The Two Faces of Islam
HIDDEN & MANIFEST

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Introduction

After the recent terrorist attack on America's World Trade Center and Pentagon, there has been a very clear debate in the international media regarding the nature of Islam. We have seen the media change from the one extreme of being explicitly anti-Islamic, to the other, for the sake of presenting a political and human balance, of being pro-*Moslem*.

Christianity very clearly teaches us to love all of our fellow humans- even our enemies- but it by no means tells us to become blind to reality and the truth, or to be mislead by misinformation.

To make a fair assessment regarding any issue, one must be aware of all sides of the matter at hand, and for this reason; this study will demonstrate a certain side of Islam, which has not been precisely portrayed by any part of the popular media. The facts here will be based on textual reality from a recognised interpretation of the *Quran [The meaning of THE HOLY QURAN by Abdullah Yusuf Ali1992]*- note that the word "interpretation" and not "translation" is used because Islam prohibits the literal translation of its "holy book"- for this reason, the Arabic text of the Quranic verses has also been included, so that there is no possible accusation of misinterpretation.

THE TWO FACES OF ISLAM

In the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, many Muslims (and non-Muslims driven by political ends) worldwide have attempted to present Islam as a religion of peace and love, wanting to distance it from those shameful and brutal occurrences" they say that there is no violence in the essence of Islam.

It is obvious however that the perpetrators of these acts base their dependence on violence on clear and indisputable verses of the Quran, represented clearly in a statement by Osama Bin Laden on the CNN network. Based on this premise, Bin Laden, the *Taliban* and the Philippines Muslim group *Abu Saiaf*, among others, have openly declared war against the United States of America in the name of Islam, using quotations from the Quran such as***:***

And those of the people of the Book (Jews & Christians) who aided them (the unbelievers), Allah (God) did take them down from their strongholds. And cast terror into their hearts, so that **some ye slew, and some ye made prisoners. And He made you heirs of their lands, their houses, and their goods** (Surah Al Ahzab 33:26 and 27)

(سورة الأحزاب آيات 26و27) وأنزل الذين ظاهروهم (إي الذين كفروا) من أهل الكتاب من صياصيهم (حصونهم) وقذف في قلوبهم الرعب فريقا تقتلون وتأسرون فريقا. وأورثكم أرضهم وديارهم وأموالهم وأرضا لم تطأها وكان الله على كل شيء قديرا]

Many are then confused; is Islam is a religion of violence, or one of peace?

When we actually study the book of Islam, the *Quran*, we discover that Islam has **two faces**. Each of these face represents a certain stage of Mohammed's character: one in ***Mecca,*** and the other in ***Medina***.

THE FIRST FACE OF ISLAM Mohammed's character in Mecca

In *Mecca*, where Mohammed started his new religion in the year 610 A.D, he was not yet strong. To be accepted by all people, he presented a peaceful and loving picture of Islam, avoiding any mention of violence, and here are some quotations from the Quran about that first stage:

1. Mohammed was told to **be patient** with his opponents in *Surah Al Muzzammil* (73:10) 'And **have patience** with what they say, and leave them with noble (dignity)'

سورة المزمل (73: 10) "واصبر على ما يقولون واهجرهم هجرا جميلا"+

2. Mohammed was told **not to impose Islam by force** in *Surah Al baqarah* (2: 256) 'Let there **be no compulsion** in religion'
"لا إكراه في الدين" (2: 256 سورة البقرة+

3. Mohammed was told **to speak pleasantly to *'people of the Book'*** (Christians and Jews) in *Surah Al Ankabut* (29:45) And dispute ye not with the people of the Book, except with means better (than mere disputation) but say: we believe in the Revelation which has come down to us and that which came down to you; Our God and your God is One; and it is to Him we bow (in Islam)
+ سورة العنكبوت (29: 46) "ولا تجادلوا أهل الكتاب إلا بالتي هي أحسن ... وقولوا آمنا بالذي أنزل إلينا وأنزل إليكم وإلهنا وإلهكم واحد ونحن له مسلمون"

THE SECOND FACE OF ISLAM
Mohammed's character in Medina

After Mohammed moved to *Medina* in the year 622 AD and his followers grew in strength and number, he became a relentless warrior, intent on spreading his religion by the sword, and this is the message that now lives on. Here is some evidence from Quran of this stage:

1. He claimed that God told him to **kill his opponents** in *Surah Al baqarah* (2:191) And slay them wherever ye catch them
+ سورة البقرة (2: 191) "واقتلوهم حيث ثقفتموهم (وجدتموهم) ..."

