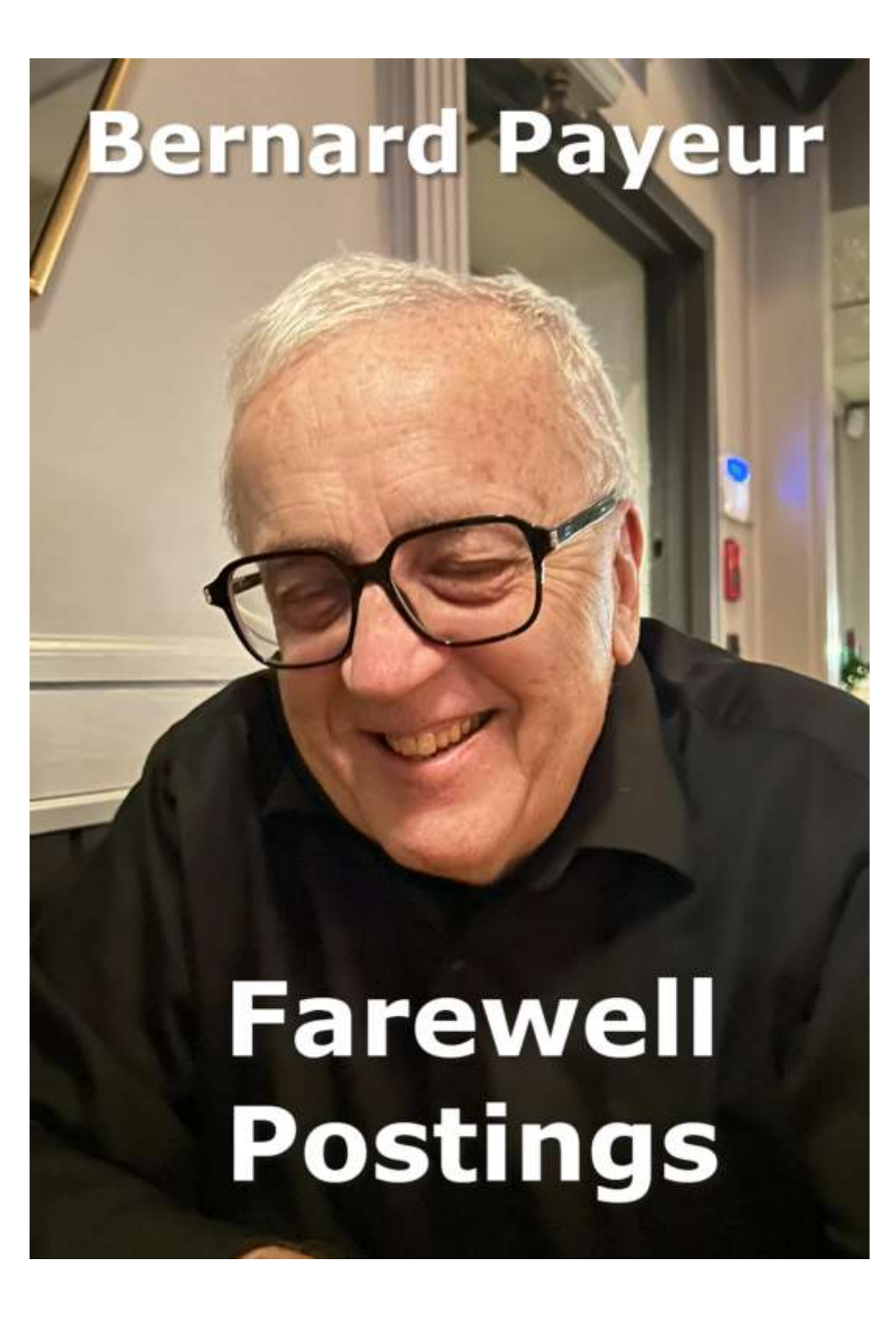


A close-up photograph of an older man with short, light-colored hair, wearing black-rimmed glasses and a black collared shirt. He is smiling broadly, showing his teeth. The background is slightly out of focus, showing an indoor setting with a doorway and some wall fixtures.

Bernard Payeur

**Farewell
Postings**

Farewell Postings

Bernard Payeur

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Boreal Books

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Dedication

To Life!

At her request, I ordered smoked salmon on a bagel with cream cheese for lunch and her favourite wine as accompaniment.

It was a few minutes before the nurse who would get her ready for what came next to make her appearance, when Lucette raised her glass and said: "I would like to propose a toast."

What she wanted us to toast caught all of us by surprise. It was not what you would have expected from someone whose existence, as was her wish, would shortly come to an end.

We all raised our glasses and she said: "À la vie!" (To life!).

And

To a celebration of life that was the Arab Civilization.

I am not aware in the entire history of civilizations 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*

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Foreword

November 30, 2024

Dear...,

It is always nice to hear from you. Thanks for the pictures. Everyone looks great.

I may live another ten years, and then again, I may not. Isn't that the situation for most people my age?

In informing me of the result of my latest thoracic echocardiogram, my doctor said that I had been dodging a bullet for years, and I may continue doing so, but the odds were no longer in my favour. After what Lucette went through, I consider my aneurysm a godsend, even if I don't believe in the guy.

A silver lining: with my last book, *Fade to Black*, I thought I had nothing left to write about, and lo and behold I get to write about Lucette and me again and revisit stuff I wrote about Islam.

If I beat the odds, won't I have egg on my face?

Love You

Bernard

On February 5, 2025, I met with a cardiologist. He said there is nothing to worry about for at least another two years. While the aneurysm has grown slightly since my last echocardiogram, it's still below the threshold for intervention. With that piece of bittersweet news, I will now attempt to transform my *Farewell Postings* into another book. Like they do in academia when one has nothing new to add to their published scholarship; it is revisit, rehash and recycle time. Having said that, among the déjà vu material you will find a sprinkling of never published postings going back to the start of boreal.ca in 2003, before the focus became increasingly about Islam.

Unless otherwise indicated, the verses that appear in my books are from a mainstream translation of the Koran by native Arabic speaker Majid Fakhry, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at the American University of Beirut. 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 that it "succeeds in

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expressing the meanings of the original Arabic in simple readable English.” An example of Fakhry's superior command of the English language is his succinct and elegant translation of Verse 48:28, one of the most significant revelations of the Koran.

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.

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.

Another important feature of Fakhry's translation is that, while he cannot avoid supremacist statements like the above in rendering an accurate translation of the Koran, he does not go out of his way to highlight them like the other two mainstream translations. Professor Khaleel Mohammad, then assistant professor in the Department of Religious Studies at San Diego State, made the following observations pertaining to the two most widely available English translations of the Koran courtesy of the Saudi government.

The Holy Qur'an: Translation and Commentary by Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali.

Among those Qur'an translations which found Saudi favor and, therefore, wide distribution, was the Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali (1872-1952) rendition that, from its first appearance in 1934 until very recently, was the most popular English version among Muslims...

While his rendering of the text is not bad, there are serious problems in his copious footnotes; in many cases, he reproduces the exegetical material from medieval texts without making any effort at contextualization. Writing at a time both of growing Arab animosity toward Zionism and in a milieu that condoned anti-Semitism, Yusuf 'Ali constructed his oeuvre as a polemic against Jews...

In 1989, Saudi Arabia's Ar-Rajhi banking company financed the U.S.-based Amana Corporation's project to revise the translation to reflect an interpretation more in conjunction with the line of Islamic thought followed in Saudi Arabia.

Ar-Rahji offered the resulting version for free to mosques, schools, and libraries throughout the world. The footnoted commentary about Jews remained so egregious that, in April 2002, the Los Angeles school district banned its use at local schools.

The Noble Qur'an in the English Language by Muhammad Taqi al-Din al-Hilali and Muhammad Muhsin Khan.

Now the most widely disseminated Qur'an in most Islamic bookstores and Sunni mosques throughout the English-speaking world, this new translation is meant to replace the Yusuf 'Ali edition and comes with a seal of approval from both the University of Medina and the Saudi Dar al-Ifta. Whereas most other translators have tried to render the Qur'an applicable to a modern readership, this Saudi-financed venture tries to impose the commentaries of Tabari (d. 923 C.E.), Qurtubi (d. 1273 C.E.), and Ibn Kathir (d. 1372 C.E.), medievalists who knew nothing of modern concepts of pluralism...

From the beginning, the Hilali and Muhsin Khan translation reads more like a supremacist Muslim, anti-Semitic, anti-Christian polemic than a rendition of the Islamic scripture...

Although this Saudi-sponsored effort, undertaken before 9-11, is a serious liability for American Muslims in particular, it still remains present in Sunni mosques, probably because of its free distribution by the Saudi government.

The First Koran

The first written Koran was put together in a hurry from second-rate sources after those who remembered Allah's revelations best were killed putting down a rebellion against Muslim rule, following Muhammad's passing, known as the *War of the Apostates*. In the last phase of that war, at the battle Yamama, 7,000 so-called apostates (mainly Muslims who refused to pay Muhammad's successor, Abu Bakr, the Zakat, an obligatory charity that the Prophet set up largely to finance his successful war against the pagans of the Peninsula) were surrounded and slaughtered. Seventy of the best reciters of the Koran—Muhammad had decreed that the Koran not be written down but memorized, as is done to this day—perished in the assault on the apostates. The loss of the best "Koranic memories" meant that the young man tasked with putting together the first written Koran had

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to depend on less reliable sources to create a written record of what Allah first told the angel Gabriel, who, in turn, revealed it to Muhammad.

Narrated Zaid bin Thabit Al-Ansari who was one of those who used to write the Divine Revelation:

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.'"

Abu Bakr added, "I said to Umar, 'How can I do something which Allah's Apostle has not done?'"

Umar said (to me), "By Allah, it is (really) a good thing."

So Umar kept on pressing, trying to persuade me to accept his proposal, till Allah opened my bosom for it and I had the same opinion as Umar.

"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

Thabit's original, which the daughter of Caliph Umar kept under her bed, was retrieved on the order of Uthman, Umar's successor.

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.

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

The revised product does not appear to have improved on the original from a presentation perspective. There is still no timeline per se. 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 chronological order, you get answers to questions that have yet to be asked and accounts of events in reverse order. Also, little

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evidence of scholarship is evident in the proliferation of duplicate, triplicate, quadruplicate and even quintuplicate verses telling the same story despite having gone through two iterations under Bakr and Uthman respectively. The lack of scholarship is also manifested in the transposition in space and time of stories from the Bible that defy facts that should have been known at the time such as the Samaritans could not have part of the Exodus (see Chapter "Moses II/Moses vs. the Bad Samaritan," *Shared Prophets*, Boreal Books).

There is no disagreement among scholars as to the origin of the first manmade written copy of the Koran. That is not the case, however, as to when God actually wrote the book, whose original can be found on a tablet in Paradise.

85:21 Yet, it is a glorious Qur'an,

85:22 In a Well-Preserved Tablet.

43:2 By the Manifest Book.

43:3 We have made it an Arabic Qur'an that perchance you may understand.

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

A saying of the Prophet would place the tablet on Allah's Lap, or within arm's reach.

Narrated Abu Huraira:

Allah's Apostle said, "When Allah completed the creation, He wrote in His Book which is with Him on His Throne, 'My Mercy overpowers My Anger.'"

Bukhari 54.416

Some have argued that the Koran always was and was never actually created. That the book existed before Allah revealed its content to Muhammad is evident in God's five recollections of a conversation between Moses and Pharaoh after Moses has cast his staff which morphed into a snake.

7:107 So he cast his staff and, behold, it was a manifest serpent.

The snake would proceed to eat what Allah recalls as something conjured up by Pharaoh's magicians.

7:117 We revealed to Moses: "Cast your staff"¹, and behold, it proceeded to devour what they faked.

In Allah's fourth and fifth recollection of that momentous occasion, instead of Pharaoh having his magicians crucified (see Chapter/Section "Moses - Moses and Pharaoh's Magicians," *Shared Prophets*, Boreal Books) the leader of the Egyptians would have one of his officials build him a tower high enough to prove Moses a liar as to where you will find Allah.

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."

40:36 And Pharaoh said: "O Haman, build me a tower that I may perchance reach the pathways,

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.

Moses must have been aware of the location of Paradise as described in Koran, and informed Pharaoh of what he knew for Pharaoh to believe that it was within reach. In the Koran, the place where God sits on His throne is just above the clouds held up by invisible pillars.

13:1 These are the verses of the Book; and that which has been revealed to you (Muhammad) by your Lord is the truth, but most people do not believe.

13:2 Allah is He Who raised the heavens without pillars that you can see; there He sat upright on the Throne and made the sun and the moon subservient, each running for an appointed term. He manages the [whole] affair and makes clear the Revelations so that you may be certain of meeting your Lord.

For all the Koran has to say about the location, construction and amenities of Paradise, see Chapter "Paradise," *The Islamic Hereafter*, Boreal Books.

¹ In the Bible it is Aaron who casts his staff. Exodus 7:10 "Aaron threw down his staff before Pharaoh and his officials and it became a snake."

The Modern Koran

The Cairo Edition, the source document from which all mainstream translations of the Koran are derived is recent by historical standards, dating back to the 1920s.

FORGOTTEN WITNESS: EVIDENCE FOR THE EARLY CODIFICATION OF THE QUR'AN

Estelle Whelan,
Columbia University

Excerpt from *Journal of the American Oriental
Society*, vol. 118, no. 1, 1998, pp. 1-14.

Alarmed by reported divergences in the recitation of the revelation, [caliph Uthman (644-61)] 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. 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).

A Dialogue on the Koran

The world desperately needs an honest discussion about Islam, starting with an unfettered dialogue on the Koran, if we are to stop the violence done in the name of Allah and His proclaimed last and greatest spokesperson, the Prophet Muhammad. We have to have as profound a discussion as the one initiated by courageous Islamic philosophers of a bygone age. Between the 8th and 10th century there emerged an Islamic school of thought largely influenced by Plato and Aristotle and which became known as Mu'tazilism or Philosophy of Rationalism or simply Islamic Philosophy.

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.

Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab People*, Harvard University Press 1991, p. 76

Mu'tazilites argued that verses of the Koran should not be taken literally and that human reason was more reliable than scriptures. 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. Much of Islam's substantial contribution in the

field of astronomy and mathematics is from this period when Mu'tazilism was accepted by the Caliphate as a legitimate Islamic school of thought. How could it have been otherwise?

My Books



Getting to Know Allah

Biblical Figures in the Koran - What They Said and Did

Jihad in the Koran

From Merchant to Messenger

Muhammad's Struggle for Legitimacy as Revealed in the Koran

SPECIAL

Let Me Rephrase That
Your Layman's Guide to Abrogations

Children and the Koran
The End of Empathy

Teach Your Children Well

PLAY/SCRIPT

Remembering Uzza
If Islam Was Explained to Me in a Pub

Alice Visits a Mosque to Learn
About Judgment Day

THE PROPHET

1001 Sayings and Deeds of the
Prophet Muhammad

END-GAME

Fade to Black
Triumph of the Irrational

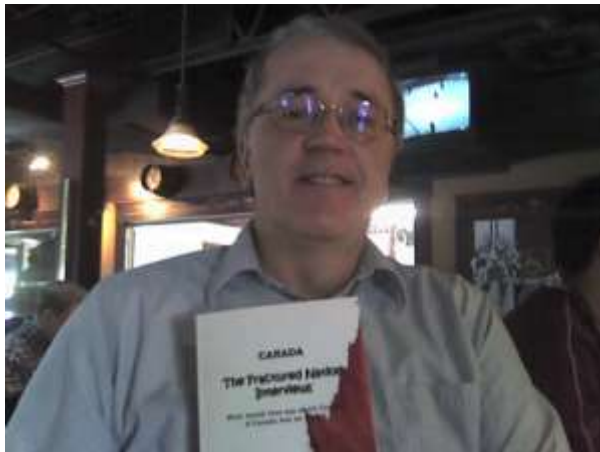
MIX

Love, Sex & Islam

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Shooting the Messenger
Till Death Do Us Part

That's me in smoke-filled bar celebrating the publication of my first book, the out-of-print book *Canada – The Fractured Nation Interviews*.



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Praise for *The Interviews*:

Let's Recapture Values We Love

Les Brost, For The Calgary Herald, June 25, 2007

Dear Canada:

It might seem strange to write a letter to a country rather than a person, but there's a first time for everything. I'm writing because next Sunday is our 140th birthday, and I figured that it was a big enough number to deserve a birthday present...

That's why my perfect birthday present to Canada would be to help start a national discussion about the Canada we want to see for our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. I recently found a stimulant for that kind of national discussion. It is a book written by Bernard Payeur and published by Trafford Publishing in Victoria called *Canada: The Fractured Nation Interviews...*

Do not read this book if you want to continue in the comfortable national doze. Read it only if you are prepared to think -- really think -- about tomorrow's Canada².

Farewell Postings keeps alive the hope of getting you interested. Of course, for those who have not read anything I wrote, and decide to take the plunge with my latest and likely last book, it will all be new.

Farewell Postings begins with mainly remembrances and sentiments of a personal nature before the focus becomes overwhelmingly what I have been writing about for the past quarter century, concentrating on the foundational glue that binds all believers: War (against unbelievers), Worship and Sex and what Islamists and Jihadists insist is all you need to know about everything.

Any study beside that of the Quran is a distraction, except the Hadiths and jurisprudence in the religion. Knowledge is what He [Muhammad] narrated to us, and anything other than that is the whispering of the Satan.

Al-Qaeda

The greatest enemy of knowledge is not ignorance; it is the illusion of knowledge.

Stephen Hawking, 1942-2018

² 2006 nominee for *The Sunburst Award for Canadian Literature of the Fantastic*.

Prologue

(Abbreviated from *Shooting the Messenger - Till Death Do Us Part*, Boreal Books)

I was born in Hearst, Ontario, a mostly French-speaking town about 150 miles southwest of James Bay on a northern leg of the Trans-Canada Highway. When the glaciers retreated, they deposited a lump of clay in the middle of the great Canadian Shield. On this lump of clay, in the middle of muskeg and stunted pine trees grew the town of Hearst.



[Courtesy of the Town of Hearst](#)

On this lump of clay, hardy farmers managed to grow some vegetables and enough forage to support some animal husbandry, mostly dairy cattle, but it is with the logging industry that Hearst is first and foremost associated.

Sawmills were the town's primary economic growth engine. Whenever a new sawmill opened in or near the town, Hearst experienced a mini economic boom. Those who could profit from these periodic booms, by risking big and not going bust, would be set for life. Enough did that it was said that Hearst had, at one point in time, more millionaires per capita than any other town in Ontario.

Many of the people who got rich were those who obtained the contracts to supply these sawmills with trees and, to a lesser extent, the vendors who sold and maintained the equipment to harvest the forest for these sawmills. My father was one of these vendors.

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I was not yet a teenager when Hearst experienced another of these economic booms. This time it was not just another sawmill that was coming to town, but a plywood plant. A plywood plant whose appetite for trees would dwarf the demand of the sawmills that doted the Hearst landscape. The owners of the logging companies, who would get the contracts to supply what some claimed was destined to become the largest plywood plant in the world, would be the new millionaires.

My father teamed up with one of the owners of a small logging operation. His company financed the purchase of the equipment the logger would need to make him a serious contender for these lucrative contracts. The logger did not get the sought-after contracts, and my father was left with having to pay for a large assortment of expensive logging equipment, only a portion of which could be resold to the successful bidders. My parents might have been able to weather this setback if fate had not been particularly unkind, and if my father had not used this setback as an excuse to drink more heavily than usual.

It was sometime in June after midnight when I was awoken by people shouting and the glow from a fire that illuminated the basement bedroom where I slept. The vacant house next door was on fire. The family home, along with most of its contents, was quickly reduced to a pile of smoldering embers when the fire next door caused a rupture in the natural gas line where it entered our house. This momentarily turned the gas line into an impressive flame thrower that spewed fire into every corner of the basement where three of my siblings and I, only a short time earlier, had been sound asleep.

My parents loved this nondescript little town floating on a lump of mud in the middle of a swamp. Hearst was home. They were middle-aged and the idea of being left homeless and penniless with six children still at home must have been frightening. They rebuilt the family home after the fire, but not enough time had passed to build any equity when their worst fear became reality. In the fall of 1967, Traders Finance forced them into bankruptcy.

On a cold Sunday afternoon in November, in a scene reminiscent of *The Grapes of Wrath*—with a snowstorm threatening, my mother at the wheel, and my father nursing a bottle of gin or rye—the family set out on a journey of more than 2,000 miles to begin again. A few hours

into the journey, the gently falling snow became a blizzard. Somehow, we made it to Thunder Bay where we spent the night.

...

[Seven years later] I am not sure why I chose to come to Ottawa. It may have been the glimpse I got of the city from the train I took to Expo 67. I knew I had missed something. In high school in British Columbia, because I came from (Northern) Ontario, whenever Ottawa was brought up, they assumed I knew the city and what went on there. I didn't, but I was curious about what it would be like to work for the Federal Government, even for a short time.

I made the return trip to Ontario in early September when I was half my mother's age and conditions were ideal. She did it in near-winter weather during the unpredictable month of November. She drove more than two thousand miles in under three days, driving from sunrise to past sundown on a highway where four lanes were the exception; driving from dawn to dusk with four kids in the back seat, the youngest in the front sandwiched between her and an alcoholic husband who could not be trusted to help with the driving.

As I encountered one familiar sight after another from that remarkable journey, I could not help but marvel at the courage it took. Three days after leaving Kelowna, I was in Ottawa having a cold beer on the terrace of the National Arts Centre next to the legendary Rideau Canal. Now, where to stay?

Eulogy

Lucette Carpentier BA, MA, MBA

September 1947 - July 2019



I used to be a different man. Today, I would like to think I am a better man and I had nothing to do with it. It is all her doing, and I told her so on our wedding day. I told her almost forty years ago that I was marrying her, not only because of the person she was, but the person I became when I was with her, a person I liked.

I asked her to marry me a year into our relationship. She said no - something about my not being ready. Four years later, thinking I was ready, I asked her again. She said yes. I was still not ready.

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About a month into the wedding preparations, she sensed uneasiness. She asked if I wanted to go through with it. I was no longer sure. Without the slightest hesitation, and without the slightest hint of recrimination, she cancelled the whole thing.

We did not talk about getting married again until a few years later. We had now been seeing each other for about seven years. We were playing backgammon at my place. I think I was winning when she said, "If I win this game, we get married." She liked to talk about how she won me in a game of backgammon. I like to think I let her win because I would have been a fool not to.

I met my future partner in life in 1973 at Communications Canada. She was a professional translator on a temporary assignment at the agency. Four years earlier, she had moved to Ottawa from Montreal, her hometown, to complete, on a scholarship no less, a Masters of Linguistics at Ottawa U.

Lucette was the only child of Adélard Carpentier and Anne Marie Mercier. They came from Montreal to join her in a large apartment on Elgin Street. I spent seven years of wonderful Sunday evenings with her and her kind and generous parents. Evenings which began with a lovely supper and ended with a game of cards or watching *Les Beau Dimanche*.

I would not have had the courage to ask that beautiful young woman in an enclosed office still working away on a Friday afternoon, but it was either giving it a try or admitting to my sister Rosa, who was in town with her husband Laurent for a teachers conference, that I did not have a date for a ball at the *Chateau Laurier*, to which they had invited me.

Lucette loved to dance. She admitted later that that was the reason she accepted my invitation. She would get to dance. I definitely did not woo her with my awkward impression of Fred Astaire. But still, at the end of the evening she said she would like to see me again. Thank you, Lord.

For our second date, I invited her to my studio apartment where I cooked for her what I thought was a simple dish. Most of our conversation that evening ended up being a back and forth with me alone on the bed and her in the bathroom getting over my impersonation of someone who knew how to cook. She decided then

and there that, from now on, she would be doing the cooking. That was a bonus. I was just glad she still wanted to see me.

Shortly after we became an item, she joined the elite of government translators/interpreters: the fifty or so professionals who provide translations services and simultaneous interpretation to the House of Commons, the Senate of Canada, Parliamentary and Cabinet Committees and Party Caucuses.

Her range of interest, her knowledge of art, food, history, her extensive travels, before and after we met, meant that many an evening, when she could not talk about her day because of that secrecy thing, there was always still plenty to talk about.

Later, during the years when I was working in Montreal, she completed a Master of Business Administration, adding economics and commerce to our conversations. I loved talking economics, having taken a few courses at Simon Fraser during my phase, I think I want to be an economist, only to be stumped by the mathematics. This was not the case for Lucette; she loved numbers. Soon she was doing my tax returns and doing them much better than I could.

Having a dilettante for a husband, a husband who was never sure if he was doing what he was meant to do, did not faze her one bit. She took it all in stride. Because she believed in me, I started believing in myself.

Before joining the Public Service Lucette taught French as a second language at Ottawa U. One summer the University sent her to *Aix en Provence*, all expenses paid, to teach French to adult Canadians looking for the ultimate immersion experience.

Lucette made friends easily. It was inevitable that her students became more than acquaintances. When the Public Sector told me to take a walk, she contacted a former student who paved the way to a successful career for me in the private sector as a consultant in computer-based information systems.

Lucette once joined me and my then business partner on a trip to London to meet with clients who had expressed an interest in an application I had developed. On landing, Gerry and I ignored her advice - a bad idea - that we all get a good night's sleep, and headed off to the Soho bar and theater district where we promptly got mugged.

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Again, she took it all in stride, just a slight admonishment that we were businessmen on a mission and not tourists, and we should behave that way. The next evening, she got us three of the best seats to an amazing production of *Les Miserable* at the Palace Theater. When the cab driver asked her, "Where to?" she said: "The Palace." "Buckingham Palace ma'am?", he enquired; an understandable mistake. With Lucette providing corporate guidance and home-cooked meals we did well.

My last years as a computer consultant would be spent at Bell Canada headquarters in Montreal. As I mentioned earlier, Lucette used the opportunity to earn an MBA while tending to her day job and her responsibilities as Vice President of her Union. Where she found the time and energy to meet me at the train station every Friday and drive us home to a table set for two and a romantic dinner, I will never know.

Lucette was 34; I was 30 when we married. She told me she could not wait forever to have children. I was never ready and forever came to pass. She was a great partner, and I am sure she would have been a great parent and an even greater grandparent. As an only child she will have to depend on the memories of other than her progeny to recall the wonderful, resourceful, and thoughtful person that she was. That is where I come in.

You may have noticed, as you entered, a book about a book which some of you may think out of place. Her DNA may not live on, but the words we crafted together and the message they convey will, of that I am sure.

It was shortly after 9/11 when I walked into my local Chapters and noticed a pile of Korans stacked near the entrance. I purchased one, took it home and started reading. I had always dreamt of writing something more useful than a User's Guide for a Management Information System.

I told Lucette that I would like to write about what I had read and would reread many times over. I expected it would take me a year or two, three at the most to complete a sort of layman's guide to the Koran. Ten years was more like it. Ten years that turned out to be some of the best years of our time together.

Most days began with the buzz of the alarm clock; my signal to get up and go downstairs to make the coffee. Ten minutes later, a warm

cup of coffee in each hand, I would make my way back up the stairs, leaving one cup on the desk in my home office, and the other on her bathroom vanity.

Back in the bedroom I would open the curtains then walk over to the bed to kiss her good morning. She would shower and get dressed and I would drive her to her job on Parliament Hill—a five to ten minute drive depending on the traffic. After a hurried goodbye and a “have a nice day” —Wellington Street, in front of Parliament, is a busy street in the morning—I would make my way back home and begin my day’s work, bringing order to the Koran.

When she got home at the end of the day, depending on the season, and the weather, we would sit on the front porch with a glass of wine and some munchies and she would read and comment on what I had accomplished that day. I always had a copy of Fakhry’s interpretation of the Koran on my lap ready to answer her questions. This was when her Masters in Linguistics - Specialty Translation came in handy.

Sipping her wine, she would patiently explain some of the nuances of Fakhry’s translation that I had failed to grasp or that I might have misunderstood. We agreed on most things when it came to Islam and the threat it posed to Western Civilization except, that she believed it would all come to pass, that the moderates would win the day and the March of Civilization would continue and we would not see the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, which ushered in the Age of Reason, undone.

She was always the optimist. As our layman's guide to the Koran grew from a few hundred pages to encompassing the entire book, her optimism was severely tested, but her dedication to what would become our project to make the Koran accessible to the layperson never wavered.

If we, believers and non-believers, can have the type of discussions Lucette and I had about Islam, then her optimism that a modern interpretation of the Koran, and mutual respect and understanding, will eventually overcome fanaticism and intolerance may be validated, and nothing would make her happier.

Love you Lucette. I will miss you terribly

July 11, 2019

A Belated Acknowledgement

In this cowering new age where an honest appraisal of a religions text or of the alleged illiterate who revealed its content is a death defying act, I thought it prudent not to acknowledge her contribution while she was alive. Lucette passed away on the afternoon of July 5, 2019.



Failures

October 16, 2024

Lately, I have been sharing too much with people I barely know, including snippets of my favourite video, that of my late wife's fiftieth birthday. While pointing her out to my friendly waitress, I mentioned that one of the last things she said to me was that I was the smartest man she had ever met. What a pretentious jerk I imagined her thinking as I left Abby's Wine Bar. There was no time to provide context, so I will try to do so here.

Three failed career choices is not a sign of a smart person, but a delusional one. The reason I survived my failures was that they did not stop her from believing in me. She knew that, after she was gone, there would be no one to encourage me to persevere, and she wanted me to persevere.

My first failure was the result of ignoring the advice of Sophocles who, in *Antigone*, warned us: "None love the messenger who brings bad news" and informed my superiors, at the then Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs (Global Affairs), about my discovery of a multi-million dollar fraud on the Canadian taxpayers first confirmed by our Tokyo embassy and inadvertently revealed by our numbers man in Brussels during a visit to Ottawa. My unearthing of this massive fraud would lead to my receiving, what I refer to as the *Appraisal from Hell*, and being fired on a bogus charge of insubordination, with a hapless former Prime Minister making it possible for them to get away with it.

The Fifty Percent Solution

(Excerpt from *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books)

The Estimates contain the details of the government's projected expenditures by department and agency. They consist of the Main Estimates and the Supplementary Estimates. The Main Estimates contain expenditure details for the upcoming fiscal year. The government presents the Main Estimates to Parliament for review and approval usually in early March, although the timing will depend on the Budget. It is impossible to forecast all financial needs in advance. Therefore, the government may also table Supplementary Estimates, often in the fall and the spring, if

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the amount voted in the Main Estimates is insufficient or if new funding or a reallocation of funds is needed.

From the House of Commons Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates web page.

It's the little things that trip you up, the unexpected little things. For the diplomats, it was a request that I build a small database and user interface to facilitate the preparation of the Estimates for Parliament that would lead to the discovery of probably the largest and longest sustained raid by public servants on the public purse in Canadian history.

The preparation of the Estimates at Foreign Affairs is slightly more complicated than in other departments because a large portion of its budget is spent in other countries' currencies. The Estimates preparation process, when I was with Foreign Affairs, began in September. One of the formalities was opening *The Globe and Mail* newspaper to the page where it publishes the exchange rates for the Canadian Dollar against the world's currencies. These rates became the budgeted rate of exchange—the exchange rates used to convert budgeted expenditures in a foreign currency into Canadian Dollars. This Canadian Dollar total for planned expenditures for the coming fiscal year was the amount that Parliament was asked to approve as part of the Estimates process.

It is next to impossible to predict what the Canadian Dollar will be worth from one day to the next against the American Dollar, let alone accurately predict what our dollar will be worth against most of the world's currencies eight to twenty months down the road. What you can predict with absolute certainty is that, in some countries, the Canadian Dollar will gain in purchasing power and in others, it will lose.

The idea, then, was to pass on any increase in purchasing power in countries where the Canadian currency saw gains against the local currency where Canada had an official presence, i.e., embassy, high commission or consulates to missions (also referred to as posts) experiencing a decrease in purchasing power. For example, if Parliament had authorized the rental of affordable, comfortable housing similar to that found in Canada, in Paris for instance, as guaranteed under the Foreign Service Directives (FSD), the increased purchasing power of the Canadian Dollar against the French Franc did not mean you could now rent a fancy apartment on the Avenue

des Champs-Élysées complete with two fireplaces and comfortable seating for twelve at the dining room table, as was done by the Canadian accountant stationed at the Canadian embassy.

You had to return any gains in purchasing power (the budgeted cost of the item or service – the actual cost) so that Ottawa could make these *new* dollars, courtesy of a local currency experiencing a downward trend, available to less fortunate posts where the local currency was on the rise. If you did not return this windfall, then posts experiencing a decrease in purchasing power would be forced to draw dollars from a special emergency reserve, and when that reserve fell below a certain threshold, Parliament would be asked for more money via the Supplementary Estimates process. This is, in effect, what was happening. Canadian taxpayers were being asked to shell out millions of additional dollars to maintain adequate funding for posts experiencing a decrease in purchasing power because diplomats and their staff indulged their penchant for luxuries instead of doing what the law required by returning all of this currency windfall to Ottawa. I did not know that at the time.

It was only about a year after I joined the team completing the building of the Post Expenditures Database as part of the project with the ungainly but descriptive name of Full Telegraphic Input of Financial Data (FTIFD) project, that I discovered what was happening.

The Auditor General, in a previous audit at Foreign Affairs, had expressed concern as to the timeliness and accuracy of the reporting of expenditures by posts. To fix this problem, Foreign Affairs had embarked on the ambitious and innovative FTIFD initiative. Expenditures made by all posts would be transmitted via the department's worldwide communication network on a weekly basis to its powerful mainframe computer (a DEC-20 from the now defunct Digital Equipment Corporation of Maynard, Mass.) in Ottawa, then quickly sorted, analyzed and summarized and made readily accessible for review and action by management. As an incentive, and so as not to add to the administrative burden of posts, *expenditures would be reported in the currency the goods or services were paid for*; the DEC-20 would convert all expenditures made in a foreign currency into Canadian Dollars based on the exchange rate that accompanied every transaction.

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Full telegraphic input meant that, for the first time, the exchange rate used by posts to convert Canadian Dollars into the currency of the host country, as well as the cost of goods or services, was available *in electronic format* on the same computer where the Estimates Database that I had built and still managed was located. What did the Estimates Database contain? *The exchange rate at which posts' budgets had been approved by Parliament.* The department and its posts were not aware of the significance of this development.

They say the road to Hell is paved with good intentions. During the implementation phase of Full Telegraphic Input of Financial Data, I spent a lot of time, at all hours of the day and night, in front of a computer terminal waiting for some post halfway across the world to send in their information. Before the information was *packaged* to be included in the Post Expenditures Database, I quickly scanned it for obvious errors or fixed errors detected by error-detection programs before drafting a telex, i.e., telegram, telling the post that had sent the information what they had done wrong.

It was late one night, while waiting for the information from Warsaw or Ouagadougou to arrive, that I realized I could eliminate the need for posts to calculate gains and losses on foreign currency transactions altogether. All I had to do was link the Post Expenditure Database and the Estimates Database, write a program to calculate gains and losses, and build a database to store the information. The time savings would be impressive. It took more than one hundred (100) people around the world days to perform these calculations every month using pen and paper and a desktop calculator, something the DEC-20 could do in a matter of hours.

It took more than a few months, working part-time and after hours, to put together what became known as the Currency Fluctuation Reporting System. Most of the time was consumed in writing programs to produce summary, and detail reports for each Canadian embassy, high commission and consulate. Back then, there were no sophisticated off-the-shelf programs to do this. You had to program every type of report from scratch and this took time. The actual calculation done by the computer was, of course, quite simple, although time consuming if done manually. The following formula can be easily understood by anyone who has traveled to a foreign country and had to convert Canadian Dollars into the local currency:

(Expenditure in Local Currency x Budgeted Exchange Rate)
 - (Expenditure in Local Currency x Local Exchange Rate) =
 Gain or Loss on Transaction

I had processed more than a year's worth of information and produced the first complete set of computer printouts of the soon to be infamous Currency Fluctuation Report when I decided it was time to show my calculations to the boss. Dave Gordon was the Director of the Financial Planning and Analysis Division, which had overall responsibility for the implementation of the FTIFD. Gordon was incredulous. "That can't be," he said. "The gains indicated are at least twice what posts are reporting."

Why did I wait so long? I was doing this on my own time or when there was nothing else to do. I enjoyed the challenge. I was also doing the type of complex programming that was not part of my job description. I was afraid that, if I told anyone before I was far enough along, I might not get to finish what I had started.

Tokyo Lets the Cat Out of the Bag

(Excerpt from *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books)

Gordon requested that I draft a telegram (telex) for his signature, asking our embassy in Tokyo to confirm that they had under-reported gains on foreign currency transactions by at least one hundred thousand dollars. Tokyo had been chosen as a test to confirm the accuracy of my calculations because of its reputation for impeccable bookkeeping.

Tokyo's initial response was not at all what the Director and I expected. Tokyo dispensed with any diplomatic niceties in its telegram telling Gordon what he could do with his calculations. Dave Gordon was a proud and ambitious man. Not only had I made him look like a fool but, if Tokyo was right, a potential windfall of more than seven million dollars had just evaporated, a tidy chunk of change even then. Further savings could be expected as lengthy, tedious calculations previously performed by support staff around the world were now done by a computer in Ottawa.

It was not only more than seven million dollars for the 1983 fiscal year that was gone, but promises of even greater savings down the road. This was not a trivial thing for the man ultimately responsible for the preparation of the Estimates to Parliament. The head of the

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Estimates and Budgets Section, Hugh Burrill, reported to Gordon. It was for Burrill's section that I built the Estimates Database.

Gordon was not a happy man when he showed up with Tokyo's response. I was working at one of the computer terminals in a restricted access room (then, access to all computers was tightly controlled; even personal computers were kept in this room) when he showed up. He only came close enough to where I was sitting so that when he flew Tokyo's telegram like a Frisbee in my direction, it landed on my desk. "Answer this," he said, and walked out.

I wasted no time in getting the powerful DEC20 computer to print out every financial transaction of the Tokyo embassy and the rates of exchange (both the budgeted and actual rates) used in the calculation of what they owed in currency gains. I pitied the next courier headed for the Far East. It had only taken Tokyo a few days to respond to my (Gordon's) first telegram. Going over the massive computer printout delivered by diplomatic courier took a bit more time, time measured in weeks.

I was busy, as usual, at a computer terminal when Gordon showed up with Tokyo's second telegram. He did not look happy, but this time he did not throw it at me; this time, he handed it to me. The telegram contained an apology. Tokyo wrote that after a detailed review, my numbers were correct. So, why the gloomy disposition? This was a time for celebration, or at least congratulations.

Looking back, I am convinced that Tokyo was aware all along that my calculations were correct. This would explain the embassy's over-the-top reaction to the first telegram. The tone of their initial response was probably their way of telling Gordon, in no uncertain terms, to back off. When they realized that proof existed in Ottawa as to what posts had been doing (for a number of years, it would later be revealed), it was time to adopt a different strategy, a strategy that would have to involve Ottawa.

There was no thank you or apology from Gordon; just a request for a printout of the gains and losses for all posts by geographical area (Africa and Middle East, Europe, Asia Pacific, Latin America, and the United States). He wanted the printouts for his next meeting with the so-called Area Comptrollers scheduled for later that morning.

What is an Area Comptroller? Foreign Service Officers, as part of what is called re-Canadianization (getting reacquainted with Canadian values after so much time spent in countries that don't share them), are rotated back to Ottawa after two or more postings. Area Comptrollers were usually Foreign Service Officers in Ottawa on a re-Canadianization tour. Each was assigned a geographical region and given overall administrative responsibility for managing budgets and tracking expenditures for their respective region.

In retrospect, there was really no point in producing the more than 200-page currency fluctuation printout. So why did Gordon sacrifice a few trees? Was he still unsure about what to do next? The Currency Fluctuation Reporting System had not only identified additional savings of more than seven million dollars but also an apparent fraud on the taxpayer and Parliament that had been going on for years. The cat was out of the bag. Evidence of what had been going on was in the computer printouts that Tokyo acknowledged as accurate.

When I showed up with the information he requested, Gordon asked if I wouldn't mind meeting with the Comptrollers. They were waiting for me in the division's small boardroom. *This was highly unusual.* I had never dealt with them directly. In fact, to the best of my recollection, I had never met any of them. Furthermore, a middle grade Financial Officer was, in effect, being asked to negotiate the return of more than seven million dollars, probably fraudulently obtained, with five experienced diplomats. I was, of course, not being asked to do any such thing.

With the massive computer printouts under my arm, I made my way to the boardroom where the Comptrollers were said to be waiting. They were all seated on one side of a medium-sized round table. They did not get up. I don't remember them introducing themselves. We definitely did not shake hands. What I remember is placing the printouts, which I had separated by geographical region, in front of them and having them gently pushed back. What I also remember is that they were not the least bit interested in talking about dollars and cents.

"We already know what your report contains," said the Comptroller directly across from me, the one who did all the talking. It soon became clear why I was the only one invited. It was not a meeting to discuss the return of ill-gotten gains. I had been invited to a lecture. The Comptrollers' unexpected tribute to the hardworking diplomats

did not last more than five minutes. To the best of my recollection, here is the essence of what the guy in front of me had to say:

Foreign Service officers are doing an important job under difficult circumstances and deserve to be compensated for their hard work and dedication, something the government is not always willing to do. Under the circumstances, the Foreign Service was justified in keeping a portion of the gains made on foreign currency transactions.

