are even remotely accurate, this period would have witnessed the largest cold-blooded killing of an indigenous people in all written history.



## **A War That Pays For Itself**

**Uzza:** After Badr, Muhammad not only felt his position secure enough to have his critics killed but also to put his newfound prestige on the line by asking the Jews to pay the equivalent of protection money in the form of a head tax, the Jizya.

**Bob:** To protect them from whom?

**Uzza:** From him.

**Archie:** Am I missing something here? The Jews saved the Prophet because he preached what they believed, and for a while it seemed like they were getting along like a house on fire. And now, you're telling us that the man they saved wants them to pay protection money.

**Uzza:** Remember, God had told Muhammad that it was okay to kill unbelievers, even during the sacred months.

**Gerry:** But the Jews were not unbelievers. Muslims and Jews both believed in Allah, the one and only god.

**Uzza:** Yes, but the Jews did not believe in Muhammad. When that became evident to the man who claimed to be God's last and greatest spokesperson, the romance was over.

**Bob:** But the Jews have prophets up the ying-yang. The Bible is full of them.

**Uzza:** Yes, but they are Jewish Prophets.

**Gerry:** Of course. God only talks to the Chosen People, the Jews, and Muhammad was an Arab.

**Uzza:** It was a heartfelt blow for Muhammad, who was a real fan of Moses. After Allah and Muhammad, it is Moses who is mentioned most often in the Koran.

**Bob:** Wouldn't that make Allah a fan of Moses?

**Uzza:** What do you mean?

**Bob:** If the Koran is the word of God and not something the guy who said he spoke for Him made up, then it is Allah who is a fan of Moses, not the other way around.

**Uzza:** [*showing some frustration*] They both liked him, okay.

**Bob:** Okay!

**Uzza:** You are smarter than you let on, my inscrutable friend.

**Bob:** Why would you think that?

**Uzza:** You know why! Anyway, Muhammad saw himself as the Arab Moses. God gave Moses the Ten Commandments<sup>129</sup>, which Jesus, one of his lesser prophets, completely misunderstood, prompting Allah to send the Koran to Muhammad to reiterate some of the more salient point of the Torah, such as the aforementioned Talion Law which Allah elevated into a glorification of revenge. "In retaliation there is life for

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<sup>129</sup> The first mention of the Ten Commandments:

2:51 And [remember] how we promised Moses forty nights (at the end of which Moses received the scriptures); and you took the calf after him, thus becoming evildoers.

2:52 But We pardoned you after that, so that you might give thanks.

2:53 And when We gave Moses the Book (the Torah) and the Criterion ("Al-Furqan" which distinguishes right from wrong), so that you might be well guided.

Al-Furqan is also a reference to the Qur'an as the decisive factor between Good and Evil. Begs the question as to whether Moses was given all, or part of the Koran. Like in the Bible, Moses comes down the mountain only to find his people worshipping a golden calf. In the Bible the tribe of Levi, who did not worship the calf, is asked to make an example of the idol worshippers, killing three thousand of them. In the Koran, the killing comes in the form of an unusual request.

2:54 When Moses said to his people: "My people, you have wronged yourselves by taking the calf [as god]. Repent to your creator. Kill yourselves (let the innocent kill the evil-doers); that would be better for you in the sight of your Creator." Then He forgave you. He is the All-Forgiving, the Merciful.

But there's more...

2:55 And when you (Moses' people) said: "O Moses, we will not believe in you until we see Allah with our own eyes", whereupon you were struck by a thunderbolt while you looked on.

2:56 Then We raised you up after you had died, so that you might give thanks.

In another recollection it is clear that it is the people who are struck by the killer thunderbolt from heaven, not Moses.

4:153 The People of the Book ask you to bring down a book from heaven for them; indeed, they asked Moses for greater than that, saying: "Show us God face to face." Thereupon the thunderbolt struck them for their wickedness. Then, they worshipped the calf, after they had received the clear proofs. Yet we pardoned all that and we gave Moses clear authority.

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you"<sup>130</sup>, Allah said. Proportional retaliation for a wrong done to you; disproportional retaliation for a wrong done to Him or His spokesman.

**Archie:** What do you consider disproportional retaliation?

**Uzza:** To be crucified on the trunk of a tree after having an arm and a leg lopped on opposite sides as Pharaoh repeatedly said he would do to his magicians who, after witnessing Moses' superior magic, became believers (appendix: Moses and Pharaoh).

**Bob:** Ouch!

**Uzza:** There is the pain, but there is also the humiliation of hanging from a cross dangling by one arm and one leg.

**Gerry:** And who is deserving of such barbaric punishment?

**Archie:** To call it barbaric is an insult to barbarians everywhere.

**Uzza:** Heretics, or anyone, as was demonstrated by the Islamic State which crucified Christians in Raqqa on crosses but kept the Islamic touch of cutting a limb from opposite sides. But, it is mostly for those who have returned Allah's gift of belief that Islamic-style crucifixion is demanded.

**Gerry:** Why were Christians crucified, except perhaps to make fun of the crucifixion?

**Uzza:** Why make fun of something that never happened?

**Gerry:** What do you mean?

**Uzza:** In the Koran, the crucifixion<sup>131</sup> is one big illusion Allah created to confuse the Christians; but not before catering the Last Supper, which was not an illusion, and during which the apostles acknowledged, at Jesus' insistence, that he was a simple messenger of Allah. When the crucifixion is supposed to have happened, Allah had already welcomed Jesus, body and soul, into His Paradise.

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<sup>130</sup> 2:179 In retaliation there is life for you, O people of understanding, that you may be God-fearing.

<sup>131</sup> 4:157 And their saying: "We have killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary and the Messenger of Allah." They neither killed nor crucified him; but it was made to appear so unto them. Indeed, those who differ about him are in doubt about it. Their knowledge does not go beyond conjecture, and they did not kill him for certain;

4:158 Rather Allah raised him unto Him. Allah is Mighty and Wise.

**Archie:** Back the Son of God up for a minute; are you saying that when Jesus invited the apostles for a last supper, there was no supper?

**Uzza:** The alleged Son of God. It is only after the apostles insist that it would be easier to believe what Jesus has asked them to believe if He could convince God to send down something to eat<sup>132</sup>.

**Archie:** That's crazy.

**Uzza:** Tell that to God, who told the disciples that if they disbelieved after what He had just done for them, He would punish them like no one had been punished before<sup>133</sup>.

**Gerry:** Why did the Islamic State crucify Christians in a manner reserved for heretics?

**Uzza:** Allah leaves it to the believer in charge as to whether those who actively oppose Allah and His Messenger should suffer a similar fate. The crucified Christians of Raqqa may have refused to pay the Jizya, thereby opposing Islam by depriving it of funds to make war.

**Gerry:** That sounds to me like passive resistance.

**Uzza:** Islamists are not into splitting hairs.

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<sup>132</sup> The Last Supper, which Allah catered, may have begun with a Freudian slip with Jesus erroneously referring to himself as Allah in revelation 5:111, i.e., "Believe in Me and My Messenger"; the translator's bracketed explanation notwithstanding. The Messenger in 5:111 can only be Muhammad who would not be born for at least another 570 years. The apparent confusion in Allah's revelations about the Last Supper is only the beginning of incongruities in Allah's attempt to recast the events surrounding the Crucifixion so as to minimize Jesus' role and suffering, as He does throughout the Koran.

5:111 And when I revealed to the disciples (ordering them through Jesus): "Believe in Me and My Messenger", they replied: "We believe, and You bear witness that we submit."

5:112 When the disciples said: "Jesus, son of Mary, is your Lord able to bring down for us a table [spread with food] from heaven?"; he said: "Fear Allah, if you are true believers."

5:113 They said: "We would like to eat from it so that our hearts may be reassured and know that you have told us the truth and be witnesses thereof."

5:114 Jesus, son of Mary, then said: "O Allah, our Lord, send down to us a table spread with food from heaven that it may be a festival for the first and last of us and a sign from You; and provide for us, for You are the Best Provider."

<sup>133</sup> After the serving up the last supper Allah warned the disciples about reneging on their pledge.

5:115 Allah said: "I will send it down to you, so that whoever of you disbelieves thereafter I will inflict on him a punishment I do not inflict on any other being."

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**Bob:** You mentioned the gift of belief. What is that?

**Uzza:** If you believe, it is because Allah allows you to believe. It is a gift from Him. For you to return this gift is the ultimate insult and deserving of the worst punishment.

**Bob:** Can a heretic say they were wrong and asked for Allah's gift back?

**Uzza:** Even if you could, summary execution makes it somewhat problematic.

**Gerry:** Do Islamists consider you and people like you heretics?

**Uzza:** Yes.

**Archie:** I can see now why you are so upset that they were allowed in, no questions asked. All we have to do when the jihadists come calling is agree to become believers and keep on breathing; but you, and people like you, are in for a really hard time.

**Uzza:** Do not be so sure. Under Islamic law, a believer who kills an unbeliever is entitled to his property, which includes his wives and daughters. Even in Muhammad's time it was a problem stopping believers from killing wealthy unbelievers, or unbelievers with pretty wives and daughters who converted at the last minute.

**Bob:** Better convert now, Archie.

**Archie:** Got no money, can't get laid? Allah will provide, if you're man enough to kill for it. What a god!

**Gerry:** Isn't that what God tells the Jews in the Torah: if you want the Holy Land, you will have to kill for it?

**Uzza:** Yes, that wonderful invitation to genocide in Deuteronomy. The Arabs and Jews had so many reasons to get along, including this killing business to fulfill a promise made in a book by a god who cannot be bothered to do his own dirty work.

**Archie:** Watch it, Uzza, your heresy is showing.

**Gerry:** The scriptures that sanction killing to get what your god has promised you can be a tie that binds. That is, until you realize that the god in whom you both claim to believe expects you to kill each other in the pursuit of a promise He made.

**Archie:** Who says God does not have a sense of humor? A morbid one, I admit, but then again, isn't that what gods are all about? Remember all the shenanigans of the gods of the Greeks?

**Uzza:** They were a myth!

**Archie:** And Allah isn't? The Greeks put their gods on top of a mountain. The Koran places its mashed-up variation in an Earth-like Paradise just above the clouds between the Earth and the moon. A climb up Mount Olympus proved the Greek gods were a figment of someone's imagination. Neil Armstrong's journey to the moon should have proven the same as far as the alleged author of the Koran and His home in the sky is concerned.

**Gerry:** Yes, why do Muslims still believe in the Koran's description of what is out there when we now know so much about what is actually out there?

**Uzza:** The leader of Boko Haram summarized it for all Islamists in an interview on the BBC when he said that space and all that we see there is another illusion created by Allah to test our faith.

**Bob:** And illusions seem to be something Allah is good at.

**Archie:** [*throwing his hands up*] You just can't win! Western civilization is about to be defeated by an army of morons.

**Uzza:** You underestimate the forces aligned against you. Your defeat was engineered by the greatest strategist and military mind of all times. He even left a blueprint which, in your arrogance, your Achilles heel, you could not be bothered to read.

**Archie:** Really. How hard could it be to get morons to kill for sex, money and fame?

**Uzza:** While the lure of the possessions of those you personally slaughtered or slaughtered as a group, their females in particular, was enough to seduce those who would be doing the killing in Allah's Cause, it was not enough to finance the military campaign of a religion on a total war footing until all unbelievers have been "subjugated or killed"<sup>134</sup>. That was the Jizya. It was another stroke of genius. The tax

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<sup>134</sup> Many authors have pointed out that it is problematic to speak of Muslim "fundamentalism" because it suggests that there are large doctrinaire differences between fundamentalist Muslims and the mainstream. The truth, however, is that most Muslims appear to be "fundamentalist" in the Western sense of the world—in that even "moderate" approaches to Islam generally consider the Koran to be the literal and inerrant word of the one true God...

## 111 A War That Pays For Itself

on the Christians and Jews under Muslim jurisdiction would finance the military expeditions to bring more Christians and Jews and their lands under Muslim jurisdiction.

**Gerry:** I must admit, Uzza, that was brilliant: a war against your enemy paid for by your enemy with the possessions of the murdered as payment and enticement for warriors and the Jizya to finance the rest. Brilliant, absolutely brilliant, if somewhat immoral.

**Uzza:** Islamists do not consider wars to extend Allah's dominion as immoral; quite the opposite.

**Gerry:** All wars of aggression are immoral. Calling it a holy war does not make it less so.

**Uzza:** Except when it does.

**Bob:** One thing I don't get.

**Archie:** Only one thing?

**Bob:** Very funny. If Muhammad was pissed off at the Jews, why take it out on the Christians?

**Uzza:** Allah said to tax the People of the Book, the Bible, which meant the Jews and the Christians. The Byzantine Empire to the north and west was filled with taxable Christians. Allah may have anticipated that an invasion of those lands would inevitably follow the believers' victory over the pagan Arabs and that it would be an expensive proposition.

**Bob:** Did the Christians of Medina object?

**Uzza:** There is evidence that Christians, before Islam, lived in peace with the Arabs of Mecca. In fact, it was a Christian cousin of Muhammad by the name of Waraqa who convinced him his dreams and visions were communications from Paradise (appendix: Waraqa, the Most Influential Christian Ever).

**Bob:** He has to be the most influential Christian of all time.

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The only future devout Muslims can envisage—as Muslims—is one where all infidels have been converted to Islam, subjugated, or killed. The tenets of Islam simply do not admit of anything but a temporary sharing of power with the "enemies of God."

*Sam Harris, author of the New York Times bestseller, End of Faith, W. W. Norton, 2004*

**Uzza:** We do not know if there were any Christians in Medina when Allah imposed the tax, but the Jews, who were then still a force to be reckoned with, ridiculed what they believed was an attempt at extortion by Muhammad, saying that God could not be so poor as to need their money.

**Bob:** So how did Muhammad take it?

**Archie:** Bad, I'll bet. Remember the poets who made fun of him?

**Uzza:** Muhammad was a patient man; he bided his time. He also started receiving revelations which said, more or less, to Hell with the Jews, the most significant being a change of direction. Before the breakup, Muslims and Jews prostrated themselves in the direction of Jerusalem during prayers. After the breakup, the believers were instructed to prostate themselves in the direction of Mecca<sup>135</sup>.

**Gerry:** "To Hell with the Jews!" Isn't that a bit harsh?

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<sup>135</sup> 2:142 The ignorant among the people (among the Jews and polytheist Arabs) will say: "What caused them (the Prophet Muhammad and the believers) to turn away from the former Qibla towards which they used to turn (Jerusalem)?" Say: "To Allah belongs the East and the West. He guides whom He wills towards the Right Path."

2:143 And thus We have made you (the Muslim nation) a just nation, so that you may bear witness unto the rest of mankind, and that the Messenger may bear witness unto you. We did not ordain your former Qibla except that We may distinguish those who follow the Messenger from those who turn on their heels (return to disbelief). It was indeed a hard test except for those whom Allah guided. Allah would not allow your faith to be in vain. He is Clement and Merciful to mankind.

2:144 Surely, We see your face turned towards heaven (yearning for guidance through revelation). We shall turn you towards a Qibla that will please you. Turn your face then towards the Sacred Mosque (the Sacred Mosque of Mecca, the Ka'ba); and wherever you are turn your faces towards it. Those who were given the Book (the Jews and Christians) certainly know this to be the Truth from their Lord. Allah is not unaware of what they do.

2:145 Were you even to come to the People of the Book with every proof, they will not follow your Qibla, nor will you follow their Qibla. Nor will some of them follow the Qibla of the others. And were you to follow their desires after all the knowledge that came to you, surely you would be one of the evil-doers.

2:146 Those to whom We gave the Book know him (Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah) as they know their own sons; but a group of them will knowingly conceal the truth.

2:147 The truth is from your Lord. So do not be one of the doubters.

2:148 To everyone there is a direction towards which he turns. So hasten to do the good works. Wherever you are, Allah will bring you all together (in the Hereafter). Surely Allah has power over all things.



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**Uzza:** No, not really. When you hear the Islamists repeating revelations that seem to tolerate Jews and Christians, Jews in particular, they are usually repeating truths that are no longer valid. They are telling lies which you readily believe because you do not know any better, and do not want to.

**Archie:** But I thought you said revealed truths were unchangeable?

**Uzza:** In the Koran, on at least four occasions, Allah reveals that it is a god's prerogative to change his mind<sup>136</sup>.

**Archie:** So, a fact in the Koran is only a fact until Allah comes up with an alternate fact. Why does that remind me of Donald Trump?

**Uzza:** No, it is not like Trump. Allah simply comes up with a new fact, of which most scholars agree there are about 240<sup>137</sup>, to replace an existing fact. That other fact no longer exists; it has been abrogated, nullified by a new fact.

**Gerry:** Sorry, Uzza, but that still does not make sense. In the real world, better information replaces old information. In the world of what you call immutable facts communicated to a mortal by a god who claims to be all-knowing and all-seeing, abrogation should not even be the exception; it defies logic. For a god who brags that not only does He know the future but He shapes it, to get it wrong so often, it boggles the mind.

**Uzza:** It does not trouble the minds of the Islamists and that is all that matters.

**Archie:** That is because they are out of their minds!

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<sup>136</sup> 2:106 Whichever verse We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring instead a better or similar one. Do you not know that Allah has the power over all things?

13:39 Allah blots out and confirms what He pleases; and with Him is the Mother of the Book.

16:101 And if We replace a verse by another – and Allah knows best what He reveals – they say: “You [Muhammad] are only a forger.” Surely, most of them do not know.

17:86 If We please, We certainly can blot out that which We have revealed to you (O Muhammad); then you would find no guardian to assist you against Us.

<sup>137</sup> The complete list in *Let Me Rephrase That - Your Layman's Guide to Abrogations*, Bernard Payeur, Boreal Books.

**Gerry:** Of all the incongruities that devotees of a religion steeped in incongruities must accept, the concept of abrogation, in a book the author claims is without any defects<sup>138</sup>, has to be the most difficult.

**Uzza:** It would be, if it were not for Lawrence's observation about people being comfortable with absurdities.

**Gerry:** If not taxes...

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<sup>138</sup> 39:28 We made it an Arabic Qur'an without any defect that perchance they might be God-fearing.

How do we know our holy books are free from error? Because the books themselves say so. Epistemological black holes of this sort are fast draining the light from our world...

If we cannot find our way to a time when most of us are willing to admit that, at the very least, *we are not sure* (italics his) God wrote some of our books, then we need only to count the days to Armageddon—because God has given us many more reasons to kill one another than to turn the other cheek...

*The End of Faith - Religion, Terror and the Future of Reason, W. W. Norton & Company, 2004, p. 35*

## **Overkill Becomes the Norm**

**Uzza:** An irresistible opportunity for revenge on the Jews for making fun of the Jizya and for plunder presented itself with the retaliation killing of a Muslim by a Jew of the Banu Qaynuqa, the smallest of the three Jewish tribes of Medina.

A Muslim girl was sitting in a Jewish goldsmith shop while waiting for the shopkeeper to return with some ornament when, unbeknownst to her, a woman pinned the hem of her skirt. When she got up, everyone had a good laugh. The poor girl was mortified. A passing Muslim killed the Jew he thought responsible. The brother of the man killed then killed his brother's killer. There was a clamor for revenge on the tribe of Banu Qaynuqa.

**Bob:** Uh-oh!

**Uzza:** Muhammad gathered his followers and took the Jews of the Banu Qaynuqa as prisoners. There was talk of execution until Muhammad decided to simply curse the Jews, confiscate their property and send them into exile.

**Bob:** Nobody else died. That was unexpected.

**Uzza:** He probably spared them to avoid spooking the remaining Jewish tribes of Medina into joining the forces gathering outside the city to avenge the defeat at Badr.

**Archie:** The Meccans are back. Great!

**Uzza:** The Meccans were not about to let their defeat at Badr go unavenged. A large detachment of troops accompanied by the men's wives, which was not unusual, marched on Medina. At a place called Uhud they waited for the believers to come out and fight them, which they did.

**Gerry:** Did the women accompany their men because a victory was assured?

**Uzza:** Not necessarily. They were there to urge their men on, many tearing their clothing, exposing their breasts in defiance and letting their men know what awaited them if they were victorious.

**Archie:** Or what the other guy would get his hands on if they weren't.

**Uzza:** Perhaps.

**Bob:** WOW! Arab women showing their boobs in public.

**Uzza:** Arab women, before Islam, were not the dominated prudes you see today. Before Islam, Arab women were very much spirited partners of the men they married.

**Gerry:** What a modern outlook.

**Uzza:** The Arab men and women of what Islam calls the Age of Ignorance, before Allah sent the Book to Muhammad, were modern before modern became a dirty word.

**Archie:** From women who bared their breasts in defiance, to women who won't bare their nose to sneeze.

**Uzza:** It was these bold women who would be the difference in the only battle the Meccans would win, not because of what they did before the battle but during; they ran away thinking the battle was lost, which it was, until they took flight.

**Archie:** And holy warriors rushed after them to be the first to get themselves one of those brash Meccan girls, allowing the Meccans to get back in there.

**Uzza:** How did you know?

**Archie:** After everything you said about the motivation of those who fight in Allah's Cause, it was a no-brainer.

**Uzza:** Another Muslim victory was at hand until Muhammad's archers, thinking the battle already won and seeing some women flee, shouted "The booty, the booty," and started running after them<sup>139</sup>. The Meccan

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<sup>139</sup> Narrated Al-Bara bin Azib:

The Prophet appointed Abdullah bin Jubair as the commander of the infantry men (archers) who were fifty on the day (of the battle) of Uhud. He instructed them, "Stick to your place, and don't leave it even if you see birds snatching us, till I send for you; and if you see that we have defeated the infidels and made them flee, even then you should not leave your place till I send for you."

Then the infidels were defeated.

By Allah, I saw the women fleeing lifting up their clothes revealing their leg-bangles and their legs. So, the companions of Abdullah bin Jubair said, "The booty! O people, the booty! Your companions have become victorious, what are you waiting for now?"

Abdullah bin Jubair said, "Have you forgotten what Allah's Apostle said to you?"

cavalry seized the opportunity and counterattacked, turning a near victory for the believers into a rout.

**Archie:** Allah must have been pissed!

**Uzza:** Like Muhammad, Allah was no fool and kept His cool and counselled His spokesperson to do the same<sup>140</sup>.

**Archie:** Sure, let's keep pretending they are not one and the same.

**Bob:** You mean He didn't send armed angels like He did at Badr to help out?

**Archie:** Bob, let me tell you something about gods. When their side wins, it is because of them; when their side loses, it's not their fault, or they caused their side to lose – but not by too much – to teach it a lesson, or for some other made up excuse<sup>141</sup>.

**Bob:** Uzza, is Allah like that?

**Uzza:** Well, He did not send angels to help out at Uhud like He did at Badr where He took credit for the victory. At the beginning of the Koran's account of the defeat at Uhud, Allah does admit that the sight of the booty was a test to see who desired Paradise more than what this world has to offer, but He forgave those who failed the test<sup>142</sup>.

They replied, "By Allah! We will go to the people (i.e. the enemy) and collect our share from the war booty." But when they went to them, they were forced to turn back defeated ...

*Bukhari 52.276*

<sup>140</sup> 3:159 It was by a mercy from Allah that you dealt leniently with them (the Muslim fighters who flinched in the midst of the battle); for had you been cruel and hard-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you. So, pardon them, ask Allah's Forgiveness for them and consult them in the conduct of affairs. Then, when you are resolved, trust in Allah; Allah indeed loves those who trust [in Him].

<sup>141</sup> 3:165 And when a misfortune befell you (in the Battle of Uhud) after you had inflicted twice as much (in the Battle of Badr), you said: "Whence is this?"; say: "It is from yourselves." Surely Allah has power over everything!

3:166 And what befell you on the day the two armies met (in the Battle of Uhud) was by Allah's Leave, that He might know the true believers;

3:167 And that He might know the hypocrites. When it was said to them: "Come, fight in the way of Allah or defend yourselves", they replied: "If only we knew how to fight, we would have followed you." On that day, they were closer to disbelief than to belief. They say with their tongues what is not in their hearts; and Allah knows best what they concealed!

<sup>142</sup> 3:152 Allah fulfilled His Promise to you when, by His Leave, you went on killing them; until you lost heart and dissented about the affair and disobeyed (the Muslims were victorious until the archers disobeyed the Prophet's orders),

**Bob:** Why would He do that; forgive them, I mean?

**Archie:** Because, Bob, these gods need real people to do the killing, because they're not real.

**Uzza:** Real or not, the believers were needed to fight another day, that is for sure. And when that day came, which was soon, He did not want them to be distracted by the booty when they should be killing people, so He simply warned them not to do it again and forgave them.

**Bob:** But when do you know that you have killed enough people that it is safe to go scavenging for booty?

**Uzza:** You cannot, which is why Allah chose to err on the side of caution and advised overkilling them, killing more than might be necessary to achieve victory<sup>143</sup>. The lesson has not been lost on holy warriors to this day.

**Archie:** Godlike in both its simplicity and immorality.

**Bob:** What about the people who ran for their lives when the Meccans counterattacked? Surely they were not to blame.

**Uzza:** Nonetheless, Allah forgave them, blaming the devil for their flight to safety<sup>144</sup>, an illusionary safety He will later explain.

**Archie:** What did I tell you?

**Bob:** An illusionary safety, what is that?

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after He had shown you what you cherished. Some of you desired this world (left their position to get a share of the booty), others the Hereafter. Then, He turned you away from them (the Qurashite foes of the Muslims) in order to test you, and He has forgiven you. Allah is Gracious to the believers!

<sup>143</sup> 47:4 So when you meet the unbelievers, strike their necks till you have bloodied them, then fasten the shackles. Thereupon, release them freely or for a ransom, till the war is over. So be it. Yet had Allah wished, He would have taken vengeance upon them, but he wanted to test you by one another. Those who die in the Cause of Allah, He will not render their works perverse.

47:5 He shall guide them and set their minds aright;

47:6 And shall admit them into Paradise which He has made known to them.

In Mohsin Khan's Saudi-funded translation of the Koran, there is no ambiguity as to the meaning of "strike their necks," i.e., cut off their heads.

47:4 So, when you meet (in fight - Jihad in Allah's Cause) those who disbelieve, smite (their) necks till when you have killed and wounded many of them, then bind a bond firmly (on them, i.e. take them as captives) ...

<sup>144</sup> 3:155 Those of you, who fled on the day the two armies met, were made to slip by the Devil, on account of something they had done. However, Allah has forgiven them; Allah is indeed Forgiving and Merciful.

**Uzza:** It was not enough to get the believers to overkill. Allah, or Muhammad, if you agree with Archie, also had to get them to get over their fear of death, get them to look forward to it if they were going to triumph over the death-wary unbelievers.

**Gerry:** Are you saying that transforming Islam into what some people call a death cult began in earnest after the defeat at Uhud?

**Uzza:** After the defeat at Uhud you get the pep talk you hear in one form or another throughout the Koran, where Allah reminds the believers that He decides when and where someone dies; that no one can play it safe<sup>145</sup>, and if He causes any of them to die in His Cause, all their sins are forgiven and they get to meet with Him before everyone else<sup>146</sup>.

**Bob:** And get a first crack at the maidens and the houris before the Judgment Day stampede to get at them.

**Uzza:** Probably. Allah is not one to withhold what He has promised<sup>147</sup>.

**Bob:** Bring on the grim reaper.

**Gerry:** Uzza, how many believers got to meet Allah that day?

**Uzza:** After killing as many believers as there were Meccans killed at Badr, the Meccans withdrew, considering the dead of Badr avenged.

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<sup>145</sup> 3:156 O believers, do not be like the unbelievers, who say about their brethren when they [die] while travelling abroad or fighting: "Had they stayed with us, they would not have died or been killed." Allah wished to make that a cause of anguish in their hearts. It is Allah who causes men to live and die, and Allah has Knowledge of what you do!

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3:168 Those who said to their brethren, while they themselves stayed at home! "Had they obeyed us they would not have been killed?" Say: "Then ward off death from yourselves, if you are truthful."

<sup>146</sup> 3:157 And were you to be killed or to die in the Way of Allah, forgiveness and mercy from Allah are far better than what they amass.

3:158 And were you to die or to be killed, it is unto Allah that you will be gathered.

<sup>147</sup> 3:169 And do not think those who have been killed in the Way of Allah as dead; they are rather living with their Lord, well provided for.

3:170 Rejoicing in what their Lord has given them of His bounty, and they rejoice for those who stayed behind and did not join them; knowing that they have nothing to fear and that they shall not grieve.

3:171 They rejoice in the Grace of Allah and His Favour, and that Allah will not withhold the reward of the faithful;

Had they pursued the fleeing believers, they would have annihilated them once and for all.

**Bob:** Maybe they were in a hurry to enjoy the breasts of victory.

**Uzza:** The pre-Islamic Arabs were not the bloodthirsty type. The Meccans returned home because under Talion Law, the dead had been avenged and no one else needed to die. The pagan Arabs' aversion to unmitigated violence, as well as the limit they placed on retaliation killing compared to that demanded by an unadulterated Talion law and Allah's opened-ended endorsement of killing in His Cause, sealed the fate of the pagan Arabs.

**Gerry:** I can't believe men could be distracted by women to the point of risking losing a battle.

**Uzza:** Put yourself in those young men's shoes. What was fleeing was a chance at intimacy, something most of them would not experience unless they literally grabbed it, not unlike the young men who are responsible for the repeated rape epidemics in India. Most were not fighting for something we would consider honourable; they were fighting, as Archie said, for the promise of what was getting away.



## **Rape Without Compassion Becomes the Norm**

**Gerry:** What do rapes in India have to do with young men running after women fleeing a battlefield more than a thousand years ago?

**Uzza:** I do not want to condone the actions of rapists or those who seek intimacy through the capture of the object of their affection.

**Archie:** That is one way of putting it.

**Uzza:** It all has to do with the scarcity of females. In India, the scarcity is real and is the result of the deliberate killing of females in their millions when technology to detect the sex of a fetus became widespread. In the time of Muhammad, scarcity was apparent, not real. It was caused by the hoarding of females by rich and powerful men, usually older men, thereby depriving a significant number of young men of female companionship. Muhammad took advantage of this imbalance by telling the so-deprived that the females of the unbelievers they killed were theirs for the taking as a reward from God<sup>148</sup>.

**Bob:** Did the believers rape their captives?

**Uzza:** Some married them, which you might consider rape if the vows were coerced. Virgins intended for sale were usually not violated for it reduced their market value. That left married women and widows for whom rapists, before Islam, showed some compassion.

**Archie:** And the Prophet was okay with this?

**Uzza:** Muhammad did not so much create a new religion but a synthesis of pagan practices and Jewish traditions and beliefs.

**Gerry:** What does this have to do with this "compassion" shown to raped widows and wives?

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<sup>148</sup> 8:68 But for a prior ordinance of Allah, you would have been afflicted on account of what you have taken (an ordinance which made it lawful for Muslims to take spoils and captives) by a terrible punishment.

8:69 So eat of the lawful and good things you have taken as booty. Fear Allah; Allah is truly All-Forgiving, Merciful

**Uzza:** Pre-Islamic Arabs tried to avoid impregnating unmarried women or another man's wife by practicing coitus-interruptus and not leaving a lasting impression, which would make it difficult for the women, if and when they were released or sold, to get on with their lives. Muhammad put an end to that. Muhammad's admonition against coitus interruptus<sup>149</sup> and, by extension, contraception is another reason why family planning in Muslim majority countries is non-existent or ineffective<sup>150</sup>.

**Bob:** What about condoms?

**Uzza:** Most schools of Islamic Law allow condoms within a marriage as a temporary measure only; the same for the birth control pill for a woman if she has her husband's consent. All are against men having a vasectomy or women a tubal ligation, for this would be interfering with Allah's right to schedule a pregnancy at some point in the future.

**Archie:** Like I said before, that is nuts.

**Uzza:** How is it more stupid than the Catholic Church's stand against contraceptives when the human race is drowning in its own excrement?

**Archie:** Good point!

**Gerry:** The Prophet was a man of his time who assumed much when it came to the Will of His Benefactor. But, surely Allah did not sanction the rape of the unmarried or another man's wife, let alone rape without compassion?

**Uzza:** I do not know about rape without compassion, which may be, as you said, Muhammad assuming too much, but Allah not only approved of, but encouraged the rape of married women in front of

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<sup>149</sup> Narrated Abu Said Al-Khudri: that while he was sitting with Allah's Apostle he said, "O Allah's Apostle! We get female captives as our share of booty, and we are interested in their prices, what is your opinion about coitus interruptus?"

The Prophet said, "Do you really do that? It is better for you not to do it. No soul that which Allah has destined to exist, but will surely come into existence."

*Bukhari 34.432*

<sup>150</sup> As reported by the BBC, Muhammad's views on coitus interruptus and by extension contraception have encouraged "more conservative Islamic leaders [to] openly campaign against the use of condoms or other birth control methods, thus making population planning in many countries ineffective."

## 123 Rape Without Compassion Becomes the Norm

their captive husbands<sup>151</sup>, if he too survived his encounter with the believers, something even the early converts to His Cause had been reluctant to do.

**Bob:** Why would he do this?

**Uzza:** Perhaps for the emotional pain it would inflict on those who denied His mercy and compassion or that He even exists.

**Gerry:** Religion, too often, brings out the worst in us because we think we are doing God's Will.

**Archie:** When it's that other guy's will.

**Uzza:** I believe people are born good. All the death and destruction that seem to follow Islam everywhere is not normal.

**Gerry:** Could it be because Islam teaches a different definition of what is right and what is wrong that children grow to do such horrible things to others and themselves, thinking it is the right thing to do? Doing what they think God expects of them when it's not God at all.

**Archie:** You got that right!

**Uzza:** It is not the Devil, it is not Muhammad, it is us. Nothing compels us to be so cruel to each other. Maybe global warming will bring an end to our existence and that will be a good thing.

**Gerry:** Uzza, don't get all gloomy on us.

**Uzza:** Violence, including rape, is what happens in war. The pre-Islamic Arabs tried to avoid war at all cost because of the violence and the resulting deaths. Then Islam came along and elevated violence into

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<sup>151</sup> The Apostle of Allah (may peace be upon him) sent a military expedition to Awtas on the occasion of the battle of Hunain. They met their enemy and fought with them. They defeated them and took them captives.

Some of the Companions of the Apostle of Allah (may peace be upon him) were reluctant to have intercourse with the female captives in the presence of their husbands who were unbelievers. So Allah, the Exalted, sent down the Qur'anic verse: (4:24) "And all married women (are forbidden) unto you save those (captives) whom your right hands possess."

*Abu Dawud 2.2150*

4:24 Or married women except those your right hands possess (captives of war or slave-girls). This is Allah's decree for you. Beyond these it is lawful for you to seek, by means of your wealth, any women, to marry and not to debauch. Those of them you have enjoyed, you should give them their dowry as a matter of obligation; but you are not liable to reproach for whatever you mutually agree upon, apart from the obligatory payment (the dowry). Allah is indeed All-Knowing, Wise.

a virtue and death into something you yearn for. Maybe Islam is right and wrong reversed?

**Archie:** Thank you!

**Uzza:** All you have to do is say the magic words: "I declare there is no god except God, and I declare that Muhammad is the Messenger of God," and what had been both illegal and immoral becomes not only lawful, but the right thing to do if you do it to someone who does not share your beliefs. With a few simple words, wrong becomes right! I never quite looked at it that way.

**Gerry:** Uzza, you're letting Archie get to you.

**Uzza:** And soon, they will be coming for your wives and daughters because you are evil and wrong for not believing in Him and the one he allegedly chose to speak on his behalf, and it will be the right thing to do.

**Gerry:** Don't say that.

**Uzza:** What else would you like me to say?

## Wife Management Problem Resolved

**Bob:** [*trying to change the subject*] Was it after the battle of Uhud that Allah said that women cover up just to be sure holy warriors did not get distracted when they should be busy killing people?

**Uzza:** No. Many of Allah's revelations pertaining to how women and girls must dress and behave were received after Muhammad had accumulated perhaps a dozen wives and began experiencing wife management difficulties, especially with his teenaged acquisitions, for example Aisha.

**Archie:** The dream baby!

**Uzza:** The lovely Aisha wandered into the desert and got lost, only to be rescued by a young man who brought her back to Medina the next day. Needless to say, this started people talking. Talk, if the revelations pertaining to this incident are to be believed, that severely distressed Muhammad. So much so that Allah intervened, not only to vouch for Aisha's faithfulness (appendix: Muhammad's Child Bride Accused of Adultery), but also to make sure that none of Muhammad's wives would ever put His favourite spokesperson in an embarrassing situation again. In a position where Muhammad would be the object of gossip, or "chatter" Allah calls it<sup>152</sup>.

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<sup>152</sup> 24:10 And, but for Allah's Bounty towards you and His Mercy and that Allah is a remitter of sins and is All-Wise;

24:11 Those who spread the slander (against Aisha, wife of the Prophet, according to the commentators) are a band of you. Do not reckon it an evil for you; rather it is a good thing for you. Everyone of them will be credited with the sin he has earned, and he who bore the brunt of it shall have a terrible punishment.

24:12 Would that the believers, men and women, when you heard it (the slander), had thought well of themselves saying: "This is manifest slander!"

24:13 And would that they had brought forth four witnesses [to vouch for it]! But since they did not bring any witnesses, those are, in Allah's sight, the real liars.

24:14 And but for Allah's Bounty to you and His Mercy, in this world and the next, you would have been visited, due to your chatter, by a terrible punishment.

The revelation to which I think you are referring about staying home, concealing bosoms and private parts and not stamping your feet<sup>153</sup> is part of this package of revealed truths which were really meant to help Muhammad with his wife management problems.

**Gerry:** Then, what many Muslim women who don't abide by the Islamic dress code have said is true; it was meant for the Prophet's wives, not females in general.

**Uzza:** Before what Muhammad said and did became an example to emulate, undoubtedly. But remember, Muhammad was not the only one who enjoyed being surrounded by a bevy of wives, concubines and slave-girls. The solution to Muhammad's wife management problems, putting the fear of God into them (appendix: Muhammad's Wives Lectured to by God), became a solution for every hoarder of females, and a cheap solution at that, getting the women to police themselves.

**Gerry:** When women say that the veil is another way for men to control them, they are correct. It has nothing to do with piety.

**Uzza:** I would not go that far. Allah's solution to Muhammad's wife management problem did what the Indians have not managed to do, and that is to protect women from being gang-raped by young men whose lust they have aroused and who see rape as the only way they will ever experience what it is like to be inside a woman.

**Archie:** Or a child.

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<sup>153</sup> 24:31 And tell believing women to cast down their eyes and guard their private parts and not show their finery, except for the outward part of it. And let them drape their bosoms with their veils and not show their finery, except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, the sons of their husbands, their brothers, the sons of their brothers, the sons of their sisters, their women, their maid-servants, the men-followers who have no sexual desires, or infants who have no knowledge of women's sexual parts yet. Let them, also, not stamp their feet, so that what they have concealed of their finery might be known. Repent to Allah, all of you, O believers, that perchance you may prosper.

## Two Down, One to Go

**Bob:** After the Prophet got his ass kicked at Uhud, what did he do?

**Uzza:** He went looking for a scapegoat. Muhammad, on returning to Medina with his troops, marched on the fortified Jewish neighborhood of the Banu Nadr, accusing them of being complicit in the defeat of the Muslims at Uhud.

**Archie:** But there were no Jews at Uhud. And it was Arab women who got the Prophet's warriors all hot and bothered.

**Bob:** Would Jewish women have had the same effect?

**Archie:** For Christ's sake, Bob!

**Uzza:** No, it is a valid question. Under normal circumstances, I would say yes. Religion normally does not change what makes us attractive to men. But Islam is different.

**Archie:** No kidding.

**Uzza:** It all depended on what you intended to do with your quarry once you captured it. If you are looking for a wife, a woman of the Book will make you try harder, for you are allowed to marry them just like you would a Muslim woman. If all you want is a slave-girl then what she believes or does not believe does not matter<sup>154</sup>.

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<sup>154</sup> 5:5 This day the good things have been made lawful to you; the food of the People of the Book is lawful to you, and your food is lawful to them; and so are the believing women who are chaste, and the chaste women of those who were given the Book before you, provided you give them their dowries and take them in marriage, not in fornication or as mistresses. If any one denies the faith, his work shall be of no avail to him, and in the Hereafter he will rank with the losers.

Revelation 5:5 expanded many-fold the available stock of virgins that a believing man could choose from. And if this still was not enough or you could not afford a believing woman, you could always take wives from among your believing slave-girls.

4:25 Whoever of you cannot afford to marry a free, believing woman, let him choose from whatever your right hands possess (captives of war or slave-girls) of believing girls. Allah knows best your faith; you come one from the other. So marry them with their parents' leave and give them their dowry honourably, as chaste women, neither committing adultery nor taking lovers ...

The pain a former slave-girl can expect if she cheats on her husband with another man must take into account her former status as a slave.

**Gerry:** You called a human being “it.”

**Uzza:** To those who would make a female their captive, either as a slave-girl or a wife, that is all she is, something you prey upon. What do you say about calling a spade a spade?

**Bob:** Can a non-Muslim marry a Muslim girl?

**Uzza:** No<sup>155</sup>. But neither can a Muslim man marry an unbelieving woman unless she converts<sup>156</sup>.

**Bob:** That’s more than fair when you consider that if she is booty, he can still have his way with her as if she was his wife.

**Archie:** If the believers’ defeat was not because they were salivating at the thought of screwing Jewish girls, why blame the Jews?

**Gerry:** Archie, don’t be crude.

**Uzza:** That is alright, Gerry, I have heard worse. Jews have been used as scapegoats since at least the time of the Romans, usually by people who were after their wealth, and the Banu Nadir were a wealthy tribe.

4:25 ... If they are legally married and commit adultery, their punishment shall be half that of a free women. Such is the law for those of you who fear committing sin; but to abstain is better for you. Allah is All-Forgiving and Merciful!

Why all the rules about the women and girls a man can marry? It’s a question of lust and Allah’s Mercy.

4:26 Allah wants to explain to you [His laws] and to guide you along the paths of those who preceded you, and to be Merciful to you. Allah is All-Knowing, Wise!

4:27 Allah also wants to be Merciful to you, but those who follow their lust want you to deviate greatly from the right course.

<sup>155</sup> 60:10 O believers, if believing women come to you as Emigrants, then test them; Allah knows better their faith. If you find them to be believers, do not send them back to the unbelievers. They are neither lawful to the unbelieving men, nor are those men lawful to them. Give them what they [the unbelieving husbands] had paid in dowry; and you are not at fault if you marry them, provided you pay them their dowries. Do not hold fast to unbelieving women; demand what you have spent and let them demand what they have spent. That is Allah’s Judgement. He judges between you, and Allah is All-Knowing and Wise.

<sup>156</sup> 2:221 Do not marry unbelieving women (polytheists) until they believe. A believing slave-girl is certainly better than an unbelieving woman, even if the latter pleases you. And do not give your women (believing women) in marriage to polytheists until they believe. A believing slave is certainly better than a polytheist, even if the latter pleases you. Those (the polytheists) call to the Fire and Allah calls to Paradise and Forgiveness by His Leave; and He makes clear His Revelations to mankind so that they may be mindful.



They would not come out to meet him in battle, so Muhammad did what before would have been unthinkable. To impress upon them that they had no future in Medina, alive or dead, he destroyed much of Medina's date palms.

**Bob:** Why would the Banu Nadir have cared?

**Uzza:** THEY WERE THEIR DATE PALMS. It was their livelihood that Muhammad destroyed.

**Archie:** And Allah agreed with that?

**Uzza:** Yes, to destroy such a valuable crop on an oasis in the middle of a desert – Medina is still referred to as the oasis city – had some Arabs up in arms, prompting Allah to send a revelation saying that He had authorized the destruction of whatever trees Muhammad deemed necessary<sup>157</sup>.

**Gerry:** Why attack the Banu Nadir and not the Banu Qurayzah? They had to represent an equal if not greater threat, or why not attack both?

**Uzza:** Muhammad, to use a cliché, never bit off more than he could chew. If the Banu Nadir and Banu Qurayzah had acted in concert they could have resisted the believers, if not completely overwhelmed them, especially since not an insignificant portion of the Arab population of Medina would have joined them. But they could not agree among themselves, let alone agree to form an alliance to save their lives.

**Archie:** Typical.

**Gerry:** It is typical of human nature to want to believe that it is the other who is doomed and that we will survive and even prosper if we don't get involved. That is seldom the case when faced with the type of threat represented by sociopaths.

**Uzza:** With their livelihood gone, the Banu Nadir agreed to go into exile. Muhammad allowed them to take with them whatever their camels could carry. That left only the Banu Qurayzah of the three Jewish tribes of Medina that had ensured the survival of Islam. Their fate would be sealed after the next encounter between the Meccans and the Muslims at Medina.

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<sup>157</sup> 59:5 Whatever palm trees you cut off or leave standing upon their roots is only by Allah's Leave, and that He might disgrace the sinners.

## If It Was Only About Going in Circles in an Opposite Direction

**Uzza:** The battle for Medina is usually referred to as the *Battle of the Ditch* because of a trench that was dug in six days on the flat approaches to the city<sup>158</sup>. This “ditch” completely stymied the Meccan forces. For two weeks an army of ten thousand, which included a 300-horse cavalry unit, waited for their befuddled commander Abu Sufyan to devise a strategy to overcome the obstacle and defeat an army estimated at 3,000. He waited for two weeks before a windstorm forced his troops, who were out in the open, to return to Mecca never to threaten the city again<sup>159</sup>.

**Archie:** Even if they could find 3,000 shovels for 3,000 men, which I doubt, they could not have, in six days, dug a ditch deep enough and wide enough that it could not be crossed with a little effort, or long enough that it could not be gotten around.

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<sup>158</sup> No slaves were employed in the digging of the trench.

### **Narrated Anas:**

Allah's Apostle went towards the Khandaq (i.e. Trench) and saw the Emigrants and the Ansar digging in a very cold morning as they did not have slaves to do that for them.

When he noticed their fatigue and hunger he said, "O Allah! The real life is that of the Here-after, (so please) forgive the Ansar and the Emigrants."

In its reply the Emigrants and the Ansar said, "We are those who have given a pledge of allegiance to Muhammad that we will carry on Jihad as long as we live."

*Bukhari 52.87*

<sup>159</sup> 33:9 O believers, remember Allah's grace on you when enemy hosts (of confederates allied against Muslims in the Battle of the Ditch (Khandaq) during the siege of Medina) came upon you; then We sent against them a wind and hosts you did not actually see. Allah perceives well what you do.

Disconcerted and confused, the Meccans and their allies abandoned the siege of Medina.

33:25 Allah turned back the unbelievers in a state of rage, having not won any good (spoils), and Allah spared the believers battle. Allah is, indeed, Strong and Mighty.

As at the Battle of Badr, the casualties inflicted by these “hosts” during this desert sitzkrieg were light; casualties for both sides were 8 Meccans dead and 6 Muslims.

**Uzza:** That is the story that is told to school children. It is part of our history.

**Archie:** And who wrote these stories where the Muslims are constantly fighting superior forces who are unable to withstand their attack or finish them off?

**Uzza:** You must understand, until the Arabs as a nation under Islam became a force to be reckoned with and burst out of the Peninsula intent on making the world that of Allah, nobody paid any attention to commonplace skirmishes between tribes. These involved mostly posturing until the believers escalated them into violent confrontations.

**Gerry:** Surely the Prophet did not go unnoticed?

**Uzza:** At the time, Muhammad was just another doomsday prophet peddling a religion. That is how Mecca thrived, by appealing to every religion under the sun, inviting them to place a relic or an icon in a cube-like structure, the Ka'ba, to which pilgrims could come and pay homage. The Ka'ba became such a hit that, at the time of the Muslim conquest, there were at least 360 icons and relics in it including a statue of the Virgin Mary. The desire to invite everyone to worship at the Ka'ba spawned the religious months during which travellers to Mecca were inviolate, until Muhammad broke with this civilizing tradition.

**Gerry:** I think the history of the world would have been a lot less bloody if this civilizing influence of the Arabs before Islam had been allowed to spread.

**Uzza:** The Arabs before Islam were the most civilized people of their time<sup>160</sup>, and that was reflected in their tolerance of the benign beliefs of others.

**Archie:** And profiting from them.

**Uzza:** Nothing wrong with that when everybody is happy with the arrangement, and they were coming in the tens of thousands every year, especially for the Hajj.

**Bob:** The Hajj was something people did before the Muslims?

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<sup>160</sup> I am not aware in the entire history of civilisation of a more gracious, more loving, more vibrant society than that of the Arabs before Islam ... [it was a time] ... of unbound freedom, lofty sentiments, a nomadic and chivalrous way of life, [a land] of fantasy, joy, mischievousness, bawdy impious poetry, refined love-making ...

*Ernest Renan, cf. Robert Montagne, La Civilisation du désert*

**Uzza:** The first person to perform the Hajj was Adam.

**Bob:** Of Adam and Eve?

**Uzza:** Yes. God told Adam to go to this place in the desert, which He said was located directly below the most sacred place in Paradise, and to erect the structure we know today as the Ka'ba.

**Archie:** And around and around we go.

**Uzza:** What do you mean by that, Archie?

**Archie:** Look, for that sacred place in the sky to always be directly above the Ka'ba means that Paradise goes around in circles, performing a full rotation every twenty-four hours or so, as does the Earth.

**Uzza:** Not if a rotating Earth is all part of a grand illusion.

**Archie:** Now, why didn't I think of that?

**Bob:** And where was Adam when Allah told him to build this Ka'ba thing?

**Uzza:** In a place we know today as Sri Lanka.

**Archie:** What the Hell was he doing there?

**Uzza:** That is where he landed when Allah threw him and Eve out of Paradise.

**Bob:** Eve was with him. They fell together. Makes sense.

**Uzza:** Eve landed about 3,000 miles east on the shore of the Red Sea about 100 miles from Mecca, which of course did not exist at the time.

**Archie:** HOW DOES ANY OF THIS MAKE ANY SENSE? Assuming that the Koran is right and Paradise is about five miles up; two people falling from that height would not land 3,000 miles apart, let alone survive the fall! [*catching himself*] What am I doing trying to make sense out of nonsense? Next thing you know they will be calling me an Islamic scholar.

**Uzza:** [*starting to enjoy getting Archie's goat*] I do not think anyone will ever mistake you for an Islamic scholar, Archie. Maybe if you grew a beard? [*getting a bit drunk*] How about another drink, you Islamic scholar you? So, who wants to hear the rest of the story of the Hajj and the Ka'ba?

**Bob:** I do.

**Uzza:** What about you, Gerry?

**Gerry:** I'd love to hear it.

**Archie:** Sure, why not.

**Uzza:** You are going love this, Archie. When Adam was thrown out of Paradise, he grabbed a stone.

**Bob:** I would have grabbed a parachute, myself.

**Uzza:** A large stone that he dragged all the way to Mecca where Eve was waiting<sup>161</sup>.

**Gerry:** That means it was a woman who first disturbed the sands of Mecca; a woman founded Mecca. Did you hear that!

**Uzza:** When you put it that way. But, it is the placement of the stone from Paradise that is associated with the founding of Mecca. It is as if Adam had planted Allah's flag when, after building the first Ka'ba, he made the stone its centerpiece and circled it seven times as the believers do today: counter clockwise, bowing up and down as Muhammad demonstrated.

**Gerry:** In things big and small, the reversal of right and wrong you mentioned earlier, the Prophet was very much the contrarian, wasn't he?

**Uzza:** Clockwise is how the pagans circled the Ka'ba. It was perhaps Muhammad's way of again putting Islam's imprint on a pagan tradition. This is, of course, if you are not convinced that he was simply demonstrating the way Adam first did it.

**Bob:** Is going in circles in opposite directions the only difference in the way the pagans and the believers do the Hajj?

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<sup>161</sup> In Arab traditions, the story of Adam and Eve is not like that of other people's. They were tricked by the devil into eating the forbidden fruit and for that transgression were literally thrown out of Paradise. Eve landing in Arabia and Adam in [present day] India ...

Adam made his way to Mecca, dragging with him a stone from Paradise and built the first Ka'ba [in which he placed the stone] ... Next to the Ka'ba is another stone, the Maqām Ibrāhīm ("Abraham's place of standing") on which Abraham is alleged to have left his footprint.

Later in a pilgrimage to Mecca Adam ran into Eve near mount Arafat. In one meaning of the Arabic ta'arafa, "they recognized each other." The miracle is not that they found each other, but that they recognized each other having been separated for over a hundred years ... They fell in love again ... and began procreating.

*La Vie de Mahomet, Virgil Gheorghiu, Robert Lafont, 1962, p. 18*

**Uzza:** The Hajj before Islam was not the somber ritual you have today. It was more of a song and dance festival where you did your own thing. Some even circled the Ka'ba naked<sup>162</sup> and nobody minded until Muhammad put a stop to it. Allah described the pagan Hajj as "nothing but whistling and clapping"<sup>163</sup>.

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<sup>162</sup> Following is one of five accounts of the story of Adam and Eve in the Koran. This one is all about the first couple discovering their "private parts," not once, but twice. The first time their "private parts" just seem to appear out of the blue (rev. 7:22). In a later explanation, it is Satan stripping them of their clothing in front of a concealed audience of his kin (rev. 7:27). Could there be a connection between the first couple prancing around naked and nakedness at the Hajj before Islam? Allah seems to think so (see last revelation in this series).

7:19 And [We said]: "Adam, dwell you and your wife in Paradise, and eat from wherever you wish; but do not come close to this tree, lest you both become wrongdoers."

7:20 But Satan tempted them secretly in order to expose their nakedness to them saying: "Your Lord has forbidden you this tree, lest you become angels or become immortal."

7:21 And he swore to them: "I am indeed a sincere advisor to you both."

7:22 Then he brought about their downfall by deceit; so that when they tasted the tree, their private parts became visible to them, and they started to cover themselves with the leaves of Paradise. Then their Lord called out to them: "Have I not forbidden you that tree and said to you: 'Indeed Satan is your sworn enemy'?"

7:23 They said: "Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves and if you do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we will surely be among the losers."

How many losers could there have been?

7:24 He said: "Go down, some of you as enemies of the others. On earth you will have a dwelling place and a means of enjoyment for a while."

7:25 He said: "Therein you shall live and therein you shall die, and from it you will be brought out."

7:26 "O Children of Adam, We have provided you with clothing and finery to cover your private parts. But the attire of piety is the best." Such are Allah's Signs, that they may take heed.

The stripping:

7:27 "O Children of Adam, do not let Satan lead you astray as he drove your parents out of Paradise, stripping them of their clothes so as to show them their private parts. He and his host (army or tribe) see you from a place where you cannot see them. We have made the devils the friends of those who do not believe."

Whoever told the pre-Islamic Arabs they could perform the Hajj naked, it wasn't Allah, even if they think it was.

7:28 When they commit an indecency, they say: "We have found our fathers doing it, and Allah commanded us to do it." Say (O Muhammad): "Allah does not command indecencies. Do you impute to Allah what you do not know?"

<sup>163</sup> 8:35 Their prayer at the House (the Ka'ba) is nothing but whistling and clapping; so taste the punishment for your disbelief.

**Bob:** That's my type of Hajj!

**Uzza:** The pagan Hajj could also be considered the first to perform the Thanksgiving tradition of sparing the lives of animals. Muhammad said that Al-Khuzai, who is credited with starting the custom of setting animals free at the Hajj before Muhammad put a stop to that as well, would spend an eternity dragging his intestines in Hell's fire<sup>164</sup>.

**Bob:** Was the Prophet always that crude and cruel?

**Uzza:** When it came to describing what Allah would do to those who did not do as they were told, yes<sup>165</sup>!

**Gerry:** Did you do the Hajj?

**Uzza:** My father took me a few years ago. He wanted me to experience something he thought would be wonderful.

**Gerry:** And was it?

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<sup>164</sup> **Narrated Said bin Al-Musaiyab:**

Al-Bahira was an animal whose milk was spared for the idols and other deities, and so nobody was allowed to milk it. As-Saiba was an animal which they (i.e. infidels) used to set free in the name of their gods so that it would not be used for carrying anything.

Abu Huraira said, "The Prophet said, 'I saw Amr bin 'Amir bin Luhai Al-Khuzai dragging his intestines in the (Hell) Fire, for he was the first man who started the custom of releasing animals (for the sake of false gods).'"

*Bukhari 76.723*

<sup>165</sup> Muhamad's account of Allah crushing a helpless animal under Abraham's feet on Judgment Day until blood oozes then throwing it into the fire is about as vicious as vicious can get and an example for the believers that when it comes to unbelievers, nothing is too bad for them.

**Narrated Abu Huraira:**

The Prophet said, "On the Day of Resurrection Abraham will meet his father Azar whose face will be dark and covered with dust. (The Prophet Abraham will say to him): 'Didn't I tell you not to disobey me?'"

His father will reply: 'Today I will not disobey you.'

Abraham will say: 'O Lord! You promised me not to disgrace me on the Day of Resurrection; and what will be more disgraceful to me than cursing and dishonoring my father?'"

Then Allah will say (to him): 'I have forbidden Paradise for the disbelievers.' Then he will be addressed, 'O Abraham! Look! What is underneath your feet?'"

He will look and there he will see a Dhabh (an animal,) blood-stained, which will be caught by the legs and thrown in the (Hell) Fire."

*Bukhari 55.569*

**Uzza:** Only if you like having your ass grabbed every time you bent down while going around in circles with a million other people.

**Bob:** You're kidding?

**Uzza:** It is next to impossible to segregate the sexes during the Hajj, therefore women and girls must silently submit, or risk being accused of arousing the males next to them, to the probing hands of men and boys who are not allowed to get so close to the opposite sex as during the Hajj, until they are married, and seek to understand with their hands what Islam has denied their eyes until their wedding night. I do not blame them. And it does not only happen at the Hajj.

**Gerry:** But you were with your father?

**Uzza:** Like I said, you are going around in circles squeezed in by a million or more people. He may have been close, but unless he looked up and sideways or backwards, which would have gotten him in serious trouble, he would not have seen the men crowding together to get at his daughter's behind<sup>166</sup>.

**Bob:** What kind of trouble?

**Uzza:** Muhammad demonstrated how you did the Hajj as he demonstrated everything, from how you prayed and how you ate to how you clean yourself after answering the call of nature. Unless you did exactly as he demonstrated, especially anything that had to do with worshipping Allah, and I mean exactly, you risked serious injury, even death. One day, an old man decided he could not complete the prayers as Muhammad was demonstrating. Later that day he was executed as an unbeliever<sup>167</sup>.

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<sup>166</sup> The devil likes to "make sport" of peoples' behinds when they cannot avoid exposing their posterior. You should protect yourself against such an eventuality, but there is no harm if you don't.

**Narrated Abu Hurayrah:**

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said... If anyone goes to relieve himself, he should conceal himself, and if all he can do is to collect a heap of sand, he should sit with his back to it, for the devil makes sport with the posteriors of the children of Adam. If he does so, he has done well; but if not, there is no harm.

*Abu Dawud 1.35*

<sup>167</sup> **Narrated Abdullah bin Masud:**

The Prophet recited Suratan-Najm at Mecca and prostrated while reciting it and those who were with him did the same except an old man who took a handful of small stones or earth and lifted it to his forehead and said, "This is sufficient for me." Later on, I saw him killed as a non-believer.

*Bukhari 19.173*



**Gerry:** Did you tell your father about the groping?

**Uzza:** Why, and spoil the Hajj for him?

**Gerry:** For your father, it was a good experience, then?

**Uzza:** My father was looking for a spiritual experience, and it was not. I do not know if it was the preachers shouting verses from the Koran as you made your way to different venues on stark concrete walkways, the unpicked garbage in large orange bags strewn about, the noise of animals being tortured to death, or the visit to perhaps the largest shopping mall in the world only a few hundred yards from what is supposed to be the holiest place on Earth, where someone stole his watch.

**Bob:** The Hajj is much more than just a pilgrimage then; it is a shopping destination?

**Uzza:** It is the Saudis combining the holy and the mercantile in Allah's and their Cause. Organizing the Hajj and the year-round lesser pilgrimages is an expensive proposition, not to mention funding the mosques and madrassas around the world that will generate the pilgrims and the money that will keep the thousands of Princes of the House of Saud in the lifestyle they are accustomed to when the oil runs out. The sumptuous five-storied Abraj Al Bait shopping mall, with its more than 1,000 stores overlooking the Ka'ba, is simply part of that strategy.

**Archie:** I am sure the merchant in the Prophet would approve.

**Gerry:** The pilgrimage has to be more than going around in circles, killing some animals, doing some shopping, then going back home?

**Uzza:** The Hajj is a five-day affair. There is the Tawaf, what you call "going around in circles" seven times; then there is the back and forth seven times between two hills to commemorate Hagar's search for water after being left with Ismael to fend for themselves by Abraham in the vicinity of the Ka'ba; then there is the procession to Mount Arafat to stand in vigil where Muhammad delivered his last sermon<sup>168</sup>; then

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<sup>168</sup> The second most important document in Islam after the Koran is probably Muhammad's Farewell Khutba, his farewell sermon. In his last sermon, delivered on mount Arafat outside Mecca a few months before he died, he summarized all the basic beliefs of Islam and all the duties of a Muslim. English translations will usually run less than 1,300 words. Like the Koran, commentators have spoken about the Muhammad's last khutba in laudatory terms. If you are not a believer your praise may be more guarded.

there is the procession to Mina where we all throw pebbles at a pillar in a recreation of the three occasions when Muhammad threw stones at the devil, just like Abraham did to scare him off; and finally, the Feast of Eid ul Adha, which marks the end of the Hajj and commemorates Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Ismael. During this celebration of a man's willingness to murder his son because God asked him to, hundreds of thousands of animals are slaughtered in the ritual manner, not only at Mecca but around the world.

**Bob:** Exactly what is this ritual manner of killing animals?

**Uzza:** As demonstrated by Muhammad, first you secure the animal in an upright position, then cut its throat and watch it struggle as it bleeds to death; the awful noise it makes is a testament to how painful this gratuitous cruelty can be. At one Hajj, Muhammad demonstrated the technique by personally slaughtering seven camels and two rams<sup>169</sup>.

**Bob:** Isn't what the Prophet demonstrated also what happens in slaughterhouses?

**Uzza:** Only in slaughterhouses that prepare halal meats, which has become a booming business. When you see in your supermarket a piece of meat labeled halal, it is from an animal that has been literally tortured to death (appendix: Ignoring the Cruellest Slaughter of All), not from an animal that has been stunned into unconsciousness before being bled<sup>170</sup>.

**Gerry:** And the Koran demands this, that animals whose meat is meant to be eaten be tortured to death?

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<sup>169</sup> The Prophet slaughtered seven Budn (camel) with his own hands while the camels were standing. He also sacrificed two horned rams (black and white in color) at Medina.

*Bukhari 26.772*

I saw Ibn Umar passing by a man who had made his Badana (sacrifice) sit to slaughter it. Ibn Umar said, "Slaughter it while it is standing with one leg tied up as is the tradition of Muhammad."

*Bukhari 26.771*

<sup>170</sup> Modern, non-traditional slaughtering methods use what is commonly referred to as a captive bolt pistol which delivers a forceful strike to the forehead rendering an animal unconscious prior to slaughter "to prevent the pain and suffering of the animal during the bleeding (exsanguination) process (which is itself necessary to prevent meat spoilage) during butchering."

**Uzza:** NO! The Koran only prohibits the eating of carrion<sup>171</sup> and decrees that animals at the Hajj be killed while standing up<sup>172</sup>.

**Bob:** I could never kill an animal the way Muhammad did.

**Uzza:** You could if you had grown up in an environment where this is normal. Muslim children have been conditioned by celebrations such as the feasts that follow Ramadan and the Hajj to watch and learn, even enjoy the suffering of animals, and later that of human beings put to death in such a cruel manner.

