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Is The Bible More Violent Than The Quran? - posted by savannah, on: 2019/5/21 21:50

Is The Bible More Violent Than The Quran?

by Philip Jenkins

As the hijackers boarded the airplanes on Sept. 11, 2001, they had a lot on their minds. And if they were following instructions, one of those things was the Quran.

In preparation for the suicide attack, their handlers had told them to meditate on two chapters of the Quran in which God tells Muslims to "cast terror into the hearts of unbelievers."

"Slay the idolaters wherever ye find them, arrest them, besiege them, and lie in ambush everywhere for them," Allah instructs the Prophet Muhammad (Quran, 9:5). He continues: "Prophet! Make war on the unbelievers and the hypocrites! ... Hell shall be their home, an evil fate."

When Osama bin Laden declared war on the West in 1996, he cited the Quran's command to "strike off" the heads of unbelievers. More recently, U.S. Army Maj. Nidal Hasan lectured his colleagues about jihad, or "holy war," and the Quran's exhortation to fight unbelievers and bring them low. Hasan is accused of killing 13 people at Fort Hood, Texas, last year.

Given this violent legacy, religion historian Philip Jenkins decided to compare the brutality quotient of the Quran and the Bible.

Defense Vs. Total Annihilation

"Much to my surprise, the Islamic scriptures in the Quran were actually far less bloody and less violent than those in the Bible," Jenkins says.

Jenkins is a professor at Penn State University and author of two books dealing with the issue: the recently published *Jesus Wars*, and *Dark Passages*, which has not been published but is already drawing controversy.

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Philip Jenkins, author of 'Jesus Wars'

Violence in the Quran, he and others say, is largely a defense against attack.

"By the standards of the time, which is the 7th century A.D., the laws of war that are laid down by the Quran are actually reasonably humane," he says. "Then we turn to the Bible, and we actually find something that is for many people a real surprise. There is a specific kind of warfare laid down in the Bible which we can only call genocide."

It is called herem, and it means total annihilation. Consider the Book of 1 Samuel, when God instructs King Saul to attack the Amalekites: "And utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them," God says through the prophet Samuel. "But kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey."

When Saul failed to do that, God took away his kingdom.

"In other words," Jenkins says, "Saul has committed a dreadful sin by failing to complete genocide. And that passage echoes through Christian history. It is often used, for example, in American stories of the confrontation with Indians — not just is it legitimate to kill Indians, but you are violating God's law if you do not."

Jenkins notes that the history of Christianity is strewn with herem. During the Crusades in the Middle Ages, the Catholic

popes declared the Muslims Amalekites. In the great religious wars in the 16th, 17th and 19th centuries, Protestants and Catholics each believed the other side were the Amalekites and should be utterly destroyed.

'Holy Amnesia'

But Jenkins says, even though the Bible is violent, Christianity and Judaism today are not for the most part.

"What happens in all religions as they grow and mature and expand, they go through a process of forgetting of the original violence, and I call this a process of holy amnesia," Jenkins says.

Jenkins, author of *Jesus Wars*, says that violence in the Quran is largely a defense against attack.

They make the violence symbolic: Wiping out the enemy becomes wiping out one's own sins. Jenkins says that until recently, Islam had the same sort of holy amnesia, and many Muslims interpreted jihad, for example, as an internal struggle, not physical warfare.

Andrew Bostom calls this analysis "preposterous." Bostom, editor of *The Legacy of Jihad*, says there's a major difference between the Bible, which describes the destruction of an enemy at a point in time, and the Quran, which urges an ongoing struggle to defeat unbelievers.

"It's an aggressive doctrine," he says. "The idea is to impose Islamic law on the globe."

Take suicide attacks, he says "a tactic that Muslim radicals have used to great effect in the U.S., Iraq, Afghanistan and the Middle East. It's true that suicide from depression is forbidden in Islam" but Bostom says the Quran and the Hadith, or the sayings of Muhammad, do allow self-destruction for religious reasons.

"The notion of jihad martyrdom is extolled in the Quran, Quran verse 9:1-11. And then in the Hadith, it's even more explicit. This is the highest form of jihad "to kill and to be killed in acts of jihad."

'Out Of Context'

That may be the popular notion of jihad, says Waleed El-Ansary, but it's the wrong one. El-Ansary, who teaches Islamic studies at the University of South Carolina, says the Quran explicitly condemns religious aggression and the killing of civilians. And it makes the distinction between jihad "legal warfare with the proper rules of engagement" and irjaf, or terrorism.

"All of those types of incidences", Maj. Nidal Hasan and so forth "those are all examples of irjaf, not jihad," he says. According to the Quran, he says, those who practice irjaf "are going to hell."

So what's going on here? After all, we all have images of Muslim radicals flying planes into buildings, shooting up soldiers at Fort Hood, trying to detonate a bomb on an airplane on Christmas Day. How to reconcile a peaceful Quran with these violent acts?