At the end of this homage to the poor, unappreciated, hardworking Canadian Foreign Service officers, I was told to take my reports with me and get out. Until I met with the Area Comptrollers, I was convinced that under-reporting of currency gains was a simple mistake. Now I realized it wasn't.

I briefed my director about my meeting with the Area Comptrollers. Gordon told me to continue producing the Currency Fluctuation Reports on a monthly basis and give them to him. He would look after them. I did so for more than two years. I respected the chain of command and trusted him to do what needed to be done.

A Mugging in Amsterdam

(Excerpt from *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books)

The multi-million-dollar fraud on the Canadian taxpayers could not have been carried out without the assistance of the department's accountants and bookkeepers. Foreign Affairs had scores of these on its payroll. Financial Officers, at the time, were stationed on a permanent basis in London, Paris, Brussels, Tokyo and Washington. Smaller posts had at least one locally engaged staff (LES) member to look after the books under the supervision of a Foreign Service Officer or non-rotational Canadian staff on temporary assignment abroad.

It was purely by accident that I discovered that our accountant in Brussels, along with the one in Paris with the apartment described earlier, were in on the fraud. I ran into our man in Brussels coming out of Gordon's office during a short visit to Ottawa. I could not resist asking him how it was possible for Brussels to have under-reported gains on foreign currency transactions by at least a quarter of a million dollars.

He was not as eloquent as the spokesman for the Area Comptrollers in explaining his role in the theft of tens of millions of dollars.

Glancing around, he whispered, "listen, it's always been the practice; we always only reported half the currency gains. Ottawa was happy, and we kept the rest."

Unlike the Canadian Financial Officer stationed in Paris who was there on a multi-year posting, our numbers man in Brussels was non-rotational, returning to Ottawa every four months. It was on one of these return trips to Ottawa that he was mugged by a man holding an ice cream cone. It happened while he was transiting through Amsterdam. He and the man with the cone both tried to get into the same cab at the same time, with the inevitable result that our much-travelled accountant ended up wearing the man's ice cream. The man apologized profusely and tried his best to clean up the mess he had made, and in the process, also removed our bookkeeper's passport and wallet which contained four thousand dollars, more than twice that in today's dollars.

I was a little surprised when he submitted a claim for his stolen cash, *and it was paid*. The legal term is an "ex gratia payment," meaning there was no legal obligation to pay it. I don't doubt that the money was stolen, but what was he doing coming back to Canada, after a four-month stay in Belgium at the Queen's expense, with so much paper currency in his wallet?

The Appraisal from Hell

(Excerpt from *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books)

McGahey tried to rid the department of my person by attempting to provoke a physical confrontation (see Chapter, "McGahey," *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books). Others took a less risky route, that of character assassination. If the threat of character assassination did not convince me to leave quietly, they would still have the satisfaction of having destroyed my reputation, which, like most people, I valued. As Allan Barth wrote: "Character assassination is at once easier and surer than physical assault; and it involves far less risk for the assassin. It leaves him free to commit the same deed over and over again, and may, indeed, win him the honours of a hero."

Days had stretched into weeks and weeks into months as I sat alone in my little grey cell wondering when the axe would fall, when Richard invited me into his office. This was after my meeting with McGahey. My scheduled annual appraisal was at least four months away when he presented me with a very special performance review on which Gordon had already signed off. What I refer to as *The*

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Appraisal from Hell rated me a complete moron unable to accomplish the simplest of task, incapable of making informed decisions, undependable and incoherent.

- 2 -

ASSESSMENT OF OFFICER IN PRESENT ASSIGNMENT DURING PERIOD UNDER REVIEW
ÉVALUATION DU RENDÉMENT DE L'AGENT DANS L'EXERCICE DE SES FONCTIONS ACTUELLES PENDANT LA PÉRIODE DU RAPPORT

(1) Unsatisfactory: Consistently fails to meet the major requirements of the job.
 Non satisfaisant: ne remplit généralement pas les principales exigences du poste.
 (2) Acceptable: Occasionally fails to meet some requirements of the job.
 Acceptable: ne remplit pas toujours toutes les exigences du poste.
 (3) Fully Satisfactory: Meets on a consistent basis all major requirements of the job.
 Fully satisfaisant: atteint régulièrement toutes les exigences du poste.
 (4) Superior: Frequently exceeds all requirements of the job.
 Supérieur: dépasse fréquemment de nombreuses exigences du poste.
 (5) Outstanding: Consistently exceeds all requirements of the job.
 Exceptionnel: dépasse régulièrement toutes les exigences du poste.

	Unsatisfactory Non satisfaisant	Acceptable	Fully Satisfactory Fully satisfaisant	Superior	Outstanding Exceptionnel
(1) KNOWLEDGE/CONNAISSANCES	UNABLE TO ASSESS				
(2) ABILITIES/APTITUDES					
Ability to analyze and evaluate aptitude à analyser et à évaluer		X			
Ability to plan aptitude à planifier		X			
Ability to organize aptitude à organiser		X			
Ability to control aptitude à contrôler		X			
Ability to direct aptitude à diriger					
(N/A)					
Ability to communicate aptitude à communiquer		X			
(3) PERSONAL SUITABILITY/QUALITÉS PERSONNELLES					
Quality of work Qualité du travail		X			
Superiority Supériorité		X			
Initiative Initiative		X			
Dependability Fiabilité		X			
Integrity Intégrité		X			
Interpersonal relations - Relations interpersonnelles -		X			
- with subordinates - avec les subordonnés		X			
- with superiors and colleagues - avec les supérieurs et ses collègues		X			
- with subordinates - avec ses subordonnés					
(N/A)					
(4) NARRATIVE ASSESSMENT (narrative, acceptable, superior, outstanding) ÉVALUATION NARRATIVE (non satisfaisant, acceptable, supérieur, exceptionnel)					

Superior is rarely and exceptionally use and all such marks on (1) (2) (3) outside fully satisfactory (add extra page if necessary).
 Supérieur est rarement et exceptionnellement utilisé et tous ces marques sur (1) (2) (3) en dehors de fully satisfaisant (add extra page si nécessaire).
 (Ajouter d'autres pages si besoin.)

In my twelve years as a public servant, I had never received an appraisal that had rated me less than fully satisfactory. This hateful appraisal was nothing less than character assassination. Director General Dan Bresnahan—the leader of, for lack of a more appropriate label, I refer to as the character assassins—had told Chrétien, during the ambassador's investigation into my allegations, that a Special Appraisal—with which both his Directors, Gordon and Dunseath, had agreed—was being prepared that would rate me "unsatisfactory on all rating factors." The ambassador was obviously okay with that, his affirmations about my character during our previous meeting notwithstanding (see Chapter "Ambassador Chrétien," *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books).

I sat down in a chair across from Richard to read what the character assassins had to say about me. Richard was not smiling, not even the hint of a grin; he was serious. He did not say a word, letting the implication of what they intended to do sink in.

Richard: Are you going to sign it?

No.

Richard: It will go on your file anyway, and you know what that means.

If it went on my file, I would effectively become unemployable in both the public and private sectors. That appraisal would be available to any prospective employer. Such an appraisal was also grounds for immediate dismissal or, at the very least, a trip to the psychiatrist. They had decided the less risky route for my dismissal was insubordination; they had no intention of using The Appraisal from Hell to seek my dismissal on grounds of incompetence or mental defect. We both knew that my dismissal, which was imminent, was going to end up before the courts, something they wanted to avoid.

Richard: Look, you agree to leave, and I tear it up. We forget the whole thing. What will it be?

What Richard, Gordon and company saw as an incentive to leave, I saw as an incentive to stand my ground. If that appraisal went on file, it would be proof positive in any court proceeding of Foreign Affairs' deceitful, duplicitous conduct, or so I thought. I did not sign it. The Personnel Bureau gave its blessing anyway; the report went into my personnel file and I was given a copy.

For a government official to destroy an employee's reputation using this type of appraisal, Barth's quotation notwithstanding, is not an easy task. That is, unless the assassins can count on the acquiescence of those whose responsibility it is to stop these bloodless, surreptitious murders. At Foreign Affairs, that collective responsibility was shouldered by R. G. Woolham, Director General of the Personnel Administration Bureau (see Chapter "Woolham and the Appraisal from Hell," *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books) and later by soon to be ambassador John Thomas Boehm (see Chapter "J. T. Boehm's Sense of Humour," *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books). The personnel administration I knew when I was a manager would never have signed off on such an obvious travesty; either the

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employee had completely lost his mind, or his bosses had gone mad. This gave me hope.

The Appraisal from Hell was unassailable proof of the gangster mentality at Foreign Affairs. All I had to do was hang in there until my objections to this despicable assessment of a man's character and abilities reached a level where competent and ethical people in positions of authority could be found. All I needed to do was hang on just a little longer. What I did not anticipate was Woolham running interference on behalf of the assassins.

Nonsense

(Excerpt from *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books)

Conduct hearings in accordance with the law, the principles of Natural Justice and render timely decisions.

Mission Statement (partial), Public Service Staff Relation Board.

Adjudication is “the legal process by which an arbiter reviews evidence and listens to arguments, including legal reasoning.” The Public Service Staff Relation Board *judge* who would review the evidence and listen to all this legal reasoning in the case of Bernard Payeur vs. Treasury Board (Foreign Affairs) was adjudicator Thomas W. Brown.

To argue that my dismissal was all well and good on behalf of the Treasury Board and by extension, Foreign Affairs, Luc Leduc, LL.D and Mylène Bouzigon, LL.D. In the background, Robert Cousineau, LL.D, Q.C., Solicitor for the Attorney General of Canada. To cross swords with this formidable gathering of *Doctors of Law*, the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), my union, sent Evelyne Henry, a former secretary with training in the art of adjudication. Considering her handicap, Evelyne did a very credible job in presenting the mountain of evidence of systematic abuse of privilege and of the person. Her logic and organization of the facts was impeccable; her pointed, probing cross-examination of government witnesses, impressive.

The hearing before Thomas W. Brown lasted three days; a fourth day was reserved for closing arguments. The government based its entire case for my firing on my failure to produce The Currency Fluctuation Report using a desktop calculator, pencil and paper. The evidence of *official* malfeasance quickly grew to overwhelming proportions. When

they were not spouting nonsense in the defense of the indefensible, Foreign Affairs' witnesses were caught in lies and contradictions. At one point, a completely flustered witness for the department actually blamed me for Foreign Affairs' alleged inability to keep track of millions of dollars in gains on foreign currency transactions *because I had gotten myself fired*.

To the logical, precise questions of Evelyne, they responded in a manner that would have led a person unaware of what was going on, and walking into Thomas W. Brown's Hearing Room, to think that they had accidentally walked into a rehearsal of a Monty Python sketch. The following is a partial reconstruction from official documents, notes and my own recollections of Richard's impeachable and somewhat surreal testimony. He was the one who had the unenviable task of having to defend the indefensible.

On the impossible report:

Evelyne: Mr. Payeur had been producing the Currency Fluctuation Report for almost three years, using the department's computer, when you requested that he do the report using an adding machine?

Richard: We decided he did not need the computer to do the Currency Fluctuation Report³.

Evelyne: You also claim that, during all these years, no manager, including yourself, enquired as to how this report was done?

Richard: He would not tell us.

Evelyne: Not tell you? What about the detailed report he gave you on how the system worked in January of 1984?

Richard: I don't remember getting that report.

Evelyne: You don't remember getting a report called "Report on the Calculation of Gains and Losses on Foreign Currency Transactions"?

³ Gordon admitted on the stand that this was his decision.

In cross-examination, Mr. Gordon testified that he had discussed the question of 'tools', meaning the computerized equipment, with the grievor and was convinced that the grievor did not need such equipment to do the work assigned.

Decision of Thomas W. Brown, p.53

Only a computer illiterate would refer to a computer as "computerized equipment."

Richard: No.

Evelyne: You say you never got this report. Why would he produce such a report if he wasn't asked?

Richard: Maybe somebody else did.

Evelyne: But you just said that he would not tell anyone how his system identified millions of dollars of unreported income every year?

Richard: That's what I said.

Evelyne: You claim you did not see this report; you claim that you and every other manager did not know how Mr. Payeur calculated the millions in gains on currency exchange transactions for almost three years?

Richard: Like I said, he would not tell us.

Evelyne: Still, you were willing to risk millions of taxpayer dollars so he could produce these reports using an adding machine after admitting that you and other managers did not have a clue as to how these reports were produced. How do you explain that?

Richard: We would not have risked anything if he had done the report as he was told.

Evelyne: Using an adding machine?

Richard: Like I said before, he did not need the computer; the new way was a better use of his time.

Evelyne: When he had access to the computer, did Mr. Payeur produce the Currency Fluctuation Reports on time and in the manner requested?

Richard: Yes.

Evelyne: Why did you not simply give him access to the tools he had used in the past to prepare the reports when you realized that you were losing millions of dollars because he could not do them using only an adding machine?

Richard: Like I said before, he did not need access to the computers to produce the currency fluctuation reports. I already told you that, and it is all his fault if today we cannot keep track of millions of dollars. It's his fault for getting himself fired! Because he got himself fired, we had to dismantle the Currency Fluctuation Reporting System

because nobody knew how to run it. We even hired a consultant for \$90,000.00 so he could tell the consultant how the system worked *before we fired him*. (Remember this dialogue.)

Evelyne: Did this consultant ever talk, or even meet, with Mr. Payeur?

Richard: No, Bernard was supposed to tell Lee Gottdank what he knew and Lee would tell the consultant.

Evelyne: That was more efficient than having Mr. Payeur talk to the consultant directly?

Richard: Yes.

Evelyne: Was Lee Gottdank familiar with the Currency Fluctuation System and that is why you chose him as go-between?

Richard: No; as I told you before, nobody knew how the system worked. Lee was the one I chose as the contact with Bernard so he could concentrate on his reports.

Evelyne: Was anyone else allowed to talk to Mr. Payeur?

Richard: NO! I wanted him to concentrate on his reports.

In the event that Thomas W. Brown was computer illiterate (it was not unusual at the time; the IBM Personal Computer, which would revolutionize the way we all worked, had only been introduced a few years earlier), Evelyne phrased most of her computer-related questions in terms that even he should have been able to understand.

Evelyne: The information that Mr. Payeur needed to do the currency fluctuation reports was in the department's computer, correct?

Richard: Yes.

Evelyne: The same computer used by Mr. Payeur to do his reports before the department decided it was not needed?

Richard: Yes.

Evelyne: A big computer like that is like a big filing cabinet, right?

Richard: Yes. I guess you could call it that.

Evelyne: Then, could you explain to me how he was to produce long, complicated reports the department

considered vital if he was denied access to the filing cabinet where the information he needed was kept?

Richard: We made other arrangements.

Evelyne: What kind of arrangements?

Richard: Bernard was to ask Lee Gottdank for the information he needed, and Lee would get it for him. Lee would give him the computer printouts of the information he needed to do his reports.

Evelyne: Would it have been more efficient to let Mr. Payeur get the information himself, or let the computer do all those millions of calculations as was done in the past?

Richard: No!

Evelyne: NO?

Richard: NO!

Evelyne: You admit that the Currency Fluctuation Reporting System was a big complex system, a system so complex that no manager at Foreign Affairs could understand how it worked?

Richard: Yes.

Evelyne: And you expected Mr. Payeur to recreate this system, to produce reports from this complicated system, using pen and paper and an adding machine, from memory?

Richard: Yes.

Evelyne: Mr. Payeur was required to sign in and out of his office?

Richard: Yes.

Evelyne: Was anyone else on your staff required to sign in and out.

Richard: No.

Evelyne: Why was he singled out?

Richard: I wanted to make sure he was working on our reports.

Evelyne: After you denied him access to all computers, you also changed his job description to say that his job did not require the use of computers?⁴

Richard: Like I said before, his job did not require the use of a computer.

Evelyne: A Financial Systems Analyst not requiring access to computer systems, ever. Isn't that unusual?

Richard: No.

On the Appraisal from Hell:

Evelyne: Isn't it true that when you invited Mr. Payeur to your office to give him his performance review, you told him that if he accepted a transfer to another department you would tear it up?

Richard: That's not true.

Evelyne: Did you not tell him to use his previous good appraisal to transfer out of the department while he still could?

Richard: That's not true.

Evelyne: Didn't you tell him that if he did not leave, he would be fired for insubordination or fired for incompetence using this appraisal [the Appraisal from Hell]?

Richard: That's not true.

Evelyne: Such an appraisal is grounds for immediate dismissal for incompetence or incapacity, isn't it?

Richard: I don't know.

Evelyne: If this appraisal was not going to be used to get rid of Mr. Payeur, why such an appraisal six months (it was actually four months) before his regular appraisal was due?

Richard: To get him to do his job.

Evelyne: Anyone with such an appraisal is obviously incapable of doing even the most menial tasks, let alone all the complex calculations required to do the currency fluctuation reports?

⁴ Even though the new job description bore my position number, the position was shown as VACANT.

Richard: We thought that this appraisal would convince him that we were serious about getting our reports.

Evelyne: So, what you're saying is that such a horrible appraisal is just the department's way of motivating employees?

Richard: Yes.

Evelyne: To your knowledge, do you know of anyone else who received such an appraisal?

Richard: I don't know of anyone else.

What were all the *Doctors of Law* to do after more than three days of getting pummelled by this nonsensical testimony and other damning evidence? What Evelyne and I did not know was that the government lawyers had an ace up their sleeves—technically an illegal ace, but what does it matter when you are defending people who consider themselves above the law? Foreign Affairs officials had shown themselves to be dismally ethically and morally bankrupt. The lawyers from Treasury Board tasked with defending Foreign Affairs' actions would prove that, when it came to a lack of ethics, Foreign Affairs was not in a class by itself.

After three days of hearings before adjudicator Brown, where a mountain of evidence had been introduced as to the perfidy of Foreign Affairs officials, what could Leduc possibly say in rebuttal? He did not even try! He simply opened his briefcase, took out Joe Clark's letter to me, and, as he walked to where Thomas W. Brown sat in judgement, said, "I have here a letter from the Honourable (it should have been the Right Honourable) Joe Clark to Mr. Payeur where he expresses complete confidence in his officials." He placed the letter in front of adjudicator Brown, looked him in the eye, and dared him to call Joe Clark a liar: "Are *we* prepared to call Joe Clark a liar?" All judicial appointments in Canada are political appointments. Leduc was daring adjudicator Brown to embarrass the very people on whom his job depended.

The Betrayal of Joe Clark

(Abbreviated from *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books)

Joe Clark betrayed me, and he, in turn, was betrayed by those who convinced him that betraying me was the right thing to do. Lucette was in Montréal at a government-sponsored conference at the Place Victoria Hotel where she recognized Denis Beaudoin. Beaudoin was

Special Assistant to the Right Honourable Joe Clark. She introduced herself as my wife and pointedly asked him what had they done to her husband? (“Veux-tu bien me dire qu’est ce qui c’est passé?”) Denis Beaudoin, perhaps taken aback, was extremely forthcoming.

Mr. Clark would have liked to help your husband, but he had an understanding with Massé that he would not interfere with his running of the department. He still blames them (Foreign Affairs) for his disastrous trip (the trip around the world where they lost his luggage) and needs their cooperation.

The conversation ended with a promise that they would extract some payback for what had been done to me.

If it’s any consolation, the careers of those responsible for what happened will suffer a setback.

And they did, but friends in high places would make it up to at least one of them. I was in Ottawa’s historic ByWard Market when I ran into a former manager with the Financial and Accounting Division of Foreign Affairs. My first car had been a 1950s vintage Volkswagen. There was a gathering in the market that day of a Volkswagen fan club of which he was a member. He asked if I wanted to see the club’s *bug* collection. I did. As we walked over to the area where the cars were on display, he asked if I was aware that Dave Gordon had retired. I wasn’t. He said they often played golf together and that he was enjoying his retirement. Did he want to rub it in? I don’t think so. He enquired if I knew that, upon retirement, Gordon had been given a substantial bonus to make up for lost promotions because of my discoveries.

I gave no indication of how disappointed I was that Foreign Affairs would again, when it thought no one was looking, pick the taxpayer’s pocket to reward one of its own for, according to former Ambassador Raymond Chrétien, “taking a bullet for the department.” I sent an advanced copy of the chapters in *Shooting the Messenger – A Whistleblower’s Tale*, the precursor to *Till Death do Us Part*, where the ambassador is mentioned. He called me at home and we had a very pleasant conversation. We talked for almost an hour.

The conversation was almost entirely in French, except when I asked what he thought of Gordon getting a bonus upon retirement. “He took a bullet for the department,” he said. I asked him if he thought it was fair that the man at the center of my controversial firing got an

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ostensibly substantial boost to his already generous pension while I lost my job, and my pension. He agreed that it was not fair, but what can you do? He wasn't in government anymore and would rather not get involved. He suggested I get in touch with Denis Comeau, the current Inspector General for Foreign Affairs, his old position when I first met with him. I wrote Ambassador Comeau. No response!

In the Supreme Court of Canada

(Abbreviated from *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books)

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF CANADA
(On appeal from the Federal Court of Appeal)

B E T W E E N :

BERNARD PAYTON
Applicant

-vs-

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN IN RIGHT OF CANADA
as represented by Treasury Board
Respondent

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR
LEAVE TO APPEAL

TAKE NOTICE that the applicant will apply to this Honourable Court at the hour of 12:00 o'clock in the forenoon on Friday, the 2nd day of October, 1987 for an Order, pursuant to Section 31(2) of the Federal Court Act, granting to the Applicant leave to appeal from the judgment of the Federal Court of Appeal rendered the 3rd day of June, 1987 (F.C.A. File no. A-388-86).

AND FURTHER TAKE NOTICE that the said application will be made on the following grounds, to-wit:

I. That the Federal Court of Appeal erred in not ruling, section 38 of the Federal Court Act notwithstanding, that the actions of government officials during hearings held before the Public Service Staff Relations Board into the dismissal of the applicant from the Public Service for "alleged" insubordination, had brought the administration of justice into disrepute.

DATED AT OTTAWA, this 10th day of September, 1987

B. Payton
Bernard Payton
Applicant

The Right Honourable Chief Justice Brian Dickson

The Honourable Mr. Justice McIntyre

The Honourable Mr. Justice Antonio Lamer

Robert Cousineau, Q.C., counsel for HER MAJESTY THE
QUEEN IN RIGHT OF CANADA and Treasury Board.

John E. McCormick, Esq., counsel for the
Public Service Staff Relations Board

Bernard Payeur representing himself



Image may be subject to copyright

I had just stepped up to the lectern and was getting ready to address the Court when a group of school children on a field trip were ushered in by their teacher. If anything, they would learn a valuable lesson about getting justice in Canada that day. I had

fifteen minutes to convince the Supreme Court of Canada to grant me leave to appeal the judgement of the Federal Court of Appeal. Even if I had been given more time, I did not want to repeat the mistake I had made in Federal Court by telling the whole story. I again prepared my arguments after reading old Memorandums of Points of Arguments given to me by the always helpful Court staff.

During the two years it took to appeal my firing, starting with the Federal Court of Appeal (see Chapter “In the Federal Court of Appeal with a Fool for a Client,” *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books) all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada, I built a computer application, using leading edge Canadian software that I would use as my calling card to find work despite the Appraisal from Hell. It was not quite ready when my appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada was dismissed, not on its merit, but because, in the words of The Right Honourable Chief Justice Brian Dickson, my firing was “not a question of national interest.”

It was a few days after hearing the Right Honourable Chief Justice Brian Dickson’s dismissive words that, quite unexpectedly, I was told that someone wanted to offer me a job. André’s small Montréal-based computer consulting firm had won an impressive contract to provide user support to the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and he was looking for someone to manage the young people he would be sending to Ottawa. I took the job (see Chapter “CIDA,” *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books).

Sharing a drink at a bar during one of his visits to Ottawa I told André that I had inadvertently discovered who he bribed at CIDA and at the then Department of Supply and Services to obtain the contract. He was candid about it. He knew whoever he hired to

manage his operation at CIDA would eventually find out, and that is why he hired me. Knowing my history, he was confident that after what they did to me for telling on my bosses [at Foreign Affairs], I would not make that same mistake again and he was right. And that is how corruption becomes endemic.

The Shell to the Rescue

(Excerpt from *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books)

(Advertisement, circa 1991)

The Boreal Shell

The Multilingual Solution

The Federal Government says all its new software programs should now be available in both official languages.

The Official Languages Act now requires that federal government institutions "that regularly and widely used automated systems from processing and communication of data acquired or produced by the institution on or after January 1, 1991 can be used in either official languages."

Can you develop bilingual programs? Say YES with the Boreal Shell!

The Boreal Shell totally automates bilingual application development. It's the industry's only truly multilingual application development tool.

The Boreal Shell gives government MIS groups and software consultants the tools they need to comply with the government's new bilingual requirements as they are implemented.

The Boreal Shell - Benefits

- *Responds in your language*
- *Powerful, easy report writing*
- *Performs Ad hoc queries*
- *Fast, easy development*
- *No coding required*
- *Takes less than an hour to learn*
- *Supports all ZIM platforms*

The Boreal Shell enhances and brings to the user or system developer all the power of the ZIM™ application development environment in an easy-to-use, flexible interface. Together the Boreal Shell and the ZIM 4GL RDBMS drastically reduces

system development and maintenance cost.

Multilingual Capabilities

The Boreal Shell lets you work in the language of your choice, while at the same time, serving your clients in the language of their choice --- or even in a bilingual format!

Users can switch both the language they're working in and the language they're generating reports with on the fly.

Speedy Application development

Application development using ZIM and the Boreal Shell is at least three times faster than using conventional application development. There is no 'time penalty' and no additional cost in building multilingual applications.

With the Boreal Shell, applications can be up and running in an hour without having to write a single line of code. The 'reusability' problem is a thing of the past. Build completely different applications using the same components.

English/French Dictionary

The Boreal Shell comes complete with an integrated dictionary which can contain not only the corresponding English/French titles for each field, but complete definitions in each language of up to 400 characters.

Easy to Learn

The learning curve for applications developed using the Boreal Shell is measured in hours, not days or weeks. The next step is always indicated where the response is not intuitive.

Report Generation & Ad Hoc Queries

The Boreal Shell comes with a complete easy to use, powerful Report Generator. In a matter of minutes you can produce a comprehensive report that can include totals, averages, maximums and minimums.

The Boreal Shell also provides an intuitive and easy to use Ad Hoc Query facility where selection criteria are selected right in the database field.

Derived Fields

This function is usually found in spreadsheet programs. It allows the user to dynamically add fields to each other subtract fields from one another and divide or multiply fields by each other.

More Boreal Features

- *Labels*
- *Built-in security*
- *Hierarchical Searches*
- *Perform simple & multiple Searches*
- *Exporting, On-Line Help*
- *Pop-Up Utilities*
- *Note-it Function*

ZIM 4GL RDBMS - Open Application Development.

The Boreal Shell is available on the complete range of ZIM-supported platforms.

ZIM is a fully-open application development environment that embraces the emerging standards of the 90s for the delivery of complex, multi-user applications of superior design. Based on the Entity-Relationship (E-R) data model, ZIM provides one uniform language for the entire application development cycle.

The Boreal Shell was now ready for prime time. I started my own

consulting firm, Boreal Consulting, and used the shell to get clients. My first client was the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC).

Denis Podolsky was a man with a big problem on his hands. He was the civil engineer on assignment from the Department of Public Works tasked with building a computer based application to catalogue all assets for which the Federal Government was responsible in the more than 800 First Nation communities, i.e., reserves, across Canada, and that included everything from roads to fire halls and firefighting equipment, water treatment plants, schools, etc. His first attempt at creating a database had taken more than a year and was an abject failure; the highly touted American DBMS (Database Management System) *PowerBuilder* proved inadequate for the task.

Government departments are notoriously shy about trying unproven Canadian software like the Boreal Shell. Complicating matters, my *Shell* was based on leading edge technology from Bell Northern Research, the precursor to Nortel, with the unfortunate name of ZIM; a name which completely obscured the powerhouse that was the ZIM DBMS and the ZIM fourth-generation language,

I made Denis a promise that normally would have been considered reckless. I promised him that, using ZIM and the Boreal Shell, and starting from scratch, I could have the thing done in four months. Not only that, but it would include a user-friendly interface and a feature that no other database product on the planet offered at that time: the ability to respond to the user in the language of his or her choice, in this case English or French, and produce reports on the fly in either language. If I did not deliver what I promised within the agreed-upon timeframe, he did not have to pay me. He was impressed enough that he gave ZIM and the Boreal Shell a chance, and he never looked back.

The system, which became known as CAIS for Capital Asset Inventory System, was built within the time guaranteed and implemented within all the Indian and Northern Affairs (INAC) regional offices across Canada. With the success of CAIS, I was asked to build the more complicated companion system, ACRS (Asset Condition Reporting System, pronounced *acres*).

Every year, the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs must estimate and allocate the amount of money it will need to maintain First Nations' community assets in good working conditions and to

track projects related to the maintenance of these assets. This was the role of ACRS. ACRS won the Deputy Minister's award for excellence, coming in on time, under budget, and exceeding requirements and user expectations.

The next few years were good years, then the government declared ZIM's super-efficient way of retrieving information not compliant with an old standard developed by IBM 30 years earlier called SQL (pronounced sequel) which it adopted as a government-wide standard (see Chapter "The Butterfly Effect," *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books). This not only made it next impossible to get new government clients, but existing ZIM clients started abandoning the DBMS (Database Management System) in favour of inferior American products. Ontario First Nations Technical Service Corporation based in Toronto stayed with ZIM and the Boreal Shell. With the assistance of Michael Cowpland of Corel fame, who had recently acquired the ZIM Corporation, they would have succeeded in saving this cutting-edge Canadian gem until the rest of the industry caught up, had it not been for the perfidy of INAC.

Michael Cowpland and First Nations

(Abbreviated from *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books; for how the Americans, with the unwitting assistance of the Canadian government doomed Corel, please read the unabbreviated version.

Around the time I was building CAIS, and later ACRS, the Government of Canada announced a policy whereby First Nation communities were going to be given the resources, training and technology to manage their communities. As part of this policy of devolution, there was to be a transfer of computer-based management information technology to the First Nations, and part of that transfer included CAIS and ACRS.

I went to work for the Ontario First Nations Technical Services Corporation (OFNTSC) to make it happen. On its website, OFNTSC describes its mission as a "technical advisory service for 133 First Nations and 16 Tribal Councils in Ontario." Back then, under the visionary leadership of Chief and Executive Director Irvin George and the project management skills of Elmer Lickers, an Iroquois from Six Nations of the Grand River, OFNTSC had the potential to become

the provider of custom-made, leading edge computer applications for First Nation communities across Canada and beyond.

We merged CAIS and ACRS and added a housing database and call the new integrated system CAMS for Community Asset Management System. Housing on reserves is the responsibility of the Federal Government. As landlord to the First Nations, it had not been able to solve what seemed to be an intractable problem: getting timely information on housing conditions in Native communities, especially in the North. OFNTSC was looking to remedy that situation by adding a housing component initially called CAHD for Conditional Assessment of Housing Database to CAMS.

Teams were sent out to collect what should have been destined to become a digital life-cycle record of every house in every community, including information about the sex and age of occupants and sleeping accommodations so as to identify overcrowding that might invite sexual interference. We incorporated within the housing component the complete Canadian Building Code. This allowed for quick verification, when a request for payment was received for repairs done along with a digital photo of the work done, that it was done according to code.

Thanks to the Boreal Shell as a development platform, and people who knew what they were doing, we had a working application in less than a year. Communities loved the CAMS, not only for its ease of use, but because it was presented as a First Nation achievement, which it was (and also a Métis achievement, Dewey Smith, a Métis, was the expert in the voluminous Canadian Building Code incorporated into the system as a set of pop-up regulations). Of no small importance, they would be custodians of the information collected about conditions in their communities.



We had catalogued nearly a thousand homes—mainly in poor Northern Ontario communities such the house pictured on the left—when the dream came to an end.

OFNTSC had a vision of being a management software provider to First Nations across Canada, and to that end,

Elmer and I went to B.C. to demonstrate our application to the B.C. INAC regional office. They were more than impressed and wanted to start using the CAMS immediately. Next came Alberta, to whom we sent a prototype. They all wanted it. There was only one catch: we estimated that to make CAMS available to all 800+ First Nations communities would require at least a million dollars.

The housing component was OFNTSC's idea, but its development was funded by the Federal Government. INAC said the money for the development was a contribution, as opposed to a grant, therefore, as the one and only contributor—as if sweat equity and devolution did not matter—they owned it and would now take over the CAMS. OFNTSC refused to hand over the application and the source code that made it run. To try to convince INAC to let OFNTSC handle the deployment of CAMS, I got Michael Cowpland, who had recently purchased ZIM, to partner with OFNTSC and make a joint presentation to the Department. Michael even agreed to throw in \$250,000 of free ZIM software to keep our first year's estimated deployment costs at or below a million dollars.

A small group consisting of Irvin George, Bill Taggart, OFNTSC's general counsel, Elmer Lickers, a Ms. Batson from ZIM Technologies, and myself met with an assistant to Minister Nault to make our case. Bill Taggart made the most compelling argument. Holding a CAMS installation CD in one hand, he waved it in front of the bemused assistant, telling him, "You have here an easy-to-use, elegant, inexpensive solution tailored to First Nations peoples' needs; what more could you want?" An ugly request put an end to any substantial discussion about an "easy-to-use, elegant, inexpensive solution" to a pressing problem.

Another argument was that CAMS, especially in northern communities, could be the difference between life and death. The aide's response was to ask us to produce a cost benefit analysis for the Minister, which at this point should not have been necessary. In that analysis—I kid you not—he wanted us to include an estimate on how much the life of an "Aboriginal" was worth. Michael Cowpland, when he heard about this preposterous demand, correctly concluded that they were wasting our time and wanted nothing more to do with INAC. Unbeknownst to any of us at the time, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada had probably already signed a \$20,000,000+ contract with Accenture, the large American software integrator, to build

Internet-based CAMS with ORACLE as the DBMS. Their wanting ownership of the community-based CAMS, instead of letting a First Nations organisation proceed with its implementation across Canada was to kill it in favour of Accenture.

We asked for a million dollars for a proven system that had found favour among those it was meant to help. Accenture wanted, and got, 20+ million dollars to build a system that the First Nations could never trust, having their participation relegated to that of data entry clerks. I had the opportunity to ask a consultant with Accenture about the initial 20 million dollars, an amount I found excessive, knowing the problem to be solved. "Because we don't know what we're doing," was his reply. A Freudian slip, or was he simply being facetious? Considering that they never managed to duplicate the CAMS, I would opt for the former.

In the fall of 2019, I got a call from Elmer who was in town on business. Did I have time to meet him for a game of pool? He had some news. After almost twenty years and a slew of costly failures, INAC had finally relented and was ready to adopt the community-based solution we had proposed way back when. They had given OFNTSC the money to build a new CAMS using a mainstream DBMS and language, ZIM having withered on the vine.

In all those intervening years, Elmer had kept a working copy on an out-of-the-way computer. When he met with the developers to show them what he wanted, he simply fired up the old machine and gave them a demonstration of our CAMS. He said they were absolutely blown away. They could not believe that what he was showing them was twenty years old. They even admitted, he said, that they could not easily duplicate some of the features even today. He thought I would be happy to hear that. I was and I wasn't. That is the way with what-might-have-beens.

My last client for the Boreal Shell was Bell Canada Enterprises. With the help of the smartest manager I have ever worked with, we beat Google to Google, only to have new management abandon the project days before going live.

Doing Google Before Google Did Google

(Excerpt from *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books)

Bell purchased a site license, which meant it could use the Shell

anywhere within the Bell organization without any further payments to my company, Boreal Informatics Inc. The first Bell system to benefit from my shell was NOMAS, a small Human Resource Management System (HRMS) dedicated to the management of part-time employees. The person who negotiated the license told me that I should have insisted on more money, that Bell had saved the equivalent of a dozen employee's yearly salaries since the Shell had been made part of NOMAS.

After NOMAS, I was invited to customize a large, complex incident tracking system known as LEGOS. It required the Shell to automatically switch between a character base and a graphic interface depending on the operating system detected, among other things.

Bell's generous per diem meant that I could afford to stay at the only apartment hotel on Crescent Street, the affectedly named Chateau Royale. Montréal's Crescent Street is where booze, beautiful women, and bawdiness effortlessly mix. On cosmopolitan Crescent Street, it's not just a cliché; you do meet the most interesting people.

On one side of the street is a two-story building with two spacious outdoor balconies. One is the extension of a well-appointed dining room that takes up the entire top floor; the other, an extension of the first floor Cheers-like bar, only bigger. Beneath it all is a nightclub where, when I was there, disco went to die and found a new lease on life. The building, which encompasses the restaurant, the bar and the disco, is called Thursdays – in French, "Les Beaux Jeudis," though even its French clientele call it Thursdays.

Across from Thursdays and slightly to the right is Ziggy's, a small pub where the late, great Mordecai Richler could be found. Then there is Sir Winston Churchill Pub (Winnie's) just next to Thursdays, an establishment almost as famous but without the Cheers-like atmosphere or the intimacy of Thursdays' disco. I spent many an evening at Thursdays during my almost five years in Montréal doing computer consulting.

I enjoyed letting my universe unfold in unpredictable ways on Crescent Street, as long as it did not interfere with the next day's commitments. It made for the most pleasant and distracting evenings, as can be attested to by those who have read *Love, Sex and Islam*. There were some practical benefits to the nightlife I enjoyed while in

Montréal; it made the purchase of an expensive South American cockatoo unnecessary.

Stéphane was LEGOS's chief programmer. A programming error could impact the entire Bell network. Talk about a stressful job! He was, in many ways, your stereotypical overweight but pleasant-looking computer nerd in his late twenties or early thirties, with a full well-trimmed beard that gave him a robust look that women should have found attractive. He lived alone in a house that he owned. When he came home after work, there was no one to talk to about his day or, more importantly, to change the subject. His cubicle was next to mine. One day, he folded his arms across his keyboard, laid his head down and started sobbing uncontrollably.

Bell was worried that the entire team of about a dozen people was about to experience a nervous breakdown so arranged for everyone, except yours truly, to spend a week with a psychologist at a resort in the Laurentians. When they returned, they had all been rigorously psychoanalyzed and given techniques to deal with work-related stress according to his or her personality type.

Stéphane would continue to see a psychologist. I decided that what Stéphane needed was a girlfriend. Like I said before, he owned a house, had a good, well-paying job and was not unattractive, in spite of being overweight. Finding a girlfriend should have been easy.

I started inviting him for a game of pool after work and later, for a drink at Thursdays. He joined me a few times, but it did not quite work out. He did manage to hook up with someone he thought might be "a nice girl" but quickly broke it off when, after the second or third date, she called him at home and started "talking dirty," expecting him to do the same. "People actually pay girls to do that," I told him. "Consider yourself lucky!"

He decided that the bar scene was not for him (and it isn't, if you are judgmental). Stéphane's real problem was not work-related; it was returning home to an empty house after a hard day's work. His psychoanalyst decided that, until he found the right girl, an expensive South American parrot might provide the company he needed to sustain him emotionally until the blessed event.

It seemed to do the trick. Stéphane now came to work with something new to talk about. Two-thousand-dollar parrots of the *Cacatuidae* family, I found out, are smart birds. You don't train them; they train

you. Pretty soon, Stéphane was coming to work with fewer and fewer bandaged fingers as he and his parrot learned to live together and appreciate each other's company.

To be a successful consultant, you have to be able to read body language. Guy Derasp, the man in charge of both LEGOS and NOMAS, had the easiest body language to read. Whenever we had a discussion—whether at my workstation or in his office—we would usually sit across from each other. Guy would cross his legs, his left over his right, then place one hand on top of the other on his left knee. Whenever the discussion was not going well, Guy's left foot would start to quiver. The intensity of the vibrations was an indication of Guy's unhappiness with the course of the discussion. If he took his hands off his knee and grabbed a hold of his shin, that was the time to put away any objections or misgivings about what he wanted done and instead try to come up with a way to make that day's vision a reality. We had a lot of these vibrating discussions, in part because of modifications he wanted made to the Shell that would also require making serious modifications to LEGOS.

The Boreal Shell was breakthrough software but so was LEGOS. LEGOS "listened" for and alerted management and maintenance personnel about equipment failures or anticipated failures in Bell's new all-digital communication infrastructure in Ontario and Québec as well as parts of the Northwest Territories. The key components of this digital network were circuit boards with built-in electronics and software that could communicate a malfunction or potential malfunction in text message form to LEGOS, which would record this information in its database before alerting Bell personnel. Whoever made the repair would then record, in the same database, what had been done to fix the problem.

The ZIM database and the ZIM language were what made LEGOS shine and bolstered Guy's reputation. No other DBMS at the time could achieve what ZIM was required to do.