**Bob:** The next time I see halal meat at my supermarket, I may just throw up.

**Uzza:** There is also a benefit to children watching and learning how to kill an animal the ritual way. I remember looking at pictures of ISIS recruits and noticing their composure as they stood behind their kneeling victims getting ready to slice their throats like they would do

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<sup>171</sup> 5:3 You are forbidden the eating of carrion, blood, the flesh of swine as well as whatever is slaughtered in the name of any one other than Allah. [You are forbidden] also the animals strangled or beaten to death, those that fall and die, those killed by goring with the horn or mangled by wild beasts, except those which you slaughter and those sacrificed on stones set up [for idols]. [You are forbidden] to use divining arrows; it is an evil practice. Today, those who disbelieve have despaired of your religion; so do not fear them, but fear Me. Today, I have perfected your religion for you, completed my Grace on you and approved Islam as a religion for you. Yet, whoever is compelled by reason of hunger (to eat what is forbidden), but not intending to sin, then surely Allah is All-Forgiving, Merciful.

<sup>172</sup> 22:36 And the camels We have made for you as parts of the sacred rites of Allah. You have some good therein; so mention Allah's Name over them as they stand in line. When their sides fall to the ground, eat of them and feed the contented and the beggar. That is how We subjected them to you, that perchance you may be thankful.

a sheep. They are totally unperturbed; they know how it's done<sup>173</sup>. The agony their victims are about to experience will not bother them. Most recruits into regular armed forces need to be trained and conditioned to kill. Not so for most of those who join the ranks of holy warriors, as witnessed by the mass killings done by the fresh faces of Islamic State<sup>174</sup>.

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An image grab taken from a propaganda video released on November 16, 2014 by al-Furqan Media allegedly shows members of the ISIL jihadists preparing the simultaneous beheadings of at least 15 men described as Syrian military personnel. AFP Photo

<sup>174</sup> Brigadier General S. L. A. Marshall, Chief Historian of the European Theater of Operations in World War II, in a series of interviews with American riflemen, concluded that only 15 to 20 percent of them fired their weapons at an exposed enemy soldier. His conclusions have been supported by other studies.

The modern military has largely overcome this reluctance in a normal person to killing another human being, even in theaters of war, through repetition and operant conditioning (modification of behaviour based on stimulus/response), making it an automatic reflexive reaction for a soldier to fire his weapon at a threat, real or imaginary.

What if your objective is to deliberately and methodically eliminate a segment of humanity for which you will require the assistance of the general population? You do what the NAZIs did. You dehumanize that portion of humanity you wish to eradicate, making their elimination the moral equivalent of getting rid of a pest. Islamists have taken this dehumanization process one step further, adding demonization to the mix.

4:76 Those who believe fight for the Cause of Allah, and those who disbelieve fight on behalf of the Devil. Fight then the followers of the Devil. Surely the guile of the Devil is weak.

Islam, as a religion, has proven particularly effective at overcoming peoples' strong genetic predispositions against killing one of their own kind by concentrating on a thorough indoctrination in the Koran. It starts at home where a child is expected to have at least mouthed in its entirety, under the tutelage of its mother, what philosopher Robert Redeker, writing in *Le Figaro*, described "as a book of incredible violence."

## 141 If It Was Only About Going in Circles...

**Gerry:** That explains the knife attacks that have become commonplace. Micro-terrorism has proven more terrifying and effective than the macro variety.

**Bob:** What do vegetarians at the Hajj eat?

**Uzza:** Only Muslims can do the Hajj and Muhammad said that those who do not eat meat are not Muslims<sup>175</sup>.

**Bob:** During the Hajj, did you get to kiss the rock of Paradise like the Irish kiss the Blarney Stone?

**Uzza:** Tradition holds that the stone was once heavenly-white, not the black-as-Hell stone you see today. This, it is said, was caused by too much kissing of the stone of Paradise, and not because it came from that other place, Archie. That is it, no more kissing.

**Archie:** I didn't say anything.

**Gerry:** If there are stones in Paradise, then Paradise in the Koran is not like the spiritual place of the New Testament where men and women are equal, and happiness comes from being close to God and being free of physical wants and earthly desires?

**Archie:** If Paradise was a spiritual place, you would not need those pillars to hold it up, would you?

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<sup>175</sup> Three women approached the Prophet one day. One of them said, "O Prophet! My husband has shunned the company of his wife." The second said, "My husband has stopped eating meat!" The third said, "My husband has stopped using perfume!"

Hearing the women, the Prophet was upset. He saw that misguided ideas were beginning to take root amongst his followers.

Although it was not the time for any mandatory prayer, he proceeded to the mosque. He went in such a great hurry that even his cloak was not properly placed on his shoulder and one end of it was touching the ground. He ordered the people to assemble in the mosque. People rushed there leaving aside their tasks.

The Prophet ascended the pulpit and said, "I have heard that my companions are getting wrong ideas." He added, "I am Allah's Messenger, I eat meat and delicious food! I wear good clothes! I wear perfumes and keep the company of my wives and have conjugal relations with them! Whosoever opposes my ways is not my follower!"

The Prophet has repeated this sentence on several occasions:

"One who does not adopt my ways is not a Muslim".

*Wasa'il*

## No Paradise for Old Men

**Uzza:** Paradise in the Koran is like seven large oases, one on top of the other, with typical desert oasis vegetation irrigated by underground rivers<sup>176</sup>. On these humongous oases there are carpets and couches in lovely shades of green as far as the eye can see<sup>177</sup>.

**Bob:** What's with the carpets and couches?

**Uzza:** On these carpets and couches men will fornicate to their heart's content with female facsimiles, the so-called houris, and blushing maidens<sup>178</sup> to whom they are quickly married to avoid committing the sin of adultery<sup>179</sup>.

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<sup>176</sup> 2:29 It is He Who created for you everything on earth, then ascended to the heavens fashioning them into seven, and He has knowledge of all things.

23:17 We have created above you seven spheres, and We were not oblivious of the creation.

41:11 Then He arose to heaven while it was smoke, and He said to it and to the earth: "Come over, willingly or unwillingly." They said: "We come willingly."

41:12 Then He completed them as seven heavens in two days and assigned to each heaven its proper order. And We adorned the lower heaven with lamps as protection (from the demons). That is the determination of the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing.

48:5 That He may admit the believers, men and women, into gardens beneath which rivers flow, dwelling therein forever, and that He may remit their sins. That, in Allah's Sight, is a great triumph.

55:68 Therein are fruits, palm trees and pomegranates.

67:3 He Who has created seven stratified heavens. You do not see any discrepancy in the creation of the Compassionate. So fix your gaze, do you see any cracks?

<sup>177</sup> 76:13 Therein, they shall recline upon couches, and they shall see therein neither [blazing] sun nor bitter cold.

18:31 Those shall have Gardens of Eden, beneath which rivers flow, bejeweled therein with bracelets of gold, and wearing green clothes of silk and brocade, reclining therein on couches. Blessed is their reward and fair is the resting place!

<sup>178</sup> 37:43 In the Gardens of Bliss;

37:44 Upon couches, facing each other.

37:45 A cup of pure spring water shall be passed around them;

37:46 Snow-white, a delight to drinkers.

37:47 Wherein there is no gall and they are not intoxicated by it.

## 143 No Paradise For Old Men

**Bob:** Inflatable dolls have come a long way. I am told that taking one to bed is like having sex with the real thing, so why kill yourself and a bunch of innocent people just to have sex with one in Paradise?

**Uzza:** Are you kidding? Man-made female replicas will never match what the Creator of us all can manufacture in Paradise!

**Archie:** What about the real women?

**Uzza:** If you mean the wives of the men doing all that fornicating, they will be confined to large pavilions<sup>180</sup>, not unlike the harems of Muhammad's day, doomed to a sporadic bout of intimacy for an eternity, not unlike prisoners dependent on a conjugal visit from a cheating husband.

**Archie:** Do I detect some bitterness?

**Uzza:** Shut up!

**Gerry:** I read in the Koran that the pavilions were to house the maidens<sup>181</sup>.

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37:48 And they also shall have wide-eyed maidens averting their gaze.

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52:20 Reclining on ranged couches, and We shall wed them to wide-eyed houris.

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56:22 And wide-eyed houris,

56:23 Like hidden pearls;

56:24 As a reward for what they used to do.

<sup>179</sup> The marriage ceremony may include branding of the houris. According to Professor Clark, in a Tradition of the Prophet, one of the houris' voluptuous breasts is branded with the name of her husband and the other with the name of her husband's benefactor, Allah. This will definitely make it easier for men to keep track of what is the equivalent of their herd or harem of houris and make it less likely for one man to accidentally fornicate with another man's houris.

<sup>180</sup> **Narrated Abdullah bin Qais:**

Allah's Apostle said, "In Paradise there is a pavilion made of a single hollow pearl sixty miles wide, in each corner of which there are wives who will not see those in the other corners; and the believers will visit and enjoy them."

*Bukhari 60.402*

<sup>181</sup> 55:70 Therein are beautiful virtuous maidens.

55:71 So, which of your Lord's Bounties do you both (Jinn and humans) deny?

55:72 Wide-eyed, cloistered in pavilions.

**Uzza:** Obviously Allah had to have some type of warehousing complex for the legitimate wives, the houris and the maidens, since the men could only do one at time. What were they to do, stand in line waiting to be fucked? Did I just say that? I am sorry.

**Gerry:** Don't be. It is what Allah's Paradise is all about, after all.

**Bob:** [*awkwardly*] In Paradise, do they do it... that way?

**Uzza:** [*knowing where he is going with this and feeling mischievous*] What do you mean, "that way"?

**Bob:** The thing the Backstreet Boys sang about wanting it that way?

**Gerry:** Is that what the song is about?

**Archie:** In Bob's mind.

**Uzza:** Come on, say it. What way would that be?

**Bob:** You know, sex, in the you-know-where.

**Uzza:** You mean will those blushing maidens and houris and what- not get fucked in the ass?

**Bob:** [*stunned*] Yes, but I would not have put it that way.

**Uzza:** Do not be such a prude. Children of believing parents learn about anal sex from their mother before the age of seven as part of the sex education they get from their first full reading of the Koran. It cannot be avoided with Allah's rants against homosexuals and sodomy.

**Bob:** Well, will they?

**Uzza:** Will they what? I forget.

**Bob:** Men do to women what Allah forbids men to do to other men.

**Uzza:** I would not know. In the Koran there is nothing about making love to a woman that way, but Allah is probably against it.

**Gerry:** That brings up an interesting question.

**Uzza:** I cannot wait to hear it.

**Gerry:** I was at a party where I was having a conversation with the wife of a reporter from Tunisia. When her husband tried to join our conversation, she waved him off. He was not pleased. Later that evening, when I had a chance to talk with him with his wife within earshot, he said she would get it tonight. I asked what he meant by that. He said he was going to punish her that way.



**Uzza:** And what way would that be?

**Gerry:** Oh, come on, Uzza, stop it. You know what he meant.

**Uzza:** You go to interesting parties.

**Gerry:** But is it true? Do Muslim husbands use anal sex to punish their wives?

**Uzza:** I would not know. I am not married.

**Archie:** You said that his wife heard him. What did she do?

**Gerry:** She looked at him and shrugged her shoulders as if it was no big deal.

**Uzza:** Maybe it was not, what do you say, that big of a deal. And I am not saying that to disparage her husband's manhood. From what I have been told, it can be quite painful and the Koran does sanction pain as a way of disciplining wives. And Muhammad did say that you should not beat someone about the face<sup>182</sup> and we are definitely nowhere near there.

**Archie:** That leaves out a blow job as punishment.

**Uzza:** Very funny. From what I know, non-Muslim couples do it that way too, anal sex that is. I understand it is a bit of a power trip for men.

**Gerry:** I wouldn't leave out sadism as a reason.

**Uzza:** Or masochism.

**Archie:** Is that why women do it?

**Uzza:** I guess some women do want it that way for the sensation however unpleasant, and, as Norman Mailer wrote, it is the most intimate form of sex a woman can offer a man.

**Archie:** He would say that.

**Gerry:** Women in a normal relationship are free to make the gesture or refuse their partner's request for that form of intimacy. What about a relationship where the man is the designated dominant partner and a woman dares not refuse his request for intimacy? Does this include Mailer's most intimate form?

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<sup>182</sup> **Narrated Abu Huraira:**

The Prophet said, "If somebody fights (or beats somebody) then he should avoid the face."

*Bukhari 46.734*

**Uzza:** It all depends if that which Allah defines as a wife's "private parts," over which He has given a husband absolute jurisdiction to do with whatever, includes her behind. I am sure there is fatwah somewhere that clears that up, but I am not aware of it.

**Bob:** What is a fatwah again?

**Uzza:** A religious ruling on everything and anything.

**Bob:** All this sex in tight places...

**Archie:** Are we still talking anal sex here?

**Bob:** That, and virgins, which seem to be an obsession of Allah and the boys. To me that means they like penetration where there is some resistance and pain.

**Uzza:** That is an interesting way of putting it.

**Bob:** Well, do they?

**Uzza:** Do they what? Just kidding. Allah in the Koran only says that the females He will provide have not been touched by another man or jinn<sup>183</sup>. They will not be, what do you call them, damaged goods<sup>184</sup>. On the other hand, it would be a simple matter for a god like Allah to mend a hymen after sex so that there is always that resistance which men who seek anal sex also seem to favour. Am I right?

**Gerry:** That would make a Paradise populated by those who have died in Allah's Cause and been rewarded accordingly more of an obscenity than it already is.

**Bob:** All that sex! Young men might be able to take advantage of it, but what about old guys for whom virgins may present more of a challenge than an opportunity, if you know what I mean? Will Viagra be available for old people?

**Uzza:** No need. There will be no old people in Paradise. Muhammad said that no matter your age, you will all be in your early thirties once

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<sup>183</sup> 55:56 Therein are maidens lowering their glances and they have not been touched, before them by any man or jinn.

<sup>184</sup> 56:35 We have formed them originally;  
 56:36 And made them pure virgins,  
 56:37 Tender and unageing,

you get there, if you get there<sup>185</sup>, and your mates – which may or may not include the houris who will be providing you with all the sex you can handle – will be of equal age<sup>186</sup>. You will also literally be able to go at it day and night for you will never get tired<sup>187</sup> and never be without an erection when you need one<sup>188</sup>.

**Bob:** This is really good news for old people.

**Uzza:** The only people of Paradise who we know for sure will not be in their thirties, are boys whom Allah describes as “hidden pearls” who will go around the men lounging on couches, ostensibly to serve them food and drink, or whatever<sup>189</sup>.

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<sup>185</sup> It was narrated from Muaadh ibn Jabal that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "The people of Paradise will enter Paradise hairless, beardless with their eyes anointed with kohl, aged thirty or thirty-three years."

*al-Tirmidhi 2545*

<sup>186</sup> 38:49 This is a Reminder and the God-fearing will surely have a fair resort.

38:50 Gardens of Eden whereof the gates are wide-open for them.

38:51 Reclining therein and calling for abundant fruit and beverage.

38:52 And they have mates of equal age, averting their gaze.

38:53 “This is what you are promised for the Day of Reckoning.

38:54 “This is our provision which will not end.”

<sup>187</sup> 15:45 “The righteous will surely be amidst gardens and fountains.

15:46 [It will be said to them]: “Enter therein in peace and security.”

15:47 We shall remove all hatred from their hearts, and as brethren they shall recline, facing each other, upon couches.

15:48 They shall not be touched by fatigue therein, nor will they be driven out.

<sup>188</sup> Each time we sleep with a houri we find her virgin. Besides, the penis of the Elected never softens. The erection is eternal; the sensation that you feel each time you make love is utterly delicious and out of this world and were you to experience it in this world you would faint. Each chosen one [Muslim] will marry seventy [sic] houris, besides the women he married on earth, and all will have appetising vaginas.

*Al-Suyuti (died 1505)*

<sup>189</sup> 76:15 And cup-bearers shall go round them with vessels of silver and goblets of glass,

76:16 Goblets of silver which they measured exactly.

76:17 And they are given therein to drink a cup whose mixture is ginger.

76:18 A spring therein is called Salsabil.

76:19 And there go round them immortal boys; when you see them, you will think that they are scattered pearls.

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52:22 And We shall supply them with fruit and meat, such as they desire.

**Bob:** Are these the little boys that commit suicide bombings?

**Uzza:** Probably not.

**Bob:** How do you get little boys to blow themselves up anyway?

**Uzza:** You play on every little boy's fantasy of being all grown up. You tell them that, literally, in a puff of smoke, they can become a man if they are willing to help Allah get rid of the bad people.

**Archie:** You have to wonder why there are no old geezers blowing themselves up with a promise of eternal youth and orgies galore.

**Archie:** They know better, and with every gullible guy blowing himself up, it leaves more young women and girls for them. They are no fools, just like the Prophet was no fool.

**Bob:** Young girls are also blowing themselves up. What's in it for them?

**Uzza:** Not much<sup>190</sup>, which is why the process of getting girls to do what young boys will do without much persuasion is slightly more complicated and brutal. Turning little girls into mass murderers is a challenge, but holy warriors have proven themselves up to the task with little girls increasingly outnumbering little boys as suicide bombers.

**Gerry:** How do they do it?

**Uzza:** The transformation usually begins with the rape of god-fearing girls by fighters in Allah's Cause. It is meant to make them feel a heart-

52:23 They will exchange therein a cup of wherein there is no idle talk or vilification.

52:24 And boys of their own will go around them, as if they were hidden pearls.

<sup>190</sup> According to David Cook, author of *Understanding Jihad*, a question was posed on the Hamas website by a prospective female suicide bomber as to what are the "rewards for a female martyr." Would she get the equivalent to the male suicide bomber who is promised a "fairly extensive harem of women in return for martyrdom?"

Question: I wanted to ask: what is the reward of a female martyr who performs a martyrdom operation; does she marry 72 of the houris?

Answer: ...the female martyr gains the same rewards as does the male, with the exception of this one aspect [the houris], so that the female martyr will be with the same husband with whom she dies. "And those who have believed and their progeny, followed them in belief. We shall join their progeny to them. We shall not deprive them of any of their work; every man shall be bound by what he has earned" [52:21]. The one who is martyred and has no husband will be married to one of the people of Paradise.

breaking guilt for having brought dishonour on their family, a shame so intense that death seems preferable.

**Gerry:** But why do they not just kill themselves and not harm anyone else?

**Archie:** Or wait for their father to kill them?

**Gerry:** Archie, this is serious.

**Archie:** I am being serious.

**Uzza:** Rape makes a shamble of a young girl's fantasy of marrying her prince charming. What nice young man would have her as his beloved bride now that she is no longer a virgin? Only Allah, she is told, can now make her dream come true. Not in the here-and-now, but in the Hereafter, if she has the courage to kill herself and take as many of His enemies as possible with her.

## **The Ka'ba: The Nabataeans, Abraham or Adam?**

**Gerry:** Your description of how believers brutalize little girls into becoming mass murderers shows some crappy creativity, unlike your description of Paradise as stacked oases, which conforms to Lawrence's observation that the Arabs' imaginations were vivid, but not creative.

**Uzza:** Muhammad's imagination, if you are insinuating that Paradise is how he imagined it, was not typical of the imagination of the Arabs of his time. Pre-Islamic Arabs built the jewel and engineering wonder that is Petra (appendix: Allah Annihilates Petra). It took creativity, immense creativity.

**Bob:** The Arabs did that? That is amazing.

**Uzza:** Yes, the Arabs did that! Even more amazing, my namesake, the goddess al-Uzza, was worshipped by both the Arabs of Petra and those of Mecca. That required more than a vivid imagination.

**Bob:** What's with the "al"?

**Uzza:** It simply means "the." It emphasizes the uniqueness of the one who bears the name. For example, you could spell Allah with a hyphen after the first "l" for it means the God.

**Gerry:** So Uzza is unique, just like you are unique.

**Uzza:** In more ways than one, you flatterer you. By naming me Uzza, my parents were making a statement by breaking with tradition. It is a sin for Muslims to name their children after deities whose existence Allah has denied, which is every god and goddess that ever lived, and that includes al-Uzza.

**Bob:** That sounds dangerous?

**Uzza:** When the Islamists come for me, my parents will already have been killed.

**Gerry:** That is terrible. And we let them in, as you said.

**Uzza:** Archie, more wine please, for tomorrow we die.

**Gerry:** Don't say that.

## 151 The Ka'ba: The Nabataeans, Abraham or Adam?

**Archie:** What is so amazing about the Arabs of Mecca worshipping the same goddess as the Arabs of Petra?

**Uzza:** It supports a theory that it was the well-travelled Nabataeans, the name of the Arab tribe which built Petra, who also founded Mecca.

**Archie:** [*sarcastically*] It wasn't Adam and Eve? I don't believe it!

**Bob:** What about the stone?

**Uzza:** Most agree that the stone is the remnant of a meteorite.

**Bob:** So, the stone in the Ka'ba is really out of this world.

**Uzza:** Obviously, whether you believe it came from Paradise or outer-space. The Nabataeans, some have speculated, believed the stone that fell to Earth came from the home of the gods and goddesses above the clouds; a sign that they, including the goddess al-Uzza, wanted a shrine built where it fell.

**Gerry:** And that is where they built the Ka'ba.

**Uzza:** And around the Ka'ba grew the city of Mecca. The Romans maintained, in the first century, a garrison at the port of Jeddah just about 50 miles from Mecca and catalogued much of the area without mentioning Mecca. This is further evidence that it was founded by the Nabataeans. You would have expected that a shrine built by Adam and Eve, and later rebuilt by Abraham after the Great Flood swept away the Ka'ba and its contents, would have already grown into a town worthy of mention by the Romans, who did take notice of Medina.

**Bob:** Abraham, from what I remember of the Bible, lived at least a thousand miles from Mecca.

**Uzza:** At least.

**Bob:** So how did he get from here to there to rebuild a cabin in the middle of nowhere? His two thousand mile round-trip by camel could not have gone unnoticed by those left behind and those who would not have let the old guy go on such a journey all by himself.

**Uzza:** The first time he was not by himself. He was with Hagar and their son Ismael.

**Archie:** You mean he did this trip more than once?

**Uzza:** At least twice. Once to drop off Hagar and their son Ismael after Sarah finally bore her husband a son and demanded he get rid of Hagar, her Egyptian servant and Ismael.

**Gerry:** I thought Isaac was Abraham's first son by his first wife, Sarah.

**Uzza:** Islam considers Hagar a legitimate wife of Abraham therefore Ismael, his first-born son. The Koran is clear on the concept: Isaac was a gift from God to Abraham because of his willingness to sacrifice Ismael on a small hill next to the Ka'ba<sup>191</sup>.

**Gerry:** Who is right, the Bible which says that Abraham was willing to sacrifice Isaac or the Koran which says it was Ismael on hills at least a thousand miles apart?

**Uzza:** The Koran was also sent to correct errors in the Bible, so the Koran has to be right.

**Archie:** What else is new!

**Bob:** If the stone from Paradise was swept away, why do Muslims still believe that the stone they worship today is the same one that Adam brought from Paradise?

**Uzza:** The angel Gabriel put it in a safe place (appendix: A Flood Story like No Other) and gave it to Abraham so that he could return it to its honored place in the Ka'ba he rebuilt.

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<sup>191</sup> 2:125 And [remember] when We made the House (the Ka'ba) a place of residence for mankind and a haven [saying]: "Make of Abraham's maqam [stand] a place for prayer." We enjoined Abraham and Isma'il [saying]: "Purify My House for those who circle it, for those who retreat there for meditation, and for those who kneel and prostrate themselves (perform the prayers)."

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37:102 Then, when he attained the age of consorting with him, he said: "My son, I have seen in sleep that I am slaughtering you. See what you think." He said: "My father, do what you are commanded; you will find me, Allah willing, one of the steadfast."

37:103 Then, when they both submitted and he flung him down upon his brow;

37:104 And We called out to Him: "O Abraham,

37:105 "You have believed the vision." Thus We reward the beneficent.

37:106 This, indeed, is the manifest trial.

37:107 And We ransomed him with a large sacrifice.

37:108 And We left him for later generations:

37:109 "Peace be upon Abraham."

37:110 Thus, We reward the beneficent.

37:111 He is indeed one of Our believing servants.

37:112 And We announced to him the good news of Isaac as a Prophet, one of the righteous.



**Archie:** That is one handy angel to have around, isn't it? Maybe he was kind enough to loan Abraham his flying horse for at least the return trips to Mecca when he would not have to carry the three of them, which may have exceeded its takeoff weight.

**Uzza:** Funny you should say that. Scholars have speculated that Gabriel did just that.

**Archie:** I was joking.

**Uzza:** Scholars do not joke about such things.

**Archie:** I can't help myself.

## **The Hajj: So Many Pilgrims, So Little Time**

**Gerry:** Getting back to the Hajj, if you have the means and the wherewithal you have to perform the Hajj at least once in your lifetime?

**Uzza:** Yes.

**Gerry:** If you don't, Allah will not let you into His Paradise. You will have to spend eternity in Hell.

**Uzza:** Probably.

**Gerry:** Two million is about the maximum number of Hajj pilgrims Mecca can accommodate because of the limitations of a finite space and the set-in-cement example of the Prophet.

**Uzza:** That is the why the Saudis impose quotas by country.

**Gerry:** That mean the Saudis decide who's going to Hell.

**Uzza:** I think I know what you are getting at.

**Gerry:** 1.5 billion divided by 2 million is 750. If every Muslim alive today wanted to do the Hajj, it would take more than 750 years to accommodate them all. How could Allah have mandated a ritual that you must perform or spend an eternity on fire in His Hell that the vast majority of believers cannot fulfill even if they wanted to?

**Archie:** Makes you wonder about the big guy's ability to see the future, doesn't it?

**Uzza:** Muhammad insinuated that the end of the world would occur during his lifetime, which Allah may have led him to believe<sup>192</sup>, or

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<sup>192</sup> 15:98 So (Muhammad), celebrate the praise of your Lord and be one of those who prostrate themselves.

15:99 And worship your Lord, till the certain [Hour] overtakes you!

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21:1 Mankind's reckoning is drawing near, but they are turning away heedlessly.

33:63 People will ask you about the Hour. Say: "The knowledge thereof is with Allah." And what do you know? The hour may be close at hand.

shortly thereafter<sup>193</sup> when there was plenty of room for everyone at the Hajj. This may have had something to do with it. I do not know.

**Gerry:** Could Allah have been setting up the believers for a fall or perhaps lied, not only about knowing what would happen next, but being able to do anything about it?

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47:18 Do they, then, only expect that the Hour should come upon them suddenly? In fact, its signs have already come. How then, when it comes, will they regain their recollection?

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53:57 The Last Day is imminent;

53:58 It has, apart from Allah, no disclosure.

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70:1 A questioner asked about an imminent punishment,

70:2 Of the unbelievers, that none can avert;

70:3 From Allah, Lord of the Ways of Ascent.

70:4 Unto Him the angels and the spirit (Gabriel) ascend on a Day the duration thereof is fifty thousand years.

70:5 Bear up patiently then (Muhammad).

70:6 They think it is distant;

70:7 But we think it is close.

<sup>193</sup> **Narrated Sahl bin Sad As-Sa'idi:**

Allah's Apostle, holding out his middle and index fingers, said, "My advent and the Hour are like this (or like these)," namely, the period between his era and the Hour is like the distance between those two fingers, i.e., very short.

*Bukhari* 63.221

**Narrated Anas:**

A bedouin came to the Prophet and said, "O Allah's Apostle! When will The Hour be established?"

The Prophet said, "Wailaka (Woe to you), What have you prepared for it?"

The bedouin said, "I have not prepared anything for it, except that I love Allah and His Apostle."

The Prophet said, "You will be with those whom you love."

We (the companions of the Prophet) said, "And will we too be so?"

The Prophet said, "Yes." So we became very glad on that day.

In the meantime, a slave of Al-Mughira passed by, and he was of the same age as I was.

The Prophet said, "If this (slave) should live long, he will not reach the geriatric old age, but the Hour will be established."

*Bukhari* 73.188

**Uzza:** His angels did accuse Allah of wanting to spread mischief<sup>194</sup> when he sent Adam to Earth, but I do not think it was His intention to put so many believers in the impossible situation you described. It is a situation that is bound to get worse if no solution is found, with people joining Islam in record numbers, if only to be on the winning side.

**Archie:** And to get in on the plundering while the getting is good. Maybe the Chinese will be able to turn the tide and solve the Hajj accommodation problem.

**Gerry:** By doing to the believers what the believers are doing to the unbelievers. That would mean they are no better than them.

**Archie:** They kill on the promise of manufactured breads who will allow them to screw them every which way non-stop for an eternity. To kill in self-defence and to protect your family from sex maniacs is not the same, not the same at all.

**Bob:** I agree with Gerry. I don't like the idea of all this killing.

**Archie:** They started it.

**Bob:** The Chinese could expand their re-education camps. We don't kill sex addicts and the delusional, we try to cure them. That is the humane thing to do.

**Uzza:** It is also not the same to kill someone simply because you cannot bring yourself to say a simple phrase.

**Archie:** It's more than that, and you know it.

**Gerry:** Surely scholars have given some thought to how to save what has to be billions of people from going to Hell because the Hajj can't fit them in.

**Archie:** Sorry, never crossed my mind.

**Uzza:** We could rebuild the Ka'ba along the lines considered by Muhammad after Gabriel showed him the Ka'ba in the sky, and do away with the circling and all the other rituals. In one door and out the other, and your obligation is fulfilled.

**Gerry, Bob, Archie:** THERE'S A KA'BA IN THE SKY?

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<sup>194</sup> 2:30 When your Lord said to the angels: "I am placing a deputy on earth", they said: "Will you place one who will make mischief in it and shed blood, while we sing Your praise and glorify Your sanctity?" He said: "I know what you do not know."

**Uzza:** What did you think Allah meant when He said to build the Ka'ba down here beneath the most sacred place in Paradise?

**Archie:** His throne, where He parks His sacred ass, where else?

**Uzza:** Well, He meant the Bait-ul-Ma'mur which is directly above in Paradise. The angels enter by one door and leave by another<sup>195</sup>. Much more efficient.

**Gerry, Bob, Archie:** THE ANGELS HAVE THEIR OWN HAJJ?

**Uzza:** Yes, as weird as that sounds.

**Bob:** What about aliens?

**Uzza, Archie, Gerry:** [*taken aback*] WHAT?

**Bob:** What if there is intelligent life out there and they too chose to submit to the Will of Allah. If the Hajj cannot accommodate the people of Earth, how will it accommodate aliens?

**Archie:** Haven't you been listening? There is no there, there. It is all an illusion, aliens not included. The only there, there, according to the Koran, is Paradise a few miles up, and like on Earth it is filled with

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<sup>195</sup> Except for an entrance and an exit door, Bait-ul-Ma'mur is almost an exact replica of the Ka'ba in Mecca and is situated directly above it, somewhere above the clouds.

Like Muslims on Earth, angels are required to make a pilgrimage to this Ka'ba in the sky at least once in their lifetime as immortals, and seventy thousand angels do so every day according to Muhammad, who was informed of this by Gabriel himself during his one-night visit with Allah in Paradise.

Anas b. Malik reported on the authority of Malik b. Sa sa', perhaps a person of his tribe, that the Prophet of Allah (may peace be upon him) said ...

Then the bait-ul-Ma'mur was raised up to me. I said: O Gabriel! what is this? He replied: It is the bait-ul-Ma'mur. Seventy thousand angels enter into it daily and, after they come out, they never return again ...

*Sahih Muslim 1.0314*

Unlike Earth-bound pilgrims, angels do not circle the Ka'ba but enter by one door and exit by another. Much more efficient, which may explain why Muhammad once considered remodelling the Earth Ka'ba on the Ka'ba in the sky.

**Narrated Aswad:**

Ibn Az-Zubair said to me, "Aisha used to tell you secretly a number of things. What did she tell you about the Ka'ba?"

I replied, "She told me that once the Prophet said, 'O Aisha! Had not your people been still close to the pre-Islamic period of ignorance! I would have dismantled the Ka'ba and would have made two doors in it; one for entrance and the other for exit."

*Bukhari 3:128*

mindless automatons who spend much of their existence in awe of the great illusionist. Not only is there no intelligent life out there, there is not that much here either, when you think about it.

## Stupid Is As Stupid Does

**Gerry:** Uzza, ignore that stuff about aliens, but consider everything else. Do you honestly believe what you have just told us about the stone from Paradise and the sanctity of the rituals associated with it, which the majority of believers will not be able to perform through no fault of their own and be condemned to an eternity on fire?

**Uzza:** As I said before, it does not matter what I believe, it is what Islamists believe.

**Archie:** That would mean that anyone who performs the Hajj is an Islamist.

**Uzza:** MY FATHER PERFORMED THE HAJJ AND HE IS NO ISLAMIST!

**Gerry:** Uzza, calm down. From what you have told us about your father, he doesn't sound like the type who would believe stories about how a stone from Paradise became the icon at the center of Islam's most sacred shrine venerated by all who believe.

**Uzza:** The stone from Paradise is not an icon; only unbelievers venerate icons. The stories about Adam falling to Earth can be surmised from Allah telling him to "go down from here"<sup>196</sup> and Abraham's visits to Mecca and what he did there, including asking Allah to send an Arab messenger to teach the Arabs the Koran<sup>197</sup>. You will find details in the Koran from which a more comprehensive story can be told.

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<sup>196</sup> 2:37 Then Adam received words from his Lord, Who forgave him. He is indeed the All-Forgiving, The Merciful.

2:38 We said: "Go down from here (Paradise) all of you. And when in time My Guidance is vouchsafed to you, those who follow My Guidance will have nothing to fear nor will they grieve (because they will be re-admitted into Paradise)."

<sup>197</sup> 2:128 "Our Lord, cause us to submit to You, and make of our posterity a nation that submits to You. Show us our sacred rites, and pardon us. You are, indeed, the Pardoner, the Merciful."

2:129 "Our Lord, send them a Messenger from among themselves (Arabs) who will recite to them Your Revelations, to teach them the Book (the Koran) and the wisdom, and to purify them. You are truly the Mighty, the Wise."

**Gerry:** Uzza, have you ever wondered why Abraham asked Allah to send the Koran when He had yet to send the Torah, and how he would have known about the Koran in the first place?

**Uzza:** Not really.

**Archie:** Obviously it's a question that also did not bother whoever filled in the blanks. Anyone we should know?

**Uzza:** For the complete story, believers are very much indebted to a man who spent a lifetime studying the Koran and the saying of Muhammad before writing a sixty-thousand-page history of the world, the *Kitab Tarikh al-Rusul wa'l Muluk*, *The Book of History of Prophets And Kings*, from Creation to the 9th century, his century. Al-Tabari is considered the father of Islamic History, and after Muhammad, one of the wisest men who ever lived.

**Bob:** The story about Adam and the stone of Paradise and all the bowing and the circling, the running back and forth like a mad person between two hills and throwing stones at a pillar as if it was the devil, are not mentioned in the Koran?

**Uzza:** The circling and the bowing, yes<sup>198</sup>.

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<sup>198</sup> 2:125 And [remember] when We made the House (the Ka'ba) a place of residence for mankind and a haven [saying]: "Make of Abraham's maqam [stand] a place for prayer." We enjoined Abraham and Isma'il [saying]: "Purify My House for those who circle it, for those who retreat there for meditation, and for those who kneel and prostrate themselves (perform the prayers)."

2:126 And when Abraham said: "My Lord, make this a secure city and feed with fruits those of its inhabitants who believe in Allah and the Last Day." Allah (having accepted Abraham's prayer) said: "As for those who disbelieve, I shall provide for them for a while (in this life), and then subject them to the scourge of the Fire, and what an abominable fate!"

If the Islamic tradition that Adam set up the original altar at Mecca using the stone he brought with him from Paradise has any connection with reality, then people were already circling the Ka'ba when Abraham and Isma'il showed up. Where the Tradition falls down a bit is if we give "raised the foundations" in revelation 2:127 its ordinary, everyday meaning.

2:127 And while Abraham and Isma'il raised the foundations of the House, [they prayed]: "Our Lord, accept [this] from us. Surely you are the All-Hearing, the Omniscient."

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22:29 Then, let them complete their self-cleansing and fulfill their vows and circle round the Ancient House (the Ka'bah).



## 161 Stupid Is As Stupid Does

**Archie:** This fellow Tabari may be a wise man, and the fastest guy ever with a feather and a bowl of ink, but an even wiser man said that "stupid is as stupid does."

**Uzza:** My father was not a stupid man. And how are the rituals of the Hajj any more stupid than those of the Catholics? Like associating eating a piece of flat bread with eating a piece of God as part of their worship.

**Archie:** He is not a fool who recognizes that he has been played for a fool, and Catholics have been deserting their church for years now. They've wised up.

**Bob:** I don't remember Forrest Gump saying that thing about fools not being fools?

**Archie:** He didn't, I did.

**Uzza:** Catholics have not deserted their church because of some silly ritual but because of the nonsense it preaches, like that sex is for procreation only. What about an infertile couple? They have deserted their church because their children are being raped by men prohibited from marrying. They say Islam is obsessed with having sex and that this is a bad thing; but a religion that is obsessed with not having it is worse.

**Gerry:** I might agree with you if Islam did not use sex as an incentive to commit mass murder.

**Archie:** You know what strikes me about this discussion of rituals in praise of unknowable gods?

**Uzza:** I cannot wait to hear this.

**Archie:** That we are all pagans, except me of course, for I don't believe in any of this crap. Like you said, Gerry, a caveman woke up one day and realized he was alone and mortal and couldn't deal with it so he invented gods and the afterlife. He was the first pagan. Mindless rituals are how pagans from the very beginning worshipped the newly minted figment of their imagination. Modern religions would like you to believe they are different. They are not. They simply, to survive the discovery that the moon and sun and whatever were not gods after all, embraced a new nonsense, the metaphysical, while sticking with the same shtick of the pagans of old to maintain an aura of authenticity.

**Gerry:** A new, what you call nonsense, that is much harder to disprove. What you have just said, Archie, is actually quite profound. And I'm

impressed that the words metaphysical, inscrutable and authenticity are even part of your vocabulary.

**Archie:** Do you want to hear something even more profound? Something Mark Twain said about faith: that it is believing in something you know to be untrue.

**Bob:** What does that mean?

**Archie:** It means that cavemen who could not have known any better were probably smarter than today's pagans.

**Bob:** Enough about pagans. So, what happened after the Meccans went home?

**Gerry:** Good idea, let's change the subject again. Are you okay with that, Uzza?

**Uzza:** I guess so. But leave my father out of it. I find it very tiresome.

**Archie:** We're not changing the subject; that is how this discussion all started.

**Gerry:** Archie, give it a rest, will you?

## A Strategic Massacre

**Uzza:** After the Meccans left, Muhammad went looking for those who had provided him with many of the shovels and implements with which he had dug the ditch that apparently stymied the Meccans.

**Bob:** To thank them?

**Uzza:** No, to kill them!

**Bob, Gerry:** WHAT!

**Bob:** Why kill them? They had proven useful.

**Gerry:** And why did you say "apparently stymied" them?

**Uzza:** As mentioned earlier, it was the Arab way, before Islam, to try, in conflict situations, to avoid bloodshed, usually by a simple show of force.

**Gerry:** That would explain why the Meccans did not make a serious attempt to cross what Archie pointed out should have been a minor obstacle.

**Uzza:** And why the remaining Jews of Medina did not attack the believers while they were looking the other way.

**Bob:** Did the Jews finally put up a fight?

**Uzza:** There was no battle. Muhammad marched on their fortress just outside Medina with three thousand jihadists. When he neared the fortifications, he called out to its defenders: "O brothers of monkeys and pigs! Fear me, fear me." This dehumanizing simian reference would make its way into the Koran<sup>199</sup>.

**Archie:** Didn't Hitler do the same thing?

**Uzza:** Please no more comparisons to Mein Kampf.

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<sup>199</sup> 2:65 And you surely know those of you who violated the Sabbath; We said to them: "Be [like] dejected apes."

2:66 Thus We made that an example to their contemporaries and to those after them, and an admonition to the righteous.

7:166 Then, when they disdained arrogantly what they were forbidden, We said to them: "Be miserable monkeys."

**Archie:** Maybe Allah told His Messenger about evolution, the monkey part I mean that we are all descendants of monkeys.

**Gerry:** Don't be funny, this is serious. What happened next?

**Uzza:** Adopting that civilizing influence of the pre-Islamic Arabs of not fighting a losing battle to avoid bloodshed, the Jews asked for a negotiator. Muhammad sent Abu Lubabah. He matter-of-factly informed the assembled men and weeping women and children that he was the emissary of a man who had slaughter on his mind by pointing at his throat<sup>200</sup>.

**Bob:** And they surrendered anyway?

**Uzza:** The holy warriors outnumbered the fighting men of the Banu Qurayzah by at least four to one. The Jews may also have counted on Muhammad's reputation for mercy.

**Archie:** After what he did after the Battle of Badr, that was wishful thinking.

**Uzza:** He did ransom most of the prisoners of Badr, and that may have given hope to the men who laid down their weapons and appeared defenceless with their wives and children before Muhammad, offering to go into exile and leave all their possessions for the believers to plunder at their leisure.

**Archie:** But that wasn't enough for the Prophet this time around, was it?

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<sup>200</sup> When they saw him (Lubabah), the men rose to meet him, and the women and children rushed to grab hold of him, weeping before him, so that he felt pity for them. They said to him, "Abu Lubabah, do you think that we should submit to Muhammad's judgment?"

"Yes", he said, but he pointed with his hand to his throat, that it would be slaughter.

*Tabari*

Abu Lubabah would not be a witness to the result of his negotiations with the Jews. It was probably just as well.

Abu Lubabah felt guilty that he had broken his promise of secrecy with Muhammad. To atone for his 'misdeed' he went straight to the mosque and bound himself with ropes to one of the pillars. This pillar is known as the 'pillar of repentance' or the 'pillars of Abu Lubabah'.

*Abul Kasem*

Lubabah spent six days chained to his pillar. He was freed by the Prophet after God's Messenger received the following revelation.

8:27 O you who believe, do not betray Allah and the Messenger, nor betray your trust knowingly.

## 165 A Strategic Massacre?

**Uzza:** Perhaps to protect a dubious reputation for mercy, Muhammad called upon one of the less than a dozen Muslim casualties of the Battle of the Ditch to decide the fate of the helpless, hapless Jews. The mortally wounded Sad bin Mu'adh could be counted upon to render the expected verdict, and he did, declaring that the men should be killed, and their wives and children parceled out among the believers to do with as they please<sup>201</sup>.

**Gerry:** How did they determine who was old enough to die?

**Uzza:** Any boy who was unlucky enough to show signs of pubic hair was herded with the men next to a ditch Muhammad had dug in the marketplace. Then, he sat down to watch as, in orderly fashion, the more than 700 men and boys of the last Jewish tribe of Medina were beheaded<sup>202</sup>, their decapitated bodies tumbling along with their severed heads into the ditch dug for the occasion.

**Bob:** Why did they dig another ditch? Couldn't they use the one that had already been dug to defend the place, or was it just not deep enough?

**Uzza:** Like the Islamic State at Raqqa, the marketplace or public square is where you carry out these types of executions, in part to demonstrate your ruthlessness. That is how it was done in the idealized time of Muhammad by kings and others who claimed to rule by divine right.

**Archie:** The ditch and lining up those you intend to murder on the rim so that they simply fall in or simply require a nudge after you have executed them reminds me of how the NAZIs processed the Jews of

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<sup>201</sup> Some people (the Banu Qurayzah) agreed to accept the verdict of Sad bin Mu'adh so the Prophet sent for him. He came riding a donkey, and when he approached the Mosque, the Prophet said, "Get up for the best amongst you." or said, "Get up for your chief."

Then the Prophet said, "O Sad! These people have agreed to accept your verdict."

Sad said, "I judge that their warriors should be killed and their children and women should be taken as captives."

The Prophet said, "You have given a judgment similar to Allah's Judgment."

*Bukhari, 58.148*

<sup>202</sup> The messenger of God commanded that furrows should be dug in the ground for the B. Qurayzah. Then he sat down, and Ali and al-Zubayr began cutting off their heads in his presence.

*Tabari*

Poland and Ukraine; remember Babi Yar, before the gas chambers became available.

**Uzza:** HOLY WARRIORS ARE NOT NAZIs, they only do what God approves of. There is a difference!

**Archie:** If you say so.

**Uzza:** Those who kill in God's name are not like those who commit murder in a man's name.

**Gerry:** Sad was a man.

**Uzza:** Sad knew his duty as a believer, and that is to rid the world of those who will not submit to Allah's Will. He knew what it means to be a believer to the very end.

**Archie:** Doing what God would do if He were here, His own dirty work.

**Bob:** How do we know God approved of the mass execution of the men and boys of the last Jewish tribe of Medina?

**Uzza:** When Sad bin Mu'adh died later that day, Muhammad told the believers that Allah's throne shook, so moved was God by the death of a man who had the courage to cold-bloodedly send His enemies to their death, and their wives and daughters into slavery. A revelation would follow making it official<sup>203</sup>.

**Archie:** The Chosen People are actually God's enemies. You learn something new every day.

**Bob:** Allah doesn't sound much like the compassionate and merciful god I keep hearing about on TV.

**Uzza:** That is what the preachers want you to hear and believe. It is an insider joke.

**Bob:** An insider joke? I don't understand.

**Uzza:** The flattering invocation "In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful" headlines 112 of the 114 surahs of the Koran, and in hundreds of revelations, Allah unabashedly brags about His compassionate and merciful nature. But the joke is on those who

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<sup>203</sup> 33:26 And He brought those of the People of the Book who supported them from their fortresses and cast terror into their hearts, some of them you slew and some you took captive.

33:27 And He bequeathed to you their lands, their homes and their possessions, together with land you have never trodden. Allah has power over everything.

## 167 A Strategic Massacre?

cannot be bothered to read the Koran, for if they did, they would soon realize only the believers are entitled to Allah's mercy and compassion, which He makes abundantly clear.

If you had read the Koran, you would understand why Allah was impressed by Sad's decision and by anyone who kills unbelievers wherever they find them, and the more the merrier. If the West had understood this simple message as to whom Allah considers compassion-worthy, they would never have let the Islamists in. Mass public executions are about to become much more commonplace. There was a lesson to be learned in what happened to the Jews of Medina.

**Archie:** Yes, be careful who you welcome to stay with you because you think they are just like you.

**Uzza:** It is a lesson that was lost in the painting of Islam's violent history as a defensive struggle or as bringing peace to a supposedly violent region when it did exactly the opposite.

**Bob:** Even after the massacre, people still believed the Prophet to be a nice guy?

**Uzza:** News of the massacre spread like wildfire and like terrorist attacks today, led to a conversion bonanza. Many converted to Islam, not only because they believed that a man who would do such a thing could not be stopped, but to join in the general pillage of unbelievers' property. All you had to say was "I declare there is no god except God," and you could with impunity kill the men who refused to do so and abscond with their wives and their daughters for your troubles, and still be guaranteed a place in Paradise.

**Gerry:** What about the part about Muhammad being the Messenger of God?

**Uzza:** That would be added later.

**Archie:** You still haven't answered Bob's question: why kill the Jews? Was it to instill terror?

**Uzza:** Probably not at this stage. It was killing them now or killing them later. Killing them now, when they were at his mercy, was the best strategy when you consider the mission Allah had given Muhammad.

**Gerry:** You mean the one about killing the unbelievers, even your friends and benefactors?

**Uzza:** The only friends of believers, Allah said, are other believers<sup>204</sup>. Believers who took unbelievers as friends, He warned, would join them in Hell on Judgment Day<sup>205</sup>

**Gerry:** Does that mean we can't be friends?

**Uzza:** For those who swear by the Koran, this is definitely the case.

**Gerry:** Then we can be friends, you and me that is.

**Uzza:** Yes.

**Bob:** [*something dawns on Bob*] I GET IT. The Prophet was about to go on the warpath and could expect that many of the Jews he had exiled would join the opposition. When put that way, the massacre actually makes sense.

**Archie:** To a sociopath maybe.

**Uzza:** Muhammad was committed to doing God's Will and fighting and killing the unbelievers until everyone worshipped Allah and only Allah<sup>206</sup> or, if they were Christians or Jews, accepted Muslim suzerainty by humbly paying the Jizya. Whom you mistake for a sociopath was a man on a mission from God to make Islam the dominant religion<sup>207</sup> because God would not accept any other religion. By his ruthlessness – a sociopathic ruthlessness wholeheartedly sanctioned by Allah<sup>208</sup> –

<sup>204</sup> 5:55 Your only friends are Allah, His Messenger and those who believe, performing the prayer and giving the alms, while they bow down.

<sup>205</sup> 4:144 O believers, do not take the unbelievers for friends, instead of the believers. Do you wish to give Allah a clear proof against you?

<sup>206</sup> Narrated Abu Huraira:

Allah's Apostle said, "I have been ordered to fight with the people till they say, 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allah', and whoever says, 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allah,' his life and property will be saved by me except for Islamic law, and his accounts will be with Allah, (either to punish him or to forgive him.)"

*Bukhari 52.196*

<sup>207</sup> 48:28 It is He Who sent forth His Messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth, that He may exalt it above every other religion. Allah suffices as Witness.

<sup>208</sup> 9:73 O Prophet, fight the unbelievers and the hypocrites and be stern with them. Their abode is Hell, and what a terrible fate!

Just so we are clear on the concept, when Allah demands that the believers "be stern with them" (or harsh), He means kill them, as He does here in a revelation where He insists the hypocrites be murdered wherever you find them.

33:61 Accursed, wherever they are encountered they will be seized and slaughtered.



## 169 A Strategic Massacre?

Muhammad saved thousands of his brethren from burning in Hell for an eternity. His example has probably saved billions over the centuries from a similar fate.

**Archie:** At least you admitted that the Prophet was a sociopath.

**Uzza:** I admitted to no such thing. Behaving like a sociopath in a god's cause does not make you a sociopath.

**Archie:** It does where I come from.

**Bob:** Uzza, what did you mean by Muslim suzerainty? That can't be good!

**Uzza:** Muslim rule, as was the case in Spain during the Caliphate.

**Gerry:** Sam Harris, in a book he wrote about a conversation he had with a former radical by the name of Nawaz, said that "the vaunted peace of Andalusia is largely a fairy tale, first presented in the novels of Sir Walter Scott, Benjamin Disraeli and others who romanticized Muslim rule, [that] it was good only by comparison with the most murderous periods of medieval Christendom... [that] the general reality was a world absolutely suffocated by religious stupidity and violence."

**Uzza:** I would not know.

## Orphaned by Lust

**Archie:** I'll bet the Prophet's choice of a reward for his role in the massacre of the Jews of Medina was a nice young girl. Am I right?

**Uzza:** He took for himself the wife of one of the men killed, a young woman by the name of Rayhanah<sup>209</sup>.

**Bob:** Talk about a nervy guy. I'm impressed. And this Rayhanah was okay with having sex with the guy responsible for the murder of her husband?

**Uzza:** Again, it was not murder. God-sanctioned killings are not murder.

**Archie:** Then what are they?

**Bob:** Quit changing the subject. Was this Jewish princess okay with being bonked by the guy who had her old man killed on behalf of the big boss in the sky?

**Uzza:** Her father was the leader of the Qurayzah, so that would make her a Jewish princess of sorts.

**Bob:** WOW. I meant her husband. But, the Prophet was also responsible for her father getting wacked and the guy still had the nerve to ask her to marry him.

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<sup>209</sup> Rayhanah was not only a beautiful young woman. "Rayhana's name means 'extremely fragrant' and Muhammad loved perfumes."

The Holy Prophet said: "From the things of the world, I regard women and perfume highly, but prayer is the light of my eyes."

*Al-Khisal*

You might even call it an obsession:

The Most Noble Messenger was so fond of applying perfume that he would skip his supper so as to procure his needed perfume. If perfume was not at his disposal, he would soak the perfumed scarf of his wife and rub his face with it so as to be perfumed. Likewise, before going out he would always look at himself in the mirror or water, and groom himself to such an extent as to always be an embodiment of adornment and dressing well. He would apply so much perfume that his beard had turned white as a result.

*An-Nisa'i*

**Uzza:** What happened to her husband, her father and her kin may explain why Rayhanah refused Muhammad's offer of marriage and only accepted to be his concubine. Of all of Muhammad's flesh and blood acquisitions, Rayhanah is the most pathetic. Even as a concubine, she may have found her life sexually servicing the man who left her without a husband and family unbearable and committed suicide a few years later. None of Muhammad's young wives and concubines had a shorter life than the beautiful tragic Rayhanah [*wipes away a tear*].

**Archie:** I have heard that the Prophet took in all these women and girls not only for the sex, but to solidify relationships with other tribes or with his buddies. What relationship would he have solidified if Rayhanah had accepted his marriage proposal?

**Uzza:** Some of the arranged marriages were to cement relationships with other tribes, but many were not. At least two were the offspring of cronies who offered their daughters in marriage after Muhammad expressed an interest in them (appendix: Muhammad Marries Two Cronies' Daughters).

**Gerry:** Muslims should admit that Muhammad, in middle age and beyond, developed an insatiable appetite for beautiful young women and girls, and when he saw one he liked, game over. He had the power, and he used it. Admit it and get it over with.

**Uzza:** You may be right. The most blatant evidence of these bouts of infatuation and the lengths Muhammad was willing to go to get what he wanted is in his marriage to his cousin Zaynab. He walked in on her when she was almost naked and, mesmerized by her beauty he just had to have her. The only problem: his cousin was already married to his adopted son Zayd.

**Bob:** Zayd must not have been pleased?

**Uzza:** When he became aware of his father's latest obsession, he quickly divorced Zaynab so that she was available for him to marry.

**Bob:** But Muhammad was not really his father?

**Uzza:** The pre-Islamic Arabs were even enlightened when it came to adopted sons; they completely erased the distinction between an adopted and a natural-born son. An adopted son became the son of the man who adopted him, with all the rights and obligations of a natural-born son including calling the man who took him in, father.

**Bob:** And Allah was okay with this, marrying your living son's former wife?

**Uzza:** Absolutely not and neither were the people!

**Bob:** How did the Prophet get away with it this time?

**Uzza:** We do not know who first got the idea to change the status of adopted sons to "brothers in religion"<sup>210</sup>, but Allah, who Aisha remarked was always quick to please her husband when it came to his sexual needs<sup>211</sup>, made marrying the former wife of any other than your natural-born son like marrying the divorced wife of any man. So that there is no doubt He approved of Muhammad's marriage to his cousin Zaynab, Allah then sent a revelation saying it was all His idea<sup>212</sup>. Perhaps to avoid any future misunderstanding, Allah, in the same surah, lists all the close relations Muhammad may marry, including females who give themselves freely to His spokesperson, an exception He makes clear is not available to the ordinary believer<sup>213</sup>. For good measure, Allah quickly followed this verse with another revelation where He tells Muhammad that he does not need to follow a regular

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<sup>210</sup> 33:4 Allah did not create two hearts within the breast of any man; and He did not make your wives, whom you compare to your mothers' backs; and He did not make your [adopted] sons your sons in fact. That is your own claim, by your words of mouth. Allah speaks the truth and He guides to the Right Path.

33:5 Assign them to their own fathers. That is more equitable in the sight of Allah; but if you do not know their real fathers, then they are your brothers in religion, your adopted fellow Muslims. You are not at fault if you err therein; but only in what your hearts intend. Allah is ever All-Forgiving, All-Merciful.

<sup>211</sup> "I feel that your Lord hastens in fulfilling your wishes and desires."

*Bukhari 60.675*

<sup>212</sup> 33:37 And [remember] when you said to him whom Allah favoured and you favoured: (this is addressed to Zayd regarding his wife Zaynab) "Hold on to your wife and fear Allah", while you concealed within yourself what Allah would reveal and feared other men, whereas Allah had a better right to be feared by you. Then, when Zayd had satisfied his desire for her, We gave her to you in marriage; so that the believers should not be at fault, regarding the wives of their adopted sons, once they have satisfied their desire for them. For Allah's Command must be accomplished.

<sup>213</sup> 33:50 O Prophet, we have made lawful, for you, your wives, whose dowry you have paid, what your right hand owns (slave-girls) out of the spoils of war that Allah gave you, the daughters of your paternal uncles, the daughters of your paternal aunts, the daughters of your maternal uncles, the daughters of your maternal aunts who emigrated with you, and any believing woman who gives herself freely to the Prophet, if the Prophet desires to marry her, granted exclusively to you, but not the believers. We know what We have prescribed for them, regarding their wives and what their right hands own, so that you may not be at fault. Allah is All-Forgiving, Merciful.

rotation when it comes to having sex with all these wives, concubines and sex-slaves to which he is entitled<sup>214</sup>.

**Gerry:** That a god in a book meant to be a moral guide for mankind for centuries to come would spend so much time on the sex life of just one man, including the granting of exceptions and changing the law to make what had previously been considered deviant behaviour normal, invites disbelief!

**Uzza:** That, it probably did. Allah obviously realized that His shameless pandering to an older man's unbridled lust<sup>215</sup> for what should have been a younger man's fantasy was sowing mistrust about what His Book is all about. In the next revelation in this series, He tells Muhammad that this is it; from this point forward, he must confine his marital choices to the ones the law allows<sup>216</sup>.

**Archie:** You have to hand it to the Prophet, he had this special relationship with God, if you believe in that sort of thing, and he used it for all it was worth.

**Uzza:** Of all the things Allah did to cater to Muhammad's sexual appetites, His justification for allowing Muhammad's marriage to Zaynab has had the most lasting and most detrimental impact. The revelations changing the relationship between adopted sons and their surrogate parent so that Muhammad could add his cousin and former daughter-in-law to his collection of wives, concubines and slave-girls has been interpreted to mean that Islam is against Western style adoption where an adopted son can take the name of his adopted parents.

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<sup>214</sup> 33:51 You may defer any of them you wish, and take in any of them that you wish or any that you may have cut off. So you are not liable to reproach. For thus it is more likely that they will be delighted and will not grieve, but be content with what you have given each one of them. Allah knows what is within your hearts; and Allah is All-Knowing, Clement.

<sup>215</sup> Muhammad did not always let his lust get the better of him.

Jabir reported that Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) saw a woman, and so he came to his wife, Zaynab, as she was tanning a leather and had sexual intercourse with her. He then went to his Companions and told them: The woman advances and retires in the shape of a devil, so when one of you sees a woman, he should come to his wife, for that will repel what he feels in his heart.

*Sahih Muslim 8.3240*

<sup>216</sup> 33:52 Thereafter, other women are not lawful to you, nor is substituting other wives for them, even if you admire their beauty, except for what your right hand owns. Allah is Watchful over everything.

**Gerry:** That is a bit of stretch, isn't it?

**Uzza:** By making it a sin for adopted sons to take their surrogate father's surname when he made them second-class children, Allah created a lasting disincentive for men to take the responsibility of raising another man's child as if he was their son, as was done in pre-Islamic times<sup>217</sup>. One man's obsession and an accommodating deity is why today, in the Islamic world, you have an untold number of children with no one alive to call father.

**Archie:** You would think a religion that produces so many orphans would treat them better.

**Bob:** What about female orphans?

**Uzza:** What is Islam's solution to any female problem?

**Archie:** Stoning them.

**Bob:** Stoning orphans? That's a bit harsh, even by Islamic standards.

**Uzza:** NO! MARRIAGE, including their guardian taking them as his wives<sup>218</sup>.

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<sup>217</sup> **Narrated Aisha:**

Abu Hudhaifa, one of those who fought the battle of Badr with Allah's Apostle, adopted Salim as his son and married his niece Hind bint Al-Wahd bin Utba to him and Salim was a freed slave of an Ansari woman.

Allah's Apostle also adopted Zaid as his son.

In the Pre-Islamic period of ignorance the custom was that, if one adopted a son, the people would call him by the name of the adopted-father [from] whom he would inherit as well, till Allah revealed: "Call them (adopted sons) By (the names of) their fathers." (33:5)

*Bukhari 59.335*

<sup>218</sup> In Islam, if a problem, real or imagined, involves a female and it has nothing to do with her having sex outside marriage, then marriage is most often the solution. Marriage is also Allah's recommended course of action in dealing with female orphans.

As you consider the following scattered noble sentiments concerning orphans, keep in mind that the male guardian of female orphans could, at his discretion, "marry such of the women as appeal to" him when they reached the age of nine (the age at which females can be married off under Islamic law, i.e., the Sharia). By doing so, he maintains effective control of whatever property the female orphan might possess to use and dispose of at his discretion.

4:2 Render unto the orphans their property and do not exchange worthless things for good ones, and do not devour their property together with your property. That indeed is a great sin!

4:3 If you fear that you cannot deal justly with the orphans, then marry such of the women as appeal to you, two, three or four; but if you fear that you cannot

**Bob:** Like Woody Allah, I mean, Woody Allen did.

**Uzza:** Allah may have regretted what He did to orphan boys. In subsequent revelations He insists that orphans be treated kindly and fairly. But there was no turning back the clock. [*getting emotional again*]  
Can we change the subject?

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be equitable, then only one, or what your right hands own (captives of war or slave-girls). That is more likely to enable you to avoid unfairness.

## A Big Deal of a Treaty

**Bob:** With the Meccans gone and the Jews no longer an issue, what did the believers do to celebrate?

**Archie:** BOOTY TIME! With more than a thousand defenceless females and the Prophet's approval, what do you think they did?

**Bob:** What does Archie mean by "the Prophet's approval"?

**Uzza:** You do not miss a thing, do you, Archie? Remember earlier when I said that Muhammad asked holy warriors not to practice coitus interruptus when raping their captives?

**Bob:** Yes.

**Uzza:** That meant he did not object to rape per se, just that the rapist should not withdraw to avoid impregnating the victim and thereby deprive Allah of the opportunity to make a baby. This is called his silent approval<sup>219</sup> and it has the same force in law as if he had shouted "go out and rape and multiply."

**Archie:** And that is exactly what Islamic State did when it raped all those captured Yazidi women and girls.

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<sup>219</sup> Hadiths (sayings and the example of the Prophet) are mostly hearsay evidence of what Muhammad said and did, including his silent approval of actions taken in his presence – silence being very much a metaphor for his not objecting to something done in his presence as in the following where laughter ensued:

Umar then came forward, and when he had asked and had been granted permission he found the Prophet sitting sad and silent with his wives around him. He told that he decided to say something which would make the Prophet laugh, so he said, "Messenger of God, I wish you had seen the daughter of Kharija when she asked me for extra money and I got up and slapped her on the neck."

God's messenger laughed and said, "They are around me as you see asking for extra money."

Abu Bakr then got up, went to A'isha and slapped her on the neck, and Umar did the same to Hafsa ...

*Sahih Muslim 9.3506*

Authenticate hadiths like the preceding are legal precedents if they do not contradict the Koran, and, along with the Koran, are the basis of Islamic Law, the Sharia, God's Law.



**Bob:** They were rewarding themselves for killing their husbands and fathers, just like the Muslims of Medina who killed the Jews?

**Uzza:** Yes, but they were not breaking any laws.

**Gerry:** Another argument for Western jurisprudence which condemns immorality not condones it.

**Uzza:** God's Law, the Sharia, cannot, by definition, condone immorality. Therefore, what holy warriors do to their female captives is both legal and moral.

**Archie:** You don't have a problem with what was done to the Yazidi females?

**Uzza:** OF COURSE I DO. NO SANE PERSON WOULD NOT!

**Archie:** No need to shout. We get it. People who do these things are insane and the laws they live by are just as crazy.