El-Ansary says that in the past 30 years, there's been a perfect storm that has created a violent strain of Islam. The first is political: frustration at Western intervention in the Muslim world. The second is intellectual: the rise of Wahhabi Islam, a more fundamentalist interpretation of Islam subscribed to by Osama bin Laden. El-Ansary says fundamentalists have distorted Islam for political purposes.

"Basically what they do is they take verses out of context and then use that to justify these egregious actions," he says.

El-Ansary says we are seeing more religious violence from Muslims now because the Islamic world is far more religious than is the West. Still, Jenkins says Judeo-Christian cultures shouldn't be smug. The Bible has plenty of violence.

"The scriptures are still there, dormant, but not dead," he says, "and they can be resurrected at any time. Witness the white supremacists who cite the murderous Phineas when calling for racial purity, or an anti-abortion activist when shooting a doctor who performs abortions.

In the end, the scholars can agree on one thing: The DNA of early Judaism, Christianity and Islam code for a lot of violence. Whether they can evolve out of it is another thing altogether.

Luke 19:27

But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to rule over them, bring them here and slaughter them before me. - Jesus

Re: Is The Bible More Violent Than The Quran? - posted by Jeremy221, on: 2019/5/22 3:25

This article and many of the discussions of violence and war are from a perspective which changes the value of the judgment rendered. The decision to judge based on secular, humanist values makes all non-humanists guilty. I've seen a lot of arguments like this online and the framing always bothers me because the attacks are generally a synchronistic amalgam of humanist thought and Christian morality.

Re: - posted by deltadom (), on: 2019/5/22 6:59

No the Qur'an is more violent read Suraj 9

Re: Holy Bible - posted by savannah, on: 2019/5/22 14:43

I read it twice Dominic.

Consider this;

There are no Amalekites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites today because God commanded the Israelites to slaughter those people groups - men, women, children, infants, and animals.

1 Samuel 15

3 "Now, go and attack Amalek. Completely destroy all that they have. Don't spare them, but put to death both man and woman, child and infant, both ox and sheep, camel and donkey."

18 "The LORD sent you on a mission: Go and completely destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they're destroyed."

32,33 "Bring Agag king of Amalek to me."

"Agag came to him in fetters, saying to himself, Surely the bitterness of death is past."

"Samuel said, Just as your sword has made women childless, so your mother will be childless among women. Then Samuel cut Agag into pieces in the LORD's presence in Gilgal."

And in Deuteronomy 13:6-11

"Your own blood brother, your son, your daughter, your beloved wife, or your friend who is like your soul mate may entice you quietly. He may tell you, Let's go and serve other gods (whom neither you nor your ancestors have known) from the gods of the people that surround you - whether near or far from you - from one end of the earth to the other. You must not yield to him, listen to him, look with pity on him, show compassion to him, or even cover up for him. But you must surely execute him. You must be the first to put him to death with your own hand, and then the hands of the whole community. Stone him to death, because he sought to lure you from the LORD your God who brought you from the land of Egypt, from the land of slavery. Then all Israel will hear about it, be afraid, and won't do this evil thing again among you."

Re: Is The Bible More Violent Than The Quran? - posted by Jstme (), on: 2019/5/22 15:28

Hi Savannah-

I read this through a couple times and I guess I'm missing the point.

I've read the Koran, and in fact, use to believe it was sent by God.

I don't really think it matters which is more violent, nor does it matter which speaks of more virtue.

The point is, when you read them through, you can see the god of the Koran is angry and unpredictable. He shouts and intimidates. I don't think people become violent by the stories in the books or become nicer by forgetting. I think people begin to look like who they worship.

The God of the Bible shows His character through reading past the stories and seeing the bigger picture.

Is there a reason why one might need to know if the Bible is more violent than the Koran?

Re: - posted by Sree (), on: 2019/5/22 18:19

There are ways in which we can consider Bible to be more violent than Quran. It depends on what parameter you use. For example a 300 pounds 5 feet person can be considered bigger than a 6.5 feet 300 pound person because the shorter guy looks big in size.

There are events represented in both Bible and Islamic scriptures but Bible gives a more blood narrative. In that sense Bible is more violent in the things it explains.

But Quran has open ended violent command. For instance Sura 9:5 is clearly violent and commands Muslims to kill all unbelievers they see. But Bible has no such command. Any context that is brought into these violent commands of Quran are actually coming from outside Quran, hence cannot be valid.

I have debated with so many Muslims on this scripture (Sura 9:5) and none was able to answer me in a satisfactory way. Finally all of them have escaped with one silly response, I do not know Arabic hence I cannot comment on Quran! First they say the context was in a war, but there is no mention of any war in Quran for Sura 9. Here is why I believe it was a direct command,

1. Quran says it is perfectly clear book in which everything is clearly explained. This makes the arguments of inner violence inactive. Quran by its own definition is not a symbolic book. But Bible by its own definition a secretly revealed book that needs God's spirit to understand (Deu 29:29). So Sura 9:5 should be a perfectly clear command. There is no mention of which particular unbelieving group should be attacked. No mention of war etc.