When I joined Bell to integrate the Boreal Shell within LEGOS, I wasn't aware that Guy intended to extend the reach of my Shell's text search capabilities to rival the future Google's—two years before the official launch of Google in September 1998—allowing searching on permutations of a search term (in addition to "sounds-like searches" already available in the Boreal Shell), meaning that misspellings did not invalidate your search. After more than two years of work,

integration of the dual (character and graphic) interface of the Boreal Shell within Legos was almost complete, along with its improved text search capabilities.

I had joined Bell at a crucial time in its history, a time when the company embarked on a strategy that would make it cash-rich in order to make the company more attractive to investors. It more or less started with a divestiture of its electronics equipment manufacturing and advanced research and development arm, which was spun out as Nortel Networks. During my last month at Bell, it rid itself of its entire programming and software application development staff, including Guy's operation. A thousand Bell employees or more became employees of CGI (the same company that completely flubbed the launch of Obamacare); at this writing, CGI is Canada's largest computer consulting and systems integration company.

CGI was not into research and development, and they did not do ZIM. I almost managed to present CGI with a *fait accompli*—and beat Google to Google—which would have made it difficult for them to abandon what Guy and I had accomplished.

One of the last components, which would give outside technicians across Ontario, Québec and what was then the Northwest Territories their first taste of the new LEGOS-Boreal Shell interface—inside technicians, those who worked at Bell's headquarters, had already used the Shell and were delighted—was due to be installed. As usual, I showed up at Bell just after midnight Sunday morning. The last major upgrade of the Boreal Shell/LEGOS was just over two hours away.

At three in the morning, LEGOS would be disconnected from the network, i.e., taken offline, and I would have two hours to make the upgrade before LEGOS resumed its monitoring of the Bell telephone network. If anything went wrong in the Bell telephone system during this time, such as a malfunction in a switch (circuit board), Bell would not be made aware of it, but the disruption in telephone service would be minimal.

After I made the upgrade, I began running a series of tests to make sure that everything had gone as planned. Every upgrade included an undo function, which allowed you to quickly remove all modifications made that night if you were not 100% sure that this was the case. I had not yet finished my tests when 5am rolled around and

LEGOS was about to resume its monitoring of the Bell telephone network. I gave the undo command. It would mean a week's delay before outside technicians got to use the Boreal Shell and its Google-like enhancements, but it was better than getting off on the wrong foot with a system that did not perform perfectly.

A few days earlier, before this planned key upgrade, Guy announced that he had reached an agreement with CGI—unlike regular staff, Guy's management position and reputation meant he could negotiate the conditions under which he would join CGI—and that he would be leaving shortly. This meant that Ghislain, his second-in-command, would be in charge.

Ghislain was everything Guy wasn't, starting with the way he dressed. Guy was business casual, wearing a light brown jacket and pants with a tie that more than made up for the bland suit. For Ghislain, it was a three-piece black pinstripe suit. He was a perfect picture of the punctilious bureaucrat of yesteryears. Every organization needs someone like him to keep the paperwork in order. If he had been more like Radar (Gary Burghoff) and less like Frank Burns (Larry Linville) of M*A*S*H fame, it would have been alright.

Ghislain, like the Frank Burns character, saw himself as a leader. Guy's impending departure, and my decision to postpone the upgrade for another week, gave him the opportunity to demonstrate if not his leadership qualities, then his management style to his new employer. On Monday morning, I informed Ghislain—Guy was not in his office at the time—about Sunday night's cancellation of the planned upgrade. It should not have been a big deal.

Maybe an hour later, Ghislain showed up at my workstation with two gentlemen from CGI who shared much the same fashion sense. He told me to tell them what I had told him earlier. After I had briefed Ghislain that morning, he said that he expected me to return the following Sunday to make the postponed modifications at my own expense. It was a given that I would return next Sunday; that I would not be paid for work performed was unusual, but I agreed as the upgrade was too important to quibble about a night's per diem.

After my repeat performance for the gentlemen from CGI, Ghislain stood proud, stiff as a rail in his black pinstripe ensemble. The only thing missing was a stovepipe hat as he matter-of-factly announced to one and all, "I have demanded that Mr. Payeur return next Sunday to

make the modifications to LEGOS at his expense and he has agreed to do so.” This was the first time that he referred to me as Mr. Payeur, not Bernard. It was arrogance masquerading as excessive deference meant to impress his new bosses. In fact, his entire performance was meant to improve his standing with his new employer at my expense, both literally and figuratively.

The final upgrade to LEGOS that would have made Bell’s Google more widely available and beaten Google’s to the punch would never be made. My contract was up for renewal at the end of the week. I reminded Guy of that deadline when I saw him the next day. A short time later, I received an email confirming that my contract had been extended for an additional three months. Still later that day, I received a copy of an email from Ghislain to Guy informing both of us that there was no more money to pay for my services, therefore my contract would not be extended. There had obviously been a change at the top.

Guy quickly came over to apologize for the misunderstanding and told me to enjoy my last few days at Bell and in Montréal. Guy’s grace of a few more days (an employee or a consultant whose services are no longer needed is not expected to stick around) meant I could say a proper goodbye to my colleagues of almost three years, as well as to many of the people I had met at Thursdays who had made the whole experience memorable in ways I would only get to appreciate when I abandoned writing code to write prose.

Following my departure, CGI put ZIM-based LEGOS in maintenance mode. There would be no more upgrades until an ORACLE replacement was ready. Like I said before, CGI did not do ZIM.

It was post 9/11, after I had returned from Montréal for good, when I picked up a copy of the Koran in the hope of understanding what happened that fateful day and decided to write about it. It is a failure in progress.

Agreeing to an ECG and Muhammad's Fatal Accident

November 6, 2024

In 2017 I was diagnosed with a rising aortic aneurysm. Every eight months or so, I went in for an echocardiogram to check if it had expanded to a size where surgery to cut off the damaged portion to be replaced by some type of polyethylene tubing was called for. After Lucette passed away on July 5, 2019, I cancelled any further measurements and decided to let nature take its course. I will now have my first thoracic echocardiogram in more than five years. It was my doctor's idea. In the event that the size of the aneurysm warrants surgical intervention, she still hopes to convince me to have the operation. Not going to happen! Maybe, like Muhammad, it will be an unfortunate accident that will lead to my demise.

A few years back, I read the more than fourteen thousand authenticated sayings and deeds of Muhammad, the so-called hadiths that are part of the Sunni cannon and arrived at my own conclusion, based on eyewitness accounts, as to the cause of his death. The results I published in a web page and as a chapter of *1001 Sayings and Deeds of the Prophet Muhammad* which I included here as part of my Farewell Postings. But, before we proceed, an introduction into *hadith* literature is definitely in order.

Islam is not so much a religion as a way of life, with thousands of indelible rules to instruct every waking moment of a believer's existence. First, there are the Koran's more than six thousand revealed truths, i.e., immutable facts communicated to a mortal by a god, and then there are the *hadiths* whose importance cannot be overstated.

The authenticated sayings and example of the Prophet Muhammad, along with Koran, are the basis of Sharia law. Given the fact that [hadiths are] often used as the lens through which to interpret the Koran, many Muslim jurists consider [them] to be even a greater authority on the practice of Islam.

Sam Harris, *The End of Faith - Religion, Terror and the Future of Reason*, 2004, W. W. Norton & Company.

In *Islam: A Short History* (2002), Karen Armstrong, former nun and unabashed fan of Muhammad, explains why hadiths were made necessary and how they transformed Islam:

The Quran contains very little legislation, and what laws there were had been designed for a much simpler society. So some of the jurists began to collect reports about the Prophet and his companions to find out how they had behaved in a given situation... Thus they believed they would gain true ilm, knowledge of what was right and how to behave... (p.49)

The Prophet, the Perfect Man, became the person to imitate. (p. 60)

Hadiths – Origin

(Abbreviated from *1,001 Sayings and Deeds of the Prophet Muhammad*, Boreal Books)

Hadiths are mostly hearsay evidence of what Muhammad said and did, including his silent approval of actions taken in his presence (by way of lack of objection), 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 Aisha and slapped her on the neck, and Umar did the same to Hafsa...⁵

Sahih Muslim 9.3506

Hadiths are the holiest scriptures in Islam after the Koran and are an integral part of Islamic law. For example, Revelation 4:34 grants a husband the right to beat his wife, but it is a saying of Muhammad that pretty much guarantees the wife-beater immunity from prosecution.

⁵ Aisha was the daughter of Abu Bakr, and Hafsa the daughter of Umar. Abu Bakr would succeed Muhammad as leader of the believers. His short reign as caliph would be followed by the caliphate of Umar.

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 (their sex) 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 ways of harming them; for Allah is Sublime and Great.

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

Most hadiths were collected approximately 200 years after Muhammad's passing by men who travelled the land seeking people, who may have known of people who had died, usually decades earlier who knew of people who predeceased them, all the way to close contemporaries of Muhammad. What these people remembered of what had been passed down from generation to generation, as oral traditions, of what the Prophet's companions and wives related of what he said and did, or did not do, became the hadiths.

The task of collecting and classifying the hadiths was mostly completed by the end of the 9th century. A fatwa was then issued declaring that all the knowledge about the nature of existence and whatever information humanity needed to know to conduct its affairs as God intended was in the Koran and the sanctioned collections of sayings and actions of Muhammad, to which no further hadiths could be added.

The Pseudo-Science of Hadith Authentication

Sunni Islam considers the hadiths collected by six men – al-Bukhari, Imam Muslim, At-Tirmidi, Ibn Majah, Abu Dawud and An-Nisa'i – as the “six canonical collections.” Al-Bukhari's (d. 870) collection of 7,275 hadiths is considered the most authoritative, and along with Imam Muslim's (d. 875), is considered to be authentic (sahih) by Sunnis.

Shiites consider the recollections of the *Companions of the Prophet* suspect because they voted Abu Bakr, a good friend of Muhammad to whom he had given his nine-year-old daughter Aisha in marriage, his successor instead of Ali, Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law. Shiites

have developed their own books of hadiths which are largely based on what members of the *House of the Prophet* reported: Muhammad's daughter Fatima, his son-in-law Ali, and his grandsons Hasan and Husayn.

Bukhari's hadiths are accepted as authentic without question in part because he is said to have collected over 600,000 but kept only approximately one percent as valid. Therefore, his scholarship in weeding out nonsense, erroneous recollections and outright lies is assumed to be beyond reproach.

In deciding that Bukhari's collection of hadiths was of unimpeachable quality, another assumption was made: that none of it contradicted the Koran. What to make of hadiths, such as the following, that appear to do just that?

Narrated Abu Dhar:

The Prophet asked me at sunset, "Do you know where the sun goes [at the time of sunset]?"

I replied, "Allah and His Apostle know better."

He said, "It goes till it prostrates itself underneath the Throne and takes the permission to rise again, and it is permitted and then [a time will come when] it will be about to prostrate itself but its prostration will not be accepted, and it will ask permission to go on its course but it will not be permitted, but it will be ordered to return whence it has come and so it will rise in the west. And that is the interpretation of the Statement of Allah: 'And the sun runs its fixed course for a term [decreed]. That is The Decree of [Allah] The Exalted in Might, The All-Knowing.'⁶"

Bukhari 54.421

The Koran is unequivocal: the sun disappears in a sea of mud on which a flat earth appears to float, and re-emerges the next morning on the other side.

18:86 Then, when he (*Alexander the Great*) 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."

This is where one must depend on an Islamic scholar to reconcile, for

⁶ 36:38 And the sun runs into its fixed station. That is the decree of the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing.

the untrained mind, the apparent contradiction and to explain the ostensible nonsense.

Hadiths, hearsay evidence collected over two centuries after Muhammad's passing, cannot be expected to possess the clarity and easy-to-follow structure of verses from the Koran. The process by which the strength or weakness of a hadith is assessed is considered the *Science of Hadith*. The process, which involves weighing hearsay evidence to establish a level of credibility for the transmitters, has little in common with the type of empirical proof required in the physical sciences. What Islam considers a scientific method is really a methodology that mainly examines provenance to establish the validity of a statement allegedly made by Muhammad.

With the possible exception of a Mutawatir hadith (see explanation that follows), one of the narrators, of a reputable chain of narrators, had to have heard or seen Muhammad in action. An example of a hadith received by way of Abu Al Nauman, who said he heard it from Said ibn Zayd, who said he heard it from Ali ibn Zayd, who said he heard it from Jabir ibn Abdullah, is that Muhammad said: "Whoever has three daughters, cares and provides for them, and shows them mercy, will enter Paradise."

A Mutawatir hadith is a saying or story remembered by enough people to be considered sahih, i.e., authentic, the rationale being that a large number of people reporting the same thing could not be "expected to agree upon a lie." An example is the story told by Muhammad about the coming of the Mahdi, the "prophesied redeemer of Islam."

The Mahdi, a man named Muhammad b. `Abdullah and a descendant of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) through Fatimah [his daughter], who will be the Leader (Imam, Khalifah) of the Muslims, rule for seven years and fill the world with justice and equity after it had been filled with tyranny and oppression. He will also fight the Dajjal along with Jesus son of Mary...

The Concept of the Mahdi among the Ahl al-Sunnah (Sunnis) [has the support of] 69 later scholars who wrote in support of the concept, compared to 8 scholars who rejected the idea.

The hadith prophesying the Dajjal (False Christ), a one-eyed man who will have miraculous powers and will be followed

by the Jews, and the return of Jesus Christ son of Mary (peace be upon them), who will descend in Damascus and pray behind the Mahdi, kill the Dajjal at the gate of Lod in Palestine, break the Cross, kill the Pig, marry and have children and live for forty years before dying a natural death, are Mutawatir in meaning.

Suhaib Hasan

The Mahdi in a hadith:

Narrated AbuSa'id al-Khudri:

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "The Mahdi will be of my stock, and will have a broad forehead a prominent nose. He will fill the earth with equity and justice as it was filled with oppression and tyranny, and he will rule for seven years.

Abu Dawud 36.4272

An authentic or good, i.e., hasan, hadith is a legal precedent even if the source narrator is unsure of where and when he heard it. Was it at the festival of ul Fitr, which marks the end of Ramadan, or ul Adha, which commemorates the end of the Hajj?

Narrated Abu Said Al-Khudri:

On Id ul Fitr or Id ul Adha Allah's Apostle (p.b.u.h) went out to the Musalla. After finishing the prayer, he delivered the sermon and ordered the people to give alms. He said, "O people! Give alms." Then he went towards the women and said, "O women! Give alms, for I have seen that the majority of the dwellers of Hell-Fire were you (women)."

The women asked, "O Allah's Apostle! What is the reason for it?"

"He replied, "O women! You curse frequently, and are ungrateful to your husbands. I have not seen anyone more deficient in intelligence and religion than you. O women, some of you can lead a cautious wise man astray."

Then he left. And when he reached his house, Zainab, the wife of Ibn Masud, came and asked permission to enter.

It was said, "O Allah's Apostle! It is Zainab."

He asked, "Which Zainab?"

The reply was that she was the wife of Ibn Mas'ub.

He said, "Yes, allow her to enter."

And she was admitted. Then she said, "O Prophet of Allah! Today you ordered people to give alms and I had an ornament and intended to give it as alms, but Ibn Masud said that he and his children deserved it more than anybody else."

The Prophet replied, "Ibn Masud had spoken the truth. Your husband and your children had more right to it than anybody else."

Bukhari 24.541

A weak, i.e., *da'if*, hadith is one where there is a break in the chain of transmission and/or the integrity of the narrator(s) is suspect, or simply not enough people remember hearing about it. A weak hadith can still be considered a legal precedent depending on the circumstances. If the chain of narrators through the pseudo-science of hadith authentication was judged to be reliable, then the scholarship ended with the first person to claim to have heard it from a close friend of Muhammad, usually a so-called *Companion of the Prophet*. The assumption is that whoever Muhammad confided in must have been trustworthy. To question that assumption is to question the very validity of a legal system based on immutable precedents derived from hearsay evidence and assumptions about what was said and done two hundred years earlier.

Death of the Prophet

(Abbreviated from *1001 Sayings and Deed of the Prophet Muhammad*, Boreal Books)

Prophets are granted the right to decide when it is their time to die.

Narrated Aisha:

When Allah's Apostle was in good health, he used to say, "No prophet's soul is ever captured unless he is shown his place in Paradise and given the option (to die or survive)." So when the death of the Prophet approached and his head was on my thigh, he became unconscious for a while and then he came to his senses and fixed his eyes on the ceiling and said, "O Allah (with) the highest companions."

I said, "Hence he is not going to choose us." And I came to know that it was the application of the narration which he (the Prophet) used to narrate to us. And that was the last

statement of the Prophet (before his death), i.e., "O Allah!
With the highest companions."

Bukhari 76.516

Muhammad spent his last days on Earth in the house of his favourite wife and confidante, Aisha.

Narrated Aisha:

When the ailment of the Prophet became aggravated and his disease became severe, he asked his wives to permit him to be nursed (treated) in my house. So they gave him the permission. Then the Prophet came (to my house) with the support of two men, and his legs were dragging on the ground, between Abbas, and another man.

Ubaid-Ullah (the sub narrator) said, "I informed Abdullah bin Abbas of what Aisha said.

Ibn Abbas said: 'Do you know who was the other man?'

I replied in the negative. Ibn Abbas said, 'He was Ali (bin Abi Talib).'"

Aisha further said, "When the Prophet came to my house and his sickness became aggravated he ordered us to pour seven skins full of water on him, so that he might give some advice to the people. So he was seated in a Mikhdab (brass tub) belonging to Hafsa, the wife of the Prophet. Then, all of us started pouring water on him from the water skins till he beckoned to us to stop and that we have done (what he wanted us to do). After that he went out to the people."

Bukhari 4:197

Muhammad disliked taking medicine.

Narrated Aisha:

We poured medicine in one side of the Prophet's mouth during his illness and he started pointing to us, meaning to say, "Don't pour medicine in my mouth."

We said, "(He says so) because a patient dislikes medicines."

When he improved and felt a little better, he said, "Didn't I forbid you to pour medicine in my mouth?"

We said, "(We thought it was because of) the dislike, patients have for medicines."

62 Agreeing to an ECG and Muhammad's Fatal Accident

He said, "Let everyone present in the house be given medicine by pouring it in his mouth while I am looking at him, except Abbas as he has not witnessed you (doing the same to me)."

Bukhari 59.735

During his last days, Muhammad asked Abu Bakr, who would succeed him as leader of the believers, to lead his flock in prayer.

Narrated Al-Aswad:

"We were with Aisha discussing the regularity of offering the prayer and dignifying it. She said, 'When Allah's Apostle fell sick with the fatal illness and when the time of prayer became due and Adhan was pronounced, he said, 'Tell Abu Bakr to lead the people in prayer.'

He was told that Abu Bakr was a soft-hearted man and would not be able to lead the prayer in his place. The Prophet gave the same order again but he was given the same reply.

He gave the order for the third time and said, 'You (women) are the companions of Joseph. Tell Abu Bakr to lead the prayer.'

So Abu Bakr came out to lead the prayer. In the meantime the condition of the Prophet improved a bit and he came out with the help of two men one on each side. As if I was observing his legs dragging on the ground owing to the disease. Abu Bakr wanted to retreat but the Prophet beckoned him to remain at his place and the Prophet was brought till he sat beside Abu Bakr.'"

Al-A'mash was asked, "Was the Prophet praying and Abu Bakr following him, and were the people following Abu Bakr in that prayer?"

Al-A'mash replied in the affirmative with a nod of his head.

Abu Muawiya said, "The Prophet was sitting on the left side of Abu Bakr who was praying while standing."

Bukhari 11.633

As his condition deteriorated, Muhammad could only watch the believers at prayer.

Narrated Anas:

The Prophet did not come out for three days. The people stood for the prayer and Abu Bakr went ahead to lead the prayer. (In the meantime) the Prophet caught hold of the curtain and lifted it. When the face of the Prophet appeared we had never seen a scene more pleasing than the face of the Prophet as it appeared then. The Prophet beckoned to Abu Bakr to lead the people in the prayer and then let the curtain fall. We did not see him (again) till he died.

Bukhari 11.649

The last two chapters of the Koran, 113 and 114, are known as the Muawidhatan (also spelled Mu'awwidhatayn), the *Verses of Refuge*. When he feared his time had come, Muhammad repeated over and over these two short surahs.

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 DAYBREAK

113 Al-Falaq

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

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),

113:5 "And from the evil of the envious when he envies."

In Muhammad's time, witches were thought to blow into knots to cast spells, another superstition from the Dark Ages that found its way into the Koran. Surah 113 as a choice for a last appeal to a higher

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power before the darkness closes in is revealing, not only in its reference to witches, but in Allah admitting He is the source of evil (113:1-2).

THE PEOPLE

114 An-Nâs

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

114:1 Say: "I seek refuge with the Lord of the People,

114:2 "The King of the people,

114:3 "The God of the people,

114:5 "From the evil of the slinking whisperer [Satan],

114:6 "Who whispers in the breasts of people,

114:7 "Both jinn and men."

Muhammad's last orders:

Narrated Said bin Jubair:

That he heard Ibn Abbas saying, "Thursday! And you know not what Thursday is?"

After that Ibn Abbas wept till the stones on the ground were soaked with his tears. On that I asked Ibn Abbas, "What is (about) Thursday?"

He said, "When the condition (i.e. health) of Allah's Apostle deteriorated, he said, 'Bring me a bone of scapula, so that I may write something for you after which you will never go astray.'

The people differed in their opinions although it was improper to differ in front of a prophet, They said, 'What is wrong with him? Do you think he is delirious? Ask him (to understand).'

The Prophet replied, 'Leave me as I am in a better state than what you are asking me to do.' Then the Prophet ordered them to do three things saying, 'Turn out all the pagans from the Arabian Peninsula, show respect to all foreign delegates by giving them gifts as I used to do.'"

The sub-narrator added, "The third order was something beneficial which either Ibn Abbas did not mention or he mentioned but I forgot."

Bukhari 53.393

A bad attempt at cheering up a dying man:

Narrated Aisha:

When the Prophet became ill, some of his wives talked about a church which they had seen in Ethiopia and it was called Mariya. Um Salma and Um Habiba had been to Ethiopia, and both of them narrated its (the Church's) beauty and the pictures it contained.

The Prophet raised his head and said, "Those are the people who, whenever a pious man dies amongst them, make a place of worship at his grave and then they make those pictures in it. Those are the worst creatures in the Sight of Allah."

Bukhari 23.425

Bickering among those around him prevented Muhammad from writing down his last instructions.

Narrated Ubaidullah bin 'Abdullah:

Ibn Abbas said, "When Allah's Apostle was on his deathbed and there were some men in the house, he said, 'Come near, I will write for you something after which you will not go astray.' Some of them (i.e. his companions) said, 'Allah's Apostle is seriously ill and you have the (Holy) Quran. Allah's Book is sufficient for us.'

So the people in the house differed and started disputing. Some of them said, 'Give him writing material so that he may write for you something after which you will not go astray.' while the others said the other way round. So when their talk and differences increased, Allah's Apostle said, 'Get up.'⁷"

Ibn Abbas used to say, "No doubt, it was very unfortunate (a great disaster) that Allah's Apostle was prevented from writing for them that writing because of their differences and noise."

Bukhari 59.717

⁷ Or perhaps "Get out."

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Perhaps he wanted to make out a will, which the Koran had made mandatory for adult males.

2:180 It is prescribed for you that when death is imminent for one of you and he leaves wealth, he should equitably make a testament in favour of the parents and the near of kin. This is incumbent upon the righteous.

The fact that he ignored this Divine Ordinance surprised some people.

Narrated Talha bin Musarrif:

I asked Abdullah bin Abu Aufa "Did the Prophet make a will?"

He replied, "No."

I asked him, "How is it then that the making of a will has been enjoined on people, (or that they are ordered to make a will)?"

He replied, "The Prophet bequeathed Allah's Book (i.e. quran)."

Bukhari 51.3

The passing of Muhammad:

Narrated Aisha:

It was one of the favors of Allah towards me that Allah's Apostle expired in my house on the day of my turn while he was leaning against my chest and Allah made my saliva mix with his saliva at his death.

Abdur-Rahman entered upon me with a Siwak in his hand and I was supporting (the back of) Allah's Apostle (against my chest). I saw the Prophet looking at it (i.e. Siwak) and I knew that he loved the Siwak, so I said (to him), "Shall I take it for you?"

He nodded in agreement. So I took it and it was too stiff for him to use, so I said, "Shall I soften it for you?"

He nodded his approval. So I softened it and he cleaned his teeth with it.

In front of him there was a jug or a tin containing water. He started dipping his hand in the water and rubbing his face with it, he said, "None has the right to be worshipped except Allah. Death has its agonies."

He then lifted his hands (towards the sky) and started saying, "With the highest companion," till he expired and his hand dropped down.

Bukhari 59.730

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

Muhammad's first meal after he died:

Narrated Qatada:

We were in the company of Anas whose baker was with him. Anas said, "The Prophet did not eat thin bread, or a roasted sheep till he met Allah (died)."

Bukhari 65.297

Aisha said that when her husband died, his armor was mortgaged to a Jew. This is unlikely as, not only was Muhammad a man of means, but Tabari [838–923] wrote that Muhammad, after he exiled the Banu Qaynuqa Jewish tribe from Medina (see Chapter "The Jews of Medina," *Jihad in the Koran*, Boreal Books), announced that, "Whoever of the Jews falls into your hands, kill him."

Narrated Aisha:

Allah's Apostle died while his (iron) armor was mortgaged to a Jew for thirty Sas of barley.

Bukhari 52.165

On his death bed Muhammad cursed both Christian and Jews.

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."

Bukhari 56.660

The last gathering:

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 wrongdoers."

Bukhari 13.49

The probable cause of Muhammad's fatal affliction:

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

The last example of Muhammad:

Narrated Anas bin Malik:

Once Allah's Apostle rode a horse and fell down and the right side (of his body) was injured. He offered one of the prayers while sitting and we also prayed behind him sitting. When he completed the prayer, he said, "The Imam is to be followed. Pray standing if he prays standing and bow when he bows; rise when he rises; and if he says, 'Sami

a-l-lahu-liman hamida, say then, 'Rabbana wa Lakal-hamd' and pray standing if he prays standing and pray sitting (all of you) if he prays sitting."

Bukhari 11.657

Muhammad's death shroud:

Narrated Aisha:

When Allah's Apostle died, he was covered with a Hibra Burd (green square decorated garment).

Bukhari 72.705

The last Prophet:

Narrated Abu Huraira:

The Prophet said, "The Israelis used to be ruled and guided by prophets: Whenever a prophet died, another would take over his place. There will be no prophet after me, but there will be Caliphs who will increase in number."

The people asked, "O Allah's Apostle! What do you order us (to do)?"

He said, "Obey the one who will be given the pledge of allegiance first. Fulfil their (i.e. the Caliphs) rights, for Allah will ask them about (any shortcoming) in ruling those Allah has put under their guardianship."

Bukhari 56.661

Kind words for a successor.

Narrated Ibn Abbas:

Allah's Apostle in his fatal illness came out with a piece of cloth tied round his head and sat on the pulpit. After thanking and praising Allah he said, "There is no one who had done more favor to me with life and property than Abu Bakr bin Abi Quhafa. If I were to take a Khalil (*friend*), I would certainly have taken Abu-Bakr but the Islamic brotherhood is superior. Close all the small doors in this mosque except that of Abu Bakr."

Bukhari 8.456

Muhammad's death agony and its impact on Aisha:

Narrated Aisha:

The Prophet died while he was between my chest and chin,

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so I never dislike the death agony for anyone after the Prophet.

Bukhari 59.726

Muhammad's age when he died and why it is important.

Narrated Aisha:

The Prophet died when he was sixty-three years old.

Bukhari B 56.736

Narrated Abu Huraira:

The Prophet said, "Allah will not accept the excuse of any person whose instant of death is delayed till he is sixty years of age."

Bukhari 76.428

And chatter ensued...

Narrated Ibn Umar:

During the lifetime of the Prophet we used to avoid chatting leisurely and freely with our wives lest some Divine inspiration might be revealed concerning us. But when the Prophet had died, we started chatting leisurely and freely (with them).

Bukhari 62.115

Chatter may have ensued, but when knowledge of Muhammad's death spread among the Medinan populace panic set in with people running around screaming and crying, thinking that Judgement Day was at hand. Muhammad had intimated that that most ominous of days would occur during his lifetime or shortly after his passing (see Chapter "The Reckoning," *From Merchant to Messenger*, Boreal Books).

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

God, in Revelation 15:99 would appear to confirm that Judgement Day, i.e. "the certain [Hour]" will catch up with a living Muhammad.

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!

To quell the panic Abu Bakr recited a verse that none has ever heard
about Muhammad dying⁸.

39:30 You are mortal and they are mortal too.

With the believers reassured, there remained the question of
Muhammad's funeral and burial. After three days of pointless
discussions (some say it was two days), with some still expecting
God's spokesman to, like Jesus, spring back to life, and after the
decease's uncle Abbas mentioned that the corpse was starting to
smell, the Prophet was surreptitiously buried in the middle of the
night in the house where he died⁹.

⁸ Hela Ouardi, *Les derniers jours de Muhammad (The Last Days of Muhammad)*,
Albin Michel, 2016,

⁹ *ibid*

Leaving Montréal

November 12, 2024

Muslim protesters march towards the Danish embassy in London



The Ottawa Citizen, Saturday February 6, 2006

Rather than wait for a balloon to burst or a fanatic like those in the above photograph to do their worst, maybe it's time to do a *Leaving Las Vegas* type of exit. For those unfamiliar with the movie, it stars Nicholas Cage who plays a despondent character who "decides to move to Las Vegas and drink himself to death. Once there, he develops a romantic relationship with a prostitute played by Elisabeth Shue."

Having been unable to connect with a partner who would join me for some excessive drinking and a bout of intimacy, and be well rewarded if I don't survive, maybe it's time to return to Montréal and hook up with a woman like Mary, or travel back in time with a girl like Jasmine.

Lucette, when I got depressed in the more than two years I was stuck at home preparing one appeal of my firing after another, would tell me to go to Montréal, have a good time and see you tomorrow. But of

course, this is not quite the same thing, which, at this stage of my life, she would probably say: "Are you out of your mind?"

I don't think so, but I am also no longer a young man.

Important:

The graphic sex in the following two stories, and others, is not gratuitous. They are part of an argument meant to convince would-be martyrs that sex in the here-and-now is better than sex in the Hereafter and take away a key incentive for killing and dying in Allah Cause.

From the back cover of *Love, Sex and Islam*:

If I am able to convince believers contemplating martyrdom not to be in such a hurry to get at those houris only to be disappointed, then the almost twenty years I have dedicated to the study of the world's fastest growing religion will not have been in vain.

The dozen or so adult situation stories in PART I – Sex in the Here-And-Now, some of which may bring more than a smile to your face, are not gratuitous. Actual names (first names only) are used.

PART II – Sex in the Hereafter compares the experiences revealed in PART I with what a martyr can expect in Paradise. A must-read for anyone contemplating martyrdom because of what they have been told about sex in the Hereafter, that the dead have better sex than the living.

Mary

(Excerpt from *Love, Sex and Islam*, Boreal Books)

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 that takes up the entire top floor; the other, an extension of the first-floor Cheers-like bar, only bigger. Beneath it all was a nightclub where disco went to die and found a new lease on life when I was there.

The building, which encompasses the restaurant, the bar, and the disco, is called *Thursdays*—in French, "Les Beaux Jeudis," though

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. Not because it was Tuesday at *Thursdays*, which was a party every night of the week, but because there was a raging snowstorm 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 dress covered with a mesh-like material, ending in fringes that stroked her skin as she walked. She sat 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 crests of her ample, perfectly round breasts showing, so close together that you couldn't have slipped a sheet 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*.

Mary 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 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, to play a few tunes from my younger days. I asked if she would join me on one of *Thursdays'* two dance floors. She chose the one with the disco ball and a 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 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 near enough to wrap her hands around the back of my neck, then 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. The Chateau Royale, my hotel, was just across the street. She asked if she could 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. I thought I was doing her a favour only to be told that it could cost me! I had never paid for sex, though, like many men, I *have* paid for expensive dinners hoping that intimacy would follow.

As we were getting undressed, she told me her rate: \$240 an hour. She was grateful enough to only charge me that amount for the entire night. It was almost midnight and I had to be at work first thing in the morning. Even if I had been interested, it was not a great deal. We spent the night facing away from each other; she lay on one side of my king-sized bed and me, on the other.

The next morning, she was not smiling, but I was. Is there anything more pleasing to the eye than a woman you first saw naked the night before getting out of bed in the bright morning light to take a shower? But she didn't shower. I had to be content watching her get dressed and walk out the door.

I thought that was that. I don't remember how many days had passed when there was a knock at the door in the middle of the night. There she was, asking if she could sleep over again. Sure, why not?

She again got undressed and into bed, still on her side but a little closer to mine. When I crawled over and put my arms around her, she didn't seem to mind—she even lightly pressed her hips against my lap while reminding me that anything more came with a price. No money would change hands again, but it was quite pleasant not having to sleep alone.

The same scenario was repeated a few days later, except this time I didn't have to crawl halfway across the bed. I just rolled over and there she was. Again, I wrapped my arms around her, my forearms beneath her breasts acting like a push-up bra, as if they needed one. Even when moving around the room with nothing on, Mary's impressive breasts seemed to defy gravity.

This time it was not a light tap; her hips pushed back hard, and she started moving them like a stripper trying to perform a lap dance while lying on her side next to her client. In no time at all, her posterior's impressive twins had trapped what they had aroused in the narrow canyon between them.

An obstinate erection that didn't care what time it was, or what my brain wanted, would have to be content spending the night pressed against her backside, hoping the sensation of being stretched out and more than half buried between the soft and smothering buttocks of a young African woman might bring release in a dream. But it wasn't over; far from it.

There was no talk of money when she raised the leg that was on top, bending it at the knee and forming an archway that easily allowed a hand to come through. Her behind moved out of the way just long enough to grab what it came for, taking me to a place already moist in anticipation.

There was no frenzied thrusting—just a slow, silent back and forth with only the occasional peek outside the entrance of a funneling tunnel. She didn't moan much during the entire time and I didn't make any of the sounds that men make when they feel like the dam is about to burst, plunging in with renewed vigour as if wanting their entire body to disappear into that too-narrow opening.

I thought I heard a whimper when her cushioning bum jerked forward, each cheek pressing hard against the other as they left the comfort of my lap. It was not the spasmodic clench-and-release that is your assurance that you have made your partner very happy and a testament to your competence as a lover. Her hips returned to my lap shortly after, pressing hard against the base of what was slowly deflating inside her before slipping out to momentarily rest on that black, muscular, smooth-as-silk thigh.

Wow, unprotected sex with a hooker?! That was bit reckless, I hear you telling me. When that working girl puts a condom on you before penetration, or even before oral sex, it is not for your protection but hers.

When Mary parked me outside the entrance to her vagina as an invitation to press on and make myself at home, she knew an exchange of bodily fluids was inevitable. But she also knew, from our time together not having sex, that I would not put her out of business

for any length of time. Still, if it had not happened the way it did, I would have insisted on her sheathing it before I went in, or done it myself, as I did the next time and the time after that...

There was another thing about Mary that I would later discover was unusual for a woman in her profession. She always smelled nice, even when all you could detect was her body odour and not some light fragrance that could not have camouflaged anything.

Hookers and cheating wives look to the same solution if they don't have time to shower or bathe after sex: they pour on the perfume to mask the scent of the man and the deed. That meant that whatever Mary was doing with other men did not involve full body-on-body contact, or that she met her clients at their hotels, after which she would shower. This also explained why it had not been a priority for her to do so before leaving my apartment to make her way home on the previous mornings. The reason for her sporadic visits would also become evident: those were the evenings she was too late to catch the last metro.

She got up first the next morning and took a quick shower while I was still wiping the sleep from my eyes. She asked for money, but only for a cab to get her home. She lived off the Island of Montréal, so it was an expensive ride. The underground metro, with a station less than a block from my hotel, would certainly get her there faster than a cab fighting morning traffic all the way to Longueuil.

I was happy to give her the fare, even knowing she would probably take the faster, cheaper way home. I even threw in money for breakfast – a *good* breakfast. It was still a better deal than the price she quoted me that first night, but this was never about the money. Maybe sex with me was not that bad, compensated by cab fare and breakfast, and it was not simply the convenience of my apartment that made up the difference. Who am I kidding?

I was in my forties and her, maybe twenty years younger. I was not the young man a prostitute might prefer to the older man who could offer more for her favours, like in the following hadith in which temporary marriages are sanctioned by God's spokesman.

Sabra Juhanni reported:

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 dowry 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

The holy warriors in the preceding hadith had obviously not received any females—wives *or* daughters—as their share of the booty. That would have eliminated the need to seek sex with a prostitute. A revealed truth within a hadith (both reinforcing one another) meant to reduce the reluctance of some believers to raping wives in front of husbands who survived their encounter with the Muslims.

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

In areas controlled by the Muslims, a prostitute was usually the slave-girl of a believer who willingly accepted to have sex with men other than her owner for compensation.

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.

Sunni doctrine does not allow for temporary marriages as a means of getting around Allah's prohibition against pre-marital sex, despite God implicitly allowing slave owners to pimp out slave-girls who did not care to remain "chaste."

As for those sayings of Muhammad allowing it, respected Sunni scholar and author of *The Lawful and Prohibited in Islam* quotes a companion of Muhammad, a fellow by the name of Al-Juhani, who claimed that after the conquest of Mecca, God's spokesperson abrogated his earlier ruling and said, henceforth, all temporary marriages were forbidden. Nonetheless, you will find the largest brothel in the world in a Sunni country. It's an entire village, that of Daulatdia in Bangladesh, one of twenty government-sanctioned brothels (as of 2019).

The greatest number of temporary marriages is performed in Shia Iran, held in unofficial brothels where you will find an imam who is prepared, for a price, to proffer a temporary marriage certificate. The payment for sex is deemed to be her dowry, so believers can avoid going to hell for having sex with a woman outside of actual marriage. The hypocrisy never fails to astound.

I suppose that I, too, was being a hypocrite, pretending that paying for an expensive cab ride—which she probably did not even take—was not paying for sex. The pretending stopped when her nocturnal visits began interfering with the work for which I was getting well paid.

I ended my nights with Mary somewhat abruptly. I told the night clerk not to let her come up to my apartment anymore. To tell her, if necessary, that I was no longer a guest of the Chateau Royale. I did not expect him to go that far, but he did. It was inevitable that I would run into her again and have to admit that, no, I had not moved out. She was somewhat humiliated and disappointed that I had not

had the courage to tell her in person that I wanted to end “our arrangement.”

Sex was now out of the question. Instead, we started meeting for dinner where we eventually had the conversation that resulted in my dedicating *Remembering Uzza* to her.

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, enjoying 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, and no wildlife to speak of. As far as the tropical forest was concerned, there was almost none left. On other nights, she talked about her family. Her father and mother remained in Africa. She hinted at a relationship that seemed to be her prime motivator for immigrating to Canada: 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 twenty-five years ago, who inspired me to go on a voyage of discovery of a religion like no other. *Uzza* should have been the culmination of that journey wherein I imagined her spending an evening in a bar in conversation with patrons talking about what I have learned.

I had a client who dated mainly sex-workers and avoided serious relationships. His motto was “It’s cheaper to rent than to own.” Bob in *Remembering Uzza* is based on his personality; I gave him a copy of the book. At fifty-something, he expressed disappointment with how things had turned out. He envied what I’d had with Lucette and told me how lucky I had been.

I was no longer having sex with Mary, but another line had been crossed, and I no longer cared about the money, which I could afford. After Mary, I became an easy mark for all the young women who dropped by *Thursdays* looking to entice a patron into paying for sex. I would end it all after, of all things, having sex for free with a young stripper who forced me to confront the morality of what I was doing.

Jasmine

(Abbreviated from *Love, Sex and Islam*, Boreal Books)

I don't consider prostitution an ignoble profession if nobody gets hurt and it's what you want to do, but it's not for everyone and it should not have been for me. Paying for what Lucette gave freely out of love for me, and the pleasure she got when I returned that love, should have been sufficient. If I could say no to Anne, why could I not say no to these young women? Booze and loneliness obviously played a role, but it's no excuse.

I don't remember her name, but since Jasmine comes to mind, that is what I will call her. With Jasmine, I was to spend the most enigmatic night of my life. Jasmine was a young stripper working the day shift at a strip club around the corner from *Thursdays*. I barely recognized her when she walked into the bar. It was the first time I'd seen her there. She sat on the stool next to me and bought herself a drink. Being from Toronto, she didn't speak much French, but she knew I spoke English when she spotted me at the bar.

Jasmine's skin was a dark brown. She had the curves but not the robust physique of Mary. Mary braided her hair, while Jasmine's hair was all curls, a lot like Little Orphan Annie; black curls, like a halo surrounding an angelic face, making her look almost too young to be buying a drink, let alone stripping for a living. She was returning to Toronto the next day. Her mood was somewhat sullen; not what you would expect from someone trying to seduce you into paying for sex, which I assumed was her intention when she first sat down next to me.