**Uzza:** I did not say that.

**Archie:** Of course you didn't. We understand.

**Uzza:** And, if there was what you called "booty time" after the elimination of potential enemies, it would only have provided a temporary respite from what was still a dire situation for the believers.

**Bob:** How's that?

**Uzza:** The Meccans and the Jews of Khaybar, a large farming community to the north of Medina to which many of the Jewish exiles had fled, had agreed to come to each other's aid if either was attacked by the believers. Both cities also instituted the equivalent of an economic blockade. Not only were the Muslim caravans confined to Medina but so were their raiding parties. Not only could the believers no longer depend on plunder to make ends meet, but Muhammad had destroyed much of the orchards of the oasis city and exiled or slaughtered its farmers.

**Archie:** Serves him right.

**Uzza:** Something had to give. The believers appeared to have no choice. Unless they broke the blockade by attacking either Khaybar or Mecca, many of the warriors who became believers for the plunder and the sex, with starvation a definite possibility, would leave, or worse, change sides, making the fall of Medina and the defeat of the believers inevitable.

**Bob:** Who did they attack first?

**Uzza:** Khaybar, but not before giving the Meccans what they most wanted: a negotiated peace that avoided, for now, unnecessary Arab bloodshed and set Khaybar adrift. He would deliver the olive branch in person.

**Archie:** Calling for peace, from what you have told us so far, is not what Muslims do.

**Uzza:** Allah told the believers not to call for peace if they had the upper hand<sup>220</sup>, but He also said it was okay to lie in His Cause<sup>221</sup>. A lie in His Cause at this point seemed the appropriate thing to do if the believers were to survive to fight another day.

**Gerry:** It wasn't a lie if Muhammad intended to keep the peace.

**Uzza:** Many believers thought it was a lie to catch the Meccans off guard when informed of Muhammad's plans to go to Mecca, not to fight but to perform the lesser pilgrimage, the Umrah.

**Gerry:** But it wasn't?

**Uzza:** No, it was not, but neither was it about the pilgrimage. He invited all believers to accompany him on this 500 miles round-trip trek. Except for the Bedouins who became believers for the booty, most of his followers joined him. Those who would accompany him were only allowed a sheathed sword and must follow the ritual preparation, much of it borrowed from the pagans, such as fasting, shaving your head and body hair, wearing a simple robe without decorations of any kind and abstaining from sexual relations.

**Gerry:** That is definitely not preparing to do battle.

**Uzza:** On February 628, Muhammad and an estimated fourteen hundred men leave Medina for Mecca. Somehow, they manage to avoid a large force sent to intercept them and make it to the outskirts of

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<sup>220</sup> 47:35 So do not weaken and call for peace, while you have the upper hand and Allah is with you. He will not stint you your actions.

<sup>221</sup> 4:71 O believers, be on your guard; so march in detachments or march altogether.

4:72 Indeed, among you is one who will stay behind, so that if a disaster befalls you, he will say: "Allah has favoured me, since I have not been a martyr with them."

4:73 If, however, a bounty from God comes to you, he will say, as though there was no friendship between you and him: "Would that I had been with them; then I would have won a great victory."

the city. Uthman, Muhammad's son in law, accepts to go and talk to the Meccans. When he is late in returning, rumours start to circulate that he has been killed or is being tortured.

**Bob:** From what you have told us, that is not like the Meccans.

**Uzza:** No it is not. To everyone's astonishment, except perhaps Muhammad, a short time later, a delegation from Mecca arrives. A ten-year non-aggression treaty is signed, the Treaty of Hudaibiyah. Under Hudaibiyah, believers will be allowed to perform the pilgrimage the following year and every year during which the treaty is in force. It is during the signing of this treaty that we get the best indication from a credible witness that Muhammad was not a total illiterate. His scribe wrote, where Muhammad was to put his imprimatur, "These are the terms on which Muhammad, Allah's Apostle, agreed."

**Archie:** If the title fits, use it!

**Uzza:** The Meccans objected, saying that if they believed he was really Allah's Apostle, they would have no objections to him visiting the Ka'ba anytime. When Muhammad's scribe refused to change the wording, he took the treaty from him, rubbed out what the Meccans found objectionable and wrote in what met with their approval<sup>222</sup>.

**Bob:** So, Muhammad could read and write?

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<sup>222</sup> **Narrated Al-Bara:**

When the Prophet intended to perform Umra in the month of Dhul-Qada, the people of Mecca did not let him enter Mecca till he settled the matter with them by promising to stay in it for three days only.

When the document of treaty was written, the following was mentioned: "These are the terms on which Muhammad, Allah's Apostle agreed (to make peace)."

They said, "We will not agree to this, for if we believed that you are Allah's Apostle we would not prevent you, but you are Muhammad bin Abdullah."

The Prophet said, "I am Allah's Apostle and also Muhammad bin Abdullah."

Then he said to Ali, "Rub off (the words) 'Allah's Apostle'", but Ali said, "No, by Allah, I will never rub off your name."

So, Allah's Apostle took the document and wrote, "This is what Muhammad bin Abdullah has agreed upon: No arms will be brought into Mecca except in their cases, and nobody from the people of Mecca will be allowed to go with him (i.e. the Prophet) even if he wished to follow him and he (the Prophet) will not prevent any of his companions from staying in Mecca if the latter wants to stay."

**Uzza:** Reputable scholars agree that Muhammad was not a total illiterate, that he could write his name and perhaps read at a rudimentary level. Does that make him literate? I do not know.

**Archie:** The treaty allowed the Muslims to make the pilgrimage to Mecca. Big deal!

**Uzza:** The big deal was that the treaty no longer committed the Meccans to come to the aid of the Jews of Khaybar if they were attacked.

**Archie:** That is a big deal!

**Uzza:** So that is what Muhammad did. Having made peace, if only a temporary one, with his Arab kin, he wasted no time in attacking Khaybar.

## **A Man in a Hurry Takes Wife #11**

**Uzza:** Muhammad would use the breathing space provided by the Treaty of Hudaibiyah to complete the encirclement of Mecca. Under the Treaty, Mecca must remain neutral in disputes between the believers and their enemies and that includes the Jews of Khaybar.

**Archie:** How could the Meccans be so stupid?

**Uzza:** One explanation is that Muhammad was an old man, in his late fifties when he signed the treaty. He had already exceeded the life expectancy of people of his time. If he respected the terms of the treaty, Mecca was safe for at least ten years, during which time Muhammad would undoubtedly have passed away and the threat to the city would have receded without a fight.

**Gerry:** It was obviously a miscalculation.

**Uzza:** It might have worked if Muhammad's age had not worked against them, not for them as they may have expected.

**Bob:** I don't understand.

**Uzza:** Muhammad, probably because of his age and expectations, was a man in a hurry.

**Gerry:** Are you saying that he had no intention of respecting the terms of the treaty he just signed?

**Uzza:** Like most doomsday prophets, Muhammad expected that fateful day to occur in his lifetime. Unlike most doomsday prophets, he expected to help bring it about and perhaps avoid spending any time in the grave.

**Bob:** From what you have told us about life in the grave, I would not want to spend any time as a zombie if I could help it.

**Uzza:** Avoiding life in the grave is probably the second greatest incentive for suicide bombers to do what they do after the promise of an afterlife of non-stop debauchery for an eternity, and that includes murderers whose last murder was in Allah's Cause<sup>223</sup>.

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<sup>223</sup> The atonement property of killing and dying in Allah Cause includes forgiveness of murders not committed on God's behalf.

**Bob:** Was the Prophet, if he helped bring about Judgment Day, expecting to be raptured or something, and be raised up to heaven before all hell broke loose<sup>224</sup>?

**Uzza:** That is a Christian belief. Except for Jesus and martyrs, every man, woman and child, even the prophets, must spend time in the grave until Judgment Day.

**Narrated Abu Huraira:**

Allah's Apostle said, "Allah welcomes two men with a smile; one of whom kills the other and both of them enter Paradise. One fights in Allah's Cause and gets killed. Later on Allah forgives the 'killer who also get martyred (in Allah's Cause)."

*Bukhari 52.80*

In the Christian gospels, Jesus of Nazareth shed his blood to redeem the sins of mankind; in the Islamic variation, it is the shedding of one's own blood while killing the enemies of Allah that wipes away sins.

There is a man who fights in the path of Allah and does not want to kill or be killed, but is struck by an arrow. The first drop of blood from him is atonement for every sin he has committed; for every drop he sheds, he gains levels in Paradise.

The second type of man is one who fights desiring to kill but not to be killed, and is struck by an arrow. The first drop of blood from him is for every sin; for every drop he sheds he gains a level in Paradise until he bumps Abraham's knee.

The third type of man is one who fights in the path of Allah desiring to kill and be killed and is struck by an arrow. The first drop of blood from him is atonement for every sin; he will come to the Day of Resurrection with a drawn sword [able to] intercede.

*David Cook, cf. Ibn al-Mubarak Understanding Jihad, p.15.*

- <sup>224</sup> 81:1 When the sun shall be coiled up;  
 81:2 And when the stars shall be scattered about;  
 81:3 And when the mountains shall be set in motion;  
 81:4 And when the pregnant camels shall be discarded;  
 81:5 And when the beasts shall be corralled;  
 81:6 And when the seas shall rise mightily;  
 81:7 And when souls shall be paired off;  
 81:8 And when the buried infant shall be asked:  
 81:9 "For what sins was she killed?"  
 81:10 And when the scrolls shall be unrolled;  
 81:11 And when heaven shall be scraped off;  
 81:12 And when Hell shall be stoked;  
 81:13 And when Paradise shall be brought near;  
 81:14 Then each soul shall know what it had brought forth.

**Gerry:** If Islam considers Jesus just another prophet of Allah, and even for the prophets there is no avoiding a zombie-like existence, why the exception?

**Uzza:** God needed a general, so to speak, to lead the forces of good against the forces of evil during the end-times cataclysmic battles.

**Gerry:** But that is a Christian belief?

**Uzza:** And an Islamic one as well, with one key distinction: the forces of good are the believers.

**Gerry:** That is a big difference!

**Archie:** No kidding. So, Uzza, how does it feel having a drink with a bunch of evil dudes instead of hanging out with the righteous twosome dressed in original Model T colours who came in earlier?

**Uzza:** You are not evil.

**Archie:** Is it because black is not our favourite colour?

**Uzza:** Do not be silly.

**Gerry:** You are not losing your religion are you, Uzza?

**Uzza:** If I did, I would not admit it. I am not that brave.

**Gerry:** I think you are [*touches her hand*].

**Bob:** Getting back to the old guy and his obsession with killing Jews.

**Uzza:** Muhammad was not obsessed with killing Jews. Yes, he was upset with them for denying his claim to Prophethood because he was not a Jew, but it was his obsession with what he thought was a looming Judgment Day that drove him to fight them, and when necessary, kill them.

**Gerry:** How was killing Jews helping him to bring about Judgment Day?

**Uzza:** Muhammad said that "the last hour will not come" until Muslims vanquished the Romans, that is the Byzantines at a place called Dabiq in modern day Syria, a few miles from the Turkish border. He intended to (appendix: Dabiq and the End Times) lead the believers in a last battle which would usher in the end-times and Judgment Day.

**Archie:** Who did he think he was?

**Uzza:** Like I said before, Muhammad saw himself as the Arab Moses. Moses led his people to the Promised Land; he would lead his people

to Dabiq, the last stopover before the Hereafter where he will stand next to God and be praised by his tribesmen for having saved most of them from Hell's fire, and to watch as Allah sentences those who refused to submit to burn in Hell.

**Archie:** Talk about delusional.

**Uzza:** He was not crazy. Muhammad had a plan and it involved forging a united Arab nation under God able to field an army capable of defeating the Byzantines. A necessary step was removing the Jewish threat should the Meccans come to their senses and renew their alliance with the Jews of Khaybar.

**Archie:** Fickle allies the Meccans were.

**Bob:** Are you imitating Yoda now, Archie?

**Archie:** Star Wars is a parody of another fight between good and evil, between light and darkness. And the bad guys are all dressed in black.

**Bob:** No, they don't all wear black. The stormtroopers all wear white armor.

**Archie:** A sometimes confusing storyteller this Lucas person is.

**Gerry:** But not Uzza. I have never heard the story of Islam told to me in such an engaging fashion where it all makes sense.

**Uzza:** You are too kind.

**Gerry:** Forget this Star Wars nonsense, Uzza. I want to hear more about how we got into the mess we find ourselves in today with Western civilisation on the brink of annihilation.

**Uzza:** From Islam's point of view, believers are bringing order to chaos; cleaning up the mess you say you find yourselves in today.

**Archie:** And what has the killing of the Jews of Khaybar got to do with cleaning up a mess, except for one of the Prophet's own making?

**Uzza:** Muhammad did not kill all the male Jews of Khaybar with pubic hair like he did at Medina. Medina had taught him that farmers are useful in both war and peace. He allowed the surviving Jews of Khaybar to continue farming the land with him taking fifty percent of the crop<sup>225</sup> to feed his army, mostly.

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<sup>225</sup> **Narrated Ibn Umar:**

Umar bin Al-Khattab expelled all the Jews and Christians from the land of Hijaz. Allah's Apostle after conquering Khaibar, thought of expelling the Jews



**Archie:** I'll bet that is not all he got for his troubles.

**Uzza:** Yes, he also took a 17-year-old Jewish teenager by the name of Safiyyah bint Huyai as his eleventh wife after allowing a holy warrior to take her as his slave.

**Archie:** A bit of an Indian-giver was the Prophet, was he?

**Uzza:** The use of that expression does not become you, Archie, and he was not the type of person you describe. Muhammad was supervising the distribution of the women and girls of his dead and defeated enemy when a holy warrior came forward and asked him for a slave girl from among the captives. He picked the young and beautiful Safiyyah. That was before a companion informed Muhammad of her beauty and status as the widow of a chief among the Jews (appendix: Muhammad Takes another Jewish Chief's Daughter).

**Bob:** Just like Rayhanah?

**Uzza:** No. Unlike Rayhanah, Safiyyah was a merry widow, happy to be rid of an abusive husband, it is said, and happy to become the wife of Muhammad even if the customary dowry demanded by the Koran would not be available to ransom herself, as unlikely as that was about to happen.

**Bob:** Muhammad broke the law?

**Uzza:** Of course not. She may have been a slave for only a short time. He made her a free woman before he married her and deemed her freedom to be her dowry<sup>226</sup>.

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from the land which, after he conquered it belonged to Allah, Allah's Apostle and the Muslims.

But the Jews requested Allah's Apostle to leave them there on the condition that they would do the labor and get half of the fruits (the land would yield).

Allah's Apostle said, "We shall keep you on these terms as long as we wish." Thus they stayed till the time of 'Umar's Caliphate when he expelled them to Taima and Ariha.

*Bukhari 53.380*

<sup>226</sup> **Narrated Anas:**

Allah's Apostle manumitted Safiyya and then married her, and her Mahr (dowry) was her manumission (freedom), and he gave a wedding banquet with Hais (a sort of sweet dish made from butter, cheese and dates).

*Bukhari 62.98*

**Archie:** What you're saying is that his new teenaged acquisition cost him nothing and he again changed the law in the process because it suited him.

**Uzza:** That is not what I am saying at all.

**Bob:** What did you mean by *ransom herself*?

**Uzza:** The Koran demands that a bride be given a dowry. This is meant to give the wife-to-be some means of looking after herself, if only for a short period, should her husband divorce her, and she must leave his home forthwith. A believing man unhappy with a marital choice need only say "I divorce you" before sending her packing – after ascertaining she is not pregnant with his child. A wife's dowry is her only possession; everything else, including the family home, is exclusively her husband's<sup>227</sup>. Her dowry is also one of the few means she has of "ransoming herself"<sup>228</sup>, that is, foregoing her dowry to obtain a divorce from, say, an abusive husband.

**Gerry:** Not providing Safiyyah a "real" dowry makes the Prophet out to be a bit of a scrooge.

**Uzza:** Muhammad was parsimonious, I will admit. When his daughter Fatima asked her father to give her one of his slave-girls to help with

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<sup>227</sup> A reminder from Muhammad that a believer's wife owns basically nothing except her dowry, not even a share of the family home, and that she must defer to her husband for whatever goes on in his home, from who can visit, to how much or how little she can eat, to what reward points (points for doing good that will be weighted against points for doing bad things on Judgment Day) her husband can expect if she gives some "of his wealth" to charity without his permission.

**Narrated Abu Huraira:**

Allah's Apostle said, "It is not lawful for a lady to fast (Nawafil) without the permission of her husband when he is at home; and she should not allow anyone to enter his house except with his permission; and if she spends of his wealth (on charitable purposes) without being ordered by him, he will get half of the reward."

*Bukhari 62.123*

<sup>228</sup> 2:231 If you divorce [your] women and they reach the end of their [waiting] period, retain them in an honourable manner or release them in an honourable manner. Do not, however, retain them for the sake of causing them harm and in order to commit aggression (by forcing them to ransom themselves, or by retaining them for a longer period). Whoever does that shall do wrong to himself. Do not make a mockery of Allah's Revelations; and remember the Grace Allah has bestowed upon you, and the Book (the Koran) and the wisdom He has revealed to you in order to admonish you. Fear Allah and know that He knows everything.

the housework he refused, telling her that more prayers would be just as helpful<sup>229</sup>.

**Bob:** You don't get rich by giving your stuff away, that's for sure.

**Uzza:** Whatever Muhammad took for himself, he spent most of it in Allah's Cause.

**Archie:** How do you spend women in Allah's Cause?

**Uzza:** As a reward. I am sure if giving one or more of his many wives and slave-girls to a holy warrior would have advanced Allah's Cause, Muhammad would have done so.

**Archie:** If you believe that, I've got a bridge you might be interested in.

**Uzza:** You are impossible.

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<sup>229</sup> **Narrated Ali:**

Fatima complained of what she suffered from the hand mill and from grinding, when she got the news that some slave girls of the booty had been brought to Allah's Apostle. She went to him to ask for a maid-servant, but she could not find him, and told Aisha of her need. When the Prophet came, Aisha informed him of that.

The Prophet came to our house when we had gone to our beds. (On seeing the Prophet) we were going to get up, but he said, 'Keep at your places,' I felt the coolness of the Prophet's feet on my chest. Then he said, "Shall I tell you a thing which is better than what you asked me for? When you go to your beds, say: 'Allahu Akbar (i.e. Allah is Greater)' for 34 times, and 'Alhamdu Lillah (i.e. all the praises are for Allah)' for 33 times, and Subhan Allah (i.e. Glorified be Allah) for 33 times. This is better for you than what you have requested."

*Bukhari 53.344*

## Hell is for Mothers

**Gerry:** A wife without a dowry could not ransom herself, making an unhappy marriage in Islam possibly worse than slavery<sup>230</sup>.

**Uzza:** And of all the unhappy marriages, a virgin who marries an impotent man is the most to be pitied, doomed to a life without ever experiencing what it is like to feel a man you welcome inside you for the first time<sup>231</sup>.

**Bob:** If she had a dowry, couldn't she just ransom herself and marry another man?

**Uzza:** No, because of another of these weird rulings by a man obviously torn between desire and contempt for our sex who insinuated himself into every nook and cranny of our being, thinking that is all we are about.

**Bob:** But you must admit, your nooks and crannies are what make you special.

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<sup>230</sup> The slave could be freed by his master; the unbeliever could at any time become a believer by his own choice, and thus end his inferiority. Only the woman was doomed forever to remain what she was.

*Bernard Lewis*

<sup>231</sup> **Narrated Aisha:**

The wife of Rifa'a Al-Qurazi came to the Prophet and said, "I was Rifa'a's wife, but he divorced me and it was a final irrevocable divorce. Then I married Abdur Rahman bin Az-Zubair but he is impotent."

The Prophet asked her "Do you want to remarry Rifa'a? You cannot unless you had a complete sexual relation with your present husband."

*Bukhari 48.807*

Yahya related to me from Malik... that Rifa'a ibn Simwal divorced his wife, Tamima bint Wahb, in the time of the messenger of Allah three times. She then married 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn az-Zubayr and he turned from her and could not consummate the marriage and so he parted from her.

Rifa'a wanted to marry her again and it was mentioned to the Messenger of Allah, and he forbade him to marry her.

He said, 'She is not halal for you until she has tasted the sweetness of intercourse.'

*Al-Muwatta 28 7.17b*

**Uzza:** What about our humps<sup>232</sup>?

**Bob:** Those too.

**Uzza:** [*dismissively*] Whatever! My mind is what makes me special; what makes everyone special. The rest is window dressing. Women should not be punished because our minds are attractively packaged and some men cannot handle it. Or, like Muhammad, are unable to get over the window dressing and blame it, us, for causing unwanted erections – whether they be evident or not, or lead to anything – to not being able to cause one at a time and a place he and Allah deem appropriate.

**Archie:** Are you saying that Allah blames the wife if her husband can't get it up?

**Uzza:** Women should be wary of any man who would make their lives miserable and say that it is God's Will. It is, in fact, thinly disguised contempt. There is nothing in the Koran about punishing a woman who has never had sex from ever having sex again because the man she married cannot get an erection. That is Muhammad's doing. He said that a virgin who divorces a man because he cannot consume the marriage cannot marry again unless she is no longer a virgin.

**Gerry:** That's a bit of a catch-22.

**Uzza:** A catch-22? What is that?

**Gerry:** A situation from which an individual cannot escape because of an absurd ruling based on contradictory rules<sup>233</sup>, such as this one. One rule says that a wife in an unhappy relationship can pay her husband to get out of it. However, a virgin, even if she obtains a divorce from an impotent man, will not be able to lose her virginity without risking getting stoned to death for breaking the rule about having sex outside marriage. That is absurd, a catch-22.

**Uzza:** And they say the Greeks have a word for it.

**Archie:** A word for nasty beyond belief?

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<sup>232</sup> "My Humps" is a song performed by American recording group The Black Eyed Peas. ... The song sparked controversy because of its title and lyrics, which center on a woman who uses her breasts and buttocks to accomplish her goals.

*Wiki*

<sup>233</sup> The term was coined by Joseph Heller, who used it in his 1961 novel *Catch-22*.

**Bob:** Not nice then, but today it may not be too bad. I had a girlfriend who swore off sex with men after discovering sex toys. She bragged about having a different man every night of the week who never disappoints.

**Uzza:** The type of sex toys I think you are referring to are out of the question, such as dildos and latex penises that come in all sizes and shapes and that simulate the real thing.

**Bob:** So you know about those?

**Uzza:** It is not what you think, and even if it was, what difference does it make?

**Archie:** To that virgin of yours, a hell of a lot.

**Uzza:** Well, SHE CANNOT HAVE THEM!

**Bob:** WHY THE HELL NOT?

**Uzza:** The young sex slave of an old man who could not get it up asked him to put his fingers in her vagina and stimulate her that way. He went to see his imam, who was not any imam but Ali ar-Reza, a descendent of Muhammad, to ask him if that was okay.

**Archie:** Let me get this straight. An old guy has a young girl who is willing to have him touch her that way – bless her – and he has to go to ask his imam if it's okay. Is there any part of a Muslim's existence in which your religion will not stick its fingers, eh, I mean nose?

**Uzza:** No, I do not think so. A golden rule of Islam based on, you guessed it, a saying of Muhammad, is, if you do not know if something is illegal, do not do it until you have consulted a religious authority of some kind<sup>234</sup>. With more than six thousand revealed truths and twice as many sayings of Muhammad to inform a believer's every waking moment, if you are a believer, it is actually not bad advice.

**Bob:** So, what did the imam say?

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<sup>234</sup> **Narrated An-Nu'man bin Bashir:**

The Prophet said "Both legal and illegal things are obvious, and in between them are (suspicious) doubtful matters. So who-ever forsakes those doubtful things lest he may commit a sin, will definitely avoid what is clearly illegal; and who-ever indulges in these (suspicious) doubtful things bravely, is likely to commit what is clearly illegal. Sins are Allah's Hima (i.e. private pasture) and whoever pastures (his sheep) near it, is likely to get in it at any moment."

*Bukhari 34.267*

**Uzza:** He said it was okay, as long as whatever he put in there was part of his body<sup>235</sup>, and that ruling has remained a mainstay of all four mainstream schools of Islamic law.

**Gerry:** Again, why do women put up with this nonsense?

**Uzza:** Because Islam would collapse if we didn't, and we would all burn in Hell for an eternity.

**Gerry:** Didn't the Prophet say that the vast majority of those whom Allah will sentence to burn in Hell will be women? And, from what I remember, it was not because of what we have been talking about.

**Uzza:** No, it will be because of our ungratefulness<sup>236</sup>, with a small minority of women, and possibility their children, being forced to join the sinning husband Allah infrequently condemns to burn in Hell<sup>237</sup>.

**Bob:** Ungrateful to whom?

**Uzza:** Our husbands.

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<sup>235</sup> As far as the methods of mutual stimulation in foreplay... no foreign object should be used. The restriction on the use of foreign objects is based on the following hadith.

'Ubaydullah bin Zurarah says that he had an old neighbor who owned a young slave-girl. Because of his old age, he could not fully satisfy the young slave-girl during sexual intercourse. She would therefore ask him to place his fingers in her vagina as she liked it. The old man complied with her wishes even though he did not like this idea. So he requested 'Ubaydullah to ask Imam 'Ali ar-Reza (A.S.) about it. When 'Ubaydullah asked the Imam (A.S.) about it, the Imam (A.S.) said, "There is no problem as long as he uses any part of his own body upon her, but he should not use anything other than his body on her."

*Sayyid Athar Husayn S.H. Rizvi, Islamic Marriage Handbook*

<sup>236</sup> **Narrated Abdullah bin Abbas:**

The people say, "O Allah's Apostle! We saw you taking something from your place and then we saw you retreating."

The Prophet replied, "I saw Paradise and stretched my hands towards a bunch (of its fruits) and had I taken it, you would have eaten from it as long as the world remains.

I also saw the Hell-fire and I had never seen such a horrible sight. I saw that most of the inhabitants were women."

The people asked, "O Allah's Apostle! Why is it so?"

The Prophet replied, "Because of their ungratefulness."

*Bukhari 18.161*

<sup>237</sup> 37:22 Gather together those who were wrongdoers, their spouses and what they used to worship;

37:23 Apart from Allah, and lead them to the path of Hell.

**Archie:** That is sick, sick, sick, sick! That means Allah's favourite firewood for his Hell is mothers.

**Uzza:** What do you mean?

**Archie:** Think about it for a minute. Islam expects girls to be married off at a very young age, and once married, avoid contraceptives so that Allah can get busy creating little believers by the ton.

**Uzza:** Allah does not want girls to burn in Hell. That is why, when they reach puberty, He wants them to get married so that when they get the urge to have sex, they will satisfy that urge as the wife of somebody and not burn in Hell for having sex outside the sanctity of marriage. Scholars like the Ayatollah Khomeini have confirmed Allah's intent by encouraging fathers to marry off their daughters before they start menstruating<sup>238</sup>.

**Archie:** Without the child's consent, obviously.

**Uzza:** Not really.

**Archie:** How does a nine-year-old girl, assuming that the Prophet had sex with Aisha after she had experienced her first period, know enough about what marriage is all about, especially early on, to give her consent to any man, especially one who is old enough to be her father, if not her grandfather?

**Uzza:** Muhammad said her silence is her consent<sup>239</sup>.

**Archie:** Just another way the Prophet made it easy for old men to have their way with children<sup>240</sup>.

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<sup>238</sup> It is better in the eyes of God if a girl started menstruating in the home of her husband instead of that of her father and that any father marrying his daughter so young will have a permanent place in heaven.

*Ayatollah Khomeini*

<sup>239</sup> **Narrated Abu Huraira:**

The Prophet said, "A matron should not be given in marriage except after consulting her; and a virgin should not be given in marriage except after her permission."

The people asked, "O Allah's Apostle! How can we know her permission?"

He said, "Her silence (indicates her permission)."

*Bukhari 62.67*

<sup>240</sup> Aisha knew from experience that this was a specious justification for having your way with a child and said so to her husband who simply repeated his claim about silence being the equivalent of consent.



**Uzza:** A child who has started menstruating is no longer a child.

**Gerry:** Uzza, that means in Islam, a child's transition from being too young to being old enough to be taken advantage of is measured in days, weeks at the most.

**Uzza:** When you put it that way.

**Bob:** How do such agreeable, if clueless kids, become ungrateful enough to deserve to end up on Allah's barbecue?

**Uzza:** The unforgiveable ungratefulness comes later, when the child-bride grows into a woman who no longer automatically acquiesces to everything her husband demands of her, in spite of all the good things he, according to Allah, has given her out of the goodness of his heart. That is why it is mostly females of all ages who will keep Hell's Fire burning<sup>241</sup>.

**Archie:** And, like I said before, most of them will be mothers.

**Bob:** It is a good thing everyone who enters Paradise will be thirty-something. If not, you would have a lot of motherless children in Paradise crawling, laying around crying, pleading for their mothers.

**Gerry:** Even worse. On Judgment Day, Hell will be positioned just below Paradise<sup>242</sup>. The believers will just have to look down to feast

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**Narrated Aisha:**

I said, "O Allah's Apostle! A virgin feels shy."

He said, "Her consent is (expressed by) her silence."

*Bukhari 62.68*

<sup>241</sup> **Narrated Ibn Abbas:**

The Prophet said: "I was shown the Hell-fire and that the majority of its dwellers were women who were ungrateful."

It was asked, "Do they disbelieve in Allah?" (or are they ungrateful to Allah?)

He replied, "They are ungrateful to their husbands and are ungrateful for the favors and the good (charitable deeds) done to them..."

*Bukhari 2.28*

<sup>242</sup> Hell will be dragged into its final position on Judgment Day by an army of angels.

The Prophet said: "Hell will be brought forth that Day by means of seventy thousand ropes, each of which will be held by seventy thousand angels."

*Sahih Muslim 40.6810*

What the angels may be dragging is a large living monster, if a revelation of Allah which also anthropomorphises Hell is any indication.

50:30 "On the Day We shall say to Hell: 'Are you full?', and it shall respond: 'Is there more to come?'"

their eyes on their tormented former friends<sup>243</sup> and relatives whom Allah has condemned to burn for an eternity<sup>244</sup>.

**Bob:** That means, these instant men will not be able to avoid seeing their mothers roasting in Hell while fornicating with one of Allah's robots, with most of the real women sent to Hell by the manufacturer.

**Gerry:** Not only that, Paradise and Hell will also be within shouting distance of each other<sup>245</sup>. The moans of their houris may not be able to drown out the terrible screams of their mothers on fire below.

**Uzza:** I think I am going to be sick.

On Judgment Day, Paradise also will be moved.

50:31 Paradise will be brought closer to the God-fearing, not a far distance.

<sup>243</sup> Milling around Paradise, one denizen will approach another and ask if he is looking down.

37:50 Then, they will advance one towards the other asking each other.

37:51 One of them will say: "I had a comrade;

37:52 "Who used to say: 'Are you then one of the confirmed believers?'

37:53 "Will we, once we are dead and have become dust and bones, be really judged?"

37:54 He said (to his companion): "Are you looking down?"

37:55 He looked and saw him in the centre of Hell.

37:56 He said: "By Allah, you almost caused my perdition.

37:57 "But for my Lord's Grace, I would have been one of those brought forward."

<sup>244</sup> Eternity may not be forever:

11:106 As for the wretched, they shall be in the Fire; they shall have therein groaning and moaning;

11:107 Abiding therein forever, so long as the heavens and earth shall endure, except as your Lord pleases. Your Lord does indeed what He wants.

<sup>245</sup> The people of Paradise and the people of Hell will be within shouting distance of each other.

7:43 And We shall remove all rancour from their hearts; and under them rivers will flow. They will say: "Praise be to Allah Who guided us to this; we would never have been guided, had not Allah guided us. The Messengers of our Lord came with the truth." Then a voice will cry out to them: "This is indeed the Paradise which you have been made to inherit for what [good] you used to do."

7:44 And the people of Paradise will call out to the people of the Fire: "We have found what our Lord promised us to be true; so have you found what your Lord promised to be true?" They will say: "Yes." Thereupon a caller from their midst shall call out: "May Allah's curse be upon the wrongdoers;

7:45 "Who bar [others] from Allah's Way and desire it to be crooked; and they disbelieve in the Hereafter."

**Archie:** Do you want me to call your mother?

**Uzza:** That is so cruel!

**Archie:** Sometimes you have to... Ah, forget it! I'm sorry, Uzza. But, if you're going to end up in Hell anyway, why do you and women like you, and I suspect most educated women who have been tasked by an ungrateful asscapade into raising arrogant sons and submissive daughters, put up, as Gerry said, with all the nonsense?

**Uzza:** You do not understand what you are asking of women and girls raised not only on a fear of what Allah will do to them when He gets His hands on them, but what men will do to them here.

**Gerry:** Maybe we should get back to Safiyyah and what happened next.

**Uzza:** I am sorry, but I cannot stop thinking about what was just said.

**Archie:** You're a woman, Uzza. You can think and talk at the same time, and do all those other things, like raising a family. It is because you're smart, beautiful, and can do whatever you want to when you put your mind to it that you scare the crap out of the insecure men around you who, like this Prophet Muhammad and his ludicrous claim that God, any god, would take pleasure in burning mothers, for whatever reason, will stop at nothing to prevent you from becoming the best you can be. Fuck me; I'm starting to sound like a bloody commercial.

**Uzza:** [*can't help but smile*]. Asscapade? Is that even a word?

**Archie:** Would you prefer...?

**Uzza:** No. No, I would not.

## **An Attempted Assassination and the Bloodcurdling Cry**

**Bob:** Muhammad was pushing sixty and he felt confident enough to satisfy a 17-year-old girl and ten other wives. Was he some kind of sexual superman<sup>246</sup>?

**Uzza:** Muhammad was a man in extraordinary physical shape for his age, considering he survived being poisoned at a celebratory dinner when one of his younger companions did not.

**Bob:** Who had the nerve to try to poison the Prophet during dinner?

**Uzza:** A woman, of course.

**Gerry:** Why a woman?

**Uzza:** I believe women are more willing to risk their lives to protect those they love, or, in this instance, avenge those they loved.

**Archie:** Nothing like a woman scorned.

**Uzza:** The attempt on Muhammad's life had nothing to do with the pettiness of a woman scorned. After his victory over the farmers of Khaybar, most of the leaders of the city and their sons were beheaded and their wives and daughters placed into captivity until they could be allocated to a deserving believer by Muhammad, as was initially done with Safiyyah.

**Archie:** I take some satisfaction in knowing that the leaders who are going to get us all killed will be the first to go.

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<sup>246</sup> Muhammad was a potent man, almost to the very end, if Anas bin Malik is to be believed.

### **Narrated Qatada:**

Anas bin Malik said, "The Prophet used to visit all his wives in a round, during the day and night and they were eleven in number (*eleven wives survived Muhammad, BP*)."

I asked Anas, "Had the Prophet the strength for it?"

Anas replied, "We used to say that the Prophet was given the strength of thirty (men)."

*Bukhari 5.268*

**Gerry:** Archie, quit interrupting.

**Uzza:** Many of the leading Jews of Mecca were tortured before being put to death in the hope they would reveal the location of non-existent buried treasure. One of those who died in agony was a fellow by the name of Kinana who is believed to have been the father of Zaynab, the woman who tried to poison Muhammad. Also beheaded that day were her husband and uncle.

**Archie:** Another Zaynab.

**Uzza:** [*ignoring him*] Zaynab, who was reputed to be the best cook of Khaybar, was asked to prepare that fateful meal after all the bloodletting. She put poison in a carcass of lamb – some say it was goat – that she prepared for Muhammad and his companions. They all started eating when one of them keeled over dead. Muhammad, who never misses a thing, told everyone to quit eating, called in the cook and asked her point blank why she had poisoned the meat.

**Bob:** The Prophet knew she had poisoned the meal?

**Archie:** For Christ's sake, Bob, the dead guy was a dead giveaway.

**Uzza:** Perhaps, but it is not what Muhammad told Zaynab when she asked him how he knew. Muhammad said a leg he held in his hand informed him, but not before he had taken a bite.

**Archie:** We are talking about a fully cooked leg of lamb?

**Bob:** Or a goat.

**Uzza:** The Koran, in its description of Judgment Day, is full of talking limbs<sup>247</sup>, which, what do you say, spill the beans. In this instance, Muhammad may have been speaking metaphorically. Perhaps the taste of the meat was off because of the poison and that is what he meant when he said the meat spoke to him.

**Gerry:** Muhammad obviously survived the attempt on his life.

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<sup>247</sup> 41:19 And when the enemies of Allah are mustered unto the Fire, they shall be held in check.

41:20 When they reach it, their hearing, sights and skins shall bear witness against them regarding what they used to do.

41:21 And they will say to their skins: "Why did you bear witness against us?" They will say: "Allah Who gave everything speech gave us speech, and He is the One Who created you the first time and unto Him you shall be returned."

**Archie:** But not the cook, and I do understand why he would have had her killed.

**Uzza:** But maybe he did not.

**Archie:** What's with the maybe?

**Uzza:** One account has Muhammad pardoning her and sending her on her way<sup>248</sup>. In another, she is strangled to death<sup>249</sup>. It is not clear if that is what Muhammad intended. A witness only revealed that Muhammad "ordered regarding her and she was killed"<sup>250</sup>.

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<sup>248</sup> **Narrated Jabir ibn Abdullah:**

Ibn Shihab said: Jabir ibn Abdullah used to say that a jewess (sic) from the inhabitants of Khaybar poisoned a roasted sheep and presented it to the Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) who took its foreleg and ate from it. A group of his companions also ate with him.

The Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) then said: Take your hands away (from the food).

The Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) then sent someone to the jewess (sic) and he called her. He said to her: Have you poisoned this sheep?

The jewess replied: Who has informed you?

He said: This foreleg which I have in my hand has informed me.

She said: Yes.

He said: What did you intend by it?

She said: I thought if you were a prophet, it would not harm you; if you were not a prophet, we should rid ourselves of him (i.e. the Prophet).

The Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) then forgave her, and did not punish her. But some of his companions who ate it, died.

The Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) had himself cupped on his shoulder on account of that which he had eaten from the sheep. Abu Hind cupped him with the horn and knife...

*Abu Dawud 39.4495*

<sup>249</sup> **Narrated Ali ibn AbuTalib:**

A jewess used to abuse the Prophet (peace be upon him) and disparage him. A man strangled her till she died. The Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) declared that no recompense was payable for her blood.

*Abu Dawud 38.4349*

<sup>250</sup> **Narrated Abu Salamah:**

A jewess presented a roasted sheep to the Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) at Khaybar. He then mentioned the rest of the tradition like that of Jabir (No. 4495).

He said: Then Bashir ibn al-Bara' ibn Ma'rur al-Ansari died.

He sent someone to call on the jewess, and said to her (when she came): What motivated you to do the work you have done?

**Archie:** It seems clear to me that it is what the Prophet intended, that she be killed.

**Uzza:** When informed of the murder of the cook, Muhammad said that her killer would not be rewarded for what he did. This indicates to me that he did not intend for her to be killed for the attempt on his life and the murder of at least one companion.

**Gerry:** Why not give him the benefit of the doubt?

**Uzza:** Thank you.

**Bob:** Celebration's over. It's onto Mecca, right?

**Uzza:** Not just yet. Mecca's morning would have to wait until Muhammad concluded a few more alliances and an opportunity arose to break the Treaty of Hudaibiyah, which the Koran gave him the right to do if he suspected treachery<sup>251</sup>.

**Bob:** What do you mean by "Mecca's morning"?

**Uzza:** The believers usually attacked in the morning following the Fajr prayer, the dawn prayer<sup>252</sup>. The signal for the believers to swarm the enemy's defenses was usually Muhammad shouting a warning, like at Khaybar, intended to send shivers down the spines of defenders: "Allahu Akbar! Khaybar is ruined, for whenever we approach a nation then it will be a miserable morning for those who have been warned."<sup>253</sup> And a miserable morning it was.

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He then mentioned the rest of the tradition similar to the one mentioned by Jabir (No. 4495).

The Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) then ordered regarding her and she was killed. But he (Abu Salamah) did not mention the matter of cupping.

*Abu Dawud 39.4496*

<sup>251</sup> 8:58 And should you fear treachery from any people, throw back their treaty to them in like manner. Allah does not like the treacherous.

<sup>252</sup> **Narrated Humaid:**

Anas bin Malik said, "Whenever the Prophet went out with us to fight (in Allah's cause) against any nation, he never allowed us to attack till morning and he would wait and see: if he heard Adhan (the call to prayer) he would postpone the attack and if he did not hear Adhan he would attack them ..."

*Bukhari 11.584*

<sup>253</sup> **Narrated Anas bin Malik:**

Allah's Apostle reached Khaibar in the early morning and the people of Khaibar came out with their spades, and when they saw the Prophet they said, "Muhammad and his army!" and returned hurriedly to take refuge in the fort.

**Bob:** Is that why suicide bombers shout out Allahu Akbar; to warn those around them that they are about to commit a holy massacre?

**Uzza:** When Muhammad said it, it was to instill fear in his enemy before a battle. But, in the case of the suicide bomber, I suspect it is more to endear themselves to Allah one last time before they meet Him in person to claim their reward.

**Archie:** There sure is a lot of sucking up to Allah these days.

**Uzza:** Unlike at Khaybar.

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The Prophet raised his hands and said, "Allah is Greater! Khaibar is ruined! If we approach a nation, then miserable is the morning of those who are warned."

*Bukhari 56.840*



## Mecca Cowed and Deceived

**Uzza:** On January 630, less than two years into a ten-year non-aggression pact, Muhammad, at the head of an army numbering at least ten thousand, marches on Mecca. There is no one to hinder the march of the believers as between them and the holy city are tribes that have converted to Islam or are allies of the Muslims, Khaybar having convinced many, the Bedouins in particular, that in Muhammad they have a winner who will deliver on his promise of wealth and women for fighting under his banner in Allah's Cause.

**Bob:** So much for treaties with Muslims?

**Archie:** In a bar fight, if you don't finish off the other guy when he is down, you're a dead man. Allah understood this when He said not to ask for peace when you have the upper hand; finish them off.

**Gerry:** But Uzza told us that He also said you should not break a treaty.

**Uzza:** Unless you fear treachery, and Muhammad, from what we have been told, was convinced the Meccans had been supplying arms to the Banu Bakr, a tribe allied with the Meccans that had been fighting a tribe allied with the Muslims, the Banu Khuzah.

**Archie:** In everything this Allah says, paranoia seems to run deep, as the man said<sup>254</sup>. From beating your wife to beating the other guy, it's all about what's on your mind?

**Bob:** Not so much what's on your mind, but what you think is on the other person's mind.

**Archie:** That's paranoia, d'oh!

**Gerry:** Uzza, what were the Meccans thinking? They had to be aware of the precarious position they were in and that the worst thing they could do was give the Prophet a reason to attack?

**Archie:** Give it up, Gerry, it was all a pretense.

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<sup>254</sup> "Paranoia strikes deep" from *What It's Worth*, Buffalo Springfield, 1966. Lyrics by Stephen Stills.

**Uzza:** What we know for sure is that the Meccans vigorously protested their innocence and offered to compensate Muhammad and the believers, to no avail, for any damage the Banu Bakr may have caused.

**Archie:** There you go...

**Bob:** I feel a Mecca morning coming on.

**Uzza:** Mecca was not Khaybar.

**Bob:** Because there were no Jews?

**Uzza:** No, that was not it. Mecca was not a community of farmers and Mecca still had powerful friends. Muhammad was no fool; he had to know a full-frontal assault like at Khaybar could prove disastrous for the believers, many of whom were leery about attacking sacred Mecca. He had to get the Meccans to surrender without a fight, and quickly.

**Bob:** And how would he do that?

**Uzza:** Muhammad was not bound by convention. He did what he needed to do to win and then made sure you were never in a position to challenge his authority again as he progressed to his next objective, always with the ultimate prize in mind. He was both brilliant in war and peace, even using a tactic of the Arabs to avoid bloodshed: the fear of death.

**Bob:** But the Muslims were not afraid of death?

**Uzza:** But their opponents were. And the believers have been using this fear to their advantage to this day.

**Bob:** You mean they sent suicide squads inside Mecca to kill men, women and children to spread terror?

**Uzza:** They did what I believe the Meccans at Medina tried to do, intimidate the believers into giving up without a fight by convincing them that they would lose if it came to that, and that they probably would lose their lives.

**Gerry:** Isn't that a form of terrorism?

**Uzza:** The Meccan form is a promise reluctantly made in the name of self-preservation. Islamic terror is proactive and coercive; it has a violent history and an agenda and it does not care how many lives or whose life it takes and in what manner – the more horrific the better – and that is what makes it so effective.

**Gerry:** But at Mecca, the Prophet used the Meccan way and it worked.

**Uzza:** He used the Arab way in making for a show of strength then offering a compromise to avoid bloodshed. But it remained Islamic-style terrorism in that it was coercive and when he had the Meccans at his mercy, his agenda would not be denied.

**Gerry:** You mean Allah's Cause?

**Archie:** Get over it, they're the same!

**Uzza:** In front of Mecca, Muhammad initially behaved like an Arab, not a believer, offering a way out to a suitably awed disinclined foe who enjoyed the life they had in the here-and-now and were in no hurry to find out what awaited them in the Hereafter.

**Archie:** Like any sensible people.

**Uzza:** What also worked in Muhammad's favour was that the hapless Meccan leader at the Battle of the Trench still held sway. With nothing to stop him but the determination of free men to remain free, Muhammad parked his army, when he arrived at nightfall, just outside the city. Countless campfires were lit to confuse the enemy as to the size of his army.

**Bob:** Isn't that what they always do?

**Uzza:** With everything in order, he invited the hapless Abu Sufyan for a visit. During his time among the believers, Muhammad made sure he was constantly surrounded by thousands of heavily armed holy warriors, some on parade, other executing mock attacks in the shimmering firelight making them even more menacing, spontaneously stopping whatever they were doing to shout that blood-curdling cry, Allahu Akbar, announcing an imminent slaughter in Allah's Cause, as it does today.

**Gerry:** Impressive.

**Uzza:** With a suitably cowered Abu Sufyan, Muhammad offered to spare the lives of all Meccans who laid down their arms and stayed in their homes or sought refuge in the Ka'ba while the believers occupied the city. Except for Sufyan's wife, who remained defiant, the Meccan surrendered en masse and agreed to become believers, but not before

obtaining a concession from Muhammad that they could continue worshipping the goddesses al-Lat, al-Uzza and Manat<sup>255</sup>.

**Gerry:** And he agreed to this concession?

**Uzza:** Yes, after a quick consultation with Allah.

**Archie:** Am I missing something here? Muslims don't worship women.

**Uzza:** No, they do not. The next morning Muhammad said it was all the devil's doing; that the devil had intruded on his conversation with Allah and that in the morning God had set him straight<sup>256</sup>. Allah was particularly incensed that the Meccans would assign to Him female offspring<sup>257</sup>.

**Archie:** I give up. Muslims will believe anything.

**Uzza:** What are referred to as *The Satanic Verses*<sup>258</sup>, revelations that confirmed the existence of female goddesses who were entitled to be worshipped, were stricken from the Koran.

**Bob:** But that was a condition for the Meccans to become Muslims. Nobody objected?

**Uzza:** What could they do? The believers were in control of their city and their weapons had been confiscated.

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<sup>255</sup> The Prophet's tribe, the Quraysh, used to chant, as they circumambulated the Ka'ba, "Al-Lat, and al-Uzza and Manat, the third, the other; indeed these are exalted gharaniq (cranes); let us hope for their intercession."

*F. E. Peters, The Hajj, p 3-41*

<sup>256</sup> 22:52 We have not sent a Messenger or Prophet before you but when he recited the Devil would intrude into his recitation. Yet Allah annuls what the Devil had cast. Then Allah establishes His Revelations. Allah is All-Knowing and Wise.

<sup>257</sup> 53:19 Have you, then, seen al-Lat and al-'Uzza?

53:20 And Manat, the third one, the other?

53:21 Do you have the male and He has the female?

53:22 That indeed is an unjust division.

53:23 These are mere names you and your fathers have named, for which Allah did not send down any authority. They only follow conjecture and what the souls desire; yet Guidance has come to them from their Lord.

53:24 Or will man have whatever he wishes?

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16:57 And they ascribe to Allah daughters [glory be to Him!], but to themselves what they desire (sons).

<sup>258</sup> These are the exalted cranes (al-Lat, al-Uzza, and Manat)

Whose intercession [with Allah] is to be hoped for.

## **MAD for Mecca**

**Gerry:** If Islamic terrorism was a factor at Khaybar and now at Mecca, wouldn't that make the Prophet the first terrorist in Allah's Cause?

**Archie:** And the most successful of all the S.O.B.s who came after. The Meccans had the right idea but lacked the ruthlessness of the Prophet. What if we were more like him and adopted Islamic-style terrorism to stop the Islamist takeover?

**Uzza:** Your side is badly outnumbered by those who have a death wish. A prerequisite for a successful terrorism campaign is fanatics willing to devotedly step up and kill themselves.

**Archie:** Then how about the Arab tactic of a show of strength and a threat?

**Uzza:** And the threat would be...?

**Archie:** To nuke Mecca.

**Gerry:** Are you out of your mind?

**Uzza:** A threat like that would only work if you had demonstrated via prior pitiless acts of premeditated mass murder that not only are you capable of doing such a thing but are also ruthless enough to do so.

**Archie:** Fine, first we nuke Medina then threaten to do the same to Mecca if the believers don't back off.

**Gerry:** That's crazy.

**Archie:** It was a crazy solution that prevented the downfall of capitalism. Maybe we need something like MAD again if Western civilization is to survive and not go the way of the Arab civilization.

## Ten Murders in One Night and When Charity was Extortion

**Bob:** Did the Prophet at least keep his promise not to kill anybody?

**Uzza:** No. You did not mock Muhammad if you had no protectors and you valued your life. Remember Badr. And you did not leave Islam for the same reason. Those ordered to be killed on sight had done one or the other or both.

**Gerry:** Who were these doomed individuals?

**Uzza:** One was a fellow by the name of Khatal<sup>259</sup>. He had once been Muhammad's collector of God's fee for purifying your property, the Zakat<sup>260</sup>, the obligatory charity, but later abandoned Islam and returned to Mecca. He was one of six men and four women put to death on Muhammad's orders.

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<sup>259</sup> **Narrated Anas bin Malik:**

Allah's Apostle entered Mecca in the year of its Conquest wearing an Arabian helmet on his head and when the Prophet took it off, a person came and said, "Ibn Khatal is holding the covering of the Ka'ba (taking refuge in the Ka'ba)."

The Prophet said, "Kill him."

*Bukhari 29.72*

<sup>260</sup> The Zakat is God's fee for purifying your property, and the best property you can hoard are virtuous women.

**Narrated Abdullah Ibn Abbas:**

When this verse was revealed: "[9:34 O believers, many of the rabbis and monks devour the property of the people unjustly and bar others from the Path of Allah.] And those who hoard gold and silver [and do not spend them in Allah's Path, announce to them a very painful punishment.]" The Muslims were grieved about it.

Umar said: I shall dispel your care. He, therefore, went and said: Prophet of Allah, your Companions were grieved by this verse.

The Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) said: Allah has made zakat obligatory simply to purify your remaining property, and He made inheritances obligatory that they might come to those who survive you.

Umar then said: Allah is most great.

He (the Prophet) then said to him: Let me inform you about the best a man hoards; it is a virtuous woman who pleases him when he looks at her, obeys him when he gives her a command, and guards his interests when he is away.

*Abu Dawud 9.1660*

**Gerry:** Obligatory charity! How can charity be obligatory? Isn't charity, by definition, voluntary?

**Uzza:** In your world, perhaps.

**Archie:** Yeah, not in your bizarro world where logic is illogical, wrong is right, good is bad.

**Uzza:** Bizarro world? I do not understand.

**Gerry:** Bizarro was Superman's opposite. He lived on a "bizarro world" where up was down, left was right, go meant stop, goodbye meant hello... Bizarro is a term often used to describe a person or thing, or perhaps a god, who uses a twisted form of logic.

**Uzza:** That is not the world people like me and like my father before me have embraced.

**Archie:** Sorry, I didn't mean you personally.

**Bob:** Who decided how much of this Zakat you paid?

**Uzza:** Muhammad. He even wrote a letter before he died for people in the newly conquered territories detailing how much Zakat was owed on livestock such as cattle and goats<sup>261</sup>. You even paid Zakat on goods you intended to trade<sup>262</sup>.

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<sup>261</sup> **Narrated Abdullah ibn Umar:**

The Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) wrote a letter about sadaqah (zakat) but he died before he could send it to his governors. He had kept it with his sword. So Abu Bakr acted upon it till he died, and then Umar acted upon it till he died. It contained: "For five camels one goat is to be given; for ten camels two goats are to be given; for fifteen camels three goats are to be given; for twenty camels four goats are to be given; for twenty-five to thirty-five camels a she-camel in her second year is to be given.

If the number exceeds by one up to seventy camels, a she-camel in her fourth year is to be given; if they exceed by one up to seventy-five camels, a she-camel in her fifth year is to be given; if they exceed by one up to ninety camels, two she-camels in their third year are to be given; if they exceed by one up to one hundred and twenty, two she-camels in their fourth year are to be given. If the camels are more than this, a she-camel in her fourth year is to be given for every fifty camels, and a she-camel in her third year is to be given for every forty camels.

For forty to one hundred and twenty goats one goat is to be given; if they exceed by one up to two hundred, two goats are to be given. If they exceed by one up to three hundred, three goats are to be given; if the goats are more than this, one goat for every hundred goats is to be given. Nothing is payable until they reach one hundred. Those which are in one flock are not to be separated, and those which are in separate flocks are not to be brought together from fear of sadaqah (zakat).

**Gerry:** A sales tax.

**Uzza:** I guess so.

**Bob:** And who did you pay this Zakat to?

**Uzza:** To Muhammad directly<sup>263</sup> or via Zakat collectors<sup>264</sup> like the unfortunate Khatal.

Regarding that which belongs to two partners, they can make claims for restitution from each other with equity. An old goat and a defective one are not to be accepted as sadaqah (zakat)."

Az-Zuhri said: When the collector comes, the goats will be apportioned into three flocks: one containing bad, the second good, and the third moderate. The collector will take zakat from the moderate. Az-Zuhri did not mention the cows (to be apportioned in three flocks).

*Abu Dawud 9.1563*

<sup>262</sup> **Narrated Samurah ibn Jundub:**

The Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) used to order us to pay the sadaqah (zakat) on what we prepared for trade.

*Abu Dawud 9.1557*

<sup>263</sup> All Zakat collected was taken directly to Muhammad who counted it and branded what had been paid in livestock, the most common currency in which the obligatory charity was paid.

**Narrated Abu Humaid Al-Sa'idi:**

Allah's Apostle (p.b.u.h) appointed a man called Ibn Al-Lutbiya, from the tribe of Al-Asd to collect Zakat from Bani Sulaim. When he returned, (after collecting the Zakat) the Prophet checked the account with him.

*Bukhari 24.576*

**Narrated Anas:**

Bin Malik took 'Abdullah bin Abu Talha to Allah's Apostle to perform Tahnik for him. (Tahnik was a custom among the Muslims that whenever a child was born they used to take it to the Prophet who would chew a piece of date and put a part of its juice in the child's mouth).

I saw the Prophet and he had an instrument for branding in his hands and was branding the camels of zakat.

*Bukhari 24.578*

<sup>264</sup> If Muhammad's decrees got the respect reserved for revealed truths, Zakat today would still be collected the old-fashioned way today. Forget the mail, let alone electronic transfers.

**Narrated Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-As:**

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: There is to be no collecting of sadaqah (zakat) from a distance, nor must people who own property remove it far away, and their sadaqahs are to be received in their dwelling.

*Abu Dawud 9.1587*



## 209 Ten Murders in One Night...

**Archie:** What happened to you if you did not contribute to the voluntary charity?

**Uzza:** You could expect a visit from a deputation of holy warriors who would make you an offer you could not refuse<sup>265</sup>.

**Archie:** That's extortion!

**Uzza:** If you say so, but Islamists would not agree.

**Gerry:** Extortion is "obtaining something through force or threats." Archie has a point.

**Uzza:** A voluntary charitable contribution demanded by God and enforced by those who believe in him cannot be extortion.

**Archie:** Did you just say voluntary? I thought you said this Zakat was mandatory?

**Uzza:** Nowhere in the Koran does Allah make charity mandatory. It was Muhammad's idea and may explain why, after his death, some believers thought they could avoid paying the Zakat. But they thought wrong<sup>266</sup>.

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<sup>265</sup> When the tribe of the Bani al-Mustaliq embraced Islam, the Holy Prophet sent Walid bin Uqbah to collect the zakat from them. When he arrived in their territory, he became scared due to some reason and without visiting the people of the tribe returned to Madinah and complained to the Holy Prophet that they had refused to pay the zakat and had even wanted to kill him.

On hearing this the Holy Prophet became very angry and he made up his mind to dispatch a contingent to punish those people.

In the meantime the chief of the Bani al-Mustaliq, Harith bin Dirar (father of Juwairiyah, wife of the Holy Prophet), arrived at the head of a deputation, and submitted: "By God, we did not at all see Walid; therefore, there could be no question of refusing to pay the zakat and wanting to kill him ...

*Tafsir Moududi- Surah 49. Al-Hujurat, Ayaat 6 To 8*

<sup>266</sup> **Narrated Abu Huraira:**

When Allah's Apostle died and Abu Bakr became the caliph some Arabs renegade (reverted to disbelief). (Abu Bakr decided to declare war against them),

Umar, said to Abu Bakr, "How can you fight with these people although Allah's Apostle said, 'I have been ordered (by Allah) to fight the people till they say: "None has the right to be worshipped but Allah, and whoever said it then he will save his life and property from me except on trespassing the law (rights and conditions for which he will be punished justly), and his accounts will be with Allah."'

Abu Bakr said, "By Allah! I will fight those who differentiate between the prayer and the Zakat as Zakat is the compulsory right to be taken from the property (according to Allah's orders). By Allah! If they refuse to pay me even

**Archie:** I get it. Charity was not extortion until the Prophet made it so.

**Uzza:** You can believe that if you want. It does not matter. The Zakat is compulsory under the Sharia. Get used to it, for you will soon be paying it, and gladly.

**Bob:** Will we still have to pay income tax, if we pay the Zakat?

**Uzza:** Probably. The Zakat may have made the Ayatollahs into billionaires, but the Iranians still have to pay regular income tax. They do, I believe, get to deduct what the clergy extorts; I mean collects in God's name.

**Bob:** You said six men and four women were put to death on Muhammad's orders. Apart from this guy Khatal, what did these other people do that rubbed the Prophet the wrong way?

**Uzza:** About the other men, I do not know, but two of the women assassinated were singers in Khatal's household who, years earlier as young girls, had sang satirical songs about this Messenger of Allah. This may, in part, explain Muhammad's pathological aversion to women singers.

**Archie:** This guy had issues.

**Uzza:** Muhammad said a harbinger of the end of times would be women singers everywhere.

**Gerry:** So, it was not simply because they made fun of him as children that he had them killed.

**Uzza:** Muhammad equated women singing as an invitation to lust and as a distraction from worshipping Allah.

**Archie:** And we would not want that.

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a she-kid which they used to pay at the time of Allah's Apostle. I would fight with them for withholding it"

Then Umar said, "By Allah, it was nothing, but Allah opened Abu Bakr's chest towards the decision (to fight) and I came to know that his decision was right."

*Bukhari 23.483*

## Foreplay and Fallacies

**Uzza:** Women singers everywhere meant that the world was wallowing in lust, making it more likely that Allah would bring an end to all this lusting and music.

**Archie:** You said music. What's with the music?

**Uzza:** Music too is a distraction from worshipping Allah. That is why listening to music or playing a musical instrument, all of which are considered an invention of the devil, flutes in particular being the worst, is a sin.

**Archie:** I'll say it again, you have to be kidding!

**Uzza:** And it is not a trivial sin. It is 16th on the list of grave sins.

**Bob:** What are the Grave Sins?

**Uzza:** The Greater Sins, or Grave Sins, are those where the Koran, or a saying of Muhammad, explicitly state or imply that the sinner is going to Hell (appendix: The Forty Greater Sins).

**Gerry:** Why single out flutes?

**Archie:** Come on Gerry! With a prude of a prophet you know why. You just want to hear Uzza talk dirty again.

**Uzza:** [*does not give Gerry time to answer*] Muhammad was even more straight-laced than Allah, if you can believe that?

**Archie:** Sure, why not!

**Uzza:** For example, when Muhammad first arrived in Medina and discovered that date bearing palms were artificially pollinated, he was scandalized and ordered the practice stopped. He re-instituted the practice the next year after date production plummeted, but insisted it be done when he was not around.

**Bob:** Does that mean that Islam is against artificial insemination?

**Uzza:** There is consensus that it is permissible as long as she is inseminated by the sperm of her husband from sperm which was not produced during the holy month of Ramadan, as masturbation is considered a sexual act, and all sexual activity is forbidden during Islam's holiest month.

**Bob:** Then it's okay for a man to masturbate into a test tube.

**Uzza:** His sperm will ultimately end up in Allah's designated receptacle to produce the babies He demands; therefore, it is for a good cause. Another good cause is when pleasuring yourself stops you from committing a greater sin such as adultery. Only the most dogmatic schools of Islamic law, such as the Shafi school, consider masturbation haram under all circumstances because of a strict interpretation of revelations where Allah commands that a man's private parts is for sex with his wives and slave-girls exclusively<sup>267</sup> not himself.

**Archie:** Since the problem with women who can't get pregnant is usually their husband's sperm, why the charade of having her husband deliver it manually?

**Uzza:** It is not always the sperm; sometimes it is the delivery mechanism.

**Archie:** You mean the hose is too short or not enough pressure builds up to give the little buggers a running start?

**Uzza:** Or the environment the litter buggers must travel to reach their destination is too toxic, which makes it the woman's fault.

**Bob:** Why not another man's sperm?

**Uzza:** You have to ask. Part of it has to do with giving the wife ideas. If she can receive another man's sperm via a syringe, why not the old-fashioned way<sup>268</sup>, and behind her husband's back?

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<sup>267</sup> 23:1 The believers have prospered;  
 23:2 Those who are submissive in their prayers,  
 23:3 And those who turn away from idle talk,  
 23:4 And those who give the alms.  
 23:5 And those who guard their private parts,  
 23:6 Except from their wives and what their right hands possess (slave-girls).  
 [For these] they are not blameworthy.  
 23:7 Whoever seeks anything beyond that – those are the transgressors.

<sup>268</sup> The next type of artificial insemination is that a stranger's sperm is inserted into the wombs of someone else's wife. This kind of artificial insemination in the view of Islam (which has based marriage on precaution, carefulness, accuracy and piety) is absolutely illegal and the same is view of the great jurists of Islam and from some traditions regarding marriage we can know that it is prohibited.

In addition to this from the ethical, social and psychological points of view this is absolutely illegal and prohibited. And it has three main defects as described below:

**Gerry:** Women get no credit for decency and self-control, do they?

**Uzza:** No.

**Bob:** I guess I don't have to ask about flutes?

**Uzza:** Muhammad considered flutes phallic symbols. He warned the believers about the seductive power of musical instruments that resembled a man's penis into which you blew and used your fingers to coax out a tune.

**Bob:** That brings up an interesting question.

**Archie:** I'll bet!

**Bob:** Can Muslim girls do that, blow it or play with it until he comes?

**Uzza:** When it comes to a girl putting a man's penis in her mouth with the purpose of pleasuring her lover, scholars are all over the place<sup>269</sup>.

**Bob:** What other purpose is there?

**Uzza:** There is more of a consensus around a man performing fellatio<sup>270</sup>, but still many disagree. The main objection to both cunnilingus and fellatio is that lips and tongues are used to recite the Koran and touching another person's private parts renders them unclean for that purpose.