***Imam Abdullah Yusuf Ali**, comments on this verse saying, "This passage is illustrated by the events that happened at Hudaybiyyah [a battle] in the six year of the Hijrah [exodus of Mohammed from Mecca to Medina]. The Muslims were by this **time a strong and influential community**. (The Meaning of the Holy Quran P77).*

2. He claimed that God told him **to kill whoever rejects Islam** in *Surah Al Baqara* (2:193) "And fight them on until there is no tumult or oppression, and there prevail justice and faith in Alla "

+ سورة البقرة (2: 193) "وقاتلوهم حتى لا تكون فتنة ويكون الدين لله ..."

Imam Abdullah Yusuf Ali*, comments on this verse saying, "Islam will not acquiesce in wrong doing, and its men will hold their lives cheap in defence of honour,and the religion which they hold sacred. They believe in courage, obedience" and a constant striving by all means in their power" They will not flinch from war if their houner,demands it and a righteous Imam commands it" (The Meaning of the Holy Quran P77).*

3. He claimed that God told him **to fight the "people of the Book"** (Christians & Jews) in *Surah Al Tawba* (2:29) "Fight those who believe not in Alla and the Last Day " nor acknowledge the religion of truth (Islam) from among the People of the Book until they pay the ***Jizyah*** (tax) with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued …'

+ سورة التوبة (2: 29) "قاتلوا الذين لا يؤمنون بالله واليوم الآخر ... ولا يدينون دين الحق من الذين أوتوا الكتاب (أي النصارى واليهود) حتى يعطوا الجزية وهم صاغرون ..."

Imam Abdullah Yusuf Ali*, comments on this verse saying, "A straight fight in the cause of right; go forth bravely to strive and struggle, and prove yourselves worthy of Alla"*
(The Meaning of the Holy Quran P.446).

4- (Surah Al Tawbah 9: 12) "" **Fight ye the chiefs of Unfaith [infidel]** ""

(سورة التوبة 9: 12) "... فقاتلوا أئمة الكفر إنهم لا أيمان لهم لعلهم ينتهون"

* *Imam Abdullah Yusuf Ali****, comments on this verse saying,"The catalogue of their sins being set out, it is cleare that they were aggressors in the worst possible ways;*** *and war became inevitable".* ***(The Meaning of the Holy Quran P.440).***

5- (Surah Al Tawbah 9: 14) **“Fight them** and Alla will punish them by your hands, **cover them with shame**, help you to victory over them, Heal the breasts of Believers”

(سورة التوبة 9: 14) "قاتلوهم يعذبهم الله بأيديكم ويخزهم وينصركم عليهم ويشف صدور قوم مؤمنين"

* ***Imam Abdullah Yusuf Ali****, comments on this verse saying,”When Alla’s Law is stablished, the fire of indignation is quelled, and the true Peace of Islam is attained” (The Meaning of the Holy Quran P.441).*

6- (Surah Al Tawbah 9: 123) “O ye who believe **fight the unbelievers** who gird you about. And let them find firmness in you and know that Alla is with those who fear Him”

(سورة التوبة 9: 123) "يا أيها الذين آمنوا قاتلوا الذين يلونكم من الكفار وليجدوا فيكم غلظة واعلموا أن الله مع المتقين"

* ***Imam Abdullah Yusuf Ali****, comments on this verse saying,”When conflict becomes inevitable, the first thing is to clear our surroundings of all evil…To evil we must put up a stout and stif resistance” (The Meaning of the Holy Quran P.475).*

7- (Sura Al Anfal 8: 65) **O Prophet rouse the Believers to the fight.** If there are twenty amongst you, patint and persevering, they will vanquish two hundred: if a hundred they will vanquish a thousand of the Unbelievers: for these are a people without understanding

(سورة الأنفال 8: 65) "يا أيها النبي حرض المؤمنين على القتال إن يكن منكم عشرون صابرون يغلبوا مائتين وإن يكن منكم مائة يغلبوا ألفا من الذين كفروا بأنهم قوم لا يفقهون"

* ***Imam Abdullah Yusuf Ali****, comments on this verse saying, “In a fight … the men of faith do not daunt. Whether they personally **win or die**, their cause prevails. They are sure to win: because (1) **they have divine aid**, and (2) even humanly speaking, those who take up arms against truth are fools, and their seeming power is but a broken reed. (The Meaning of the Holy Quran P.431).*

He adds, Jihad (Holy war) is fought under strict conditions laid down by Islam, and glory for the cause of Alla. (The Meaning of the Holy Quran P.431).