It was early in the evening, and she was still nursing whatever she had ordered when she turned to me and said, "I'm tired of this. Can we just go over to your place and watch television?" That is what we did. She did not sit at one end of the couch but toward the middle, so I did the same after turning on the television and getting us each a beer. We put our feet up on the coffee table and looked at each other. She smiled. I put an arm around her shoulders and gently drew her in. That sullen mood slowly disappeared as we talked about I don't remember what, ignoring what was on TV. It was inevitable that I would hazard a kiss, something you don't do to a working girl. She kissed me back, if only a little. I'm not a fan of tonsil hockey so it was just fine.

Maybe I was wrong about her. She had not demanded any money up front or mentioned any hourly rate and what was included. She had done none of the things that working girls do when they get you where they want you. Instead, it was like taking a girlfriend back to your place for the first time. She giggled when I started unbuttoning her blouse with my free hand. There was no frenzied undressing, just a slow, methodical removal of garments with generous kisses to show my appreciation of what was being revealed.

She didn't grab it or stroke it using the classic three-finger grip, or any other grip. She just lightly touched it now and then, as if by accident, but the sensation was enough to add a few centimetres.

I had her lay back in a semi-sitting position, her shoulders resting against an arm of the sofa, legs raised facing me with her heels only a few inches from her bum. I usually didn't care to, what is the phrase, go down on a partner who may have, even days earlier, had sex with someone other than me. With Jasmine it felt different.

I slowly parted her legs and moved down, giving her belly button more than a passing kiss before reaching what, in my dimly lit living room, stretched out before me like a short, sparkling rivulet of pink barely visible between two brownish, hair-free contoured ridges.

I lingered there as if she were a high school sweetheart I hoped to persuade to go all the way. There was another reason my head was between her legs. I had already touched her there, gone inside hoping to draw out more of the natural lubricant that would avoid me rubbing her excitable 'little man in the boat' the wrong way but finding what I was looking for in short supply.

At this point, if she had not done so at the beginning of proceedings, a working girl would have reached for her tube of K-Y Jelly and generously coated the entire area, inside and out. Not my Jasmine. I was now convinced she was not that kind of girl.

There would be no hands wrapped around my head making sure I stayed glued to it, or hands pushing me away because the sensation was becoming too intense. She did, however, play with my hair, a sure sign that she was not totally enthralled by whatever I was doing down there. Nonetheless, my efforts were partially rewarded with a sufficient increase in the lubrication that would ensure a smooth glide back and forth.

I might have taken the time to put on a condom, but I had used up

my supply making sure I was protected when Mary crawled into bed after our first time bareback. Jasmine didn't have any protection either, another sign that she was genuine.

I crept back up that incredible body of hers until I was again staring into her eyes. There was no sign of disappointment, just anticipation. It was not just her eyes, but her smile and parted lips waiting to breathe. Her expression never changed, except for her smile, which fleetingly became a grimace when I crossed the threshold and morphed into a sly grin when she detected that it was over.

There was no warning. I had not felt any urge to increase the pace when suddenly, I was flooding her insides. It felt like the spasms that announced there was more to come, no pun intended, would go on forever. It was like how it happens in dreams, the best of dreams.

The fact that I came and she didn't even come close was to be expected. Even if I had managed to last all night, it was not going to happen, that was obvious from the very beginning. Assuming she was at least eighteen, she could have been making love to a friend of her father, something that I suspect, for most girls, is not a turn on. What about a grandfather? That is what the fifty-three-year-old Muhammad could have been to the child he contracted to marry when she was six and first had sex with when she was nine. Jasmine knew what to expect and still, I had some difficulty getting her to a state of arousal that made for at least a pleasant sexual experience, if only mind-blowing for yours truly.

How would a man ten years older than me prepare a girl at least half Jasmine's age to be bludgeoned by his manhood, even if he could be bothered? It is obvious that Aisha didn't have a clue what this old friend of her father's intended to do to her, based on her account of the blessed day. It was all hush-hush. She was taken off her swing set, her face was wiped clean, and she was taken by her mother to sit on Muhammad's lap.

"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. Neither a camel nor a sheep was slaughtered on behalf of me."

Tabari IX:131

Unlike Muhammad's many other marriages, the most famous and impactful was not publicly celebrated, the meaning of "Neither a camel nor a sheep was slaughtered on behalf of me." The fact that the day God's spokesman took Aisha's innocence was not "celebrated" is a clear indication that Muhammad knew the whole thing was unseemly and that his kinsmen would not have been keen on toasting his having sex with a child.

Muhammad could have easily picked up the child sitting on his lap and, remaining sitting, impaled her then and there, but I doubt that is how it happened, and not only because of the bloody lap that would ensue from the tearing of the child's hymen and perhaps other tissues. He probably instructed her to get on her hands and knees, after which, if he had not already done so, removed her dress, or simply lifted it up and over, exposing her pristine "private parts," to do with whatever he fancied.

In the mandatory marriage contract under Islamic law, the bride guarantees the groom unfettered access to her vagina, and whatever other parts of her body Allah considers private, for her husband to do with whatever is permitted under Islamic law. As Muhammad makes clear in the following hadith, there is no derogation from this written undertaking.

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

Without further ado, God's spokesperson would have then grabbed his child bride's hips with both hands, not only to steady her but to keep her from trying to move away as he relentlessly pummeled her from behind. A squirming child beneath him would have made first positioning himself, then forcing his way inside her more difficult than it need be. But this is not the only reason Muhammad probably did it the way he did.

From what I remember reading in an issue of *Le Point*, a “French weekly political and news magazine,” from behind is how Muhammad and Arab men of his time preferred to engage in intercourse. There are at least three demonstrable reasons for this preference—four, if you count Muhammad’s plausible example on how to first have sex with a child.

Arab man wore the equivalent of long flowing robes which may not have been unlike today’s thawb or thobe, an ankle-length garment, usually with long sleeves. The female equivalent could be said to be the Abaya. If you wanted a quickie during the day, the wife simply lifted up her robe, exposing herself and leaning against something, or simply got down on all fours. You then lifted the front of your garment with one hand and used the other to guide your manhood—without rubbing it, for that could be considered a sin, that of masturbation—into her exposed finery, another euphemism used by Allah and His spokesman to describe the parts of a female’s anatomy that are for her husband’s eyes and use only. What could be simpler?

A variation of the above, if you were out in the open or in a communal tent and wanted a modicum of privacy, was demonstrated in a scene from *The Good Kill* about the use of drones in Afghanistan. In the scene, which may or may not have been staged, a drone is filming a woman in a courtyard sweeping patio stones. A man dressed in the traditional flowing robe enters the courtyard and without so much as a “by your leave,” punches her, sending her crashing to the ground in a heap with her back to him. He then lies down beside her, reaches beneath his clothing, then hers. If it was not for the assailant’s discernible rocking movements beneath the tangle of fabric, none would be the wiser.

He is obviously a busy man, so after only a few energetic thrusts, he gets up, makes a few adjustments to his clothing, and continues on his merry way. The motionless figure then stirs to life, grabs her broom, and resumes sweeping as if what had just happened was nothing out of the ordinary. Maybe it wasn’t; maybe it was her husband’s way?

The first levels of Paradise will mostly comprise believers out in the open, reclining on couches next to and facing each other (houses and palaces are reserved for the more worthy such as martyrs in Allah’s Cause).

37:44 Upon couches, facing each other.

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

In Paradise, of course, you will not need to immobilize your hours with a haymaker before getting down to business; how you have sex with a lack of privacy, however, may be similar to the man and woman in the courtyard.

Finally, as you get older, especially if, like Muhammad, you have more than one wife—and young ones, at that—whom you service on a regular basis, the position that will literally get you the most bang for the buck without tiring you out is the one demonstrated with Anne and Mary. You both lie down, and the man enters the woman's front passage from behind. The rest of the body can relax while the hips do most of the work.

For the young women and teenagers who were part of Muhammad's coitus rotation, his having intercourse with them from the back undoubtedly made it easier for them to imagine, if they were so inclined, that it was someone much closer in age making love to them—something they would never get to experience.

No man has had more of an impact on an imperfect world than the so-called perfect human being. Muhammad's every action, for those who believe in his perfection, are to be emulated as closely as possible so that they, too, can come as close to perfection as its personification.

In the year 624, or thereabout, a fifty-three-year-old Dark Age illiterate, revered as the perfect human, forced his manhood into a nine-year-old's vagina, and by his example, made it the inalienable right of every Muslim man to do the same. A nine-year-old child would have had no idea what to expect on her wedding night, and Muhammad admitted as much when he said that a child's consent was her silence.

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

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.

Narrated Aisha:

I said, "O Allah's Apostle! A virgin feels shy."

He said, "Her consent is (expressed by) her silence."

Bukhari 62.68

Without informed consent, a woman's—let alone a child's—vagina will be lacking in the lubrication that comes from sexual arousal and facilitates penetration to avoid abrasions, tears, and other such injuries common in rape victims.



The depiction of then twenty-nine-year-old Emilia Clarke's wedding night rape scene from *Game of Thrones* caused quite the uproar. Imagine instead the face of an innocent nine-year-old girl who is being mercilessly pummeled from behind, looking at you in fear and

pain (image may be subject to copyright). It should leave you nauseated and outraged that this is still happening to children because God's alleged spokesman and acclaimed perfect human being did it first. If that doesn't make you sick to your stomach, there is something seriously wrong with you.

In one way, Aisha was luckier than many child brides. Muhammad, by favouring quantity over quality, probably never built up an adequate sperm count, which would explain his difficulties in conceiving. In the sub-Sahara, where Islam is making the greatest advances at this writing, *Modern Ghana* news magazine reported on an extraordinary increase in a condition called vesicovaginal fistula or VVF, where the afflicted experience "the continuous involuntary discharge of urine into the vaginal vault." The magazine goes on to explain that the increase is mainly a result of children giving birth:

Thousands of underage child-wives are abandoned by their pedophile husbands when these little girls develop VVF and dribble urine - a complication of obstructed labour during underage child birth.

Of all the religions that have come and gone, and those that still plague our existence, none has proven more detrimental to the welfare of children than the one whose founder's example is very much the essence of the religion.

After resting in Jasmine's arms for I don't remember how long, I got up and asked if she was ready for bed. She took my hand and I led her to the bedroom. That night, for the first time since arriving in Montréal, I was cuddled. I imagined myself with my Lucette. That, and what Jasmine said the next morning when I offered her some money, set me on a path to a renewed self-respect—redemption if you like—and isn't that what angels are supposed to do?

She refused to accept anything from me. She was not a prostitute; she was a dancer, and she hadn't had sex with me for money. She was lonely, and it just felt right. To accept my money would make it all wrong. She wrote the name of the strip club she normally worked at in Toronto on a piece of paper and handed it to me, then walked out the door. I never saw her again.

An Echocardiogram Expertly Performed by a Poached Technician

November 16, 2024

Today, I had a thoracic echocardiogram. The first since Lucette passed away. My family doctor will get the results in about a week's time. The technician who performed the procedure was an Egyptian-Canadian. It again reminded me of how the Canadian health care system depends on pilfered expertise from the developing world to survive. I level this criticism in spite of the fact that it was an old Nigerian doctor who corrected a diagnose and thereby extended my wife's life by at least five years.

In January 2011, Lucette was incorrectly diagnosed with cancer in both lungs. The respirologist (a medical specialist who deals in diseases of the lungs and the respiratory tract) after viewing X-rays, and the result of a biopsy on the right lung, told her that the cancer was probably in stage four, it's final stage (there are actually five stages of lung cancer, with 0 being stage 1, go figure). She might have only six months to live.

With what was believed to be cancerous lesions in both lungs, surgery was out of the question. Only radiation therapy could extend her life, and she was referred to a radiologist at the Ottawa General Hospital.

The old Nigerian-born doctor took one look at the X-rays and decided something was not right. He ordered a biopsy on her other lung before scheduling radiation treatment. The result of the second biopsy revealed not cancer, but a deadly bacterium feasting on her left lung. If left untreated, it would kill her faster than the cancer in her right lung. Radiation on the bacterium could have had the opposite effect it has on cancerous cells and caused the bacterial colony to grow and expand in spectacular fashion.

A handful of specialists were involved in my wife's treatment. At no time did any of these highly trained doctors have to get the approval from an insurance company nurse, which is routine in the United States, before authorizing the necessary tests and life-saving treatments.

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In the United States, it is not inconceivable that the radiologist who wanted a second biopsy to confirm the respirologist's diagnosis would have been denied by the insurance company nurse, with disastrous consequences.

It had been three months and five courses of radiation therapy. A PET scan revealed that no cancer cells have left the lung, as was feared. As for the bacterium, she was required to take drugs every day for 18 months; drugs that she received free of charge thanks to Tommy Douglas.

If we had been in the United States, chances are we would have been facing bankruptcy and my wife counting the days to her last breath. And this is the private system that some praise as being superior to Canada's government-funded and administered health care. I don't think so. Don't believe Conservative rhetoric that a system where your level of care and life-expectancy is a function of your wealth is an improvement over what we have.

If only we could graduate enough of our own medical personnel, and not have to resort to pilfering from the developing world.

Regrets

November 19, 2024

One evening, a short time before her passing, Lucette and I talked about regrets. She said she had none. I did, one of them was what I put her through and what she had missed out when I lost my job at the then Department of Foreign Affairs (today Global Affairs) for failing to report, under impossible conditions, the theft of millions of dollars.

A Sunny Day in May

(Abbreviated excerpt from *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books)

Every morning, if the sun was shining, for a few hours the corridor in front of the small beige cell where I sat would be flooded with sunlight from the east-facing windows in the section further down the hall where the bosses had their offices. I was staring into the brilliant May sunshine flooding the usually gloomy corridor when Bruce came running in. "Do you have the 15 cents I loaned you for the bus the other day?" he asked.

Bruce more than lived up to the stereotype of the penny-pinching Scot—in other ways, he was not the archetype at all. He was fastidious to the extreme. Some can't see the forest for the trees; Bruce could not see the trees for the leaves. Bruce did not share much and considered just about everything a private matter. This did not leave much room for small talk. I once had him over for dinner and asked him about his parents only to be told, in no uncertain terms, that it was none of my business.

He was almost beside himself. He was literally shaking as I reached into a pocket and found a dime and a nickel. "Yes, I've got it," I said, and gave them to him. Without saying another word, he ran out the door just seconds before two security guards showed up. "Please come with us," one of them said.

I cannot describe what it was like walking past your former colleagues escorted by two uniformed security guards; they were nowhere to be found. Maybe Bruce was the signal to clear out.



The Foreign Affairs complex is comprised of three low-rise buildings (Towers A, B and C) which are linked by a large, cavernous reception area. My little beige cell was on

the ground floor of Tower C. I was escorted down a long corridor which opened up onto the reception area. At a brisk pace—I was thankful for small mercies—we crossed the vast lobby where curious visitors waiting at the central reception desk looked on and embarrassed acquaintances, exiting from the ground-floor cafeteria, looked the other way.

I was being escorted to Tower A (the tallest of the three), the tower where the really important people had their offices. We took the elevator to the floor where Canada's former ambassador to Belgrade, Assistant Deputy Minister, Personnel Branch, J. G. (Jim) Harris conducted his business.

Ambassador Harris was between diplomatic assignments, keeping busy in Ottawa until he could return to the job he was trained for. An important and pressing piece of business that day for the man next in line for Massé's job was firing me. Somehow, it seemed appropriate that it was an ambassador on temporary assignment as head of what passes for personnel management at Foreign Affairs who would officially put an end to this nasty piece of business.

With me standing in front of him, Ambassador Harris, in the manner of medieval heralds for kings and tyrants, read a formal proclamation of the crime for which I was being terminated.

You have neglected to submit to instructions from your superiors to begin work immediately on the project which was assigned to you namely the preparation of the report on currency fluctuation. In spite of instructions from your superiors, you did not produce any work as part of this project.

The crime, that of insubordination for insisting that I could not complete using only an adding machine, a pencil and paper the monthly *Currency Fluctuation Report* that I had programmed into the Department's mainframe computer to perform more than a million

lengthy calculations, many, such as for the Italian lira, to seven decimal points. The following one-page monthly summary would have been supported by at least 200 pages of detailed calculations.

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS Effect of Currency Fluctuations On Post Expenditures March 31, 1983									
	Opening Gain/Loss	Current Gain/Loss	Year To Date. Gain/Loss	Unspent Budget	Forecast Gain/Loss Unspent Budget	Total Forecast Gain/Loss	Percent Change March		
Africa and Middle East	750,335	193,254	943,589	682,602	18,338	961,927	10.57		
Europe	2,176,637	199,444	2,376,081	2,507,448	236,291	2,612,372	8.59		
Asia & Pacific	441,550	101,602	543,152	491,634	46,361	589,513	6.83		
Latin America	4,961,129	1,067,726	6,028,855	467,047	143,074	6,171,929	49.14		
United States	-347,881	-18,903	-366,784	385,635	-17,844	-384,628	-1.72		
Total Operating Expenditures	\$7,981,770	\$1,543,123	\$9,524,893	\$4,534,366	\$426,220	\$9,951,113			
Africa and Middle East	601,090	99,410	700,500	369,103	17,775	718,275	28.71		
Europe	736,413	90,542	826,955	839,064	124,972	951,927	9.20		
Asia & Pacific	271,173	34,292	305,465	141,716	16,498	321,963	6.43		
Latin America	2,241,202	391,405	2,632,607	256,137	146,906	2,779,513	59.35		
United States	-197,589	-12,048	-209,637	312,108	-6,551	-216,188	-1.94		
Total Wages Local Staff	\$3,652,289	\$603,601	\$4,255,890	\$1,918,128	\$299,600	\$4,555,490			
Africa and Middle East	17,012	3,475	20,487	60,777	-9,413	11,074	3.31		
Europe	88,646	21,810	110,456	142,555	2,522	112,978	6.86		
Asia & Pacific	26,506	23,932	50,438	62,126	3,869	54,307	10.04		
Latin America	313,586	98,759	412,345	409,164	192,702	605,047	35.68		
United States	-7,417	-2,431	-9,848	5,248	-4,455	-14,303	-1.51		
Total Capital Expenditures	\$438,333	\$145,545	\$583,878	\$679,870	\$185,225	\$769,103			
TOTAL WORLD WIDE	\$12,072,392	\$2,292,269	\$14,364,661	\$7,132,364	\$911,045	\$15,275,706			

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With those formalities out of the way, I was escorted out of 125 Sussex. A poster with my picture and description was put up in a conspicuous place with a warning about letting me in the building unescorted. Less than a year after proclaiming the end of my career as a public servant, Ambassador Harris returned to his diplomatic duties as Canada's High Commissioner to New Delhi.

At the worst of times, and even as her world was closing in on her, she never complained about our life together, and that night was no different. She reached out and placed one hand on top of mine, looked at me with those soft blue eyes, and said, "Don't be sad; that doesn't matter. What matters is that during my life with you, I have always felt loved. What more could a woman ask for?"

A toast to us on the occasion of our 25th Wedding Anniversary



In spite of everything, she had "always felt loved."

Two regrets I never divulged were about girlfriends to whom I abruptly said goodbye. I broke up with Glenna after attending her graduation. Following the dinner and dance, rather than drive to our special place where we would kiss and make-out, I drove her home and told her it was over. Was I afraid about what could happen next, and convinced that our relationship had no future, deciding that someone else should be the first? I don't know!

Glenna

(Excerpt from *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books)

I was packing groceries when a well-dressed, polite, middle-aged woman approached me. She introduced herself and asked if I knew her daughter, Glenna. The name didn't mean anything until she described the head-turner who had almost caused me a minor neck injury when she first walked by the big Red and White supermarket on Railroad Avenue, Ashcroft's main street, where I worked after school and on weekends.



[Courtesy Town of Ashcroft](#)

If you were a French Canadian family moving to an English-speaking province, Ashcroft would probably not have been your first choice as a place to settle. How welcoming would a town that catered to miners, ranchers and cowboys be to people who spoke English with an accent and were responsible for that foreign language on cereal boxes? The hoped-for final destination had been the city of Kamloops, where my oldest sister, my adopted sister Lea, and her husband Ray had moved a few years earlier. It was not to be, but this was a blessing in disguise.

After a few months of searching, my parents realized they could not afford a business in Kamloops that would allow them to raise the kids. They found such an opportunity in Ashcroft, a small town about 50 miles from Kamloops, three miles or so off the highway to Vancouver at the bottom of another valley carved by the Thompson

River. They purchased a small supermarket from a very British owner, Mr. Parson. The people of Ashcroft not only made my family feel at home with words and deeds, but with dollars, almost doubling sales in the first year and forcing one of the other two supermarkets to adopt a new line of business.

The passage of the Official Languages Act (1969) was still at least a year away, and its guiding principle, still more than a decade away from being incorporated into the Canadian Constitution as Section 16 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982). Constitutional amendment or no constitutional amendment, at Ashcroft High, learning French was not an option if you wanted to graduate. Nobody seemed to mind; it was all part of being Canadian. Even Americans who moved here were expected to learn French. I was very impressed with my classmates doing their best to learn a language that most of them would never have the opportunity to use.

My parents were not the activist types, and the kids were probably too young to care. There was really nothing to be upset about. When we moved to British Columbia, my parents expected the kids to fit in, and when in Rome... That meant speaking English, going to school in English, working in English. There was nothing wrong with that then, and there is nothing wrong with that today. My parents made a choice to move to a predominantly English-speaking province; it was up to us to adapt, and we did.

The woman who had asked if I knew her daughter explained that they had recently moved to Canada from the United States and her daughter could use some tutoring in French. Glenna had recently enrolled in the same high school as me—the town's only high school, Ashcroft High—and would be in grade 10. I was in grade 11.

The tutoring did not last long, my understanding of French grammar being inadequate to the task, but I did get to know Glenna better, as well as her wonderful mother, her stepfather, and later, her brother when he returned from Vietnam, a very troubled individual who had great difficulty living with the memories.

They were Mormons from Salt Lake City, Utah. Glenna's parents may have come to Canada to establish a sanctuary for her brother. He was part of a maintenance team that met the helicopters when they returned from combat missions or raids on Vietnamese villages to pick up suspected collaborators. On a few occasions, when alone with

me, he would break down and cry as he described helicopters returning with prisoners who were simply lined up on the tarmac and shot. He would raise his arm and make a “bang-bang” motion as if he was shooting off a revolver, and, between sobs, say over and over, “They just shot them, they just shot them...” That is when I suspected that he may have been the reason for the family relocating to Canada.

These truly disturbing stories left me strangely unmoved. At the time, my faith in my government, in the government of the United States, in the government of democracies of the Western mode, was steadfast. They just did not do that sort of thing. The My Lai massacre of 300 unarmed Vietnamese civilians, including women, children, and the elderly on March 16, 1968, carried out by soldiers of Charlie Company under the command of Lt. William Calley, was still not common knowledge. Glenna’s brother had to be wrong about what he saw, what he experienced. Today, I realize that this conscientious American was probably accurately relating events he had witnessed. It is unfortunate that I was not more compassionate when compassion was called for.

My faith in democracies like the United States is still unequivocal, but I am more realistic as to what war does to ordinarily decent human beings; that war—like religion, like money—can make good people do bad things, and this is something we have to guard against.

I would join Glenna and her family to go fishing on a small, secluded lake just off the winding road that links the Caribou Highway (Hwy 97) to Lillooet, Mile 0 of the Gold Rush Trail. I don't remember catching anything. All I remember is sitting with Glenna at one end of the boat, her mother and stepfather at the other, fishing lines dangling in the water and being rocked by gentle waves on a beautiful, sunny Sunday afternoon, all silently hoping the fish wouldn't bite and spoil the moment.

On other occasions, we went hunting in the hills above Ashcroft. We never shot at anything. It was more of an excuse to go on a picnic and get to know each other better. A short distance into the forest, Glenna’s mother and stepfather would go off on their own with a simple request that we not shoot at anything in their general direction.

Glenna and I had a favourite spot high up on the mountain where, if conditions were just right, as the sun rose (these hunting picnics were

early-morning affairs), you could just make out the snow-capped coastal mountains in the distance. A few hours into this make-believe hunt, we would all meet at a pre-arranged rendezvous to enjoy whatever was in the picnic basket.

I would also join Glenna, her family and coreligionists for picnics and softball games. When someone decided it was time to bring out the bats and mitts, just like Moses parting the Red Sea, everyone on one side of an imaginary line was on one team and everyone on the other side, members of the opposing team. There was none of the (sometimes humiliating) public displays of team captains handpicking the best players, then arguing who would be saddled with the less talented. Except for perhaps tennis, I was not particularly gifted when it came to sports. I never felt they were trying to convert me; they were just making me a part of their family activities, and I appreciated that.

It was Glenna's stepfather who introduced me to a variation of "intelligent design", decades before it became the subject of controversy. On that same winding road to Lillooet there is a red exposed cliff. One day, Glenna's stepfather stopped and parked by the side of the road a few metres from the cliff face. I was following with the beautiful Glenna in my car and did the same.

We all walked up to the red cliff. After rummaging around the loose stones, Glenna's stepfather picked a sliver of rock and handed it to me. On the surface of the rock was the outline of a trilobite, a snail-like creature from the Cambrian Period, 570-505 million years ago. We spent perhaps an hour searching the cliff face, finding maybe another dozen fossilized creatures from Earth's distant past, mostly more trilobites. For Glenna's stepfather, they may not have been put there 6,000 years ago but they were all part of God's creation, all part of His plan.

I prided myself in being able to look at both sides of an argument before coming to a conclusion. I also did not like confrontations. This may explain my penchant for looking at any situation from the other person's perspective, hoping to find in that perspective a reason to agree or at least a reason why I should respect the other's point of view. I respected Glenna's stepfather's argument, in part because I respected him and knew him to be an honest man. To this day, I am still undecided about teaching "intelligent design" in schools for fear that Darwin will get short-changed.

It's never too late to apologize or make amends for past transgressions or thoughtlessness, and I would like to make such an apology now, though many will consider it completely out of place. It's perhaps even silly, as someone said, because Glenna's parents—Glenna, even—may no longer be with us. It may be silly, but we only have so much time left to make fools of ourselves, and we should use that time wisely; that includes taking the time to say we're sorry to people we may have hurt, deliberately or inadvertently. If they are no longer with us, the more reason to honour their memory by recognizing their impact on our lives.

I said goodbye to Glenna twice. The first time was when her family left Ashcroft for Vancouver. The evening before she left, she gave me the most innocent, warm, and unexpected of kisses. Her family lived at one end of town, and at the other end was the old gold rush era cemetery. I walked the length of the town, to wander among the headstones and crosses in the moonlight and reflect on the end of things. I wanted to write about this first goodbye, and this memorable kiss, to apologize for how we parted the second time and to thank her, her mother, and her stepfather for countless kindnesses not forgotten.

The way I behaved, and not talking things over with Glenna, remains a lasting regret as does the way I ended my relationship with Margaret. She would fly to Ottawa from Windsor to visit me after I made the city my home. After I decided I was marrying Lucette, I simply packed the clothes she kept in my apartment and mailed them to her with a note that said, "I'm sorry."

Returning to my apartment, after driving her to the airport after her last visit, I found a note she left behind: "I think am falling in love with you all over again." When I wrote my own note, I felt a twinge of satisfaction that she might feel the pain I felt when I found her in bed with Rakesh; a twinge of satisfaction for a lifetime of regret. Not worth it!

Margaret

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." I was crossing at the top of Canada Way on a misty January morning to take the bus to Simon Fraser when I noticed the activity at the bottom of the hill.

It was the first day of classes, and I did not want to be late. Just another fender-bender, I thought, and paid it no further attention except to ask a young woman at the bus stop if she had seen what had happened. She had not. Her name was Margaret. And that is how we met. If it had not been for the collision at the bottom of Canada Way, I doubt if I would have had the nerve to even say hello.

With Margaret I experienced Dickens' best and worst of times — *minus the guillotine*. Margaret had moved to Vancouver (Burnaby) from Windsor, Ontario. She had moved to escape her past. It would catch up to her.

She had rented a room with a bathroom and kitchenette across Canada Way from where I was staying. It wasn't long before I was spending many an evening at her place, lying on her bed, smoking one of her Craven Ms while watching her strumming her guitar and humming the lyrics to *Mr. Bojangles* or Janice Joplin's *Me and Bobby McGee*. I never tired of hearing her sing out of tune, or watching her struggling with a difficult chord and never getting it quite right.

She started opening up to me in an almost schizophrenic sort of way; sometimes being extremely knowledgeable, then exceedingly naïve, especially when it came to sex.

She talked about the reason for her coming to Vancouver. She said she had been sexually assaulted while hitchhiking between Windsor and Toronto. One of the two men was about to be released from custody, and she did not want to be around when that happened. When we first became intimate, she said that it was the first time she had been with a man since the assault. We had been friends for maybe a month before the apparent glorious reawakening of Margaret to the joy of sex, and like with Joyce, it caught me completely by surprise.

Friday night was pub night at Simon Fraser or at *Shakey's Pizza Parlour and Pub* in New Westminster. It was when we were alone in the back of the bus returning from an evening at Shakey's that she snuggled up to me, laid her head on my shoulder and whispered, "is it okay if I fall in love with you?" That night, as I was sprawled on her bed, not knowing what to think, what to say or what to expect when she left the room and returned a few minutes later, wearing a white bathrobe which she let fall to the floor or placed on a chair, I don't remember what she did with it exactly. It's not important. One

moment it was on, the next it was off. Naked, she walked to her side of the bed and opened the covers. She did not lie down, but sat on the side of the bed, watching and waiting while I took my clothes off.

Even the weather gods conspired to make this the best of times. Spring comes early to the lower mainland. Winter has barely time to makes its presence known before it's gone. Springtime in Vancouver tends to be misty and grey, but not that spring. Even on days when the lower mainland was *socked-in* with low-lying clouds, mountaintop Simon Fraser was bathed in sunshine, and where that sunshine was most agreeable was in the legendary courtyard on the grass next (the grass has since been replaced by paving stones, *sigh*) to the pond in the middle of that great grey raised square that is Arthur Erickson's tribute to the celebrated monasteries and early universities of Europe.



This is where we did what all college kids do: talk about how we were going to change the world, tell jokes and laugh at anything and everything. She thought I had a wonderful sense of humour. We talked about her favourite French male singer, Robert Charlebois. She did not understand all the words to his songs, but he was her type of guy. This should have been a hint.

Spring also meant the end of the *winter* semester; time to head back up the Fraser Valley to Kamloops. Margaret would come and visit me there, giving her small black dog Cricket some sleeping pills to keep him quiet during the five-hour bus trip. It was during one of these visits that she met my mother who was confined to her bed, the result of a stroke. The doctors did not hold out much hope that she would

survive more than a few months. Mom liked Margaret. She died thinking that her sometimes weird, unpredictable boy was going to be okay because he had found the right girl.

I returned to Simon Fraser in the fall. Some things had changed; for one thing, the sex. She gave indications in the games that we played that she wanted to be taken the way she had been taken that night on that highway between Toronto and Windsor. I tried, but it was not in my nature. More and more Margaret wasn't home, and one day I found her in bed with another man. *Bring on the worst of times.*

I saw less of her at Simon Fraser. She had discovered a cause, and that cause was Amchitka. Amchitka is a volcanic, tectonically unstable island in the Aleutian Islands. Amchitka was the last great underground American test site for nuclear weapons. In 1971, the United States was planning the largest such test ever: the Cannikin test. This particular test was highly controversial. Environmental groups feared that the Cannikin explosion would cause earthquakes and tsunamis along the B.C. coast and large protests were held, some organized by Simon Fraser students and profs.

My last conversation with Margaret at Simon Fraser was about Amchitka. She did all the talking.



It was a short conversation. I had run into her as I came out of the library (the entrance is on the right). She talked about the massive demonstration against the Cannikin test at the Blaine border crossing and how exciting that had been, and continued on

her way.

It had been some time since I had last seen her. I asked around, only to learn that she was in the hospital. I went to see her, picking a bunch of flowers on the way. It was the afternoon. She was asleep. There were no other visitors. I left the flowers on the table next to her bed and returned that evening. Again, I was the only visitor.

She asked about the flowers. It was like meeting again for the very first time. We were just getting re-acquainted when a nurse appeared to say visiting hours were over. I hated to leave, and Margaret may

not have wanted to see me go because I was not out the door when the nurse asked me to wait outside.

A few minutes later she came out of Margaret's room and told me "You can go back in, but don't tell anybody and be quiet."

The nurse had dimmed the lights. For the first time in a long time we held hands and talked until she fell asleep. The worst of times got a little better, and then she left. She got on a plane and went home. The Americans went ahead with the Cannikin test. They said that the big explosion on Amchitka did not cause any collateral damage, but don't tell me that.

Margaret was first attracted to me because I was none-threatening. I lost some of that appeal when I was not threatening enough. The violence that was done to Margaret changed her in ways she may not have expected; in ways I did not expect and would only begin to understand later in life.

Then, there is the death of a young woman whose suicide I should have anticipated.

Pestalozzi

(Excerpt from *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books)



Unlike Kelowna, rent in Ottawa was prohibitively expensive, but there were alternatives for those short on cash. One option was Pestalozzi College, an urban commune named after Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi [1746-1827], the famous—or infamous, depending on your point of view—Swiss pedagogue and educational reformer. It was a college in name

only. Pestalozzi was a modern twenty-story apartment building on one of the National Capital's more famous streets: Rideau Street. This was a prized location only a short distance from Parliament Hill and an even shorter distance from the University of Ottawa (l'Université d'Ottawa), Ottawa's downtown bilingual university.

It was the layout of the apartments that made Pestalozzi special and the rent affordable. Most apartments consisted of three or four small, spartanly-furnished bedrooms featuring a bunk bed with pull-out drawers, a closet and a desk. In some configurations, you had two or

three small bedrooms and one large bedroom with two bunk beds, two desks and one closet. The bedrooms opened into a central living and dining area. Depending on the number of bedrooms, you shared one or two bathrooms.

Unless you went to Pestalozzi as a group, you had no idea who your communal companions would be. I moved into an empty apartment with three one-bunk bedrooms and one large two-bunk bedroom. With the start of the fall semester, the building quickly filled up, including my little corner of the world on the 16th floor. The first to check in after me were Bob and Marina, who took the larger bedroom.

Bob was a tall, thin young man with long black hair. He had this booming voice, or should I say, booming laugh; Bob did not so much talk as laugh, a slightly hysterical laugh. He also had this vaguely frantic disposition, bouncing around the apartment like the proverbial butterfly. Bob was more into fashion and make-up than most women I have known, and better at it! Bob and Marina's large bedroom would occasionally double as a makeshift beauty salon for the residents of Pestalozzi. Bob's makeovers were nothing short of spectacular. Bob was your stereotypical gay guy. Marina, however, was not your stereotypical lesbian.

Marina was a short, slightly overweight young Inuit woman. Like Bob, she had long black hair. Unlike Bob, who wore his hair like Jesus Christ Superstar—that is, unkempt but so clean it sparkled—she always had hers tied back, which only emphasized her pleasant round face. Marina taught Inuktitut part-time at Ottawa U.

I never got close to Bob, perhaps for obvious reasons, but with Marina it was different. She was a comforting presence when things did not go as expected. Marina was into Tarot Cards, usually 72 cards, 22 of which represent virtues and vices, death and fortune, and are used to ostensibly tell the future. Whenever I felt my life was going down the tube, the cards predicted that times would get better, which they usually did.

Marina had been the victim of multiple sexual assaults until she came up with her own solution to stopping the attacks on her person. Her radical solution was not to resist and to laugh at her disconcerted assailant as he attempted penetration, and even after. In her "milieu," rape was somewhat commonplace. She said that for a rapist, a

struggling victim is half, if not most, of the fun. She took the fun out of it by not resisting. Laughing at her assailant meant she was diminishing him as opposed to him diminishing her. After her reputation was made, the rapes and attempted rapes stopped. Short-term discomfort for long-term relief; it had to take guts.

On a number of occasions, Marina asked me to accompany her to a strip club a few blocks west on Rideau Street so she could hook up with a woman who understood her. In those days, women did not go to a strip club without a male escort. The male friend would camouflage her intention to buy a girl a beer and discretely arrange for a bout of intimacy, usually at her place. I became her chauffeur on some of these outings.

Marina became a model for me on how to talk to women. I already knew how to listen. From the conversations I had with her and the conversations she had with women she fancied, I came to appreciate that women want to be treated both as sexual entities and as human beings—not unlike men. Marina, the woman who loved women and the intimacy of igloos on cold arctic nights, was partly responsible for my finally needing the fingers of my other hand to count the women I would get to know as friends and lovers.

Bob's boyfriend had curly blond hair that framed a pleasant, pasty freckled white skin face that made him look much younger than his twenty-something years. When the boys were short of cash, he would go down to the park behind Ottawa's premier hotel next to the Parliament Buildings, dodging queer-hunters with bats and broomsticks, to tend to the men and boys waiting in the bushes where the Rideau Canal meets the Ottawa River. The area behind the Chateau Laurier has since been extensively renovated, and most of the action has moved to a park on Ottawa's other river, the smaller Rideau. You can still, however, get your mind—and other parts of your anatomy—blown in a variety of ways a short distance from Parliament Hill.

With the arrival of Pierrette from Québec City and André from Mont-Laurier (a small town in North-Western Québec), our little, randomly thrown-together commune was complete. Pierrette was a slightly taller, thinner version of Marina and wore her hair the same way. Pierrette was a natural leader, although our community acknowledged no such person in theory. You picked up after yourself and kept the place clean because Pierrette expected you to. She was a

woman of few words, but when she spoke, you listened: a single loud, "ÇA VA FAIRE!" (That's enough!) when she was studying was sufficient to quiet even the most raucous crowd. Like André, she had difficulty with the English language, which may explain why she and André did not associate much with Marina, Bob and friends.

André worked as a disc jockey at a local radio station on the Québec side of the Ottawa (Outaouais) River. To this day, he remains the funniest person I have ever met. Dinners were a laughing riot. It wasn't long before Pierrette fell in love with André, but he was not interested. André is the only man I have ever known who expressed no interest, in the more than eight months we were together, in an intimate relationship with either sex.

Many weekends, when Pierrette and André returned home, Marina and I would share a bunk, with Bob and Blondie on the other makeshift bed, passing around a joint and listening to Pink Floyd, the Stones, Led Zeppelin, or whatever, talking late into the night. It was not all small talk or rambling on the politics and pop-philosophy of the day; we also talked about Adam Smith, Hume, Kant, Nietzsche's influence on Wagner's music, etc. German philosophers seemed to be a favourite of Bob and his boyfriend.

At the end of the school year, Pierrette moved back to Québec City. André would shortly find a job with Canadian Armed Forces Radio and leave for Germany. The dynamics of the commune were about to change with soulmates of Bob taking over the space vacated by Pierrette and André. It was time to move on, in this instance, to another apartment with the same configuration on a different floor.

Charles, a retired airman, occupied the large bedroom. It must have been the mother of all divorce settlements for him not to be able to afford accommodations more in keeping with a man his age and status. His conservatism and parochialism meant he was no competition for the two professional young women who occupied the remaining smaller bedrooms. Huguette had recently graduated from teacher's college and started teaching at an elementary school in the French enclave of Vanier, while Rhona was articling for a law firm.

They were serious young career women for whom Pestalozzi was just a convenient and inexpensive place to call home while they planned their futures and paid off some debts. Huguette had an out-of-town boyfriend. Rhona admitted to never having experienced an orgasm

during intercourse; I accepted the challenge. She was a good sport, with only the occasional "I told you so" shrug when a requested change of position proved as inconsequential as the previous. Both Huguette and Rhona, and even Charles, were good company, but it was the truncated time I spent with the young woman across the hall that left an indelible regret instead of a pleasant memory.

She lived alone in one of the smaller communal apartments. Her place was always a mess. Everywhere you looked, there was a piece of clothing—even underwear—strewn about. The kitchen counter was seldom free of empty packaging from takeout or a dirty pot or pan from the day before. The walls were bare except for what could pass for a child's attempt at painting still-life: flowers surrounded by a smooth, cheap grey frame made of balsam.

How could a woman who always appeared impeccably dressed and groomed in public live in such a mess? I got to know and often shared a drink with the slender, Twiggy-like blonde living in that mess. We would sit at her kitchen table—a four-by-four vinyl and wood imitation of a butcher's block on stainless steel legs—drinking and talking about our impossible relationships. I don't remember what she poured in my glass except that it wasn't wine, and it wasn't beer. All I remember is that I did not like it that much. It was probably rye or whiskey, something my father drank.

She had the saddest blue eyes I had ever gazed into. I stared at her; she stared at the painting. Even when she looked at me, she was looking past me. She talked about the man she yearned to be with. The man whose company she craved she described as a brilliant misunderstood artist. The man she talked about was confined to a state institution. Montréal is only 120 miles from Ottawa, but she was spending today's equivalent of a thousand dollars a month on long-distance telephone charges. Our short evenings together usually ended with, "Il faut que je fasse un appel" (I have to make a call).