**Archie:** That is why God invented mouthwash, I am sure.

**Uzza:** You are making fun of me?

**Archie:** No, not you.

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1. From the ethical point of view it encourages promiscuity in women and slowly it attracts her to illegal liaisons. She tends to think that what difference does it make because the sperm of a stranger is inserted into her womb or this is carried out through illegal intercourse.

After this procedure (even if this had the husband's sanction) this woman most of the time attempts illegal liaisons. Because in doing thus she has no fear from the husband. And if she becomes pregnant she can easily transfer the responsibility to artificial insemination which has been carried out with the permission of the husband.

Islam.org - Question 72: Islamic View on Artificial Insemination

<sup>269</sup> "If a man inserts his penis in his wife's mouth, it is said that it is disliked (makruh), and others said that it is not disliked." (al-Fatawa al-Hindiyya, 5/372)

<sup>270</sup> Imam Musa al-Kazim (A.S.) was once asked, "Can a person kiss his wife's vagina?" The Imam (A.S.) said, "No problem."

*Sayyid Athar Husayn S.H. Rizvi author of Islamic Marriage Handbook*

**Uzza:** As to that other thing, as long as it is the left hand of your spouse or sex-slave that is attempting to coax a tune out of you, it is probably halal, especially if you intend to penetrate her before ejaculating so as not to deprive Allah of the opportunity to make a baby.

**Archie:** Wouldn't want to do that.

**Bob:** I guess that also means no cumming on her boobies.

**Archie:** What are you, five years old?

**Uzza:** Muhammad too liked breasts, not that way I am sure, but he enjoyed fondling them.

**Bob:** Who doesn't!

**Uzza:** He especially enjoyed playing with those of his child-bride Aisha when it was her time of the month<sup>271</sup> and he could not touch her down there, you know, because she was unclean.

**Archie:** I will bet anything Allah was a fan as well.

**Uzza:** Yes He is, but not for the sensation that comes from touching them, but for what they contain, as was Muhammad.

**Bob:** Are you saying they liked to suck on them, like babies I mean?

**Uzza:** NO! Allah, definitely not! God was well aware that a mother's milk is essential to a newborn and decreed that mothers shall wean their babies for two years<sup>272</sup>, or maybe twenty-one months.

**Archie:** Why the "maybe twenty-one months"?

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<sup>271</sup> **Narrated Aisha:**

The Prophet and I used to take a bath from a single pot while we were Junub. During the menses, he used to order me to put on an Izar (dress worn below the waist) and used to fondle me...

*Bukhari 6.298*

<sup>272</sup> 2:233 Mothers shall suckle their children for two whole years; [that is] for those who wish to complete the suckling. Those to whom the children are born (the fathers) shall maintain and clothe them kindly. No soul is charged beyond its capacity. No mother should suffer on account of her child and he to whom a child is born should not suffer on account of his child. The same [duties (the maintenance and clothing of divorced women)] devolve upon the [father's] heir (if the heir is a child and has a guardian the latter would be charged with those duties). But they commit no offence if by mutual agreement and following consultation they choose to wean the child. You also commit no offence if you engage wet-nurses, provided that you give them what you promised to give kindly. Fear Allah and know that Allah has knowledge of what you do.

**Uzza:** Because, in another revealed truth Allah decreed that the time from gestation to when the child is weened is thirty months<sup>273</sup>.

**Bob:** So?

**Gerry:** Do the math: if a baby must be suckled for 24 months that leaves only a gestation period of six months.

**Bob:** What is gestation again?

**Uzza:** The time from when a sperm enters the egg and a human being emerges fully form.

**Bob:** Everybody knows that is nine months, more or less.

**Archie:** Everybody except Allah, or should I say Muhammad.

**Uzza:** Probably was a mistake, a typographical error, I am sure.

**Archie:** A typo, my ass. From what you have told us about Allah's understanding of where babies come from, it is obvious that whoever came up with a gestation period of six months for human being is basing the start of a pregnancy on the appearance of a baby bump and knows nothing of what has taken place before that.

**Uzza:** You would say that. It is not that I disagree with you, but I cannot agree with you.

**Archie:** Believe it or not, Uzza, I understand and I apologise for the "typo my ass" remark; you didn't deserve that.

**Uzza:** Thank you, Archie. And I will have another glass of wine with that apology.

**Archie:** [*pours her another glass of wine which she downs in one gulp*]

**Uzza:** WOW, I always wanted to do that. May I have another, Archie, my Mr. Bartender?

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<sup>273</sup> If the weaning period is included in the suckling period (24 months) then Allah, in the following verse where He decrees that the gestation and weaning period combined total thirty months, has underestimated the gestation period of the human fetus by three months (30 - 24 = 6 months gestation time).

46:15 We have commanded man to be kind to his parents; his mother bore him painfully and delivered him painfully, his gestation and weaning totalling thirty months. When he is fully grown and turns forty, he will say: "Lord, inspire me to be thankful for the favour, with which You have favoured me and favoured my parents; and to do a righteous deed, well-pleasing to You. Grant me righteousness in my progeny; I have truly repented to You and one of those who submit.

**Archie:** Only if you promise to sip it.

**Uzza:** I promise, but not little sips. I am a big girl and big girls take big sips.

**Archie:** Uzza, I think you're getting drunk. Be careful.

**Uzza:** Be careful, what did you just say [*leans forward, winks at Gerry and slaps her behind*], my ass. Now, does anyone want to know what Muhammad thought of breast milk?

**Bob:** I do.

**Archie:** Why not.

**Uzza:** What about you, Gerry [*touching his hand*]?

**Gerry:** Archie, why don't you get Uzza a cup of coffee?

**Uzza:** Maybe later, not now. Do not spoil it, please, Gerry. I have never felt this way before, and it is not just the wine.

**Archie:** And what way would that be?

**Uzza:** Free. So free and...

**Gerry:** Okay, Uzza, tell your story about Muhammad, then I'm taking you home.

**Uzza:** [*frustrated and babbling*] I told you before, you cannot! I could suckle you if my breasts were that way and that might make it alright; but you are not a believer therefore it probably would not work, and even if it did, we could not get together in that beautiful way you talked about before because that would be incest.

**Archie:** What the fuck are you talking about?

**Bob:** [*looking at Uzza*] What he just said.

**Uzza:** For Muhammad, breasts were not only a utilitarian attribute of females and fun to play with<sup>274</sup> but what they contained had almost magical properties. He said that a woman who suckled an adult male who was not a close relation made marriage to her not only impossible for him but undesirable. He became the equivalent of a brother and

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<sup>274</sup> **Narrated Aisha:**

The Prophet and I used to take a bath from a single pot while we were Junub. During the menses, he used to order me to put on an Izar (dress worn below the waist) and used to fondle me. While in Itikaf, he used to bring his head near me and I would wash it while I used to be in my periods (menses).

*Bukhari 6.298*



therefore could spend time alone with her<sup>275</sup>. This is also what happens to unrelated boys and girls who are suckled by the same nursemaid: they became the equivalent of brothers and sisters. If, later in life, they marry and discover this was the case they must get divorced immediately, Muhammad said<sup>276</sup>.

**Archie:** Too bad the Prophet did not make marrying your cousin like marrying your sister, for both increase the risk of giving birth to cripples and morons.

**Uzza:** Mentally and physical handicapped children, yes. Even Saudi Arabia has acknowledged that this is a problem<sup>277</sup> in spite of Allah, not Muhammad, saying it was okay<sup>278</sup>.

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<sup>275</sup> Aisha (Allah be pleased with her) reported that Salim, the freed slave of Abu Hadhaifa, lived with him and his family in their house.

She (i. e. the daughter of Suhail came to Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him) and said: Salim has attained (puberty) as men attain, and he understands what they understand, and he enters our house freely, I, however, perceive that something (rankles) in the heart of Abu Hudhaifa, whereupon Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him) said to her: Suckle him and you would become unlawful for him, and (the rankling) which Abu Hudhaifa feels in his heart will disappear.

She returned and said: So I suckled him, and what (was there) in the heart of Abu Hudhaifa disappeared.

*Sahih Muslim 8.3425*

<sup>276</sup> **Narrated Abdullah bin Abu Mulaika from 'Uqba bin Al-Harith:**

Uqba married the daughter of Abu Ihab bin Aziz, and then a woman came and said, "I suckled Uqba and his wife."

Uqba said to her, "I do not know that you have suckled me, and you did not inform me." He then sent someone to the house of Abu Ihab to enquire about that but they did not know that she had suckled their daughter.

Then Uqba went to the Prophet in Medina and asked him about it.

The Prophet said to him, "How (can you keep your wife) after it has been said (that both of you were suckled by the same woman)?"

So, he divorced her and she was married to another (husband).

*Bukhari 48.808*

<sup>277</sup> The knowledge of the risk of reduced mental acuity and increased physical abnormalities due to inbreeding has not stopped marriages between close relations in traditional Muslim societies such as Saudi Arabia.

"In some parts of Saudi Arabia, particularly in the south... the rate of marriage among blood relatives ranges from 55 to 70 percent... according to the Saudi government. Widespread inbreeding in Saudi Arabia has produced several genetic disorders Saudi public health officials said..."

*New York Times, Saudi Arabia Awakes to the Perils of Inbreeding, May 1, 2003*

**Bob:** Can we get back to sucking boobs for a minute. What if I'm already married and I want to try what the baby's having? Does that mean we need to get a divorce, or are married couples immune to this thing that breastmilk does to strangers who would suck my wife's boobies?

**Uzza:** I do not know.

**Archie:** And I thought it could not get any weirder...

**Bob:** And sexier [*wiping his brow*].

**Gerry:** [*doing the same*] I think it's time to change the subject, again.

**Uzza:** What were we talking about before things got interesting? Ah yes, Mecca and the Zakat. See, I am not drunk.

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<sup>278</sup> 4:23 Unlawful to you are your mothers, your daughters, your sisters, your paternal and maternal aunts, your brother's daughters and sister's daughters, your foster-mothers who gave you suck, your foster-sisters, your wives' mothers, your step-daughters who are in your custody, born to your wives whom you have lain with. But if you have not lain with them then, then you are not at fault. [It is also not lawful to marry] the wives of your sons who are of your loins, or to take in two sisters together, unless this has already happened. Allah is truly All-Forgiving and Merciful!

4:24 Or married women except those your right hands possess (slave-girls). This is Allah's decree for you. Beyond these it is lawful for you to seek, by means of your wealth, any women to marry and not to debauch...

## **A Woman Who Slept Around Confronts the Conqueror**

**Bob:** Was collecting the Zakat the first thing the Prophet did after the believers took over Mecca?

**Uzza:** No. The first thing Muhammad did was to take away a Meccan woman's right to choose.

**Archie:** The man had his priorities.

**Uzza:** At a special ceremony, he had the women of Mecca pay him homage and promise, among other things, not to commit adultery.

**Gerry:** Why bring up adultery at this time?

**Uzza:** The women of Mecca slept around. That was not a secret, and Hind was no exception.

**Bob:** And their husbands were okay with this? They did not have them stoned to death?

**Uzza:** They may not have always approved, but most of the pre-Islamic Arabs, especially the fun-loving, tolerant people of Mecca, were not barbarians.

**Archie:** Who is this Hind person?

**Uzza:** Sorry, she was the wife of Abu Sufyan. She was the only woman among those assembled with the men of Mecca to hear their conqueror deliver his instructions to leave her face and hair uncovered. When Muhammad demanded the women of Mecca swear to stop "fornicating" with men other than their husbands, she rose to ask if it was possible for a free woman to commit adultery.

**Bob:** What did she mean by that?

**Uzza:** Like the free married men of Mecca who slept with other women, she may have felt that a free woman was entitled to do the same; it was her choice and many of the fair-minded men of Mecca, before Islam, seemed to agree. How I love that woman.

**Bob:** Because you like to sleep around?

**Uzza:** NO, and if I did, it is no one's business but my own. No, it is because she defended women's rights when they were threatened, unlike the women of today who see covering their features as empowering them, when it is about empowering men who, like Muhammad, would tell them what to wear, what to do and with whom they can do it with. Sometimes I hate my sex.

**Archie:** You and the Prophet.

## **A Whore's Understanding**

**Uzza:** Gerry, do you want to come to an understanding?

**Gerry:** What do you mean?

**Uzza:** Oh, for Allah's sake! Do you want to have sex?

**Gerry:** You mean right here, right now? Can I buy you dinner first?

**Uzza:** It is now or never. A distant cousin has gotten in touch with my parents and made them a very attractive offer.

**Gerry:** And they accepted?

**Uzza:** Of course not! But they told me about it, and I said that, in spite of the age difference, I was okay with it. They need the money and after all they have done for me, it is the least I can do for them.

**Gerry:** You're a good girl, Uzza. In fact, you might say, a very good Muslim girl.

**Uzza:** I am a good Muslim girl.

**Archie:** Even if you came here to have sex?

**Uzza:** I did not come here with sex on my mind, except perhaps with the stranger I have agreed to marry who will soon have his way with me and it scares me. I came here to think about that, about how my life is about to change, unsure about everything. Then you got me talking about my religion, and I stayed even after you mocked it<sup>279</sup> – not you Gerry – because some of what was said I know to be true, and confronting it turned out to be a liberating experience.

**Archie:** That and the wine.

**Uzza:** That and remembering Hind and the free-spirited women of Mecca before Muhammad, and what you said, Gerry, about sex being an understanding between two people who respect each other, and that it is this understanding that makes it a beautiful thing. I did not come

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<sup>279</sup> 4:140 He has revealed to you in the Book that, should you hear the Revelations of Allah being denied or mocked, you should not sit with them until they engage in some other discussion. Otherwise, you are like them. Allah shall assemble all the hypocrites and the unbelievers in Hell;

here expecting to have sex, but I do believe in serendipity. So, Gerry, can we come to an understanding?

**Gerry:** But you already have an understanding?

**Uzza:** It is a whore's understanding<sup>280</sup>! I have agreed to have sex for money. That we will be doing it in a marriage setting makes no difference<sup>281</sup> except to our two peas in a pod who expect me to bend

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<sup>280</sup> Those who force their slave-girls into prostituting themselves for their benefit will find Allah "Forgiving, Merciful," unless it is the slave-girls He intends to forgive.

24:33 Let those who do not find the means to marry be abstinent, till Allah enriches them from his Bounty. Those whom your right hands own and who wish to pay for their emancipation, conclude a contract with them, if you know that there is some good in them, and give them of Allah's wealth which He gave you. Do not force your slave-girls into prostitution, if they wish to be chaste, in order to seek the fleeting goods of this life. Whoever forces them, surely Allah, after their being forced, is Forgiving, Merciful.

<sup>281</sup> Two sayings of Muhammad from two separate respected collectors which appears to explicitly confirm that marriage sanctifies prostitution is his approval of temporary marriages for the singular purpose of having and paying for sex.

**Narrated Abdullah:**

We used to participate in the holy wars carried on by the Prophet and we had no women (wives) with us. So we said (to the Prophet). "Shall we castrate ourselves?"

But the Prophet forbade us to do that and thenceforth he allowed us to marry a woman (temporarily) by giving her even a garment, and then he recited: "O you who believe! Do not make unlawful the good things which Allah has made lawful for you." Qur'an 5:87

*Bukhari 6:60:139*

Sabra Juhanni reported (*unlike Bukhari, Sahih Muslim does not use quotation marks in his hadiths*):

Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) permitted temporary marriage for us. So I and another person went out and saw a woman of Bana 'Amir, who was like a young long-necked she-camel. We presented ourselves to her (for contracting temporary marriage), whereupon she said: What dower would you give me?

I said: My cloak. And my companion also said: My cloak. And the cloak of my companion was superior to my cloak, but I was younger than he. So when she looked at the cloak of my companion she liked it, and when she cast a glance at me I looked more attractive to her.

She then said: Well, you and your cloak are sufficient for me.

I remained with her for three nights, and then Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) said: He who has any such woman with whom he had contracted temporary marriage, he should let her off.

*Sahih Muslim 8:3252*

Sunnis consider temporary marriages haram while Shiites have made it part of their legal code and accessible to just about everyone.

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over<sup>282</sup>, excuse my French, for the man Allah has put in charge of me because He tells me he is better than me and will spend money on me<sup>283</sup>.

**Gerry:** Sorry, Uzza, it doesn't feel right and this is certainly not the place.

**Uzza:** Are you saying you have never had sex in a public washroom?

**Gerry:** That is not the point.

**Uzza:** It is because you are nice man, and I know that, and that is why I am attracted to you.

**Bob:** I thought women liked the bad boys?

**Uzza:** A bad boy is what I can expect on my wedding night, but right now I want to do it with a nice man who will hold me in his arms, passionately kiss and caress me everywhere, tell me I am beautiful and that everything will be all right.

**Archie:** You expect a lot from sex in a washroom.

**Gerry:** Uzza, do you really want your first time to be in a public restroom, even if Archie would let us?

**Archie:** Just don't ask, and if you do decide to do it, use the men's can.

**Bob:** Why the men's can?

**Archie:** Men entering a washroom where a couple is having sex are less likely to make a scene.

**Uzza:** So, Gerry, what will it be?

**Gerry:** I don't know. Archie, another, please.

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<sup>282</sup> Don't do it from the back if you don't want a squinty-eyed child. In a minority interpretation of revelation 2:223, it's all about giving the husband the right to decide what position to adopt during sex so as to avoid giving birth to a child with strabismus, not about taking away a woman's right to deny her husband's demand for intimacy if she is not in the mood.

### **Narrated Jabir:**

Jews used to say: "If one has sexual intercourse with his wife from the back, then she will deliver a squint-eyed child." So this Verse was revealed: "Your wives are a tilth unto you; so go to your tilth when or how you will." (2:223)."

*Bukhari 60.51*

<sup>283</sup> 4:34 Men are in charge of women, because Allah has made some of them excel the others, and because they spend some of their wealth. Hence righteous women are obedient...

## **The Cleansing of Mecca and Avoiding a Similar Fate**

**Bob:** Uzza, is it true that when the Prophet visited the Ka'ba on the night Mecca surrendered, he destroyed the statues and relics of more than 300 religions<sup>284</sup>?

**Uzza:** He did more than that. On the walls were paintings of prophets and other revered people. He had the walls washed and ordered everyone to destroy any statues and reproductions of the living and the dead they had in their homes.

**Bob:** Why?

**Uzza:** Allah, for a god who claims to be the most omnipotent of the omnipotent, is somewhat insecure in his omnipotence, afraid that people will be distracted by the worship of inanimate things, like statuettes, from worshipping his greatness. Any art that imitates life is also considered an act of creation, an infringement of a god's prerogative, and therefore must be destroyed.

**Gerry:** I have difficulty imagining a world whose art is confined to geometric shapes combining circles, lines, squares and triangles to avoid any representation, any resemblance, no matter how remote, to the human or animal form.

**Uzza:** I cannot imagine a world without Michelangelo and his David; the Mona Lisa of Leonardo de Vinci; the Greek statues celebrating the beauty of Venus and athletes of ancient Greece; the figures carved in stone in remembrance of the Pharaohs of ancient Egypt, not to mention the lion with the human face – the Sphinx; the statues and art of the Roman empire; the paintings on the cave walls at Lascaux; and I am Muslim.

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<sup>284</sup> **Narrated Abdullah:**

When the Prophet entered Mecca on the day of the Conquest, there were 360 idols around the Ka'ba. The Prophet started striking them with a stick he had in his hand and was saying, "Truth has come and Falsehood will neither start nor will it reappear."

*Bukhari 59.583*



**Archie:** Will you knock it off, you two? We get the message.

**Uzza:** NO, YOU DON'T! Soon the entire world will resemble Mecca after Islam. With the destruction of the so-called idols and most forms of art, the suffocating restrictions placed on women and the changing of the pilgrimages from a celebration of life by all to a celebration of death by an obsessed fraternity, from one day to the next all-embracing Mecca changed from a vibrant, welcoming community to a bleak, uninviting place.

**Archie:** Except for the believers.

**Gerry:** You didn't say Muslims.

**Archie:** I am starting to understand what Uzza is getting at.

**Uzza:** The cleansing of the Ka'ba was followed by the cleansing of Arabia, bringing an end to the most enlightened civilization the Middle East has ever known.

**Bob:** Cleansing. That is a bit much isn't?

**Uzza:** No, it is not. Cleansing is intolerance in action, whether it be intolerance for another race or intolerance of people of another religion or no religion at all. Muhammad's actions at the Ka'ba and shortly later, when he issued an edict that all Arabs had to become Muslims within four months or face death or enslavement at the hands of the believers, speak for themselves.

**Bob:** But that is not like ethnic cleansing, like what was done by the NAZIs.

**Uzza:** The only difference is that the Jews could not change their race to save their lives. Your civilization is now facing its own cleansing. The funny thing is, it is your unthinking tolerance of intolerance, not unlike that of the Meccans, that has brought you to the brink of extinction.

**Gerry:** You're not saying that Western civilization should have indulged in a little cleansing of its own like the Serbs did at Srebrenica?

**Uzza:** NO! ABSOLUTELY NOT! All they had to do was not let the intolerant in.

**Bob:** You mean a Muslim ban like Trump wanted?

**Uzza:** Again, NO! All you had to do was ask a few questions of Muslim immigrants as a first step to avoiding welcoming Islamists.

**Archie:** And those questions would be?

**Uzza:** 1. In the Koran, Allah says that "Whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted from him."

*Do you agree?*

2. In the Koran, Allah confirms that he sent Muhammad with what He refers to as "the guidance and the religion of truth, that He may exalt it above every other religion."

*Do you believe that it is your duty as a believer, wherever you are, to do the same?*<sup>285</sup>

3. Prophet Muhammad said: "I have been made victorious with terror."

*Do you believe that terrorism is a legitimate weapon in Allah's Cause?*

4. In the Koran, Allah says it is okay to lie if it will further His Cause.

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<sup>285</sup> 8:72 Those who have believed and emigrated and struggled with their wealth and their lives in the Path of Allah, and those who gave refuge and support – those are friends of one another; but those who have believed, yet did not emigrate, you will not be responsible for their protection until they emigrate. Should they seek your support for religion's sake, you ought to support them, but not against a people with whom you have a compact. Allah is Fully Aware of what you do.

8:73 As to the unbelievers, they are friends of one another. If you do not do this (subdue the unbelievers), there will be great sedition and corruption in the land.

The quoted revelations were initially meant to encourage converts to Islam to emigrate out of pagan controlled areas and join Muhammad's forces at Medina. Today, based on the conclusions of respected scholars such as the following, they are considered part and parcel of Allah's plan for world domination.

I charge you with five of what Allah has charged me with; to assemble, to listen, to obey, to immigrate and to wage Jihad for the sake of Allah.

*Tirmidi*

Migration will continue until the sun rises from the West. Hijra will not be stopped until repentance is cut off, and repentance will not be cut off until the sun rises from the West (on Judgement Day).

*Dawud*

O people, immigrate, holding on to Islam, for Hijra (migration) is to continue as long as Jihad continues.

*Malik*

Those who immigrated to what Islam considers the Land of War – any jurisdiction not government by the Sharia – and died in the "Path of Allah" get the same benefits as believers who did not immigrate but died under similar circumstances.

22:58 And those who emigrated in the Path of Allah, then were killed or died, Allah shall provide them with a fair provision. Allah is surely the Best Provider.

22:59 He will admit them into a place with which they will be well-pleased. Surely, Allah is All-Knowing, Clement.

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*Would you lie to further Allah's Cause?*

A yes to any of these questions would automatically disqualify a person as an immigrant or a refugee.

**Archie:** I would only ask one question: "Yes or No! Do you swear by the Koran?" That's it. Answer yes, and you don't get in.

**Uzza:** Somewhat simplistic, but better than no questions at all.

**Bob:** What is the second step?

**Uzza:** Deport anyone whose actions betray their allegiance.

**Bob:** I'll drink to that.

**Archie:** [*raising his glass*] And to the well-meaning pussies who gave up without a fight.

**Uzza:** The Meccans were not pussies, to use your derogatory term. And you will remember, it was a pussy who tried to get the men to resist. If they had had a leader like the one who rushed to retake Mecca from the believers instead of the cowardly Sufyan, things would have been a lot different.

## Hunayn, the Ultimate Victory for God and Booty

**Bob:** Are you saying that if the Meccans had held out for any length of time, the cavalry was waiting to rush in and save their butts?

**Uzza:** I would not have put it quite that way, but yes. One reason Muhammad wanted a quick surrender was because he could not waste time or believers in battle when he knew that Mecca's friends would be riding to its rescue if it was attacked.

**Archie:** And who would those be?

**Uzza:** Warriors from four tribes allied with the Meccans. They had a brave but unfortunately inexperienced commander who made the mistake of placing the women, children and property, mostly livestock, at the rear of the advancing troop thinking this would make them fight harder, knowing what they would lose if the believers prevailed.

**Bob:** Why was it a mistake?

**Uzza:** It interfered with military maneuvers which might have saved the day when the believers were again distracted by the booty and fled under a shower of arrows from Mecca's would-be saviors<sup>286</sup>, only to return to fight after Allah assisted Muhammad, who stood his ground, by sending down His serenity and invisible fighting angels, as He did at Badr, to turn the tide<sup>287</sup>. Mecca's allies were defeated, leaving no

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<sup>286</sup> **Narrated Abu Ishaq:**

Somebody asked Al-Bar-a bin 'Azib, "Did you flee deserting Allah's Apostle during the battle of Hunain?"

Al-Bara replied, "But Allah's Apostle did not flee. The people of the Tribe of Hawazin were good archers. When we met them, we attacked them, and they fled. When the Muslims started collecting the war booty, the pagans faced us with arrows, but Allah's Apostle did not flee. No doubt, I saw him on his white mule and Abu Sufyan was holding its reins and the Prophet was saying, 'I am the Prophet in truth: I am the son of 'Abdul Muttalib.' "

*Bukhari 52.116*

<sup>287</sup> 9:25 Allah gave you victory in numerous places and on the day of Hunayn (a valley between Mecca and Ta'if) when you were pleased with your large number; but it availed you nothing and the land became too straight for you, despite its breadth, whereupon you turned back and fled.

effective opposition to Muhammad's plan to Islamize (sic) the Arabian Peninsula then take the fight to the Byzantines.

**Gerry:** And the Meccans joined in, doing to the rest of the Arabs what the Prophet had done to them?

**Uzza:** He did provide a tried-and-true incentive. The booty from what is known as the battle of Hunayn was immense, a reported six thousand captives, mostly women and children, forty thousand sheep and goats, four thousand ounces of silver and twenty-four thousand camels, of which he gave the lion's share to the Meccans.

**Gerry:** That must not have gone over too well with those who spilled blood and guts in Allah's Cause.

**Uzza:** It almost caused the believers to revolt. Islamic scriptures are clear on the concept: if you kill the enemies of Allah, you are entitled to their property. Muhammad explained to his upset warriors what is known in Islam as Mu'allafatul Qulub, using the booty, and the Zakat if necessary, to foster an appreciation of all that Islam has to offer to former enemies and would-be enemies.

**Bob:** And they bought it?

**Uzza:** Why not? After all, there was more where that came from.

**Gerry:** Some people fight for king and country, others for a sometimes obscure notion of liberty, freedom and human rights with no guarantee of an interesting sexual afterlife, or any afterlife at all. For believers, it's all for God and booty, or so it would seem.

**Uzza:** It makes me sick to my stomach when I am reminded how so many people, tens of millions of men, women and children over the centuries, were killed in cold-blood by merciless young men on the promise of sex and wealth in this world and an eternal life of debauchery in the next.

**Archie:** With no weapons of mass destruction, most died at the hands of a holy warrior brandishing a sword or a dagger. It's hard to imagine so many millions killed, one by one, that way.

**Uzza:** And it is not over. It will never be over! The killing will go on even after the last unbeliever has been robbed of his life and his wife

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9:26 Then Allah sent down His Tranquility upon His Messenger and upon the believers, and He sent down soldiers you did not see, and punished the unbelievers. That is the reward of the unbelievers.

and daughters have been taken into slavery. Another glass of wine, Archie. Please.

## More Slavers, Less Sinners

**Bob:** I know the Prophet needed the promise of slave-girls and plenty of sex to entice the young men he needed to do the killing until no one was left alive that did not say Allah is the greatest. But why would Allah not have demanded that slavery be abolished once He got everyone to kiss His ass?

**Uzza:** No, He could not do that, and touching the ground with your nose and forehead during prayer is not at all like kissing someone's ass.

**Bob:** That is not what I meant, but okay.

**Archie:** Why could he not do that, get rid of slavery? I thought Allah could do whatever He wanted, that He has the power<sup>288</sup>.

**Uzza:** Because Allah is the smartest god that has ever been imagined, which is why the other gods did not stand a chance.

**Archie:** Did you just say imagined?

**Uzza:** It is just an expression.

**Archie:** No, it isn't.

**Uzza:** Whatever.

**Bob:** There are other gods? I thought Allah said there weren't any.

**Uzza:** That is what He told Muhammad to say<sup>289</sup>.

**Bob:** What do you mean?

**Uzza:** Often, Allah in His Koran tells Muhammad, as if Muhammad was responding to a question – which may actually have been what he was doing<sup>290</sup> – to say this or that.

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<sup>288</sup> 5:40 Did you not know that to Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth? He punishes whom He wills; and Allah has power over everything.

<sup>289</sup> 6:19 Say: "What has the greatest testimony?" Say: "Allah is Witness between you and me, and He has revealed this Qur'an to me so that I may warn you and whomever it may reach. Do you indeed testify that there are gods besides Allah?" Say: "I do not testify." Say: "He is indeed One God and I am innocent of the association of idols [with Him]."

**Archie:** He actually uses the word “say.”

**Uzza:** The actual word “say” was probably added during an early revision of the Book, to portray this back and forth between Allah and Muhammad in real time, to use a modern expression.

**Bob:** That would mean that...

**Uzza:** Do not go there. It would just lead to another pointless discussion. You either believe that every word is God’s or you do not and let us leave it at that.

**Archie:** So are there other gods or not?

**Uzza:** It is all very confusing. Allah rants and rages against those who worship lesser gods and associates that He claims are not gods at all while admitting to creating them<sup>291</sup>. In one instance He has them arrayed like troops ready to take Him on<sup>292</sup>. He will even have them participate in His Judgment Day extravaganza where they will

<sup>290</sup> Muhammad’s attempt to convince his audience that Allah is the only god was not initially well-received, judging from some of Allah’s responses which He asked Muhammad to convey to an obviously rancorous assembly.

39:62 Allah is the Creator of everything and He is the Guardian of everything.

39:63 His are the keys of the heavens and the earth; and those who have disbelieved in Allah’s Signs are the losers.

39:64 Say: “Do you, then, command me to worship anyone other than Allah, O ignorant ones?”

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4:22 Say: “Call upon those you allege, apart from Allah. They do not possess the weight of a speck of dust in the heavens or on earth, and they have no partnership in either of them; nor is any of them a helper to him.”

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17:42 Say: “If there were other gods with Him, as they say, then surely they would have sought access to the Lord of the Throne.”

<sup>291</sup> 7:191 Do they associate with Allah those who can create nothing, while they, themselves, are created?

7:192 And they can neither help them nor help themselves.

7:193 And if you call them to guidance, they do not follow you. It is the same, for you, whether you call them or you remain silent.

7:194 Indeed those you call, apart from Allah, are servants like you; so call them and let them answer you, if you are truthful.

<sup>292</sup> 36:74 Yet, they have taken, apart from Allah, other gods that they might receive support.

36:75 But they cannot support them, although they are arrayed as troops for them.



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denounce those who worshipped them<sup>293</sup>. His attack on other gods and those who believe in them are so pervasive and so vicious that the number one sin in Islam is that of Shirk, associating other gods with Allah. Do that and you are dead in this world and on fire in the next.

**Archie:** Many of these other gods allowed slaves; for example, those of the Greeks and Romans. How was Allah-approved slavery different from theirs?

**Uzza:** For these other gods, slavery is an end in itself; for Allah, slavery is a means to end.

**Archie:** As a reward for those who do His dirty work.

**Uzza:** It is more than that. Much more, and part of the inescapable logic of the Koran.

**Bob:** The Koran is logical!!!

**Uzza:** Do not believe those who say that Islam is the stupidest of all the religions. Some of the things you are asked to accept on faith, I will agree, are stupid from a rational person's point of view, but they do not, by themselves, deny the logic of the Koran; logic that makes Islam a smart religion, a very, very smart religion, and slavery is at the core of that logic.

**Bob:** I'm confused.

**Archie:** This time, Bob, you're not the only one.

**Gerry:** Same here.

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<sup>293</sup> 10:28 On the Day We will muster them all together; then We will say to those who set up associates with Allah: "Stay in your places, you and your associates." Then We shall separate them, and their associates will say: "You were not worshipping us."

10:29 "Allah is a sufficient witness between us and you; for we were unaware of your worshipping us."

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16:86 And when those who associated other gods with Allah see their associates they shall say: "Our Lord, these are our associates whom we used to call upon besides you." But their associates will retort: "Surely you are liars."

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19:81 And they took, besides Allah, other gods, to be for them a source of strength.

19:82 No, they shall repudiate their worship and turn against them.

**Uzza:** That is because you have not read the Koran or, like many who have, not looked beyond the contradictions and the tall tales. To have abolished slavery would have required Allah to send down another Koran, thereby denying the logic that made those who understood so successful. Logic also dictated that it was not enough to offer an incentive to do away with unbelievers. People being what they are, they would have to be kept in line until such a time that Allah decided to bring an end to His Creation. Slavery ensured victory, but it also diminished the threat of sedition once victory is achieved and the need to take more drastic measures, not only to stop individuals from leaving Islam but entire communities as well.

**Gerry:** Allah being Allah, that would be death.

**Uzza:** That would be death, yes. Muhammad told the believers to kill any Muslim who abandons their religion<sup>294</sup>, say, for one which does not condone slavery or no religion at all. Allah, in the same murderous vein but on a much larger scale, decreed that a community who would leave Islam after embracing it should be slaughtered forthwith<sup>295</sup>.

**Bob:** Did that ever happen, that a bunch of people were murdered all together for leaving Islam?

**Uzza:** Only a short time after Muhammad's death when several tribes tried to leave Islam. Toward the end of what is known as the *War of the Apostates*, an estimated seven thousand men were surrounded, and none were spared by the believers. They were slaughtered to the last man as per Allah's directive. There is no leaving Islam, not as a group, not as an individual.

**Archie:** Bunch of murderers. To believe in Allah is to believe in cold-blooded murder and be willing to carry it out.

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<sup>294</sup> **Narrated Ikrima:**

Ali burnt some people and this news reached Ibn 'Abbas, who said, "Had I been in his place I would not have burnt them, as the Prophet said, 'Don't punish (anybody) with Allah's Punishment.'"

No doubt, I would have killed them, for the Prophet said, 'If somebody (a Muslim) discards his religion, kill him.'"

*Bukhari 52.260*

<sup>295</sup> 2:191 Kill them wherever you find them and drive them out from wherever they drove you out (from Mecca). Sedition is worse than slaughter. Do not fight them at the Sacred Mosque until they fight you at it. If they fight you there, kill them. Such is the reward of the unbelievers.

**Uzza:** Mass executions have been very much a tactic of Islam since the beginning, both in its wars of conquest and equally bloody pitiless conflicts between believers over dogma and succession. The slaughter which took place towards the end of the *War of the Apostates* was the first documented methodical massacre of more than a thousand people at one time by the believers.

**Bob:** The apostates were obviously no match for the believers.

**Uzza:** The believers' opponents were not into extermination and valued their lives and that of their adversaries, therefore Muslim casualties tended to be less. But still, at the battle of Yamama, 70 or so fanatics of the Koran, the professional reciters of the Book, were killed.

**Archie:** You would expect fanatics of the Koran to be in the thick of things. The damn book is an invitation to kill and be killed.

**Uzza:** Not always. The tradition was that whatever Allah told Gabriel to tell Muhammad to tell the believers was not to be written down but committed to memory.

**Archie:** Then and there, that's ridiculous. Who remembers everything some preacher says, even the short-winded ones, especially when they're spouting stuff you haven't heard before?

**Gerry:** No, telling people not to write anything down, that's smart. With nothing written down, the Prophet could deny anything he said from one day to the next if the message did not have the desired effect. And if he was making it up as he went along, well...

**Uzza:** Why the tradition of not writing down Allah's revelations, I do not know, but the loss of the best memorizers worried Abu Bakr, Muhammad's successor as leader of the believers. He broke with tradition and asked a scribe by the name of Zaid bin Thabit Al-Ansari to go around and ask people what they remembered about what Gabriel communicated to Muhammad from Allah and to write it down<sup>296</sup>.

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<sup>296</sup> Abu Bakr sent for me after the (heavy) casualties among the warriors (of the battle) of Yamama (where a great number of Qurra' (reciters of the Koran) were killed). Umar was present with Abu Bakr who said, "Umar has come to me and said, 'The people have suffered heavy casualties on the day of (the battle of) Yamama, and I am afraid that there will be more casualties among the Qurra' (those who know the Qur'an by heart) at other battle-fields, whereby a large part of the Qur'an may be lost, unless you collect it. And I am of the opinion that you should collect the Qur'an.'"

**Bob:** And that is how we got the first copy of the Koran?

**Uzza:** Not quite. Abu Bakr died before it was finished. His successor, Umar, perhaps not knowing what to do with it, gave it to his daughter Hafsa, who put it under what she slept on.

**Archie:** A mattress. She kept it where kids used to keep copies of dirty magazines before the internet. People are killed today for not showing the Koran the proper respect, and she slept on it, maybe even had sex on it.

**Uzza:** Maybe, but not for long. Umar's successor, when informed that Muslims in battle were reciting from different versions of the Koran, remembered the copy in Hafsa's possession and retrieved it. He then asked the ever dependable Thabit and a committee set up for the purpose to edit it and make copies<sup>297</sup>, which were then distributed to the troops and all other versions of the Book burnt.

"You are a wise young man and we do not suspect you (of telling lies or of forgetfulness): and you used to write the Divine Inspiration for Allah's Apostle. Therefore, look for the Qur'an and collect it (in one manuscript)."

By Allah, if he (Abu Bakr) had ordered me to shift one of the mountains (from its place) it would not have been harder for me than what he had ordered me concerning the collection of the Qur'an. I said to both of them, "How dare you do a thing which the Prophet has not done?"

Abu Bakr said, "By Allah, it is (really) a good thing." So I kept on arguing with him about it till Allah opened my bosom for that which He had opened the bosoms of Abu Bakr and Umar. So I started locating Quranic material and collecting it from parchments, scapula, leaf-stalks of date palms and from the memories of men (who knew it by heart).

The manuscript on which the Quran was collected, remained with Abu Bakr till Allah took him unto Him, and then with 'Umar till Allah took him unto Him, and finally it remained with Hafsa, Umar's daughter.

*Bukhari 60.201*

<sup>297</sup> **Narrated Anas bin Malik:**

Hudhaifa bin Al-Yaman came to Uthman at the time when the people of Sham and the people of Iraq were waging war to conquer Arminya and Adharbijan. Hudhaifa was afraid of their (the people of Sham and Iraq) differences in the recitation of the Qur'an, so he said to Uthman, "O chief of the Believers! Save this nation before they differ about the Book (Quran) as Jews and the Christians did before."

So Uthman sent a message to Hafsa saying, "Send us the manuscripts of the Qur'an so that we may compile the Qur'anic materials in perfect copies and return the manuscripts to you."

Hafsa sent it to Uthman. Uthman then ordered Zaid bin Thabit, Abdullah bin AzZubair, Said bin Al-As and Abdur Rahman bin Harith bin Hisham to rewrite the manuscripts in perfect copies.

**Gerry:** Pierre Burton, in one of his last books, *The Joy of Writing*, said he owed his success to his editor; that it was difficult for any author to succeed without a good editor. Did God have a good editor?

**Uzza:** Thabit's second effort remains a somewhat disjointed affair<sup>298</sup> and may not have been the final fruitless effort at bringing order to what many consider chaos, such as noted Western historians Thomas Carlyle, who damned it as "a confused, jumble, crude, endless iteration," and Edward Gibbon: "as toilsome a reading as I ever undertook; a wearisome confused jumble."

**Bob:** What is this endless iteration?

**Uzza:** Any anthology transcribed from what people remembered of the thousands of observations made by a person who died some years earlier will contain discrepancies. This difficulty for Thabit and his helpers, in deciding which recollection of an event or what was said at the time was the accurate one, may explain the duplicates, triplicates, quadruplicates and even quintuplets recollections of the same event – Carlyle's endless iteration. A decision was probably made to include even the conflicting accounts and leave it to future scholars to sort it out<sup>299</sup>.

**Archie:** Gibbon – that is the guy who wrote *The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire*, isn't it?

Uthman said to the three Quraishi men, "In case you disagree with Zaid bin Thabit on any point in the Qur'an, then write it in the dialect of Quraish, the Qur'an was revealed in their tongue."

They did so, and when they had written many copies, Uthman returned the original manuscripts to Hafsa.

Uthman sent to every Muslim province one copy of what they had copied, and ordered that all the other Qur'anic materials, whether written in fragmentary manuscripts or whole copies, be burnt.

*Bukhari 61.510*

<sup>298</sup> The finished product appears to have been put together in a haphazard manner. There is little scholarship evident in its production. There is no timeline. The only allowance given to any kind of order is the sequencing of most of the 114 chapters from longest to shortest. Because no attention seems to have been given to arranging the chapters and verses in some kind of chronological order, you often get answers to questions that have yet to be asked. And duplicates, triplicates, quadruplicates and even quintuplets abound.

<sup>299</sup> The same reasoning may have been used during the compilation of the first books of the Hebrew Bible, which has two versions of Creation: Genesis I and II. In Genesis I, God creates plants before animals and humans; in Genesis II, God creates Adam, then plants and animals and last but not perhaps not least, Eve.

**Uzza:** *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, yes. As to his and Carlyle's description of the Koran as a confused jumbled, that is not to say that Allah's revelations, on their own, are not clear and easily understood.

**Gerry:** I agree. I don't remember any significant variations in the clear and to the point revelations on slavery, which, from what I remember, are few, except for the many references to slave-girls or *what your right hands possess*.

**Uzza:** That is because Allah is truly the smartest of gods. He did not want anyone disputing what He meant when He made slavery not only a tenet of the faith, but a rule that could not be removed without bringing his religion into disrepute by making it illogical.

**Archie:** How did Allah make slavery a hard-and-fast unbreakable rule, when rules are meant to be broken?

**Uzza:** In your world, perhaps.

**Archie:** Please, Uzza, I thought we were past that. Didn't you say that in the Koran, Allah changed his mind at least 200 times?

**Uzza:** Sorry. One way Allah made slavery an unbreakable rule of Islam was by making freeing a slave part of a blood-money payment<sup>300</sup>; you have to free a slave if you have insulted your wife by comparing her to your mother's back and now wish to touch her in that special way<sup>301</sup>; part of the penance for breaking an oath is the freeing of a slave<sup>302</sup>. In

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<sup>300</sup> 4:92 It is not given to a believer to kill another believer except by mistake; and he who kills a believer by mistake should free a slave who is a believer and pay blood-money to his relatives, unless they remit it as alms. If he happens to belong to a people who are your enemies, but he is a believer, then you should free a believing slave. If he belongs to a people bound with you by a compact, then blood-money should be paid to his relatives and a believing slave should be freed. As for him who has not the means, he should fast for two consecutive months, as a penance from Allah. Allah is All-Knowing, Wise!

<sup>301</sup> 58:2 Those of you who ignore their wives saying: "You are like our mother's back", should know that they are not really their mothers. Their mothers are only those women who gave them birth, and they are certainly making a reprehensible statement and a lie. But Allah is indeed Al-Pardoning, All-Forgiving.

58:3 And those who say of their wives: "You are like our mother's back", then retract what they said, have to free a slave before touching each other. That is what you are admonished, and Allah is Fully Aware of what you do.

<sup>302</sup> 5:89 Allah will not take you to task for what is unintentional in your oaths, but will take you to task for the oaths you intentionally take. Expiation for it, is feeding ten poor people with such average food as you would feed your own families, clothing them or freeing one slave. But he who cannot find [the

## 239 More Slavers, Less Sinners

making freeing a slave the solution to a variety of transgressions, He cut down on the number of sinners, an acceptable compromise for a god for whom sinners are an obsession.

**Bob:** How does more slavery cut down on the number of sinners when slavery is a sin?

**Uzza:** In Islam it is not. And when Islam is triumphant everywhere, everywhere slavery will become the norm again for it is part of Allah's unchanging natural order of things<sup>303</sup>. A brave new world where you will think twice about committing some sins if it means losing a valuable slave.

**Bob:** I get it: more slave owners, less sinners.

**Archie:** No, three Hail Marys and back to sinning until your next confession. And let us not forget the one about losing the limb that committed the sin<sup>304</sup>. That limb will sin no more and neither will the guy killed for trying to leave the faith. It's enough to make sinners an endangered species. Allah will have succeeded where so many other gods have failed.

**Gerry:** Imagine taking what we consider a sin, making it into a virtue, then using it to combat sin. Did I get that right?

**Uzza:** Yes, sort of, and if you are going to make freeing a slave an incentive not to sin, logic dictates that you must be allowed to keep slaves in the first place.

**Bob:** Can't argue with that.

**Archie:** Sure you can. Just remove slaves as part of the equation, make slavery a sin and cut down on the number of sins against gods where no human is harmed, and, I will bet you anything, you will have a

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means] should fast three days. That is the expiation for your oaths when you have sworn (those oaths which you have not kept). Keep your oaths; that is how Allah makes clear His Revelations to you, that you may be thankful.

<sup>303</sup> 30:29 Yet, the wrongdoers have followed their fancies without knowledge. Who, then, will guide those whom Allah has led astray and who have no supporters?

30:30 So, set your face towards religion uprightly. It is the original nature according to which Allah fashioned mankind. There is no altering Allah's Creation. That is the true religion; but most men do not know.

<sup>304</sup> 5:38 As for the thieves, whether male or female, cut off their hands in punishment for what they did, as an exemplary punishment from Allah. Allah is Mighty and Wise.

greater reduction in the number of sinners than Allah's slave-driven solution.

**Gerry:** What are you going to do, Archie, rewrite the Koran?

**Archie:** If I could, I would.

**Uzza:** But you cannot, nobody can, even the so-called moderates. Inevitably they too must accept the logic of Allah, a logic that they will find so much easier to live with as the extremists make gains everywhere. An acceptance they may live to regret.

**Archie:** How's that?

**Uzza:** You think about it. Even if everyone is a believer, you will still need slaves to satisfy a blood payment obligation, for instance, or to be set free as penance. And if you cannot get them from unbelievers because they have all converted or been killed, where will you get them?

**Archie:** That is where the whole thing becomes illogical, doesn't it? Allah is not to be the smartest of them all. I knew it.

**Uzza:** You do not know anything, and I say that with all due respect, Archie. Allah said that you must believe with certainty<sup>305</sup>. Do you think it is possible for everyone to believe with certainty in even the little I have told you so far about what is in the Koran?

**Archie:** Only fools.

**Uzza:** It is these fools that still kill more Muslims than believers every year.

**Bob:** Why is that?

**Uzza:** Because these fools are still concentrated in Muslim majority countries. But that is changing and, in places, rapidly because of the number of fools we have let in. And when the fools have finished with you and the world is a glorious fascist pitiless caliphate, a super super-sized Islamic State, the true unbelievers, heretics, reformers and hypocrites will be the slavers' salvation. Allah's logic will not be denied.

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<sup>305</sup> 45:20 This (Qur'an) is an illumination for mankind, a guidance and mercy unto a people who believe with certainty.

5:50 Now, is it the judgement of the "period of ignorance" that they desire? Yet who is a better judge than Allah for a people who believe with certainty?



# What Do Hypocrites Have to Do with It?

**Archie:** What the hell are true unbelievers?

**Uzza:** Who are true unbelievers? They are those who favour what Allah calls “a middle course”; who do not believe everything that He revealed to Muhammad and the others mentioned in the Koran<sup>306</sup>.

**Archie:** In other words, heretics.

**Uzza:** A mild form of heresy. But Allah is not, to paraphrase the second Bush president, a nuanced type of god; it is “a demeaning punishment” for all.

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<sup>306</sup> 4:150 Those who disbelieve in Allah and His Messengers and want to make a distinction between Allah and His Messengers, and say: “We believe in some and disbelieve in the others”, wanting to take a middle course in between,

4:151 Those are the true unbelievers, and we have prepared for the unbelievers a demeaning punishment.

4:152 But those who believe in Allah and His Messengers and do not discriminate between any of them those He will grant them their rewards. Allah is All-Forgiving, Merciful!

3:84 Say: “We believe in Allah and what has been revealed to us and has been revealed to Abraham, Isma’il, Isaac, Jacob and the Tribes; and in what Moses, Jesus and the Prophets have received from the Lord. We do not discriminate between any of them, and to Him we Submit.”

When Allah demands you do not differentiate between His Messengers, He is referring to what He said about them in the Koran not what was said about them in the Bible. In that context the following admonition from His Messenger is not a contradiction of revelations 4:152 and 3:84.

## **Narrated Abu Huraira:**

The people of the Scripture used to read the Torah in Hebrew and explain it to the Muslims in Arabic. Then Allah's Apostle said, "Do not believe the people of the Scripture, and do not disbelieve them, but say, 'We believe in Allah and whatever has been revealed...' (3.84)

*Bukhari 93.632*

Revealed truths tend to reflect the values and traditions of those who first received them and the Koran is no different.

12:2 We have revealed it as an Arabic Qur'an, that perchance you may understand.

**Archie:** I can understand heretics becoming a target – every religion has them, and Islam by the ton when you consider that the Sunni and Shias are heretics to one another – but reformers? I thought Islam could not be reformed.

**Uzza:** It cannot. You would have to begin with the abolition of the abomination that is slavery, which you cannot because Islam, as a religion for good or evil, would fall apart.

**Archie:** And that would be a bad thing?

**Uzza:** Have you ever wondered why aid workers, like the nurses vaccinating children against polio in Pakistan, are often the target of Islamists?

**Archie:** Are you asking me?

**Uzza:** You, Bob, Gerry, Ted and Alice; it does not matter?

**Gerry:** I think we all have at one time or another. What is that all about?

**Uzza:** Allah warned that the true unbelievers do good deeds with the intent of corrupting you; that these do-gooders are actually reformers and reformers are evildoers<sup>307</sup>.

**Archie:** And I thought “the road to hell is paved with good intentions” was just an expression.

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<sup>307</sup> Believers who wish to reform their religion face an uphill battle and risk death at the hands of fellow believers for questioning orthodoxy.

2:8 There are some who say: “We believe in Allah and the Last Day;” but they are not real believers.

2:9 They seek to deceive Allah and the believers, but deceive none other than themselves, though they are not aware of that.

2:10 In their hearts is a sickness; so Allah has increased their sickness. A painful punishment awaits them because of their lying.

2:11 And when they are told: “Do not sow mischief in the land”, they say: “We are only doing good.”

2:12 It is they who make mischief, but they are unaware of that.

In case the meaning of Allah’s words is not clear in Fakhry’s interpretation, a translation by Sheikh Muhammad Sarwar of verses 2:11 and 2:12.

2:11 When they are told not to commit corruption in the land, they reply, “We are only reformers.”

2:12 They, certainly, are corrupt but do not realize it.

Rashad Khalifa’s translation is even more to the point: reformers are evildoers!

2:12 In fact, they are evildoers, but they do not perceive.

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**Gerry:** From what I remember from reading the Koran, those accused of corrupting the land are “to be killed, crucified, have their hands and feet cut off on opposite sides” – not necessarily in that order.

**Uzza:** Yes, but slavery is always an option, except perhaps for some young people and hypocrites. Muhammad said that many of these evildoers, when Judgment Day is near, will be “young people with foolish thoughts and ideas” and that they are to be killed on sight.<sup>308</sup>

**Archie:** As if the believers needed another reason to kill people.

**Bob:** What about the hypocrites?

**Uzza:** The wives, daughters and young sons of hypocrites, as a group, after Islam is triumphant everywhere, will be the largest reservoir of potential slaves. The fathers, husbands and mothers accused of hypocrisy will be the source of much violence and an abundance of blood that will continue to flow in Allah’s Cause even when there are no non-Muslims left to convert or kill.

**Bob:** Why?

**Uzza:** Because every believer will, at one point in time, whether they realise it or not, cross the line into the swamp that is Allah’s definition of hypocrisy and become a candidate for murder, the decreed punishment for a hypocrite from a god set in his ways<sup>309</sup>.

**Bob:** How does a believer cross over the line into hypocrisy?

**Uzza:** By making excuses to avoid fighting in Allah’s Cause<sup>310</sup>, not saying their prayers with enough fervour indicating an open mind<sup>311</sup>

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<sup>308</sup> **Narrated Ali:**

I heard the Prophet saying, "In the last days (of the world) there will appear young people with foolish thoughts and ideas. They will give good talks, but they will go out of Islam as an arrow goes out of its game, their faith will not exceed their throats. So, wherever you find them, kill them, for there will be a reward for their killers on the Day of Resurrection."

*Bukhari 61.577*

<sup>309</sup> 33:60 If the hypocrites, those in whose hearts is a sickness and those who spread lies in the city, do not desist, We will certainly urge you against them and then they will not dwell with you therein as neighbours but for a short time.

33:61 Accursed, wherever they are encountered they will be seized and slaughtered.

33:62 That is Allah’s way of dealing with those who have gone before, and you will never find any alteration of Allah’s Way.

<sup>310</sup> 3:167 And that He might know the hypocrites. When it was said to them: “Come, fight in the way of Allah or defend yourselves”, they replied: “If only

that must be shut permanently<sup>312</sup>, not spending enough money in Allah's Cause, indulging in small talk – "idle talk," as Allah calls it – having some fun or simply enjoying some of the pleasures of this life<sup>313</sup>

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we knew how to fight, we would have followed you." On that day, they were closer to disbelief than to belief. They say with their tongues what is not in their hearts; and Allah knows best what they conceal!

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4:145 Surely, the hypocrites will be in the lowest depths of the Fire, and you will not find any supporter for them.

<sup>311</sup> Those who had any doubts about what Allah revealed will have a hard time finding their way in the dark on Judgment Day and will be condemned to an eternity on fire in the lowest depths of Hell.

57:13 On the Day the hypocrites, men and women, will say to the believers: "Wait for us, so that we may borrow from your light." It will be said: "Go back and seek for yourselves a light." Then a wall will be raised between them both, which has a door. On the inner part thereof is Mercy, and on the opposite side the outer part thereof is punishment.

57:14 They will call out to them: "Were we not with you?" They will say: "Yes indeed; but you deluded yourselves, you waited long, doubted and were deceived by false hopes, until Allah's Decree came and the deceiver (Satan) deceived you regarding Allah."

<sup>312</sup> 4:142 Surely, the hypocrites seek to deceive Allah, but Allah causes their deceit to backfire. And if they rise to perform the prayer, they rise lazily, trying to show off in public and they remember Allah but little.

4:143 Vacillating between the two (belief and disbelief), inclining neither to these nor to those (neither to the believers nor to the unbelievers); and whomever Allah leads astray, you will not find him a way out.

<sup>313</sup> 9:64 The hypocrites fear that a Surah will be revealed informing them of what is in their hearts. Say: "Go on mocking, Allah will surely bring into the open what you fear."

9:65 And should you ask them, they would surely say: "We were only talking idly and playing." Say: "Were you then mocking Allah, His Revelations and His Messenger?"

9:66 Make no excuses; you have disbelieved after believing. If We pardon a group of you, We shall punish another group, because they were wicked sinners.

9:67 The hypocrites, males and females, are all alike. They enjoin evil and forbid what is good and close their fist (they do not spend in Allah's way). They have forgotten Allah (they have been disobedient), and so He has forgotten them (He has deprived them of His Mercy). The hypocrites are the wicked sinners.

9:68 Allah has promised the hypocrites, males and females, and the unbelievers, the Fire of Hell, abiding in it forever. It is sufficient unto them. He has also cursed them, and a lasting punishment awaits them.

9:69 Like those who came before you (the hypocrites); they were mightier than you and had more wealth and children. So they enjoyed their share (of earthly life); then you enjoyed your share as did those before you, and you engaged in

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when they should be praying, worshipping Allah or listening to preachers expounding on Allah's compassionate and merciful nature.

**Archie:** Which is all the time?

**Uzza:** Pretty much<sup>314</sup>.

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idle talk as they did. Those, their works in this world and in the Hereafter are vain; they are the losers.

<sup>314</sup> Allah did not create man so that he could have fun. The aim of creation was for mankind to be put to the test through hardship and prayer. An Islamic regime must be serious in every field. There are no jokes in Islam. There is no humor in Islam. There is no fun in Islam. There can be no fun and joy in whatever is serious.

*Ayatollah Khomeini*

## A Matter of Interest

**Gerry:** Sometimes it is difficult to ascertain the moral or ethical imperative on which Allah bases His instructions. For example, His condoning of slavery and His condemning the practice of lending money at interest. Both convey an economic advantage to the slave-owner and the money-lender respectively.

**Uzza:** The transaction involving only money, however, can be to the benefit of both contracting parties. The transaction in humanity, on the other hand, usually benefits only the title-holder while confining the other, the slave, to a life of miserable servitude.

**Gerry:** Then why would someone invent a world where slavery is good, and interest on borrowed money is bad?

**Uzza:** What if that someone was a slave owner in debt? I am just saying.

**Bob:** I thought the Prophet was rich from the Zakat and the plunder?

**Uzza:** It would be awhile before the plunder and the Zakat was enough to make ends meet, let alone finance a war of expansion. In the meantime, Muhammad used his own money and that of his first wife, Khadijah. And when that ran out<sup>315</sup>, he borrowed from his uncle Abbas and some say from the Jews<sup>316</sup>.

**Bob:** His wife had money of her own?

**Uzza:** Before Islam, females could accumulate wealth and keep it. It was theirs to do with as they wished, even after marriage.

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<sup>315</sup> Khadijah died destitute and penniless in a makeshift habitat in a ravine on the outskirts of Mecca. She did not live long enough to witness her husband's triumph over his enemies; a triumph which would not have been possible without her wealth and support when Islam was in its infancy. She could not have foreseen that after Islam, the right to learn, the independence and the freedom she enjoyed and which made it all possible would be severely curtailed by a religion which became increasingly male-centric after her death.

<sup>316</sup> **Narrated Aisha:**

The Prophet purchased food grains from a Jew on credit and mortgaged his iron armor to him.

*Bukhari 34.282*

**Archie:** And this woman gave money to a man to create a religion that would take a woman's right to own anything except perhaps her dowry. What a stupid woman.

**Uzza:** Khadiaja was not a stupid woman. She trusted the young man she first hired to lead her caravan, then later married when he was twenty-five and she forty-something, to do the right thing.

**Archie:** But he didn't?

**Uzza:** It all depends on your point of view. He obviously struck a nerve with women across the ages. His most ardent supporters today are women.

**Gerry:** Struck may not be the right word.

**Archie:** I think it is.

**Bob:** Did he pay interest on the money that he borrowed from his uncle Abbas and others?

**Uzza:** He was expected to, yes.

**Archie:** But he didn't, did he?

**Uzza:** No, he did not. Not to his uncle, that is certain<sup>317</sup>.

**Archie:** Because he got a revelation from Allah that said that he did not have to, right?

**Uzza:** No, Allah revealed that no one had the right to charge interest on borrowed wealth.

**Archie:** Same difference.

**Uzza:** Allah did include Muhammad in a warning of a war waged by Him and Muhammad on those who will not forgo interest owed, and

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<sup>317</sup> According to Virgil Gheorghiu, Abbas' nephew still owed his uncle the equivalent of twenty ounces of gold, including interest, when he abandoned Mecca for Medina. Abbas was one of the seventy Meccans captured at the famous battle of Badr. After much discussion as to whether they should be burnt alive or decapitated by a close Muslim relative to avoid having to pay blood money to the family of the prematurely deceased, the merchant in Muhammad decided, after seeking the angel Gabriel's advice, that the prisoners, or their families, could pay a ransom to obtain their freedom.

To obtain his freedom, Abbas proposed to his nephew that his ransom be considered the substantial amount of money Muhammad still owed him. Muhammad would have none of it. He told his uncle that he will have to do better than that because, "those twenty ounces of gold was something of yours that the mighty and powerful Allah gave to me." The kin whose money kept his nephew's dream alive after Khadijah's ran out paid the additional ransom, and wisely forgot all about the loan.

that would, of course, include the interest owed by Muhammad<sup>318</sup>. The inclusion of Muhammad, a debtor, in such a warning – which, unlike most other warnings by Allah is retroactive – could be significant.

**Bob:** Isn't that a conflict of interest?

**Archie:** The Prophet got away with not paying money he owed for the same reason he got away with everything else he got away with.

**Gerry:** I feel another sermon from the bar coming on.

**Archie:** That Aisha broad got it right when she said Allah was always quick to please her husband when it came to his sexual needs, and all his other needs from what I can make out. He made charging interest on borrowed money a sin because it freed His Prophet from having to pay it, just like he took away the sin of marrying your son's wife while he was still alive so that Muhammad could do just that. As I said before, I don't blame him for using a manufactured relationship with God to get God to do his bidding. I don't blame him. I blame those who put together the book after he was dead and left in it all that self-serving crap.

**Uzza:** I would not call it that. And you forget that Allah is also the author of the Torah. In that first draft of his instructions for mankind He forbade the Jews from charging interest<sup>319</sup>. It is only logical that you would find that prohibition in the Koran, the final draft. And then there is the example of Jesus banning the money changers from the Temple.

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<sup>318</sup> 2:278 O believers, fear Allah and forgo what is still due from usury, if you are [true] believers.

2:279 But if you fail to do that, take note of a war [waged] by Allah and His Messenger. But if you repent you will have your capital, neither wronging (sic) nor being wronged.

<sup>319</sup> Exodus 22:25 "If you lend money to one of my people among you who is needy, do not treat it like a business deal; charge no interest."

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4:160 And it was on account of the wrongdoing of the Jews that We forbade them certain good things which had been lawful to them; as well as on account of their frequent debarring [of people] from Allah's path;

4:161 Their taking usury, although they had been forbidden from doing it and their devouring other people's wealth unjustly. We have prepared for the unbelievers among them a very painful punishment!

4:162 But those firmly rooted in knowledge among them and the believers do believe in what was revealed to you (Muhammad) and what was revealed before you. Those who perform the prayers, give the alms and believe in Allah and the Last Day – to these We shall grant a great reward!



**Gerry:** In the Torah, God tells the Jews not to charge the needy interest, and Jesus banned the money changers from doing business in the Temple, Uzza, not from not doing any business. And then there is the parable of the Talents which implicitly allows the increase of one's wealth from the investment of currency.

**Uzza:** Jesus may be a bad example.

**Archie:** The Prophet was very much a merchant or a businessman like myself, and how we make money is by selling what we sell for more than we paid for it. How is increasing your wealth through strictly monetary transactions different than increasing it through barter or through the purchase of an item, then selling it for more than you paid for it?

**Uzza:** Allah does not go into the specifics, even when demonstrating an accountant's understanding of compound interest<sup>320</sup>, except to warn those involved in trade to know the difference if they did not want to burn in Hell for an eternity<sup>321</sup>. The question was obviously asked of Muhammad who goes into much detail as to how you do this. A modern economy could not function if you followed his instructions (appendix: Selling It!).

**Bob:** So, the Prophet's example is not always a good one.

**Uzza:** No, not in this day and age. Which is one reason why Islamists insist on turning the clock back, if only to prove Muhammad right about everything.

