Terrorism Has No Religion

Terrorism cannot be born of religion. Terrorism is the product of corrupt minds, hardened hearts, and arrogant egos, and corruption, destruction, and arrogance are unknown to the heart attached to the divine.

Islam is a religion of tolerance and peaceful coexistence with all of humanity both as individuals and communities. Islam views people as honored creatures without regard for their religion, race, or color. God Most High says, Verily We have honored the Children of Adam. We carry them on the land and the sea, and have made provision of good things for them, and have preferred them above many of those whom We have created with a marked preferment [17:70]. Islam has come up with a code for relations between Muslims and non-Muslims living in the same society: God forbids you not those who warred not against you on account of religion and drove you not out from your homes, that you should show them kindness and deal justly with them. Lo! God loves the just dealers [60:8]. God commands us in this verse to act well towards non-Muslims and not harm them saying, “show them kindness (tabirruhum),” for kindness (birr) is all that is good. It is as if God is commanding us, and making it preferable that we cooperate with non-Muslims in all avenues of good.

All who truly know Islam are aware of its concern for global peace, since it made it one of its main pillars. Peace (al-Salam) is one of the names of God Most High and it is among His attributes, He said, He is God, than Whom there is no other God, the Sovereign Lord, the Holy One, Peace, the Keeper of Faith, the Guardian, the Majestic, the Compeller, the Superb. Glorified be God from all that they ascribe as partner (unto Him) [59:23]. He made peace His greeting to His servants and enjoined them to make it their greeting as well; they exchange it whenever they meet, it is their distinguishing mark in the mosque, school, factory, and marketplace. Paradise is named the Abode of Peace: He said, For them is the Abode of Peace with their Lord. He will be their Protecting Friend because of what they used to do [6:127]; and the other verses in which “peace” is mentioned are numerous.
Peace has been the distinguishing mark of Muslims in the East and the West from the advent of Islam to this day. It is the greeting that they give other Muslims when they meet each other and when they depart from each other saying, “Peace be upon you.”

This peace and security is not limited just to Muslims. Muslims believe that all men, regardless of their faith, always posses the right to live in peace and security in Muslim lands. Protecting others from oppression within one’s borders is something that Islam makes mandatory emphasizing this and forbidding Muslims to harm or have animosity against those under their protection either by word or deed. God Most High does not love or guide oppressors; He gives them their punishment ahead of time in the world, or leaves them to be punished doubly in the afterlife.

The Quranic verses and Prophetic Tradition that mention the impermissibility, grossness, and the evil effects of oppression are many. Prophetic Traditions have been related specifically warning against oppressing non-Muslims who are under the protection of Muslims or possess treaties with them. The Prophet said, “Whoever wrongs someone with whom the Muslims have a treaty, denies them their rights, burdens them beyond their capacity, or takes something from them without their good will, I am that person’s adversary on the Day of Judgment.”1

Islam encourages peace and security due to the extremely important effect they have on making life stable for humanity and making advancement possible in all fields. In order to comprehend the extent of the effect of peace and security on the advancement of peoples, we need to take a look at the destructive effects of war on peoples, advancement, and development, for as the saying goes, “The good of something is revealed by its opposites.” Since the basic components of community development and advancement are the physical well-being of the individuals of the society so that they can fulfill their roles, we find that wars and economic sanctions have a devastating effect on the health and well-being of a community.

Tolerance for adherents of other religions by people whose entire lives are based on a religion by which they have been granted victory and predominance, is something that was previously unknown in the history of religions. This is something to which Westerners themselves bear witness. The knowledgeable French scholar Gustav Le Bon said, “We have seen from the Quranic verses mentioned previously that Muhammad’s magnanimity towards Jews and Christians was most great; something which was not said by the establishers of the religions that predated him like Judaism and Christianity in particular. And we shall see how his deputies followed him in this.”

It is both false and unjust to think that Islam is the cause of terrorism just because it is carried out by groups who associate themselves with Islam; otherwise this claim would be call for the destruction of all religions.

For example, we know that Christianity calls for love, and that its followers were oppressed at a time when they were weak, but should we consider that the repression and torture of Muslims and Jews which was carried out by the Church in Spain was the result of the teachings of Christianity? The Church took out its anger on the Jews and Muslims due to the spread of the philosophy and thought of Ibn Rushd, especially among the Jews, and ruled that all Jews who did not allow themselves to be baptized were to be expelled from the country. They were allowed to sell their property if they wished, but they were not permitted to take any gold or silver with them when they left, so they were forced to accept trade-goods in return for their property. The Jews left Spain leaving their properties behind them in order to escape with their lives, although many were overcome by hunger and the hardship of travel due to their poverty. The Church also ruled in 1052 CE for the expulsion of all Muslims from Spain and its outlying lands if they did not submit to being baptized. The condition imposed upon them was that they not take a road leading to Muslim lands upon their departure, and whoever went against this order was killed.

We are also loath to blame the Crusades on the teachings of Christianity, and we attempt to differentiate between them and the practices of certain Christian extremists and terrorists. The twentieth century, with all of its revolutionary experiments, including all of the barbarism of the communist and Nazi revolutions, falls short in the face of the atrocities of the Crusades against other Christians; some of them would spread their dead defectors out on the ground as a means of fertilization! Viedham mentions that these wars were full of atrocities because the theologians were always ready to pour oil on the fire and revive the soldier’s brutality when they were overcome with doubts and weakness. The soldiers may have been brutal, but there were times when they inclined towards mercy; as for the theologians, they considered moderation and mercy a form of treason.

Sheikh Muhammad Abduh says concerning the Inquisition, “The cruelty of the Inquisition was such that people of that time said it was nearly impossible to be a Christian and die at home in one’s bed.” He also says, “Between the years 1481 and 1808 C.E. the courts of the Inquisition judged 340,000 people, 200,000 of whom were burned alive.”

Much closer to us today are the number Afghan villages that were completely destroyed in order to punish one person, and the fires are still burning in Baghdad in order to punish one person because he possesses weapons of mass destruction, which have no existence outside of intentional lies.

Similarly the clear and unabashed terrorism practiced by the Zionist entity cannot be blamed on the teachings of Judaism, for a all religions came as a mercy to people and a means of spreading justice and forgiveness among them.

This does not mean that we deny the acts of destruction and terror which occur in our secure countries, but they are the result of perverse minds, desolate hearts, and arrogance. Alllah says, Behaving arrogantly in the land and plotting evil; and the evil plot only encloses the men who make it [35:43]. In fact the words of God nearly apply directly to them when He says, And of mankind there is he whose conversation of the life of this word please you (Muhammad), and he calls God to witness as to that which is in his heart; yet he is the most rigid of opponents. And when he turns away (from you) his effort in the land is to make mischief therein and to destroy the crops and the cattle; and God does not love mischief. And when it is said to him: Be careful of they duty to God, pride takes him to sin. Hell will settle his account, an evil resting-place [2:204-206].

We ask God to inspire us with guidance and to give peace to our children, our countries, and the entire Muslim community.

And God is Most High and Knows Best.

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