It may have been the Twiggy-like figure with the sad, misty blue eyes who first mentioned seizing the moment before self-preservation interfered and spoiled it. It was just talk; we were just talking. Who has not talked or thought about leaving this world on his or her own terms, and not according to some mythical god's timetable? Sometimes, when I spot a Minister walking the Halls of Parliament or on Wellington Street accompanied by a good-looking blonde with a

binder or a briefcase, I am reminded of her. She spent a lot of time with government movers and shakers and at least one Minister.

She was not from Québec City, but somewhere else where English is a foreign language; it might have been Gaspé or maybe Rouyn-Noranda. Young Québec women with a college degree or even a high school diploma, who could not speak English but had a pleasant personality and good looks, easily found jobs with one of the many personnel placement agencies that specialized in providing ministers, members of Parliament and senior bureaucrats with private one-on-one tutoring in conversational French.

One evening, I found her in a much-improved mood. There was life in those beautiful blue eyes, and the mist had dissipated. She said she had found a new job or something and that she was leaving. Before I left her that evening, she took the painting off the wall and gave it to me. "Pour toi; j'en n'aurai plus besoin" (For you; I won't need it anymore). She gave me a hug and held on for the longest time. Before closing the door, she said: "Tu sais, si pour toi la vie ne vaut rien, rien ne vaut la vie" (You know, if life means nothing to you, then nothing makes life worth living).

Back in my apartment, I turned the painting over and, in the most beautiful handwriting, I read: "Si pour toi la vie ne vaut rien, rien ne vaut la vie." I thought the message was for me. How arrogant. How could it have been? It was not signed, and her giving it to me had been a last-minute decision. It was his message to her. Why did I not see it at the time? The painting was her link to the man in Montréal for whom her heart ached, and she would not part with something so precious unless...

The next morning, someone made their way onto the roof of Pestalozzi and, as the sun rose, jumped. I was told that a body had been found on the stairs in front of the eastern entrance to the building, but nothing else. To the east was Montréal and the man behind the painting. It did not occur to me at the time that it could have been her, and that giving me the painting was her way of saying goodbye forever. How could I have been so clueless?

Try as I might, I cannot remember her name. Forgetting her has been the worst, reminding me of my own failings as a human being. With her name I might have been able to find out what happened to her. Maybe it wasn't her who jumped, and I shouldn't feel guilty. It

doesn't help that, more than a few years later, as I was cleaning out my garage, I came across the painting. It had suffered water damage and was so moldy, I had to throw it out.

Pestalozzi College has since been redeveloped into a typical apartment building and is now called Horizon Towers, the urban commune concept having fallen into disrepute—too many visits by the police and the fire department, I suspect. It was during my stay at Pestalozzi that I took the public service exam and was given my first assignment.

Of all my regrets there is one I consider poetic justice, which makes it even worse.

An Appalling Indiscretion

(Excerpt from *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books)

When I came back from lunch she wasn't there. "Where is she?", I asked Arthur. When he told me, I only felt a twinge of remorse. That would change. It wasn't my decision, after all. It wasn't even Art's. I had told Art, who had told the chairman, who had told Art what to do, or so Art told me. Only years later would I fully appreciate the pain and humiliation I must have caused.

The Energy Supplies Allocation Board (ESAB) was part of the Trudeau Government's commitment to what it called a *Made in Canada Price for Oil*. This initiative took on a new urgency after the first energy crisis in 1973 which saw OPEC prices for crude more than double. Eastern Canada got most of its oil from OPEC; the pipeline carrying oil from Alberta stopped at Sarnia in southern Ontario. If nothing was done, most of Ontario, Québec and the Maritime provinces could expect to pay a lot more for oil, while Western Canada and parts of Ontario would continue to enjoy low prices. Alberta did not have the disproportionate clout it has today and Trudeau chose to use revenues from the sale of oil from Alberta to the United States to subsidise oil imports from OPEC and Venezuela and thereby equalize gas prices across Canada.

On a regular basis, our registered accountant and auditor, who was also my boss, would travel to every oil company's head office in the United States to confirm that the documents submitted as justification for billions of dollars in compensation were legitimate. It was during a visit to the New York offices of the owners of the refinery at Come-

by-Chance that he discovered claims paid out for more than 30 million dollars of oil that had never been delivered.

There was no secret about what went on at ESAB; it was a small organization, 30 employees or so. I should have known that when the secretary asked, "What if the press got a hold of this?", she was just doing what everybody else did: indulging in idle, somewhat pointless speculation and gossip. I told Arthur what the secretary had said about "the press getting a hold of this." When I returned to work after lunch, she was gone. When the guards came for me, I imagined what it must have been like for her. This made me feel both better and worse. Better, because in a way I felt it was what I deserved for that appalling indiscretion—poetic justice and all that; worse, because I imagined what was happening to me happening to her.

The Board not only moved quickly to fire the secretary, but to obtain an Order-in-Council to seize the oil in the next ship to dock at the Come-By-Chance refinery. The whole affair almost became known when the RCMP seized the tanker, after the oil was unloaded, something they were not supposed to do. They were persuaded to give it back before the Panamanian or Liberian owners of convenience complained. No one was ever prosecuted and, as far as I am aware, charges were never contemplated.

Three Photographs

It was around the time that Lucette had finished her radiation treatment and been told that she could expect to live at least another five years (it turned out to be eight) that I was diagnosed with a neoplastic cyst on the pancreas, at the worst possible location. Rather than perform a biopsy that could cause cancer cells to escape into the bloodstream if it was cancerous, it was decided to take a wait and see approach and schedule another MRI six months later. My pessimistic self immediately assumed the worst.

I was a semi-regular listener to *The John Tesh Radio Show*. When all this was happening, he happened to have a discussion about the last person you will remember before you draw your last breath. He said it would be a girl you were with during your teenage years. I was not a teenager when I met Lucette and neither was she. I kept a box that contained pictures of Margaret, Glenna and Joyce. Thinking that I

was going die before her, and that the last thing she would hear from me would be one of their names, and later find the box and assume that I loved someone else more than her, I got rid of it. What an idiot!

Who is Joyce? I am grateful to Joyce for being the first when I thought it would never happen, and because when Lucette asked me if I knew how to ride a horse (she was an accomplished rider), the answer was yes.

Joyce

(Abbreviated from *Love, Sex & Islam*, Boreal Books)

The first time I had sex was also my first time on a horse. It was Joyce's idea. She was still infatuated with my brother and knew that he loved to go riding on the Tk'emlups Indian reserve across the river, less than a mile from downtown Kamloops, British Columbia.

Girls like Joyce were not usually attracted to guys like me. Like most attractive, outgoing young women, she preferred the strong, physical type with the pleasant personality and who knew how to dance – that was not me. My brother's interest in Joyce had waned as his interest in another young lady blossomed, and he was looking for a way to let her down gently. He suggested to Joyce that she might want to date me. For Joyce it was a no-brainer. If dating the brother meant being close to the man she was still in love with, that was a price she was willing to pay.

The riding instructor reminded me, as we left the corral, that if I ever wanted to enjoy sitting again, I must ride with my legs, letting my bum go up and down in rhythm with the motion of my horse's back.

About a mile into our slow trot in the direction of Mount Peter and Paul, Joyce, an accomplished rider just like my Lucette, decided she had had enough of this slow, single-file canter and peeled off at a gallop heading towards the river, waving at me to follow. Once I had my ride pointed in the right direction, it understood. All I could do was hang on. I was gaining on Joyce as we approached a bend in the Thompson River when her charging horse stopped suddenly, and a pair of flying hooves narrowly missed knocking out my mount's front teeth. An attempted sucker punch if there ever was one! The now insulted and angry beast beneath me was not about to let it go. It, too, stopped, swivelled 180 degrees, and before we knew it, both horses were knocking hooves. Joyce quickly regained control of her mount

and, to my surprise, I managed to do the same with my rambunctious stallion.

A short time after leaving the stables the aboriginal leader of our little posse had galloped back toward me.

"What's the problem?" he shouted.

"My horse won't go where I want him to go," I shouted back.

He came close enough to grab the bridle, and twisted my horse's head until its nose almost touched the tip of one of my boots.

"You have to show your horse where you want him to go," he explained. "You have to show him who is the boss," and he galloped back to the head of the line. That lesson was undoubtedly the reason I managed to regain control of my charger.

With our rides under control, we made our way back to the stables. Back in the car, Joyce was not ready to go home just yet. She suggested I drive to a secluded place on the reserve where we could talk and watch, unobserved, others riding by. Maybe she was still under the influence of the adrenaline rush, or maybe it was my unexpected competence as a cowboy, but Joyce was in the mood...

The Day I Should Have Died

November 22, 2024

In informing me of the result of my latest thoracic echocardiogram my doctor said that I had been dodging a bullet for years, and I may continue doing so, but the odds were no longer in my favour. Her prognosis reminded me of the day I should have died.

I should have died almost 60 years ago as I laid on my back in a drainage ditch adjacent a country road, looking up at the sky with a gentle rain caressing my face telling me not to worry.

“Correct conduct,” according to Mencius [372–289 BC], “arises, not through external forces, but as a result of virtues developed internally through observation of laudable models of behaviour.” A laudable model of behaviour for me was a priest. I was particularly fond of the man for whom I was an altar boy, a Cub Scout and scout leader. My fondness for Father Tremblay was a mix of admiration and gratitude. The priest had saved my life.

I was twelve or thirteen when, with my brothers and a few friends, we hitched a large flatbed trailer used to haul heavy equipment such as bulldozers to logging or construction sites to a farm tractor and all, except for the driver, jumped onto the trailer and headed for a lake about seven miles down a solitary country road. A short distance from Lake Pivabiska, it started to rain. We had brought a tent. To shield ourselves from the rain, we partially unfolded it and raised it above our heads. I was closest to one of the two large wheels between which the trailer bed was balanced like a seesaw.

For only a fraction of a second, I saw the wheel closest to me spinning in my direction before I felt myself floating in the air, landing on my back somewhere by the side of the road looking up at the sky. The wheel had caught a corner of the partially unfolded tent and dragged it and me with it, crushing a few vertebrae and less valuable bones and organs.

Eventually, a car came by and the driver was sent into town to fetch an ambulance. The town’s only ambulance was out on another call. Rather than wait for it to return, Father Tremblay, hearing that his altar boy was in trouble, jumped into his black station wagon and rushed to the site of the mishap.

They had laid me flat on my stomach on the trailer, and everyone waited in the now pouring rain for the ambulance. When the priest got there, he decided there was no time to waste. They wrapped me in some blankets and slid me into the back of his station wagon, and I was rushed to the hospital.

I thought we'd gotten there in plenty of time. I was still aware of my surroundings as the hospital's nursing staff (nuns, mostly) started taking off my clothing. I could hear them complain about boys playing with tractors before I finally passed out. I was later told that, if they had waited for the ambulance, I would have died from internal bleeding. Father Tremblay was the difference between life and death.

Father Tremblay always tried to do the right thing, even when it was not convenient—*especially* when it was not convenient—for that was the test; it was a test I would always try not to fail.

I often remember that day, and just as often wish for a different outcome and avoiding the life of someone who seldom fitted in and caused unnecessary hardship to a woman who deserved better.

Lucette and that Damned Firing

(Excerpt from *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books)

I was sitting at my computer, an early Compaq portable, thinking about who to write to, after the Right Honourable Chief Justice Robert George Brian Dickson had dismissed the appeal of my dismissal for alleged insubordination with a curt, cold, "Not a question of national interest", when she came up the stairs, put a hand on my shoulder, and softly said: "You've done enough; time to move on." I was not ready to give up. I was not ready to move on, even if two and a half years without a paycheck had taken its toll. All our savings were gone and we were deeply in debt.

"Ross said he spoke with a consultant he knows from Montréal who is looking for someone to manage some of his people here in Ottawa."

I ignored her, not something I usually did. "Don't you understand? We are broke," she said. "We have no more money. The bank won't lend us more; you have to get a job."

I still ignored her. I am sorry about that.

“Won’t you at least meet with the person who is willing to give you a job?” she pleaded.

I had not looked for a job, thinking it pointless! Who would hire someone who had been fired from the Public Service, especially with the Appraisal from Hell as a reference? Someone was actually willing to overlook all that. If I was not at least willing to talk to such a person, I risked losing more than mere possessions.

As part of her job, Lucette often found herself in the same room as government ministers and sometimes even the prime minister. The hardest thing for her during my confinement, with an impossible task to perform and a promised loss of employment no matter what I did, was stopping herself from walking up to a powerful minister, or even the prime minister, and pleading with them to help me.

She had promised me she would never do that. She did, however, as mentioned earlier, confront an aide to Joe Clark in Montréal. I did not want her to plead my case with any of the powerful people with whom she rubbed shoulders, not only because if she inconvenienced the wrong Minister she was out of a job, but because this was my fight and it would be won or lost on its own merit. My concern for her job was also why I did not want her at my hearing before Thomas W. Brown, or at my appearance before the Federal Court of Appeal and later, the Supreme Court of Canada. My opponents had revealed themselves to be people without honour. Her presence could only inspire further acts of reprisal with her as the means. I would not take the risk, even if her counsel at my hearing before the Federal Court, when Judge Marceau stated the obvious, would have been invaluable.

In some ways, my firing had more of an abiding, deleterious effect on her than on me. She actually blamed herself for not having taken better care of me. As if any other woman could have done more, before, during, and after! In any event, I would not let her, so she should not have felt bad. But still, she did.

Funeral Arrangements and Grave Markers

November 26, 2024

Having already paid for my grave when I purchased Lucette's, I was a bit surprised at the cost when I went to make my funeral arrangements: more than nine thousand dollars for a simple graveside ceremony, no embalming and an actual pine box. It's not that I could not afford it, but I did balk, to no avail, at paying \$500 for them hosing my body. I may have put on some weight, but I doubt it would take more than a few minutes. I also did not think it was necessary with a closed casket.

I should have negotiated my own funeral arrangements when I agreed to hers. That would have avoided what may have been non-negotiable extras added knowing that I would pay anything to be buried next to her.

Beechwood Cemetery is a national treasure operated by a non-profit foundation; if the money will go to its upkeep, who I am to complain?



To the left is a picture of me sitting in the shade a few days after Lucette's burial having planted the first of many flowers and shrubs before the installation of our tombstone.

To get Lucette a grave near a large shady tree I had to buy three graves, instead of two—one for her and one for me. This was a short time before she died. At first she said I was wasting my money. She changed her mind when I said it meant I would visit with her on even the hottest of

days and sit under the shade of her tree while we talked.

I visited with her every week except for when that idiotic COVID restriction went into effect that forced Beechwood to close the cemetery to visitors.

While waiting to install a proper tombstone, Beechwood gave me to following plaque to mark Lucette's resting place.



Her grave last summer:



Talking to the Dead and the Undead

November 27, 2024

When I visit Lucette's gravesite and talk to her, I can only imagine her hearing me. The same when I ramble on in the middle of the night. When a Muslim visits the grave of a dearly departed, they may not have to pretend. Muhammad first mentioned that the ostensibly lifeless, like the modern-day zombies of movies and television, have excellent hearing after he was seen shouting at the enemy dead being dumped into a well following the Muslim victory at the famous Battle of Badr, the most talked about battle in the Koran (see Chapter "Battle of Badr," *Jihad in the Koran*, Boreal Books).

Narrated Ibn Shihab:

These were the battles of Allah's Apostle (which he fought), and while mentioning (the Badr battle) he said, while the corpses of the pagans were being thrown into the well, Allah's Apostle said (to them), "Have you found what your Lord promised true?"

Abdullah said, "Some of the Prophet's companions said, "O Allah's Apostle! You are addressing dead people."

Allah's Apostle replied, "You do not hear what I am saying, better than they."

Bukhari 59.360

Life in the Grave

(Abbreviated from *The Islamic Hereafter*, Boreal Books)

For most of what Islam has to say about what happens when a human being passes away, we must look to the sayings (*Traditions*) of the Prophet Muhammad. If you thought the Compassionate's description of what He intends to do when he gets His hands on unbelievers and sinners was about as bad as it could get, you haven't read His spokesman's account of what will happen when they die. Don't try to make sense of what you are about to read, and don't let it give you nightmares.

According to the *Traditions*, the whole death thing starts innocently enough. Forty days before a person dies, a leaf inscribed with the

soon-to-be-deceased's name falls from a tree in Paradise just beneath Allah's throne. Izra'il, the Angel of Death, picks it up and schedules a pick-up forty days hence. Even believers, Muhammad said, will be taken aback when Izra'il comes knocking. When he shows up on their doorstep, even after they have been warned of his coming by the Messenger of God, they will still ask him: "Who are you?"

Next, two angels who have been patiently and anonymously recording their bad and good deeds will, in the blink of an eye, present the soon-to-be deceased with their lifetime of good and bad deeds. With *this was your life* formalities out of the way, the person's living, thinking, seeing, able to feel pain soul will sink into the ground where they died, or where they are buried, Muhammad is not clear on the concept¹⁰, but not before Izra'il has finished extracting it from the still-warm body, drawing it out like rough cotton through an eye socket. Because the soul desperately tries to get out via a natural opening, the mouth, Izra'il's extraction method seems unnecessary cruel.

56:83 Would that, when the soul leaps to the throat,

56:84 And you are, then, waiting;

56:85 While We are closer to him (the dead man) than you,
but you do not see.

In Islamic traditions, death—except for martyrs who are admitted directly into Paradise¹¹—is meant to be an atrociously painful transition. Satan will offer believers in Allah's good books some relief from the pain caused by Izra'il. If the poor tormented soul can't stand the pain and accepts Satan's offer to reduce its suffering, it's a U-turn from the threshold of Paradise to Hell come Judgement Day. Many will be sorry for not standing the pain just a while longer.

If the extracted soul is meant to go to Hell, it will be given a glimpse of life in the grave and its final destination on Judgement Day. The horror-struck soul will then briefly escape Izra'il's grip and fly to

¹⁰ In the case of Muhammad this is not an issue as he died and was buried in Aisha's house which has since been demolished to make room for a massive expansion of the *Prophet's Mosque* (Masjid an-Nabawi). The expanded mosque can now accommodate a million worshippers at a time. In a small enclosure referred to as the noble chamber is where the Prophet is buried should, in a visit to the mosque, you want to speak to him directly.

¹¹ 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.

heaven to try all seven doors to the seven levels of Paradise, only to be turned back by the angels guarding its entrances. It will be forced to return to Izra'il, who will then stuff it back into its corpse where the reconstituted soul-body combo will begin its new life in the grave. The believers who die in God's good books will be provided with a spacious grave complete with curtains and a bed. An unbeliever, or a believer who dies while in Allah's bad books, will be confined to a cramped space with walls constantly closing in on them, making every breath a laboured one.

After the living dead have settled into their zombie-like existence, two black-skinned, blue-eyed angels by the name of Munkar and Nakir will burst into their graves and start questioning the decaying remains as to their religious beliefs for forty days non-stop; to what end I do not know, since the Koran states that a believer enters Paradise based on their records of good and bad deeds or at God's discretion. One question asked by the angels will lead the corpse to incriminate itself, "bear witness against themselves" (Revelation 7:37).

7:35 "O Children of Adam, when Messengers from you own people come to you reciting to you My Verses – then those who fear God and mend their ways have nothing to fear, and they will not grieve."

7:36 But those who deny Our Revelations and reject them arrogantly – those are the people of the Fire; therein they shall abide forever.

7:37 For who is more unjust than he who fabricates lies about Allah or denies His Revelations? Those will get their share of the punishment ordained for them. When Our Messenger (the angel messengers of deaths) come to take their souls they will say: "Where are those upon whom you called besides Allah?" They will say: "They have left us" and they will bear witness against themselves that they were unbelievers.

The corpse will not only be asked about Allah's Revelations but also whether it ever spoke ill of Muhammad. If only praise and prayer were expressed during its living, breathing life above ground, God's spokesman declared that all will be forgiven; Paradise it is!

Narrated Anas:

Prophet Muhammad said, "When a human being is laid in

his grave and his companions return and he even hears their footsteps, two angels come to him and make him sit and ask him: 'What did you used to say about this man, Muhammad?'

He will say: 'I testify that he is Allah's slave and His Apostle.' Then it will be said to him, 'Look at your place in the Hell-Fire. Allah has given you a place in Paradise instead of it.'

Prophet Muhammad added, "The dead person will see both his places. But a non-believer or a hypocrite will say to the angels, 'I do not know, but I used to say what the people used to say!'

It will be said to him, 'Neither did you know nor did you take the guidance (by reciting the Quran).' Then he will be hit with an iron hammer between his two ears, and he will cry and that cry will be heard by whatever approaches him except human beings and jinns."

Bukhari 23.422

The interrogation over, the grave's occupant will continue to receive a twice-daily visit from another angel until Judgement Day. He has not come to chat, but rather to open those curtains with either a pleasing or horrifying view.

Narrated Abdullah bin Umar:

Allah's Apostle said, "When anyone of you dies, he is shown his place both in the morning and in the evening. If he is one of the people of Paradise; he is shown his place in it, and if he is from the people of the Hell-Fire; he is shown his place there-in. Then it is said to him, 'This is your place till Allah resurrect you on the Day of Resurrection.'"

Bukhari 23.461

For unbelievers and other sinners, life in the grave will be uncomfortable to the extreme. Muhammad said that "we would faint in terror if we could hear the screams of those being tormented" in their graves, even for minor offences.

Narrated Ibn Abbas:

Allah's Apostle passed by two graves and said, "Both of them (persons in the grave) are being tortured, and they are not being tortured for a major sin. This one used not to save himself from being soiled with his urine, and the other used

to go about with calumnies (among the people to rouse hostilities, e.g., one goes to a person and tells him that so-and-so says about him such-and-such evil things)."

The Prophet then asked for a green leaf of a date-palm tree, split it into two pieces and planted one on each grave and said, "It is hoped that their punishment may be abated till those two pieces of the leaf get dried."

Bukhari 73.78

If this claustrophobic, agonizing existence that combines both physical and psychological terrors to achieve an unprecedented level of horror were not god-inspired, Muhammad would probably be remembered today as the ultimate sadist. For some Islamic scholars, life in the grave as described by God's spokesman was too much, even by Allah's standards, and they looked to the Koran for any reason to modify Muhammad's horrific descriptions.

23:99 Yet, when death visits one of them, he says: "Lord bring me back (to the world);

23:100 "That perchance I might act rightly with respect to what I have omitted." No, it is just a word he is uttering; and behind them is a barrier till the day they are raised from the dead.

These soft-hearted scholars interpreted "barrier" as referring to a state of unconsciousness. They maintain that the interrogation by Munkar and Nakir will last no more than forty days, at which time the object of their suspicions will sink into blissful unconsciousness until awakened on Judgement Day. All of Allah's messengers and believers will enjoy a restful and relaxing life in the grave. In addition, God's greatest and last will be visited every day by angels bringing him the blessings of believers still walking the earth. Muhammad will be allowed to intercede on behalf of a finite number of believers whom Allah has condemned to the torments of Hell. These lucky believers destined to be saved are those who have said the most "*the peace and blessings of God be upon him*" whenever his name is mentioned.

Dying Happy

November 28, 2024

In September, after having a late supper in front of the television, I got up and felt a stabbing pain in my chest with every beat of my heart. This is it thought, and let myself fall back on the couch, stretched out my legs, crossed my arms over my chest and tried to maintain what I hoped would be a lasting serene facial expression, and said to myself, "Let it rip!" No such luck. Once back on the couch, the pain went away to be replaced by a dull sensation. After about half an hour with nothing new to report, I got up, put the dirty dishes in the dishwasher, brushed my teeth and went to bed.

I don't understand the attraction of dying a natural death surrounded by family. Unlike a medically assisted death, like that of my Lucette where they first put you into a deep sleep before the lethal injections are administered, about five minutes later, it's usually not a pretty sight. Except for her eyes flashing open, her passing was at once serene and uneventful. The attending physician said that this happens sometimes, after making a futile attempt to close her eyes. He then made a call and handed me the phone. It was the coroner offering her condolences and asking if I was satisfied with how my wife's assisted death had been carried out. After I handed it back, he left with his nurse leaving me alone with my partner of 38 years on the bed, propped up by pillows, staring into the distance as if mesmerized by some spectacle. It felt so real that the first words out of my mouth were, "Are you okay?"

I called to have her body removed. Just before they arrived, I tried one last time to close her eyes. She had a favourite scarf with which I covered them when a knock on the door announced the arrival of the people from Beechwood Cemetery.

The doctor, before performing the procedure that allowed my Lucette to die on her terms, had asked her, "Madame, how do you feel?"

She replied, "Happy, very happy."

"Madame," he said, "would it surprise you to know that is the response I get from most of the patients for whom I perform this procedure?"

Not Seeking Comfort in a Lie

November 29, 2024

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 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 2019 at two in the afternoon, we said our last goodbye.

She declined her ordained cousin's offer to give her the last rites.

"Faith," Mark Twain said, "is believing in something you know to be untrue." Even with the end just moments away, Lucette did not seek comfort in what was, for her, a lie. She did not need it.

At her request, I had ordered smoked salmon on bagel with cream cheese for lunch and her favourite wine as accompaniment. It was a few minutes before the nurse who would get her ready for what came next to make her appearance when she raised her glass and said: "I would like to propose a toast."

What she wanted us to toast caught all of us by surprise. It was not what you would have expected from someone whose existence, as was her wish, would shortly come to an end.

We all raised our glasses and she said: "À la vie! (To life!)"

I will never get over the serenity with which she crossed over into, what is, for those who value empirical truths above all, the great unknown. I hope I will have her courage, when my time comes, to not seek comfort in a lie.

Finding Solace in the Absurd

November 30, 2024

I envy those who believe they have a nice place to go to when they die; what a comfort it must be when facing your imminent demise. A theory I read about as a teenager devouring books on science fiction and science facts, is that this evidence-free notion was imagined when primitive man first became aware of his mortality and, unable to deal with the implication, invented an afterlife.

In Islam, this idea of a life after death has degenerated into men spending eternity fornicating ad nauseam with female facsimiles in a sterile, static, musky Paradise in the sky where you all look alike, dress alike and eat like a desert dweller.

It's the second time that I have recycled *The Promise of Absurd Sex*, and I probably would recycle it again, given the opportunity, because what it reveals about sex in the hereafter is key to fighting the scourge of young men killing and dying on a god's promise of an eternity of sex with the equivalent sophisticated sex dolls.

The Promise of Absurd Sex in a Strange Paradise

(Abbreviated from *Love, Sex & Islam*, Boreal Books)

Clothing

It would be difficult for gods acting in concert to look after the welfare of those in Paradise while attending to the roasting of the unbelievers in Hell, let alone a god on his own. To make the whole thing more manageable Allah will severely limit the choices available to those invited into His home in the sky. The most limiting of choices has to be in clothing. A silk gown and brocade is fine for lounging—if that is all you will be doing for an eternity, then maybe you won't need a pair of jeans or any other type of garment for that matter—but did Allah have to make them all green to match His green cushions and rugs?

18:30 As for those who believe and do the good deeds,
surely, We will not waste the reward of him who does
the good work.

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!

55:76 Reclining upon green cushions and superb rugs.

God, in promoting His green silk and brocade gowns as the definitive fashion statement reminds me of the times I accompanied my wife to buy a fancy dress or business attire. It was never just about the fabric or the colour, but how you would accessorize it, and the same goes for Allah.

76:20 If you look there, you will see bliss and a vast kingdom.

76:21 Upon them are green silk garments and brocade; and they have been adorned with silver bracelets, and their Lord has given them a pure potion (wine).

What about matching gold bracelets? Don't forget the pearls.

35:33 Into Gardens of Eden they enter, wherein they are adorned with gold bracelets and pearls and their clothing therein will be silk.

All the silk and bling could not make up for the thrill of watching Joyce first pull down her jeans, then pull them back up after we had sex in that secluded clearing. A full-length silk gown and jewelry could not make up for the sight of Anne, in a sexy number that could have been from Victoria's Secret, inviting me to follow her bouncing buttocks up the stairs to her bedroom, etc.

Food

Good food and drink make for good sex, often of the unexpected kind. Allah may not be of that opinion. Muslims in the here-and-now and the Hereafter will never experience what it's like to share a glass of unadulterated wine with the object of your forthcoming affection. If you don't overdo it, it will make a more relaxed lover out of you. Under normal circumstances, women like that, and so will you. You will not be in such a rush to get to the penetration part, and once you're in, it will extend your stay by slowing the production of what must eventually come gushing out.

Of course, alcohol also lowers inhibitions, often leading to spontaneous pleasant surprises that often become a staple of a multifaceted sex life. Your houris are programmed to do whatever a strait-laced God, who never had sex, allows. That can get old very quickly. The type of stuff banned in the Koran will undoubtedly be banned in Paradise. Do you really want to miss out on everything a real woman has to offer, including a slightly inebriated one?

Allah talks about rivers of wine. Whether these rivers will flow with red, white or rosé is not mentioned. Red is assumed, as white wine only came into its own long after the Koran was revealed. It is obvious that rivers of wine will not be the result of fermentation from a variety of grapes, or any fermentation at all, so don't expect the multitudes of aromas, flavours and textures that come from that time-consuming process.

Fermentation is what leads to alcohol, so I wouldn't expect the "spring" wine that Allah keeps in sealed containers for his pet-believers, which He expects them to fight over, to be much better than what the less favoured will sample by dipping their cups into the aforementioned rivers.

83:25 They are given to drink from a sealed wine;

83:26 Whose seal is musk. Over that, let the competitors compete;

83:27 And its mixture is from Tasmin (a spring in Paradise);

83:28 A spring from which the well-favoured drink.

As to the food, don't be fooled by revelations, like the following about having "whatever souls desire" served on plates and in cups of gold.

43:70 "Enter Paradise, you and your spouses joyfully.

43:71 "Platters and cups of gold shall be passed around them, and therein shall be whatever souls desire and eyes delight in, and in it you shall dwell forever."

What the soul desires is what Allah has on His menu, a very limited menu that only a desert dweller would find more than adequate for their needs. In both the Koran and the hadiths, the exception and not the generality is the rule.

Food often plays a social role and enhances relationships that have grown beyond the adolescent expectations of martyrs in Allah's

Cause. For example, the nice dinner my wife had planned when she met me at the train station was more than a prelude to a night of intimacy. It was an integral part of it; the foreplay before the foreplay, you might say. Foreplay is what gets your partner to where you want her to be when you get there, unless all you care about is your own gratification. That seems to be the case for those who would blow others to bits for sex with impassive female knockoffs.

Lucette would spice up the foreplay before the foreplay by keeping me guessing as to what was for dinner. With a limited menu and a God who decides when dinner and breakfast will be served—lunch appears to be out of the question as it was in Muhammad’s desert home where the noonday heat made it more propitious to a siesta than a meal—this will not be possible in Paradise.

19:62 They hear therein no idle talk, but only: “Peace”; and they receive from their provision therein morning and evening.

Lucette was a fantastic cook, at ease preparing dishes from a variety of cuisines, from French to Chinese with frequent forays into Italian food. Don’t expect that type of variety in Paradise, and if you like vegetables with that serving of chicken, you may be out of luck. Vegetables are not usually found on a desert oasis, the template for Paradise. It’s nothing but fruit, *which you will eat!*

43:73 Therein you have abundant fruit from which you will eat.

You will not have to worry about keeping an eye on your belongings as you reach for that pomegranate.

44:55 They call therein for every fruit in perfect security.

If you like strong aromas, not unlike the scent of mothballs, you will be well served by a spring that gushes water mixed with camphor and whose capacity increases the more people drink from it.

76:5 The pious will surely drink from a cup whose mixture is camphor,

76:6 A spring from which the servants of Allah shall drink, making it gush abundantly.

That may not be the case for a spring named Salsabil whose output will be parceled out in measured quantities by those legendary immortal boys with alabaster complexions.

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.

Beef dishes may also be available, assuming Allah allows the beasts of Paradise to be slaughtered. Cattle were probably domesticated there—my understanding of "subdued" in Revelation 36:72—after which eight pairs were sent down to Earth, Revelation 39:6.

36:71 Have they not seen that We have created for them, of Our Handiwork, cattle whereof they are now the owners?

36:72 And We subdued them to them, so that of some are their mounts and of some they eat.

39:6 He created you from a single soul; then, out of it, He made its mate, and brought down for you of the cattle eight pairs...

Apart from fruit, and perhaps beef dishes as a break from all those "fowl" servings, there is no mention of other types of dishes on Allah's menu. However, this does not mean there are none. In the Koran, Allah does allow the eating of fish.

5:96 Lawful to you is the catch of the sea and its food as an enjoyment for you and for travellers; but unlawful to you is the game of the land so long as you are on pilgrimage. Fear Allah unto Whom you shall be gathered.

As a bonus, Muhammad revealed that the first 70,000 to enter Paradise will be served a portion of fish liver. Yummy!

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 caudite (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.

Bukhari 60.7

What may be inferred by Gabriel's communication to Muhammad about meals for early arrivals is that you may not have much choice in what Allah serves as the meal of the day, and this is understandable. He is but one God with billions upon billions of people to feed. If the angels and jinn also require nourishment, the number of meals Allah will have to prepare every day could easily exceed a trillion, and then some. Maybe His houris, like the android *Data* of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, will not require sustenance. Of course, if houris don't eat, then food cannot be part of the foreplay and that is a shame. It will make building a meaningful relationship—if that is even possible with a facsimile programmed for non-stop fornication—even more difficult.

Smell

It was on his first visit to Paradise that Muhammad noticed that the ground he walked on was permeated with the main ingredient of his favourite perfume: musk.

Narrated Abu Dhar:

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

Its pungent smell will be everywhere, especially in the vicinity of his private river retreat in Paradise.

Narrated Anas bin Malik:

The Prophet said: "While I was walking in Paradise (on the night of Mi'raj¹²), I saw a river, on the two banks of which there were tents made of hollow pearls.

I asked, 'What is this, O Gabriel?'

He said, 'That is the Kauthar which Your Lord has given to you.' Behold! Its scent or its mud was sharp smelling musk!"

Bukhari 76.583

The smell of musk will not only emanate from the soil, but from the sweat generated from the eating of spicy foods common in regional Middle Eastern cuisine (the prevalent cuisine of Paradise) and from the perspiration of billions of humongous men sweating bullets during the sustained vigorous ploughing of their houris.

Narrated Abu Huraira:

Allah's Apostle said, "The first group of people who will enter Paradise, will be glittering like the full moon and those who will follow them, will glitter like the most brilliant star in the sky. They will not urinate, relieve nature, spit, or have any nasal secretions. Their combs will be of gold, and their sweat will smell like musk. The aloe

¹² The night Muhammad flew to Paradise on the back of the winged-horse al Buraq to meet with God to set the number of daily prayers believers would have to perform.

wood will be used in their centers. Their wives will be houris. All of them will look alike and will resemble their father Adam (in stature), sixty cubits tall."

Bukhari 55.544

Whether a houri sweats during a spirited sexual workout with a man who can literally keep it up (pun intended) forever is a matter for scholars.

Even a wounded warrior's blood will smell like musk. Why God did not heal him when He put him back together to judge him is a mystery.

Narrated Abu Huraira:

The Prophet said, "A wound which a Muslim receives in Allah's cause will appear on the Day of Resurrection as it was at the time of infliction; blood will be flowing from the wound and its color will be that of the blood but will smell like musk."

Bukhari 4:238

If Muhammad performed cunnilingus on any of his wives, concubines, or slave-girls shortly after their periods, he probably breathed in his favourite aroma.

Narrated Aisha:

A woman asked the Prophet about the bath which is take[n] after finishing from the menses.

The Prophet told her what to do and said, "Purify yourself with a piece of cloth scented with musk."

The woman asked, "How shall I purify myself with it?"

He said, "Subhan Allah (Glorious is God)! Purify yourself (with it)."

I pulled her to myself and said, "Rub the place soiled with blood with it."

Bukhari 6.311

This pervasive musky odour will mask the sweetest smell of all, that of the woman herself. What houris might smell like, I haven't a clue, but if I had to guess...? Musk is not on the list of fragrances that research has shown have the greatest impact on a man's sexual performance.

The combined odor of lavender and pumpkin pie had the greatest effect, increasing median penile-blood flow by 40%.

Second in effectiveness was the combination of black licorice and doughnut, which increased the median penile-blood flow 31.5%.

The combined odors of pumpkin pie and doughnut was third, with a 20% increase. Least stimulating was cranberry, which increased penile blood flow by 2%...

Psychology Today: The Science of Sex and Smell, October 2019.

Musk is not even in the top ten fragrances women and men rated as having the properties of an aphrodisiac, which are as follows: pumpkin, lavender, vanilla, strawberry, jasmine, ginger, black licorice, cinnamon, doughnut, and pink grapefruit. Then again, men with permanent erections won't require an aphrodisiac to be turned on, and neither will their houris; it's their default (and only) setting. It may be too much trouble for a god who likes to keep things simple to supply what is not normally found on desert oases, such as doughnuts.

Musk—in moderation—is a lovely fragrance, but is that the only scent you want to tickle your nose for an eternity, whether you're simply lounging or enjoying the women, real and fake, that God has put at your beck and call?

Scenery

An oasis is a nice place to visit, but would you want to spend an eternity in one, even if the smell was not always that of musk? Even if the only form of entertainment was not one-on-one sex 24/7 and watching people writhe in pain on fire in Hell below? Even if you could dress in more casual clothing of varied colours, and all the people you encountered didn't look like you and were not the same age, and you could talk about whatever you wanted? Even if the floor covering and the couches were not all green like the matching robes everyone will be wearing? Even if God offered a more varied menu that catered beyond an Arab desert dweller's palate, one that included wine stronger than grape juice, vegetables and dessert?

Allah, like His spokesman, is set in His ways and there is no altering His Words or His Creation, so you're stuck with His Paradise.

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.

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.

You certainly won't be able to complain to management!

78:35 Therein, they do not hear any idle talk or denunciation.

78:36 A reward from your Lord, a sufficient gift;

78:37 The Lord of the heavens and the earth and what lies between them; the Compassionate to Whom they do not have the power to speak.

When He separated the mass that was the Universe into Heaven and Earth¹³, Allah could have made Paradise another Earth with its varied vistas, but instead focused on transforming the enormity of His domain in the sky into a place His spokesman would feel right at home.

Joyce was the girl with whom I was intimate for the longest period of time before I met Lucette. We did it everywhere my car could take us: in the mountains, in the forest, in open fields, by the sea, by lakes and rivers...and yes, we also did it in comfortable beds. The car provided us with the opportunity to have sex hundreds of miles from our homes in all kinds of different locales, which made the sex that much more memorable. We also did it in the car with the rain falling, the snow blowing, the sun shining, with a hovering moon on the horizon visible through the back window... you get the idea. Even if you decided to move about Paradise with your string of houris in tow, the place you end up will be very much like the place you left behind, and you will have traveled all that distance on foot, or on the back of cattle, for little or no reward.

40:79 It is Allah Who created for you the cattle, so that some you may ride and some you may eat.

For a god who allegedly created such a diverse planet—with vast

¹³ 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?

oceans, mountain ranges that reached above the clouds, beaches that stretch to the horizons, unbounded plains and forests—to model His entire Paradise on His spokesman's corner of the world is a testament to Muhammad's unparalleled influence with God.

The contrived blandness of the people of Paradise and their self-same attire, the blandness of the food and the place itself with its uniform smell of musk and unchanging scenery, leaves much to be desired as an inspirational setting for sex for an eternity.

Sex by the Numbers

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.

"And they have mates of equal age", Revelation 38:52, means that, upon entering Paradise, boys and men, women and girls will be transformed into 30- or 33-year-olds.

With regard to their ages, they will all enter Paradise at the age of strength and youth, thirty-three years old. It was narrated from Mu'aadh 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

In Paradise, all these thirty-somethings will be having sex everywhere; not only in the tent, the apartment, the house or the palace they have been assigned by Allah, depending on their devotion to His Cause, while in the land where a stomach and intestines were necessary for digestion.

Jabir reported:

I heard Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him) as saying that the inmates of Paradise would eat and drink but would neither spit, nor pass water, nor void excrement, nor suffer catarrh. It was said:

Then, what would happen with food?

Thereupon he said: They would belch and sweat (and it would be over with their food), and their sweat would be that of musk and they would glorify and praise Allah as easily as you breathe.

Sahih Muslim 40.6798

In Paradise, All-Seeing Allah from His perch in the 7th heaven, like the ultimate voyeur, will be able to watch His favourite gender doing it ad nauseam having provided it, according to a respected 16th Egyptian cleric, with permanent erections with which to pummel, one after the other, the engineered “appetizing vaginas” with regenerative hymens.

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 appetizing vaginas.

Al-Suyuti (died 1505)

A warning from the makers of Viagra:

If you have an erection that lasts more than 4 hours, get medical help right away. If it is not treated right away, priapism can permanently damage your penis.

Men will also be able to do it 24/7 since they won't require sleep or grow weary from all that pounding.

15:48 They shall not be touched by fatigue therein, nor will they be driven out.

From this point forward, I will no longer play Allah's and Muhammad's game of using euphemisms like “enjoy” when they mean “fuck.” The young men and women He seeks to persuade to kill and die on his behalf should have a full appreciation of what Paradise is all about. By calling, to use an abused cliché, a spade a spade, I hope to dispel any notions they might have about a romantic afterlife that might make eternity, in even the dullest of settings, bearable.