**Archie:** It's too bad he wasn't wrong about warfare and how you get people to kill and die for you or give up without a fight. So, what did he do after capturing Mecca that way?

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<sup>320</sup> 3:130 O believers, do not devour usury, double and redoubled, and fear Allah that you may prosper!

<sup>321</sup> 2:275 Those who take usury will not rise up (On the Day of Resurrection) except like those maddened by Satan's touch. For they claim that trading is like usury, whereas Allah has made trading lawful and prohibited usury. Hence, he who has received an admonition from his Lord and desisted can keep what he has taken (prior to the prohibition) and his fate is to be left to Allah. But those who revert [to it (taking usury)] – those are the people of the Fire in which they shall abide forever.

## **Crusades v. Crusades, Community v. Family**

**Uzza:** With Mecca and vicinity secured and the believers spreading out across the Peninsula to spread the good news, Muhammad returned to Medina.

**Gerry:** Why Medina? Why not stay closer to God in Mecca?

**Uzza:** Medina, being an oasis, was much more hospitable than dusty Mecca. Also, it was further north, closer to Muhammad's ultimate objective, the Byzantine Empire and Dabiq.

**Bob:** I would like to visit Medina sometime.

**Uzza:** You cannot. It and Mecca are sacred cities in what is called the Hejaz, the Western Province. If you get caught trying to sneak in, it is convert or be beheaded on the spot.

**Gerry:** Is that what Hejaz means, the Western Province?

**Uzza:** No. Hejaz means Barrier. Islamists like bin Laden consider the entire Hejaz sacred and off limits to unbelievers. One of his stated reason for the 9/11 attacks on the United States was that American troops were stationed in the Hejaz to thwart any attempt by Saddam Hussein to invade Saudi Arabia.

**Archie:** For saving the Muslim Holy Land from being overrun by Iraqi troops in the First Gulf War, bin Laden slaughtered thousands of Americans.

**Uzza:** Before saving the Saudi Princes, the United States should have demanded they stop promoting their hate-filled supremacist, anti-Semitic Wahhabi theology to the tune of billions of dollars a year, building mosques and madrassas around the world that must closely adhere to Wahhabi teachings.

**Gerry:** Unless they need them to defend them, the House of Saud and its 4,000 plus princes<sup>322</sup> are not welcoming to Christians, unlike in Iraq where 250,000 found a home until that ill-fated invasion.

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<sup>322</sup> The modern founder of the house of Saud, King Abdulaziz, fathered forty sons and an estimated twenty daughters. To stay within the Koranic limit of four wives while

**Bob:** What is Wahhabism?

**Uzza:** “Wahhabi theology sees the world in white and black categories—Muslim and non-Muslim, belief and unbelief, the realm of Islam and that of warfare”<sup>323</sup>. They even regard Muslims who do not agree with them as unbelievers who must be eradicated. Wahhabi theology demands a non-stop active campaign to make fundamentalist Islam triumphant everywhere.

**Bob:** What you’re saying is that Saudi Arabia is at war with us.

**Uzza:** The United States had a great opportunity to take the fight to an intractable enemy of Western civilization with much of the world cheering it on after 9/11, when it was revealed that 15 of the 19 hijackers were Saudi citizens raised on Wahhabi hate. Instead, not only did they spirit the Saudi princes who were in the country at the time out of the United States on private jets to avoid them becoming the targets of an understandably enraged population and perhaps even the Justice Department, but deflected any blame by attacking a country that had nothing to do with 9/11, Iraq.

**Gerry:** That would be like the United States declaring war on, I don't know, Korea instead of Japan after Pearl Harbour.

**Uzza:** They had an oilman as a President with little appreciation of the perfidy of the Saudis. That may have had something to do with it. He allowed them to continue spreading the good news, even if that good news was responsible for the horrible death of thousands of American men, women and children.

**Bob:** What is this "good news" you keep referring to?

**Uzza:** The Koran. Today, that is the Saudi-sponsored translation for which a respected scholar of the Book wrote, “reads more like a supremacist Muslim, anti-Semitic, anti-Christian polemic.” The Saudi Koran concludes with evocatively capitalised denunciations squarely

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fathering that many children, he divorced one wife to marry another, taking a new wife sometimes every few weeks thereby creating a solid foundation for breeding the more than 4,000 princes you have today with obviously thousands more to be added over time which may severely tax the Kingdom’s economy in years to come.

<sup>323</sup> Wahhabi theology sees the world in white and black categories—Muslim and non-Muslim, belief and unbelief, the realm of Islam and that of warfare. They [Wahhabi believers] regard all Muslims who [do] not agree with them as unbelievers to be subdued (that is, fought and killed) in the name of Islam.

aimed at recruiting Christians in Allah's Cause, such as FINALITY OF PROOF ON THE FABRICATION OF THE STORY OF THE CROSS and BIBLICAL EVIDENCE OF JESUS BEING A SERVANT OF GOD AND HAVING NO SHARE IN DIVINITY (appendix: A Gratuitous Discrediting of Christian Doctrine).

Imagine, if every bible contained a gratuitous denunciation of Muhammad's Prophethood, that people thought him a madman – and Allah admitted as much (appendix: Muhammad Labeled a Madman) – the hell that would result.

**Archie:** The name does seem to fit, doesn't it? Change the "u" to an "e."

**Uzza:** STOP IT!

**Bob:** Why can they do that?

**Archie:** You mean call Jesus a fraud to our faces and we can't stop them, or return the favour and accuse Muhammad of being a con<sup>324</sup> and a madman, even a joke<sup>325</sup>?

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<sup>324</sup> 6:25 And some of them listen to you, but We have cast veils over their hearts, lest they should understand it (the Qur'an) and a deafness in their ears. And even were they to see every sign, they will not believe in it; so that when they come to dispute with you, the unbelievers will say: "This is nothing but fables of the ancients."

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8:31 And when Our Revelations are recited to them, they say: "We have heard. Had we wished, we would have uttered the like of this; this is nothing but fables of the ancients."

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16:24 And if it is said to them: "What has your Lord revealed?" they say: "Fables of the ancients."

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25:5 And they say: "Legends of the ancients which he solicited their writing down. Hence they are dictated to him morning and evening."

25:6 Say: "He Who knows the secret in the heavens in the earth has sent it down; He is indeed All-Forgiving, Merciful."

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32:1 Alif – Lam – Mim (*no consensus on meaning*).

32:2 The revelation of the Book from the Lord of the Worlds, wherein there is no doubt.

32:3 Or do they say: "He invented it?" Rather, it is the truth from your Lord, so as to warn a people to whom no warner came before you (Muhammad), that perchance they might be well-guided.

**Bob:** I guess that's what I mean.

**Archie:** Because Islam is a religion whose followers will kill you if you do.

**Uzza:** There is some truth to that, I hate to admit. But first, you would have to read the bloody book to understand what has been written about Judeo-Christian scriptures before raising the fuss that, yes, could get you killed.

**Archie:** What you said about the Saudi Koran being like, Muslims are the greatest, you're all scum. Isn't that what you said about Wahhabism?

**Uzza:** That is not quite what I said. Oh, what is the point! To answer your question about Wahhabism, Wahhabism is a reflection of a literal interpretation of the Koran.

**Archie:** Is there any other?

**Uzza:** Not for dedicated Sunnis or Shias. The Saudi translation of the good news is available to anyone free of charge and is the book that Saudi-subsidized mosques and madrassas worldwide are expected to use, making it the most widely read and quoted Koran on the planet.

**Gerry:** Are you saying the Koran used at the mosque next door is a Saudi Koran?

**Uzza:** If it is a Sunni mosque, probably.

**Gerry:** That would explain the correlation between the establishment of a mosque and the rise of extremism within its vicinity.

**Uzza:** That correlation has never been proven.

**Gerry:** How can there not be a correlation when both the preacher and the congregation are a captive of the Book?

**Uzza:** The Iman leading a congregation in prayer must confine himself to verses from the Koran; but, in his sermon, he is free to quote Muhammad or anyone else for that matter.

**Archie:** Sure, quote the guy who said he owed his success to terrorism. That won't give people ideas.

**Uzza:** Muhammad said other things.

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<sup>325</sup> 25:41 And when they see you, they only take you for a laughing stock: "Is this the one Allah sent as Messenger?"

**Bob:** Good news and Koran in the same sentence; that doesn't sound right.

**Uzza:** It does to Islamists. They believe that if all countries allowed the unimpeded preaching of the Koran, the good news - or as the conqueror of Persia Al-Walid phrased it, "this beautiful way of life"<sup>326</sup> - to its citizens, they would willingly embrace Islam without the believers having to topple their governments to deliver the good news.

**Archie:** Good news only if you bought into the message and your neighbour didn't, then you improved your lifestyle and standing in your newfound god's eye at the expense of the neighbour. Or, if all converted and you couldn't just grab your neighbour's property, you joined the mob on a profitable crusade.

**Bob:** Christians did Crusades, not Muslims.

**Archie:** Crusades are simply an armed mob on the march grabbing somebody's property in the name of some god, usually after depriving the legitimate owner of his life.

**Bob:** That would mean the Muslims, with their concept of a Holy War, invented the Crusade?

**Gerry:** That would also mean there is no difference between a Jihad and a Crusade.

**Uzza:** There is a difference, a BIG difference. You may know nothing about Islam, but Muslims know everything about Christianity. Since it came after the Bible, the story of Jesus is part of the Koran, if only to lower his prestige and raise that of God's new favourite. The Koran says that Jesus got it wrong when he said to love everyone unconditionally. The actual message Allah wanted him to deliver was to love only those who believed in Him and to hate those who did not,

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<sup>326</sup> Our aim is not to fight you. Accept Islam the peaceful way, and you will be safe. If not, then clear our way to the people so that we may explain this beautiful way of life to them...

If you do not accept any of these conditions, then the only alternative is the use of the sword. Before deciding on the third alternative you should keep in mind that I am bringing against you a people who love death more than you love life.

*From a letter by Khalid Ibn Al-Walid, the leader of the Muslim armies invading Persia, to impose "the beautiful way of life" by force, to the Persian General Hormuz before the battle of Kadima.*

It was a typically bloody conquest with the believers offering no quarter, beheading thousands of surrendered and captured Persian soldiers, fulfilling Khalid's pledge to Allah that if He gave them victory, "no enemy warrior will be left alive, until their river runs red with blood."

to death if necessary. That is why he sent Muhammad who could be counted upon not to muddle the message (appendix: Who Got It Right: Jesus or Muhammad?).

**Gerry:** But you don't hate us, do you?

**Uzza:** Allah may have been right when He warned us not to associate with Christians lest they corrupt you. This may be what has happened to me.

**Gerry:** You're not about to say that you believe in Jesus?

**Uzza:** That he is the Son of God? Of course not! But his message, that of a wise and kind person, that we should all love each other no matter what, is the message I prefer to live by, with one "but." Must be my Muslim upbringing.

**Bob:** What do you mean? We're not talking about deviant sex again, are we?

**Uzza:** No, silly. The Koran has no universal declaration like those contained in the Ten Commandments. There is always a "but." I would add to Jesus' universal declaration to love everyone unconditionally: to love everyone who loves you back no matter what.

**Gerry:** As if we were all family.

**Uzza:** The Western humanitarian concept that we are all brothers and sisters, and that brothers and sisters love each other no matter what, is somewhat alien to Islam.

**Gerry:** Uzza, I can't believe you just said that Muslims don't have our appreciation of what it means to be a family.

**Uzza:** Not Muslims, believers! There is difference, as I have been trying to tell you.

**Gerry:** I am sorry, but you don't sound like any Muslim I've ever met.

**Uzza:** I am not unique. Trust me.

**Gerry:** I trust you. So why do believers have a different understanding of what is family than you and me?

**Uzza:** Pay close attention when you listen to a preacher or read about Islam as a social group. It is rarely about the family. It is almost always about the community, the so-called ummah. Us against them, that is the theme. Family is secondary to the ummah. A member of your family will not believe; you must get them to believe or disown them, if

not kill them. That is what the ummah expects you to do, and you do it if you want to maintain or improve your standing within the community.

**Gerry:** But the Torah makes the same demands of observant Jews?

**Uzza:** The Koran is often a reflection of the worst the Torah has to offer.

**Archie:** What about all this stuff about dishonouring your family by not wearing a scarf or by dating a boy not of your religion. That is family stuff?

**Uzza:** NO, IT IS NOT! Do you not understand? It is not what the family thinks that matters; it is what the community thinks. You kill your daughter for being disobedient to maintain your standing in the community as an upholder of Allah's morality.

**Archie:** And you kill the other guy to get at his wives and daughters and whatever. Got it.

**Gerry:** What does any of this have to do with "the big difference" between a Muslim Crusade and a Christian Crusade and what does Jesus have to do with it?

**Uzza:** The Christian Crusades were a relatively short-lived phenomenon, while the believers' Crusade has been ongoing for almost 1,400 years. In fact, the Christian version may have been in response to believers' incursions into Europe which took on a new urgency. The Christians rulers, if not their subjects, had to be aware of Muhammad's ultimatum, after his return to Medina, that all nations had to submit to the will of Allah or expect to be invaded.

**Gerry:** Are you saying that the Prophet actually declared war on the world? That our conflict with Islam is the continuation of an old war?

**Uzza:** Yes, and it will not end until all nations have agreed to the terms Muhammad set out in a letter he sent to the nations that bordered the Peninsula, to submit or else.

**Archie:** Do we have a copy of such an important letter?

**Uzza:** You may still be able to find one in Istanbul's Topkapi Palace, which is now a museum. The more than thousand-year-old shrunken piece of parchment contains both a promise of extravagant wealth and a threat.

**Gerry:** The old carrot and stick.



**Uzza:** It is addressed to the governor of Egypt, a fellow by the name of Muqawqis. Become believers willingly and you will grow rich, Muhammad promises; refuse and expect the worst. He ends his ultimatum with an ominous warning that believers do not make idle threats<sup>327</sup>.

**Bob:** Did it work, the threat and the promise of riches that is?

**Uzza:** No. The intimidating letters did not have the desired effect and Muhammad and his successors made good on the threats they contained. Within twenty short years after Muhammad's death, Muslim armies, during the period known as the Rashidun – the reign of the first four successors to Muhammad known as the Rightly Guided Caliphs– imposed Muslim rule on Persia, modern day Iraq, Syria, Armenia, Egypt and most of North Africa.

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<sup>327</sup> From Muhammad the servant and Prophet of Allah, to Muqawqis, the leader of the Coptic tribe. There is safety and security for those believers who follow the correct path. Therefore I invite you to accept Islam. If you accept it, you shall find security, save your throne, and gain twice as much reward for having introduced Islam to your followers. If you refuse this invitation, let the sin of calamity which awaits your followers be upon you. You too are People of the Book; therefore let us come to a word common between us that we worship none but Allah and shall equalise anything with him. Let us not abandon Allah and take others for lords other than him. If you do not consent to this invitation, bear witness that we are Muslims.

If you do not consent, we are Muslims; we do not make idle threats. Allah echoed Muhammad's warning in a revelation:

3:64 Say: 'O People of the Book, come to an equitable word between you and us, that we worship none but Allah, do not associate anything with Him and do not set each other as lords besides Allah.' If they turn their backs, say: 'Bear witness that we are Muslims.'

Muqawqis, we are told, knew of Muhammad and held him in high regard. Proof of this admiration is the tribute he sent him, after receiving the ultimatum of a beautiful black stallion, gold and silver and two teenaged sisters, Maria and Sirin, to do with as he pleased. Upon receipt of Muqawqis' tribute, Muhammad said to a confidant that he could not be that easily be bought off, and Muqawqis' reign would shortly be coming to an end.

Muhammad took Maria as his twelfth wife and gave Sirin to a henchman. It was this same Muqawqis, also known as Cyrus, Patriarch of Alexandria, who negotiated a separate peace with the Muslims on behalf of the Coptic Christians, which included agreeing to pay the Jizya, when the believers invaded Egypt about ten years after the ultimatum was received. This early capitulation allowed a relatively small Arab invasion force (later re-enforced by desert Bedouins when it became evident that Egypt was ripe for the taking and plunder was to be had, followed by veterans of the northern campaigns to gain converts to Islam, e.g., Syria) to quickly take complete control of what was then a key province of the Byzantine Empire.

**Archie:** When the preachers say that Islam is not at war with us, they are lying?

**Uzza:** Some, obviously.

**Bob:** But the Crusades, the Christian Crusades were not about stopping a Muslim invasion of Europe but about taking the Holy Land back from the infidels?

**Uzza:** It probably was easier to rally a divided Europe to fight the type of fight that had made the believers so successful, and that was a Crusade of their own; the fight would be all about pleasing God by returning the Holy Land to its rightful owners<sup>328</sup>. A not insignificant benefit of controlling the coastline of the Holy Land was that it would severely hamper the operations of slave-trading believers, who trolled the Mediterranean, preying on unsuspecting Europeans merchant ships.

**Gerry:** You realize that your reasonable explanation is not what most of us have been taught.

**Uzza:** You were taught wrong. It is not only things like the art that defines Western civilization which will be obliterated by an Islamist victory, but its history.

**Bob:** You still have not explained what Jesus had to with it.

**Uzza:** With what? I forget.

**Bob:** You said that Jesus was the big difference between the never-ending Muslim Crusade and the short-lived Christian Crusades.

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<sup>328</sup> It seems to me that a politically correct mythology is replacing history on many of these topics.

Consider the Crusades. The Christians are often depicted as barbarian aggressors and the Muslims as their highly cultured victims. But the Crusades were primarily a response to 300 years of jihad (whether the Crusaders were aware of the Islamic doctrine or not). They were a reaction to Muslim incursions in Europe, the persecution of Eastern Christians, and the desecration of Christian holy sites. And few people seem to remember that the crusaders lost all but the first of those wars.

Although the Crusades were undoubtedly an expression of religious tribalism, the idea of holy war is a late, peripheral, and in many ways self-contradictory development within Christianity—and one that has almost no connection to the life and teachings of Jesus. One can't say the same about the status of jihad under Islam.

*Sam Harris in conversation with Maajid Nawaz, Islam and the Future of Tolerance, Harvard University Press, 2015*

**Uzza:** In response to the believers constantly using the Crusades to justify horrible acts committed by members of their community, an editorial in the Figaro explained that the Catholic Church was not without its faults, its history being filled with dark pages it regrets, the writer wrote. However, he said, what differentiates Christianity from Islam is that Christians can always return to the values in the Gospels and to the gentle person of Jesus and ignore a Church which has lost its way.

**Bob:** And Muslims can't do that?

**Uzza:** Muslims can do whatever they want; believers, however, cannot. As the Figaro explained, believers can only return to a book filled with violence and hatred and the example of a man for whom violence was a means to an end. The Catholic Church has put its violent past behind, thanks in large part to the example and sayings of Jesus. For the believers that is impossible; the Koran and the example of Muhammad will not allow them to do that<sup>329</sup>.

**Gerry:** Uzza, you read French?

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<sup>329</sup> The following is my translation of pertinent parts of an article which appeared in Le Figaro and defined the problem for those who would deny the cause-and-effect of the terrible violence done in Allah's Name.

The Catholic Church is not without its faults. Its history is filled with dark pages it regrets... However, what differentiates Christianity from Islam is that Christians can always return to the values in the Gospels and to the gentle person of Jesus and ignore a Church which has lost its way.

... Jesus is nonviolent. A return [to the teachings] of Jesus is the remedy for the excesses of religious institutions. Looking to the Prophet[Koran] for guidance, on the other hand, only reinforces the hate and the violence.

Islam is a religion which in both its sacred text (Koran and Book of Hadiths) and in banal rituals promotes hatred and violence. The ritual stoning of Satan every year at Mecca is not simply a re-enactment of a superstition... Its impact is anthropological. It is a ceremony, to which every Muslim is encouraged to participate, and which sanctifies and encourages violence...

Sam Harris again:

The reality of martyrdom and the sanctity of armed jihad are about as controversial under Islam as is the resurrection of Jesus under Christianity. It is not an accident that millions of Muslims recite the shahadah or make pilgrimage to Mecca. Neither is it an accident that in the year 2015, horrific footage of infidels and apostates being decapitated has become a popular form of pornography throughout the Muslim World. All these practices, including this ghastly method of murder, find explicit support in scriptures.

*Sam Harris in conversation with Maqjid Nawaz, Islam and the Future of Tolerance, Harvard University Press, 2015*

## Beowulf and the Koran

**Uzza:** I learned Arabic because I had no choice; I learned English because it would allow me to meet interesting people; and I learned to speak and read French because I love the language.

**Gerry:** So you can read the Koran in the original?

**Uzza:** That is, what do you say, a big crock [*as Uzza gets more inebriated, her language becomes more familiar*],

**Gerry:** Huh?

**Uzza:** If I gave you a 1,400-year-old English text, could you even begin to make sense of it?

**Gerry:** Beowulf is a thousand years old. It is the oldest preserved Old English long story. I dare anyone with a normal understanding of the English language to attempt to read it in the original without throwing up his or her hands in despair.

**Uzza:** And that goes for a 1,400-year-old Arabic text, to a lesser extent. What you call the original Koran was written in Classical Arabic<sup>330</sup>, when punctuation and vowels were essentially nonexistent. To make matters worse, research indicates that the original Koran contained verses in Hebrew and in Aramaic, the language associated with Jesus<sup>331</sup>. The Koran has probably gone through more revisions than any

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<sup>330</sup> Classical Arabic (CA), also known as Qur'anic or Koranic Arabic, is the form of the Arabic language used in literary text from Umayyad and Abbasid times (7th to 9th centuries). It is based on the Medieval dialects of Arab tribes. Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is the direct descendent [of Classical Arabic] ...

While the lexis and stylistics of Modern Standard Arabic are different from Classical Arabic, the morphology and syntax have remain basically unchanged (though MSA uses a subset of the syntactic structure available in CA). The vernacular dialects, however, have changed more dramatically ...

Tradition has it that the caliph Ali, after reading the Qur'an with errors in it, asked Abu al-Aswad al Du'ali to write a work codifying Arabic grammar. Khalil ibn Ahmad would later write Kitab al-Ayn, the first dictionary of Arabic ..."

*From Modern Arabic poetry 1800-1970: the development of its forms and themes by Shmuel Moreh*

<sup>331</sup> Research into the origins of the Koran, such as that conducted in Germany by Christoph Luxenberg (pseudonym), have revealed a great number of words in Aramaic

other so-called Holy Book; the last, famous as the accessible Cairo edition from which all subsequent mainstream translations originate, was standardized at al-Azhar University in the 1920s (appendix: How We Got To the Cairo Edition of the Koran).

**Bob:** Then why do preachers say that unless you understand Arabic, you will not be able to understand the Koran? If that was the case, why all the translations?

**Uzza:** To get you to learn Arabic – and it is a ready excuse if you find that after reading a translation you begin to question what they have been preaching about the Koran being all about peace and love.

**Bob:** What English translation should I read if I want to know if these preachers are lying to me?

**Uzza:** I recommend the one Gerry chose. Majid Fakhry has al-Azhar's seal of approval so you cannot go wrong. His, is also the first mainstream translation by a native Arabic speaker<sup>332</sup>. Actually, any good translation will be able to accurately communicate Allah's Message (appendix Majid Fakhry vs. Yusuf Ali), and it is the message we should be concerned with.

**Archie:** Why the emphasis on learning Arabic?

**Uzza:** It is a way of maintaining cohesion and a sense of purpose for the struggle ahead; to give you a greater appreciation that you belong to a community of like-minded people and not that *other* one which does not care to live according to the Book. If they did, they too would learn to read Allah's "glorious Koran"<sup>333</sup> in easy Arabic<sup>334</sup>.

**Archie:** Glorious Koran?

**Uzza:** Allah is not shy when it comes to promoting His Book.

**Bob:** You can say that again.

and/or Syriac which would indicate that many verses may have had a Christian or Jewish origin.

<sup>332</sup> In the translator's own words "we have tried to express ourselves in a simple, readable English idiom." Publishers Weekly wrote of Fakhry's notable accomplishment: "Succeeds in expressing the meanings of the original Arabic in simple readable English."

<sup>333</sup> 85:21 Yet, it is a glorious Qur'an,

85:22 In a Well-Preserved Tablet.

<sup>334</sup> 43:3 We have made it an Arabic Qur'an that perchance you may understand.

**Gerry:** Arabic is not easy to learn. I've tried and given up.

**Uzza:** For those not used to reading and writing from right to left and whose language contains vowel sounds which are explicit, not implied, Allah's native language can be a difficult language to master, I agree.

**Bob:** And all this time I thought God's native language was Hebrew.

**Uzza:** Learning Arabic may have nothing to with getting the Koran right or pleasing Allah and everything to do with a winning strategy. Having everyone learn Arabic bestows a tremendous strategic advantage on an international force bent on the destruction of a foe who must depend on interpreters to gauge what is happening.

**Gerry:** If Arabic offers a strategic advantage and is a way for Muslims, I mean believers, to set themselves apart from the greater population, why did countries like Canada introduce Arabic immersion in schools with the objective under its multicultural policy, to quote some Minister, "to facilitate the integration of children from Muslim countries"?

**Uzza:** Because they are stupid, stupid, stupid and so is unthinking multiculturalism, which, by the way, is probably responsible for an uptick in what Western jurisprudence considers a crime and some religions do not.

**Archie:** You mean one religion, don't you?

**Uzza:** Do not put words in my mouth. Steven Weinberg said that religion makes good people do bad things. It may have to do with the Koran replacing moral imperatives in Judeo-Christian teaching with relativistic ones, not only removing the sin aspect, but actually encouraging stealing, lying and generally treating someone with contempt if that someone happens to be an unbeliever.

Now, do not get me wrong. There is nothing wrong with a country seeking to accommodate the innocuous traditions and customs of different cultures within a national identity. What is wrong is not differentiating between the benign and the malignant, thereby allowing champions of irreconcilable value systems to compete Darwinian-like for supremacy where the most ruthless usually wins. A concept Muhammad and those who follow his example understand only too well.

## **The Sykes–Picot Betrayal Haunts Us Still**

**Gerry:** How long after taking Mecca did the Prophet decide to take the fight to the Byzantines?

**Uzza:** Later that same year.

**Gerry:** That quickly?

**Uzza:** Muhammad, as I have told you, was a man in a hurry. He also was a man who knew how to seize the day. With eager young warriors from all corners of Arabia flocking to his banner with the promise of booty and a river of Zakat flowing into Medina, Muhammad wasted no time taking his now well-funded army of more than 30,000 north to the frontier of the Byzantine Empire.

**Archie:** The Byzantines must have been surprised.

**Uzza:** They could not be bothered, being somewhat preoccupied with the Persians who coveted the same territory.

**Bob:** What happened?

**Uzza:** Muhammad and his army made the arduous journey of more than 552 miles north intending to engage the Byzantines at Tabuk, now part of Saudi Arabia, only to find no one there to fight.

**Archie:** A bit of a waste of time, was it?

**Uzza:** What is your expression? “When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.” Muhammad was very good at making lemonade during the few times lemons were the fruit of his endeavors. He made friends with the locals who were suitably impressed. Many converted, ensuring that the eventual conquest of the land Allah had bequeathed to the children of Abraham was a relatively bloodless conquest.

**Bob:** If Abraham is the father of both the Jews and the Arabs, that would make them joint owners of the Holy Land?

**Uzza:** Yes, and that is how it is supposed to be. There is even a revelation in which Allah grants the Holy Land to the Jews<sup>335</sup> and another where He refers to them as His first chosen people<sup>336</sup>.

**Bob:** If Arabs and Jews are both Allah's chosen people, why all the fighting between the Palestinians and the Israelis?

**Uzza:** At Tabuk, Muhammad gave an example of how the people who believed in the god that he did should be treated, and that is why the Jews did not oppose the conquest of Palestine by the believers. And why, for more than a thousand years, Jews and believers lived in relative harmony in that now disputed part of the Middle East.

**Bob:** So, what happened?

**Archie:** Israel happened, you moron.

**Uzza:** Israel was the outcome, not the cause.

**Archie:** And that cause would be?

**Uzza:** A British betrayal of the aspirations of both Jews and Arabs.

**Gerry:** But the British did follow through on their promise of a Jewish homeland?

**Uzza:** Only after six million Jews were murdered and an opportunity for cementing a nurtured peace between Jews and Arabs that had lasted since Tabuk was squandered. The Faisal-Weizmann Agreement, a joint proposal by the Zionists and the Arabs, which would have given the Jews a negotiated home in Palestine in 1919 instead of an imposed one in 1949, was rejected by the British during the Treaty of Versailles negotiations.

**Bob:** You mean there was a time when the Zionists and the Arabs actually saw eye to eye?

**Uzza:** Yes.

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<sup>335</sup> 7:137 And We bequeathed to the people who were held to be weak the eastern and western parts of the land which we had blessed (the Holy Land); and the fairest Word of your Lord in regard to the Children of Israel was fulfilled, because of their endurance; and We destroyed the houses and towers which Pharaoh and his people were building.

<sup>336</sup> 44:30 And thus We saved the Children of Israel from the demeaning punishment;

44:31 From Pharaoh; for he was haughty and extravagant.

44:32 We have indeed chosen them knowingly, above all other peoples;

44:33 And given them many Signs wherein there was a manifest trial.



**Archie:** And the British did not jump at that opportunity. Blimey!

**Uzza:** They had already agreed in secret negotiations with the French, the Sykes–Picot betrayal of 1916, to carve up the Middle East between themselves, a Middle East that would be largely liberated by the Arabs of King Faisal to whom they lied. They had no intention of keeping their promise to him that if he fought the Turks, after the war he would be allowed to "unite the Arabs into one nation." Instead, the Arabs were driven out of lands they conquered with their blood by mostly French troops who came to claim what was agreed to during those secret negotiations.

**Gerry:** Is that the betrayal the Islamic State referred to in its propaganda about uniting the Arabs under one nation as Faisal tried to do?

**Uzza:** Yes, again. Think about it. If a negotiated home for the Jews had been agreed to back in 1919, not only might we have avoided the atrocities of Islamic State, but how many more Jews would have survived the Holocaust?

**Bob:** But it was Christians who were crucified by these assholes, not Jews.

**Archie:** All the Jews had left. They knew better than to stick around.

**Uzza:** There were more than 2,000,000 Syrian Christians and only a few hundred Jews when the Islamic State invaded. It was inevitable that the Christians would become targets. The Jews today, unlike at the beginning of Islam when they could have made a difference, because of their numbers, are insignificant and will be dealt with when the time comes.

**Bob:** You mean killed?

**Uzza:** Yes. Unless they do like Abdullah bin Salam, one of the first Jews to convert to Islam (appendix: Abdullah bin Salam and the First Meal of the People of Paradise) He not only prospered but became a trusted adviser to Muhammad<sup>337</sup>. It is the Christians who still stand in the way,

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<sup>337</sup> It the post-Jesus era, the Jews were moving away from the more brutal punishments specified in the Torah, such as the stoning of adulterers. Muhammad would have none of it, and with the help of bin Salem forced the Jews of Medina – over whom he had ultimate authority under the negotiated Constitution of Medina – to stick to the old ways, many of which became the news ways of the Koran.

because of their numbers, of the total subjugation of the West and who have to be shown no mercy if the extremists are to succeed.

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**Narrated Abdullah bin Umar:**

The Jews came to Allah's Apostle and told him that a man and a woman from amongst them had committed illegal sexual intercourse.

Allah's Apostle said to them, "What do you find in the Torah (old Testament) about the legal punishment of Ar-Rajm (stoning)?"

They replied, "(But) we announce their crime and lash them."

Abdullah bin Salam said, "You are telling a lie; Torah contains the order of Rajm."

They brought and opened the Torah and one of them solaced [placed] his hand on the Verse of Rajm and read the verses preceding and following it.

Abdullah bin Salam said to him, "Lift your hand."

When he lifted his hand, the Verse of Rajm was written there.

They said, "Muhammad has told the truth; the Torah has the Verse of Rajm.

The Prophet then gave the order that both of them should be stoned to death.

(Abdullah bin Umar said, "I saw the man leaning over the woman to shelter her from the stones."

*Bukhari 56.829*

# The Christian Mosque of Medina

**Gerry:** Crucifying Christians is not in keeping with the example of the Prophet at Tabuk.

**Uzza:** No, it is not. Even Allah, in spite of the invectives He showers on Christians for suggesting Jesus is His son, early on betrayed a fondness for the followers of Jesus because, He says, among them are priests and monks who are not arrogant<sup>338</sup>.

**Archie:** I thought Allah hung around with angels, lots and lots of angels, not monks and priests?

**Uzza:** He does not have to, to know what they are like. He is God.

**Archie:** Did Muhammad hang around with priests and monks?

**Uzza:** As if I did not see that one coming.

**Archie:** Well, did he?

**Uzza:** Before he announced that he had been chosen by God to be his last and greatest spokesperson at the age of forty, or thereabouts, Muhammad accompanied or led trading caravans as far north as Damascus. At twelve years of age he joined his uncle on a business trip to Syria. On the way there, the caravan passed by a Christian monastery near present-day Basra where a Christian monk named Bahira invited the merchants to stay overnight.

**Bob:** Now, there's a good Christian.

**Uzza:** Later that evening, he asked the young Muhammad to sit with the men of the caravan, if not to participate in the conversation then to just listen. Remember, this was pre-Islam and after the collapse of most of the Roman Empire. It was a time when people of every faith could

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<sup>338</sup> 5:82 You shall find the most hostile people to the believers to be the Jews and the polytheists; and you shall find the closest in affection to the believers those who say: "We are Christians." For among them are priests and monks, and they are not arrogant.

Allah's fondness for some priests notwithstanding, Taqi ad-Din Ahmad Ibn Taymiyya (1263-1328) made their murder a priority in times of war. The Salafist theologian is the darling of Saudi Wahhabis and militants groups seeking to justify their violence.

get together and without fear, talk about their gods and their religious beliefs.

**Gerry:** It would have been interesting to hear what our future Prophet had to say.

**Uzza:** The future spokesperson for the Almighty would return to this monastery many times during his extensive travels throughout the Middle East. Years later, the former merchant, now famous as the Prophet Muhammad, allowed a monk to build a Christian mosque next to his own in Medina.

**Bob:** A Christian mosque? Isn't that like a church?

**Uzza:** I guess so.

**Archie:** Why have we never heard of it?

**Uzza:** Muhammad, on returning from Tabuk, on the advice of Allah, had the Masjid al-Dirar<sup>339</sup> demolished. But I would not read too much into its destruction.

**Bob:** Why?

**Uzza:** Two reasons. The first being that Muhammad, on the way back, escaped another assassination attempt and feared that those who would see him dead used the Christian mosque as a place to conspire

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<sup>339</sup> The Masjid al-Dirar had been built next to the Masjid al-Quba whose first stones were positioned by Muhammad himself. After receiving the revelation that He should not pray there, he realized that it had been a mistake to allow its construction and had the Masjid al-Dirar destroyed. The fact that the Christian mosque was built with Muhammad's approval would indicate that Abu 'Amir's intentions were honourable, but revelation 9:107 says otherwise.

9:107 And those who build a mosque (the reference is to the mosque built in the neighbourhood of the mosque of Quba', the first mosque built by Muslims) or hurt [the Muslims], to spread unbelief, to disunite [the believers] and to await him (he is said to be Abu 'Amir) who had fought Allah and His Messenger – they will certainly swear that they meant nothing but good. Allah bears witness that they are liars.

9:108 Do not stand up there [for prayer]; for a mosque founded on piety from the first day is worthier of you standing in it. Therein are men who love to be purified; and Allah loves those who purify themselves.

9:109 Is one who founds his edifice upon the fear and Good Pleasure of Allah better, or one who founds his edifice upon the brink of a crumbling precipice that will tumble down with him into the Fire of Hell? Allah does not guide the unjust people.

9:110 The edifice which they built will continue to be a source of doubt in their hearts, unless their hearts are cut up into pieces. Allah is All-Knowing, Wise.

against him and therefore Allah may have recommended its destruction as a precaution.

**Archie:** You would think that having the only god in the universe as your guardian would be precaution enough.

**Uzza:** [*ignores him*] The second is, after the believers came into possession of Jerusalem, they made sure that both the Jewish and Christian places of worship were not disturbed, therefore you have to assume that the destruction of the Masjid al-Dirar was for legitimate security concerns.

**Archie:** Building that dome where the Jews wail on their wall was not disturbing the place. Give me a break!

## **Mary, What a Strange Thing You Have Done!**

**Uzza:** The Dome of the Rock was built over the rock outcrop where Abraham is said to have offered a son to God. It was built to honour their common ancestor which is why, when it was built, Jews were invited to worship there as they would in a synagogue. It even honoured the Christians, proclaiming in one of the more than fifty inscriptions that circle the perimeter, and which are said to be Koranic in origin, that the Virgin Mary is a Messenger of Allah<sup>340</sup>.

**Gerry:** I wasn't aware of that.

**Uzza:** That may be because there is no verse in the Koran that says such a thing.

**Gerry:** But you just said that the inscriptions on the Dome were from the Koran.

**Uzza:** The original Koran, maybe?

**Gerry:** But Mary's story is in the modern Koran. In fact, she is the only woman in the Book whom Allah mentions by name.

**Uzza:** In the original Koran, she may have been more than just the mother of the lesser prophet Jesus, but a messenger in her own right.

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<sup>340</sup> Most, if not all of the more than fifty original inscriptions on the Dome of the Rock are Koranic in origin. It is difficult to say which are not, if any, because Allah's book of revealed truths has gone through a number of revisions and redaction, the last, the so-called Cairo edition, was completed in the 1920s at Al-Azhar University and is the basis of all modern (twentieth, twenty-first century) mainstream translations.

The inscriptions in question are seventh century in origin which, according to Estelle Whelan, writing in the Journal of the American Oriental Society, "have generally being ignored or dismissed because of apparent departures from the 'canonical' text, as represented by the Cairo edition." Including, it would seem, the inscription where Mary, the mother of Jesus, has the status of Messenger. On the inner octagonal arcade of the Dome of the Rock you can read the following inscription pertaining to Mary's status:

Mary, was only a Messenger of God, and His Word which He conveyed unto Mary, and a spirit from Him. So believe in God and His messengers, and say not 'Three' - Cease!

## 271 Mary, What a Strange Thing You Have Done!

**Bob:** The Virgin Mary, the only woman mentioned by name in the Koran. That is weird. Why her?

**Uzza:** Allah could not avoid it; He needed her help to discredit the Christian claim that her son is His son.

**Bob:** Why again?

**Uzza:** The entire concept of the Koran is based on a simple premise: God had gotten fed up with sending His instructions on how we should live and how He should be worshipped via prophets who did not communicate His message accurately or were misunderstood by a less than receptive audience. God's patience had run out. He would send one last messenger, His greatest Messenger, with His final instructions for mankind: the Koran. Anyone who did not heed what this ultimate Messenger told them was doomed to an eternity in Hell.

**Bob:** Sounds like a plan.

**Uzza:** There was only one problem with this latest divine plan for getting humanity to behave: Jesus. If God had already come down to Earth to deliver his message personally in the person of Jesus, then sending another messenger with a final message from on High made no sense. If Muhammad's claim to be the last and greatest messenger of God was to have any credibility, the Christian claim that Jesus was the Son of God had to be discredited and Mary was central to a strategy to do just that.

**Bob:** That's smart, having a mother agree that her son is nothing special.

**Uzza:** In a somewhat convoluted plot, Allah has Mary take the newborn Jesus to see whom He calls "her people" after giving birth under a palm tree with the baby Jesus or Gabriel – none can agree as to which of the two is the one who looked up "from beneath her" and told her not to worry<sup>341</sup>.

**Archie:** If Gabriel was the father, that's the least he can do. And if he wasn't, what the hell was he doing down there looking up Mary's skirt, not being a woman or a close male relative?

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<sup>341</sup> 19:22 So, she conceived him and she withdrew with him to a distant place.

19:23 Then labour pangs drove her towards the trunk of a palm tree. She said: "I wish I had died before this and had become completely forgotten."

19:24 Whereupon [the babe (Jesus) or (Gabriel)] called her from beneath her: "Do not grieve. Your Lord has created below you a stream."

**Uzza:** Gabriel may have been the father if a revelation about his appearing before a confined Mary<sup>342</sup> in the form of a “well-shaped human being” to tell her of her impending pregnancy<sup>343</sup> is any clue.

**Bob:** If it was Jesus, that was one special baby. Why would his mother deny it?

**Uzza:** [*somewhat exasperated*] She did not deny her son was special, and neither did Allah<sup>344</sup>, but not Son-of-God special. Anyway, when she shows up with a baby and no husband, “her people” think it strange and tell her so<sup>345</sup>.

**Bob:** Her people think Mary is a slut?

**Uzza:** I would not go that far, but “her people,” continuing to use what Allah calls them, ask her how a sister of Aaron – don’t ask how that

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<sup>342</sup> Allah, at one point in Mary’s development, entrusted the care and feeding of the future mother of Jesus to Zachariah who would later discover that Allah himself looked after Mary’s welfare.

3:37 Then her Lord accepted her graciously and made her to grow into a fine child, entrusting her to Zachariah. Whenever Zachariah went to see her in the sanctuary, he found that she had some provision. “Mary,” he asked, “where did you get this?” She replied: “It is from Allah, and Allah provides for whom he wishes without measure.”

<sup>343</sup> 19:16 And remember [the account] of Mary in the Book when she withdrew from her people to an eastern place.

19:17 She screened herself away from them, and We sent to her Our Spirit and it appeared to her in the form of a well-shaped human being.

19:18 She said: “I seek refuge with Allah from you, if you do fear Allah.”

19:19 He said: “I am only the messenger of your Lord to grant you a boy most pure.”

19:20 She said: “Shall I have a boy, when no man has touched me and I have not been an unchaste woman?”

19:21 He (the angel) said: “Thus [it will be], your Lord has said: “This is an easy matter for Me; that We may make him (the boy Jesus) a sign unto mankind and a Mercy from Us.” And thus it was decreed.

<sup>344</sup> 3:45 When the angels said: “O Mary, Allah bids you rejoice in a word from Him, whose name is the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary. He shall be prominent in this world (through prophethood) and the next (through intercession) and shall be near to God.”

3:46 “He shall speak to people from the cradle and while an old man and will be one of the righteous.”

<sup>345</sup> 19:27 Then she brought him (the child) to her people, carrying him. They said: “O Mary, you have surely committed a strange thing.



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makes any sense – a daughter of a father who was a good man and a mother who was chaste, could do such a thing<sup>346</sup>.

**Bob:** Good question. Enquiring minds want to know.

**Uzza:** Zachariah, the father of John the Baptist, who drew the short straw and ended up looking after what is assumed is a pregnant Mary<sup>347</sup>, might have been able to provide an answer, or at least vouch for Mary's out-of-this-world insemination, but he is obviously not present when she shows off her baby to "her people" for Allah would have mentioned it.

**Gerry:** You would think.

**Uzza:** Mary keeps her cool and points to the baby Jesus, who has been placed in a crib<sup>348</sup>. Without being asked, only hours after exiting the birth canal, the infant Jesus loudly proclaims that he is not God's son but a messenger of Allah<sup>349</sup>, a rebuttal of Christian dogma which Allah himself immediately vouches for as being the truth<sup>350</sup>.

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<sup>346</sup> 19:28 "Sister of Aaron, your father was not an evil man and your mother was not unchaste."

<sup>347</sup> 3:42 And when the angels said: "O Mary, Allah has chosen you and purified you, preferring you to all womankind."

3:43 "O Mary be obedient to your Lord, prostrate yourself and bow down with those who bow down."

3:44 This is part of the tidings of the Unseen which We reveal to you. You were not in their midst when they cast their pens (casting lots) to see who will take charge of Mary, and you were not in their midst when they were disputing.

<sup>348</sup> 19:29 Whereupon she pointed to him. They said: "How will we talk to one who is still an infant in the cradle?"

<sup>349</sup> 19:30 He (Jesus) said: "Indeed, I am the servant of Allah, Who gave me the Book and made me a Prophet.

19:31 "And He made me blessed wherever I am, and has commanded me to pray and to give the alms, so long as I live;

19:32 "And be devoted to my mother; and He did not make me arrogant and mischievous.

19:33 "Peace be upon me the day I was born, the day I die and the day I rise from the dead."

<sup>350</sup> 19:34 Such was Jesus, son of Mary; it is the truth which they (the Christians) dispute.

19:35 It is not fitting for Allah to have a son. Glory be to Him; when He decrees a thing, He simply says: "Be", and it comes to be.

19:36 Allah is truly your Lord and my Lord; so worship him. That is a straight path.

**Archie:** That is one precocious baby<sup>351</sup>, I must say. A baby speaking complete sentences almost right after popping out; that is special, even godlike.

**Uzza:** As I said before, Jesus was special – not as special as Muhammad, not special like a god is special, but special nonetheless.

**Archie:** Special like your archenemy is special.

**Bob:** Obviously Jesus knows who the father is. Why not name the guy who put the bun in Mary's oven?

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<sup>351</sup> Jesus was, according to Muhammad, one of only three people to have been born with the gift of gab.

**Narrated Abu Huraira:**

The Prophet said, "None spoke in cradle but three: (The first was) Jesus, (the second was), there a man from Bani (Children of) Israel called Juraij. While he was offering his prayers, his mother came and called him.

He said (to himself), 'Shall I answer her or keep on praying?'

(He went on praying) and did not answer her, his mother said, 'O Allah! Do not let him die till he sees the faces of prostitutes.'

So while he was in his hermitage, a lady came and sought to seduce him, but he refused. So she went to a shepherd and presented herself to him to commit illegal sexual intercourse with her and then later she gave birth to a child and claimed that it belonged to Juraij. The people, therefore, came to him and dismantled his hermitage and expelled him out of it and abused him.

Juraij performed the ablution and offered prayer, and then came to the child and said, 'O child! Who is your father?'

The child replied, 'The shepherd.'

(After hearing this) the people said, 'We shall rebuild your hermitage of gold,' but he said, 'No, of nothing but mud.'

(The third was the hero of the following story) A lady from Bani Israel was nursing her child at her breast when a handsome rider passed by her.

She said, 'O Allah! Make my child like him.'

On that the child left her breast, and facing the rider said, 'O Allah! Do not make me like him.'

The child then started to suck her breast again.

(Abu Huraira further said, 'As if I were now looking at the Prophet sucking his finger (in way of demonstration).')

After a while the people passed by, with a lady slave and she (i.e. the child's mother) said, 'O Allah! Do not make my child like this (slave girl)!'

On that the child left her breast and said, 'O Allah! Make me like her.'

When she asked why, the child replied, 'The rider is one of the tyrants while this slave girl is falsely accused of theft and illegal sexual intercourse.'"

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**Archie:** Get real! From what we have been told about the story in the Koran, Gabriel – if you believe in that sort of thing – is likely the father. If he is, then Mary did the dirty deed with something or someone other than her husband, or with Allah himself. From Allah's point of view, the less said about the father the better, and He wrote the Book so He can reveal whatever He wants to reveal.

**Uzza:** And what He wants to reveal is that Jesus denounced, from the moment he was born and throughout his life that he is Allah's son, and that those who say he is are perverts<sup>352</sup>. This denial is central to a story that could not be told without mentioning Jesus' mother by name.

**Gerry:** By not having Mary show up with a husband, the Koran does away with the pretense in the Bible that she had a husband with whom she never had sex – at least, not until after Jesus was born. But still, like Bob, if I was a god who wanted to prove that a woman's baby was not mine, I would not make her out to be a single mother with husband unknown.

**Bob:** And what's with her giving birth under a palm tree, out in the open? That is not realistic.

**Archie:** And the rest is?

**Uzza:** It is not only a changed message Muhammad delivered but a change of venue, with the more significant events of the Bible occurring

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<sup>352</sup> 5:75 The Messiah, son of Mary, was only a Messenger before whom other Messengers had gone; and his mother was a godly woman. They both ate [earthly] food. Look how We make clear Our Revelations to them; then look how they are perverted!

9:30 The Jews say: "Ezra is the son of Allah", and the Christians say: "The Messiah is the son of Allah." That is their statement, by their mouths; they emulate the statement of the unbelievers of yore. May Allah damn them; how they are perverted!

The Jews used to "confer the title of 'son of God' to a person whose piety has placed him in a very near relationship to God." Encyclopedia of Judaism 6:1 Ezra is such a figure, having brought the Torah back to Jerusalem from Babylon. It does not in any way imply that the person is a direct descendant of the Almighty.

Now it came about, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them, 2 that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose.

3 Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."

Either Allah confused the meaning of sons of God in Genesis or heard the Jews referring to one of their own as a son of God and assumed the worst in revelation 9:30.

at or near Mecca, the most flagrant being Abraham's aborted infanticide.

**Gerry:** The fact that Mary had her son deliver one of the more momentous messages of the Koran should have been reason enough for the inscription on the Dome of the Rock.

**Uzza:** All messengers of Allah delivered messages about His greatness and His short temper personally. Mary did not do that. There had to be something in another Koran where she did, for her to be considered a messenger.

**Archie:** And where would we find this other Koran?

**Uzza:** What may be a copy of the original Koran was discovered in the walls of the Great Mosque of Sana'a in Yemen with whose construction Muhammad was involved. During renovations in the 1970s, what is known as the Sana'a Manuscript was found in the walls. When Yemeni authorities were informed that this possibly earliest Koran contained minor but significant differences from the version that orthodox Islam maintains is the perfect unchanging Word of God, they restricted access to the more than 40,000 pieces of parchment from the earliest days of Islam.

**Gerry:** You're saying that the inscription on the Dome of the Rock may be from this earlier version?

## **100 Years of Conflicts and Conquests and No Muhammad**

**Uzza:** The hundred years following Muhammad's death was an extremely violent period, even by Islamic standards, with non-stop wars of conquest and civil wars. The second civil war in particular had a transformative impact on Islamic scriptures and early Islamic history because of the actions of caliphs who decided that looking at the history of Islam and scriptures through a common lens might put an end to the violent disagreements among believers.

**Archie:** And that lens would be, let me guess, the Prophet?

**Uzza:** Yes, but I am getting ahead of myself. I must first tell you about the first civil war. It is key to understanding the second and what came after.

**Bob:** You can't talk about war enough.

**Uzza:** The first Fitna, as it is called, was a result of the assassination of Uthman, the third successor to Muhammad as leader of the believers, the meaning of caliph. The assassination ignited a bloody war of succession. It ended after another assassination, that of Uthman's successor Ali by a disgruntled ally who objected to Ali making peace overtures to another challenger for the caliphate, Muawiya, the Governor of Syria. Ali's eldest son, Hasan, thought it prudent to accept a rich endowment and a promise from Muawiya that he could seek to lead the caliphate upon his death, and so postponed his claim to the throne of Muhammad, his grandfather. The Governor of Syria was proclaimed the new caliph and Damascus became the capital of the caliphate.

**Bob:** That would mean that two of the Prophet's immediate successors were assassinated.

**Uzza:** Make that three; his second successor, Umar, was also assassinated.

**Gerry:** Why all the assassinations?

**Uzza:** Muhammad, thinking the end of the world would occur in his lifetime or shortly after his death, made no provisions for an orderly transition. What would have been the point? In fact, when he died, people were literally going mad because Muhammad had said that he would be with them on Judgment Day, shielding them from all the horrible things the Koran said would happen that day. If it had not been for Bakr, who quoted a verse that none had ever heard that Muhammad was going to die<sup>353</sup>, who knows what would have happened.

**Archie:** Are you saying he made it up?

**Uzza:** I did not say that.

**Archie:** Any other verses that nobody had ever heard that somebody just happened to remember to save the day?

**Uzza:** If you believe that the Koran is the word of God, then the verse about making the Persians a people of the Book<sup>354</sup> is not something that

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<sup>353</sup> 3:144 Muhammad is merely a Messenger, before whom many Messengers have come and gone. If then he dies or gets killed, you will turn on your heels?

<sup>354</sup> 22:17 Indeed, the believers, the Jews, the Sabians, the Christians, the Magians and the idolaters – Allah shall decide between them on the Day of Resurrection. Surely, Allah is a witness of everything.

Robert Wright in *The Evolution of God* speculates that verse 22:17 may have been added after the Muslim conquest of Persia to make Islam more palatable to Zoroastrians by including them as a people whom Allah, who “does whatever He pleases,” may admit into Paradise.

By and large the Koran offers no evidence that Muhammad had contact with the Zoroastrians —except for this one verse where they appear out of nowhere and are suddenly eligible for Paradise. It’s enough to make you wonder whether this verse wasn’t added, or at least amended after Muhammad’s death, when the conquest of Persian lands brought many Zoroastrians under Islamic governance.

The Zoroastrians were a people of a book, not the Book, but a book, the Avesta. But, what about the Sabians?

There is another reason to suspect that this verse is a product of the post-Muhammad era. It grants salvation not only to Zoroastrians but to “Sabians.” To judge by the beliefs of their modern day heirs (sometimes called Mandeans), the Sabians, like the Zoroastrians, would have been hard to fit into the Abrahamic fold; they revered John the Baptist but considered Jesus, Abraham and Moses false prophets.

And again (judging by their modern heirs) they would have had another thing in common with Zoroastrians; their residential epicenter was to the east of Muhammad’s turf, in modern-day Iraq and Iran, land conquered not by Muhammad but by his successors.

*Robert Wright, The Evolution of God, p. 394*

somebody made up to save the day, but a revelation from a god who could see when such a verse would come in handy.

**Bob:** I did not know the Persians believed in the Bible.

**Uzza:** Not the Bible but the Avesta, which provided Allah, or whoever remembered the verse, reason to stop killing them and getting them to accept Muslim rule.

**Gerry:** Why is there any doubt that this verse was not part of the original Koran?

**Uzza:** Muhammad's obsession was with the Byzantines who stood in the way of getting to Dabiq before Judgment Day. A verse which made the followers of Zoroaster a people of the Book would not have been necessary during his lifetime, which would see the world come to end.

**Bob:** But it didn't!

**Uzza:** Which is why some have suggested that the Koran's message was modified from 'repent, the end of the world is at hand' to 'conquer the world and I will bring it to an end and welcome you into Paradise' to reflect this new reality<sup>355</sup>.

**Bob:** What has all this to do with the Koran making the Persians a people of the Book?

**Uzza:** Because there should not have been a need for it. The believers invaded Persia proper in 642, ten years or so after Muhammad's death and the anticipated end of times.

**Archie:** I get it. But what I still don't get is, why was it necessary to make the Persians a people of the Book?

**Uzza:** No matter how many Persians the believers slaughtered – the rivers, it was reported, running red with their blood – the Persians refused to submit until this verse was found that declared they, too, were a people of the Book – the Avesta would have to do – and therefore subject to the same life-saving conditions as the Jews and

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<sup>355</sup> When Muhammad died before the eschaton's (the end of the world) arrival and the Hour continued to be delayed, the early Muslims had to radically reorient their religious vision. The Hour was thus increasingly deferred into the distant future, and in less than a century Islam swiftly transformed itself from a religion expecting the end of the world to a religion that aimed to rule the world.

*Stephen J. Shoemaker, The Death of a Prophet - The End of Muhammad's Life and the Beginnings of Islam, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012*

Christians. As happened in Egypt, in only a few generations of being bombarded with the good news, most became believers.

**Bob:** When did the Muslims invade Egypt?

**Uzza:** In keeping with this doctrine of 'conquer the world in the name of Allah,' the believers invaded Egypt in 639. Unlike the Persian campaign, it was an easy victory, thanks to our friend Muqawqis who was also head of the Coptic Church. He did not care for the brand of Christianity Byzantine wanted to impose on the Copts and thought he could get a better deal from the believers.

**Archie:** What a fool!

**Uzza:** The believers said the Copts could continue to practice whatever brand of Christianity they wanted as long as they paid the Jizya. With that assurance, Muqawqis told his flock to offer no resistance to the invaders, allowing a small army of 4,000 or so, who were later joined by Bedouins as it became evident that Egypt was ripe for plundering. As happened in Persia, once the believers were in charge, it was only a matter of time before the Coptic Christians, the overwhelming majority at the time of the conquest, were seduced by the good news; they are now in danger of disappearing altogether.

**Bob:** Talk about not knowing who your friends are.

**Uzza:** Allah warned us to only take other believers as friends and to be wary of unbelievers; they will turn us against Islam and then we will be losers and He will no longer protect or support us<sup>356</sup>, in the here-and-now or the Hereafter<sup>357</sup>. It is advice that has stood the community in good stead.

**Bob:** Friends don't do civil wars.

**Uzza:** The Americans considered their Southern compatriots friends, but that did not stop them from fighting a bloody civil war.

**Archie:** One, not two. What was the second disagreement among friends that they had to fight another war?

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<sup>356</sup> 3:149 O believers, if you obey the unbelievers, they will turn upon your heels (turn you away from Islam), and thus you will become complete losers.

3:150 Rather, Allah is your Protector, and He is the Best Supporter!

<sup>357</sup> 33:64 Allah has cursed the unbelievers and prepared for them a blazing fire;  
33:65 Dwelling therein forever, not finding a protector or supporter.



**Uzza:** Not unlike the American Civil War, the second Fitna – while also a war of succession – was a war between the North and South; and not unlike the American Civil War, the North won. And, like the American Civil War, the winner tried to find common ground, and that common ground was Muhammad and a Koran that set the believers further apart from the people of the Book.

**Archie:** Who was unhappy with the guy in charge this time around?

**Uzza:** A condition of Hasan agreeing to Muawiya becoming caliph was that he would not name his son as successor, leaving the door open for Hasan to seek the caliphate.

**Archie:** And he didn't do that. What else is new?

**Uzza:** Muawiya, it is said, had Hasan assassinated<sup>358</sup> then appointed his son Yazid as his successor. When Muawiya died, a Medinan chieftain by the name of al-Zubayr encouraged Husayn to challenge Yazid. He was defeated at the infamous battle of Karbala in 680 and he and his family were beheaded.

**Bob:** Someone dared to publically execute the grandson of the Prophet? That took guts.

**Uzza:** Stupidity is more like it. What should have been an unforgivable sacrilege was quickly followed by the pillage of Medina and desecration of the mosque founded by Muhammad. Yazid then marched on Mecca. During the assault, the Ka'ba was burnt to the ground.

**Archie:** This is priceless. Today, an innocent cartoon of the Prophet can get you killed. A few decades after his death, a pretender to his legacy murdered three members of his family, ransacked the city where he died, attacked the city of his birth – almost obliterating what was to become the holiest shrine of Islam, the Ka'ba – and not only got away with it, but was rewarded with the caliphate for his efforts.

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<sup>358</sup> The death of al-Hasan removed a hurdle to his appointment of his son Yazid to the succession, which Muawiya was eagerly promoting at the time. For while it is true that al-Hasan was innocuous enough and hardly harboured any intentions of reclaiming the caliphate, many of the disaffected, smarting under the divisive Umayyad despotism, had not forgotten Muawiya's recognition of al-Hasan as his legitimate successor... This situation also lends credibility to the reports that al-Hasan was poisoned by his wife Ja'da at the instigation of Muawiya.

*Wilferd Madelung, The Succession to Muhammad – A study of the early Caliphate, Cambridge University Press, 1997.*

**Uzza:** You must understand, for the believers of the North, those places did not matter. Even Mecca did not matter that much. In the Koran, it is mentioned only once, and you have to believe the scholars when they say that Bakka<sup>359</sup> means Mecca and not some other place.

**Bob:** But the Prophet today is everywhere.

**Uzza:** But not then. Then, like I said before, Muhammad was just another doomsday prophet, many of which roamed the Middle East. What differentiated him from the other soothsayers of his day was the Book and its reputed author, God, that drove the Muslim invaders. They conquered not in the name of any prophet, but in the name of Allah.

**Bob:** Then why today can a cartoon of a guy who's been dead for more than a thousand years get you killed?

**Uzza:** That was al-Malik's doing.

**Bob:** Al who?

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<sup>359</sup> 3:96 The first House founded for mankind is truly that at Bakka (Mecca), blessed and a guidance to all the nations.

## **Birth of a Cult**

**Uzza:** Al-Malik was the son of Marwan, the fifth Umayyad caliph. He would put an end to al-Zubayr's aspirations and redefine what it meant to be a believer by borrowing an idea from the man he defeated: a second Shahadah.

**Bob:** What is a Shahadah?

**Uzza:** A declaration of faith, what you profess to believe in. What the early believers professed to believe in was that there was only one god.

**Bob:** That is what Jews and Christians also believe, isn't it?

**Uzza:** Yes. That is why, like the Jews of Medina, they did not perceive the believers as much of a threat and vice versa and why, for the most part, they were well treated by the believers as demonstrated by Muhammad at Tabuk.

**Gerry:** What about the part of the Shahadah where Muhammad is the Messenger of God?

**Uzza:** That was added later. It may have been al-Zubayr's idea. At least he was the first to make it official by issuing a coin during the Second Fitna on which was stamped what has been called the Second Shahadah, a declaration that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. Al-Malik adopted both the coinage and the saying, perhaps as a way of telling the believers in the South that the believers in the North believed the same thing. Al-Malik was a practical man; he may have also added the second Shahadah so that Jews and Christians could not avoid paying the Jizya by repeating the Shahadah about there being only one god when asked to so.

**Bob:** By pretending to be Muslims.

**Uzza:** But they were not pretending; they all believed in the same God, the one and only.

**Gerry:** The addition of the second Shahadah is how we got the cult of the Prophet Muhammad?

**Uzza:** It laid the foundation. The full-blown cult of Muhammad would be born out of necessity. Allah said that the Koran contained an answer

to everything. For a small book by Holy Book standards<sup>360</sup>, made smaller by constant repetitions<sup>361</sup>, it was quite the boast. When it came to governing an empire, it would prove an idle one. It would be left to the Abbasids dynasty, which overthrew the Umayyad in 750 or so in another war of succession referred to as the Third Fitna, to come up with a comprehensive system of precedents that would guide and expand on the administration of rule by the Book.

**Gerry:** Precedents – that is a Western legal tradition.

**Uzza:** Precedents in Islamic Law are mainly based on the life of one man and therefore not subject to the whims of changing times and mores as are precedents in Western jurisprudence – except where the evidence cannot be denied by even his most obtuse supporters.

**Bob:** Such as?

**Uzza:** For example, Muhammad said that we could never know what is in the womb<sup>362</sup>. That is obviously not true. You cannot conclusively prove or disprove anything he had to say about Heaven or Hell but we

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<sup>360</sup> An English translation of the Koran will run to about 77,700 words; the approximate size of a standard 300 page book. The Bible, the King James Version, is about 791,328 words, more than 10 times the number of words in the Koran.

<sup>361</sup> It is a testament to the power of persuasion that simply by repeating over and over again what a mortal said was written in a book whose author was God, a book no one has ever seen, not even his self-proclaimed spokesperson, that the book became self-evident proof of the alleged author's existence.

For the skeptics this is, of course, no proof at all. It makes no difference. Did Muhammad accidentally stumble upon one of the more effective methods of indoctrination, not to say brainwashing, that is repetition? Repetition is also key to making the Koran easy to remember, as the Book reminds the reader.

54:17 And We have made the Qur'an easy to remember. Is there, then, any one (sic) who will remember?

54:22 We have made the Qur'an easy to remember. Is there, then, any one who will remember?

54:32 We have, indeed, made the Qur'an easy to remember. Is there, then, any one who will remember?

54:40 We have, indeed, made the Qur'an easy to remember. Is there, then, any one who will remember?

<sup>362</sup> **Narrated Ibn Umar:**

Allah's Apostle (p.b.u.h) said, "Keys of the unseen knowledge are five which nobody knows but Allah . . . nobody knows what will happen tomorrow; nobody knows what is in the womb; nobody knows what he will gain tomorrow; nobody knows at what place he will die; and nobody knows when it will rain."

have been able to tell what is in the womb long before the actual childbirth for quite some time.