2. Historical contexts are all unreliable. For example I can mess up my work 2 days back and when asked why, I can tell that I was sick. There is no right way to validate anything quoted from History. History is not reliable. So if a scripture should be read by only historical context then it is wrong. It makes Quran unreliable.

3. If there was a war then no war commander will command his people to wait till the holy months are over and then fight. By that time your people will already be dead! This shows that it was an offensive command.

4. The unbelievers who ask pardon can be forgiven but should be forced to pay Giza tax. How is this even morally right? In USA if Muslims were forced to pay additional tax, will they tolerate? How can an almighty God command Muslims to attack and collect additional tax? This shows either Islam is not suitable for current century.

I have taken Sura 9:5 only as an example. There are many such commands. But Chapter 9 is a clear violent chapter because it is believed to be the last marching orders of Mohammed.

Re: Is The Bible More Violent Than The Quran? - posted by RogerB (), on: 2019/5/23 21:31

Looking back at the reason for the flood..

The earth was corrupt. It's generally believed that there were Nephelim or offspring of fallen angels and Adams daughter s. It's thought they were all killed off by the flood. However in Leviticus 18 there is a list of sexual sins and passing through the fire to Molech is listed as one. You have probably gone hmmm by now. Then I read of the children of Anak as the children of Israel were about to go in the land.

Apparently there was some means of reintroducing the Nephelim back into the new world though passing through the fire . Now we see why these nations were destroyed. God wanted to rid the world of the Nephelim. They were unplanned and didn't belong. Not written in the book of life from the foundation of the earth.

It's his work. He was basically giving an example of what it will be like at the end. Ridding the kingdom of all things that offend. (That's what Satan is doing in his kingdom. Christians are offensive)

There will be a time when the tares are gathered and burned. Can tares be turned into wheat?

Re: Details - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2019/5/30 17:40

Because the Quran is humanly conceived and uninspired, the only spirit it can impart is humanly inspired judgments and punishments. Since Satan instills 'religious' implementation in his violence it is no shocker the Quran is violent and cruel.

The deception of course lay in 'Allah' speaking as if he is God through his prophet. Allah is like the God of the deist, absent but has left principles behind, providential but unable to know personally. The Muslim knows his god at an intellectual level and no other. Since the Muslim is dead in trespasses and sins he/she has no where to turn. Reading the Quran does not offer the grace and mercies of God by the sacrifices of God himself, for them all must be earned, all must be strictly enforced in order to retain the 'believing' members.

By natural consequence violence must always be the outcome. Hatreds, strifes all must rise up as soldiers in defense of Islam.

It is at this elementary level that violence is never removed from the 'tool box' of Islamic weaponry. With True Christianity this weapon is forever forbidden.

The essence of true Christianity is victory by death to self, Islam is victory by death to its enemies. The essence of true Christianity is love your neighbor, the essence of Islam is love only your own tribe.

Regardless of God's judgments upon various nations, God's judgments are God's judgments. Islam has no divine decree, it has an abundance of religiously-motivated decrees issuing from a god that knows no one and sacrifices nothing.

On the surface and at the skin-depth of Old Testament judgments of God appear to be like-kind with Allah, but contrary to this initial appearance the God of scripture knows the people he has judged, he knows the children that will come to him by way of that judgment and the adults who died in total ignorance of Divine law and Divine goodness.

Allah is a fabrication of Muhammad; the God of scripture is the revealed-one to the creation which he made and fashioned after his likeness. All souls will stand before him, all he has judged will give account. God calls to account because God was watching, near, involved in the world where men live. Allah has never existed in reality anywhere at any moment. I would not be surprised if some Principality in the heavenlies named himself 'Allah' and has attempted to mimic the true God on various levels through human history and governments. But as a prince of darkness what light could emerge from him?

No, though the scripture be full of God's judgments these incidents are not some capricious God, some unfeeling harsh and cruel being, or some angry and spiteful deity who enjoys the crushing of his creation for the mere 'power' he can display. That kind of god is the god of the pagans, a god who displays wrath by reason of pride, never by reason of his holiness or righteousness as judge in the earth.

At the very heart of scripture is the revelation that the very heart of God is loving and kind, longsuffering and merciful. Man has proven himself for millennia that whenever he invents a god to serve he patterns that god after himself and his own corrupt heart. Satan adds the inhuman cruelties and barbarism, without conscience, without the slightest human compassion human devour one another after the manner of devils.

You could fill the scriptures with another 1000 histories of God's divine judgments on men and the violence that occurred because of it and the scriptures could never be remotely considered 'violent'. Because God is not a violent and angry God by nature, it is in the face of a 1000 refused mercies, and 10,000 refused opportunities to call upon God that man find himself at the end of God's sword.