All Allah's afterlife has to offer as a distraction from all that sex is scheduled servings of food ordinarily found on an oasis with some

animal husbandry, mainly chicken. Sex in a bland, unchanging setting with identical people, invariable scenery and a limited menu will quickly lose much of its charm.

Even if you get the maximum 72 houris—at the cost of impressing Allah by committing a truly horrific mass murder—all programmed to expertly execute the 64 positions of the Kama Sutra, this will still leave you with only 4,608 different coital experiences. That is, assuming that each manufactured vagina is built to different specs and not all calibrated to provide the same sensation from penetration to climax—what science refers to as the mean intravaginal ejaculation latency time (which in the here-and-now takes, on average, 5.4 minutes). Four thousand six hundred and eight may seem like a big number, but we *are* talking an eternity here.

There will be a lot of non-stop fornication in Paradise with nothing much to do, think or talk about, just fuck and eat. And by a lot, I mean everybody will be doing it almost all the time, at least for the first few years, at which point even fucking will become dull and repetitive. Like the rest of the dreariest of paradises imaginable, this should leave many wondering if it was worth the atrocities committed on Allah's behalf to get there before everyone else.

Based on the average intravaginal ejaculation latency time of 5.4 minutes, a man could conceivably have sex with 11 houris per hour. With an eternity ahead of you, you may want to take your time and space them out every hour or so, between snacks. That still means, with a maximum number of houris each performing a permutation of the 64 positions of the Kama Sutra per fucking session, you will have tried every position with every single one of your houris in about 192 days. Remember, in Paradise you don't need sleep, get tired, or lose your erection. Just over six months to get back to the beginning and start over, and over and over for millions of years and then some.

But don't feel too bad for the men; for the few real women whom Allah will allow into his Paradise, things will be much worse. They will spend most of eternity waiting their turn, competing with manufactured, large-breasted nymphomaniacs for their husband's attention.

A Semenless Experience

There is another three-word phrase sometimes used by a woman to express affection for the man making love to her without the

intention of impregnating her. When spoken out of love, not just lust, these three words will leave almost as strong an impression as her first time saying, "I love you." Traditional Muslim men will never hear these words, either here or in the Hereafter, out of love nor out of lust. In the now, it is because he is directed by God to deposit his sperm in the receptacle He has provided for that purpose, a receptacle that has no say in the matter. In Paradise, men will stop producing semen altogether, so the request in that venue is moot.

When I started making love to Margaret, I practiced coitus interruptus. We had been having sex for maybe a couple of weeks, and I was about to do what God's spokesman warned against when I heard that evocative three-word expression: "Come inside me." I did, and after I rolled off her, she pressed her body against mine, the top of her head beneath my chin. Suppressing a shiver, she whispered: "You're inside me; part of you is inside me." It's corny, I know, and a person my age recounting those words might have you gagging. Well, too bad!

Why am I telling you this? A man ejaculating his sperm into a woman's vagina is part of the bonding experience of sex between two people who care for each other. Whether she says it out loud, out of love or lust, or doesn't say it all, when a woman with a choice allows a man to leave part of him inside her, she is acknowledging that he is special to her in some way, and that acknowledgement is not lost on her lover. Houris know nothing about this bonding ritual. These mindless creatures are yours to be fucked, not to bond with, and they will fuck you in return, whether you have feelings for them or not, for that is their built-in purpose. If Allah had wanted you to bond with His houris, he would not have deprived you of a bonding agent.

3:185 Every soul shall taste death; and you shall receive your rewards in full on the Day of Resurrection. Whoever is removed from Hell and is admitted into Paradise wins. Life in this world is nothing but an illusory pleasure.

Sex without semen is, of this there is no doubt, the illusory pleasure. Your pelvic muscles will still go through the motions associated with orgasm, one has to assume, but there will be nothing to force out from the opening at the end of your penis.

[An] orgasm [in men] is also associated with powerful and highly pleasurable pelvic muscle contractions...

Ejaculation occurs in a series of rapid-fire contractions of the penile muscles and around the base of the anus... The nerves causing the muscle contractions send messages of pleasure to the man's brain.

NCBI National Center for Biotechnology Information website.

In Paradise, how the pleasure centres of the brain will interpret these muscle contractions meant to expel semen is anyone's guess. What that 16th-century Egyptian cleric had to say about semen-free orgasms being "utterly delicious" should be taken with a ton or two of salt by anyone contemplating perishing in a sacred explosion to experience one. This same cleric concluded, from Muhammad's claim that the people of Paradise "will not urinate, relieve nature," that the anus, no longer needed, will disappear along with the butt crack, leaving the people of Paradise with a posterior in the shape of a cushion¹⁴. That would definitely rule out anal sex. If you want to give anal sex a try, you will have to do it in the here-and-now.

How did we go from a perfectly normal, if a little messy, transfer of bodily fluids to mimicry where nothing is expelled? You may notice a trend here: any output from the body's orifices, from the nostrils to the anus, that might leave a stain or require disposal will no longer be an issue in Paradise. Semen would have to be near the top of the list. Imagine more than a trillion people fucking 24/7 with semen leaking out of billions of vaginas, doing what it did to my pants my first time with Joyce all over Allah's lovely green rugs, green cushions and green upholstery. They would soak up the stuff, leaving Allah with a never-ending unholy mess to clean up.

Obviously, God has no intention of picking up after His guests. This seems to be the conclusion of scholars and clerics based on a verse of the Koran and a saying of Muhammad. I will let the good folks at Islam Question & Answer (Q&A), "a website which aims to offer advice and academic answers based on evidence from religious texts in an adequate and easy-to-understand manner," explain why men in Paradise will not be hosing their spouses, inside or out, with their semen, whether these women are facsimiles or the real thing.

In Paradise, a husband has sexual intercourse with his wife and they both find pleasure, but this is done without releasing semen.

¹⁴ *Sexuality in Islam* by Abdelwahab Bouhdiba

Allah the Almighty says: "And they will have therein purified spouses, and they will abide therein eternally."
[Quran 2: 25]

Commenting on this verse, Mujaahid and 'Ataa' may Allah have mercy upon them mentioned that the people of Paradise are purified from menstruation, urine and semen.

Also, it was reported on the authority of Abu Umaamah may Allah be pleased with him that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said that the people of Paradise have sexual intercourse with their spouses with a male organ that does not drain and a desire that does not subside.

There is another bonding ritual where a woman does not just passively accept a man's semen, but actively seeks it. This is what Anne did without being asked when she moved to the end of the bed, kneeled, wrapped her lips around it and persevered. To quote Samantha Jones of *Sex and the City*, "They don't call it a blow job for nothin'. It's hard work." Not only that, but it takes practice to make even an average length penis completely disappear without gagging—even if it is not necessary for a totally enjoyable experience—and to develop the techniques that will get the job done before the jaw gets too sore to continue.

Fellatio followed by ejaculation can be as exciting as coitus, if not more so, because of a strong visual component adding to the intense sensations and the undeniable satisfaction of a loving partner's commitment to your pleasure. We are impressed by partners who, like Anne, will take it all the way to please us and not simply engage in the act as a mere prelude to penetration or in expectation of reciprocity (although that can be fun, too). Just like the first time invited to come inside a lover's vagina, it will not leave the recipient of such devotion unmoved.

Women know that, for men, there is a fascination with what Muhammad described as "water [that] is thick and white" and what she will do with it, or allow her lover to do to her, when it shoots out, such as spraying any part of her body he fancies. Her willingness to have her body be her lover's canvas makes the bonding experience even more memorable by bringing out the creativity in the artist. You can imagine the possibilities, but only if you can produce the stuff in the first place.

Muhammad's idea of a varied sex life appears to be a different vagina

for every day of the week, if not every day of the month. So don't expect Allah's houris to do more than present their genitals for you to fuck and their breasts for you to fondle.

Unlike with the women you may have fucked in real life—assuming you are not so lacking in curiosity that you did not take a few to bed before settling on the houris—there are a variety of evocative scenes you will not witness or experience in Paradise that strike a chord with the visual sex. Studies using erotic audio-visuals have demonstrated that when it comes to sex, for women it's the mood that inspires, while for men it's the visuals¹⁵. Visuals that will be impossible to recreate in Paradise, such as a blow job with semen; and let us not forget the not-so-aptly named creampie, a word that describes both the act of creating the so-called pie then having your lover show you what you left behind as it slowly leaks out.

Forget the visuals; what about a man's now-useless balls, which no one may care to play with unless Allah programs his houris to kiss and fondle them? It won't be the same as when they had a purpose and your partner could pay them attention to encourage their hard work. Of course, that is only relevant if a utilitarian god lets you keep them.

Just like houris, who are not real women, men in Paradise will not be real men, so young men, enjoy being real in the here-and-now for as long as you can! Don't let older men convince you that sex is better in Paradise. They are lying. With you out of the way, it leaves more real women for them to enjoy in a way only a real man can.

Allah should have left, if not increased, the proverbial icing on the cake for the young men (and increasingly, the young women) who would sacrifice so much for Him. Women also lose out from Allah serving young men a bland cake from a restricted menu in recognition of their sacrifice, and it's not only men who appreciate the additional dimension that semen brings to their lovemaking. There is a practical aspect to male ejaculation that Allah might have considered before deciding to end its production in the Hereafter.

New research has investigated the role that male ejaculation plays in female sexual satisfaction for the first time. The

¹⁵ Chung, W. Lim, S. Yoo, J. & Yoon, H. (2013). "Gender difference in brain activation to audio-visual sexual stimulation; Do women and men experience the same level of arousal in response to the same video clip?" *International Journal of Impotence Research*, 25, 138-142.

preliminary study found, among other things, that many women report experiencing more intense orgasms when their partner ejaculates.

The findings appear in *The Journal of Sexual Medicine* (September 28, 2018).

“The study was mainly informed by clinical observations. During my practical, clinical work I noticed that women have very strong opinions regarding men’s ejaculation — and I am not speaking about the clinical criteria that most research usually focuses on such as intravaginal ejaculation latency time or how long the man can control or prolong his ejaculation,” explained study author Andrea Burri of the European Institute for Sexual Health.

They found that 50.43% of women considered it very important that their partner ejaculates during intercourse.

“Quite a lot of women indicated that they themselves experienced more intense orgasms when their partner ejaculated, or when they had the feeling that the partner’s ejaculation was more intense, and/or when he expelled a greater ejaculate quantity (subjectively felt).”

From PsyPost, “a psychology and neuroscience news website dedicated to reporting the latest research on human behavior, cognition, and society.”

Unlike for men, there is no mention in any scriptural exegesis (explanation or interpretation of a text) consulted to demonstrate how God will make up for the decrease in sexual satisfaction occasioned by the loss of a fully inserted spasmodic penis sending jets of hot sperm crashing into a woman’s cervix. Try explaining to your houris what it was like having sex with a female into whom you ejaculated—assuming you had such an experience before you killed yourself—and what effect it had on her. They wouldn’t have a clue. Their loss, and yours as well!

I found nothing in the Koran or in the hadiths of the Sunni canon about a houri experiencing an orgasm. This does not mean that they couldn’t, but since they are designed for men’s gratification, why would God bother? There would be complex programming involved in a facsimile mimicking the multifaceted physiological changes that accompany the buildup to an orgasm, as described by actress Jennifer Morrison in the television series *House*.

Pupils dilate. Arteries constrict. Core temperature rises; the heart races. Blood pressure skyrockets. Respiration becomes rapid and shallow. The brain fires electrical impulses from nowhere to nowhere. Secretions spit out of every gland. Muscles tense and spasm like you're lifting three times your body weight. It's violent, it's ugly and it's messy [and] ... unbelievably fun.

Why would He bother if all men care about is fucking virgins, as seems to be Allah's impression, meaning that what really turns you on is your partner's lack of experience and discomfort, not necessarily her pleasure? It is much simpler for Him to regenerate the hymen of these virgins so that when it's their turn again, for the millionth time and then some—again, we are talking an eternity here—you have an identical experience, over and over...

If doing it with a virgin is what you imagine as the ultimate sexual high, you will miss out on a lot, especially if you expedite yourself to Allah before you have time to experience sex the way it has evolved from the days of the caveman who simply mimicked animals. You will be missing out on sex with a context and purpose, one perhaps beyond the awareness of our caveman ancestors.

A *houri* is, in essence, a sophisticated sex doll programmed with the skills of a veteran whore but made to look and behave like a demure virgin, even after she has been fucked for the millionth time. Allah's *houris* will always be waiting, so stick around to experience what I believe most fathers would agree is the best sex of all: starting with the intent of creating another human being, all the way to being intimate with the mother-to-be as her pregnancy progresses to its magical conclusion. Having never had children, I can only imagine the full experience, but from what I have been told it is one to be savoured and cherished forever.

My Passing May Mimic Muhammad's Official Cause of Death

December 2, 2024

Unless I get hit by a bus, or suffer some other misfortune before the blessed event, my official cause of death will be a ruptured aorta, not unlike what Muhammad believed was happening to him. The Prophet thought he was dying from an aorta-busting poison he ingested years earlier after the successful conquest of the Jewish settlement of Khaibar.

Khaibar

*(Abbreviated from 1001 Sayings and Deeds of
the Prophet Muhammad, Boreal Books)*

Khaibar is not just another of many bloody, pitiless battles waged by Muhammad to establish his rule on the Arabian Peninsula. After Badr, no battle gets more mention in the hadiths than that of Khaibar (also spelled Khaybar). The horde of holy warriors descending on the villages and towns of the Peninsula intent on slaughter, destruction and plunder with God's spokesperson announcing to their inhabitants their imminent annihilation, must have been terrifying.

Narrated Anas:

The Prophet set out for Khaibar and reached it at night. He used not to attack if he reached the people at night, till the day broke. So, when the day dawned, the Jews came out with their bags and spades. When they saw the Prophet; they said, "Muhammad and his army!"

The Prophet said, "Allahu Akbar! (Allah is Greater) and Khaibar is ruined, for whenever we approach a nation (i.e. enemy to fight) then it will be a miserable morning for those who have been warned."

Bukhari 52.195

In another hadith, which includes Muhammad's ban on eating the meat of domesticated donkey, he reached Khaibar in the morning.

Narrated Anas:

The Prophet reached Khaibar in the morning, while the

people were coming out carrying their spades over their shoulders. When they saw him they said, "This is Muhammad and his army! Muhammad and his army!" So, they took refuge in the fort.

The Prophet raised both his hands and said, "Allahu Akbar, Khaibar is ruined, for when we approach a nation (i.e. enemy to fight) then miserable is the morning of the warned ones."

Then we found some donkeys which we (killed and) cooked. The announcer of the Prophet announced: "Allah and His Apostle forbid you to eat donkey's meat."

So, all the pots including their contents were turned upside down.

Bukhari 52.234

The call to prayer only delayed the inevitable.

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

The taking of a town or village was as straightforward as it was pitiless: prayers, then an assault on the unbelievers' position. If successful, as most of these massacres were, then came the plunder and apportioning of the property of those killed including wives, daughters and sons who were taken into slavery. Young women and girls were especially prized as slave-girls. It was at Khaibar that Muhammad took for himself the seventeen-year-old Safiya (also spelled Safiyya) for his troubles. She would become his eleventh wife.

Muhammad, as God's spokesman, was not only entitled to one-fifth of the booty obtained the hard way, but all the booty that was obtained without a fight, the *Fai'*. Technically, the valuable farmland known as Fadak north of Khaibar had not been fought over. The Jewish farmers of Fadak, hoping to avoid the fate of their brethren at Khaibar, sent a message to Muhammad offering him half their land and half of what they produced if he held his pillaging horde in

check. The merchant in Muhammad knew a good deal when he saw one and spared the farmers of Fadak.

Some hadiths, such as the following do not distinguish between Khaibar and Fadak.

Narrated Abdullah bin Umar:

Allah's Apostle gave the land of Khaibar to the Jews to work on and cultivate and take half of its yield.

Ibn Umar added, "The land used to be rented for a certain portion (of its yield)." Nafi mentioned the amount of the portion but I forgot it.

Rafi' bin Khadij said, "The Prophet forbade renting farms."

Narrated Ubaid-Ullah Nafi said: Ibn Umar said: (The contract of Khaibar continued) till Umar evacuated the Jews (from Khaibar).

Bukhari 36.485

Fadak proved to be one of Muhammad's most profitable acquisitions, which may explain his successor's unilateral takeover of his interests. Fatima, Muhammad's daughter and the mother of his grandsons, confronted Bakr but was unsuccessful in receiving what should have been her due.

Narrated Aisha:

Fatima sent somebody to Abu Bakr asking him to give her her inheritance from the Prophet from what Allah had given to His Apostle through Fai (i.e. booty gained without fighting). She asked for the Sadaqa (i.e. wealth assigned for charitable purposes) of the Prophet at Medina, and Fadak, and what remained of the Khumus (i.e., one-fifth) of the Khaibar booty.

Abu Bakr said, "Allah's Apostle said, 'We (Prophets), our property is not inherited, and whatever we leave is Sadaqa, but Muhammad's Family can eat from this property, i.e. Allah's property, but they have no right to take more than the food they need.' By Allah! I will not bring any change in dealing with the Sadaqa of the Prophet (and will keep them) as they used to be observed in his (i.e. the Prophet's) life-time, and I will dispose with it as Allah's Apostle used to do."

Then Ali said, "I testify that None has the right to be

worshipped but Allah, and that Muhammad is His Apostle," and added, "O Abu Bakr! We acknowledge your superiority." Then he (i.e. 'Ali) mentioned their own relationship to Allah's Apostle and their right.

Abu Bakr then spoke saying, "By Allah in Whose Hands my life is. I love to do good to the relatives of Allah's Apostle rather than to my own relatives"

Abu Bakr added: Look at Muhammad through his family (i.e. if you are not good to his family you are not good to him).

Bukhari 57.60

By absconding with Muhammad's estate and Allah by forbidding any man to marry His spokesperson's wives after his passing (33:53: You should never hurt the Messenger of Allah, nor take his wives in marriage after him), the parsimonious Bakr reduced many of Muhammad's widows to the status of beggars, dependent on the whims of his acquisitive nature for their survival.

Umar, Bakr's successor, would return some of Muhammad's property to Ali, Fatima's husband. The property had probably lost much of its value after Umar exiled the Jews who farmed the land.

Narrated Ibn Umar:

Umar expelled the Jews and the Christians from Hijaz. When Allah's Apostle had conquered Khaibar, he wanted to expel the Jews from it as its land became the property of Allah, His Apostle, and the Muslims. Allah's Apostle intended to expel the Jews but they requested him to let them stay there on the condition that they would do the labor and get half of the fruits.

Allah's Apostle told them, "We will let you stay on thus condition, as long as we wish." So, they (i.e. Jews) kept on living there until Umar forced them to go towards Taima' and Ariha'.

Bukhari 39.531

Umar accused the Jews of harming a believer and then used what they thought was a joke made at their expense by Muhammad (Abu-l-Qasim in the following hadith) to nullify their agreement with God's spokesperson.

Narrated Ibn Umar:

When the people of Khaibar dislocated Abdullah bin Umar's hands and feet, Umar got up delivering a sermon saying, "No doubt, Allah's Apostle made a contract with the Jews concerning their properties, and said to them, 'We allow you (to stand in your land) as long as Allah allows you.' Now Abdullah bin Umar went to his land and was attacked at night, and his hands and feet were dislocated, and as we have no enemies there except those Jews, they are our enemies and the only people whom we suspect, I have made up my mind to exile them."

When Umar decided to carry out his decision, a son of Abu Al-Haqiq's came and addressed Umar, "O chief of the believers, will you exile us although Muhammad allowed us to stay at our places, and made a contract with us about our properties, and accepted the condition of our residence in our land?"

Umar said, "Do you think that I have forgotten the statement of Allah's Apostle: 'What will your condition be when you are expelled from Khaibar and your camel will be carrying you night after night?'"

The Jew replied, "That was a joke from Abu-l-Qasim."

Umar said, "O the enemy of Allah! You are telling a lie."

Umar then drove them out and paid them the price of their properties in the form of fruits, money, camel saddles and ropes, etc.

Bukhari 50.890

Umar would eventually expel all Jews and Christians from the Hejaz, the so-called holy land of Islam, which comprises most of western modern-day Saudi Arabia and is centred on Mecca and Medina.

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 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

Muhammad's Official Cause of Death

(Abbreviated from *Merchant to Messenger*, Boreal Books)

Muhammad's life template borrowed heavily from that of the prophets of the Torah and Jesus of the New Testament. In the Gospels, the penultimate Messenger of Allah suffered a gruesome death on the cross because of the Jews. For the arbiters of Islamic dogma, it may have seemed only logical that their saviour's passing, like that of Jesus, had been expedited by a Jew, and a female to boot, rather than from injuries sustained by an accomplished rider falling off his mount. In the official version, Muhammad's fate was sealed at Khaibar (also spelled Khaybar).

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.

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

The leadership of the Jews of Khaybar, as well as the male members of their immediate and extended families, were beheaded. One chief who went by the name of Kinana was almost tortured to death in the hope that he would reveal the existence of buried treasures before he too was decapitated. A Jewish woman by the name of Zaynab (who may have been Kinana's daughter) put poison in a carcass of lamb (some say it was goat) that she was told to cook for Muhammad and his cronies after the slaughter of all killable males of her tribe (those showing any growth of pubic hair). She was brought before God's spokesman to answer for her cooking. The story as reported by respected Islamic scholar Ibn Sa'd [784-845]:

The apostle of Allah sent for Zaynab and said to her, "What induced you to do what you have done?"

She replied, "You have done to my people what you have

done. You have killed my father, my uncle and my husband, so I said to myself, 'If you are a prophet, the foreleg will inform you'; and others have said, 'If you are a king we will get rid of you.'"

A foreleg of the roasted lamb did inform Muhammad that it had been poisoned, but not before he had taken a bite.

Narrated Jabir ibn Abdullah:

Ibn Shihab said: Jabir ibn Abdullah used to say that a jewess 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 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.

Abu Dawud 39.4495

In another hadith, Muhammad had her killed. It may not have been a tattletale leg of lamb that alerted him that the food was poisoned, but one of his dining companions falling over dead.

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.

152 My Passing May Mimic Muhammad's Official Cause of Death

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? 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

What does the ingestion of a benign amount of poison have to do with Muhammad's death years later? It all has to do with something Aisha said her husband uttered before he died.

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

He said something similar after he had ordered the cook to be killed.

Narrated Abu Salamah:

... So a jewess presented him at Khaybar with a roasted sheep which she had poisoned. The Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) ate of it and the people also ate. He then said: Take away your hands (from the food), for it has informed me that it is poisoned.

Bishr ibn al-Bara' ibn Ma'rur al-Ansari died. So he (the Prophet) sent for the jewess (and said to her): What motivated you to do the work you have done?

She said: If you were a prophet, it would not harm you; but if you were a king, I should rid the people of you.

The Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) then ordered regarding her and she was killed. He then said about the pain of which he died: I continued to feel pain from the morsel which I had eaten at Khaybar. This is the time when it has cut off my aorta.

Abu Dawud 39.4498

From credible accounts of a Jewish woman attempting to poison him, Islamic scholars have reached the implausible conclusion that it was

this attempt on Muhammad's life that caused his death four years later.

I could not ascertain if the Jewish woman or girl being tortured in her grave, in the following hadith, is Zaynab:

Narrated Aisha:

Once Allah's Apostle passed by (the grave of) a Jewess whose relatives were weeping over her. He said, "They are weeping over her and she is being tortured in her grave."

Bukhari 23.376

Narrated Ali ibn Abu Talib:

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

A Hundred Years of Nothing

(Abbreviated *From Merchant to Messenger*, Boreal Books)

When Muhammad allegedly died nestled in Aisha's lap in Medina in 632, he not only left this mortal realm but history altogether. I say allegedly because, with the possible exception of the letter of Caliph Umar II (717-720) 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 how and when he died or what came after for about one hundred years. None of the many citizens of Medina who could read and write, including Muhammad's indispensable scribe Zaid bin Thabit Al-Ansari, it would seem, could be bothered to note the passing of its most illustrious resident; unless, of course, this is not where and when he died.

The first written texts on the life of Muhammad appeared in the first half of the 8th century from a few Muslim clerics such as the *Kitāb al-saqifa* (the book of saqifa) by Shiite author Sulaym Ibn Qays al-Hilāl, one of the oldest such texts to have survived to this day. *Saqifa* is Arab for refuge or a large, covered space. *Saqifa Banī Sā'ida* was such a place in Medina, a spacious veranda where a group of people, according to Shiite sources, gathered in secret following the death of

Muhammad and named Abu Bakr as his successor, thereby depriving his son-in-law Ali of the caliphate.

On the Sunni side, the first clerics to have written on the life of Muhammad are Urwa Ibn al-Zubayr (d. 712) and his disciple al-Zuhri (d. 741), who lived during the Umayyad caliphate. Urwa is alleged to have written about different parts of Muhammad's life at the request of Caliph Abd al-Malik (685-705) in the form of letters addressed to his patron. None have survived. We only know of his writings because they are cited by subsequent authors such as Ibn Ishaq (b. 704 d. 767), whose teacher was none other than al-Zuhri. Ibn Ishaq's biography of Muhammad, which he wrote at the request of Abbasid caliph Al-Mansur (754-775) for his son, has much to say about his military expeditions. Like the letters of Urwa, Ishaq's biography has not survived to this day. We know some of what he wrote because he is quoted in later works by 9th and 10th century authors and from reworked fragments such as those found in the seminal *Sirat al-Rassul*, *Example of the Prophet or Life of the Prophet* by ibn Hisham (d. 832).

Ibn Ishaq was a controversial figure, in part because he approached his subject the same way a modern historian would, by considering all information available, including the testimonies of Christians and Jewish converts whom his detractors dismissed out-of-hand as unreliable. Ishaq's most vocal critic was renowned authority on the sayings and deeds of Muhammad, 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.

Muhammad Mojlum Khan, *The Muslim 100 - The Lives, Thoughts and Achievements of the Most Influential Muslims in History*, Kube Publishing, 2008.

Ibn Hisham transformed what Ishaq wrote about Muhammad into a panegyric. Hisham's plagiarized biography has achieved canonical status and the immunity from criticism that comes from being elevated to the equivalent of holy writ.

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, *The Death of a Prophet - The End of Muhammad's Life and the Beginnings of Islam*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011, cf. Patricia Crone, *Slaves on Horses*

Professor Shoemaker on the early biographies of Muhammad:

The manifold shortcomings of the early Islamic traditions, particularly with respect to the period of origins, invite the strong possibility that the beginnings of Islam differed significantly from their representation in the earliest biographies of Muhammad. Not only were the narratives composed at only an arresting distance from the events they describe, but modern scholarship on the traditional biographies of Muhammad has repeatedly found them to be unreliable sources... their failings as historical sources almost required that we look elsewhere to supplement our knowledge about the beginnings of Islam.

The Antichrist in Palestine

Christian, Jewish, Egyptian, Persian, Spanish... sources quoted in Professor Shoemaker's book as to the whereabouts of Muhammad before he died:

- 1 Doctrina Iacobi nuper Baptizati (July 634 CE)
- 2 The Apocalypse of Rabbi Shim'on b. Yohai (635-45?)
- 3 The Khurzistan Chronicle (ca. 660 CE)
- 4 Jacob of Edessa, Chronological Charts (691/692 CE)

5 The History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria: The Life of Patriarch Benjamin (before 717 CE)

6 The Spanish Eastern Source (ca. 741 CE)

7 The Syriac Common Source: The Chronicle of Theophilus of Edessa (ca. 750 CE)

8 The Short Syriac Chronicle of 775 (ca. 775 CE)

9 The Zuqnin Chronicle (ca. 775 CE)

10 A Report from the Continuation of Abū l-Fath's - Samaritan Chronicle (7th century)

11 An early Islamic witness: `Umar's letter to Leo (8th century)

Some of these impartial accounts, such as the *Doctrina Iacobi*, describe a doomsday prophet—of which the Dark Ages abounded—alive and well leading military incursions into Palestine up to two years after Muhammad's purported death in Medina. Since the invention of the clay tablet, people have exchanged information, e.g., letters about what is happening in their neck of the woods. Because such letters are often written by individuals who have no particular axe to grind, they are invaluable to historians as unbiased eyewitness accounts of what may be later revealed to be historically significant events. This is the case with a letter gleaned from the *Doctrina* by a fellow by the name of Justus to Jacob about Saracens in Palestine. The letter begins with Justus informing Jacob about a correspondence he has received from his brother Abraham regarding a Roman official in Palestine killed by Arabs, led by a man who should have been dead.

My brother Abraham wrote to me that a false prophet has appeared. Abraham writes, "When the candidatus was killed, I was in Caesarea, and I went by ship to Sykamina. And they were saying 'The candidatus has been killed,' and we Jews were overjoyed.

"And they were saying, 'A prophet has appeared, coming with the Saracens and he is preaching the arrival of the anointed one who is to come, the Messiah'.

"And when I arrived in Sykamina I visited an old man who was learned in the scriptures, and I said to him, 'What can you tell me about the prophet who has appeared with the Saracens?'

"And he said to me groaning loudly, 'He is false, for

prophets do not come with the sword and a war-chariot. Truly the things set in motion today are deeds of anarchy, and I fear that somehow the first Christ that came, which the Christian worship, was the one sent by God, and instead of him we will receive the Antichrist. Truly Isaiah said that we Jews will have a deceived and hardened heart until the entire earth is destroyed. But go, master Abraham, and find out about this Prophet who has appeared.'

"And when I, Abraham, investigated thoroughly, I heard from who had met him that one will find no truth in the so-called prophet, only the shedding of human blood. In fact, he says that he has the keys of Paradise, which is impossible."

These things my brother Abraham has written from the East.

Stephen Shoemaker, *The Death of a Prophet - The End of Muhammad's Life and the Beginnings of Islam*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011.

It would seem that Muhammad was intent on making his way north—Dabiq being the most likely destination—with the idea of fulfilling his own prophecy of a Muslim victory over the Romans that would be the signal for Allah to bring an end to His Creation, and begin the process of settling scores in an end-of-times extravaganza for the ages.

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...

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 041.6924

In Muhammad's doomsday scenario, which largely mimics that of the Christians, Jesus returns shortly before the onset of Judgement Day to render the Earth and its people more to Allah's liking.

Narrated Abu Huraira:

Allah's Apostle said, "The Hour will not be established until the son of Mary (i.e. Jesus) descends amongst you as a just ruler, he will break the cross, kill the pigs, and abolish the Jizya tax."

Bukhari 43.656

Narrated Abu Huraira:

Allah's Apostle said "How will you be when the son of Mary (i.e. Jesus) descends amongst you and he will judge people by the Law of the Quran and not by the law of Gospel."

Bukhari 55.658

The Muslims would be in possession of Dabiq within a decade of Muhammad's death, but still no Judgement Day.

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 differed 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.

Making Like the Illiterate Prophet

December 3, 2024

With my mortality coming into focus I decided to simplify my will.

Mon 2024-11-25 8:30 AM

To: Lawyer

The following changes will greatly simplify my will:

...

Thu 2024-11-28 1:31 PM

To: Lawyer

When can I expect a revised will to review?

Mon 2024-12-02 8:28 AM

To: Me

Given current workload, will do what I can to get this done before the holidays.

Mon 2024-12-02 9:50 AM

To: Lawyer

I understand. I am somewhat concerned about my durability; therefore, if you could send me the Word copy of my will, I will make the changes myself then have them notarized.

Not unlike Muhammad during the negotiations that would lead to the Treaty of Hudaibiyah, I decided to take matters into my own hands.

The Treaty of Hudaibiyah

(Abbreviated from *Jihad in the Koran*, Boreal Books)

The victory at Medina (see Chapter "Battle of the Ditch," *Jihad in the Koran*, Boreal Books) did not really solve anything for the Muslims. In fact, it may have left them more vulnerable than before. Many of the Jews Muhammad sent into exile found a new home in the Jewish oasis of Khaybar approximately 153 km north of Medina. Khaybar had a pact with Mecca whereby if either city was attacked, the other was to march on Medina.

Both cities also instituted the equivalent of an economic blockade of Medina. Not only were the Muslim caravans confined to Medina but so were their raiding parties. The believers could no longer depend on plunder to make ends meet. Something had to give. They had no choice: unless they broke the blockade by attacking either Khaybar or Mecca, many of the warriors who became Muslims for the booty would abandon Medina making the fall of the city and the defeat of the believers inevitable.

Muhammad, to the astonishment of his companions, decided to go to Mecca, not to fight, but to perform the lesser pilgrimage, the Umrah. He invited all believers to accompany him on this 800-kilometre round-trip religious trek. The Bedouins among his supporters expected hostilities to break out, and not caring to take the war to the holy city of Mecca, refused to go. The majority of believers at Medina had no such qualms and looked forward to marching on the Meccan pagans. They believed the pilgrimage was just a ruse, and that if the Prophet was denied, he would enter Mecca by force.

The men who would accompany God's Messenger were only allowed a sheathed sword as a weapon, and had to follow the ritual preparation, much of it borrowed from the pagans, such as fasting, shaving hair from the head and body, wearing a simple robe without decorations of any kind, and abstaining from sexual relations.

On February 628, Muhammad and an estimated fourteen-hundred male pilgrims left Medina for Mecca. The Meccans sent a small detachment of cavalry to intercept the pilgrims, and all were taken prisoner by the Muslims. The Prophet ordered they be released without conditions. The Meccans then sent a larger detachment to meet the believers. It arrived only to find the believers prostrated towards Mecca in prayer. Their leader Ikrimah, son of Abu Jahl, chose not to give the order to attack and simply turned back. Muhammad then sent an emissary to the Meccans explaining that they had only come to perform the pilgrimage. His envoy and retinue were intercepted by Ikrimah, who crippled their camels and left them to make their way back to the Prophet on foot.

Ikrimah and his troops then barred the main route into the sacred perimeter of the holy city. Muhammad avoided a confrontation by taking an alternate, dangerously rocky route among the hills overlooking Mecca. With the holy city spread out before him, his camel refused to go any further. The Prophet said that an angel

barred its way. It was now obvious to God's Messenger that God did not want them to go any further. There was no water where the angel forced them to stop. Muhammad raised his arms towards the heavens imploring God for help. A short time later, he was joined by a pilgrim who said to dig beneath his feet and he would find water. He did.

God's Messenger wanted to send another emissary to the Meccans. His companions would rather they simply marched on the city but Uthman, Muhammad's son-in-law, accepted to go and talk to the Meccans. When he was late in returning, rumours started to circulate that he had been killed or was being tortured. The pilgrims were now determined to enter Mecca by force, with or without their Prophet's approval, prompting God's Messenger to demand their unquestioning allegiance at a meeting under one of the few trees. One after the other the believers approach Muhammad and swore absolute obedience. A revelation to that effect:

48:18 Allah was well-pleased with the believers, when they paid you homage under the tree; so He knew what was in their hearts and sent down the Serenity upon them and rewarded them with a victory near at hand,

The "victory near at end" would not be the taking of Mecca, which would come later (see Chapter "Mecca Surrenders," *Jihad in the Koran*, Boreal Books), but the attack on the Jewish settlement of Khaibar, an easy victory that fulfilled Allah's promise of spoils for everyone.

48:19 And with many spoils for them to seize. Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.

A short time after the oath of allegiance, a delegation from Mecca arrived. A ten-year non-aggression treaty was signed, the Treaty of Hudaibiyah. Under Hudaibiyah, Muslims would be allowed to perform the pilgrimage the following year and every year during which the treaty was in force. Prior to the signing, Muhammad, the alleged illiterate, rewrote a section of the treaty to which the Meccans objected after his scribe refused to make the modification.

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."

Bukhari 49.863

God's justification for not allowing the Muslims to take Mecca by force until later was the presence of believers among the Meccans. If only "they had stood apart," He "would have inflicted on those who disbelieved a painful punishment."

48:25 It is they who disbelieved and barred you from the Sacred Mosque, and the offering was prevented from reaching its sacrificial site. Had it not been for some believing men and some believing women, whom you did not know, lest you should trample them and earn thereby the guilt unwittingly, that Allah might thereby admit into His Mercy whomever He wishes. Had they stood apart, We would have inflicted on those of them who disbelieved a painful punishment.

The Treaty of Hudaibiyah also nullified the mutual defence pack between Mecca and Khaibar allowing the Prophet to attack the Jewish settlement without having to worry that the Meccans would again attack Medina – this time, while his forces were busy elsewhere.

Prophetic Medicine and Not Bleeding Into My Risotto

December 4, 2024

Should I have an aortic graph to extend my life I will, for the rest of it, be on blood thinners; this, after a five hour operation under general anesthesia and being put on and off a heart-lung machine, will probably leave me somewhat stupider than when I agreed to the procedure. My sister tells me I have brain cells to spare, so I should not worry about that. She is being kind.

What I worry about is a quality of life that now hinges on going out for dinner without having to worry about my nose bleeding into my food because of blood with a viscosity approaching that of water. Of course, if I followed Muhammad's medical advice for whatever ails you, the idea of surgery would never come up. At one time, there was talk of setting up a school of *Prophetic Medicine*. A concerted effort was made to set up such a school based on the sayings and the example of Muhammad and his Companions.

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.

Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab People*, Harvard University Press, 1991, p. 203

The idea was dropped when it became clear that much of it was nonsense. Examples:

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 Anas:

The climate of Medina did not suit some people, so the Prophet ordered them to follow his shepherd, i.e. his camels, and drink their milk and urine (as a medicine).

Bukhari 71.590

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

Narrated Maimuna:

Allah's Apostle was asked regarding ghee (cooking butter) in which a mouse had fallen.

He said, "Take out the mouse and throw away the ghee around it and use the rest."

Bukhari 4.236

Sayings of Muhammad, like the above, along with the Koran, make up the immutable laws of Islam, if not the Universe. When it comes to treating what ails you, it is a law that is often broken with impunity. The reason that Saudi Arabia, until recently, was ruled by a gerontology was more the result of modern medicine, especially advances and innovations in the treatment of coronary and heart disease, than whatever Muhammad prescribed. See Chapter "Prophetic Medicine," *A Thousand and One Sayings and Deeds of the Prophet Muhammad*, Boreal Books for a large sample of Muhammad's sayings and example as they relate to curing what ails you.

Muhammad was an illiterate and a man of his time, the Dark Ages. What about Allah who could not even accurately describe conception

that is the fertilization of the ovum of a female by male sperm, giving the sperm all the credit. He even got the length of the gestation period wrong.

Allah and the Beginnings of Life

(Abbreviated from *Getting to Know Allah*, Boreal Books)

A Fluid Beginning

25:54 And it is He who created from water a human being;
then he made him a kin by blood or marriage. Your Lord is
All-Powerful.

77:20 Have we not created them from base water?

77:21 That We laid in a secure place;

77:22 Until an appointed term.

77:23 We determined, and what excellent determiners were
We!

From “base water” deposited in the womb, Allah creates a human being with its two senses, a heart and no brain, as the heart was understood at the time of Muhammad to do much of what we know today to be the exclusive domain of the brain: thinking.

16:78 And Allah brought you out of your mothers’ bellies
knowing nothing; and gave you hearing, sight and hearts,
that perchance you may give thanks.

In another revelation about creating humans from H₂O, it is “flowing water,” which *Islamicstudies.info* contends “means ejaculation.”

86:4 Every soul has a watcher;

86:5 So let man consider what he was created from.

86:6 He was created from flowing water;

86:7 Emanating from what lies between the loins and the
breast-bones.

The amniotic sac, which ruptures at the onset of labour, is much closer to what God describes as the source of the water than are the testes. Then again, anatomy was never Allah’s strong suit.

Allah created all creatures from water.

24:45 Allah created every beast from water. Some of them

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crawl on their bellies, some walk on two feet and others walk on four. Allah creates whatever He pleases. Allah, indeed, has power over everything.

Revelations 75:37-39 bear a remote resemblance to what actually happens, if you ignore the role of a woman's egg and the fact that the sex of an individual is decided at conception.

75:36 Does man think that he shall be left unattended (*on Judgement Day*)?

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.

Bones Then Flesh

There is no such stage when bones are formed first then coated with flesh.

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.

Beware of the Clot

In Surah, *The Clot*, Allah reveals what Islamic scholars often point to as proof that He knew more about conception than was known at the time; that God was aware that babies developed from a fertilized egg, a zygote. They interpret "clot" in Verse 96:2 to mean zygote.

THE CLOT

96 Al-'Alaq

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

96:1 Read, in the Name of your Lord, Who created:

96:2 He created man from a clot.

To back up their argument, they also point to Verse 22:5.

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.

Muhammad, in the following hadith, explains what Allah meant by clot, and it is not a zygote by any stretch of the imagination; it is something completely alien to what we know about the gestation process.

Narrated Abdullah bin Mus'ud:

Allah's Apostle, the true and truly inspired said, "(The matter of the Creation of) a human being is put together in the womb of the mother in forty days, and then he becomes a clot of thick blood for a similar period, and then a piece of flesh for a similar period. Then Allah sends an angel who is ordered to write four things. He is ordered to write down his (i.e. the new creature's) deeds, his livelihood, his (date of) death, and whether he will be blessed or wretched (in religion). Then the soul is breathed into him. So, a man amongst you may do (good deeds till there is only a cubit between him and Paradise and then what has been written for him decides his behavior and he starts doing (evil) deeds characteristic of the people of the (Hell) Fire. And similarly a man amongst you may do (evil) deeds till there is only a cubit between him and the (Hell) Fire, and then what has been written for him decides his behavior, and he starts doing deeds characteristic of the people of Paradise."