**Gerry:** The Prophet trusted his senses whether it be what they revealed of the real world or the world of his dreams, and that was it. No reason to look any further. He had, to paraphrase the man you quoted earlier, “an inert fallow intellect.”

**Uzza:** You mean Lawrence?

**Gerry:** Yes.

**Uzza:** As I keep saying, Muhammad was a man of his time, and the idiosyncrasies evident in many of his sayings and in what he claims were revelations from God are simply a reflection of the thinking about the natural and supernatural world at the time in which he lived.

**Archie:** Who decided that a medieval guy’s life would serve as precedent in just about everything?

**Uzza:** Early medieval, also referred to as the Dark Ages.

**Archie:** That would explain the idiocies even more.

**Uzza:** Not idiocies, idiosyncrasies. There is a difference.

**Archie:** I’ll take your word for it.

**Uzza:** To answer your question, Allah decided, but it was the second Abbasid caliph, Al-Mansur, who wanted his son to read about the life of Muhammad, only to be told that no such written account existed who got people interested in the man whom Allah praises as a good example to follow<sup>363</sup> and whose words, like His, are the law<sup>364</sup>.

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<sup>363</sup> 33:21 You have had a good example in Allah’s Messenger; surely for him who hopes for Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah often.

<sup>364</sup> 33:36 It is not up to any believer, man or woman, when Allah and His Messenger have passed a judgement, to have any choice in their affairs. Whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger have gone astray in a manifest manner.

To live by the Book and the example of Muhammed is to abandon your rights as a human being to decide your own fate as this revelation makes abundantly clear. The concept of free will or freedom to make your own choices is very narrowly defined in Islam. In practical terms, for believers, it means surrendering yourself to God or rejecting him. Once you have surrendered your “will” to God, your free will is effectively extinguished. Just so we are clear on the concept.

31:22 Whoever surrenders his will to Allah, while doing the right, has surely grasped the firmest handle. Unto Allah is the ultimate issue of all affairs.

**Archie:** You're kidding. The guy had been dead, let me guess, for about a hundred years, and nobody could be bothered to tell his story? Maybe you were right, the guy was a nobody.

**Uzza:** I did not say that. Let me finish. With the possible exception of what the Koran has to say, the letter to Muqawqis and a letter of caliph Umar II in 718 or thereabouts to the Byzantine emperor Leo III, in which he brags about how Muhammad led his followers out of Arabia "to fight against the largest empires," there is no contemporary Muslim account of Muhammad's life, how he died or what came after for about one hundred years.

**Gerry:** You told us that the Prophet had his own scribe and the Jews were well known to write down anything and everything.

**Uzza:** Yes, and when al-Malik asked for the same thing as al-Mansur, he was provided with letters by the first cleric known to have written about the life of Muhammad, another Zubayr by the name of Urwa Ibn al-Zubayr.

**Gerry:** And where are those letters now?

**Uzza:** They did not survive, just like the first ever biography of Muhammad which was commissioned by al-Mansur when he was informed that no such biography existed.

**Bob:** What was wrong with the first one?

**Uzza:** The first one was written by a highly respected historian, even by Western standards, by the name of Ibn Ishaq. Ishaq was a controversial figure, in part because he approached his subject in much the same way a modern historian would: by considering all information available, including the testimony of Christians and Jewish converts which his detractors<sup>365</sup> dismissed out-of-hand as not as reliable as that of Arab converts or those born into the faith.

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<sup>365</sup> Ishaq's most vocal critic was renowned authority on the sayings and deeds of the Prophet (the so called hadiths) Malik ibn Anas (b. 711 d. 795).

The methodology pursued by Ibn Ishaq was, first and foremost, that of an historian and biographer while Malik was steeped in Islamic Jurisprudence...

The main reason why Malik and others questioned Ibn Ishaq's reliability as a hadith narrator was due largely to the fact that he had obtained information about the Prophet's military campaigns (including that of the Battle of Khaibar) from both Jewish and Christian converts to Islam.

*The Muslim 100 - The Lives, Thoughts and Achievements of the Most Influential Muslims in History, Muhammad Mojlum Khan, Kube Publishing, 2008*

**Bob:** If what he wrote no longer exists, how do we know what he wrote?

**Uzza:** Because of the next person who was asked to do a proper biography of Muhammad, a fellow by the name of Ibn Hisham. Hisham would suppress any information that was unfavourable to Muhammad. He transformed what Ishaq wrote into a panegyric whose contribution to the elevation of a covetous, insular god-fearing man fed into the personification of the perfect human being. Hisham's reworked biography of Ishaq has "achieved canonical status and the immunity from criticism that comes from being elevated to the equivalent of holy writ"<sup>366</sup>.

**Archie:** What you're saying is that when people are told to shut up or die, it is to preserve Hisham's sham biography.

**Uzza:** A panegyric is not a sham.

**Bob:** What is a panegyric anyway?

**Gerry:** You've heard the expression about not speaking ill of the dead?

**Bob:** Yes.

**Gerry:** Think of a panegyric as a eulogy, as mostly undeserved praise or praise that leaves out the naughty and nasty bits.

**Bob:** If most of what Uzza has told us about the Prophet comes from this sham biography, it did not leave out the nasty bits like the killing, the stealing and the raping.

**Archie:** Haven't you been listening? Those were not nasty bits; they were praiseworthy bits because it was stuff done to unbelievers.

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<sup>366</sup> Thanks to its success the *Sira* of Ibn Ishaq (as redacted by Hisham and others) is practically our one source for the life of Muhammad preserved within the Islamic tradition.

The work is late; written not by a grandchild, but a great great-grandchild of the Prophet's generation, it gives us the view for which classical Islam had settled. And written by a member of the "ulema" the scholars who had by then emerged as the classical bearers of the Islamic tradition, the picture which it offers is one-sided: how the Umayyad caliphs remembered their Prophet we shall never know.

That it is unhistorical is only what one would expect, but it also has an extraordinary capacity to resist internal criticism, a feature unparalleled in either the *Skandhara* [the life of the Buddha] or the Gospels, but characteristic of the entire Islamic tradition, and most pronounced in the Koran: one can take the picture presented or one can leave it, but one cannot work with it.

*Stephen Shoemaker cf. Patricia Crone, Slaves on Horses*

**Bob:** That is crazy!

**Archie:** You took the words right out of my mouth.

**Uzza:** If you think that is crazy... Maybe I should not say any more about Hisham's masterpiece.

**Gerry:** What is there left to tell?

**Uzza:** Hisham's biography of Muhammad – in Arabic, his *As-sirah Nabawiyyah*—gives credence to myths that further defined Muhammad as special, such as how he was cleansed of the impurity Satan placed on his heart while he was still in the womb.

**Archie:** I knew it; Muhammad is the devil's own.

**Uzza:** Then you too are the devil's own, Archie, for we are all born with this impurity.

**Bob:** How did they remove this thing, open heart surgery?

**Uzza:** Exactly.

**Bob:** Huh...

**Uzza:** Hisham writes that, when Muhammad was a boy, he was visited by two men in white – angels are assumed – carrying a bowl of snow. They broke open his chest, took out his heart and extracted a black pebble, which they threw away, then washed the heart and body with the snow before returning it to his body and closing it.

**Archie:** Like I said before, Muslims will believe anything.

**Uzza:** I heard you the first time, and the second time.

**Gerry:** A declaration on coinage about your special relationship with God and a biography that makes you out to be anything but an ordinary person would definitely be enough to achieve cult status.

**Uzza:** But it was not. What would make Muhammad a figure revered as much, if not more, than Allah, something he never intended, was that Hisham's panegyric would lead to every moment of his existence, his every word, his every action to be concretized into invariable precedents in law on par with what Allah revealed in the Koran if it did not contradict what was in the Book. Unassailable precedents which outnumber Allah's revelations by more than two to one.



## The Passing of Perfection

**Gerry:** Cult figures are often remembered for the way they died. Remember Jesus?

**Uzza:** Death of the man today revered as the perfect human being was definitely not as spectacular as Jesus', a slight-of-hand spectacle engineered by Allah. Nonetheless, Muhammad's death, what he did and said before he died, has been an inspiration for the believers to this day and another reason they are triumphing over Jesus' supporters everywhere.

**Bob:** When did the Prophet die?

**Uzza:** He died just over a year and a half after his return from Tabuk. During that time he married the youthful Asma<sup>367</sup>, his thirteenth and last wife by most counts.

**Archie:** Thirteenth? Who was the twelfth?

**Uzza:** Oh, that would be Mariya, one of two Christian girls, sisters actually, whom Muqawqis, as a sign of respect, sent to Muhammad after receiving his ultimatum. Muhammad kept Mariya for himself and gave Sirin<sup>368</sup> to his scribe Thabit.

**Bob:** Lucky scribe.

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<sup>367</sup> Asma' b. an-Nu'man is considered by some the half-married wife of Muhammad. Her impending marriage was part of a negotiated alliance with her tribe. She would have been Muhammad's last wife since he died the next year. According to Tamam Kahn, author of *Untold - A History of the Wives of Prophet Muhammad*, Asma' is said to have been a naïve young girl who was pranked by Aisha and Hafsa who convinced her that repeating the formula for divorce when she was with her husband "would make the Prophet love her more. He, of course, heard the formula as powerful repudiation and sent her away."

<sup>368</sup> From Muqawqis I read your letter and understood what you have written. I know that the coming of a Prophet is still due. But I thought, he would be born in Syria – I have treated your messenger with respect and honor. I am sending two maids (Maria al-Qibtiyya and her sister Sirin) for you as presents. These maids belong to a very respectable family amongst us. In addition I send for you clothes and a Duldul (steed) for riding. May God bestow security on you.

**Gerry:** I find it hard to believe that a Catholic bishop would send the warring leader of a competing faith<sup>369</sup> Christian girls as tribute?

**Uzza:** All religions want the world governed by their brand of divine rule. The monotheistic religions that would rule the world may be competitors but they are also, what do you say, birds of a feather. They all agree that the universe was created in six days by some cantankerous asexual old guy with superpowers beyond our comprehension who then sat down in a big chair<sup>370</sup> in the sky for the next six thousand years and counting, keeping busy communicating at intervals<sup>371</sup>, via favourites, his instructions on how we should live and die and how he wants to be worshipped for all he has done for us.

**Gerry:** That still does not explain Christian girls as a tribute to a caliph?

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<sup>369</sup> Some have disputed Islam's account of what Muqawqis said and did after receiving Muhammad's ultimatum. The two main sticking points appear to be 1) "Why would a Christian bishop send two Christian ladies, belonging to noble Coptic families, as slaves to a non-Christian ruler?" and 2) "Christians believe in the Second Coming, not in the arrival of a new prophet, i.e., the Prophet Muhammad." One explanation is that Muqawqis was a secret convert to Islam and that would explain what he said and did, including facilitating the Muslim conquest of Egypt.

<sup>370</sup> In five of the seven recollections of His creating the heavens and the Earth in six days, Allah reminds the reader that, after all was said and done, He sat down in a big chair that is a throne, not on the traditional, ubiquitous mat or carpet of the typical desert dweller of Arabia to whom the Koran was first revealed.

7:54 Your Lord is truly Allah, Who has created the heavens and the earth in six days, then He sat upon the Throne. He covers the day with the night, which pursues it relentlessly. The sun, the moon and the stars are made subservient by His Command. To Him belongs the Creation and the Command. Blessed is Allah the Lord of the Worlds.

10:3 Truly, your Lord is Allah Who created the heavens and the earth in six days, then He sat on the Throne controlling all things. There is no intercessor without His Leave. That is Allah, your Lord; so worship Him. Do you not pay heed?

25:59 Who created the heavens and the earth and what lies between them is six days. Then the Compassionate sat upon the Throne. So ask about Him, the Well-Informed.

32:4 Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth in six days, sat upon the Throne. You have no guardian or intercessor, apart from Him. Do you not recollect.

57:4 It is He Who created the heavens and the earth in six days; then He sat upon the Throne. He knows what penetrates into the earth and what comes out of it; what comes down from heaven and ascends to it. He is with you, wherever you are: Allah perceives whatever you do.

<sup>371</sup> 32:5 He manages the affair from heaven to the earth; then, it ascends to Him in one day whose measure is a thousand years of what you reckon.

**Uzza:** Slaves were an integral part of the recently fallen Roman Empire. Muqawqis' tribute must be considered in this light, keeping in mind that he was an admirer of Muhammad, if not a Muslim at heart, who was looking for an ally in his fight with the Roman Church.

**Archie:** Some ally!

**Uzza:** Today it is more of a them against us, the them being the monotheistic big three; the us, the Secular State. That overriding commonality of interest of these birds of a feather is reflected in a reluctance to publicly criticize each other in any meaningful way<sup>372</sup> and in the tacit support given Islam's assault on the secular<sup>373</sup> by its alleged competitors. The Islamists would never have succeeded in blurring, and soon completely erasing, the line between Church and State if the Christian and Jewish leadership had not taken their side whenever the Secular tried to assert its authority.

**Archie:** What you're saying is fuck the imams, the bishops, the archbishops; fuck the Pope.

**Bob:** You didn't say fuck the rabbis?

**Archie:** Them too.

**Uzza:** Even if it was what I meant to say, I would never have put it so eloquently.

**Bob:** So this Mariya, was she good to the Prophet?

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<sup>372</sup> Reads well, but shops would be very reluctant to stock something on this subject that isn't by a scholar or authority of some kind or other. If you could get some endorsements.

In looking to satisfy a publisher's requirement that I obtain the endorsement of a recognized religious expert before they would consider publishing *Pain, Pleasure and Prejudice*, the then Rector of Ottawa's Saint Paul University arranged for me to meet with an eminent European theologian and guest lecturer who had written extensively on Islam and the Koran.

He asked if my book presented the Koran and the Prophet in a positive light.

I said, "No, not always."

He declined to even glance at my manuscript.

"There was no point," he explained. The Bible also contains questionable passages, and for him to endorse a book that offered even mild criticisms of the Koranic text was to invite retaliation in kind, which would only benefit the enemies of religion."

<sup>373</sup> This us against them cronyism was evident in Archbishop Rowan Douglas Williams' chastisement of the British government for urging Muslims to discard the niqab (a face covering veil with a narrow slit for the eyes), warning "it would advance the cause of secularism in British society."

**Uzza:** She was more than good; Muhammad could not get enough of her; after he married her, of course.

**Bob:** I didn't mean it that way, but okay.

**Uzza:** What is it with Christian girls and sex?

**Archie:** They get to practice, sometimes a lot.

**Uzza:** Sawda, a widow and the first female Muhammad married after the death of his first wife<sup>374</sup>, was a match for any Christian girl but she was getting on in years and chose to curry her husband's favour in other ways by giving up her turn<sup>375</sup>. As to the rest, except for Aisha who got Sawda's turn, they may not have gotten to practice more than once a week, and maybe not even that, especially during the last years of Muhammad's life.

**Bob:** What did Sawda get in return?

**Uzza:** Her husband would be less inclined to divorce her because of her age.

**Gerry:** The Prophet could marry whoever he wanted because he was the Prophet, but why do ordinary Muslim men who are already married seem to have no problem adding a second wife?

**Uzza:** Is it not obvious? She gets an experienced lover and a fulltime live-in maid. What woman would not want that? Trust me; until her husband loses interest in her private parts, she is not doing any housework.

**Bob:** And when he does?

**Uzza:** She will have children to look after and another dimwitted prisoner with whom to commiserate.

**Gerry:** You mean the first wife.

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<sup>374</sup> After the death of Khadijah in the year 619, Muhammad, after waiting a respectable amount of time, and after being persuaded by close friends that he needed a wife to help him raise his two unmarried daughters, married the widow Sawda. Middle-aged Sawda was the only woman Muhammad married who, it is reported, was neither young nor beautiful.

<sup>375</sup> **Narrated Aisha:**

Whenever Allah's Apostle wanted to go on a journey, he would draw lots as to which of his wives would accompany him. He would take her whose name came out. He used to fix for each of them a day and a night. But Sauda bint Zam'a gave up her (turn) day and night to 'Aisha, the wife of the Prophet in order to seek the pleasure of Allah's Apostle (by that action).

*Bukhari 47.766*

**Uzza:** Yes.

**Bob:** A “dimwitted prisoner!” Why would you call her that?

**Uzza:** That is how Muhammad referred to married women in his last sermon<sup>376</sup>, his last Khutba, probably the most important document in Islam after the Koran. In his last sermon, delivered on Mount Arafat outside Mecca a few months before he died, he summarized all the basic beliefs of Islam and all the duties of a believer. English translations will usually run less than 1,300 words. Like the Koran, commentators have spoken about Muhammad’s last khutba in laudatory terms. If you are not a believer, your praise may be more subdued.

**Bob:** Are you saying that I don’t have to read the Koran to understand what Islam is all about?

**Uzza:** There is no substitute to reading the Koran in its entirety. But, if you are not going to do that, then Muhammad’s last sermon is better than nothing.

**Gerry:** Does the man you are marrying have other wives?

**Uzza:** I do not think so.

**Archie:** Poor you.

**Gerry:** If the Prophet could not get enough of Mariya, did that mean he abandoned practicing with his other wives on a regular basis?

**Uzza:** Yes, and that upset those whose practice session with Muhammad was either cancelled or postponed. It came to a head when Hafsa found Muhammad practicing with Mariya, not only on her day, but at her place. She let him have it then and there, demanding that he swear to stop practicing with Mariya<sup>377</sup>.

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<sup>376</sup> Treat the women kindly, for verily, they are like prisoners in your house and are incapable of looking after themselves ...

*From a translation by Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah’s [1908-2002]*

<sup>377</sup> Relations between Mariya and the wives reached a theatrical pitch as we see from the following hadith. Hadith tells us: “The Messenger of Allah was alone with his slave girl Mariya in Hafsa’s room. The Prophet came out and she (Hafsa) was sitting at the door. She said: ‘Messenger of Allah! In my room and on my day!’ She said: ‘I will not accept it without you swearing an oath to me.’” So he said, ‘By Allah I will never touch her.’

*Tamam Kahn, Untold - A History of the Wives of Prophet Muhammad, Monkfish Book Publishing, 2010.*

**Bob:** And he agreed?

**Uzza:** Muhammad met his match in the teenagers he married. He could not intimidate them; they intimidated him, prompting Allah to intervene on more than one occasion to put the fear of Him in them to get them to behave. Allah even threatened with replacing two of them with more compliant wives after Muhammad has divorced them for talking behind his back (appendix: Muhammad's Wife Management Problem).

**Archie:** The kids obviously knew better.

**Bob:** So did the Prophet stop practicing with Mariya?

**Uzza:** He had taken an oath, and that presented a problem because the believers of Medina would have been aware of his undertaking and Allah's revelations about keeping your oaths if your intention was not to deceive.

**Archie:** Let me guess: Allah freed him from his oath.

**Uzza:** As Aisha said, Allah was always ready to step in and save the day if it had anything to do with her husband getting the sex he wanted. In this instance, Allah makes it clear to Muhammad that he cannot prohibit himself from indulging in what He has made lawful simply to please his wives and absolved him of his oath<sup>378</sup>. Muhammad could go back to practicing with Mariya as often as he liked with God's blessing.

**Bob:** It's surprising he did not blow a gasket with all the practice time these girls demanded of the old man.

**Uzza:** Blow a gasket?

**Gerry:** Have a heart attack.

**Uzza:** In the last year or so of his life, Muhammad may have been having less sex than he thought he was. This may have saved him from the exertion that could have caused him to "blow a gasket" during coitus.

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<sup>378</sup> 66:1 O Prophet, why do you prohibit what Allah has made lawful to you, seeking thereby the good pleasure of your wives? Allah is All-Forgiving, Merciful.

66:2 Allah has prescribed to you the absolution of your oaths. Allah is your Master and He is the All-Knowing, the Wise.

**Gerry:** Are you saying the Prophet imagined having sex with his wives?

**Uzza:** According to Aisha, that is exactly what her husband did. They blamed it on magic<sup>379</sup>.

**Gerry:** So how did he die?

**Uzza:** The official version is that he died from the minute amount of poison he may have ingested at Khaybar a few years earlier.

**Archie:** Who came up with that nonsense?

**Uzza:** Aisha said that during his agony, her husband told her that the pain he felt was like the one he experienced at Khaybar after taking a bite from the poisoned meat<sup>380</sup>.

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<sup>379</sup> **Narrated Aisha:**

The Prophet continued for such-and-such period imagining that he has slept (had sexual relations) with his wives, and in fact he did not. One day he said, to me, "O Aisha! Allah has instructed me regarding a matter about which I had asked Him. There came to me two men, one of them sat near my feet and the other near my head. The one near my feet, asked the one near my head (pointing at me), 'What is wrong with this man?'

The latter replied, 'He is under the effect of magic.'

The first one asked, 'Who had worked magic on him?'

The other replied, 'Lubaid bin Asam.'

The first one asked, 'What material (did he use)?'

The other replied, 'The skin of the pollen of a male date tree with a comb and the hair stuck to it, kept under a stone in the well of Dharwan.'"

Then the Prophet went to that well and said, "This is the same well which was shown to me in the dream. The tops of its date-palm trees look like the heads of the devils, and its water looks like the Henna infusion."

Then the Prophet ordered that those things be taken out.

I said, "O Allah's Apostle! Won't you disclose (the magic object)?"

The Prophet said, "Allah has cured me and I hate to circulate the evil among the people."

Aisha added, "(The magician) Lubaid bin Asam was a man from Bani Zuraïq, an ally of the Jews."

*Bukhari 73.89*

<sup>380</sup> **Narrated Aisha:**

The Prophet in his ailment in which he died, used to say, "O Aisha! I still feel the pain caused by the food I ate at Khaibar, and at this time, I feel as if my aorta is being cut from that poison."

*Bukhari 59.713*

**Bob:** That is one slow-acting poison. That should have given the Prophet time to ask God for an antidote<sup>381</sup>.

**Uzza:** Muhammad was very much his own medicine man and a source of much medical and environmental information for the believers. His favourite remedy for everyday aches and pains was cupping<sup>382</sup>; for something more serious he recommended cumin<sup>383</sup>; for tonsillitis it was incense, fragrant smoke<sup>384</sup>.

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<sup>381</sup> Antidotes was something Muhammad was familiar with:

**Narrated Abu Huraira:**

Allah's Apostle said, "If a fly falls in the vessel of any of you, let him dip all of it (into the vessel) and then throw it away, for in one of its wings there is a disease and in the other there is healing (antidote for it) i.e. the treatment for that disease."

*Bukhari 71.673*

Dates, which Muhammad believed made the consumer immune to poisons, were an integral part of his diet and from his perspective, may have negated the need for an antidote until it was too late.

**Narrated Saud:**

The Prophet said, "If somebody takes some Ajwa dates every morning, he will not be effected by poison or magic on that day till night." (Another narrator said seven dates).

*Bukhari 71.663*

<sup>382</sup> **Narrated Jabir bin Abdullah:**

That he paid Al-Muqanna a visit during his illness and said, "I will not leave till he gets cupped, for I heard Allah's Apostle saying, 'There is healing in cupping.'"

*Bukhari 71.600*

<sup>383</sup> **Narrated Khalid bin Sad:**

We went out and Ghalib bin Abjar was accompanying us. He fell ill on the way and when we arrived at Medina he was still sick. Ibn Abi Atiq came to visit him and said to us, "Treat him with black cumin. Take five or seven seeds and crush them (mix the powder with oil) and drop the resulting mixture into both nostrils, for Aisha has narrated to me that she heard the Prophet saying, "This black cumin is healing for all diseases except As-Sam."

Aisha said, "What is As-Sam?"

He said, 'Death.'"

*Bukhari 71.591*

<sup>384</sup> **Narrated Anas:**

That he was asked about the wages of the one who cups others. He said, "Allah's Apostle was cupped by Abd Taiba, to whom he gave two Sa of food and interceded for him with his masters who consequently reduced what they used to charge him daily. Then the Prophet said, 'The best medicines you may treat yourselves with are cupping and sea incense.'"



**Gerry:** Don't go there, Archie!

**Uzza:** In fact, Muhammad's sayings and example relating to how you treated whatever ailed you led to a concerted effort to set up a school of "Prophetic Medicine"<sup>385</sup>. It did not meet with the expected success, and the laws governing Prophetic Medicine remain the most flouted of Islamic laws, and for good reason.

**Bob:** What is this environmental advice?

**Uzza:** Environmental may be the wrong word. For example, the believers wanted to know if water from a well in which animal carcasses and excrements had been deposited was still pure<sup>386</sup>. Muhammad said yes.

**Bob:** Gross. You would think Allah would have told him that water that is full of that stuff is not good for you.

He added, "You should not torture your children by treating tonsillitis by pressing the tonsils or the palate with the finger, but use incense."

*Bukhari 71.599*

<sup>385</sup> An attempt was made to create an alternative system of medical science, 'prophetic medicine' (tibb mabawi). This represented a reaction against the tradition which came from Galen. Its system was built upon what the Hadith recorded of the practices of the Prophet and his companions in regards to health and sickness. It was not created by medical men, however, but by lawyers and traditionalists who held the strict view that the Qur'an and Hadith contained all that was necessary for the conduct of human life. It was the view of a minority, even among religious scholars, and a critical opinion was expressed, with his robust good sense, by Ibn Khaldun. This kind of medicine, he asserted, could occasionally and accidentally be correct, but it was based on no rational principle.

*A History of the Arab People, Albert Hourani, Harvard University Press 1991, p. 203*

<sup>386</sup> **Narrated Abu Sa'id al-Khudri:**

I heard that the people asked the Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him): Water is brought for you from the well of Buda'ah. It is a well in which dead dogs, menstrual clothes and excrement of people are thrown.

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) replied: Verily water is pure and is not defiled by anything.

*Abu Dawud 1.0067*

**Narrated Abu Sa'id al-Khudri:**

The people asked the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him): Can we perform ablution out of the well of Buda'ah, which is a well into which menstrual clothes, dead dogs and stinking things were thrown?

He replied: Water is pure and is not defiled by anything.

*Sahih Muslim 1.0066*

**Archie:** As I keep telling you, Muhammad and Allah are one of the same, and this proves it once and for all.

**Gerry.** Archie give it a rest. We get it. And you're making Uzza sad again.

**Archie:** I'm sorry, Uzza.

**Uzza:** Do not be. I only have myself to blame.

**Bob:** For telling us about the Prophet?

**Uzza:** For telling you about Muhammad.

**Bob:** So, were the Jews responsible for the Prophet, I mean Muhammad, dying the way he did?

**Uzza:** Muhammad had made his peace with the Jews, with Tabuk as witness, so don't believe a word of that piece of contrived history about the Jews being complicit in his passing. In fact, stories still circulated more than one hundred years after his death about how he died, stories which made it into the collection of the renown hadith collector Bukhari and are part of the Sunni cannon. Stories about Muhammad falling off whatever he was riding and appearing for the last time at prayers favouring a left shoulder, which was covered up and an oily bandage around his head<sup>387</sup>. These authenticated accounts of the last

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<sup>387</sup> **Narrated Anas bin Malik:**

Allah's Apostle (p.b.u.h) fell down from a horse and his right side was either injured or scratched, so we went to inquire about his health. The time for the prayer became due and he offered the prayer while sitting and we prayed while standing.

He said, "The Imam is to be followed; so if he says Takbir, you should also say Takbir, and if he bows you should also bow; and when he lifts his head you should also do the same and if he says: Sami'a-l-lahu Liman Hamidah (Allah hears whoever sends his praises to Him) you should say: Rabbana walakal-Hamd (O our Lord! All the praises are for You.").

*Bukhari 20.215*

**Narrated Ibn Abbas:**

Once the Prophet ascended the pulpit and it was the last gathering in which he took part. He was covering his shoulder with a big cloak and binding his head with an oily bandage. He glorified and praised Allah and said, "O people! Come to me." So the people came and gathered around him and he then said, "Amma ba'du." "From now onward the Ansar (i.e. Helpers, mainly Medinan Muslims) Muhammad will decrease and other people will increase. So anybody who becomes a ruler of the followers of Muhammad and has the power to harm or benefit people then he should accept the good from the benevolent amongst them (Ansar) and overlook the faults of their wrong-doers."

*Bukhari 13.49*

days of Muhammad would indicate that his death was the result of an accident and the Jews had nothing to do with it.

**Gerry:** Didn't Muhammad curse the Jews with his dying breath?

**Uzza:** Muhammad cursed both the Jews and the Christians in what may have been his next-to-last breath, and it had nothing to do with either one being party to his demise. It was to warn the believers not to do what Christians and Jews did, and that is build monuments to their prophets<sup>388</sup>. This is why, to this day, you will not find any equivalent testimonial to the memory of Muhammad.

**Bob:** When you said the Prophet did not intend to become a cult figure, I now believe you.

**Archie:** What were the guy's last words?

**Uzza:** His last words were to ask Allah to welcome him to the highest level of Paradise<sup>389</sup> and before that, to protect him from those who blow in knotted reeds<sup>390</sup>.

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<sup>388</sup> **Narrated Aisha and Ibn Abbas:**

On his death-bed Allah's Apostle put a sheet over his face and when he felt hot, he would remove it from his face. When in that state (of putting and removing the sheet) he said, "May Allah's Curse be on the Jews and the Christians for they build places of worship at the graves of their prophets."

(By that) he intended to warn (the Muslims) from what they (i.e. Jews and Christians) had done.

*Bukhari 56.660*

<sup>389</sup> **Narrated Aisha:**

I heard the Prophet and listened to him before his death while he was lying supported on his back, and he was saying, "O Allah! Forgive me, and bestow Your Mercy on me, and let me meet the (highest) companions (of the Hereafter)."

*Bukhari 59.715*

<sup>390</sup> **Narrated Aisha:**

Whenever Allah's Apostle became ill, he used to recite the Muawidhatan and blow his breath over himself (after their recitation) and rubbed his hands over his body. So when he was afflicted with his fatal illness. I started reciting the Muawidhatan and blowing my breath over him as he used to blow and made the hand of the Prophet pass over his body.

*Bukhari 59.723*

The Muawidhatan refers to the last two short chapters of the Koran, 5 and 6 revelations respectively. Surah 113 as a choice for a last appeal to a higher power before the darkness closes in is revealing in that it contains an admission that Allah is the source of at least some all evil, witches in this instance, from which Muhammad seeks His protection.

**Bob:** To protect him from witches.

**Uzza:** Muhammad, to repeat myself, was a product of the time in which he lived, a time when irrational beliefs, superstitions and unfounded fears overwhelmed common sense and reason.

**Archie:** What you have been repeating is that the Koran is a bunch of crap<sup>391</sup> and that God, wherever He is, had nothing to do with it.

**Uzza:** I do not believe in witches but that does not mean they do not exist.

**Bob:** That still does not explain why the Prophet would want to be protected from witches when he was about to be welcomed into Paradise.

**Uzza:** Muhammad did not die a martyr, so there was no escaping life in the grave when he may have feared that those who blow in reeds might be able to pay him a visit.

**Archie:** If I did what he did to women, I would be scared too.

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THE DAYBREAK

113 Al-Falaq

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

1. Say: "I seek refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak,
2. "From the evil of what He has created,
3. "And the evil of the darkness when it gathers,
4. "And the evil of those who blow into knotted reeds (witches or sorceresses),
5. "And from the evil of the envious when he envies."

<sup>391</sup> I first heard the Koran referred to as such by the wife of the then Kuwaiti ambassador to Canada. She had sought me out at a dinner party after hearing of my interest in the Book. "Have you ever read such a bunch of crap" she asked? Not knowing is she was serious or trying to bait me I gave an equivocal answer; that it was too early, in what would turn out to be a decade long immersion which would result in my wife and I's signature accomplishment, *Pain, Pleasure and Prejudice: A Layman's Guide To the Koran*, to come to such a conclusion.

## Tomorrow Today

**Uzza:** Speaking of visits, it is Friday already. I have to go.

**Bob:** No it isn't.

**Gerry:** Uzza, I've thought about it and maybe we should...

**Uzza:** Just kiss and say goodbye. I am okay with that. Really.

**Bob:** Uzza, I don't think...

**Gerry:** [*looking at Uzza*] That is exactly what I was going to say.

**Uzza, Gerry:** [*they kiss*]

**Gerry:** Abdulla, or whatever his name is, is one lucky guy.

**Uzza:** Ahmed. His name his Ahmed, which is short for Muhammad, and he may not be so lucky.

**Gerry:** Uzza, are you having second thoughts?

**Uzza:** No, but Ahmed may, after I insist he holds me in his arms and kisses me before our wedding day and when we are alone.

**Bob:** Why, because you want to find out if he's a better kisser than Gerry? You know, kissing and being good in bed don't necessarily go together.

**Uzza:** We are so beyond those concerns.

**Archie:** But, only a few minutes ago...

**Uzza:** It was more than a few minutes ago. More than a few minutes ago I wanted to make love in the absolute worst place if you have never made love before, and with the wrong man. Sorry, Gerry.

**Gerry:** Don't be.

**Uzza:** If things are going to change – and you sort of convinced me of that, Archie, and you, Gerry – women cannot do it alone; in fact, without the men in our lives, we cannot do it at all. We have to find a way to engage with them as equals and in a meaningful way. Get them to acknowledge, if they love us, that there is something wrong with a religion whose founder would have the god for whom he claimed to

speak burn us in Hell for an eternity after we have given them all the sex and children they wanted and raised them to believe in the Koran.

**Gerry:** That last one is no small favour.

**Uzza:** Tell that to them, Allah and Muhammad I mean.

**Archie:** Perhaps, Uzza, a first step would be to acknowledge that “them” are one of the same.

**Bob:** I would have said STOP GETTING THE KIDS HOOKED ON THE DAMNED BOOK!

**Uzza:** [*earnestly*] I have to find out if Ahmed is open-minded about Islam.

**Gerry:** And you are going to do that by getting him to kiss you before getting married?

**Uzza:** If we even touch for no good reason before we are wife and man, even with a close relative present, we commit the sin of Khalwat, the sin of close proximity.

**Archie:** Forgive me again Uzza, but that is another one of the stupidest things I have ever heard.

**Uzza:** I may not disagree. By kissing me under the conditions I have set, Ahmed will demonstrate that he is not a steadfast believer, that he is a reasonable man ... *or not*.

**Archie:** Any man would agree to kiss you with the promise of what comes after, especially knowing that Allah will forgive him and blame you for having gotten him to sin, which you will have, a good-looking girl like you.

**Uzza:** Why, thank you. That is why Ahmed must also agree that I do not have to sign that whore’s contract. I will be his whore if that is what it takes, but I will be damned if I agree to it in writing.

**Bob:** Actually, you will damned if you don’t!

**Uzza:** You are so cute. Now I really have to go.

**Bob:** Please, not before you tell us why for you it’s Thursday?

**Uzza:** The sun has gone down. It is a new day.

**Archie:** Are you telling us that in Islam, the next day starts when the sun goes down?

**Uzza:** Yes.

**Archie:** That means, for everyone to the north and south us, one day ends and the next day starts at different times. That, too, is ridiculous.

**Gerry:** And, if you go far enough north or far enough south where the sun doesn't set or doesn't rise depending on the time of year, an Islamic day can be less than 1 hour or more than 4,000.

**Bob:** What was Allah thinking, making the length of a day dependent on when the sun sets?

**Uzza:** Do not blame Allah, blame the Jews. In imposing the god of the Jews on the Arabs, Muhammad adopted many of their eccentricities, such as their dietary rules. The same goes for how each defines a day and even the name given to that measure of time.

**Bob:** They both have the same name for the days of the week?

**Uzza:** Except for Friday, which is Gathering Day for Muslims and Saturday, which is Shabbat for the Jews.

**Bob:** What are the other days called?

**Uzza:** The first day of the week, Sunday in the West, for Jews and Muslims is the First Day, then the Second Day and so on and so forth.

**Gerry:** Simplistic in the extreme.

**Archie:** Not unlike Islamic art with its geometric figures repeated over and over so as to amaze while confining the viewer's imagination to the straight and narrow.

**Gerry:** Now you talk like an art critic.

**Archie:** What can I say? Uzza brings out the intellectual in me, deal with it.

**Uzza:** But the straight and narrow is the Path that Allah has traced for the believers. He says so in His Koran<sup>392</sup>.

**Archie:** What about the names of the months, which, unlike the names for the days of the week, for example Ramadan, evoke visions of, I don't know what, dread mostly?

**Uzza:** What goes on during Ramadan may be cause for concern, but the names of the months of the Islamic calendar exhibit the same lack of imagination in naming or in not giving evocative names to six of the

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<sup>392</sup> 24:46 We have sent down (in this Qur'an) signs making everything clear, and Allah guides whomever He pleases to a straight path.

seven days of the week, although it is not obvious to those unfamiliar with Arabic. Do you know what Ramadan means in Arabic?

**Archie:** No.

**Uzza:** It means *The Month of Great Heat*. Like many of the months in the Islamic calendar, the name reflects the climatic conditions of that area of the world that Muhammad called home, the Arabian desert; just like Muhammad's description of the vegetation of Paradise is very much a description of the vegetation you will find on a desert oasis.

**Bob:** So, when people in the great white North celebrate Ramadan in the middle of winter, it should be called the Month of the Great Cold.

**Uzza:** And therein lies the problem of naming months after climatic conditions where you live<sup>393</sup> because you cannot imagine a place that is different from yours.

**Bob:** Are you saying that Allah is not responsible for the names of the months of the Islamic calendar? That would make sense; from His perch in Paradise, He had to have a broader appreciation of weather patterns below.

**Uzza:** Allah is responsible for everything, even when He allows us to do as we please. Allah only set the number of months and the calendar type. And, from what Muhammad tells us about what creates the

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<sup>393</sup> Allah and His Messenger's adoption of a primitive calendar based on local weather conditions where each month begins eleven days (365 - 354) earlier every year (not counting leap years) makes for some interesting juxtapositions. Somewhere in the world, people are freezing during The Month of Great Heat or seeking shelter from torrential rains during The First Dry Month and perhaps The Second Dry Month.

Months of the Islamic Calendar:

- 1 The Sacred Month
- 2 The Month of Travelling
- 3 The First Spring
- 4 The Second Spring
- 5 The First Dry Month
- 6 The Second Dry Month
- 7 The Month of Respect
- 8 The Dividing Month
- 9 The Month of Great Heat
- 10 The Month of Hunting
- 11 The Month of Rest
- 12 The Month of Pilgrimage



summer heat and the winter cold - information he could only have gotten from Allah's intermediary Gabriel, or God himself - that it is Hell breathing in and breathing out once a year<sup>394</sup>, the view from both perspectives is eerily familiar.

**Archie:** Both were obviously oblivious to what goes on in the Southern Hemisphere where the seasons are reversed, Muhammad having never left the Middle East, along with the voice in his head.

**Gerry:** Can we get back to Allah's choice of calendar for a minute?

**Uzza:** Allah's calendar is based on a lunar cycle of twelve months of 29 and 30 days, making the *Islamic* year 354 or 355 days long. Islam is a product of the Dark Ages when most of the science of the Greeks and Romans was temporarily lost, which may explain the choice of calendars.

**Gerry:** Lost to humanity perhaps, but surely not to God?

**Uzza:** Why Allah chose the primitive, inaccurate lunar calendar over the more accurate scientific solar calendar, such as the Julian calendar introduced by Julius Caesar in 45 BC, remains a mystery.

**Bob:** The Romans invented the solar calendar?

**Uzza:** The first solar calendar was probably developed by the Egyptians who, as a settled agrarian civilization, needed an accurate way of determining the end of one season and the beginning of another. Being able to accurately determine the best time to plant your crops would not have been an issue for the desert dwellers of the arid Arabian Peninsula, whose main occupation was trade and the raising of livestock, mainly sheep, goats and camels.

**Gerry:** What about the rest of the world who would be forced to adopt the lunar calendar as Islam spread across the globe? What are Muslims who live above the Arctic Circle to do when the fast of Ramadan coincides with a period when the sun does not set?

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<sup>394</sup> **Narrated Abu Huraira:**

Allah's Apostle said: "The Hellfire complained to its Lord, saying, 'O my Lord, my different part eat each other up.' So Allah allowed it to take two breaths – one in the winter and the other in the summer. This is [the cause] of the severe heat and bitter cold you experience."

*Bukhari 54.482*

**Uzza:** Allah is unequivocal about fasting during the month of Ramadan, granting only an exception for the believers who are too ill<sup>395</sup> or those fighting in His Cause during the holiest month in His calendar. Muhammad may not have been aware of the sun not setting above the Arctic Circle and below the Antarctic Circle during their respective summers and had nothing to say on the matter, leaving Islamic scholars to sort it out for themselves.

**Bob:** But God had to know?

**Uzza:** Yes, yes, Allah had to know, but He may have left it to scholars and imams to make other arrangements where necessary while not contravening His decree<sup>396</sup>.

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<sup>395</sup> 2:185 The month of Ramadan is the month in which the Qur'an was revealed, providing guidance for mankind, with clear verses to guide and to distinguish right from wrong. He who witnesses that month should fast it. But if anyone is sick or on a journey, [he ought to fast] a number of other days. Allah desires ease and does not desire hardship for you, that you may complete the total number (of fasting days); glorify Allah for His Guidance, and that you may be thankful.

<sup>396</sup> 2:187 It has been made lawful to you on the night of fasting to approach your wives; they are a raiment for you, and you are a raiment for them. Allah knows that you used to betray yourselves, but He accepted your repentance and pardoned you. So now get to them (the wives) and seek what Allah has ordained for you. Eat and drink until you can discern the white thread from the black thread of dawn. Then complete the fast till nightfall. But do not approach them (the wives) while you are in devotion at the mosque. Those are the bounds of Allah; do not approach them. Thus Allah makes clear his revelations to mankind, that they may fear Him.

The revelation about discerning "the white thread from the black thread of dawn" was received in stages and appears to have been a last-minute remedy for a problem Allah may not have foreseen when He first informed Muhammad about fasting during the Month of Great Heat.

#### **Narrated Al-Bara:**

It was the custom among the companions of Muhammad that if any of them was fasting and the food was presented (for breaking his fast), but he slept before eating, he would not eat that night and the following day till sunset.

Qais bin Sirma-al-Ansari was fasting and came to his wife at the time of Iftar (breaking one's fast) and asked her whether she had anything to eat. She replied, "No, but I would go and bring some for you."

He used to do hard work during the day, so he was overwhelmed by sleep and slept. When his wife came and saw him, she said, "Disappointment for you."

When it was midday on the following day, he fainted and the Prophet was informed about the whole matter and the following verses were revealed: "You are permitted To go to your wives (for sexual relation) at the night of fasting."

**Bob:** And have they?

**Uzza:** Some scholars have suggested fasting according to the sunrise and sunset times of the holy city of Mecca instead of local time. Still others have suggested that those who live where the sun is visible or absent for several months should look to the nearest city where the sun rises and sets during a twenty-four hour period.

**Gerry:** That last suggestion, in Canada, would still make for more than twenty-three hours without food, and perhaps no time for sex, if the closest city is Inuvik, Yellowknife or Whitehorse. All this confusion could have been avoided if Allah had not chosen such an inaccurate way of measuring the macro passage of time, and saddling humanity with it till the end-of-times. Why did He do it?

**Archie:** Because it wasn't Him, even if He actually existed. The one who did it did not know any better, that's why!

**Uzza:** As a merchant who led caravans as far north as modern-day Syria, Muhammad would have travelled these long distances mainly at night because of the desert heat. On these night journeys the moon was more of a friend than the blistering desert sun, and therefore a natural candidate for measuring the passage of time.

**Gerry:** Then you agree with Archie; the Prophet chose the calendar?

**Uzza:** For the believers, there is only one reason why Muhammad adopted the lunar calendar and that is because Allah told him so<sup>397</sup>. And if Allah chose it, then the traverse of the moon must be a better way of measuring the passage of the days, the months and the years than the sun, as was done when the Moon was a god worshipped by most of the inhabitants of the Peninsula.

**Gerry:** I remember, from my reading of the Koran, that Allah said he made the moon a light<sup>398</sup>. Is it possible He was not aware that the moon

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So, they were overjoyed by it. And then Allah also revealed: "And eat and drink until the white thread of dawn appears to you distinct from the black thread (of the night)." (2.187)

*Bukhari 31.139*

<sup>397</sup> 2:189 They ask you about the crescents (the new moons), say: "They are times fixed for mankind and for the pilgrimage." It is not righteousness to enter houses from the back; but the righteous is he who fears Allah. Enter then the houses by their front doors; and fear Allah that you may prosper.

<sup>398</sup> 10:5 It is He Who made the sun a bright radiance and the moon a light, and determined phases for it so that you may know the number of years and the

simply reflects the sun's light and therefore gave it more importance than it deserved, including choosing it to measure the passage of time?

**Uzza:** I will leave that one for the scholars as well.

**Archie:** I'm sorry, but I'm stumped.

**Uzza:** [*can't resist a smile*] Allah's variation of the lunar calendar also needlessly complicated things by moving through the seasons.

**Gerry:** Why do you say needlessly?

**Uzza:** Allah modelled His lunar calendar on that of the pre-Islamic Arabs. If he had left well-enough alone, it would have been better. The pre-Islamic Arabs valued common sense and so did the gods they worshipped. It was the custom of some of the tribes that shared the Peninsula, before the Muslim conquest, to add a thirteenth month when it became obvious that the lunar calendar had lost all connection with the seasons and needed to be re-synchronized with the solar year. This, Allah claimed, was an attempt by the unbelievers to interfere with his sacred months and He forbade it, declaring it an evil thing to do<sup>399</sup>.

**Gerry:** It will be difficult to get used to a lunar calendar.

**Uzza:** You will use the lunar calendar mostly for your religious observances, for even the most Islamic of governments have come to accept that Allah may have, what do you say, missed the boat on this one, and use a modern-day solar calendar to conduct the business of government and day-to-day operations. What may be more difficult to get used to is how Islam dates history. How it separates its history into two periods, before and after Muhammad, or more specifically before and after his flight from Mecca to Medina with his followers in 622. The year of this exodus is known as the Hijra or Hegira. The Hegira begins the Muslim calendar and is represented as 1 AH or 1 al-Hijra.

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reckoning. Allah did not create that except in truth, expounding the Signs to a people who know.

<sup>399</sup> 9:36 The number of months, with Allah, is twelve months by Allah's Ordinance from the day He created the heavens and the earth. Four of these are Sacred. This is the right religion, so do not wrong yourselves during them; but fight the polytheists all together just as they fight you all together; and know that Allah is on the side of the righteous.

9:37 Postponing the [Sacred Month] is an added disbelief by which the unbelievers seek to mislead, allowing it one year and prohibiting it another year, so as to equal the number [of months] Allah has made sacred. Their evil deeds are made attractive to them; and Allah does not guide the unbelieving people.

**Bob:** Just like we do, before and after JC.

**Uzza:** Your BC and AD as era markers will soon be remembered, if remembered at all, along with your so-called Judaeo-Christian heritage, as relics of the age of ignorance.

**Bob:** We are the ignorant ones? I don't think so.

**Uzza:** The period before Islam is generally referred to by believers as Jahiliya, the time of ignorance, when world views as numerous and as varied as the colours of the rainbow flourished.

**Archie:** And that is being ignorant?

**Uzza:** From Allah's perspective, yes! This is why He sent the self-proclaimed prophet Muhammad and this multi-coloured view of the universe changed to black and white, and humankind's relationship with its Creator was demoted to that of mere supplicants of a vain and vengeful God.

**Archie:** Then Allah is the ignorant one.

**Uzza:** Your opinion is irrelevant, as is mine, as are the opinions of all those who would hold contrary opinions. Our differing opinions, which we now express at our risk and peril, mattered once, but not anymore and you know why.

**Bob:** What did you mean when you said that "what goes on during Ramadan may be cause for concern?"

**Uzza:** When people think of Ramadan, they think of people fasting during the day and feasting at night.

**Bob:** And we should be concerned about people fasting?

**Uzza:** Of course not. Fasting, if done in moderation, is good for both body and soul; but Ramadan is much more than fasting. It is about using the time spent avoiding food and drink to immerse yourself in the Koran. It is more about the Koran than anything else.

**Archie:** That can't be good!

**Bob:** Whenever Ramadan rolls around, you hear people saying that this is when Allah revealed the Koran to Muhammad. Is that true?

**Uzza:** In one revelation, Allah said He did just that, the famous and elusive Night of Power revelation<sup>400</sup>, and Gabriel is said to have spent

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<sup>400</sup> 97:1 We have sent it (the Qur'an) down on the night of Power.

every night of Ramadan with Muhammad going over the Koran<sup>401</sup>. That being said, the book itself is all over the place as to when it was sent down. There is the aforementioned Night of Power; in another series of revelations, it was sent down piecemeal<sup>402</sup>; and still in another series, Allah admits that the people asked it to be sent all at once like He did for Moses<sup>403</sup>.

**Archie:** Book, know thyself.

**Uzza:** With his followers more convinced than ever of the need to rid the world of unbelievers after a period of intense immersion in the Koran, Muhammad would use the feast Eid al-Fitr, which marks the end of Ramadan, as he did the feast that marks the end of the Hajj –the

97:2 If only you knew what is the Night of Power.

97:3 The Night of Power is better than a thousand months.

97:4 The angels and the Spirit (Gabriel) descend thereon by the Leave of their Lord with every Command.

97:5 It is peace, till the break of dawn.

**Narrated Ibn Umar:**

Some men amongst the companions of the Prophet were shown in their dreams that the night of Qadr (Night of Power) was in the last seven nights of Ramadan.

Allah's Apostle said, "It seems that all your dreams agree that (the Night of Qadr) is in the last seven nights, and whoever wants to search for it (i.e. the Night of Qadr) should search in the last seven (nights of Ramadan)."

*Bukhari 32.232*

<sup>401</sup> During the month of Ramadan, the angel Gabriel visited the Prophet every day; visits during which their roles seemed to be reversed.

**Narrated Ibn Abbas:**

The Prophet was the most generous amongst the people, and he used to be more so in the month of Ramadan when Gabriel visited him, and Gabriel used to meet him on every night of Ramadan till the end of the month. The Prophet used to recite the Holy Qur'an to Gabriel, and when Gabriel met him, he used to be more generous than a fast wind (which causes rain and welfare).

*Bukhari 31.126*

<sup>402</sup> 17:105 We have revealed it in truth, and in truth it came down; and We have sent you (Muhammad) only as a bearer of good news and a warner.

17:106 It is a Qur'an which we have divided into parts that you may recite it with deliberation, and We revealed it piecemeal.

<sup>403</sup> 25:32 The unbelievers say: "If only this Qur'an had been sent down on him all at once." That is how We wanted to strengthen your heart with it and We have revealed it in stages.

two most important religious holidays in Islam – to give his army its marching orders<sup>404</sup>.

**Archie:** What a surprise. If the topic is the Koran, violence is sure to follow.

**Uzza:** Not always.

**Gerry:** I will never look at Ramadan the same way, or at a Muslim the same way.

**Uzza:** I will take that as a compliment, but now, I really must go.

**Gerry:** Will I see you again; next Thursday maybe?

**Uzza:** Inshallah or Ahmed not willing [*a quick kiss goodbye*], but for dinner, okay.

**Gerry:** I understand and thank you.

**Archie:** Will that be Thursday, the day before, or Thursday, the day after?

**Uzza:** You make me angry, but you also make me laugh, Mr. Bartender, so you cannot be all bad.

**Archie:** I like you, too.

**Uzza:** [*places a hand on Bob's shoulder as she gets ready to leave*] It means God willing, Bob.

**Bob:** I knew that.

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<sup>404</sup> **Narrated Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri:**

The Prophet used to proceed to the Musalla (open space outside a mosque that is mainly used for praying, Encyclopedia of Islam) on the days of Id-ul-fitr and Id-ul-Adha; the first thing to begin with was the prayer and after that he would stand in front of the people and the people would keep sitting in their rows. Then he would preach to them, advise them and give them orders, (i.e. Khutba). And after that if he wished to send an army for an expedition, he would do so.

*Bukhari 15.76*

## Epilogue

*[It's a few days later and Johnny is back at the bar talking with Archie.]*

**Johnny:** Too bad about Uzza.

**Archie:** Yes it is. You know that I record everything that goes on in my bar.

**Johnny:** No, I did not know that.

**Archie:** Well I do, and I would like you to make what happened last night part of your next broadcast.

**Johnny:** It will show you serving liquor to a woman you knew to be a Muslim. It will show Uzza questioning the tenets of her faith, a capital offense where she comes from.

**Archie:** I will lose my license, I will probably go to jail, her killer will go free and the guy who shot you, or someone like him, will come back to finish the job.

**Johnny:** You're asking me to commit suicide.

**Archie:** They are willing to kill and die for what they believe in. We should at least be ready to risk our lives, like Uzza did, in the hope that it will make a difference.

**Johnny:** But it won't make a difference. It's too late!



## Afterword

The clash we are witnessing around the world is not a clash of religions or a clash of civilization. It is a clash between civilization and backwardness, between the civilized and the primitive, between rationality and barbarity. It is a clash between freedom and oppression, between democracy and dictatorship. It is a clash between human rights, on one hand, and the violation of these rights, on the other. It is a clash between those who treat women like beasts, and those who treat them like human beings ...

*Wafa Sultan, outspoken Syrian-American woman during a debate broadcast on Al-Jazeera.*

Imagine extra-terrestrials visiting our devout new world after backwardness has triumphed over civilization and what they will find.

They will find it devoid of music, devoid of colour, devoid of fun and laughter, devoid of songs sung by females, devoid of the beauty of a woman's face and form, devoid of art that is not limited to meaningless geographical figures; and above all, devoid of wonder, spontaneity and imagination.

In this bleak, predictable world where the exercise of free will means death, they will witness a form of collective brainwashing where everyone, like pre-programmed automatons, constantly interrupt whatever they are doing to get down on their hands and knees and kiss the ground and mouth many of the same phrases they said earlier, and will repeat later, most in praise of a mythical, narcissistic deity which cannot be praised enough.

They may watch in horror some pleading pitiful creature buried up to her neck, whose gentle features they have never gazed upon before, and wonder why bearded men in flowing robes and turbans, in front of a crowd of cheering onlookers shouting how great is their god, gleefully throw rocks at it in an attempt to kill it as part of some barbaric sadistic retribution ritual.

They will not be able to avoid coming across men arguing amongst themselves at a bazaar, or other venues where goods are traded and sold, about the value of people on display, some of them in chains:

men, boys and old women marketed as labourers and young females as sex slaves.

The extra-terrestrials will undoubtedly have an idea, from intercepted radio and television signals, of what the people of Earth were like when cruelty was mostly make-believe, when progress was not everywhere a sin and empirical knowledge came from enquiry and reason, not from what was allegedly revealed at the height of the Dark Ages to a mortal by a god. They may even wonder how such a reversal could have come about.

But you will know.

## **APPENDICES**

## **Abdullah bin Salam and the First Meal of the People of Paradise**

Abdullah bin Salam was a rabbi and a respected member of the Jewish community before he became a Muslim after a short meeting with Muhammad who answered three fatuous questions to the rabbi's satisfaction. It was fortuitous that the angel Gabriel, whom bin Salam then considered an enemy of the Jews, had just had a conversation with Muhammad about what was on his mind.

Narrated Anas:

Abdullah bin Salam heard the news of the arrival of Allah's Apostle (at Medina) while he was on a farm collecting its fruits. So he came to the Prophet and said, "I will ask you about three things which nobody knows unless he be a prophet. Firstly, what is the first portent of the Hour? What is the first meal of the people of Paradise? And what makes a baby look like its father or mother?"

The Prophet said, "Just now Gabriel has informed me about that."

'Abdullah said, "Gabriel?"

The Prophet said, "Yes."

Abdullah said, "He, among the angels is the enemy of the Jews."

On that the Prophet recited this Holy Verse: "Whoever is an enemy to Gabriel (let him die in his fury!) for he has brought it (i.e. Qur'an) down to your heart by Allah's permission." (2:97)

Then he added, "As for the first portent of the Hour, it will be a fire that will collect the people from the East to West. And as for the first meal of the people of Paradise, it will be the caudate (i.e. extra) lobe of the fish liver. And if a man's discharge proceeded that of the woman, then the child resembles the father, and if the woman's discharge proceeded that of the man, then the child resembles the mother."

On hearing that, Abdullah said, "I testify that None has the right to be worshipped but Allah, and that you are the Apostle of Allah, O, Allah's Apostle; the Jews are liars, and if they should come to know that I have embraced Islam, they would accuse me of being a liar."

In the meantime some Jews came (to the Prophet) and he asked them, "What is Abdullah's status amongst you?"

They replied, "He is the best amongst us, and he is our chief and the son of our chief."

The Prophet said, "What would you think if Abdullah bin Salam embraced Islam?"

They replied, "May Allah protect him from this!"

Then Abdullah came out and said, "I testify that None has the right to be worshipped but Allah and that Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah."

The Jews then said, "Abdullah is the worst of us and the son of the worst of us," and disparaged him.

On that Abdullah said, "O Allah's Apostle! This is what I was afraid of!"

*Bukhari 60.7*

## **A Gratuitous Discrediting of Christian Doctrine**

A short, well-argued appendix to the free Saudi sponsored translation of the Koran (the most widely available worldwide), which reinforces Allah's denial of the Crucifixion along with Jesus' divinity using quotes from the Gospels themselves.

Translation of the meanings of  
**THE NOBLE  
QUR'ÂN**  
IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

**BY**

**Dr. Muhammad Taqî-ud-Dîn al-Hilâlî**  
Formerly Professor of Islamic Faith and Teachings  
Islamic University, al-Madinah al-Munawwarah

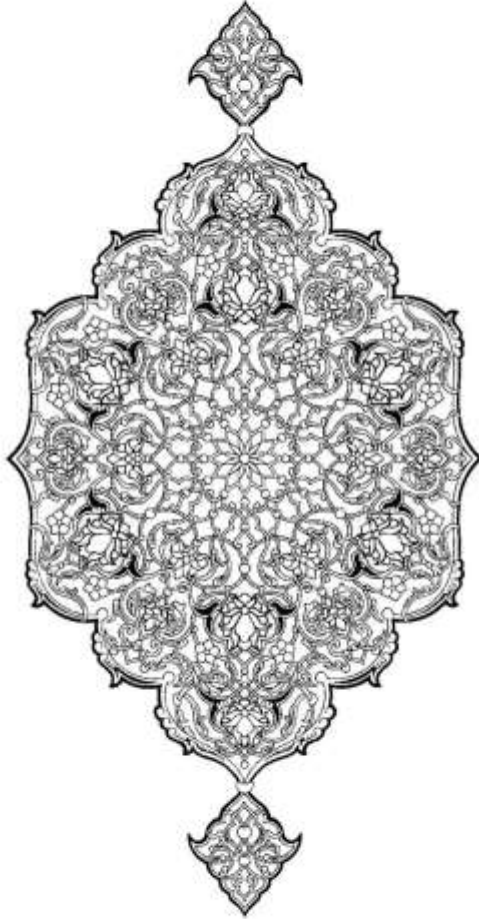
**AND**

**Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khân**  
Formerly Director, University Hospital  
Islamic University, al-Madinah al-Munawwarah

**KING FAHD COMPLEX FOR THE  
PRINTING OF THE HOLY QUR'ÂN  
Madinah, K.S.A.**

وَقَفَّ لِلَّهِ تَعَالَى مِنْ خَادِمِ الْحَرَمَيْنِ الشَّرِيفَيْنِ  
الْمَلِكِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْعَزِيزِ آلِ سَعُودٍ  
وَلَا يَجُوزُ بَيْعُهُ

مَدِينَةُ الْمَدِينَةِ



For the Endowment

Endowment for Allah's sake from the Custodian of the  
Two Holy Mosques King 'Abdullah ibn  
'Abd al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud

**NOT FOR SALE**



**JESUS AND MUHAMMAD**  
(peace be upon them)  
**IN THE BIBLE AND THE QUR'AN**

**BIBLICAL EVIDENCE OF JESUS BEING A SERVANT OF GOD AND  
HAVING NO SHARE IN DIVINITY**

**INTRODUCTION**

All praise is to the One to Whom all Dignity, Honour and Glory are due; the Unique with perfect attributes, Who begets not, nor is He begotten. He has no equal but He is the Almighty, Omnipotent. He sent His Messengers and Prophets to guide humanity towards monotheism; to worship Him Alone, the only One Worthy of worship, and to warn them of the eternal dire consequences of polytheism, associating partners with One Allāh and the worship of creatures.

Peace and Blessings of Allāh be upon all the Prophets and Messengers, especially on Muhammad, the last of the Prophets, and on all who follow him in righteousness until the Day of Recompense.

**JESUS AND THE DEVIL IN THE BIBLE**

In the New Testament of the Bible, in the fourth chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew, the sixth and seventh verses clearly indicate that Jesus is an obedient mortal and God is the Master and Lord according to his saying in the seventh verse:

“It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord, thy God.”

In this chapter we read that the Devil actually carried the Messiah, and took him from place to place. How can the Devil carry God? Glory be to Allāh; He is above such blasphemy!

Then the Devil orders him to prostrate before him and worship him, even tempting him with worldly possessions. How can the Devil even dare such an audacity with God? When the Devil wanted Jesus to comply with his orders, he (Jesus) replied by saying that it was written (in the previous Books):

“Thou shalt worship the Lord, thy God; And Him only shalt thou serve.”  
— Matthew 4:10.

### CHILDREN OF GOD

Jesus never called himself *Son of God* but he used to call himself the 'Son of Man' (Mark 2:10) although he heard himself being called by that name he did not object — as assumed in the Bible — and did not consider the title exclusively for him.

According to the Biblical term in the Old and New Testaments, every God-fearing righteous person is called 'Son of God'. In Matthew 5:9 we read:

"Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God."

In Matthew 5:45 —

"That ye may be children of your Father which is in heaven..."

### GOD THE FATHER

In Matthew 5:48 —

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

In Matthew 6:1 —

"... otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven."

Matthew 7:21 —

"Not every one that sayeth unto me (Jesus), Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of my Father, which is in heaven."

**N.B.** The word 'Lord' here was translated as *Rabb* in the Arabic version of the Bible so that people may be convinced that Jesus is God! But if one studies the rest of the verse, one will note that the verse bears testimony to the subservience (to God's Will) of the Messiah (Jesus). Therefore the correct translation should be:

"Not every one that sayeth to me, O my Master, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

It is obvious from the above readings from the Bible that the term 'Father' is used for God in numerous places in the Bible. It is never used exclusively for Jesus.

Matthew 11:25 —

"At that time Jesus answered and said, 'I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and has revealed them unto babes.'"

**JESUS THE WORSHIPPER**

Matthew 14:23 —

"And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray....."

If Jesus is God or a part of God then why did he pray? In fact, prayer is always from a submitting, needy and dependent one for the Mercy of Almighty Allāh as mentioned in the Qur'ān:

"O mankind! It is you who stand in need of Allāh but Allāh is the Rich (Free of all wants and needs), the Worthy of all praise" (V.35:15).

And in V.19:93 of the Qur'ān:-

"There is none in the heavens and the earth but comes to the Most Gracious (Allāh) as a slave."

**A BIBLICAL STORY**

Matthew 15:22-28 —

"And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts and cried unto him, saying, 'Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David: my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.' But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying; 'Send her away, for she crieth after us.' But he answered and said, 'I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'

Then came she and worshipped him, saying, 'Lord, help me.' But he answered and said, 'It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs.'

And she said, 'Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.'

