

Christianity Versus Islam

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Christianity Versus Islam

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Because we live in such a highly secularized society, we cannot believe that America could ever become involved in a religious war in this day and age. Yet ferocious religious wars have been going on all over the place: in Northern Ireland, in Israel, in the Balkans, in Sudan, in India, in Kashmir, and in Russia. But history is a very harsh taskmaster and refuses to let us Americans escape into our secular fantasies and liberal hot houses for long. Thus, it is vitally important for us to reconnect with the human race's never ending history of religious struggle. That a group of Islamic terrorists, trained in a remote war-torn, famine ridden, hell-hole in Asia, could organize the kind of mind-boggling attack against America that took place on September 11, 2001, means that America is not only not exempt from history, but has been dragged kicking and screaming back into the middle of it.

Back in 1588, Christopher Marlowe, master of historical drama, wrote his famous Tamburlaine 2. In it there is a fascinating scene in which the Christian King Sigismund of Hungary and Orcanes, the Muslim King of Natolia, both former enemies, decide to establish peace between them in order to join forces to defeat Tamberlaine the Great, the cruel, pagan conqueror of Asia.

Both men confirm their commitment with an oath. King Sigismund vows:

*By Him that made the world and sav'd my soul,
The Son of God and issue of a maid,
Sweet Jesus Christ, I solemnly protest
And vow to keep this peace inviolable!*

King Orcanes vows:

*By sacred Mohamet, the friend of God,
Whose holy Alcoran remains with us,
Whose Glorious body, when he left the world,
Clos'd in a coffin mounted up the air,
And hung on stately Mecca's temple-roof,
I swear to keep this truce inviolable!*

But as the story goes, it was King Sigismund who later broke the truce and was defeated and killed by the Muslims.

While the history of the struggle between Christians and Muslims for control of Europe was for a time settled after the Muslims were expelled from Spain in 1492, and driven back from the gates of Vienna to

Asia and Africa, the Islamic enclaves that remained in the Balkans led to the recent wars in Bosnia and Kosovo. The Serbs had considered themselves as the Christian bulwark against further Islamic incursions in Europe, and therefore could not understand why they were being bombed by fellow Europeans and Americans.

You had to know history to understand what Bosnia and Kosovo were all about and what bin Laden's men were doing in the Balkans. That conflict proved that the war between Christianity and Islam has never ended. Over the ages, it simply took on different forms. The rise of European power put a lid on Islamic ambitions and the Muslim world became the backwater of history until the discovery of oil in the twentieth century. But in the nineteenth century, the Islamic Barbary states of North Africa could still make trouble for the Infidel. They took possession of American and European commercial vessels, held their crews for ransom, and enslaved other Christians. Our first war after independence was fought during the Jefferson administration against the Muslim pirates and kidnappers of Tripolitania. It is known in the history books as the Barbary War, in which U.S. Marines staged their first invasion of foreign soil. Hence, the Marine anthem: "From the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli."

In order to finally put an end to the piracy and barbarism coming out of North Africa, France decided to take over Algeria. During the 1830s and 1840s, the French imposed their rule over the territory, encouraging Europeans to settle there. The result was a flourishing French colony and an end to Barbary piracy. France maintained order in North Africa until the end of World War II, when the anti-colonialist movement got underway. Both liberals and communists joined in forcing the European powers to give up their colonies.

In Algeria, however, over a million Europeans had settled in the territory and the coastal départements were considered an integral part of France. However, when Charles de Gaulle gained power at the height of the Algerian uprising, he decided that France should quit Algeria because the Moslems could never become true Frenchmen. And so France abandoned Algeria, and a million Europeans took to the boats. Today, the invasion has been reversed. Five million Muslims, mostly Algerians, live in France. They make up ten percent of the population and are part of the resurgent Islamic power in Europe. Christianity is now so weak in France that one wonders if it is capable of resisting the assumption of Islamic power.

We have been told by our leaders and the media that we are not at war against the Islamic religion. We are at war against terrorism. But what they all prefer not to recognize is that the spiritual power behind that terrorism, the power that drives otherwise intelligent human beings to undertake suicidal missions against the infidel is the religion of Islam. Of course, there are millions of Muslims who just want to lead normal lives. Unfortunately, after September 11, 2001, nothing is "normal" anymore.