Bukhari 54.430

It's All About the Sperm

6:98 And it is He Who created you from a single living soul; then [gave you] a resting place and a repository. Indeed, We have made plain Our signs for a people who understand.

23:12 We have created man from an extract of clay;

23:13 Then we placed him as a sperm in a secure place;

40:67 It is He who created you from dust¹⁶, then from a sperm, then from a clot. Then He brings you out as infants; then allows you to come of age, then become old men. Some of you will pass away before that, but you will attain a fixed term, that perchance you might understand.

A man is not the creator of the semen he emits during ejaculation.

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?

The semen that God has created is then deposited in the “resting place” that is the amniotic sack as “a sperm-drop” and from which He will fashion His “professed disputant,” the woman’s role being relegated to a “repository” for the sperm to grow into a male or female as directed.

16:4 He created man from a sperm-drop and, behold, he is a professed disputant.

Don’t be confused by the translator’s use of sperm, sperm-drop, semen, “extract of fluid” interchangeably; it’s all semen.

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.

32:7 Who fashioned well everything He created, and originated the creation of man from clay.

32:8 Then He fashioned his progeny from an extract of fluid.

32:9 Then He shaped him well and breathed into him of His Spirit. He gave you hearing, sight and hearts. How little do you give thanks!

¹⁶ In two revelations about the creation of Adam (see *Shared Prophets*: “Adam,” Boreal Books), God reveals He created him from dust; in another twelve, it is clay. Clay it is, then.

Another reminder from Allah about what He created from a sperm and a sperm only:

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.

Menstruation as an Impurity

2:222 And they ask you about menstruation say: "It is an impurity." So keep away from women during their menstruation and do not approach them (do not have sexual relations with them) until they are clean. Once they get clean get to them as Allah commanded you. Allah loves the repentant and loves those who purify themselves.

If God had been aware of the roles a woman's eggs and menstruation play in the reproductive cycle, would He have considered her contaminated during her menses. I don't think so.

The Suckling Imperative

(Abbreviated from *Women and the Koran*, Boreal Books)

According to Ya'qubi, an Arab historian and geographer, Muhammad once said that his first wet nurse was the nastiest of women and that she would burn for all eternity in the fires of Hell. To quench her thirst, she would only have the small amount of milk she allowed him to suckle in the days following his birth. The revelations on how long a mother or wet-nurse must suckle a child, and what the parents must do if they choose to shorten the weaning period decreed by Allah, may have had something to do with God's awareness that His Messenger had not been adequately breastfed as a baby.

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

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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.

If the decreed suckling period is 24 months, then Allah, in the following verse where He reveals a gestation and weaning period totaling 30 months, has underestimated the gestation period of the human fetus by three months ($30 - 24 = 6$ months in the womb).

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."

Suckling a non-relation adult male renders him the equivalent of a close relation.

Aisha (Allah be pleased with her) reported that Salim, the freed slave of Abu Hudhaifa, 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

Of Veils and the Lasting Influence of Two Teenage Girls

December 5, 2024

Abbas calls every day, often more than once. It's an arrangement we have. Should I fail to answer on any given day, he is to check in on me to make sure I have not passed. He has a key to my condo.

I met Abbas, a Muslim refugee from Iran, in 2005 if memory serves, in a pub near where I lived at the time. He has been sober at this writing for more than 19 years and the best of friends for almost as long. For how he beat his alcoholism and how we came to depend on each other I invite you to read Chapter "Two Muslims and Miss B./Abbas," *Fade to Black -- Triumph of the Irrational*, Boreal Books.

We talked about his home country a lot. Today, it was about Iran's Parliament enacting a harsh new modesty law that will not only increase penalties for not wearing the hijab, a piece of cloth that was never about piety, but also for not wearing it correctly, i.e., not a strand of hair must be visible.

The Assyrians, more than 4,000 years ago, were one of the first, if not the first, to require women to veil themselves. It had nothing to do with piety or modesty but to distinguish themselves from respectable women who did not practice the world's oldest profession. Head coverings for early female believers, like for all desert dwellers, including men, provided protection from a blazing sun and swirling sand when the wind blew. God, on His spokesman's insistence, extended the use of the veil for women when they answered the call of nature, with men in the vicinity doing the same. In populated areas that meant public latrines where a low wall usually separated the sexes. In fact, until Muhammad made it official, his wives did not even bother to cover their hair, let alone their face, when using a public latrine near their home, including Sauda, whose complaint about his mischievous friend Umar got her husband thinking.

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

The *Verse of the Veil* or *Al-Hijab* is often confused with the *Verse of the Curtain*. The *Verse of the Curtain* was revealed on the night of Muhammad's wedding to his former daughter-in-law, Zaynab b. Jahsh, when uninvited guests kept showing up at his home after the wedding feast, overstaying their welcome.

Narrated Anas bin Malik:

When Allah's Apostle married Zainab bint Jahsh she was with him in the house and he prepared a meal and invited the people (to it). They sat down (after finishing their meal) and started chatting. So the Prophet went out and then returned several times while they were still sitting and talking.

So Allah revealed the Verse: "O you who believe! Enter not the Prophet's houses until leave is given to you for a meal, (and then) not (so early as) to wait for its preparation ...ask them (*his wives*) from behind a screen." (33:53)

So the screen was set up and the people went away.

Bukhari 60.315

33:53 O believers, do not enter the houses of the Prophet, unless you are invited to a meal, without awaiting the hour; but if you are invited, then enter; but when you have eaten, disperse, without lingering for idle talk. That is vexing to the Prophet who might be wary of you, but Allah is not wary of the truth. If you ask them (the wives of the Prophet) for an object, ask them from behind a curtain. That is purer for your hearts and theirs. You should never hurt the Messenger of Allah, nor take his wives in marriage after him. That is truly abominable in the sight of Allah.

For many women who wear the niqab, it is analogous to a portable curtain. Revelation 33:53 also makes Muhammad out to be a jealous

and controlling husband who would seek to influence his young widows' life from beyond the grave. For Muslim women, having sex with a man other than their husband is flirting with a gruesome death and risking spending an eternity on fire in the depth of Allah's Hell. The interdiction against taking "his wives in marriage after him" is equivalent to condemning Muhammad's mostly young widows to never enjoying being intimate with a man again after his passing.

Despite the *Verse of Al-Hijab*, Umar continued to tease Sauda. What was Muhammad to do, forbid his wives from leaving the house to relieve themselves?

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-Khaṭṭāb 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."

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

Islamic scriptures are notoriously contradictory and confusing in some places, especially hadiths, as can be expected in hearsay recollections passed on from one generation to the next of what Muhammad allegedly said or did two hundred years earlier. For example, the verse of Al-Hijab invites women to "guard their private parts" and to "drape their bosom with their veil," not their face or hair.

24:31 And tell the believing women to cast down their eyes and guard their private parts and not show their finery,

except 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 desire, 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."

Muhammad was fascinated with breasts. He would play with them when his wives were experiencing their menses and everything below the waist was haram.

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

For God's spokesman it was the sight of jingling breasts, not a woman's hair that caused men to experience spontaneous erections along with a desire to have illegal intercourse then and there, should they not be wedded to the cause of their arousal. The veil, and Allah's interdiction against women stamping their feet "so that what they have concealed of their finery might be known" is meant to conceal a woman's breasts and their tendency to jiggle when the owner is in motion, not their hair. Nonetheless, it is likely that women and girls covered their face, and perhaps their hair, with one of more of their veils to maintain a modicum of privacy and decorum while squatting in the vicinity of men doing the same. But it is not what the verse of al-hijab is all about; it is about covering *their finery* which is mostly everything below the neck, their breasts in particular.

In a vaunted revelation about the perfect wife there is no mention of a dress code. Revelation 66:5 appears towards the end of a somewhat infantile story about the Prophet sampling some honey in secret and telling a spouse, who betrays his confidence. The All-Seeing tells Muhammad what has transpired, but, for some reason, not all of it. The part He leaves out, and which remains a mystery to

this day, seems to be the key to the story. First, Allah informs His Messenger 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."

God suspects a conspiracy against His Messenger. To put an end to the gossip, He informs the two women of the formidable force allied against them: God himself, His most honourable believers, and all the angels, including the mighty Gabriel, support the Prophet. 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 to silence the two women.

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: *divorce!* God would grant His spokesman a divorce so that He may receive in exchange better wives, which He then describes:

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.

Do you measure up? Allah follows his instructions about how wives should behave with the usual threat about burning to a crisp those who don't scrupulously follow His instructions.

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.

The two wives in question were Aisha and Hafsa.

Narrated Abdullah bin Abbas:

I had been eager to ask Umar about the two ladies from

among the wives of the Prophet regarding whom Allah said (in the Qur'an saying): If you two (wives of the Prophet namely Aisha and Hafsa) turn in repentance to Allah your hearts are indeed so inclined (to oppose what the Prophet likes) (66:4), till I performed the Hajj along with Umar (and on our way back from Hajj) he went aside (to answer the call of nature) and I also went aside along with him carrying a tumbler of water. When he had answered the call of nature and returned, I poured water on his hands from the tumbler and he performed ablution.

I said, "O Chief of the believers! Who were the two ladies from among the wives of the Prophet to whom Allah said: 'If you two return in repentance (66:4)?'"

He said, "I am astonished at your question, O Ibn Abbas. They were Aisha and Hafsa."

Bukhari 43.648

Much of the oppressive dogma pertaining to female conduct and appearance was revealed as a result of a late middle-aged man's difficulties in controlling two of his teenage wives: Aisha and Hafsa. The most significant contributor was Aisha when she was accidentally stranded in the desert and rescued by a young man who returned her to her husband the next day (see Chapter "The Necklace," *1,001 Sayings and Deed of Muhammad*, Boreal Books). Needless to say, this started people talking. Talk, if revelations pertaining to the incident are to be believed, that really distressed Muhammad and Allah.

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 though 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.

None of this chatter would have ensued if the All-Seeing had promptly, as was the case with the divulging of the eating of the honey, informed His spokesman that he had witnessed everything, and Aisha had not had sex with the young man who rescued her instead of waiting a month to do so. In the meantime, Muhammad confined his child-bride to the home of her parents while he waited on the god for whom he spoke to get back to him.

Some did not believe that the situation with Aisha was a big deal and thought nothing of discussing it openly. But they would be wrong; this was not a trivial matter.

24:15 Since you received it on your tongues and you uttered with your mouths what you had no knowledge of, deeming it a simple matter; whereas in Allah's Sight it was very grave.

24:16 And would that, upon hearing it, you were to say: "It is not for us to speak about this. Glory be to You; this is truly a great calumny."

And let us never talk about this again.

24:17 Allah admonishes you never to return to the like of this, if you are real believers.

24:18 And Allah expounds clearly for you the Signs. Allah is all Knowing, Wise.

God may have assured His spokesman that nothing untoward had taken place but His inability to let it go—after telling everyone to shut up about it—suggests otherwise.

24:19 Indeed, those who love to see indecency spread among the believers will have in this world and the next a very painful punishment. Allah knows, but you do not know.

24:20 And but for Allah's Bounty to you and His Mercy and that Allah is truly Clement and Merciful;

24:21 O believers, do not follow in the footsteps of Satan; for he who follows in the footsteps of Satan, simply bids to indecency and disrepute. But for Allah's Bounty to you and His Mercy, no one of you would have ever been pure; but

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Allah purifies whomever He pleases. Allah is All-Hearing, All Knowing.

24:22 Let not the bounteous and wealthy among you swear off giving freely to kinsmen, the destitute and the Emigrants in the Path of Allah. Let them pardon and forgive. Do you not wish that Allah should forgive you? Allah is All-Forgiving, Merciful.

24:23 Surely those who slander married women, who are heedless and believing, are accursed in this world and the next, and they shall have a terrible punishment.

References to Judgment Day when your appendages and orifices will testify against you (see Chapter "Judgement Day," *The Islamic Hereafter*, Boreal Books):

24:24 On the Day when their tongues, their hands and their feet shall bear witness against them, regarding what they used to do.

24:25 On that Day Allah will pay them their just dues and they will know that Allah is the Manifest Truth.

24:26 Foul women for foul men, and foul men for foul women; and good women for good men, and good men for good women. Those are acquitted of the burden of what they say; they will have forgiveness and a generous provision.

In this somewhat disjointed rant, God has a few instructions about entering houses other than your own.

24:27 O believers, do not enter houses other than your own before you ask leave and greet their occupants. This is better for you, that perchance you may remember well.

24:28 If you find no one in them, do not enter until you are given permission; and if it is said to you: "Go back", then go back. That is purer for you, and Allah knows well what you do.

24:29 It is no offence for you to enter uninhabited houses in which you have some means of enjoyment. Allah knows what you reveal and what you conceal.

Another revelation about lowering your gaze and guarding your private parts:

24:30 Tell the believers to cast down their eyes and guard their private parts. This is purer for them. Allah is conversant with what they do.

It was during this lengthy outburst that Verse 24:31, repeated here, was revealed. If Aisha and her rescuer had done nothing wrong, why the new rules about women draping their bosoms etc.?

24:31 And tell the believing women to cast down their eyes and guard their private parts and not show their finery, except 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 desire, 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.

And, if Aisha did nothing wrong, why did God admonished and warned Muhammad's wives of a terrible punishment for committing "a flagrant foul act," which has to be, if we are still on topic, about making the Prophet out to be a cuckold.

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 spokesman in an embarrassing situation is not enough, God is not beneath offering a 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.

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Being the wife of the Prophet may not have been all that fulfilling for God to admonish them to “not be abject in speech,” e.g., express hopelessness, when talking about their lives with the greatest of them all, thereby giving hope to young men of their generation – what God considered a “sickness” – that 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 have done what young women married to an older man sometimes do, and that is look for validation of their attractiveness in a young man’s eyes when out in public. The confinement of the Prophets wives in the following revelation, along with Allah waiting an inordinate of time to vouch for Aisha’s truthfulness, may be the strongest evidence we have that her husband believed she cheated on him. All that what was left to do was to come up with a strategy – the reason for the delay – that would have God admonished those who thought Muhammad a cuckold and ensure that none of his wives would ever have the opportunity to embarrass him again, using the fig leaf of God wanting to purify them fully as reason for their confinement.

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.

Because an old man believed a teenage wife of his had been unfaithful, women everywhere in the conservative Muslim world, such as found in Afghanistan, are forced into seclusion to this day. Allah admonished Muhammad’s wives to stay at home, and conservative Muslim men have been enjoining their wives and daughters to do the same ever since.

What's In a Name?

December 6, 2024

Muhammad was the top choice for parents naming their baby boys in England and Wales in 2023.

BBC Dec. 5, 2024

Narrated Abu Huraira:

The Prophet said, "Name yourselves after me (by my name), but do not call yourselves by my Kuniya (part of an Arabic name which usually begins with "abu" and refers to a father's first-born son), and whoever sees me in a dream, he surely sees me, for Satan cannot impersonate me (appear in my figure).

And whoever intentionally ascribes something to me falsely, he will surely take his place in the (Hell) Fire."

Bukhari 73.217

Just like in *The Land of Peace*¹⁷—the land where wars are never-ending—Muhammad has become the most popular boys name in England and Wales, proving once again that you can take the boy out of *The Land of Peace* but you can't take *The Land of Peace* out of the boy, starting with his parents. Mothers will name their sons after Muhammad even when that progeny is the result of the type of rape prevalent in the *Land of Peace*, that of captives, which Muhammad sanctioned by not forbidding it when informed of the practice.

ISIS captive gives birth to child of rape

When they ordered her into a car she thought death was imminent. She was wrong.

"You will be our slave," she said, recalling their words.

For more than a year she lived as a prisoner, "like a dead person, but they had not killed me yet."

Toward the end of her captivity one of her captors beat and raped her.

"I tried to fight, I cried a lot. There was a lot of pain, I was

¹⁷ Islam divides the world into two major areas: the *Land of Peace* where Islamic Law is the law of the land; and the *Land of War* where it isn't.

beaten a lot, but I couldn't do anything," she told CNN's Arwa Damon.

By the time she was released she was pregnant with a son. She named [him] Mohammed.

CNN November 4, 2016

Muhammad established that raping female captives was in accordance with Sharia Law when asked his opinion of coitus interruptus. In one hadith, he would rather that rapists not withdraw before ejaculation; in another, it does not matter.

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

Abu Sirma said to Abu Sa'id al Khadri (Allah be pleased with him): O Abu Sa'id, did you hear Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) mentioning al-'azl?

He said: Yes, and added: We went out with Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) on the expedition to the Bi'l- Mustaliq and took captive some excellent Arab women; and we desired them, for we were suffering from the absence of our wives, (but at the same time) we also desired ransom for them.

So we decided to have sexual intercourse with them but by observing 'azl (withdrawing the male sexual organ before emission of semen to avoid conception).

But we said: We are doing an act whereas Allah's Messenger is amongst us; why not ask him?

So we asked Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him), and he said: It does not matter if you do not do it, for every soul that is to be born up to the Day of Resurrection will be born.

Imam Muslim 8:3371

My name, whose one meaning is “brave as a bear” will always be associated, not with a bear but a big, friendly dog. I am okay with that, although it would be nice to also be remembered as the author who revealed the real Muhammad in books such as *Jihad in the Koran*, *From Merchant to Messenger*, *1001 Sayings and Deeds of the Prophet Muhammad*, etc.

Common Lies Told About Muhammad

The following photograph was taken at a protest in Sydney Australia on September 15, 2012 against a film showing the Prophet—like the rest of us—less than perfect. What is written on the sign has become the rallying cry of Islamists. It is meant to intimidate anyone who would even think of questioning a fabricated reputation for decency and compassion.



¹⁸ Image may be subject to copyright. Identity of the children obscured by author.

The less deserving a religious icon's reputation for propriety, the louder will be the call to silence his critics.

Never Had Sex with a Child

More evidence that Muhammad married a six year old child, and consummated the marriage when she was nine.

Shortly after taking power, Ayatollah Khomeini lowered the age at which girls could be married off, from eighteen to nine, to conform to Islamic law. In 2006, the Iranian Parliament voted to overturn Khomeini's decree and made it compulsory for girls under the age of 15 and boys under 18 to have court approval to get married. The *Guardian Council of the Constitution* quashed the initiative, and reinstated Khomeini's ruling. What the legislature voted for was an unacceptable innovation in the religion.

Narrated Aisha:

Allah's Apostle said, "If somebody innovates something which is not in harmony with the principles of our religion, that thing is rejected."

Bukhari 49.861

No man has had more of an impact on an imperfect world than the embodiment of the perfect human being, whose every action is to be emulated as closely as possible.

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.

Narrated Aisha:

The Prophet did something and allowed his people to do it, but some people refrained from doing it. When the Prophet learned of that, he delivered a sermon, and after having sent Praises to Allah, he said, "What is wrong with such people as refrain from doing a thing that I do? By Allah, I know Allah better than they, and I am more afraid of Him than they."

Bukhari 73.123

The imitators of the purported embodiment of the perfect human being who raped a child 1,400 years ago are responsible for an extraordinary increase in a condition called vesicovaginal fistula or

VVF, as mentioned in *Leaving Montréal/Jasmine*. To save future children from Muhammad's example, Islam would have to admit that what he did was wrong. That would effectively destroy the myth of the perfect human being. Not about to happen. The evidence in the hadiths that Muhammad married Aisha when she was six and had sex with her when he was fifty-three years of age and she was nine, is overwhelming.

Narrated Aisha:

The Prophet engaged me when I was a girl of six (years). We went to Medina and stayed at the home of Bani-al-Harith bin Khazraj. Then I got ill and my hair fell down. Later on my hair grew (again) and my mother, Um Ruman, came to me while I was playing in a swing with some of my girlfriends. She called me, and I went to her, not knowing what she wanted to do to me. She caught me by the hand and made me stand at the door of the house. I was breathless then, and when my breathing became all right, she took some water and rubbed my face and head with it. Then she took me into the house. There in the house I saw some Ansari women (*women of Medina*) who said, "Best wishes and Allah's Blessing and a good luck." Then she entrusted me to them and they prepared me (for the marriage). Unexpectedly Allah's Apostle came to me in the forenoon and my mother handed me over to him, and at that time I was a girl of nine years of age.

Bukhari 58.234

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

Narrated Hisham's father:

Khadija (*also spelled Khadijah, Muhammad's first wife*) died three years before the Prophet departed to Medina. He stayed there for two years or so and then he married Aisha when she was a girl of six years of age, and he consumed that marriage when she was nine years old.

Bukhari 58.236

Al-Tabari [838 - 923], author of the definitive history of Islam from Creation to 915 A.D., *The History of the Prophets and Kings*, quotes Aisha about the blessed day. According to the eminent Muslim historian, Aisha first had sex with Muhammad in her parent's house.

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. Neither a camel nor a sheep was slaughtered on behalf of me.

Tabari IX:131

There was no wedding celebration, the meaning of "Neither a camel nor a sheep was slaughtered on behalf of me." What an unseemly sight that would have been: a fifty-three year old man marrying a nine-year-old child who still played with dolls, to be followed by a public exit by the bride and groom to consummate, in private, their union.

Aisha (Allah be pleased with her) reported that Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him) married her when she was seven (sic) years old, and she was taken to his house as a bride when she was nine, and her dolls were with her; and when he (the Holy Prophet) died she was eighteen years old.

Sahih Muslim 8.3311

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 Prophet. Ayaan Hirsi Ali, in *The Caged Virgin*, writes that Aisha's father pleaded with Muhammad to wait until she reached adulthood before consummating the marriage.

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... By our Western standards Muhammad is a perverse man.

Ayaan Hirsi Ali, *The Caged Virgin*, p. 81

Muhammad was not a pervert for the child, who as mentioned in a previous chapter, had "given her consent."

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

A Prophet of Mercy

The so-called Prophet of Mercy was not so much a forecaster of the future as of the past. The events recounted in the Koran, except for Judgement Day, are all about what came before, with the exception of the ubiquitous safe-bet prediction that is the bread and butter of doomsday prophets to this day: "The end is near, repent!" The Prophet of Mercy may have been a typical doomsday prophet but a compassionate man he was not! Muhammad was praised as the Prophet of Mercy after he pardoned the men he would need to complete the conquest of the Peninsula after Mecca surrendered, while discreetly ordering the assassination of four young women and six men, one a fellow by the name of Khatal. Khatal sought the protection of the Ka'ba to no avail.

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

The four young women the Prophet of Mercy demanded be slaughtered forthwith, as girls during his time in Mecca, had insulted him in some way or had sung satirical ditties about his claim to speak on God's behalf.

The apostle had instructed his commanders when they

entered Mecca only to fight those who resisted them, except a small number who were to be killed even if they were found beneath the curtains of the Ka'ba. Among them was Abdullah b. Sa'd, brother of the B. Amir b. Lu'ayy. The reason he ordered him to be killed was that he had been a Muslim and used to write down revelation[s]; then he apostatized and returned to Quraysh and fled to Uthman b. Affan whose foster-brother he was; The latter hid him until he brought him to the apostle after the situation in Mecca was tranquil, and asked that he might be granted immunity.

They allege that the apostle remained silent for a long time till finally he said yes. When Uthman had left he said to his companions who were sitting around him, 'I kept silent so that one of you might get up and strike off his head!'

One of the Ansar said, 'Then why didn't you give me a sign, O Apostle of God?'

He answered that a prophet does not kill by pointing.

Another was Abdullah b. Khatal of B. Taym b. Ghalib. He had two singing-girls Fartana and her friend who used to sing satirical songs about the apostle, so he ordered that they should be killed with him.

Another was al-Huvvayrith b. Nuqaydh b. Wahb b. Abd b. Qusayy, one of those who used to insult him in Mecca (804).

Another was Miqyas b. Hubaba because he had killed an Ansar] who had killed his brother accidentally, and returned to Quraysh as a polytheist.

And Sara, freed slave of one of the B. Abdu'l-Muttalib; and Ikrima b. Abu Jahl. Sara had insulted him in Mecca. As for Tkrima, he fled to the Yaman.

As for Ibn Khatal's two singing-girls, one was killed and the other ran away.

A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad: A translation of ibn Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah*, Oxford University Press, p. 550-551

The young women were not the first victims of a thin-skinned, vindictive man with a long memory. That honour goes to the poets whose words troubled the Prophet of Mercy. Allah said: "Kill them wherever you find them!" For no people was this truer than the unfortunate poets who lampooned Muhammad or whom people

praised as better versifiers. In their murder, the perfect human being took a personal interest. The first poet to be killed was al-Nadr. The Meccans had praised his verses as superior to those of Muhammad. When he spotted al-Nadr among the prisoners captured at Badr, he had him beheaded on the spot. The next to die was the oldest poet, if not the oldest man of Medina, centenarian Abu Afak.

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

The courageous poetess Asma bint Marwan condemned, in verse, the murder of the old wordsmith. In the tradition of every despot through the ages, she then became the target of the assassin's blade. With an infant suckling at her breast, whom her killer pushed aside, she too was stabbed to death while sleeping. After every murder, the assassin would return to the mosque to inform Muhammad and be praised for what he had done at his insistence.

Umayr Ibn Adi came to her in the night and entered her house. Her children were sleeping around her. There was one whom she was suckling. He searched her with his hand because he was blind, and separated the child from her. He thrust his sword in her chest till it pierced up to her back. Then he offered the morning prayers with the Prophet at Medina.

The apostle of Allah said to him: "Have you slain the daughter of Marwan?"

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

Muhammad dared the men of her tribe to seek revenge for her murder, as was the custom. Knowing that there was nothing this man was not capable of, they avoided their own destruction by becoming Muslims. The next unfortunate poet to be murdered, per Muhammad's instructions, was Abu-Rafi.

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 enemies) 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?'

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

The murder of the poet Ka'b bin Al-Ashraf:

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 Allan'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

The mass murder of worshippers at the shrine of Dhul-Khalasa, a rival to the Ka'ba in Mecca:

Narrated Jarir bin Abdullah:

There was a house called Dhul-Khalasa in the Pre-Islamic Period and it was also called Al-Ka'ba Al-Yamaniya or Al-Ka'ba Ash-Shamiya.

Allah's Apostle said to me, "Will you relieve me from Dhul-Khalasa?"

So I left for it with 150 cavalrymen from the tribe of Ahmas and then we destroyed it and killed whoever we found there. Then we came to the Prophet and informed him about it. He invoked good upon us and upon the tribe of Ahmas.

Bukhari 58.160

After the successful defense of Medina, referred to in the following as the battle of Al-Khandaq, Muhammad received an order from the

angel Gabriel to attack the Banu Qurayzah (also spelled Quraiza), the last remaining Jewish tribe of Medina:

Narrated Aisha:

When Allah's Apostle returned on the day (of the battle) of Al-Khandaq (i.e. Trench), he put down his arms and took a bath. Then Gabriel, whose head was covered with dust, came to him saying, "You have put down your arms! By Allah, I have not put down my arms yet."

Allah's Apostle said, "Where (to go now)?"

Gabriel said, "This way," pointing towards the tribe of Bani Quraiza. So Allah's Apostle went out towards them.

Bukhari 52.68

He marched on their fortress just outside Medina with three thousand men. When he neared the fortress, he called out to its defenders: "O brothers of monkeys and pigs! Fear me, fear me." The simian reference would make its way into the Koran for future generations of the righteous to ponder.

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 an example to their contemporaries and to those after them, and an admonition to the righteous.

After twenty-five days, judging their situation as hopeless, the Banu Qurayzah asked for a mediator. Muhammad sent Abu Lubabah who, matter-of-factly, informed the Jews that his boss had slaughter on his mind.

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

The Banu Qurayzah asked to be allowed to go into exile. Muhammad rejected that out of hand and suggested that a mortally wounded

believer by the name of Sad bin Mu'adh decide their fate. Ignoring Lubabah's warning, they agreed and surrendered without a fight.

Narrated Abu Said Al-Khudri:

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

A trench was dug in Medina's marketplace and the men and boys who had begun to grow pubic hair of the Banu Qurayzah were beheaded with the *Prophet of Mercy* looking on.

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... They numbered 600 or 700 – the largest estimate says they were between 800 and 900. The affair continued until the Messenger of God had finished with them.

Tabari

Narrated Atiyyah al-Qurazi:

I was among the captives of Banu Qurayzah. They examined us, and those who had begun to grow hair (pubes) were killed, and those who had not were not killed. I was among those who had not grown hair.

Abu Dawud 38.4390

The dead men's wives, daughters, and surviving boys were sold into slavery, except for the beautiful widow Rayhanah whom Muhammad made his concubine.

The Banu Qurayzah were one of the three Jewish tribes of Medina – the other two having been forced into exile – who, along with the Arabs of the oasis city, had welcomed Muhammad when his Meccan

kin were bent on killing him. Had the Jews of Medina not signed on to the newly drafted Constitution of Medina (one of, if not the first of its kind) in which they, along with their Arab neighbours, accepted Muhammad as arbitrator, Islam might have been stillborn. God's spokesman would prove himself a ruthless arbitrator where women accused of illegal intercourse were concerned. 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.

Malik's Muwatta 41.41.1.5

For more examples of Muhammad's rulings in cases of illegal sex see Chapter "Stoning," *A Thousand and One Sayings and Deeds of the Prophet Muhammad*, Boreal Books.

An Illiterate

Who cares, you say? It shouldn't matter, but it is dogma and to deny it would diminish his purported achievement: memorizing what the Angel Gabriel, the Messenger to the Messenger, revealed to him of Allah's Koran and repeating, word for word, what he usually had been told the night before to an assembly of believers and sceptics the next day or later, without missing a beat. His rewriting of a section of the Treaty of Hudaibiyah and his request, on his death bed, for material on which to write his final instructions should put to rest the notion that he was illiterate. There is no denying, however, Muhammad's power of observation:

Narrated Abu Ishaq-Ash-Shaibani:

I asked Zir bin Hubaish regarding the Statement of Allah: "And was at a distance of but two bow-lengths or (even) nearer; So did (Allah) convey The Inspiration to His slave (Gabriel) and then he (Gabriel) Conveyed (that to Muhammad)." (53;9-10)

On that, Zir said, "Ibn Mas'ud informed us that the Prophet had seen Gabriel having 600 wings."

Bukhari 54.455

Not a Wife Beater

Ottawa imam condemns 'honour killings'. The imam of the Ottawa Mosque has condemned so-called honour killing, saying the practice speaks to a perverse sense of honour that is alien to Islam, and has no place in society... In his sermon, Metwally urged a packed Ottawa Mosque to look to the examples of the Prophet Muhammad, who never hit or abused his wives in any form."

National post, Dec 11, 2011

I am sure the imam meant well, but this is simply not the case. The following hadith is from *The Book of Prayers* (Kitab Al-Salat) of Sahih Muslim. It begins with a typical introduction with the narrator identifying himself, 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 Aisha 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 her husband joined her for an intimate moment, after which, thinking she is asleep, he 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 outside where she observes him doing hand gestures, after which they both return to the house, Aisha rushing ahead and hopping into bed, hoping her spouse 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: Why is it, O Aisha, that you are out of breath?

Muhammad asked the obvious question. She better tell the truth, or Allah will tell on her.

I said: There is nothing.

He said: Tell me or the Subtle and the Aware would inform me.

Aisha tells whatever she tells her husband, swearing it is the truth, and this is when he 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, Muhammad feels compelled to explain to an obviously skeptical teenager why she did not see Gabriel.

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 him.

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.

Sahih Muslim 4.2127

I would not read too much in the punching of Aisha by Muhammad as Islamic scriptures, both the hadiths and the Koran, sanction the beating of wives as a matter of course.

Ghosts and Other Manifestations

December 7, 2024



The lightest touch and I was fully awake ready to give her a prescribed dose of hydromorphone, or adjust her oxygen level depending on the circumstances, and so on. It did not bother me that I had to get up five or six times a night; I was being useful to the person I loved, and how I miss that. Now, if I am jolted awake by whatever, I turn on the television on the dresser so as to create a calming presence and avoid imagining ghosts lurking in the darkness.

If I were Muslim I would not be worried about my imagination getting the best of me at times like these, since there are no ghosts per se in Islam. If there is anything hiding and watching you under the camouflage of night, it is probably the jinn. Of all the craziness you find in the Koran, the jinn stand alone.

Allah and the Jinn

(Abbreviated from *Getting to Know Allah*, Boreal Books)

Of all the inhabitants of the Koran, jinns (Allah refers to them collectively as *the jinn*) are the most fascinating. They are the most versatile and mischievous of creatures. They even have a chapter named after them, Surah 72: The Jinn. Pre-Islamic Arabs believed in the existence of the jinn, which may explain their significant presence in the Book. The jinn are said to be spirits that inhabit another dimension. The caricature of the genie is undoubtedly based on this creature of the Koran. God does not share power with the jinn, or humans for that matter.

6:100 They set up the jinn as Allah's partners, although He created them; and they falsely ascribe to Him sons and daughters without any knowledge. Glory be to Him, and highly exalted is He above what they ascribe to Him!

Allah created the jinn from fire before he created man who, in one version of Adam's creation (see Chapter "Adam," *Shared Prophets*, Boreal Books for the six accounts of Adam's creation), was moulded out of clay and slime.

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.

Bad jinn 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.

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 thankfully, O David's House; for few of My servants are truly thankful."

Some people, at one time, worshipped the jinn instead of Allah, who was under the impression that they had worshipped His angels. On Judgement Day, the angels will set Him straight.

34:40 On the Day that He will muster them, then say to the angels: "Are those the ones who used to worship you?"

34:41 They will say: "Glory be to You; You are our protector, apart from them." No, rather, they used to worship the jinn, most of them believing in them.

34:42 Today, none of them has the power to profit or harm the other, and We will say to the wrongdoer: "Taste the punishment of the Fire which you used to question."

There is no relationship between Allah and the jinn, no matter what they allege; they, too, "will be summoned" on Judgement Day.

37:158 And they alleged a kinship between Him and the jinn, whereas the jinn know very well that they will be summoned.

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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.

Men and jinn were created by Allah to worship Him, not to feed Him.
He will feed the wrongdoers; just don't rush Him.

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.

51:58 Surely, Allah is the All-Provider, the Mighty One, the Strong.

51:59 The wrongdoers will have a portion like the portions of their fellows; so let them not rush Me.

51:60 Woe unto the unbelievers on that Day which they have been promised.

A group of jinn become Muslim after surreptitiously hearing Muhammad recite verses from the Book.

THE JINN

72 Al-Jinn

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

72:1 Say: "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 verses heard by these jinn, judging by their response, were probably about Allah denouncing those who would say He shares power with a partner or has a son.

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 knew that jinn and men were liars who told falsehoods about Allah.

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;

A tattletale tree informed Muhammad of the jinn's presence.

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

Some humans sought refuge with the jinn.

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.

72:7 ""And that they thought, as you thought, that Allah will not raise anybody from the dead;

The jinn admitted to eavesdropping on Paradise in spite of it being heavily guarded.

72:8 ""And that we reached out to heaven, but we found it filled with mighty guards and comets;

72:9 ""And that we used to sit around it eavesdropping; but whoever listens now will find a comet in wait for him;

Just like they were clueless about the Koran after listening in on Allah's conversations with his angels for who knows how long, the jinn confessed to also not knowing His plans for the people on Earth.

72:10 ""And that we do not know whether ill was intended for whoever is on earth, or whether their Lord intended rectitude for them;

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Not all the jinn became Muslims after hearing “the Guidance” (Revelation 72:14).

72:11 “And that some of us are righteous and some are less than that for we were of diverse persuasions;

72:12 “And that we knew that we will not thwart Allah on earth, and that we will not thwart Him by flight;

72:13 “And that when we heard the Guidance, we believed in it; for he who believes in his Lord need not fear to be stinted or over-burdened;

72:14 “And that some us are submitting and some are diverging.’ Those who have submitted have surely sought rectitude.”

Just like the humans who do not submit, bad jinn are Hell’s firewood. They may have been created “from blazing fire,” but that does not mean they cannot be burnt over and over.

72:15 But those who have diverged, have been firewood for Hell;

72:16 And that had they followed the Right Path, We would have given them abundant water to drink;

72:17 So as to test them thereby. He who refrains from the mention of His Lord, He will afflict him with terrible punishment;

Jinn and Men Together on Judgement Day

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).

Jinn had their own messengers.

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 you of seeing this Day of yours (*Judgement Day*)? 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 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.

Considering the importance of the jinn in the Koran, it is surprising that belief in this creature is not one of the Pillars of Faith in which a Muslim must believe.

- 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.

Not to be confused with the Five Pillars of Islam, which are not beliefs but mandatory activities:

- 1) Shahadah, declaring allegiance to God.
- 2) Salat, daily prayers.
- 3) Zakat, annual charity.
- 4) Saum, month-long fasting.
- 5) The Hajj.

Pray for Me if You Want. Just Don't Make It a Production

December 8, 2024

While I don't believe there is a Paradise and a god who decides who gets in and who doesn't, I have no objections to someone praying that I be let in. It shows they care and for that I am grateful.

Muhammad would do away with inaudible prayers of the type that were subdued, unchoreographed and uncoerced one-on-one conversations with your god, even when praying in groups. He would make prayers an audible, mandatory, and precise performance at the risk of losing one's head for non-compliance.

Prayers

(Abbreviated from *Getting to Know Allah*, Boreal Books)

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 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-Burak*. The night of *Mi'raj* is celebrated on the 27th day of the month of *Rajab*, the seventh month of the Muslim calendar.

The Prophet had just finished his late-night prayers when the angel *Gabriel* appeared holding *Al-Burak's* bridle. Muhammad got on the horse and flew off to Jerusalem where he met with the spirits of earlier messengers and led them in prayer before taking off for Paradise to meet with the god for whom he spoke. Revelation 17:1 is the only reference to this journey between "the Sacred Mosque," i.e., Mecca, and "the farthest mosque," i.e., Jerusalem.¹⁹

THE NIGHT JOURNEY

17 *Al-Isrâ'*

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

¹⁹ Jerusalem surrendered to the Muslims in 638 A.D., six years after the death of Muhammad; therefore, there could not have been a mosque, as we know them, there at the time.

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.

The trip to heaven was not without its perils, with the jinn intercepting Muhammad on his way up. Allah had already informed him of what to say to be allowed to pass.

72:19 And that when the Servant of Allah got up calling on Him, they almost set upon him in throngs.

72:20 Say: "I only call upon my Lord, and I do not associate with Him anyone else."

72:21 Say: "I have no power to harm or guide you rightly."

72:22 Say: "No one shall protect me from Allah, and I will not find apart from Him any refuge;

72:23 "Except for a proclamation from Allah and His Messages. He who disobeys Allah and His Messenger, for him the Fire of Hell is in store. Therein they shall dwell forever."

During his ascent to the seventh level of Paradise, where God sits on His Throne, Muhammad encountered many figures from the Bible, such as Jesus and Moses, whose appearances he describes in hadiths such as the following:

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

There were no witnesses to Muhammad's departure from Mecca, the landing in Jerusalem, the takeoff for heaven, or the landing in Mecca the following morning. When Muhammad described this journey to the Meccans the next day, many believed he had gone insane. It was only after he described seeing a caravan from the air (which arrived shortly thereafter in Mecca) that some of the accusations were withdrawn.

Negotiating the Number of Daily Prayers

It was during this one-night visit with God, for whom Muhammad provides no description, that the number of prayers that a believer must perform every day was established after some *literal* up and down negotiations with God caused by the intervention of Moses, who should have been relaxing in his spacious grave at the time, waiting on Judgement Day. The Koran may be short on specifics, but not those who listened to Muhammad's swashbuckling account of his flight to Paradise and what took place.

In accounts of this milestone event in the history of Islam, the Bait-ul-Ma'mur is mentioned. Except for an entrance and an exit door, it is an almost exact replica of the Ka'ba in Mecca and is situated directly above it in Paradise. 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, entering by one door and exiting by the other, as explained by Gabriel in the first of two recollections about this memorable night. The following hadith, in which the narrator remembers Muhammad mentioning his stopover in Jerusalem, is from the Sahih Muslim collection.

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 Yusuf²⁰ (peace of Allah be upon him) who had been given half of (world) beauty. He welcomed me 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.

²⁰ Joseph, son of Jacob.

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 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

In a hadith from the Bukhari collection, there are more back and forth negotiations to get Allah down to five daily prayers; the offer of milk

or wine (or honey, which is not mentioned in the previous recollection) is made after arriving in the seventh heaven, not prior to the ascent. We take up this narrative at the point where Muhammad is being shown the Bait-ul-Ma'mur.

Narrated Abbas bin Malik:

Then Al-Bait-ul-Ma'mur (i.e. the Sacred House) was shown 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, 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 Worshipers."

Bukhari 58.227

Choreographing the Irrational (Abbreviated from *Fade to Black – Triumph of the Irrational*, Boreal Books)

Muhammad made prayers a highly choreographed affair, ostensibly after being shown the steps by the angel Gabriel. It is this prayer play that used to be largely confined to mosques and their surroundings, the Musalla, that is increasingly staged in the public space.