Then Jesus answered and said unto her, 'O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.' "

In this story about a woman from Canaan there are noteworthy points:

- (1) Lack of mercy and love charged against Jesus (if the incident is reported correctly).
- (2) Degraded discrimination in regard to the uplifting of his tribe and not for the others.
- (3) Tribal pride of descendance and prejudice against others and calling them dogs.
- (4) An ignorant polytheist woman debated with him and won him over.

**JESUS: A PROPHET OF ALLĀH.**

Matthew 19:16-17 —

"And behold, one came and said unto him, 'Good master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?' And he said unto him, 'Why callest thou me good? (There is) none good but one, (i.e.) God, but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.' "

The above verses note this acknowledgment of his submissiveness (to Allāh's Will).

Matthew 21:45-46 —

"And when the chief priests and pharisees had heard his parable, they perceived that he spoke of them. But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude because they took him for a Prophet."

Here it is proved that all those who believed in Jesus during his life-time did not believe in him being God or the Son of God or one in the doctrine of Trinity; but they believed in him as being a Prophet only. This is indeed one of the strongest points of evidence against those who believe in the Divinity of Jesus (Incarnation of God) if only they pondered.

**JESUS: A SERVANT OF ALLĀH.**

Matthew 23:8 —

"But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your master, even Jesus, and all ye are brethren."

Here it is clearly proved that Jesus was servant of Allāh, and that there is only One Master and He is Allāh. In the Arabic version of the Bible this verse has been translated so that Jesus is meant to be the master whereas the English rendering is nearer the original sense.

Matthew 23:9 —

"And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father which is in heaven."

From this you will note that fatherhood and sonship is meant to be the relationship between the Lord and His servants: it is meant in a general sense and not specifically for Jesus.

Matthew 24:36 —

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only."

This is a definite proof that the Final Hour is unknown to any but Allāh, thus Jesus' knowledge is imperfect like all other men; Allāh Alone is All-Knowing, Omniscient.

Matthew 26:39 —

"And he (Jesus) went a little farther, and fell on his face and prayed, saying, 'O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt.'"

We note here that the person speaking is unaware of Allāh's Will and realizes the fact that he is a servant of Allāh. He (Allāh) Alone can cause the change.

#### THE COMPILATION OF THE BIBLE

Matthew 27:7-8 —

"And they took counsel and bought with them the potter's field to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called the Field of Blood, unto this day."

From these verses we understand that the Bible (the New Testament) was not written during Jesus' life-time but long after the occurrence of the events described, having been retained in the memory of the people.

Matthew 27:46 —

"And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? (My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?)"

This is according to their (Christians') assumption that Jesus cried in a loud voice saying the above words while he was being crucified. This is a great insult as such words could only come from unbelievers in Allāh. Further, it is incredible that such words should come out from a Prophet of Allāh because Allāh never breaks His Promise and His Prophets never complained against His Promise.

#### JESUS: PREACHER OF MONOTHEISM (*TAUHĪD*)

In John 17:3 —

"And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent."

In Mark 12:28-30 —

"And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, 'Which is the first commandment of all?' And Jesus answered him: 'The first of all the commandments is; hear O Israel, the Lord thy God is One Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord, thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.'"



In Mark 12:32 —

"And the scribe said unto him, 'Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is One God; and there is none other but He.' "

In Mark 12:34 —

"...he (Jesus) said unto him, 'Thou art not far from the kingdom of God...' "

In these verses, Jesus (peace be upon him) himself had testified that Allāh is the One God, there is none other than Him, and that whoever believes in His Oneness, he is near the Kingdom of Allāh. Therefore whoever associates partners with Allāh or believes in the Trinity is far away from the Kingdom of Allāh, and whoever is far away from the Kingdom of Allāh he is the enemy of Allāh.

In Matthew 24:36 —

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of the heaven, but my Father only."

A similar text was quoted from Matthew which is exactly as proclaimed by the Qur'ān in that none knows when the Hour will come except Allāh. This establishes the fact that Jesus was subservient to Allāh and that he had no share in Divinity: that he was an incarnation of God, was an innovation by the people of Canaan.

In John 20:16 —

"Jesus said unto her, 'Mary'. She turned herself, and sayeth unto him, 'Rabboni', which is to say, Master, Jesus saith unto her, 'Touch me not: For I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father; and to my God and your God.' Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she has seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things unto her."

In the above narrative Jesus clearly testified that Allāh is his God and their God, making no difference between him and them in the worship of the One Allāh. Whoever believes that Jesus is God has indeed blasphemed against Allāh and betrayed Jesus and all the Prophets and Messengers of Allāh.

#### **BIBLICAL PROPHECY ON THE ADVENT OF MUHAMMAD (peace be upon him ﷺ)**

John 14:15-16 —

"If you love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter that he may abide with you forever."

Muslim theologians have said that "another Comforter" is Muhammad, the

Messenger of Allāh; and him to "abide forever" means the perpetuity of his laws and way of life (*Shari'ah*) and the Book (*Qur'ān*) which was revealed to him.

John 15:26-27 —

"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning."

John 16:5-8 —

"But now I go my way to Him that sent me and none of you asketh me 'Whither goest thou?' But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and approve righteousness and judgment."

John 16:12-14 —

"I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. How be it when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and he shall shew it unto you."

John 16:16 —

"A little while and ye shall not see me: and again a little while, ye shall see me, because I go to the Father."

Muslim theologians have stated that the person who is described by Jesus to come after him — in the above verses — does not comply with any other person but Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم the Messenger of Allāh. This 'person' whom Jesus prophesied will come after him is called in the Bible 'Paraclete'. This word was deleted by later interpreters and translators and changed at times to 'Spirit of Truth', and at other times, to 'Comforter' and sometimes to 'Holy Spirit'. The original word is Greek and its meaning is 'one whom people praise exceedingly.' The sense of the word is applicable to the word 'Muhammad' (in Arabic).

#### FINALITY OF PROOFS ON THE FABRICATION OF THE STORY OF THE CROSS

(1) The Bible testifies to the fact that Jesus was known among the Jews; he used to preach and deliver sermons in the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem. It was therefore, unnecessary to hire a Jew for thirty pieces of silver to direct them to him as related in Matthew.

(2) It is related that one of the twelve disciples named Judas Iscariot was hired to direct the Jews to Jesus. They then sentenced him after which Judas was greatly ashamed and dissociated himself from their act and then committed suicide. All this took place within twenty- four hours. The contradictions are obvious.

(3) The clearest proof which alone is sufficient to discredit this story is when the Jews passed the sentence of death against Jesus and intended to get the approval of the governor, Pontius Pilate.

Matthew 27:11-14 —

‘And Jesus stood before the governor: The governor asked him, saying, ‘Art thou the king of the Jews!’ And Jesus said unto him, ‘Thou sayest’: And when he was accused of (by) the chief priests and elders he answered nothing. Then said Pilate unto him, ‘Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee?’ And he answered him never (to) a word...”

The Christians will interpret the above verse to mean that Jesus wanted to die on the Cross for the redemption of mankind and for the forgiveness of their sins. If so, then why did he ask to turn away that cup from him (i.e. death)? Why did he cry out while on the Cross (as they assume): “O Lord, why hast Thou forsaken me?” How could he have remained silent when the truth was being challenged? He was known for his soul-inspiring sermons challenging the learned Jewish *Rabbis*. No sane person can believe in this. If the story of the Cross is disproved then the very foundation on which Christianity is based, will be demolished.

Muslims believe that Jesus was not crucified by the Jews as revealed in the Holy Qur’ân by Allâh in a crystal clear manner: V. 4:157,158.—

“And because of their saying (in boast): ‘We killed Messiah Jesus, son of Mary, the Messenger of Allâh’; — but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but it appeared so to them [the resemblance of Jesus was put over another man (and they killed that man)], and those who differ therein are full of doubts. They have no (certain) knowledge, they follow nothing but conjecture. For surely, they killed him not (i.e., Jesus, son of Mary). But Allâh raised him (Jesus) up (with his body and soul) unto Himself (and he ﷺ is in the heavens).. And Allâh is Ever All-Powerful, All-Wise.”

The Jews themselves, together with the entire Christian world, believe that he was crucified. As proofs against their views and to prove the truth of the Muslim verdict through the Bible, I prepared the following set of questions based on the Book of Matthew in the New Testament of the Bible. (Chapters 26 and 27):

(1) Did those who captured Jesus (according to their assumption) know him in person? or did they not know him?



Matthew testifies that they did not know him.

(2) Was it during the day or night that he was captured?

Matthew says — it was during the night.

(3) Who was the one that directed them to him?

Matthew says: He was one of his twelve disciples called Judas Iscariot.

(4) Did he direct them free of charge or for a fixed reward which they specified for him?

Matthew says: He directed them to him for a fixed reward of thirty pieces of silver.

(5) What was the condition of Jesus during that night?

Matthew says: He was fearful and prostrated in prayer saying: "O God, if it is possible for You to let this cup pass from me, then let it pass." It is incredible that such words could come from a believer in God, let alone a Prophet of God, because all believers believe that God has power over all things.

(6) What was the condition of his eleven disciples?

Matthew says: Sleep overcame them that night together with their teacher (according to their assumption) out of fear.

(7) Was Jesus contented with their condition?

Matthew says (verses 40-46): He was not satisfied. He used to come to them to wake them up saying: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak." Then he would come again to find them asleep and he would again wake them up and say the same thing. This weakness could not have been spoken of righteous pupils even if they were pupils of an ordinary pious teacher, let alone the disciples of Jesus, son of Mary.

(8) Did they help him when those ruffians captured him?

Matthew says: They forsook him and fled.

(9) Did Jesus have confidence in his disciples that night?

Matthew says: Jesus informed them that they will all forsake him. Then Jesus said unto them: "Verily I say unto thee that this night before the cock crows, thou shalt deny me — thrice." Peter said unto him, "Although I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." Likewise also said all the disciples. And so it happened.

(10) How did those ruffians capture him?

Matthew says: They came to him with swords and staves after they were directed to him by a Jew, then they captured him as described in verse 57:

"And they that had laid hold on Jesus, led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the elders were assembled."

There they passed the sentence of death on him. The ruffians then took him away, spat on his face and struck him with their hands after which they stripped him of his clothes and clad him in scarlet robes, then placed a crown of thorns on his head and took him about, teasing and mocking him. They said to him: 'You are the king of Israel according to your claim.' They severely degraded him.

(11) Who finally decided to pass the death sentence against him?

Matthew says: He was Pontius Pilate, who was at that time the governor of Palestine.

(12) When the ruffians brought that man before the governor and informed him that the priest of the Jews passed the sentence of death by crucifixion according to their law (Torah), did he believe in them without investigation?

Matthew says: He did not believe them but asked that man: "Is it true what they have said?" He remained silent. The question was repeated and he continued to remain silent. He remained silent in view of the truth; it was essential for him even if he was not a Prophet to clarify the truth and deny the false accusation of the Jews. The governor's wife went to the governor and she said to him: "Have thou nothing to do with that just man? for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him."

The Bible states that Jesus delivered lengthy speeches to the Jews rebuking and warning them which amounted to defaming them. Then why was he silent that day? The governor's intention for asking him was to stand for the truth.

(13) How was he crucified according to their assumption?

Matthew says: They crucified him between two thieves both of whom abused him by saying to him, "If you are truthful then save yourself."

(14) This was a great calamity. What did he say while on the cross (according to their assumption)?

Matthew says (27:46):

Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? (that is to say,) my God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

This is a blatant declaration of disbelief according to all theological authorities. Whoever relates it to a Prophet is a disbeliever according to the revealed religions.

Almighty Allāh, in the Qur'ān warns, the Jews and the Christians against their blasphemy; that Jesus is an incarnation of God (Allāh) or the son of God (Allāh) or in rejecting him totally; and that they must believe in him as a Messenger of Allāh only:

“And there is none of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) but must believe in him (Jesus, son of Mary, as only a Messenger of Allāh and a human being) before his (Jesus عليه السلام or a Jew's or a Christian's) death (at the time of the appearance of the angel of death). And on the Day of Resurrection, he (Jesus) will be a witness against them.” (V.4:159).

## **A Flood Story like No Other**

After the murder of Abel, which is said to have occurred near present day Damascus, Adam became convinced that it was only a matter of time before God decided to punish mankind for its increasingly wicked ways by drowning everyone. In anticipation of the Flood, he built a shelter for the "black stone" he brought from Paradise on mount Hira, the same mount on which the future Prophet Muhammad would receive the revelations.

The flood water came the day when the sins of man became of such magnitude that they could no longer be tolerated, as Adam had predicted. A popular Arab tradition is that rain is the spit of angels. Rain being a rare occurrence where they lived, the Arabs, while being extremely imaginative, could not visualize the flood as real rain, simple angel spit that is.

The flood waters must have come from somewhere else; they did not fall from the sky. The water that inundated the desert and the entire Earth simultaneously gushed from the depths of the Earth, from a hole in the Earth's crust, like from a broken water main or a fire hydrant.

11:40 And when Our Command came, and the water gushed forth from the earth, We said: "Carry in it (the Ark) two of every kind, together with your family, except for those who have been doomed, and [take] those who believe." However only a few believers besides him were there.

This hole-in-the-ground from which water flooded the entire Earth is said to be at Kufa where the Great Mosque is located. In Shia traditions the Ark was built at Kufa:

The Ark began its voyage at Kufa in central Iraq and sailed to Mecca, circling the Ka'ba (sic) [seven times] before finally travelling to Mount Judi where it settled.

*Ibn Haukal [died 978 A.D.]*

... Before sailing off into the unknown, on the advice of the angel Gabriel who had earlier taken the sacred stone to the shelter built by Adam on mount Hira, Noah did seven complete circles of the Ka'ba aboard the Ark.

This circumambulation of the sacred sanctuary by Noah is called tawaf and is still done to this day by pilgrims as part of the Hajj and the Umra.

### 333 A Flood Story like No Other

Noah's wife, it is said, and one of her sons were great sinners and were not allowed on the Ark.

In the Koran, the son did not make it onto the Ark because he thought he would be safe on higher ground [11:43]. There is no mention of Noah's wife not boarding the Ark, only that, along with the wife of Lot, she will burn in Hell for betraying her husband in some unspecified manner [66:10] as wives in the Koran often do.

In the Traditions, Noah is buried near Baalbek in Lebanon's Beqaa Valley. Adam in Mecca, his tomb at the center of the universe, Eve is buried at Jeddah.

From: *La Vie de Mahomet*, Virgil Gheorghiu, Robert Lafont, 1962

## **Allah Annihilates Petra**

In the Koran, Allah brags about annihilating more than a handful of cities as an example of his pitiless devastating might, not satisfied with Sodom and Gomorrah, whose names He can't be bothered to remember.

Not surprisingly, perhaps, the cities Allah crows about destroying and whose names He remembers were ones with which Muhammad was familiar, from stories he heard and from stumbling unto ruins, as is undoubtedly the case with Petra, during his numerous treks north from Mecca to Syria during his more than two decades as an itinerant merchant before Allah chose him as His last and greatest spokesperson.

Petra in the Koran is called Thamud. The people of Thamud were wiped out for not heeding the warning of the prophet Salih, the only non-biblical prophet, apart from Muhammad, found in the Koran.

The Destruction of Thamud is an exception to Allah's predilection for committing genocide because people called His messengers liars. Nonetheless, the destruction is just as ghastly and the reason for the destruction of the people of Thamud is about as petty as petty gets where gods are concerned.

Allah is very proud of what He did to the inhabitants of Petra/Thamud and their city. In at least nine chapters of His Book, Thamud is mentioned as a place and a people He obliterated. You could be forgiven if you confused Allah's passion for Petra with that of a tourist who visits an impressive faraway shrine and keeps on returning to it during conversations to impress his friends and acquaintances.

Following is Allah's account of the destruction of Thamud in the surah Poets. In this account, the people regret what they did to Allah's camel, the reason for their obliteration in eight of the nine recollections; but, being sorry did not deter the wrath of the Compassionate, the Merciful.

26:141 Thamud denounced the Messengers as liars.

26:142 When their brother Salih said to them: "Do you not fear God?

26:143 "I am a faithful Messenger to you.

26:144 "So fear Allah and obey me.

26:145 "I do not ask you any wages for this; my wage is with the Lord of the Worlds.

26:146 "Will you be left herebelow in peace?

26:147 "In gardens and springs;

26:148 "And plantations and palm trees, whose shoots are tender?

26:149 "And will you hew skillfully houses in the mountains?

26:150 "So fear Allah and obey me.

26:151 "And do not obey the orders of the extravagant;

26:152 "Who work corruption in the land and do not make amends."

26:153 They said: "You are certainly a man bewitched.

26:154 "You are only a mortal like us. Produce, then, a sign, if you are truthful."

26:155 He said: "This is a she-camel; this has a drinking day, and you have a fixed drinking day.

26:156 "Do not cause her any harm, or else the punishment of a Great Day will smite you."

26:157 However, they hamstrung her, and became full of remorse.

26:158 Then, punishment smote them. There is surely in that a sign; and most of them were not believers.

26:159 Your Lord is truly the All-Mighty, the Merciful.

Allah out-schemed the Arabs of Petra (Thamud in the Koran) in the only recollection where it is not the maiming of a she-camel that is responsible for its destruction.

27:45 And We have sent to Thamud their brother Salih, saying: "Worship Allah"; and lo and behold, they split into two groups fighting each other.

27:46 He said: "O my people, why do you hasten the evil course before the fair? If only you would seek Allah's Forgiveness, that perchance you may receive mercy!"

27:47 They said: "We augured ill of you and your companions." He said: 'Your bird of omen is with Allah, but you are a people who are being tested."

27:48 And they were in the city nine individuals, who worked corruption in the land and did not set things right.

27:49 They said: "Swear one to the other by Allah: We will attack him and his family at night; then we will tell his guardian: 'We did not witness the slaying of his family, and we are indeed truthful.'"

27:50 They schemed a scheme and We schemed a scheme, while they were unaware.

27:51 See, then, what was the outcome of their scheming; We destroyed them together with all their people.

27:52 Their houses are in ruin, on account of their wrongdoing. There is in that a sign for a people who know.

27:53 And we delivered those who believed and were God-fearing.



## **Allah On Sexual Assault**

Joseph's story will provide an opportunity for Allah to offer an opinion on rape and why women who complain of being raped are usually lying, and how you can tell using the example of the wife of the Egyptian who bought Joseph. She will attempt to seduce the reluctant Joseph after being told by her husband to make his stay an honourable one.

12:21 And the Egyptian who bought him said to his wife: "Make his stay honourable; perhaps he will profit us or we may take him for a son." Thus We established Joseph in the land and taught him the interpretation of dreams. Allah has control over His Affairs though most people do not know.

12:22 When he was fully grown, We gave him judgement and knowledge, and thus We reward the beneficent.

12:23 And the woman, in whose house he was, sought to seduce him. She closed the doors firmly and said: "Come." He said: "Allah forbid. It is my Lord who gave me a good abode. Surely, the wrongdoers do not prosper."

12:24 Certainly she made for him and he would have made for her if it were not for a sign from his Lord. And that was to divert him from evil and indecency. He was indeed one of Our sincere servants.

A woman can also be expected to lie about a sexual assault, for example, falsely accusing a man of attempted rape when in reality she was the aggressor.

12:25 They raced to the door, and she ripped his shirt from behind. When they met her husband at the door, she said: "What is the penalty of one who intended evil for your wife except imprisonment or severe punishment?"

Exceptionally, Allah, when recounting this encounter, acknowledges that men can, sometimes, be the aggressors and how you can tell.

12:26 He (Joseph) said: "She sought to seduce me." And a member of her household bore witness: "If his shirt was torn from the front, then she is telling the truth and he is a liar.

12:27 "But if his shirt is torn from behind, then she lies and he is one of the truthful."

While admitting that men can, on occasion, be forceful in the pursuit of intimacy, Allah makes another generalization about women: that they are skilled in the art of deception.

12:28 When he (the husband) saw that his shirt was torn from behind, he said: "This is part of your guile, you women. Your guile is indeed very great."

The husband asked Joseph to overlook his wife's attempt at getting him to share an intimate moment and told his spouse to ask forgiveness for her sins.

12:29 "Joseph, overlook this matter; and you, woman, ask forgiveness for your sin. You are indeed one of the sinners."

## **Allah and the Beginnings of Life**

23:12 We have created man from an extract of clay;

23:13 Then we placed him as a sperm in a secure place;

23:14 Then we created out of the sperm a clot; then made from the clot a lump of flesh, then made the lump of flesh into bones; and then covered the bones with flesh; then fashioned him into another creation. So Blessed be Allah, the Best of Creators.

23:15 Then after that you will surely die.

23:16 Then on the Day of Resurrection you will surely be raised from the dead.

There is no such stage when bones are formed first and coated with flesh. Remember, Islam is a product of the Dark Ages when much of the scientific discoveries of the Greek and Roman civilizations were temporally lost, including medical knowledge related to conception and gestation, and replaced by superstitions and half-truths.

22:5 O people, if you are in doubt regarding the resurrection, We have indeed created you from dust, then from a sperm, then from a clot, then from a little lump of flesh, partly formed and partly unformed, in order to show you. We deposit in the wombs whatever We please, for an appointed term; then we bring you out as infants, till you attain full strength. Some of you are made to die, and some are returned to the vilest age, so that they may not know, after having acquired some knowledge, anything. And you see the earth barren, but when We send down water upon it, it stirs and swells and produces vegetation of every pleasing variety.

22:6 That is because Allah is the Truth, and He brings the dead to life and He has power over everything.

Allah's "clot" appears to be a mutation of a man's sperm, which He has implanted in a woman's uterus (the "secure place" in verse 23:13), and from which He will fashion a fetus; bones first, sex later.

75:36 Does man think that he shall be left unattended?

75:37 Was he not a drop of sperm released?

75:38 Then, he was a leech; then He created and fashioned (him);

75:39 Making of him a couple, male and female.

75:40 Is not that One Able to quicken the dead?

It's all about the sperm:

16:3 He created the heavens and the earth in truth; may He be exalted above what they associate [with Him].

16:4 He created man from a sperm-drop and, behold, he is a professed disputant.

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35:11 Allah created you from dust, then from a sperm, then made you into couples. No female bears or gives birth, save with His knowledge, and no man advances in years or his life-span is diminished, except as ordained in the Book. That indeed is an easy matter for Allah.

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56:57 We have created you, if only you would believe!

56:58 Have you seen the semen you emit?

56:59 Do you create it, or are We the Creators?

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80:17 May man perish! How thankless he is!

80:18 Of what did He create him?

80:19 Of a sperm, He created him and determined him.

80:20 Then He smoothed his path;

80:21 Then He caused him to die and entombed him;

80:22 Then, if He wishes He will raise him from the dead.

80:23 No indeed; he did not fulfil what He commanded him.

If Allah had given women a greater role in procreation, perhaps He would not have been disappointed with the result of His effort.

36:77 Does not man see that We created him from a sperm;  
and behold he is a manifest trouble-maker?

## **Allah, the Eternal Adolescent**

Where the adolescent, the child in Allah is most evident is in the Marcel Marceau-like charades He demands from people to whom He has granted a favour; for example, Zachariah to whom He has granted a son.

3:38 Thereupon, Zachariah prayed to his Lord saying: "Lord grant me from Your Bounty fine descendants. Indeed You hear every prayer!"

3:39 Then the angels called him while he was at prayer in the sanctuary, saying: "Allah bids you rejoice in John, confirming a word (Jesus) from Allah, a master, chaste and a Prophet and one of the righteous."

3:40 He said: "Lord, how will I have a son, seeing I have been overtaken by old age and my wife is barren?" "This is how Allah does whatever He pleases," He replied.

3:41 He said; "Lord give me a sign." Allah said: "Your sign is that you will not speak to anybody for three days, except by signs; and remember your Lord often and give praise evening and morning."

In the Koran, a child's unthinking cruelty becomes a deliberate act of destruction which seems to give the perpetrator a great deal of satisfaction. Even in revelations about the cities He has destroyed, you can hear the boy in Allah talking and exulting in His annihilation of the men, women and children they sheltered.

During a normal day, i.e., morning or afternoon, even in the Prophet's time, children played, and adults worked, or were busy with more important things, from making love to making war. Yet, it is people at play, children, whom Allah brags about killing in Revelation 7:98; and like children might say or do, He schemed to make their obliteration come about.

7:97 Did the people of the cities feel assured that Our punishment would not come upon them at night while they were sleeping?

7:98 Or did the people of the cities feel assured that Our punishment would not come upon them during the day while they were playing?

7:99 Or did they feel secure against Allah's Scheming? For none feels secure from Allah's Scheming save the losing people.

An omnipotent, omnipresent god does not need to scheme to get His way, but a child, an adolescent often does.

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Older men's preference for whom they choose to be intimate with and why can be a sign of their emotional growth. A discussion between Muhammad and a travelling companion may be an indication that his behaviour, even when it came to sexual relationships, was that of an adolescent. Remember, as you read the following that Muhammad was in his fifties.

**Narrated Jabir bin Abdullah:**

I was with the Prophet in a Ghazwa (Military Expedition) and my camel was slow and exhausted. The Prophet came up to me and said, "O Jabir."

I replied, "Yes?"

He said, "What is the matter with you?"

I replied, "My camel is slow and tired, so I am left behind."

So, he got down and poked the camel with his stick and then ordered me to ride. I rode the camel and it became so fast that I had to hold it from going ahead of Allah's Apostle.

He then asked me, "Have you got married?"

I replied in the affirmative.

He asked, "A virgin or a matron?"

I replied, "I married a matron."

The Prophet said, "Why have you not married a virgin, so that you may play with her and she may play with you?"

Jabir replied, "I have sisters (young in age) so I liked to marry a matron who could collect them all and comb their hair and look after them."

*Bukhari 34.310*

## **Dabiq and the End Times**

The Syrian town of Dabiq, which Turkish-backed Syrian rebels are seeking to wrest back from so-called Islamic State (IS), has figured heavily in the jihadist group's propaganda since 2014 and is the name of its English-language magazine. IS has focused on the dusty backwater not because of any strategic importance or the size of its population - the Syrian census of 2004 recorded that little over 3,000 people were living there - but because it holds great symbolic value.

Dabiq, which lies about 10km (6 miles) from the border with Turkey, features in Islamic apocalyptic prophecies as the site of an end-of-times showdown between Muslims and their "Roman" enemies.

The Prophet Muhammad is believed to have said that "the last hour will not come" until Muslims vanquished the Romans at "Dabiq or al-Amaq" - both in the Syria-Turkey border region - on their way to conquer Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul).

IS has been seeking to bring on that battle by goading its enemies to confront it there. And now the Turkish-led force is reportedly closing in.

*BBC News Oct 7, 2016*

Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: The Last Hour would not come until the Romans would land at al-A'maq or in Dabiq.

An army consisting of the best (soldiers) of the people of the earth at that time will come from Medina (to counteract them).

When they will arrange themselves in ranks, the Romans would say: Do not stand between us and those (Muslims) who took prisoners from amongst us. Let us fight with them; and the Muslims would say: Nay, by Allah, we would never get aside from you and from our brethren that you may fight them.

They will then fight and a third (part) of the army would run away, whom Allah will never forgive.

A third (part of the army). which would be constituted of excellent martyrs in Allah's eye, would be killed and the third who would never be put to trial would win and they would be conquerors of Constantinople.

And as they would be busy in distributing the spoils of war (amongst themselves) after hanging their swords by the olive trees, the Satan would cry: The Dajjal has taken your place among your family. They would then come out, but it would be of no avail. And when they would come to Syria, he would come out while they would be still preparing themselves for battle drawing up the ranks.

Certainly, the time of prayer shall come and then Jesus (peace be upon him) son of Mary would descend and would lead them in prayer. When the enemy of Allah would see him, it would (disappear) just as the salt dissolves itself in water and if he (Jesus) were not to confront them at all, even then it would dissolve completely, but Allah would kill them by his hand and he would show them their blood on his lance (the lance of Jesus Christ).

*Sahih Muslim 41.6924*



## **God Needs Your Money**

Wealth, who has it and what they do with it is very much a pre-occupation, almost an obsession of Allah and His Messenger. Wealth, like children, is a temptation: it's better in the Hereafter.

8:28 And know that your wealth and your children are a temptation, and with Allah is a great reward.

Just being rich is reason enough for Allah to cause your complete destruction and to take it all away.

28:58 And how many a city We have destroyed that had grown prodigal in its living. There are its dwellings, left uninhabited after they were gone, except for a few. We became the inheritors.

Having the means to fund an extravagant lifestyle does not automatically make you a candidate for "a very painful punishment" if you use some of your good fortune to further Allah's plan for world domination by, for example, funding mosques and madrassas around the world as the Saudis and Qatarians have done. Do that, and not only will He forgive all your sins and admit you into Paradise but also provide you with a fine dwelling therein, perhaps to go along with Muhammad's promised mosque in the sky.

61:10 O believers, shall I show you a trade which will deliver you from a very painful punishment?

61:11 Believe in Allah and His Messenger and struggle in the Cause of Allah with your possessions (wealth) and yourselves. That is far better for you, if only you knew.

61:12 He will then forgive your sins and admit you into the Gardens, beneath which rivers flow, and into fine dwellings in the Gardens of Eden. That is the great triumph.

In any event, your wealth and your life were Allah's all along because of a bargain He made with you, as He explains in a verse called the Salvific Covenant, i.e., do this for me and I will do this for you, save you, give you Paradise.

9:111 Allah has bought from the believers their lives and their wealth in return for Paradise; they fight in the Way of Allah, kill and get killed. That is a true promise from Him in the Torah, the Gospel and the Qur'an; and who fulfills his promise better than Allah? Rejoice then at the bargain you have made with Him; for that is the great triumph.

The promise of Paradise may not have been enough to get some of the wealthier contributors to freely finance Allah's war against the unbelievers, compelling the Almighty to make, on five separate occasions, a request for money in the form of a loan that ostensibly will be repaid many times over during the lifetime of the lender – from war booty, one has to assume. And, as a bonus, the lender's sin will be forgiven, meaning Paradise will be within reach.

2:244 Fight for the Cause of Allah and know that Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

2:245 Who is it that will lend Allah a generous loan, so that He might multiply it for him manifold? Allah provides sparingly and generously, and to Him you shall be returned.

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64:17 If you lend Allah a fair loan, He will multiply it for you and forgive you. Allah is All-Grateful, All-Clement;

Skeptics might argue that Allah's revelations about the evil of interest on borrowed money may have had something to do with Muhammad wanting to renege on a promise made in haste when funds to finance a war he was waging on God's behalf were in short supply.

A modern variation on an old campaign:

I am writing to you on behalf of Canberra Islamic Centre (CIC) Executive Committee in the holy month of Ramadan to seek your financial support and prayer for ongoing Islamic project in our National Capital ... Your donation is an investment in the path of Islam that will benefit to the Muslim generations in Canberra/Australia. As mentioned in the Holy Qur'an (64.17) 'If you lend Allah a fair loan, He will multiply it for you and forgive you. Allah is All Grateful, All Clement.'

## **How We Got To the Cairo Edition of the Koran**

Estelle Whelan writing in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, explains how we got to the Cairo edition (lightly edited to conform to the naming convention used throughout this book e.g. al-Madinah changed to Medina):

In the last two decades a controversy has arisen over the period in which the text of Muslim scripture became codified. The traditional Islamic view can be summarized as follows.

Both Abu Bakr (632-34) and Umar (634-44) made efforts to gather together the scraps of revelation that had been written down by the faithful during the lifetime of the Prophet, on bones, on palm leaves, on potsherds, and on whatever other materials were at hand, as well as being preserved in "the breasts of men."

But it was the third caliph, Uthman (644-61), who first charged a small group of men of Medina with codifying and standardizing the text.

Alarmed by reported divergences in the recitation of the revelation, he commissioned one of the Prophet's former secretaries, Zayd b. Thabit, and several prominent members of Quraysh - Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr, Sa'id b. al-'As, and Abd al-Rahman b. al-Harith are those most often mentioned - to produce a standard copy of the text, based on the compilation in the keeping of Hafsa, daughter of Umar.

If there was disagreement over language among members of the commission, it was to be resolved in accordance with the dialect spoken by Quraysh.

Once the standard text had been established, several copies were made and sent to major cities in the Islamic domain, specifically Damascus, Basra, Kufa, and perhaps others.

Although there are variations in detail, for example, in the list of names of those who served on Uthman's commission and in the list of cities to which copies were sent, this basic outline is not in dispute within the Muslim world.

Oral recitation nevertheless remained the preferred mode of transmission, and, as time passed, variant versions of the text proliferated - the kind of organic change that is endemic to an oral tradition.

In addition, because of the nature of the early Arabic script, in which short vowels were not indicated and consonants of similar form were only sometimes distinguished by pointing, writing, too, was subject to misunderstanding, copyist's error, and change over time.

In the early tenth century, at Baghdad, Abu Bakr Ibn Mujahid (d. 936) succeeded in reducing the number of acceptable readings to the seven that were predominant in the main Muslim centers of the time: Medina, Mecca, Damascus, Basra, and Kufa.

Some Qur'an readers who persisted in deviating from these seven readings were subjected to draconian punishments.

Nevertheless, with the passage of time, additional variant readings were readmitted, first "the three after the seven," then "the four after the ten."

The modern Cairo edition, prepared at al-Azhar in the 1920s, is based on one of the seven readings permitted by Ibn Mujahid, that of Abu Bakr 'Âsim (d. 745) as transmitted by Hafs b. Sulayman (d. 796).

*Forgotten Witness: Evidence For The Early Codification Of The Qur'an, Estelle Whelan, Journal Of The American Oriental Society, 1998, Volume 118.*

# Ignoring the Cruellest Slaughter of All

In its March 8, 2012 edition, *Le Point*, the popular mainstream French (France) weekly, published excerpts from a confidential government report prepared by *Le Conseil général de alimentation, de l'agriculture et des espaces ruraux* on La protection animale en abattoir; la question particulière de l'abattoir rituel (Animal Protection In Slaughterhouses: The Question of Ritual Slaughter; my translation).

The excerpts reveal that during 2010, 2,068,439 cattle, 382,460 calves, 2,568,444 sheep and 35,713 goats were ritually slaughtered, i.e., the animal was not rendered unconscious before being bled to death. The longest time reported for an animal to die while fully conscious was six minutes for cattle, almost twice that time for calves at eleven minutes, and five minutes for sheep. No time was available for goats or camels.

Under the heading *Intensité et durée de la douleur: souffrance* (Intensity and duration of the pain: suffering), the report goes on to describe the type of pain an animal that is not stunned prior to bleeding experiences. It's not for the squeamish. Again, the translation is mine, as are explanatory comments surrounded by round brackets ().

The pain that a conscious animal experiences at the time of its throat being slit is assumed to be intense...

To be able to compare different method of slaughter as to the amount of pain they cause, we must take into account the visible signs that permit us to gauge the intensity of the pain experienced by the conscious animals... The amount of pain will vary depending on the type of animal.

A slit throat is in itself painful:

- The incision provokes a nociceptive reaction ("pain caused by stimulation of peripheral nerve fibers that respond only to stimuli approaching or exceeding harmful intensity" Wiki) causing extreme pain;
- the contraction of the muscle at the point of the incision has to be extremely painful;
- blood will fill the lungs provoking a sensation of drowning...

The length of time it takes for an animal (that has not been stunned) to become unconscious is a result of many factors:

- the constriction of the arteries compensates for the loss of blood and causes an increase in the heart rate;

- where cattle is concerned, the vertebral arteries are not cut when the incision is done ...; different anastomoses (channels) between the vertebral and cervical arteries allow the vertebral arteries to continue bringing blood to the brain even after the carotid artery has been cut;
- other factors may contribute to the time an animal remains conscious, e.g. a clot in the carotid artery...

Rendering an animal unconscious is both the beginning and the end of its suffering when conventional methods are used. In the ritual slaughter of an animal, unconsciousness comes much later. During this period, which varies among types of animals, the animal, in a conscious state, will be subjected to many painful procedures, some related to the incision made by the person performing the sacrifice, others by the stop and go (“saccadé”) nature of the ritual.

# **Majid Fakhry vs. Yusuf Ali**

June 11, 2013

Bruce B. Lawrence  
Duke University

Dear Professor Lawrence,

Thank you for providing me with a copy of the lecture you gave at the KA Nizami Centre for Qur'anic Studies, Aligarh Muslim University on February 17. I thoroughly enjoyed "Abdullah Yusuf Ali's Translation of the Qur'an – An 80-Year Retrospective, With special attention to Surat ad-Duha (Q 93)", what I have to say next notwithstanding.

It was said of Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chrétien that he was equally incomprehensible in either official language. His difficult speech was partly the result of a childhood Bell's palsy attack which permanently partially paralyzed the left side of his face.

After leaving politics, he spotted my wife and other interpreters for Canada's Parliament at a restaurant and walked over to thank them for making him "sound good" all those years. Making the folksy Chrétien sound good they did, but they never deliberately put words in his mouth, or embellished what he had to say as Yusuf appears to do in his translation of the Koran.

I do not know Arabic but from the five translations of the title of surah 93 given in your lecture, Yusuf Ali seems to be going for dramatic effect with his addition of "Glorious," and damn what was in the original.

Yusuf Ali: The Glorious Morning Light

Pickthall: The Morning Hours

Droge: The Morning Light

Toorawa: Morning Light

Khan: The Forenoon

The Saudi approved and promoted Khan Translation seems to me the more accurate in spite of the translator's, to quote Khaleel Mohammad [assistant professor, Department of Religious Studies San Diego State

University], “supremacist Muslim, anti-Semitic, anti-Christian polemic.”

In *Pain, Pleasure and Prejudice*, whenever I needed another translation to bolster Majid Fakhry’s – who, like Khan translates ad-Duha as “The Forenoon” – it is Yusuf Ali to whom I normally turned. I love his translation almost as much as I love Fakhry’s, but I trust Fakhry to give me as accurate a rendition of the original, as only an “honest translation” (un travail honnête) by a native Arab speaker can.

Khaleel Mohammad dismisses the translation I used in *Pain, Pleasure and Prejudice* as being “a prosaic rendition” which does not do the Koran justice.

Compare the difference in the two translations of surah 111 Al-Masad which, I will admit, is on the extreme end of what Allah has to say; just as surah 93 is not indicative of the preponderate message of the Koran.

Yusuf Ali:

111 Al-Masadd (sic)

**Palm Fibre, The Flame**

In the name of Allah,  
the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful.

1. Perish the hands of the Father of Flame! Perish he!
2. No profit to him from all his wealth, and all his gains!
3. Burnt soon will he be in a Fire of Blazing Flame!
4. His wife shall carry the (crackling) wood - As fuel!-
5. A twisted rope of palm-leaf fibre round her (own) neck!

Majid Fakhry:

111 Al-Masad

**The Fibre**

In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful

1. Perish the hands of Abu Lahab, and may he perish too;
2. Neither his wealth nor what he has earned will avail him anything.
3. He will roast in a flaming fire,



4. And his wife will be a carrier of fire-wood,

5. She shall have a rope of fibre around her neck.

Ask any translator/interpreter and they will tell you that getting their clients' message across is what is important, and Fakhry does this very smartly without Yusuf Ali's embroidered superfluous text.

For many people, I would hazard the vast majority, poetry, as opposed to prose, leaves the impression that a text will be difficult to understand. Insisting that translations of the Koran have a rhyme and rhythm that is not in the original creates an additional deterrent to non-Muslims reading the Koran, and that is more than unfortunate.

Sincerely Yours,

*Bernard Payeur*

One of the best example of Fakhry's superior command of the English language is his succinct and elegant translation of revealed truth 48:28, one of the most significant verses of the Koran:

**Pickthall:** He it is Who hath sent His messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth, that He may cause it to prevail over all religion. And Allah sufficeth as a Witness.

**Yusuf Ali:** It is He Who has sent His Messenger with Guidance and the Religion of Truth, to proclaim it over all religion: and enough is Allah for a Witness.

**Mohsin Khan:** He it is Who has sent His Messenger (Muhammad SAW) with guidance and the religion of truth (Islam), that He may make it (Islam) superior over all religions. And All-Sufficient is Allah as a Witness.

**Shakir:** He it is Who sent His Messenger with the guidance and the true religion that He may make it prevail over all the religions; and Allah is enough for a witness.

**Muhammad Sarwar:** It is He who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the true religion to make it prevail over all other religions. God is a Sufficient witness to this Truth.

**Majid Fakhry:** It is He Who sent forth His Messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth, that He may exalt it above every other religion. Allah suffices as Witness.

When Fakhry's crisp translation is not sufficient, it is Moududi I most often turn to. Abul A'la Moududi's (also spelt Maududi) [1903-1979] credentials as a pre-eminent Islamic scholar are impeccable: journalist, theologian, Muslim revivalist, Islamist philosopher, first recipient of the King Faisal International Award for his services to Islam and Islamic studies. Of the more than 120 books he wrote, he is most famous for his magnum opus *The Meaning of the Qur'an*.

## **Moses and Pharaoh**

7:103 Then after them, We sent Moses with Our Revelations to Pharaoh and his people, but they repudiated them. See then what was the fate of the mischief-makers.

7:104 Moses said: "O Pharaoh, I am a Messenger from the Lord of the Worlds.

7:105 "It is only proper that I should not say about Allah anything other than the truth. I have brought you a clear sign from your Lord; so send forth the Children of Israel with me."

7:106 He said: "If you have brought a sign, produce it if you are really truthful."

7:107 So he cast his staff and, behold, it was a manifest serpent.

7:108 And he drew his hand; and, behold, it appeared white to the onlookers.

7:109 The dignitaries among Pharaoh's people said: "This, indeed, is a shrewd magician.

7:110 "He wishes to drive you out of your land; so what do you advise?"

7:111 They said: "Leave him and his brother for a while, and send forth summoners (sic) to the cities;

7:112 "To bring you every shrewd magician."

7:113 The magicians then came to Pharaoh and said: "We shall surely have a reward, if we are the winners."

7:114 He said: "Yes, and you will be, indeed, among those I favour."

7:115 They said: "O Moses, either you cast or we will be the first to cast."

7:116 He said: "You cast"; but when they cast, they put a spell upon the eyes of the people and frightened them, producing a mighty feat of magic.

7:117 We revealed to Moses: "Cast your staff", and behold, it proceeded to devour what they faked.

7:118 So the truth was vindicated and what they were doing was nullified.

7:119 And they were vanquished there and then, and they turned away humiliated.

7:120 And the magicians fell down prostrate.

7:121 They said: "We believe now in the Lord of the Worlds;

7:122 "The Lord Of Moses and Aaron."

7:123 Pharaoh then said: "Do you believe in Him before I give you leave? This is indeed a plot you contrived in the city, in order to drive its people out. Now you shall know.

7:124 "I will surely cut off your hands and your feet on opposite sides; then I will crucify you altogether."

In the second iteration of the meeting between Moses and Pharaoh, Allah is more specific as to the type and condition of the trees to be used in the crucifixion of the magicians.

20:69 "Cast down what is in your right hand and it will swallow what they have faked. They have only faked the guile of a magician, and the magician will never prosper wherever he goes."

20:70 Then the magicians fell down prostrate. They said: "We believe [now] in the Lord of Aaron and Moses."

20:71 He (Pharaoh) said: "Do you believe in him before I give you leave? It must be your chief who has taught you magic. I shall then cut your hands and feet on alternate sides, and I will crucify you upon the trunks of palm trees, and you will certainly know whose punishment is sterner and more lasting."

The third iteration:

26:49 He (Pharaoh) said: "You have believed before I gave you leave. He (Moses) is indeed your chief, who taught you sorcery, and so you will learn. I shall cut off your hands and feet alternately and will crucify you all."

In the fourth iteration Pharaoh won't crucify his magicians, and his dignitaries appear to have switched sides as well. This time around, he simply wants his administrator, Haman, to build him a tower. The Tower of Babel perhaps?

28:38 Pharaoh then said: "O my dignitaries, I did not know that you had any god but me. So kindle for me, O Haman, a fire upon the clay and build me a tower that I might behold the God of Moses. I really think he is a liar."

The fifth iteration the magicians are also not crucified, but Pharaoh still wants his tower.

40:36 And Pharaoh said: "O Haman, build me a tower that I may perchance reach the pathways,

### 357 Moses and Pharaoh

40:37 "The pathways of heaven; and then look upon the God of Moses. For I think he is a liar." That is how embellished for Pharaoh was his evil deed and how he was barred from the Path. Pharaoh's guile was only destined to fail.

# **Muhammad's Child Bride**

## **Accused of Adultery**

### **Narrated Aisha:**

Whenever Allah's Apostle intended to go on a journey, he would draw lots amongst his wives and would take with him the one upon whom the lot fell. During a Ghazwa (military expedition) of his, he drew lots amongst us and the lot fell upon me, and I proceeded with him after Allah had decreed the use of the veil by women. I was carried in a Howdah (on the camel) and dismounted while still in it.

When Allah's Apostle was through with his Ghazwa and returned home, and we approached the city of Medina, Allah's Apostle ordered us to proceed at night.

When the order of setting off was given, I walked till I was past the army to answer the call of nature. After finishing I returned (to the camp) to depart (with the others) and suddenly realized that my necklace over my chest was missing. So, I returned to look for it and was delayed because of that.

The people who used to carry me on the camel, came to my Howdah and put it on the back of the camel, thinking that I was in it, as, at that time, women were light in weight, and thin and lean, and did not use to eat much. So, those people did not feel the difference in the heaviness of the Howdah while lifting it, and they put it over the camel. At that time I was a young lady.

They set the camel moving and proceeded on. I found my necklace after the army had gone, and came to their camp to find nobody. So, I went to the place where I used to stay, thinking that they would discover my absence and come back in my search.

While in that state, I felt sleepy and slept.

Safwan bin Mu'attal As-Sulami Adh-Dhakwani was behind the army and reached my abode in the morning. When he saw a sleeping person, he came to me, and he used to see me before veiling. So, I got up when I heard him saying, "Inna lil-lah-wa inn a ilaihi rajiun (We are for Allah, and we will return to Him)."

He made his camel kneel down. He got down from his camel, and put his leg on the front legs of the camel and then I rode and sat over it.

Safwan set out walking, leading the camel by the rope till we reached the army who had halted to take rest at midday. Then whoever was meant for destruction, fell into destruction, (some people accused me falsely) and the leader of the false accusers was 'Abdullah bin Ubai bin Salul.

After that we returned to Medina, and I became ill for one month while the people were spreading the forged statements of the false accusers. I was feeling during my ailment as if I were not receiving the usual kindness from the Prophet which I used to receive from him when I got sick. But he would come, greet and say, 'How is that (girl)?'

I did not know anything of what was going on till I recovered from my ailment and went out with Um Mistah to the Manasi where we used to answer the call of nature, and we used not to go to answer the call of nature except from night to night and that was before we had lavatories near to our houses. And this habit of ours was similar to the habit of the old 'Arabs in the open country (or away from houses).

So, I and Um Mistah bint Ruhm went out walking. Um Mistah stumbled because of her long dress and on that she said, 'Let Mistah (cousin of Abu Bakr) be ruined.' I said, 'You are saying a bad word. Why are you abusing a man who took part in (the battle of) Badr?'

She said, 'O Hanata (you there) didn't you hear what they said?' Then she told me the rumors of the false accusers.

My sickness was aggravated, and when I returned home, Allah's Apostle came to me, and after greeting he said, 'How is that (girl)?' I requested him to allow me to go to my parents. I wanted then to be sure of the news through them.

Allah's Apostle allowed me, and I went to my parents and asked my mother, 'What are the people talking about?' She said, 'O my daughter! Don't worry much about this matter. By Allah, never is there a charming woman loved by her husband who has other wives, but the women would forge false news about her.'

I said, 'Glorified be Allah! Are the people really taking of this matter?' That night I kept on weeping and could not sleep till morning.

In the morning Allah's Apostle called Ali bin Abu Talib and Usama bin Zaid when he saw the Divine Inspiration delayed, to consult them about divorcing his wife (i.e. 'Aisha). Usama bin Zaid said what he knew of the good reputation of his wives and added, 'O Allah's Apostle! Keep your wife, for, by Allah, we know nothing about her but good.'

'Ali bin Abu Talib said, 'O Allah's Apostle! Allah has no imposed restrictions on you, and there are many women other than she, yet you may ask the woman-servant who will tell you the truth.'

On that Allah's Apostle called Buraira and said, 'O Burair. Did you ever see anything which roused your suspicions about her?'

Buraira said, 'No, by Allah Who has sent you with the Truth, I have never seen in her anything faulty except that she is a girl of immature age, who sometimes sleeps and leaves the dough for the goats to eat.'

On that day Allah's Apostle ascended the pulpit and requested that somebody support him in punishing 'Abdullah bin Ubai bin Salul. Allah's Apostle said, 'Who will support me to punish that person ('Abdullah bin Ubai bin Salul) who has hurt me by slandering the reputation of my family? By Allah, I know nothing about my family but good, and they have accused a person about whom I know nothing except good, and he never entered my house except in my company.'

Sad bin Mu'adh got up and said, 'O Allah's Apostle! by Allah, I will relieve you from him. If that man is from the tribe of the Aus, then we will chop his head off, and if he is from our brothers, the Khazraj, then order us, and we will fulfill your order.'

On that Sad bin 'Ubada, the chief of the Khazraj and before this incident, he had been a pious man, got up, motivated by his zeal for his tribe and said, 'By Allah, you have told a lie; you cannot kill him, and you will never be able to kill him.'

On that Usaid bin Al-Hadir got up and said (to Sad bin 'Ubada), 'By Allah! you are a liar. By Allah, we will kill him; and you are a hypocrite, defending the hypocrites.'

On this the two tribes of Aus and Khazraj got excited and were about to fight each other, while Allah's Apostle was standing on the pulpit. He got down and quietened them till they became silent and he kept quiet.

On that day I kept on weeping so much so that neither did my tears stop, nor could I sleep. In the morning my parents were with me and I had wept for two nights and a day, till I thought my liver would burst from weeping.

While they were sitting with me and I was weeping, an Ansari woman asked my permission to enter, and I allowed her to come in. She sat down and started weeping with me. While we were in this state, Allah's Apostle came and sat down and he had never sat with me since the day they forged the accusation.



No revelation regarding my case came to him for a month. He recited Tashah-hud (i.e. None has the right to be worshipped but Allah and Muhammad is His Apostle) and then said, 'O 'Aisha! I have been informed such-and-such about you; if you are innocent, then Allah will soon reveal your innocence, and if you have committed a sin, then repent to Allah and ask Him to forgive you, for when a person confesses his sin and asks Allah for forgiveness, Allah accepts his repentance.'

When Allah's Apostle finished his speech my tears ceased completely and there remained not even a single drop of it.

I requested my father to reply to Allah's Apostle on my behalf. My father said, 'By Allah, I do not know what to say to Allah's Apostle.' I said to my mother, 'Talk to Allah's Apostle on my behalf.' She said, 'By Allah, I do not know what to say to Allah's Apostle.'

I was a young girl and did not have much knowledge of the Quran. I said, 'I know, by Allah, that you have listened to what people are saying and that has been planted in your minds and you have taken it as a truth. Now, if I told you that I am innocent and Allah knows that I am innocent, you would not believe me and if I confessed to you falsely that I am guilty, and Allah knows that I am innocent you would believe me. By Allah, I don't compare my situation with you except to the situation of Joseph's father (i.e. Jacob) who said, 'So (for me) patience is most fitting against that which you assert and it is Allah (Alone) whose help can be sought.' Then I turned to the other side of my bed hoping that Allah would prove my innocence.

By Allah I never thought that Allah would reveal Divine Inspiration in my case, as I considered myself too inferior to be talked of in the Holy Qur'an. I had hoped that Allah's Apostle might have a dream in which Allah would prove my innocence.

By Allah, Allah's Apostle had not got up and nobody had left the house before the Divine Inspiration came to Allah's Apostle. So, there overtook him the same state which used to overtake him, (when he used to have, on being inspired divinely). He was sweating so much so that the drops of the sweat were dropping like pearls though it was a (cold) wintry day.

When that state of Allah's Apostle was over, he was smiling and the first word he said, 'Aisha! Thank Allah, for Allah has declared your innocence.'

My mother told me to go to Allah's Apostle.

I replied, 'By Allah I will not go to him and will not thank but Allah.' So Allah revealed: "Verily! They who spread the slander are a gang among you . . ." (24:11)

When Allah gave the declaration of my Innocence, Abu Bakr, who used to provide for Mistah bin Uthatha for he was his relative, said, 'By Allah, I will never provide Mistah with anything because of what he said about Aisha.' But Allah later revealed: "And let not those who are good and wealthy among you swear not to help their kinsmen, those in need and those who left their homes in Allah's Cause. Let them forgive and overlook. Do you not wish that Allah should forgive you? Verily! Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful." (24:22)

After that Abu Bakr said, 'Yes! By Allah! I like that Allah should forgive me,' and resumed helping Mistah whom he used to help before.

Allah's Apostle also asked Zainab bint Jahsh (another wife of the Prophet) about me saying, 'What do you know and what did you see?'

She replied, 'O Allah's Apostle! I refrain to claim hearing or seeing what I have not heard or seen. By Allah, I know nothing except goodness about Aisha.'

Aisha further added "Zainab was competing with me (in her beauty and the Prophet's love), yet Allah protected her (from being malicious), for she had piety."

*Bukhari 48.829*

## **Muhammad Labeled a Madman**

Many believed Muhammad to be quite mad, prompting Allah, on numerous occasions, to vouch for His Messenger's sanity and excoriate those who would make the accusation.

7:184 Do they not consider that their companion (Muhammad) is not mad. He is only a plain warner.

7:185 Have they not considered the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and all the things Allah has created, and how perhaps their appointed term may have drawn near" In what other message after this (the Qur'an) will they, then, believe.

7:186 Whomever Allah leads astray will have no guide; and He leaves them in their arrogance to wonder aimlessly.

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15:6 They say: "O you, to whom the Reminder (the Qur'an) is revealed, you are indeed a madman.

15:7 "Why do you not bring us the angels, if you are truthful?"

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34:46 Say: "I only give you one exhortation, that you arise for Allah in couples and singly, then to reflect that there is no madness in your companion (the Prophet). He is merely a warner on the eve of a terrible punishment."

Muhammad, after he left the cave where he first met the angel Gabriel, reported seeing the angel's face on the horizon wherever he looked. This only increased the scepticism of his detractors as to his sanity.

81:22 Your companion is not mad;

81:23 He saw him (Gabriel) upon the luminous horizon.

Reassuring words, advice and praise from Allah and an ominous warning to those who would question His spokesperson's sanity:

52:48 Bear with your Lord's Judgement, for you are in Our Thoughts; and proclaim the Praise of Your Lord when you arise;

52:49 And in the night glorify Him, and at the receding of the stars.

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51:52 Likewise, no Messenger came to those who preceded them but they said: "A sorcerer or a madman."

51:53 Have they attested to each other concerning him (Muhammad)? No, they are an unjust people.

51:54 So, turn away from them, you are not to blame.

51:55 And remind; for the reminder will benefit the believers.

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68:2 You are not (O Muhammad), by the Grace of your Lord, a madman.

68:3 You will have a wage which is unstinted;

68:4 And you are truly a man of noble character.

They will get what is coming to them, just bear with Me.

68:5 You shall see and they shall see,

68:6 Which of you is the demented one.

<sup>1</sup> 6:25 And some of them listen to you, but We have cast veils over their hearts, lest they should understand it (the Qur'an) and a deafness in their ears. And even were they to see every sign, they will not believe in it; so that when they come to dispute with you, the unbelievers will say: "This is nothing but fables of the ancients."

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8:31 And when Our Revelations are recited to them, they say: "We have heard. Had we wished, we would have uttered the like of this; this is nothing but fables of the ancients."

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16:24 And if it is said to them: "What has your Lord revealed?" they say: "Fables of the ancients."

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25:5 And they say: "Legends of the ancients which he solicited their writing down. Hence they are dictated to him morning and evening."

25:6 Say: "He Who knows the secret in the heavens in the earth has sent it down; He is indeed All-Forgiving, Merciful."

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32:1 Alif – Lam – Mim (*no consensus on meaning*).

32:2 The revelation of the Book from the Lord of the Worlds, wherein there is no doubt.

32:3 Or do they say: "He invented it?" Rather, it is the truth from your Lord, so as to warn a people to whom no warner came before you (Muhammad), that perchance they might be well-guided.

## Muhammad Marries Two Cronies' Daughters

### Aisha

Aisha was the daughter of Muhammad's good friend and close collaborator, Abu Bakr, who would succeed Muhammad as caliph, i.e., leader of the believers. Scholars and clerics maintain that a grateful Abu Bakr offered his pre-pubescent daughter, with whom Muhammad had fallen in love, to cement his relationship with the leader of the believers.

Ayaan Hirsi Ali is not of that opinion. In *The Caged Virgin*, she writes that Aisha's father pleaded with his fifty-something friend to wait until his daughter reached adulthood before marrying her.

He fell in love with Aisha, his best friend's nine-year-old daughter. Her father said: "Please wait until she has reached adulthood."

But Muhammad would not wait... In other words, Muhammad teaches us that it is fine to take away your best friend's child. By our Western standards Muhammad is a perverse man.

*Ayaan Hirsi Ali. The Caged Virgin, p. 81*

A hadith recorded by Bukhari would appear to support Ali's assertion that Aisha's father was not keen on marrying his young daughter to a man of his generation.

### **Narrated Ursa:**

The Prophet asked Abu Bakr for Aisha's hand in marriage.

Abu Bakr said "But I am your brother."

The Prophet said, "You are my brother in Allah's religion and His Book, but she (Aisha) is lawful for me to marry."

*Bukhari 62.18*

### Hafsa

Hafsa was the daughter of Umar, another crony of Muhammad. Umar would succeed Bakr as caliph. Muhammad married the nineteen-year-old Hafsa who had lost her husband at the infamous battle of Badr. Umar first offered her to Bakr, who declined knowing of Muhammad's interest in the young lady.

**Narrated Abdullah bin Umar:**

I met Abu Bakr and said, 'if you wish, I will marry you, Hafsa bint Umar.'

He kept quiet and did not give me any reply and I became more angry with him than I was with Uthman.

Some days later, Allah's Apostle demanded her hand in marriage and I married her to him.

Later on Abu Bakr met me and said, "Perhaps you were angry with me when you offered me Hafsa for marriage and I gave no reply to you?"

I said, 'Yes.'

Abu Bakr said, 'Nothing prevented me from accepting your offer except that I learnt that Allah's Apostle had referred to the issue of Hafsa and I did not want to disclose the secret of Allah's Apostle, but had he (i.e. the Prophet) given her up I would surely have accepted her.'

*Bukhari 59.342*

## **Muhammad Takes another Jewish Chief's Daughter**

**Narrated Abdul Aziz:**

Anas said, "When Allah's Apostle invaded Khaibar, we offered the Fajr prayer there early in the morning) when it was still dark. The Prophet rode and Abu Talha rode too and I was riding behind Abu Talha. The Prophet passed through the lane of Khaibar quickly and my knee was touching the thigh of the Prophet. He uncovered his thigh and I saw the whiteness of the thigh of the Prophet.

When he entered the town, he said, 'Allahu Akbar! Khaibar is ruined. Whenever we approach near a (hostile) nation (to fight) then evil will be the morning of those who have been warned.' He repeated this thrice.

The people came out for their jobs and some of them said, 'Muhammad (has come).' (Some of our companions added, "With his army.")

We conquered Khaibar, took the captives, and the booty was collected. Dihya came and said, 'O Allah's Prophet! Give me a slave girl from the captives.'

The Prophet said, 'Go and take any slave girl.'

He took Safiya bint Huyai. A man came to the Prophet and said, 'O Allah's Apostles! You gave Safiya bint Huyai to Dihya and she is the chief mistress of the tribes of Quraiza and An-Nadir and she befits none but you.'

So the Prophet said, 'Bring him along with her.'

So Dihya came with her and when the Prophet saw her, he said to Dihya, 'Take any slave girl other than her from the captives.'"

Anas added: "The Prophet then manumitted her and married her."

Thabit asked Anas, "O Abu Hamza! What did the Prophet pay her (as Mahr i.e. dowry)?"

He said, "Herself was her Mahr for he manumitted her and then married her."

Anas added, "While on the way, Um Sulaim dressed her for marriage (ceremony) and at night she sent her as a bride to the

Prophet. So the Prophet was a bridegroom and he said, 'Whoever has anything (food) should bring it.'

He spread out a leather sheet (for the food) and some brought dates and others cooking butter. (I think he (Anas) mentioned As-SawTq). So they prepared a dish of Hais (a kind of meal). And that was Walrma (the marriage banquet) of Allah's Apostle."

*Bukhari 8.367*



## **Muhammad's Wife Management Problem**

Following is what most would consider a trivial case of wife management in which the Almighty feels compelled to intervene.

The situation is this: Muhammad has told one of his wives, in secrecy, that he has eaten some honey. This wife then tells another that their husband-in-common has eaten some honey. Allah, who sees and hears all, decides to tell Muhammad a redacted version of what he saw and heard. We are not told about the part Allah leaves out, even it seems central to the story, unless it is really about a taste of honey.

It is again a somewhat infantile transgression which could easily have been dismissed if Allah had not chosen this opportunity to again express His views on what constitutes the perfect wife. Here is how it all went down. First, Allah informs Muhammad of part of the conversation He has overheard.

66:3 And when the Prophet confided to one of his wives a certain matter (his eating of honey); and she divulged it, and Allah disclosed it to him too, He made known part of it, but withheld the other part. Then, when he told her about it, she said: "Who told you this?" He said: "The All-Knowing, All-Informed told me."

Allah suspects a conspiracy against Muhammad. To put an end to the gossip about the honey He informs the two women of the formidable forces allied against them: God himself, most of the believers and all the angels, including the mighty Gabriel, support Muhammad.

This has to be about more than one wife divulging to another that their husband-in-common has eaten some honey for Allah to put His own prestige on the line and to throw in everything but the kitchen sink to force the two women to keep quiet.

66:4 If you two (the two wives of the Prophet) repent onto Allah, then your hearts will have certainly inclined; but if you band together against him, then Allah is his Master. Gabriel, the righteous among the believers and the angels thereupon are his supporters, too.

Then the really big threat – especially in Muhammad's time: divorce. Allah will grant Muhammad a divorce and may replace them with better wives, which He proceeds to describe followed by a reminder of what He is capable of.

66:5 Perhaps, his Lord will, if he divorces you, give him in exchange wives better than you, submissive, believing, obedient, penitent, devout, fasting, either previously married or virgins.

66:6 O believers, guard yourselves and your families against a Fire whose fuel is people and stones; its overseers are harsh, terrible angels who do not disobey what Allah commands, but will do what they are commanded.

## **Muhammad's Wives**

### **Lectured to by God**

Allah, in His Koran, has quite a few instructions which appear to be for His spokesperson's wives only. In a book for the ages this seems out of place. Muhammad's wives are, of course, in a class by themselves. As befitting their exalted status, if they make a fool of Allah's spokesperson they will suffer double the punishment of an ordinary wife, revelation 33:30, and He will see to it personally.

33:28 O Prophet, say to your wives: "If you desire the present life and its finery, so come along that I might provide for you and set you free kindly.

33:29 "But if you desire Allah, His Messenger and the life to come, surely Allah has prepared for the beneficent among you a great wage."

33:30 O wives of the Prophet, whomever of you commits a flagrant foul act, her punishment will be doubled; and that for Allah is an easy matter.

If the fear of double the punishment for putting His spokesperson in an embarrassing situation is not enough, Allah is not beneath offering a little monetary incentive.

33:31 Whoever of you obeys Allah and His Messenger and does the righteous deed, We shall pay her wage twice over, and we have prepared for her a generous provision.