In an alarming article in the November issue of Commentary magazine, Daniel Pipes contends that Islamist militants are serious about their plan to conquer America. He writes:

The first missionaries for militant Islam, or Islamism, who arrived here from abroad in the 1920's, unblushingly declared, "Our plan is, we are going to conquer America." The audacity of such statements hardly went unnoticed at the time, including by Christians who cherished their own missionizing hopes. As a 1922 newspaper commentary put it:

To the millions of American Christians who have so long looked eagerly forward to the time the cross shall be supreme in every land and the people of the whole world shall have become the followers of Christ, the plan to win the continent to the path of the "infidel Turk" will seem a thing unbelievable. But there is no doubt about its being pressed with all the fanatical zeal for which the Mohammedans are noted.

Pipes writes further:

As a teacher at an Islamic school in Jersey City, near New York, explains, the "short-term goal is to introduce Islam. In the long term, we must save American society." Step by step, writes a Pakistan-born professor of economics, by offering "an alternative model" to Americans, Muslims can transform what Ismail Al-Faruqi referred to as "the unfortunate realities of North America" into something acceptable in God's eyes.

The irony in all of this is stunning. For years the Christian right has been trying to get Americans to live godly lives, but with very limited success. The fact that 85% of American parents put their children in pagan public schools is an indication of how strong our liberal secular culture is. It controls the curriculum in our schools and universities. It controls most of the print media, the electronic media, and most of what comes out of Hollywood. And American schools are now teaching American children all about Islam. While the Bible has been eliminated from the classroom, apparently the Koran hasn't. How else can you teach about Islam?

Recently, the Reverend Franklin Graham, president of Samaritan's Purse, a Christian relief agency, called Islam "wicked and violent." He said, "I don't believe this is a wonderful, peaceful religion. When you read the Koran and you read the verses from the Koran, it instructs the killing of the infidel, for those that are non-Muslim."

As the son of Billy Graham, Franklin is the designated successor to his father's longtime evangelical ministry. He delivered the benediction at Bush's inauguration. But now he's in trouble with the White House, which sponsored a Ramadan dinner for 50 ambassadors from Islamic countries with a traditional meal and prayer. Also, the Muslim chaplain of Georgetown University recently officiated at the opening prayers of the House of Representatives on Capitol Hill.

The moral seems to be that if Islamist terrorists bomb the World Trade Center and the Pentagon and kill 5,000 Americans, other Islamists get invited to the White House for a special dinner prepared to their specifications: no pork. Now that Americans are being invited to be kind to Muslims, where will all of this lead?

Graham said, "It wasn't Methodists flying into those buildings, it wasn't Lutherans. It was an attack on this country by people of the Islamic faith." And that's why the latter are now favored guests at the White House! Of course, the President is doing this to keep the Islamic states in line while we war against the terrorists which these states harbor.

But if we are being encouraged by our born-again President to be kind to our Muslim neighbors, shouldn't Christians see this as a missionary opportunity? Why not introduce Muslims to the loving grace of Jesus Christ? One of the reasons why Americans find it difficult to become friendly with Muslims is because sooner or later their rabid hatred of Israel will surface. Americans in general don't like to hate anybody, and they are uncomfortable with people who are haters.

Christianity preaches love. Islam preaches hate. That is why hatred of Israel fills the psyche of so many Muslims. Abnormal, pathological hatred is not healthy. It requires constant energy to be sustained at the level it exists among Muslims. And that is why life is so miserable in many Islamic countries. And that is why Palestinian refugees have preferred to remain in refugee camps for 50 years rather than do something constructive with their lives. They prefer to live with festering, enduring hatred, and teach it to their children, rather than accept forgiveness and peace. No true Christian could ever waste his life that way.

Yet, the United Nations aid agency accepts these refugee camps as perfectly normal for the Arab Muslims. After World War II, millions of displaced persons found new constructive lives in countries all over the world. But in the Middle East, Palestinian hatred is used to torment the world about Israel.

It is to be hoped that one of the first things the new government of Afghanistan might do is recognize Israel and establish diplomatic relations with the Jewish state. It would signal a dramatic change in the attitude of Muslims toward Israel.

Indeed, let us be loving and concerned with the well being of our Muslim citizens, and let us convey to them that Jesus will save them from their sickening hatred and grant them life renewed.

Samuel L. Blumenfeld is the author of eight books on education, including NEA: Trojan Horse in American Education, How to Tutor, Alpha-Phonics: A Primer for Beginning Readers, and Homeschooling: A Parents Guide to Teaching Children. All of these books are available on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) or by calling 208-322-4440.