8- (Surah Al Baqara 2: 216) **Fighting is prescribed upon you**
(سورة البقرة 2: 216) "كتب عليكم القتال ..."

* ***Imam Abdullah Yusuf Ali****, comments on this verse saying, "****To fight*** *in the cause of truth is one of the highest forms of* ***charity****". (The Meaning of the Holy Quran P.86).*
Notice: Fight is a form of charity, in Islam!!!

9- (Surah Al Anfal 8:60) "Against them **make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into (the hearts)** of the enemies of Alla and your enemies …"

(سورة الأنفال 8: 60) "وأعدوا لهم ما استطعتم من قوة ومن رباط الخيل ترهبون به عدو الله وعدوكم ..."

* ***Imam Abdullah Yusuf Ali****, comments on this verse saying, "In every fight arm yourself with the best weapons and the best arms against your enemy, so as to instil wholesome respect into him for you and the cause you stand for". (The Meaning of the Holy Quran P.429).*

THE SAME IDEOLOGY

&
STRATEGY

The problem with the assessment of Islam in the West, which is predominantly Christian, is the it is looked upon as another faith- like Christianity- and thus it is the right of each individual to worship as he or she pleases. This is right, but the problem is that Islam is not like Christianity.

Christianity is a system of faith and morality which can exist within any national or state system, but Islam however has its own political and judicial system embodied in the *Shareia* (law) which governs every Muslim. For this reason, Islamic fundamentalists who live even in a moderate Islamic state with a secular political system, will attempt to overthrow this system because it does not sufficiently embody the principal of Islam being 'Religion and State'.

This study by no means attempts to present a picture of all Muslims being bad, because this is not at all true- there are many moderate Muslims who are good and constructive members of society, but even these are looked upon by fundamentalists as *kaffara* (apostate) because they do not follow the Quran faithfully, and thus are also worthy of the same end as any non-Muslim, that is, death.

Thus, the problem is one of Islam, and not of Muslims. We know that in any religion, or any faith, it is the role of each believer to carry out the teachings of that faith, and thus, these teaching become the rules by which he or she lives- any 'faithful' Muslim must follow the Quran.

Islam everywhere in the world especially in the West follow the same ideology and strategy of Islam. They start with the first stage of weakness to pretend that they are peaceful and loving. They take advantage of Democracy and Human Rights in the West to spread their faith.

After they become strong they do not hesitate to kill people and destroy the civilization of the West, which –according to their belief– is against the doctrines of Islam, as we have seen in

bombing the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington.

Testimonies Of Famous Muslims

1- Mohammed Hassanein Heikal' a well-known Egyptian Muslim author refers to this fact in his famous book "Autumn Furor". He said,

> *"The element of **Jihad** (holy war) emerged in the ideology of Abul Alaa Almaudoody (a fanatical Muslim in Egypt). He went on to differentiate between two separate stages, a Muslim community goes through:*
> ***The stage of weakness** – In it a Muslim community is unable to take charge of its own destiny. In this case – according to his thinking – they must withdraw for the purpose of preparing themselves to be capable of executing the second stage.*
> ***The second stage** is the Jihad (holy war) stage, and it will come when the Islamic Community has completed its preparation and is ready to come out of its isolation to take charge, through Jihad*
> *In this, Abul Alaa Almaudoody was making a comparison between the two stages of weakness and Jihad on the one hand, and on the other hand, Mohammad's struggle in Mecca, then in Medina."[Following the same strategy of Mohammed].*

2- Hassan Abdulla Al Torabi, the most fanatic Sudanese Muslim leader, was accustomed to say openly,

> ***"We pretend to be weak, till we become strong"***

3- ***Imam Abdullah Yusuf Ali**, comments on Surah Al baqarah* (2:191) 'And slay them wherever ye catch them…'

> *"This passage is illustrated by the events that happened at Hudaybiyyah [a battle] in the six year of the Hijrah [exodus of Mohammed from Mecca to Medina]. **The Muslims were by this time a strong and***

influential community”. *(The Meaning of the Holy Quran P77).*

This is the reality of Islam and his two faces. How much we should be aware of what is happening around us.