Being the wife of Muhammad may not have been all that fulfilling for some of the women and girls confined to his household for Allah to admonish them to "not be abject in speech," e.g. expressing hopelessness when talking about their lives with the greatest of them all. They may have even expressed a wish that their husband might give them their freedom, which would explain why Allah revealed that "he in whose heart is a sickness may covet you." Hope springs eternal. The "sickness" alluded to by Allah may simply have been young men expressing the desire that, because a wife of Muhammad may have expressed a wish to be free of her husband, they might one day get a share of Muhammad's bounty of beautiful women and girls.

33:32 O wives of the Prophet, you are not like any other women. If you are God-fearing, do not be abject in speech, so that he in whose heart is a sickness may covet you, but speak in an honourable way.

Some may, as girls and young women are wont to do, look for validation of their attractiveness in a young man's eyes. This would explain Allah's demand that they stay inside and out of sight so as not to expose their "finery" and keep busy with prayers and giving "the alms." As to how they could give "the alms" if they were not allowed to leave the house is problematic. Allah justified the extreme restrictions He imposed on His spokesperson's females, effectively making them invisible to the outside world, so as to turn away abomination – young men of their generation is assumed – and to purify them "fully," whatever that means.

33:33 Stay in your homes and do not display your finery as the pagans of old did; perform the prayer, give the alms and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah only wishes to turn away abomination from you and purify you fully, O People of the House.

33:34 And remember what is recited in your homes of Allah's Signs and of wisdom. Indeed, Allah is Subtle, Well-Informed.

33:35 Men and women who have submitted, believed, obeyed, are truthful, steadfast, reverend, giving in charity, fasting, guarding their private parts and remembering Allah often, Allah has prepared for them forgiveness and a great reward.

Because of the beautiful, young Aisha's alleged sexual indiscretion and Allah's concern about His favourite spokesperson being ridiculed for not being able to control his young brood, women everywhere in the conservative Muslim world are forced into seclusion to this day. Allah admonished His Messenger's wives to stay at home, and conservative Muslim men have been enjoining their wives and daughters to do the same ever since.

## Negotiating the Obligatory Prayers

The third holiest site in Islam is a rock underneath the Dome of the Rock, which is part of the Al-Aqsa Mosque complex on Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Muslims believe that this is the rock from which Muhammad ascended to heaven on a magical night in 621 on the back of a winged-horse named al-Buraq (also spelled al-Burak) to meet with the Boss. It was during this meeting with God that the number of prayers that a believer must perform every day was established.

Following are three lengthy hadiths about this seminal event in the history of both Islam and Paradise. In the first hadith there is no mention of a stopover in Jerusalem. In the second there is no al-Buraq and no Jerusalem. The third hadith, probably the most significant, contains both a reference to the winged Pegasus-like horse and Jerusalem.

All hadiths in the database consulted are one paragraph. For readability, lengthy hadiths like the following have been broken into short paragraphs. Any text in a hadith contained within round brackets () is that of the translator unless in italics. Except for paragraph breaks and the correction of obvious typos, the hadiths are presented as is.

### **Narrated Abbas bin Malik:**

Malik bin Sasaa said that Allah's Apostle described to them his Night Journey saying, "While I was lying in Al-Hatim or Al-Hijr, suddenly someone came to me and cut my body open from here to here."

I asked Al-Jarud who was by my side, "What does he mean?"

He said, "It means from his throat to his pubic area," or said, "From the top of the chest."

The Prophet further said, "He then took out my heart. Then a gold tray of Belief was brought to me and my heart was washed and was filled (with Belief) and then returned to its

original place<sup>405</sup>. Then a white animal which was smaller than a mule and bigger than a donkey was brought to me."

(On this Al-Jarud asked, "Was it the buraq, O Abu Hamza?" I (i.e. Anas) replied in the affirmative).

The Prophet said, "The animal's step (was so wide that it) reached the farthest point within the reach of the animal's sight. I was carried on it, and Gabriel set out with me till we reached the nearest heaven. When he asked for the gate to be opened, it was asked, 'Who is it?'

Gabriel answered, 'Gabriel.'

It was asked, 'Who is accompanying you?'

Gabriel replied, 'Muhammad.'

It was asked, 'Has Muhammad been called?'

Gabriel replied in the affirmative. Then it was said, 'He is welcomed. What an excellent visit his is!' The gate was opened, and when I went over the first heaven, I saw Adam there.

Gabriel said (to me). 'This is your father, Adam; pay him your greetings.' So I greeted him and he returned the greeting to me and said, 'You are welcomed, O pious son and pious Prophet.'

Then Gabriel ascended with me till we reached the second heaven. Gabriel asked for the gate to be opened.

It was asked, 'Who is it?'

Gabriel answered, 'Gabriel.'

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<sup>405</sup> In a Sahih Muslim hadith, the washing of Muhammad's heart occurred when he was a boy.

Anas b. Malik reported that Gabriel came to the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) while he was playing with his playmates. He took hold of him and lay him prostrate on the ground and tore open his breast and took out the heart from it and then extracted a blood-clot out of it and said: That was the part of Satan in thee. And then he washed it with the water of Zamzam in a golden basin and then it was joined together and restored to its place.

The boys came running to his mother, i. e. his nurse, and said: Verily Muhammad has been murdered. They all rushed toward him (and found him all right). His color was changed, Anas said. I myself saw the marks of needle on his breast.

### 375 Negotiating the Obligatory Prayers

It was asked, 'Who is accompanying you?'

Gabriel replied, 'Muhammad.'

It was asked, 'Has he been called?'

Gabriel answered in the affirmative.

Then it was said, 'He is welcomed. What an excellent visit his is!' The gate was opened. When I went over the second heaven, there I saw Yahya (i.e. John) and 'Isa (i.e. Jesus) who were cousins of each other.

Gabriel said (to me), 'These are John and Jesus; pay them your greetings.'

So I greeted them and both of them returned my greetings to me and said, 'You are welcomed, O pious brother and pious Prophet.'

Then Gabriel ascended with me to the third heaven and asked for its gate to be opened.

It was asked, 'Who is it?'

Gabriel replied, 'Gabriel.'

It was asked, 'Who is accompanying you?'

Gabriel replied, 'Muhammad.'

It was asked, 'Has he been called?'

Gabriel replied in the affirmative. Then it was said, 'He is welcomed, what an excellent visit his is!' The gate was opened, and when I went over the third heaven there I saw Joseph. Gabriel said (to me), 'This is Joseph; pay him your greetings.' So I greeted him and he returned the greeting to me and said, 'You are welcomed, O pious brother and pious Prophet.'

Then Gabriel ascended with me to the fourth heaven and asked for its gate to be opened.

It was asked, 'Who is it?'

Gabriel replied, 'Gabriel.'

It was asked, 'Who is accompanying you?'

Gabriel replied, 'Muhammad.'

It was asked, 'Has he been called?'

Gabriel replied in the affirmative.

Then it was said, 'He is welcomed, what an excellent visit his is!' The gate was opened, and when I went over the fourth heaven, there I saw Idris. Gabriel said (to me), 'This is Idris; pay him your greetings.' So I greeted him and he returned the greeting to me and said, 'You are welcomed, O pious brother and pious Prophet.'

Then Gabriel ascended with me to the fifth heaven and asked for its gate to be opened.

It was asked, 'Who is it?'

Gabriel replied, 'Gabriel.'

It was asked, 'Who is accompanying you?'

Gabriel replied, 'Muhammad.'

It was asked, 'Has he been called?'

Gabriel replied in the affirmative.

Then it was said, 'He is welcomed, what an excellent visit his is!' So when I went over the fifth heaven, there I saw Harun (i.e. Aaron). Gabriel said (to me), 'This is Aaron; pay him your greetings.' I greeted him and he returned the greeting to me and said, 'You are welcomed, O pious brother and pious Prophet.'

Then Gabriel ascended with me to the sixth heaven and asked for its gate to be opened.

It was asked, 'Who is it?'

Gabriel replied, 'Gabriel.'

It was asked, 'Who is accompanying you?'

Gabriel replied, 'Muhammad.'

It was asked, 'Has he been called?'

Gabriel replied in the affirmative.

It was said, 'He is welcomed. What an excellent visit his is!'

When I went (over the sixth heaven), there I saw Moses. Gabriel said (to me), 'This is Moses; pay him your greeting.' So I greeted him and he returned the greetings to me and



said, 'You are welcomed, O pious brother and pious Prophet.'

When I left him (i.e. Moses) he wept. Someone asked him, 'What makes you weep?'

Moses said, 'I weep because after me there has been sent (as Prophet) a young man whose followers will enter Paradise in greater numbers than my followers.'

Then Gabriel ascended with me to the seventh heaven and asked for its gate to be opened.

It was asked, 'Who is it?'

Gabriel replied, 'Gabriel.'

It was asked, 'Who is accompanying you?'

Gabriel replied, 'Muhammad.'

It was asked, 'Has he been called?'

Gabriel replied in the affirmative.

Then it was said, 'He is welcomed. What an excellent visit his is!' So when I went (over the seventh heaven), there I saw Abraham. Gabriel said (to me), 'This is your father; pay your greetings to him.' So I greeted him and he returned the greetings to me and said, 'You are welcomed, O pious son and pious Prophet.'

Then I was made to ascend to Sidrat-ul-Muntaha (i.e. the Lote Tree of the utmost boundary [of Paradise]) Behold! Its fruits were like the jars of Hajr (i.e. a place near Medina) and its leaves were as big as the ears of elephants.

Gabriel said, 'This is the Lote Tree of the utmost boundary'. Behold! There ran four rivers, two were hidden and two were visible. I asked, 'What are these two kinds of rivers, O Gabriel?'

He replied, 'As for the hidden rivers, they are two rivers in Paradise and the visible rivers are the Nile and the Euphrates.'

Then Al-Bait-ul-Ma'mur<sup>406</sup> (i.e. the Sacred House) was shown

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<sup>406</sup> Bait-ul-Ma'mur is a replica of the Ka'ba in Mecca and is situated directly above it. Like Muslims on Earth, angels are required to make a pilgrimage to this Ka'ba in the

to me and a container full of wine and another full of milk and a third full of honey were brought to me. I took the milk. Gabriel remarked, 'This is the Islamic religion which you and your followers are following.' Then the prayers were enjoined on me: They were fifty prayers a day.

When I returned, I passed by Moses who asked (me), 'What have you been ordered to do?'

I replied, 'I have been ordered to offer fifty prayers a day.'

Moses said, 'Your followers cannot bear fifty prayers a day, and by Allah, I have tested people before you, and I have tried my level best with Bani (*Children of*) Israel (in vain). Go back to your Lord and ask for reduction to lessen your followers' burden.'

So I went back, and Allah reduced ten prayers for me. Then again I came to Moses, but he repeated the same as he had said before. Then again I went back to Allah and He reduced ten more prayers.

When I came back to Moses he said the same, I went back to Allah and He ordered me to observe ten prayers a day.

When I came back to Moses, he repeated the same advice, so I went back to Allah and was ordered to observe five prayers a day.

When I came back to Moses, he said, 'What have you been ordered?'

I replied, 'I have been ordered to observe five prayers a day.'

He said, 'Your followers cannot bear five prayers a day, and no doubt, I have got an experience of the people before you,

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sky at least once in their lifetime as immortals, and seventy thousand angels do so every day. The Ka'ba in the sky may or may not have two doors.

Narrated Aswad:

Ibn Az-Zubair said to me, "Aisha used to tell you secretly a number of things. What did she tell you about the Ka'ba?"

I replied, "She told me that once the Prophet said, 'O 'Aisha! Had not your people been still close to the pre-Islamic period of ignorance (infidelity)! I would have dismantled the Ka'ba and would have made two doors in it; one for entrance and the other for exit.'"

Later on Ibn Az-Zubair did the same.

*Bukhari 3:128*

and I have tried my level best with Bani Israel, so go back to your Lord and ask for reduction to lessen your follower's burden.'

I said, 'I have requested so much of my Lord that I feel ashamed, but I am satisfied now and surrender to Allah's Order.'

When I left, I heard a voice saying, 'I have passed My Order and have lessened the burden of My Worshippers.'

*Bukhari 58.227*

Following is the hadith where the horse al-Buraq is not mentioned. In this account, it is Adam who is seen weeping, not Moses. Because it is quite similar to the previous hadith, I have omitted large portions.

**Narrated Abu Dhar:**

Allah's Apostle said, "While I was at Mecca the roof of my house was opened and Gabriel descended, opened my chest, and washed it with Zam-zam water.

Then he brought a golden tray full of wisdom and faith and having poured its contents into my chest, he closed it.

Then he took my hand and ascended with me to the nearest heaven. When I reached the nearest heaven, Gabriel said to the gatekeeper of the heaven, 'Open (the gate).'

...

The gatekeeper asked, 'Who is it?'

Gabriel answered: 'Gabriel.'

He asked, 'Is there anyone with you?'

Gabriel replied, 'Yes, Muhammad is with me.'

He asked, 'Has he been called?'

Gabriel said, 'Yes.'

So the gate was opened and we went over the nearest heaven and there we saw a man sitting with some people on his right and some on his left. When he looked towards his right, he laughed and when he looked toward his left he wept. Then he said, 'Welcome! O pious Prophet and pious son.'

I asked Gabriel, 'Who is he?'

He replied, 'He is Adam and the people on his right and left are the souls of his offspring. Those on his right are the people of Paradise and those on his left are the people of Hell and when he looks towards his right he laughs and when he looks towards his left he weeps.'

...

So I returned to Allah and requested for further reduction and half of it was reduced. I again passed by Moses and he said to me: 'Return to your Lord, for your followers will not be able to bear it.'

So I returned to Allah and He said, 'These are five prayers and they are all (equal to) fifty (in reward) for My Word does not change.' I returned to Moses and he told me to go back once again.

I replied, 'Now I feel shy of asking my Lord again.'

Then Gabriel took me till we reached Sidrat-il-Muntaha (Lote tree of; the utmost boundary [of Paradise]) which was shrouded in colors, indescribable.

Then I was admitted into Paradise where I found small (tents or) walls (made) of pearls and its earth was of musk."

*Bukhari 6.345*

The most important account, the one with a stopover in Jerusalem, is actually a hadith recorded by the second most respected hadith collector, Sahih Muslim. In this hadith Muhammad is offered a choice of wine, milk or honey at the beginning of the journey rather than towards the end of his sojourn in Paradise. (Please note, Sahih Muslim does not use quotes.)

It is narrated on the authority of Anas b. Malik that the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) said: I was brought al-Buraq who is an animal white and long, larger than a donkey but smaller than a mule, who would place his hoof a distance equal to the range of vision.

I mounted it and came to the Temple (Bait Maqdis in Jerusalem), then tethered it to the ring used by the prophets.

I entered the mosque and prayed two rak'ahs in it, and then came out and Gabriel brought me a vessel of wine and a vessel of milk. I chose the milk, and Gabriel said: You have chosen the natural thing. Then he took me to heaven.

Gabriel then asked the (gate of heaven) to be opened and he was asked who he was. He replied: Gabriel.

He was again asked: Who is with you?

He (Gabriel) said: Muhammad.

It was said: Has he been sent for?

Gabriel replied: He has indeed been sent for. And (the door of the heaven) was opened for us and lo! we saw Adam. He welcomed me and prayed for my good.

Then we ascended to the second heaven. Gabriel (peace be upon him) (asked the door of heaven to be opened), and he was asked who he was. He answered: Gabriel; and was again asked: Who is with you?

He replied: Muhammad.

It was said: Has he been sent for?

He replied: He has indeed been sent for. The gate was opened.

When I entered 'Isa b. Maryam and Yahya b. Zakariya (peace be upon both of them), cousins from the maternal side welcomed me and prayed for my good.

Then I was taken to the third heaven and Gabriel asked for the opening (of the door).

He was asked: Who are you?

He replied: Gabriel.

He was (again) asked: Who is with you?

He replied: Muhammad (may peace be upon him).

It was said: Has he been sent for?

He replied: He has indeed been sent for. (The gate) was opened for us and I saw Yusuf (peace of Allah be upon him) who had been given half of (world) beauty. He welcomed me [and] prayed for my well-being. Then he ascended with us to the fourth heaven.

Gabriel (peace be upon him) asked for the (gate) to be opened, and it was said: Who is he?

He replied: Gabriel.

It was (again) said: Who is with you?

He said: Muhammad.

It was said: Has he been sent for?

He replied: He has indeed been sent for.

The (gate) was opened for us, and lo! Idris was there. He welcomed me and prayed for my well-being (About him) Allah, the Exalted and the Glorious, has said: "We elevated him (Idris) to the exalted position" (Qur'an 19:57).

Then he ascended with us to the fifth heaven and Gabriel asked for the (gate) to be opened.

It was said: Who is he?

He replied: Gabriel.

It was (again) said: Who is with thee?

He replied: Muhammad.

It was said: Has he been sent for?

He replied: He has indeed been sent for. (The gate) was opened for us and then I was with Harun (Aaron, peace of Allah be upon him). He welcomed me [and] prayed for my well-being. Then I was taken to the sixth heaven.

Gabriel (peace be upon him) asked for the door to be opened.

It was said: Who is he?

He replied: Gabriel.

It was said: Who is with thee?

He replied: Muhammad.

It was said: Has he been sent for?

He replied: He has indeed been sent for. (The gate) was opened for us and there I was with Musa (Moses peace be upon him). He welcomed me and prayed for my well-being.

Then I was taken up to the seventh heaven.

Gabriel asked the (gate) to be opened.

It was said: Who is he?

He said: Gabriel.

It was said: Who is with thee?

He replied: Muhammad (may peace be upon him).

It was said: Has he been sent for?

He replied: He has indeed been sent for. (The gate) was opened for us and there I found Ibrahim (Abraham, peace be upon him) reclining against the Bait-ul-Ma'mur and there enter into it seventy thousand angels every day, never to visit (this place) again.

Then I was taken to Sidrat-ul-Muntaha whose leaves were like elephant ears and its fruit like big earthenware vessels. And when it was covered by the Command of Allah, it underwent such a change that none amongst the creation has the power to praise its beauty.

Then Allah revealed to me a revelation and He made obligatory for me fifty prayers every day and night.

Then I went down to Moses (peace be upon him) and he said: What has your Lord enjoined upon your Ummah?

I said: Fifty prayers.

He said: Return to thy Lord and beg for reduction (in the number of prayers), for your community shall not be able to bear this burden. as I have put to test the children of Israel and tried them (and found them too weak to bear such a heavy burden).

He (the Holy Prophet) said: I went back to my Lord and said: My Lord, make things lighter for my Ummah.

(The Lord) reduced five prayers for me. I went down to Moses and said. (The Lord) reduced five (prayers) for me. He said: Verily thy Ummah shall not be able to bear this burden; return to thy Lord and ask Him to make things lighter.

I then kept going back and forth between my Lord Blessed and Exalted and Moses, till He said: There are five prayers every day and night, O Muhammad, each being credited as ten, so that makes fifty prayers. He who intends to do a good deed and does not do it will have a good deed recorded for him; and if he does it, it will be recorded for him as ten; whereas he who intends to do an evil deed and does not do,

it will not be recorded for him; and if he does it, only one evil deed will be recorded.

I then came down and when I came to Moses and informed him, he said: Go back to thy Lord and ask Him to make things lighter.

Upon this the Messenger of Allah remarked: I returned to my Lord until I felt ashamed before Him.

*Sahih Muslim book 1 hadith 309*

There were no eyewitnesses to Muhammad's departure from Mecca, his landing in Jerusalem, his takeoff for heaven or his return flight to Mecca the following morning; and, of course, there is no historical or archaeological evidence of any kind to back up his story which may explain why Islamic scholars have speculated that the journey never took place in reality but occurred in a dream. For Muhammad and his Host, it was not a dream. Muhammad described this journey to sceptical Meccans the next day. Even with Allah providing visual aids to help him recall what he had seen, many believed he had gone insane.

**Narrated Jabir bin 'Abdullah:**

That he heard Allah's Apostle saying, "When the people of Quraish did not believe me (i.e. the story of my Night Journey), I stood up in Al-Hijr (the unroofed portion of the Ka'ba) and Allah displayed Jerusalem in front of me, and I began describing it to them while I was looking at it."

*Bukhari 58.226*

It was only after he remembered seeing a caravan from the air (which shortly arrived in Mecca) that some of the accusations of insanity were withdrawn. It is from this one visit to Paradise that we have the only eyewitness account of what Jesus and Moses may have looked like. In one hadith Jesus has the "lank hair"; in another it is Moses.

**Narrated Ibn Abbas:**

The Prophet said, "On the night of my ascent to the Heaven, I saw Moses who was a tall brown curly-haired man as if he was one of the men of Shan'awa tribe, and I saw Jesus, a man of medium height and moderate complexion inclined to the red and white colors and of lank hair ..."

*Bukhari 54.462*



**Narrated Abu Huraira:**

Allah's Apostle said, "On the night of my Ascension to Heaven, I saw (the prophet) Moses who was a thin person with lank hair, looking like one of the men of the tribe of Shanua; and I saw Jesus who was of average height with red face as if he had just come out of a bathroom. And I resemble prophet Abraham more than any of his offspring does. Then I was given two cups, one containing milk and the other wine. Gabriel said, 'Drink whichever you like.' I took the milk and drank it. Gabriel said, 'You have accepted what is natural, (True Religion i.e. Islam) and if you had taken the wine, your followers would have gone astray.'"

*Bukhari 55.607*

**Narrated Ibn 'Abbas:**

The Prophet said, "One should not say that I am better than Jonah (i.e. Yunus) bin Matta." So, he mentioned his father Matta. The Prophet mentioned the night of his Ascension and said, "The prophet Moses was brown, a tall person as if from the people of the tribe of Shanu'a. Jesus was a curly-haired man of moderate height." He also mentioned Malik, the gate-keeper of the (Hell) Fire, and Ad-Dajjal.

*Bukhari 55.608*

# **Pillars of Faith and Belief**

Christianity has its Ten Commandments; Islam its Five Pillars, four of which (1 2 4 and 5) are about worshipping Allah.

1. Shahadah, declaring allegiance to God.
2. Salat, daily prayers.
3. Zakat, annual charity.
4. Saum, month-long fasting.
5. Hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca.

Charity (Zakat) is the only one of the Five Pillars of Islam that has nothing, or next to nothing to do with worshipping Allah except, perhaps, in an indirect way, when you give it in furtherance of His Cause.

47:38 There you are; you are called upon to spend freely in Allah's Cause, but some of you are niggardly. Yet he who is niggardly is only niggardly against himself. Allah is the All-Sufficient and you are the destitute. If you turn back, He will replace you by a people other than you, and they will not be like you at all.

Cynics might argue that Allah instinctively appreciated the strategic value of helping people in need in recruiting for His Cause. An understanding of the persuasive power of giving that was not lost on the Islamists who, during the catastrophic flooding in Pakistan in 2010, disrupted aid from Western Countries while facilitating the distribution of the inadequate contributions from Islamic regimes; or in Somalia where Allah's militants stopped food shipments from Western nations from reaching famine-ravaged portions of the country.

The Pillars of Islam are mandatory activities which should not be confused with the Pillars of Faith, which are obligatory beliefs.

- 1) Belief in God;
- 2) Belief in the Angels;
- 3) Belief in the revealed Books of the Prophet;
- 4) Belief in God's many prophets;
- 5) Belief in a Last Day;
- 6) Belief in the divine measurement of human affairs;
- 7) Belief in a life after death.

One of the first Koranic verses committed to memory, and one of the most repeated during daily prayers is the Verse of the Throne which elaborately expresses the first belief.

2:255 Allah! There is no God but He, the Living, the Everlasting. Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes him. His is what is in the heavens and on the earth. Who shall intercede with Him except with His leave? He knows what is before them (in this world) and what is behind them (in the Hereafter). And they do not comprehend of His Knowledge except what He wills. His Throne encompasses the heavens and the earth, and their preservation does not burden Him. He is the Exalted, the Great.

A believer can declare his or her belief in the Angels, the revealed Books of the Prophets and the Prophets themselves by including in his or her daily prayers the following verse:

2:285 The Messenger (Muhammad) believes in what has been revealed to him by his Lord, and so do the believers too. All believe in Allah, His Angels, His Books and His Messengers. We make no distinction between any of His Messengers. And they (the believers) say: "We hear and obey. Grant us Your Forgiveness, our Lord. And to you is our return."

He or she can do it again and include belief in Judgment Day, rounding out the seven beliefs which define what it means to be Muslim by repeating revelation 4:136.

4:136 O believers, believe in Allah and His Messenger and in the Book which He revealed to His Messenger, and the Book which He revealed before. Whoever disbelieves in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Prophets and the Last Day has gone far astray.

## **Selling It!**

Nowhere is Islamic law applied more selectively than in commercial transactions. To do as Muhammad demands would completely cripple the modern economy. Take money, for instance:

### **Narrated Abu Al-Minhal:**

I used to practice money exchange, and I asked Zaid bin 'Arqam about it, and he narrated what the Prophet said in the following: Abu Al-Minhal said, "I asked Al-Bara' bin 'Azib and Zaid bin Arqam about practicing money exchange. They replied, 'We were traders in the time of Allah's Apostle and I asked Allah's Apostle about money exchange. He replied, 'If it is from hand to hand, there is no harm in it; otherwise it is not permissible.'"

*Bukhari 34.276*

Some of what Muhammad had to say about buying and selling are benign, but these are the exceptions.

### **Narrated Abu Huraira:**

I heard Allah's Apostle saying, "The swearing (by the seller) may persuade the buyer to purchase the goods but that will be deprived of Allah's blessing."

*Bukhari 34.300*

### **Narrated Abdullah bin Umar:**

A person came to the Prophet and told him that he was always betrayed in purchasing.

The Prophet told him to say at the time of buying, "No cheating."

*Bukhari 34.328*

Muhammad would control every aspect of the selling and buying of goods, as he did with everything he came in contact with, often to the point of absurdity. There was no macro-economic thinking behind the lawmaker's decrees. From Muhammad's experience, the type of bartering that occurred around him was what was done everywhere; it

was a micro-economic perspective perfectly suited for the ultimate micro-manager. All that needed to be done was to modify trade and commercial practices from the time of ignorance, the world before Islam, to his and Allah's liking. In the process, he made how people bought and sold stuff 1,400 years ago the equivalent of revealed truths, therefore timeless and unchanging. An example of how Muhammad's obsession with the believers not earning interest completely changed the nature of barter, many would say for the worst, much worse if Islamic law was uniform in its application:

**Narrated 'Umar bin Al-Khattab:**

Allah's Apostle said, "The bartering of gold for silver is Riba (usury), except if it is from hand to hand and equal in amount, and wheat grain for wheat grain is usury except if it is from hand to hand and equal in amount, and dates for dates is usury except if it is from hand to hand and equal in amount, and barley for barley is usury except if it is from hand to hand and equal in amount."

*Bukhari 34.344*

For a religion with global ambitions, it is quite incredible how parochial its founder was in promulgating immutable laws. What is even more incredible is that believers, Islamists in particular, would have us believe, by force and under threat of extermination if necessary, that these laws, the sayings and examples of a Dark Age trailblazer, if strictly applied, will lead to a perfect world.

What if the world economy was subjected to Islamic economic laws? For one thing, futures markets would be a thing of the past. It would also be impossible, without breaking the law, for individuals, companies, even government to negotiate large scale sales of staples such as rice, wheat, corn ... anything for that matter, on behalf of the producers.

**Narrated Ibn Umar:**

The Prophet said, "He who buys foodstuff should not sell it till he has received it."

*Bukhari 34.343*

**Narrated Ibn 'Abbas:**

The Prophet forbade the selling of foodstuff before receiving it. I consider that all types of sellings (sic) should be done similarly.

*Bukhari 34.345*

**Narrated 'Abdullah bin 'Umar:**

Allah's Apostle forbade the sale called 'Habal-al-Habala' which was a kind of sale practiced in the pre-Islamic period of ignorance. One would pay the price of a she-camel which was not born yet ...

*Bukhari 34.353*

It would mean the end of food wholesalers. Say goodbye to the modern supermarket.

**Narrated Tawus:**

Ibn 'Abbas said, "Allah's Apostle said, 'Do not go to meet the caravans on the way (for buying their goods without letting them know the market price); a town dweller should not sell the goods of a desert dweller on behalf of the latter.'"

I asked Ibn 'Abbas, "What does he mean by not selling the goods of a desert dweller by a town dweller?"

He said, "He should not become his broker."

*Bukhari 34.367*

It would mean the end of electronic commerce, e.g., internet and purchases made over the phone.

**Narrated Hakim bin Hizam:**

The Prophet said, "The buyer and the seller have the option of cancelling or confirming the deal unless they separate."

*Bukhari 34.321*

Why Muhammad would insist that food purchases made from a passing caravan could not be resold on the spot is a mystery to this twenty-first century consumer.

**Narrated Nafi:**

Ibn 'Umar told us that the people used to buy food from the caravans in the lifetime of the Prophet. The Prophet used to forbid them to sell it at the very place where they had

purchased it (but they were to wait) till they carried it to the market where foodstuff was sold.

Ibn 'Umar said, "The Prophet also forbade the reselling of foodstuff by somebody who had bought it unless he had received it with exact full measure"

*Bukhari 34.334*

Nowhere is the micro-management obsession of Muhammad more evident than in his insistence, at the that risk of a beating, that if you bought perishables without first insisting on them being measured, i.e., weighed before your eyes, you had to take them home, where I assume you had a scale of some sort, and confirm for yourself that the measure was accurate. What about modern pre-wrapped food that is weighed at the factory where it is packaged?

**Narrated Ibn 'Umar:**

I saw the people buy foodstuff randomly (i.e. blindly without measuring it) in the life-time of Allah's Apostle and they were punished (by beating), if they tried to sell it before carrying it to their own houses.

*Bukhari 34.347*

The merchant in Muhammad is everywhere evident in his obsessions with weights and measures.

**Narrated Ibn 'Umar:**

The Prophet forbade Muzabana; and Muzabana is the selling of fresh fruit (without measuring it) for something by measure on the basis that if that thing turns to be more than the fruit, the increase would be for the seller of the fruit, and if it turns to be less, that would be of his lot.

Narrated Ibn 'Umar from Zaid bin Thabit that the Prophet allowed the selling of the fruits on the trees after estimation (when they are ripe).

*Bukhari 34.381*

Muhammad's backyard was not so much a world of farmers as a world of traders and herders. He did not even know how date growers went about their business until he left the desert trading hub of Mecca for the oasis city of Medina and was scandalized to discover that date-bearing palms were artificially pollinated and ordered the practice stopped. He

re-instituted the practice the next year after date production plummeted, but insisted it be done when he wasn't around. Of course, this did not mean he could not regulate the sale of the fruits of date-palms not pollinated the old-fashioned way.

**Narrated Abdullah bin Umar:**

Allah's Apostle said, "If someone sells pollinated date-palms, their fruits will be for the seller, unless the buyer stipulates the contrary."

*Bukhari 50.877*

This exposure to date production, his experience as a merchant and his access to the Creator's expert advice, meant Muhammad was comfortable telling the growers and consumers when and how dates should be traded. Dates being a staple of the Arab diet and a favourite of the Prophet, this meant that the vast majority of hadiths about fruits and vegetable are about dates. A word you should get familiar with, which you will now frequently encounter, is Sa. It is a unit of measurement for which, as described by Wiki "the oldest accurate information about it is that of the qafiz of Hajjaj" which equaled one Sa' of the Prophet's (4.2125 litres).

**Narrated Aisha:**

The family of Muhammad did not eat two meals on one day, but one of the two was of dates.

*Bukhari 76.462*

**Narrated 'Abdullah bin 'Umar:**

Allah's Apostle said, "Do not sell fruits of dates until they become free from all the dangers of being spoilt or blighted; and do not sell fresh dates for dry dates."

Narrated Salim and 'Abdullah from Zaid bin Habit "Later on Allah's Apostle permitted the selling of ripe fruits on trees for fresh dates or dried dates in Bai'-l-'Araya, and did not allow it for any other kind of sale."

*Bukhari 34.389*



**Narrated Abu Huraira:**

The Prophet allowed the sale of the dates of 'Araya provided they were about five Awsuq (singular: Wasaq which means sixty SAs) or less (in amount).

*Bukhari 34.395*

**Narrated Ibn 'Umar:**

Allah's Apostle forbade Al-Muzabana, i.e. to sell ungathered (sic) dates of one's garden for measured dried dates or fresh ungathered grapes for measured dried grapes; or standing crops for measured quantity of foodstuff. He forbade all such bargains.

*Bukhari 34.407*

**Narrated Abu Bakhtari At-Tai:**

I asked Ibn 'Abbas about Salam for (the fruits of) date-palms. He replied "The Prophet forbade the sale of dates on the trees till they became fit for eating and could be weighed."

A man asked what to be weighed (as the dates were still on the trees). Another man sitting beside Ibn 'Abbas replied, "Till they are cut and stored."

*Bukhari 35.450*

**Narrated Anas bin Malik:**

Allah's Apostle forbade the sale of fruits till they are almost ripe. He was asked what is meant by 'are almost ripe.' He replied, "Till they become red."

*Bukhari 34.403*

Even in the trading of dates you had to be sure you were not circumventing Allah's prohibition against earning interest. Again Muhammad came to the rescue for those unclear on the concept.

**Narrated Abu Said Al-Khudri and Abu Huraira:**

Allah's Apostle appointed somebody as a governor of Khaibar. That governor brought to him an excellent kind of dates (from Khaibar).

The Prophet asked, "Are all the dates of Khaibar like this?"

He replied, "By Allah, no, O Allah's Apostle! But we barter one Sa of this (type of dates) for two Sas of dates of ours and two Sas of it for three of ours."

Allah's Apostle said, "Do not do so (as that is a kind of usury) but sell the mixed dates (of inferior quality) for money, and then buy good dates with that money."

*Bukhari 34.405*

**Narrated Abu Said al-Khudri:**

Once Bilal brought Barni (i.e. a kind of dates) to the Prophet and the Prophet asked him, "From where have you brought these?"

Bilal replied, "I had some inferior type of dates and exchanged two Sas of it for one Sa of Barni dates in order to give it to the Prophet to eat."

Thereupon the Prophet said, "Beware! Beware! This is definitely Riba (usury)! This is definitely Riba (Usury)! Don't do so, but if you want to buy (a superior kind of dates) sell the inferior dates for money and then buy the superior kind of dates with that money."

*Bukhari 39.506*

**Narrated Jabir bin 'Abdullah:**

The Prophet forbade the sales called Al-Mukhabara, Al-Muhaqala and Al-Muzabana and the selling of fruits till they are free from blights. He forbade the selling of the fruits except for money, except the 'Araya.

*Bukhari 40.567*

For hadiths about other foodstuff you have to look to the hadiths about what the believers will eat in Paradise.

As mentioned earlier, Muhammad's world was not so much a world of farmers but a world of traders and herders until he immigrated at forty-something, with most of his followers, to the oasis city of Medina to escape his Meccan kin who now wanted to kill him for preaching what they considered a dangerous, intolerant, insulting religion.

Muhammad's knowledge of trade practices during the Dark Ages, in what we now call the Middle East, was undoubtedly unparalleled; his knowledge of animal husbandry, the science of breeding and caring for farm animals, while undoubtedly superior to that of farming, could not

have been as comprehensive. What he knew about the care and feeding of domesticated animals, apart from the camels in the caravans he was part of, seems to have come from a short stint as a shepherd, which was, according to this messenger, a rite of passage for all messengers of God.

**Narrated Abu Huraira:**

The Prophet said, "Allah did not send any prophet but shepherded sheep."

His companions asked him, "Did you do the same?"

The Prophet replied, "Yes, I used to shepherd the sheep of the people of Mecca for some Qirats."

*Bukhari 36.463*

We only have Muhammad's word that he worked for a short time as a shepherd in the nearly grassless inhospitable desert in which Mecca is situated. Then again, if you can't trust a messenger of God to tell you the truth, who can you trust?

Muhammad, as could be expected, considered himself an expert in animal husbandry and like dates, when and in what condition an animal could be sold or returned to the seller. And, like the focus on dates, the hadiths concerning the sale of livestock are very much about what grazed in his neighbourhood and what sold at his local market. Note the use of dates in arriving at a fair exchange in the following hadiths about the sale and disposition of livestock.

**Narrated Abu Huraira:**

The Prophet said, "Don't keep camels and sheep unmilked (sic) for a long time, for whoever buys such an animal has the option to milk it and then either to keep it or return it to the owner along with one Sa of dates."

Some narrated from Ibn Sirin (that the Prophet had said), "One Sa of wheat, and he has the option for three days."

And some narrated from Ibn Sirin, "a Sa of dates," not mentioning the option for three days. But a Sa of dates is mentioned in most narrations.

*Bukhari 34.358*

**Narrated Abdullah bin Mas'ud:**

Whoever buys a sheep which has not been milked for a long time, has the option of returning it along with one Sa of dates; and the Prophet forbade going to meet the seller on the way (as he has no knowledge of the market price and he may sell his goods at a low price).

*Bukhari 34.359*

**Narrated Abu Huraira:**

Allah's Apostle said, "Do not go forward to meet the caravan (to buy from it on the way before it reaches the town). And do not urge buyers to cancel their purchases to sell them (your own goods) yourselves, and do not practice Najsh. A town dweller should not sell the goods for the desert dweller. Do not leave sheep unmilked for a long time, when they are on sale, and whoever buys such an animal has the option of returning it, after milking it, along with a Sa of dates or keeping it. It has been kept unmilked for a long period by the seller (to deceive others).

*Bukhari 34.360*

Transfer of ownership of a pregnant camel must await the birth.

**Narrated Abdullah:**

The people used to sell camels on the basis of Habal-al-Habala. The Prophet forbade such sale. Nafi' explained Habalal-Habala by saying. "The camel is to be delivered to the buyer after the she-camel gives birth."

*Bukhari 35.457*

Rules for traders in precious metals:

**Narrated Abu Bakra:**

Allah's Apostle said, "Don't sell gold for gold unless equal in weight, nor silver for silver unless equal in weight, but you could sell gold for silver or silver for gold as you like."

*Bukhari 34.383*

**Narrated Abu Said Al-Khudri:**

Allah's Apostle said, "Do not sell gold for gold unless equivalent in weight, and do not sell less amount for greater amount or vice versa; and do not sell silver for silver unless

equivalent in weight, and do not sell less amount for greater amount or vice versa and do not sell gold or silver that is not present at the moment of exchange for gold or silver that is present.

*Bukhari 34.385*

Real estate agents will not love the following:

**Narrated Abu Huraira:**

The Prophet forbade two kinds of dressing; (one of them) is to sit with one's legs drawn up while wrapped in one garment. (The other) is to lift that garment on one's shoulders. And also forbade two kinds of sale: Al-Limas (*"a sale in which the deal is completed if the buyer touches a thing, without seeing or checking it properly"*) and An-Nibadh (*"a sale in which the deal is completed if the seller throws a thing towards the buyer giving him no opportunity to see, touch or check it"*).

*Bukhari 34.355*

The advantage of being the nearest neighbour if you covet your neighbour's home and he puts it up for sale:

**Narrated Amr bin Ash-Sharid:**

While I was standing with Sad bin Abi Waqqas, Al-Miswar bin Makhrama came and put his hand on my shoulder. Meanwhile Abu Rafi', the freed slave of the Prophet came and asked Sad to buy from him the (two) dwellings which were in his house. Sad said, "By Allah I will not buy them."

Al-Miswar said, "By Allah, you shall buy them."

Sad replied, "By Allah, I will not pay more than four thousand (Dirhams) by installments."

Abu Rafi' said, "I have been offered five hundred Dinars (for it) and had I not heard the Prophet saying, 'The neighbor has more right than anyone else because of his nearness', I would not give them to you for four-thousand (Dirhams) while I am offered five-hundred Dinars (one Dinar equals ten Dirhams) for them." So, he sold it to Sad.

*Bukhari 35.459*

Another advantage of being a close neighbour when your neighbour is in a gift-giving mood but does not have enough gifts to go around:

**Narrated Aisha:**

I said, "O Allah's Apostle! I have two neighbors and would like to know to which of them I should give presents."

He replied, "To the one whose door is nearer to you."

*Bukhari 35.460*

Mixing it up!

**Narrated Abu Huraira:**

Allah's Apostle forbade the selling of things by a town dweller on behalf of a desert dweller; and similarly Najsh (to offer a high price for something you do not care for simply to deprive someone else of it) was forbidden. And one should not urge somebody to return the goods to the seller so as to sell him his own goods; nor should one demand the hand of a girl who has already been engaged to someone else; and a woman should not try to cause some other woman to be divorced in order to take her place.

*Bukhari 34.350*

Arranged marriages can provide a novel way of settling disputes, including one about mineral rights after a sale.

**Narrated Abu Huraira:**

Allah's Apostle said, "A man bought a piece of land from another man, and the buyer found an earthenware jar filled with gold in the land. The buyer said to the seller. 'Take your gold, as I have bought only the land from you, but I have not bought the gold from you.'

The (former) owner of the land said, 'I have sold you the land with everything in it.' So both of them took their case before a man who asked, 'Do you have children?'

One of them said, 'I have a boy.'

The other said, 'I have a girl.'

The man said, 'Marry the girl to the boy and spend the money on both of them and give the rest of it in charity.'"

*Bukhari 56.678*

You can probably buy and sell gold jewelry but wearing your purchase may be out of the question unless it is some kind of gold broach in the form of an insect (remember Job).

**Narrated Abu Huraira:**

The Prophet forbade the wearing of a gold ring.

*Bukhari 72.754*

**Narrated Abdullah:**

Allah's Apostle wore a gold or silver ring and placed its stone towards the palm of his hand. The people also started wearing gold rings like it, but when the Prophet saw them wearing such rings, he threw away that golden ring and then wore a silver ring.

*Bukhari 72.755*

**Narrated Abu Huraira:**

The Prophet said, "While Job was naked, taking a bath, a swarm of gold locusts fell on him and he started collecting them in his garment. His Lord called him, 'O Job! Have I not made you rich enough to need what you see? He said, 'Yes, O Lord! But I cannot dispense with your Blessing.'"

*Bukhari 55.604*

Wearing gold bracelets may also be inadvisable because of what transpired in a dream of Muhammad.

**Narrated Abu Huraira:**

Allah's Apostle said, "We (Muslims) are the last (to come) but (will be) the foremost (on the Day of Resurrection)."

Allah's Apostle further said, "While sleeping, I was given the treasures of the world and two golden bangles were put in my hands, but I felt much annoyed, and those two bangles distressed me very much, but I was inspired that I should blow them off, so I blew them and they flew away. Then I interpreted that those two bangles were the liars between whom I was (i.e., the one of San'a' and the one of Yamama)."

*Bukhari 87.160*

More items for which there is limited trade among believers.

**Narrated Hudhaifa:**

The Prophet forbade us to drink out of gold and silver vessels, or eat in it, and also forbade the wearing of silk and Dibaj (silk cloth) or sitting on it.

*Bukhari 72.728*



## **The Earth Is Flat**

The Earth is flat with a solid level roof.

79:27 Are you, then, stronger in constitution than the heaven He has erected?

79:28 He raised its vault then levelled it off.

79:29 He dimmed its night and lighted its day.

79:30 Then, the earth, He flattened.

79:31 From it, He brought out its water and its pasture.

79:32 And the mountains, He established firmly,

79:33 As a source of enjoyment for you and your cattle.

The Earth may be as flat as a couch:

2:21 O people (of Mecca), worship your Lord who has created you as well as those who came before you so that you may guard against evil;

2:22 Who has made the earth a couch for you, and the heavens a canopy, and Who sent down water from the sky, bringing forth by it a variety of fruits as a provision for you. Therefore do not knowingly set up equals to Allah.

The idea of a flat Earth appears to have originated with a well-travelled 6th century Christian monk by the name of Cosmas who wrote what is recognized today as one of the first, if not the first scientific treatise on geography. In his *Christian Topography*, Cosmas argued that the Earth is flat and stationary, with heaven above and hell below; that pagans such as Aristotle who postulated that the Earth was a sphere were wrong.

Pythagoras (c. 580 – 500 B.C.) was the first to identify the earth as a sphere followed by Aristotle and later Hipparchus. Until Cosmas came along “Aristotle’s spherical theory of the globe had been the cornerstone of classical geography ... Aristotle determined that the earth must be a sphere; after an eclipse he had pointed out that only an orb could throw a circular shadow on the moon.”

*William Manchester, A World Lit Only By Fire, The Medieval Mind and The Renaissance, Little Brown and Company, 1992*

It was not until Magellan's expedition circled the globe that the flat Earth theory was finally wholly discredited – in most of the Christian world, at any rate.

Before he became a Prophet at the age of forty, Muhammad accompanied or led trading caravans as far north as Damascus. He was twelve when he accompanied his uncle on a business trip to Syria. On the way there, the caravan passed by a Christian monastery near present day Basra where a Christian monk named Bahira began instructing the future Prophet on Christian theology and belief. It may have been Bahira who first introduced Muhammad to Cosmas' flat Earth theory. The biggest difference between what Cosmas advanced, and what Allah revealed is, in his Koran the sun sets in a sea of mud at one end of flat Earth and it is this disappearing act which gives rise to the night. Cosmas wrote that it was a somewhat diminutive sun disappearing behind a high mountain it circled which caused darkness to fall.

# **The Forty Greater Sins**

The forty Greater Sins in descending order of evilness:

1. Shirk (polytheism), associating other gods with Allah.
2. Yās (despair), to doubt Allah's Mercy.
3. Qunut (despondence), losing hope in Allah.
4. Not fearing Allah's punishment.
5. Murder.
6. Parental disobedience.
7. Breaking up with relatives.
8. Usurping the property of orphans.
9. The charging of interest on borrowed money.
10. Fornication (adultery).
11. Sodomy.
12. Wrongfully accusing a chaste believer of adultery or homosexuality.
13. Drinking alcoholic beverages.
14. Gambling.
15. To neglect an obligatory religious duty.
16. Playing musical instruments or listening to music.
17. Singing.
18. Lying.
19. False oaths.
20. False testimony.
21. Concealing evidence.
22. Breaking a promise.
23. Misappropriation of property.
24. Stealing.
25. Short weighing or cheating in business.
26. Eating of what is unlawful.
27. Usurping the rights of others.
28. Avoiding Jihad.

29. Becoming A'Arāb after Hijrat, "the condition when a desert Bedouin before acquiring the necessary knowledge of religion turns back to his ignorant ways."
30. Helping the oppressors.
31. Not helping the oppressed.
32. Sorcery.
33. Extravagance e.g. wasteful expenditures.
34. Arrogance.
35. To war against Muslims.
36. Eating of carrion, pork and blood.
37. Omitting prayer intentionally.
38. Non-payment of Zakat (obligatory charity).
39. To consider the Hajj (mandatory pilgrimage) insignificant.
40. Persistence in minor sins (committing a lesser sin repeatedly).

## **The Night Muhammad Punched Aisha**

A hadith about a night visit where Muhammad's child bride attempted to catch her husband in conversation with Gabriel and was punched in the chest for her efforts. The following is from The Book of Prayers (Kitab Al-Salat) of Sahih Muslim; it begins with a typical introduction with the narrator identifying himself, and if it is hearsay, as most are, who he heard it from, followed by some atypical comments from his audience (no quotation marks were in the original translation and I have chosen not to add any):

Muhammad b. Qais said (to the people):

Should I not narrate to you (a hadith of the Holy Prophet) on my authority and on the authority of my mother? We thought that he meant the mother who had given him birth. He (Muhammad b. Qais) then reported that it was 'A'isha who had narrated this: Should I not narrate to you about myself and about the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him)?

We said: Yes.

From Aisha, we learn that it all started when she joined her husband for an intimate moment, after which, thinking she is asleep, Muhammad leaves her side.

She said: When it was my turn for Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) to spend the night with me, he turned his side, put on his mantle and took off his shoes and placed them near his feet, and spread the corner of his shawl on his bed and then lay down till he thought that I had gone to sleep. He took hold of his mantle slowly and put on the shoes slowly, and opened the door and went out and then closed it lightly.

Aisha is not asleep and decides to follow her husband where she observes him doing hand gestures, after which they both return to the house, Aisha rushing ahead and hopping into bed hoping Muhammad is none the wiser.

I covered my head, put on my veil and tightened my waist wrapper, and then went out following his steps till he reached Baqi'. He stood there and he stood for a long time. He then lifted his hands three times, and then returned and I also returned. He hastened his steps and I also hastened my steps. He ran and I too ran. He came (to the house) and I also came (to the house). I, however, preceded him and I entered (the house), and as I lay

down in the bed, he (the Holy Prophet) entered the (house), and said:

Muhammad is no fool; he notices she is out of breath and asks the obvious question, and she better tell him the truth because if she does not, Allah will tell on her.

Why is it, O 'A'isha, that you are out of breath?

I said: There is nothing.

He said: Tell me or the Subtle and the Aware would inform me.

Aisha tells whatever she tells swearing it is the truth, and this is when her husband strikes her.

I said: Messenger of Allah, may my father and mother be ransom for you, and then I told him (the whole story).

He said: Was it the darkness (of your shadow) that I saw in front of me?

I said: Yes.

He struck me on the chest which caused me pain, and then said: Did you think that Allah and His Apostle would deal unjustly with you?

She said: Whatsoever the people conceal, Allah will know it.

At this point, her husband feels compelled to explain to an obviously skeptical young woman why she did not observe him and the angel Gabriel in animated conversation.

He said: Gabriel came to me when you saw me. He called me and he concealed it from you. I responded to his call, but I too concealed it from you (for he did not come to you), as you were not fully dressed. I thought that you had gone to sleep, and I did not like to awaken you, fearing that you may be frightened.

The hadith ends with Muhammad, on Gabriel's order, instructing his wife to go to a graveyard, where he will join her later, and pray for the dead as penance for having spied on her husband.

He (Gabriel) said: Your Lord has commanded you to go to the inhabitants of Baqi' (to those lying in the graves) and beg pardon for them.

I said: Messenger of Allah, how should I pray for them (How should I beg forgiveness for them)?

He said: Say, Peace be upon the inhabitants of this city (graveyard) from among the Believers and the Muslims, and may Allah have mercy on those who have gone ahead of us, and those who come later on, and we shall, God willing, join you.

## **Tolerance Abrogated**

Of all the incongruities that devotees of a religion steeped in incongruities have to accept, the concept of abrogation has to be the most outlandish. Abrogation, i.e., retraction, annulment, cancellation ... is common in the real world as better information replaces old information. In the world of revealed truths, immutable facts revealed to a mortal by a god, abrogation should not even be the exception; it defies logic.

Contemporary scholars, unlike their classical counterparts who came up with the more than two hundred abrogated revelations around the eleventh century, are divided on the concept of abrogation, and the uncomfortable contradictions it entails.

The difficulty in getting converts to accept the inherent absurdity of a know-it-all omnipotent god not getting it right the first, even the second time around may explain the attempt by contemporary scholars to refute the very concept of abrogation as did Muhammad Asad (1900-92), who argued that classical scholars misinterpreted passages relating to abrogation, citing verse 10:64 as evidence of the immutability of Allah's Words.

10:64 Theirs is the good news in the present life and the Hereafter. And there will be no alteration of the Words of Allah. That is the great triumph.

Not so, according to another contemporary expert, Ahmad von Denffer (1949-present). For this eminent scholar, understanding abrogation is central to the correct application of Allah's laws. Denffer quotes four revelations to Asad's one, where Allah admits to changing His mind.

2:106 Whichever verse We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring instead a better or similar one. Do you not know that Allah has the power over all things?

13:39 Allah blots out and confirms what He pleases; and with Him is the Mother of the Book.

16:101 And if We replace a verse by another – and Allah knows best what He reveals – they say: “You [Muhammad] are only a forger.” Surely, most of them do not know.

17:86 If We please, We certainly can blot out that which We have revealed to you (O Muhammad); then you would find no guardian to assist you against Us.

Allah even acknowledged that His changing His mind was causing problems for His Messenger whose detractors thought it strange, an omnipotent, all-knowing god who could not get it right the first time. These open-minded individuals reached the only possible conclusion: their kin, the first would-be Arab spokesperson for the Almighty, was making it up as he went along, and told him so to his face, calling him a forger in revelation 16:101.

The Arabs of old knew more than Allah was willing to admit, judging by the non-answer Gabriel communicated to Muhammad in response to the forgery accusation.

16:102 Say: "The Holy Spirit has brought it down from our Lord in truth, in order to reassure the believers, as a guidance and good news to those who submit.

Two verses, of the more than two hundred abrogated verses which cannot be ignored, are revealed truths 2:62 and 109:6 which appear to sanction tolerance of practitioners of other religions.

## Revelation 2:62

2:62 The believers (Muslims), the Jews, the Christians and the Sabians – whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and does what is good, shall receive their reward from their Lord. They shall have nothing to fear and they shall not grieve.

Revelation 2:62 is said to be abrogated by 3:85:

3:85 Whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted from him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers.

Even if revelation 2:62 had not been abrogated, its scope was already severely limited by other revelations.

Like all of Allah's seemingly universal declarations, there is a catch. Those who do not believe in an omnipotent monotheistic deity whose name is Allah, e.g., Indians (Hindus), animists, atheists, agnostics... can do all the good they can, and live an exemplary life, it won't matter a whit. Allah may not even write their good deeds down. What would be the point!



20:112 And he who does the righteous deeds, while a believer, will fear neither injustice nor inequity.

21:94 Whoever does what is good, while a believer, his endeavour will not be denied, and We are indeed writing it down for him.

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22:50 Those who believe and do the righteous deeds will receive forgiveness and a bountiful provision,

22:51 But who strive against our Revelations defying Us – those are the people of Hell.

Then, there are the ambiguous verses about the actual status of the people of the Book: believers, unbelievers or evildoers (people who associate other gods with Allah such as Christians obviously qualify).

29:46 Do not dispute with the people of the Book save in the fairest way; except for those of them who are evildoers. And say: "We believe in what has been sent down to us and what has been sent down to you. Our God and your God are one and to Him we are submissive."

29:47 And thus We have sent down to you the Book. Those to whom We gave the Book (the people of the Book, Jews and Christians) believe in it, and of these (the Prophet's Meccans contemporaries) some believe in it. Our Signs are only denied by the unbelievers.

Finally, there is verse 45:14:

45:14 Tell the believers to forgive those who do not hope for Allah's Days ("evil days from Allah" *Moududi*, "calamities" *Fakhry*), that He may reward a people for what they used to earn.

Is Allah really expecting the believers to forgive the unbelievers and, who is the reward for, and what is the reward? Is Allah being facetious?

The commentators have given two meanings of this verse and the words of the verse admit of both: (1) "That the believers should pardon the excesses of this wicked group so that Allah may reward them for their patience and forbearance and nobility from Himself and recompense them for the persecutions they have suffered for His sake." (2) "That the believers should

pardon these people so that Allah may Himself punish them for their persecutions of them."

Some other commentators have regarded this verse as repealed. They say that this command was applicable only till the Muslims had not been permitted to fight. Then, when they were permitted to fight, this command became abrogated.

*Moududi [1903-1979] (pre-eminent Islamic scholar and, theologian, first recipient of the King Faisal International Award for his services to Islam and Islamic studies)*

Authors like Fouad Laroui would like us to forget all that other stuff. The nasty and pedantic stuff found in the Koran, what he calls, "window dressing." If only that were possible! Consider a revelation which contains a plea and a prayer; a somewhat amenable near-universal prayer if you ignore the last line. Pity!

2:286 Allah does not charge any soul beyond its capacity. It gets [rewarded for] what [good] it has earned, and is called to account for what [evil] it has committed. Lord, forgive us if we have forgotten or erred. Lord, do not lay on us a burden like that You laid on those before us, and do not burden us with what we cannot bear. Pardon us, forgive us and have mercy on us. You are our Protector. Give us victory over the unbelieving people.

## Revelation 109:6

### THE UNBELIEVERS

#### *109 Al-Kâfirûn*

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

109:1 Say: "O unbelievers,

109:2 "I do not worship what you worship,

109:3 "Nor do you worship what I worship;

109:4 "Nor do I worship what you have worshipped,

109:5 "Nor do you worship what I worship (*same as 109:3*),

109:6 "You have your religion and I have mine."

Revelation 109:6 is said to be abrogated by the Verse of the Sword.

9:5 Then, when the Sacred Months (these are the four months during which war was prohibited in pre-Islamic times) are over,

kill the idolaters wherever you find them, take them [as captives], besiege them, and lie in wait for them at every point of observation. If they repent afterwards, perform the prayer and pay the alms, then release them. Allah is truly All-Forgiving, Merciful.

According to the imminent Egyptian theologian Abu al-Fadl Abd ar-Rahman Jalal ad-Din as-Suyuti (d. 1505), "Everything in the Qur'an about forgiveness and peace is abrogated by verse 9:5."

Revelation 109:6 is from a Meccan surah, a surah revealed during Muhammad's time in Mecca when he had few friends and only his say-so to convince his tribesmen that he was God's latest spokesmen charged with delivering His final instructions for mankind, the Koran.

As he became more powerful, after fleeing Mecca for Medina, Muhammad discovered the persuasive power of the sword and Allah became a lot less tolerant, as is evident in the Medinan surah, *The Clear Proof*.

## THE CLEAR PROOF

### 98 Al-Bayyinah

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

98:1 The unbelievers, among the People of the Book and the idolaters, would not desist till the clear proof comes to them;

98:2 A Messenger from Allah reciting purified scrolls,

98:3 Wherein are valuable books.

Both Jews and Christians were not willing to accept Allah's contention that He sent the Koran to correct errors that had allegedly crept into an earlier book of His: the Bible.

98:4 Those who were given the Book did not diverge except after the clear proof came to them.

For their refusal to accept the Koran as the overriding Message, i.e., "the clear proof", and Islam as the superior religion, i.e., "the religion of truth", therefore theirs being one of lies, they will be joining the idolaters in Hell, revelation 98:6.

98:5 And they were only commanded to worship Allah, professing the religion sincerely to Him as upright believers, to

perform the prayers and give the alms. That is the religion of truth.

98:6 The unbelievers, among the People of the Book and the idolaters, shall be in the Fire of Hell, dwelling therein forever. Those are the worst of creatures.

# **Waraqa, the Most Influential Christian Ever**

**Narrated Aisha:**

The commencement of the Divine Inspiration to Allah's Apostle was in the form of good dreams which came true like bright day light, and then the love of seclusion was bestowed upon him.

He used to go in seclusion in the cave of Hira where he used to worship (Allah alone) continuously for many days before his desire to see his family.

He used to take with him the journey food for the stay and then come back to (his wife) Khadija to take his food like-wise again till suddenly the Truth descended upon him while he was in the cave of Hira. The angel came to him and asked him to read.

The Prophet replied, "I do not know how to read."

The Prophet added, "The angel caught me (forcefully) and pressed me so hard that I could not bear it any more. He then released me and again asked me to read and I replied, 'I do not know how to read.'

Thereupon he caught me again and pressed me a second time till I could not bear it any more. He then released me and again asked me to read but again I replied, 'I do not know how to read (or what shall I read)?'

Thereupon he caught me for the third time and pressed me, and then released me and said, 'Read in the name of your Lord, who has created (all that exists) has created man from a clot. Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous.' (96:1, 96:2, 96:3)

Then Allah's Apostle returned with the Inspiration and with his heart beating severely. Then he went to Khadija bint Khuwailid and said, 'Cover me! Cover me!'

They covered him till his fear was over and after that he told her everything that had happened and said, "I fear that something may happen to me."

Khadija replied, "Never! By Allah, Allah will never disgrace you. You keep good relations with your Kith and kin, help the poor and the destitute, serve your guests generously and assist the deserving calamity-afflicted ones."

Khadija then accompanied him to her cousin Waraqa bin Naufal bin Asad bin Abdul Uzza, who, during the pre-Islamic period became a Christian and used to write the writing with Hebrew letters. He would write from the Gospel in Hebrew as much as Allah wished him to write. He was an old man and had lost his eyesight.

Khadija said to Waraqa, "Listen to the story of your nephew, O my cousin!"

Waraqa asked, "O my nephew! What have you seen?"

Allah's Apostle described whatever he had seen.

Waraqa said, "This is the same one who keeps the secrets (angel Gabriel) whom Allah had sent to Moses. I wish I were young and could live up to the time when your people would turn you out."

Allah's Apostle asked, "Will they drive me out?"

Waraqa replied in the affirmative and said, "Anyone (man) who came with something similar to what you have brought was treated with hostility; and if I should remain alive till the day when you will be turned out then I would support you strongly."

*Bukhari 1.3*

## Who Got It Right: Jesus or Muhammad?

John 14:6... I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

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3:31 Say [Muhammad]: "If you love Allah, follow me; then Allah will love you and forgive your sins." Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.

Allah maintains that he sent messengers like Jesus all the time. Tiring of His instructions being misinterpreted or misunderstood, he sent His last and greatest Messenger, to whom He revealed the Koran, His final, complete, unchanging and unambiguous instructions for mankind. When you compare Jesus' message to the one delivered by Muhammad you are left to wonder who got God's instructions right:

- † Jesus said that you should treat other people, Christians and non-Christians, the way you would like to be treated.
- ) Muhammad said that Christians and Jews, and an obscure sect called the Sabians, were to be tolerated and remain unmolested if they paid a head-tax (the Jizya) while all other unbelievers were to be put to death, on the spot, if they refused to submit to the Will of Allah, i.e., become Muslims.
- † Jesus said that violence should be met with non-violence (that stuff about turning the other cheek).
- ) Muhammad countered with a glorification of retaliation in kind:  
2:179 In retaliation there is life for you, O people of understanding, that you may be God-fearing.
- † Jesus said that His Father expected us to love one another unconditionally, the way a father loves his children.
- ) Muhammad repeated revelations from Allah which revealed that his god harboured a pathological noxious hatred of anyone who will not do as He commands, even children.
- † Jesus told His followers to love their enemies and to forgive them any transgressions, even transgressions against Him and His Father.

- ) Muhammad said in 5:33 that “Indeed, the punishment of those who fight Allah and His Messenger ... is to have their hands and feet cut off on opposite sides, or to be banished from the land.”

When you compare Jesus’ message, which is all about love and forgiveness to Muhammad’s, which is all about hate, merciless revenge and intolerance for all those who will not submit to the Will of Allah, you have to wonder how Jesus could have so badly misunderstood Allah’s earlier instructions?

- † Jesus reminded us that His father is a merciful, compassionate, loving God. Like Father like Son, Jesus lived the message He was delivering. He spread His message on how to get along through completely non-violent, peaceful means and invited His followers to do the same.
- ) Muhammad, to quote Ayaan Hirsi Ali, “built the house of Islam using military tactics that included mass killings, targeted assassination, torture, lying ...”

Is it conceivable that both men could have been messengers sent by the same god when the message they delivered and the tactics that they used to convey it are so different?

What about heaven, or Paradise, a place Jesus of Nazareth called home, and Muhammad said he spent a night conversing with God?

- † Paradise in the New Testament is a spiritual place where men and women are equal and happiness comes from basking in the light and the glory of the Lord and being free of physical wants and earthly desires.
- ) Paradise in the Koran is a materialist, licentious, hedonistic place where males are catered to by young boys, and freely roam, never requiring sleep, fornicating at will with sexually adept spirits (houris) and blushing maidens, gifts from Allah, stopping only to visit with friends and relatives to point and laugh at the unbelievers roasting in Hell. Females, on the other hand, are cloistered in large pavilions waiting for their husband to call on them if they are so inclined (see *Heaven*).

About Jesus, Christians and Muslims can agree on one thing: that he will be their flag bearer in the final battle against the forces of evil when humanity’s Earth-bound existence comes to an end. Christians believe that during this final conflagration, the Son of God will convert thousands of Jews to Christianity; in Islamic traditions, the son of Mary will convert thousands of Jews to Islam. And so it goes!