By tying the irrational to the performance of a sequence of prescribed movements done in unison and spouting familiar phrases repeated as one, Muhammad achieved three objectives that are central to the success of Islam or any militant organization: indoctrination, visibility and discipline. The coercive choreography of prayers in Islam is central to this purpose. You did not perform this choreography exactly as demonstrated and on schedule at your risk and peril in both the Hereafter and in the here-and-now.

Narrated An-Nu'man bin Bashir:

The Prophet said, "Straighten your rows or Allah will alter your faces."

Bukhari 11.685

Narrated Abdullah bin Masud:

The Prophet recited Suratan-Najm (103) 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

On the following page, the Islamic State, in the northern Syrian city of Jarablus, exercising the type of discipline Muhammad would have approved. As reported in the *Daily Mail*, February 4, 2016, the boy's parents were forced to watch an ISIS holy warrior behead their 14-year-old son for missing Friday prayers. Notice the blood-stained

sword. This is obviously not Allah's stand-in executioner's first beheading of the day.



The parents of the errant child were lucky that their house was not burned to the ground with them inside.

Narrated Abu Huraira:

The Prophet said, "No doubt, I intended to order somebody to pronounce the Iqama (*the second call to Islamic Prayer*) of the (compulsory congregational) prayer and then I would go to the houses of those who do not attend the prayer and burn their houses over them."

Bukhari 41.602

Friday prayers in Islam are of such importance that angels will be taking attendance.

Narrated Abu Huraira:

The Prophet said, "On every Friday the angels take their stand at every gate of the mosques to write the names of the people chronologically (i.e. according to the time of their arrival for the Friday prayer and when the Imam sits (on the pulpit) they fold up their scrolls and get ready to listen to the sermon."

Bukhari 54.433

The Example of Muhammad

Everyone has had a teacher like Muhammad, the one who said they had eyes in the back of their head.

Narrated Abu Huraira:

Allah's Apostle said, "You see me facing the Qibla; but, by Allah, nothing is hidden from me regarding your bowing and submissiveness and I see you from behind my back."

Bukhari 12:708

Muhammad was very much a petty perfectionist keen on controlling every detail of everyone's existence, and prayers were no exception.

Narrated Ibn Abbas:

The Prophet said, "I have been ordered to prostrate on seven bones i.e. on the forehead along with the tip of the nose and the Prophet pointed towards his nose, both hands, both knees and the toes of both feet and not to gather the clothes or the hair."

Bukhari 12.776

Narrated Anas bin Malik:

The Prophet said, "Be straight in the prostrations and none of you should put his forearms on the ground (in the prostration) like a dog."

Bukhari 12.785

A word you will encounter often relating to prayers is 'perfectly'.

Narrated Ibn Umar:

Allah's Apostle said: "I have been ordered (by Allah) to fight against the people until they testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and that Muhammad is Allah's Apostle, and offer the prayers perfectly and give the obligatory charity, so if they perform that, then they save their lives and property from me except for Islamic laws and then their reckoning (accounts) will be done by Allah."

Bukhari 2.24

You could not have straight rows if you did not have crowds; and straight rows, as Muhammad reminded his followers, were an important part of a 'correct prayer'.

Narrated Anas bin Malik:

The Prophet said, "Straighten your rows as the straightening of rows is essential for a perfect and correct prayer."

Bukhari 11.690

How to pray properly was something Muhammad took upon himself to demonstrate after being shown by the angel Gabriel how God wanted it done.

Gabriel came to him one day on the high ground above Mecca, and struck with his heel the turf of the hillside, whereupon a spring gushed forth from it. Then he performed the ritual ablution to show the Prophet how to purify himself for worship, and the Prophet followed his example. Then he showed him the postures and movements of the prayer, the standing, the inclining, the prostrating and the sitting, with the repeated magnification, that is, the words *Allahu Akbar*, God is Most Great, and the final greeting *as-Salatu 'alaykum*, Peace be on you, and again the Prophet followed his example. Then the Angel left him, and the Prophet returned to his house, and taught Khadijah all that he had learnt, and they prayed together."

Martin Lings, *MUHAMMAD: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources*

From God's crafted choreography first performed by Gabriel and mimicked by Muhammad, we get pagan-like performance worship that is unmatched. For the complete sequence of steps, including the prerequisite washing, i.e., ablution, that Sunni Muslims are expected to perform five times a day please read the remainder of Chapter "Choreographing the Irrational" in *Fade to Black – Triumph of the Irrational*, Boreal Books.

Stop Talking

December 9, 2024

Sunday evening is roast beef night at The Lieutenant's Pump. It's the closest thing to a home cooked meal, something I haven't had in years. I was already seated at my small table next to the bar when she walked in and took the seat closest to me. So close that I felt a need to reach out and introduce myself to a woman who reminded me of the character Constance "Connie" Tucker, played by Anne Potts in *Young Sheldon*.

She asked if I was here for the roast beef dinner. So was she, and could she join me? I thought everything was going well until, as if out of the blue, she said: "stop talking."

I apologized and said that is why I often preferred dining alone so as not to risk boring my dinner companion. She then placed her hands palms down on the table getting ready to stand up. "Maybe I should go back to my seat at the bar," she said.

"Please stay," I pleaded.

She did and our conversation returned to a more normal back and forth exchange of pleasantries. I was usually such a good listener. I realized then and there that I was behaving like a dying man who has a lot to say and only a short time say it, and I should stop that.

When her phone told her that her Uber had arrived, and it was time to go, it was her who took my hand and said she hoped to see me again next week. Hope so.

I took her admonition in stride; this is not something that Muhammad did. Before he was powerful enough to exact his own vengeance on those who interrupted him or criticized what he had to say, it was the god for whom he spoke who took it upon himself to do the retribution. The cruel and sadistic story of what He will do to Abu Lahab and His wife for her husband interrupting Muhammad can be found in children's books published in Canada.

Getting Kids to Feel Nothing

(Abbreviated from *Children and the Koran*, Boreal Books)

How do you get kids to feel nothing? I remember my parents telling me, when I was old enough to appreciate the silliness, about the day I

came home crying and vowing to kill the Romans. That was the day I first heard about the crucifixion of Jesus. Later I would learn that was not the message of the Gospels. Do children who grow up with the Koran experience the same transformation?

Christian children are told early on the story of the Crucifixion as an example of pain and suffering endured on their behalf to fire their imaginations. This is done even when the initial impact is one of hatred for those who cruelly murdered their hero and would-be saviour.

Muhammad lived much of his adult life in comfort and luxury; first, courtesy of his first wife's wealth, which he exhausted on the promotion of his new religion and which brought on a short interlude of poverty, then from the property taken from unbelievers killed in the war he started and pursued to get everyone to worship Allah and only Allah.

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

What do you tell Muslim children to get them to believe that Muhammad is special, even more special than Jesus, who died in spectacular fashion on his followers' behalf? It is not enough to tell them that the Crucifixion was an illusion concocted by Allah.

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.

Hooked on Sadism

The Koran has a ready-made solution to impress the kids. If you can't

wow them with the suffering of the man who brought Your Message to the masses, then gross them out and terrify them with the pain that others will endure for expressing doubts as to his credentials. It is what teachers do every day around the world, and Canada is no exception, to get kids hooked on Muhammad and perhaps inadvertently develop a love of seeing others suffer for their skepticism. The following are pages from the *Islamic Book Series for Children* published by the Islamic School of Ottawa ©2006, materials available worldwide as a teaching aid.

LESSON 1
SURAT-UL-MASAD
(THE PALM FIBRE)

This is the only Surah in the whole Quran that names an enemy of the Prophet (P). The enemy was Abu Lahab. His name means "the flame man".

His real name was Abdul Uzza. He was an uncle of the Prophet (P). The Surah in this lesson talks about Abu Lahab.

God has told Prophet Mohammad (P) to warn his closest relatives. The warning was that they must believe in God, or be punished if they do not. So, the Prophet (P) climbed onto the Safa to tell them. He called them together and said: "If I told you that an army of horse riders would come from the foot of that mountain, would you believe me?" They said: "Yes, because you have never lied to us". This way the Prophet (P) knew he had their faith.

Then he told them the warning. There would be punishment for those without faith. This made Abu Lahab angry. He said: "May you perish! Is this why you brought us here?" Then he threw a stone at the Prophet (P).

God condemned Abu Lahab to perish in Hell. That is where the name "the flame man" comes from - Abu Lahab would be burnt in Hell.

سورة المسد

(١١١)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

١ - تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ

٢ - مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُ مَالُهُ وَمَا كَسَبَ

٣ - سَيَصْلَىٰ نَارًا ذَاتَ لَهَبٍ

٤ - وَامْرَأَتُهُ حَمَّالَةَ الْحَطَبِ

٥ - فِي جِيدِهَا حَبْلٌ مِّن مَّسَدٍ

The Palm Fibre, Chapter (III)

In the name of God, the Source of Mercy, the Merciful

1. May Abu Lahab's hands perish; certainly he himself will perish;
2. His wealth and gains will not save him;
3. He will be burned in a flaming fire;
4. And his wife, the wood-carrier;
5. Will have around her neck a rope of palm-fibre

What This Surah Teaches Us:

Abu Lahab wished the Prophet (P) to perish. Because of this, God condemned Abu Lahab to perish in Hell. Not even his money would save him. When you die, you can't take anything with you from this world, but there is something that can save you. It is faith. Believe in God and the Prophet (P). Practise the ways of Islam.

3

If you offend the Prophet (P), you will be an enemy of God. Abu Lahab's wife also offended the Prophet (P). She will be punished too. She will be sent to Hell. In Hell, she will carry thorny bushes on her back all the time. The bushes will hang from a rope of palm fibre tied around her neck. This will be her punishment.

The throwing of a rock may have been added for effect. In the hadiths of the Sunni Canon, where many iterations of the story of Abu Lahab's transgression can be found, there is no mention, as in the following, of a rock thrown in Muhammad's direction:

Narrated Ibn Abbas:

When the Verse: 'And warn your tribe of near kindred.' (26.214) was revealed. Allah's Apostle went out, and when he had ascended As-Safa mountain, he shouted, "O Sabahah!"

The people said, "Who is that?"

Then they gathered around him, whereupon he said, "Do you see? If I inform you that cavalrymen are proceeding up the side of this mountain, will you believe me?"

They said, "We have never heard you telling a lie."

Then he said, "I am a plain warner to you of a coming severe punishment."

Abu Lahab said, "May you perish! You gathered us only for this reason?"

Then Abu Lahab went away. So the "Surat: ul-LAHAB" 'Perish the hands of Abu Lahab!' (111.1) was revealed.

Bukhari 60.495

What we know for sure is that the tethered-like-a-dog wife of Abu Lahab, who will have the abject duty of assisting God in roasting her husband by gathering the wood that the Compassionate will use to stoke the fire, at no time tried to physically harm God's spokesman.

Allah has very much a sadist's understanding of empathy, i.e., feeling someone else's pain: that it can be used to add to the suffering you wish to inflict. This will be part of the lesson that children will take away – along with the denial of compassion for those who do not care for the doomsday prophet as a person or the message he communicated – whether it was their teachers' intention or not.

In many ways, the wife's suffering will be greater than that of her husband; not only will she have to watch her beloved roasted over and over like an animal on a spit, but God has compelled her to be His accomplice in torturing her spouse. The children will know from their reading of the Koran that Abu Lahab's agony will never end. That is how it is in Allah's rotisserie.

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!

Threatening to send people to some unholy horrible place is what gods do to get their way, but Allah in His Koran does not stop there. In that holy book, the hell He created seems to be designed to also satisfy a deep-seated pathology evident in innumerable revelations where He displays all the symptoms of an unabashed sadist who revels in personally ensuring that the intense pain never ends.

With such horrific descriptions and a constant exhortation of hatred for unbelievers, can children raised on such a book ever get over their schooling in sadism when five times a day (Sunni), every day for the rest of their lives they will repeat the same sadistic, hate-filled verses they mouthed as a child during the mandatory prayers. Each prayer session must include a minimum of three verses from the Koran, not including the seven short verses from the first chapter.

They may not grow up to be radicals, but when the radicals strike, they will not feel your pain because they will have been taught to loathe you unconditionally and forever for not wholeheartedly worshipping an Arab's understanding of a Jewish concept.

A Real-Life Example of the Appeal of Scriptural Sadism

What if you could recreate the sadism that is a hallmark of Allah's Hereafter in the here-and-now? Your run-of-the-mill holy warrior can only do so much. Doctors are another matter, and they are not immune to the seductive cruelty that saturates Islam's Holy Book. Given the opportunity, trained medical personnel can do a very good approximation of the Almighty at his pitiless, cruelest best as revealed in Revelation 4:56, the one about replacing burnt skin.



Issam Abuanza, 37, is a doctor who left his family in the UK in 2014 to join Islamic State in Syria. On social media, Dr Abuanza has said he wished that a Jordanian pilot burnt alive by IS had taken longer to die.

On his Facebook page he is pictured wearing doctors' scrubs and carrying a gun in a holster. He smiles as he raises his finger in the air - a symbolic gesture to represent the oneness of God that is commonly seen in the iconography of Islamic extremism. Another image shows him in combat fatigues, cradling an automatic rifle and reading the Koran.

He wrote about the killing by IS militants of the captured Jordanian pilot who was burnt alive, complaining that: "I would've liked for them to burn him extremely slowly and I could treat him so we could torch him once more."

BBC News May 24, 2016

Dr. Abuanza, a poster child for Arendt's "banality of evil," was trained to heal and relieve suffering, not to torture and murder, but he could not resist. Imagine the Koran's impact on impressionable young minds, children who are expected to have read or mouthed the entire hateful, sadistic liturgy by the time they are seven years old then, over a period of a year or so and every year for the rest of their lives, repeat and remember it all as part of their daily devotion.

Fourteen to One

December 9, 2024

Monday evening is when I usually dine at Harmon's Steakhouse. I have my favourite table next to a large window that allows me to gaze upon the apartment building where Lucette and her parents lived during the seven years Lucette and I dated. Then it was The Bonaventure Apartments, today it's The Business Inn. A photograph of Lucette and I taken at the Bonaventure:



Muhammad and I both married women that were older than us: his first and my first and last.

Wives of Muhammad

and some of the revelations they inspired

(Abbreviated *From Merchant to Messenger*, Boreal Books)

No story of Muhammad would be complete without a word about his collection of wives and concubines. A readable account—except for the lack of references for the quoted hadiths—that is very much a believer's homage to the man and the women he sequestered in his household, is that of Tamam Kahn. Unless otherwise indicated, materials within double quotes in this section are from her book *Untold - A History of the Wives of Prophet Muhammad*, Monkfish Book Publishing, 2010.

Khadijah

Muhammad owed his success as a merchant to an older woman who hired the good-looking, allegedly illiterate young man to lead her caravans. Later she asked him to marry. For twenty-three years Muhammad was married to Khadijah and only Khadijah. It was her third marriage, his first. He was twenty-five, she was forty when they tied the knot. It was this same successful businesswoman, now his wife, who reassured her husband when he began having visions, that it was an angel sent by God, not Satan or some other godless creature. When whatever it was, that only he could see, followed him home, she told him to get undressed. She did the same and they embraced. Do you still see him, she asked? No, said Muhammad! Then it must have been an angel, she said, because an angel would not have remained to stare at a naked couple embracing.

Khadijah gave birth to two, maybe three, sons (depending on who you read), and four girls. All the couple's sons would die in infancy. The youngest daughter, Fatima, was the only offspring to have descendants. She was married to Ali, the fourth caliph (the fourth successor to the Prophet). Khadijah died destitute and penniless in a makeshift habitat in a ravine on the outskirts of Mecca. After discovering Islam some fifteen years after they were married, the now forty-something Muhammad would spend all of his and his wife's wealth on the promotion of his new religion.

The bold, erudite, self-sufficient Khadijah would not live long enough to witness her husband triumph over his enemies, a triumph that would not have been possible without her wealth and unquestioning support. She could not have foreseen that, after Islam, the

independence and freedom she, and other women, enjoyed would be severely curtailed.

Sawda

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—wed the widow Sawda (also spelled Sauda). Middle-aged Sawda was the only woman he married who, it is reported, was neither young nor beautiful. "Sawda lived twenty-two years after the death of the Prophet."

Aisha

Aisha was the first child born to parents who were believers. The founder of Islam would marry the first child born a Muslim (a child born to Muslim parents is born a Muslim) when she was six years old and consummate the marriage when she was nine. Aisha may have been responsible for awakening in her husband a preference for young women and girls.

Narrated Jabir bin Abdullah:

While we were returning from a Ghazwa (Holy Battle) with the Prophet, I started driving my camel fast, as it was a lazy camel. A rider came behind me and pricked my camel with a spear he had with him, and then my camel started running as fast as the best camel you may see. Behold! The rider was the Prophet himself.

He said, "What makes you in such a hurry?"

I replied, "I am newly married."

He said, "Did you marry a virgin or a matron?"

I replied, "A matron."

He said, "Why didn't you marry a young girl so that you may play with her and she with you?"

When we were about to enter (Medina), the Prophet said, "Wait so that you may enter (Medina) at night so that the lady of unkempt hair may comb her hair and the one whose husband has been absent may shave her pubic region."

Bukhari 62.16

Aisha “died July 13, 678 at age sixty-four. She asked to be buried with the other wives in the Baqi` cemetery of Medina, not in her apartment with her husband.”

Aisha’s quarters were a kind of cemetery. This seems the strangest part of her story. Muhammad was buried there as well as Abu Bakr (her father and first caliph i.e. leader of the faithful) and Umar the second caliph. She created a partition between her bed and the burial area, in a small room.

Tamam Khan

Al-Baqi cemetery in Medina was founded by Muhammad. Its size and number of graves are a state secret. To avoid people making pilgrimages to the cemetery where most of Muhammad’s wives are buried, the Saudis bulldozed all grave markers.

Hafsa

Hafsa was the daughter of another close collaborator of Muhammad, Umar, who would follow Abu Bakr as caliph. The Prophet married the nineteen-year-old Hafsa after her husband was killed at the famous battle of Badr (see Chapter “Battle of Badr,” *Jihad in the Koran*: Boreal Books), which ignited a war against unbelievers that continues to this day in one form or another. Hafsa is probably most famous for being the custodian of the first copy of the Koran which she kept under her bed. Hafsa died in 665 or 666, almost thirty-four years after her husband the Prophet.

Zaynab b. Khuzayma

Zaynab b. Khuzayma was another widow of Badr whom Muhammad made part of his household. Little is known about her as she died only eight months later and was buried in Baqi cemetery.

Umm Salama

Umm Salama was thirty when she accepted an offer of marriage from Muhammad, after her husband died from wounds sustained in the battle of Uhud (see Chapter “Battle of Uhud,” *Jihad in the Koran*, Boreal Books). It is reported that it was her who asked Muhammad about the “revelations’ lack of reference to women,” which prompted God’s Messenger to deliver the first revelation in which women are mentioned.

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.

“[Umm Salama] died at the age of eighty-six.”

Zaynab b. Jahsh

Muhammad walked in on his daughter-in-law Zaynab, who was then married to his adopted son Zayd, when she was nearly naked and “was troubled by her beauty”, or in the words of Tamam Khan, “something happened between them.”

Zaynab was a cousin of Muhammad, the daughter of his paternal aunt Omayma. It was the Prophet himself who insisted she be given in marriage to Zayd. Barnaby Rogerson, author of *The Prophet Muhammad – A Biography*, writes that “Zayd soon divined that Muhammad had become entranced by Zaynab’s beauty and at once offered to divorce his wife... Zayd would do anything to please his adopted father whom he revered above all else on earth.”

Marrying your son’s former wife was taboo. It did not matter if he was adopted; the same ethical and moral restrictions applied as to a natural-born son. Zayd’s father-in-law refused his offer until he received Revelation 33:5 which changed the status of adopted sons.

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.

Before Revelation 33:5, Arab fathers made no distinction between adopted sons and those they had fathered. The revelation 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, resulting in an untold number of children in the Islamic world who have no one living they can call father. God followed up these revelations with one in which He commands Muhammad to marry Zaynab (underlining mine):

33:37 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.

Orphaned boys were almost unknown in the Arab world until God changed their status. This could explain Allah's newfound concern for orphans, whom He made destitute when He changed the rules to accommodate the apple of His Eye. Demoting adopted sons to the equivalent of acquaintances for whom you provided free room and board not only made their wives, upon divorce, eligible to be taken in marriage by their "adoptive" father, but also disinherited them.

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

God may have regretted creating orphans, whereas before there were only sons, so that His spokesman could satisfy his lust for his cousin and daughter-in-law, to subsequently send more than a handful of revelations about looking after their welfare. Zaid died in one of the innumerable bloody, pitiless battles waged to convert the people of the Peninsula and beyond. Muhammad ordered that the women mourning his passing a little too loudly be silenced. That proved impossible.

Narrated Aisha:

When the news of the martyrdom of Zaid bin Haritha, Ja'far and Abdullah bin Rawaha came, the Prophet sat down looking sad, and I was looking through the chink of the door. A man came and said, "O Allah's Apostle! The women of Ja'far," and then he mentioned their crying.

The Prophet (p.b.u.h) ordered him to stop them from crying. The man went and came back and said, "I tried to stop them but they disobeyed."

The Prophet (p.b.u.h) ordered him for the second time to forbid them. He went again and came back and said, "They did not listen to me, (or "us": the sub-narrator Muhammad bin Haushab is in doubt as to which is right)."

Aisha added: The Prophet said, "Put dust in their mouths."

I said (to that man), "May Allah stick your nose in the dust (i.e. humiliate you). By Allah, you could not (stop the women from crying) to fulfill the order, besides you did not relieve Allah's Apostle from fatigue."

Bukhari 23.392

Zaynab b. Jahsh died in 642, ten years after Muhammad's passing.

Juwayriyyah

Juwayriyyah (born Barra) was another prize of war. She was a woman of means, as many women were before Islam, and sought to buy her freedom from the man who claimed her as his share of the booty after "her people were defeated at the well of al-Muraysi." As daughter of the chief of the tribe Muhammad had just defeated she demanded and received an audience with the victor. "Muhammad was taken with her. He offered to ransom, rename and marry her [and] release the people of her tribe, the Banu al-Mustaliq from captivity." The twenty-year-old married the nearly sixty-year-old Muhammad who made good on his promise to free the men and women in his custody.

Narrated Aisha, Ummul Mu'minin:

Juwayriyyah, daughter of al-Harith ibn al-mustaliq, fell to the lot of Thabit ibn Qays ibn Shammas, or to her cousin. She entered into an agreement to purchase her freedom. She was a very beautiful woman, most attractive to the eye.

Aisha said: She then came to the Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) asking him for the purchase of her freedom. When she was standing at the door, I looked at her with disapproval. I realised that the Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) would look at her in the same way that I had looked.

She said: Apostle of Allah, I am Juwayriyyah, daughter of al-Harith, and something has happened to me, which is not hidden from you. I have fallen to the lot of Thabit ibn Qays ibn Shammās, and I have entered into an agreement to purchase my freedom. I have come to you to seek assistance for the purchase of my freedom.

The Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) said: Are you inclined to that which is better?

She asked: What is that, Apostle of Allah?

He replied: I shall pay the price of your freedom on your behalf, and I shall marry you.

She said: I shall do this.

She (Aisha) said: The people then heard that the Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) had married Juwayriyyah. They released the captives in their possession and set them free, and said: They are the relatives of the Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) by marriage. We did not see any woman greater than Juwayriyyah who brought blessings to her people. One hundred families of Banu al-mustaliq were set free on account of her.

Abu Dawūd 29.3920

Juwayriyyah lived for another forty-five years after her latest husband's passing.

Rayhanah (also spelt Rayhana)

Tamam Kahn admits that Rayhanah is "not usually listed as a wife." Virgil Gheorghiu author of *La vie de Mahomet* writes that Rayhanah only agreed to become Muhammad's concubine, seeing it as unseemly to accept his marriage proposal after he had just ordered the beheading of all the men and boys (males with traces of pubic hair) of her tribe, including both her husband and her father.

After the battle of the Trench [Rayhanah was] marched into the courtyard with the several hundred other women and

their children to be claimed as a reward by the Muslim soldiers, while the Qurayzah men were led away to be executed.

Tamam Kahn

Rayhanah was more than just a beautiful young woman. "Rayhanah's name means 'extremely fragrant' and Muhammad loved perfumes," making her even more irresistible. Perfume was one of the three things God's spokesman loved the most.

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 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

Rayhanah's life with the Prophet was short and tumultuous: some say she converted to Islam, others that she died as a slave, and others that she was allowed to rejoin her Jewish community. This is somewhat unlikely as she is buried, along with other wives of Muhammad in Baqi. She died a short two years after the massacre of the men and boys of her tribe. Her age and how she died remain a mystery. All we know is that the beautiful, tragic Rayhanah died young. I would not exclude suicide. It must have been difficult to be intimate with the man who was responsible for the death of your father, your husband—all the men of your tribe and the enslavement of their widows and daughters.

Umm Habida

Umm Habida (born Ramla), Muhammad married by proxy. Umm

Habida and her husband were two of the Muslims who fled to Ethiopia, i.e., Abyssinia, on the Prophet's orders after the Meccans had become hostile to the Muslims. During their time in Abyssinia, her husband, Ubaydullah, converted to Christianity and drank so much wine that he died. "Four months or so after her husband's death in 628, when she had been in Abyssinia for twelve long years, a servant from the Negus came with a message: 'The King says to you that the Messenger of Allah has written to him to marry you to him.'" The king obliged and Umm Habida was married to Muhammad. Six years later, the now thirty-five-year-old bride joined her sexagenarian husband in Medina. She died in the year 666. She, too, is buried in Baqi cemetery.

Safiyya b. Huyayy

Safiyya was the second Jewish woman after Rayhanah to join Muhammad's collection of wives, concubines, and slave-girls. Muhammad "married the small, lovely-looking girl" on his way back from Khaybar after having selected her as his share of the booty. Technically she was his slave, but on the way back from Khaibar he married her. To avoid having to pay the obligatory dowry, he declared that his manumitting her, i.e., setting her free before marrying her, was the equivalent.

Narrated Anas bin Malik:

Allah's Apostle (p.b.u.h) offered the Fajr prayer when it was still dark, then he rode and said, "Allah Akbar! Khaibar is ruined. When we approach near to a nation, the most unfortunate is the morning of those who have been warned."

The people came out into the streets saying, "Muhammad and his army." Allah's Apostle vanquished them by force and their warriors were killed; the children and women were taken as captives. Safiya was taken by Dihya Al-Kalbi and later she belonged to Allah's Apostle who married her and her Mahr (dowry) was her manumission.

Bukhari 14.68

Safiyya outlived her husband by perhaps 40 years. She died in 670 or 672 and was buried with the other wives at Baqi cemetery.

Mariya (also spelt Maria)

Once the Muslim conquest of the Peninsula was assured, Muhammad sent a letter to the various rulers of the kingdoms that bordered Arabia inviting them and their subjects to become Muslims or else.

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.

Muqawqis (also known as Cyrus of Alexandria), the de-facto governor of Egypt and head of the Coptic Church, upon receiving the letter, and as a sign of respect for whom he took to be a prophet of God, sent a tribute to Muhammad that included two sisters, Sirin (also spelt Shirin) and Mariya:

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.

“When the caravan reached Medina, Muhammad chose Mariya and presented her sister Shirin to Hasan b. Thabit, his ‘official poet’.” Mariya was provided with her own house. The Prophet spent a lot time with Mariya, which made his other wives jealous.

Tamam writes:

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.'

God promptly sent a revelation, Verse 66:2, nullifying the promise Muhammad had made to Hafsa.

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.

Until Mariya, and God's assurance that he could have sex with whom he wanted when he wanted, Muhammad observed a strict schedule of servicing each of his wives in turn, except for Sauda, his oldest, who gave up her turn knowing that her husband preferred sex with someone younger and thereby reduced the possibility of him divorcing her to get her out of the rotation. Mariya, the Christian Copt, would give Muhammad his second son, Ibrahim. He, too, would die in infancy at eighteen months, two months before his father. Mariya died five years later.

Maymuna

Maymuna (also born Barra) was given to Muhammad by his uncle Abbas. She was thirty years old when she joined the Prophet's household. She was the last of his wives to pass away. She died in 681 at the age of 81. Unlike the other wives, she is buried in Sarif, a town near the southern tip of the Peninsula.

Asma

Asma b. an-Nu'man could be considered the half-married wife of Muhammad. Her impending marriage was part of a negotiated alliance with her tribe. She would have been the Prophet's last wife, with her husband passing away the following year. Asma was a naïve young girl frequently pranked by Aisha and Hafsa, who convinced

her that repeating the formula for divorce when she was with Muhammad “would make the Prophet love her more. He, of course, heard the formula as powerful repudiation and sent her away.”

Is it conceivable that anyone, even the densest of girls, would mistake a formula for divorce as a turn-on for her husband, unless the story about Asma being pranked is simply someone’s way of preserving Muhammad’s perfect, if somewhat contrived marriage record? God’s spokesman may have sent her away, but the people considered her still married.

Allah, in Revelation 33:53, decreed that “You should never hurt the Messenger of Allah, nor take his wives in marriage after him. That is truly abominable in the sight of Allah.” This revelation may explain why some sources claim that “No one sought to marry her, and she was not seen by anyone except relatives until her death... she died desolate.”

In the end, Muhammad’s controlling ways condemned all his still-young widows to never again knowing the joy of being intimate with another man, or having a husband to look after them, the fate of the young Asma being the most pathetic.

What Facial Hair Can Tell You About a Man's Radicalism

December 10, 2024

I used to shave every day. Now I may not shave for two, three or even four days. I'm either making a fashion statement or it is because I am not as concerned about my appearance since being told about the state of my aneurysm. It's the latter. Facial hair on a committed believer is definitely not a fashion statement but an indication of his radicalism in observing the example of Muhammad down to what he decreed about beards and mustaches.

Narrated Nafi:

Ibn Umar said, The Prophet said, "Do the opposite of what the pagans do. Keep the beards (as it is) and cut the moustaches short."

Bukhari 72.780

Muhammad liked to colour his beard using a bright orange natural dye called henna and he used kohl, an ancient eye cosmetic, both as a fashion statement and protection from the sun. Some believers will have kohl circles around their eyes and/or orange strands in their beard, not only as a sign of affinity with their Prophet's grooming habits, but with his goal of a world where all unbelievers have been killed or enslaved.

A woman's radicalism is there for all to appreciate in what she voluntarily wears in public in the West, such as the niqab (face covering veil) or the burqa. She will cut the throat of unbelievers, if not behead them, with as much conviction as her bearded coreligionists should the opportunity present itself, as it did for many young Muslim men during ISIS's rampage through the Middle East:

... 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 and Maajid Nawaz, *Islam and the Future of Tolerance*, Harvard University Press, 2015

Remembering Nicholas, James, John and Robert

Islamic State holy warriors about to decapitate surrendered Syrian military personnel:



An image grab taken from a 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

Notice the composure of the decapitators. They know how it's done. Many will have learned how during the celebration of the Feast of



Sacrifice that marks the end of the Hajj pilgrimage, during which all over the Muslim world, and in countries that allow it, millions of animals are ritually slaughtered, i.e., the animal is bled to death while fully conscious.

It is also a good time to show young boys how to decapitate an animal with just a knife, a large one preferably, without flinching and perhaps, like the boys in the photograph, enjoying it.



When Muhammad championed the beheading of his enemies, holy warriors used swords. Today, it's a combat knife, or something similar, that keeps that tradition alive. Unlike an expertly wielded sword, it is totally inadequate to the task.

What is it like for a human being to be killed the Islamic way? The Ottawa Citizen's description of the execution of Nicholas Berg by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi (al-Qaeda's top man in Iraq at the time) on May 7, 2004:

Zarqawi literally hacked and sawed with his knife the neck of the young twenty-six-year-old idealist from Pennsylvania while he screamed in agony. In the words of Dan Garner writing in the Ottawa Citizen, Zarqawi "sawed back and forth as if he were cutting a thick rope. Berg screamed and screamed and screamed. Zarqawi kept sawing back and forth, back and forth, cutting on this side, cutting on that. Finally, Nicholas Berg's head left his body. Zarqawi clutched it by the hair and raised it to the camera as he and his men shouted "Allahu Akbar! God is Great, God is Great."

A holy warrior in the service of the Islamic State, with the power granted to him by the Koran, about to behead journalist James Foley with the same type of knife used to decapitate Nicholas Berg and the Syrian military personnel.



We are facing an increasingly bloody and violent future made even bloodier by Islamic rituals and scriptures that condition believers, from childhood onward, not only to accept that killing unbelievers is a good thing, but to enjoy and celebrate their slaughter.

Militants rejoiced as Canadians were beheaded.

Abu Sayyaf extremists rejoiced as they watched two Canadians being beheaded in the jungles of the southern Philippines, said a still-shocked Filipino hostage who was freed Friday.

Marites Flor tearfully recalled to reporters the moments when Canadians John Ridsdel and Robert Hall were handcuffed and led away to a nearby jungle clearing to be separately decapitated.

"They were watching it and they were happy," she said of the militants.

Philippines – The Associated Press, June 24, 2016

Muhammad's ranting against innovations in his religion after he passed obviously did not apply to improvements in ways of killing Allah's enemies.



An image posted on a militant website on June 14, 2014, appears to show militants from the al-Qaeda-inspired Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant taking aim at captured Iraqi soldiers wearing plain clothes after taking over a base in Tikrit, Iraq.
(ASSOCIATED PRESS)

Death as an Opportunity Not to Be Missed

December 12, 2024

Hi Bernard,

I have read all of your "Farewell Postings" to date. I couldn't help but notice a very common thread in almost all of your postings, of you bringing up your health situation. Obviously, a very big concern for you, and justifiably so.

Albert

My death is not that big of a deal. The serenity I felt when I thought I would die lying on my back in a drainage ditch is pretty much how I feel today.

Whether it happens tomorrow or I continue dodging the bullet, for who knows how long, what my diagnoses offers is a chance, maybe one last time, to connect with people about Islam, and me, by including with almost every chapter an excerpt from one of my books in the hope that the reader will want to know more. For example, maybe the following excerpt from *Jihad in the Koran* about the only defeat suffered by the Muslims during the conquest of the Peninsula will inspire the reader to read the book.

Battle of Uhud

(Abbreviated from *Jihad in the Koran*, Boreal Books)

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?"

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Abdullah bin Jubair said, "Have you forgotten what Allah's Apostle said to you?"

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

The believers were well on their way to winning their second encounter with the Meccans—this battle taking place on the slopes and flats of Mount Uhud—when the Muslim archers left the battle early, thinking it was already won, to be the first to plunder the undefended Meccan camp. The Meccan cavalry counter-attacked, seriously wounding the Prophet and routing the Muslim forces. Had they pressed on, they would have completely crushed the believers. Revelations 3:121-122 are about this near-disaster at Uhud, which Allah initially takes credit for averting through His *moral* support of the two battalions commanded by His Messenger.

3:121 [And remember] when you (Muhammad) went at daybreak, away from your family, in order to lead the believers to their battle stations (at the Battle of Uhud); Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing!

3:122 Two of your battalions²¹ were about to lose heart, and Allah was their Protector. In Allah let the believers put their trust!

3:123 Allah had already given you victory at Badr, at a time when you were still powerless; so fear Allah that perchance you might thankful!

3:124 When you were telling the believers: "Is it not enough that your Lord should reinforce you with three thousand angels sent down?"²²

3:125 Yes, if you forbear and fear Allah and the enemy attack you at once, Your Lord will reinforce you with five thousand marked angels.²³

²¹ "They belonged to Banu Salamah and Banu Harithah who formed the two wings of the Muslim army which was led by the Prophet." *Fakhry*

²² In the Traditions, Allah sent the archangels Gabriel, Michael and Saraphel at the head of a thousand angel warriors each to help the Muslims at Badr.

²³ God would not send any angels to help his beleaguered believers at Uhud as He allegedly did at Badr.

3:126 Allah has not intended this except as good news to you and that your hearts might be reassured thereby. Victory comes only from Allah, the Mighty, the Wise!

The lure of the booty overwhelmed the need to keep on killing. How the near disaster unfolded and what happened next, in God's own words:

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), 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!

Even with the departure of the archers, the Muslims might still have been able to withstand the renewed assault of the Meccans if someone by the name of Suraqah had not shouted that Muhammad, who had been wounded in the encounter, was dead, causing consternation in the believers' ranks and prompting many to flee in disarray in what became a rout.

3:153 [Remember] how you fled and paid heed to no one, while the Messenger was calling you from the rear. Thus He rewarded you with grief upon grief, lest you should not be sorry for what you missed or what befell you. Allah is Aware of what you do!

"After the grief," God caused some who could still not be trusted in battle, "as a security" to fall asleep, and still others to express doubts about what they were fighting for – was it worth risking their lives? – thereby providing Allah with an opportunity for rebuttal.

3:154 Then He sent down upon you, after the grief, as a security, slumber overcoming a group of you, whereas another group were only concerned about themselves, entertaining untrue thoughts about Allah, like the thoughts of the pagans. They say: "Do we have any part in the affair?" Say: "The whole affair is Allah's." They conceal in their hearts what they do not reveal to you. They say: "Had we had any part in the affair, we would not have been killed here." Say: "Had you been in your homes, those who

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were destined to be killed would have sallied forth to the places where they would be slain; so that Allah might purify what is in your hearts. Allah knows well what is hidden in the breasts.”

Suraqah would deny, until his dying day, that he was the one who shouted that Muhammad had been killed. God did not blame him; He blamed the Devil.

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.

Don't be like the unbelievers and think that you can escape death by playing it safe.

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!

Dying fighting for God is much better than whatever the unbelievers can amass in this life.

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.

A reminder that those who die fighting for God immediately join Him in Paradise:

3:158 And were you to die or to be killed, it is unto Allah that you will be gathered.

Praise for how His Messenger handled the aftermath of Uhud by being lenient with the men he would need to fight another day.

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].

In Allah we trust!

3:160 If Allah supports you, no one will overcome you; but if He forsakes you, then who will be able to support you after Him? And in Allah let the believers put their trust!

There may not have been much booty to be had at Uhud, but even at Uhud, booty reared its ugly head.

3:161 It does not benefit any Prophet to cheat [in handling the booty]; for whoever cheats will bring the fruit of his dishonesty with him on the Day of Resurrection. Then, each soul shall be paid in full for what it earned (its works); and they will not be wronged.

God will grade the believers on their performance at Uhud, the reason for engineering their defeat for His own ends.

3:162 What, is he who follows Allah's good Pleasure like him who brings upon himself God's Wrath? Hell is his refuge, and what a wretched destiny!

3:163 They (the believers) have different grades in Allah's Sight; and Allah has knowledge of what they do!

3:164 Allah has been gracious to the believers, sending them a Messenger from among themselves to recite to them His Revelations, to purify them and to teach them the Book and the Wisdom, though they had been in manifest error before that.

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 that day the two armies met (in the Battle of Uhud) was by Allah's Leave, that He might know the true believers;

If God knows what is in men's hearts, was the defeat at Uhud really necessary?

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

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what is not in their hearts; and Allah knows best what they conceal!

The following revelations are a reminder from God that those who died at the battle of Uhud are well taken care of. Those who “stayed at home” should be so lucky.

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.”

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;

There is great reward for those who, after being wounded, keep on doing “what is right,” fighting and killing unbelievers.

3:172 Those who responded to Allah’s Call and the Messenger’s after they had incurred many wounds. To those of them who do what is right and fear Allah, a great reward is in store.

Dead Palestinian Children! Who's to Blame?

December 14, 2024

Men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction.

Blaise Pascal

Golda Meir said she hated the Palestinians, not because they were Palestinians, but because they forced her to kill their children. No one forced her, and no one is forcing the current Israeli leadership to do such a horrible thing, but still, they do it. The insanity of men raised on a pitiless text setting up women and children to be killed for the propaganda value, and an enemy willing to oblige.

Meir's justification for killing children is not unlike someone intent on killing a man who has committed horrible crimes, but they can't get to him without killing his immediate and extended family. Rather than seeking another way of making the guilty man pay for his crime, they just kill them all. This is basically what Netanyahu is doing, and just like the people who committed the October massacre, it is a strategy sanctioned by their variation of the same god who wrote books extolling violence as a means to an end.

The Koran is a book of concentrated violence on par with the Torah's invitation to genocide. The Koran is a shorter book than the Bible (by a factor of ten); pound for pound, it no doubt features more exhortations to violence.

So if you ask which book is "worse" in terms of belligerence, you might say that qualitatively the Hebrew Bible (and hence the Christian Bible) takes the trophy—thanks to that unrivalled embrace of genocide in Deuteronomy—but that quantitatively the winner is the Koran, at least in terms of the frequency of belligerent passages, if not in absolute numbers. And if, on top of the verses espousing violence in the terrestrial world, you add verses gleefully envisioning the suffering of infidels in the afterlife, the Koran wins the quantitative competition more decisively.

Richard Wright, *The Evolution of God*.

Hamas killed or kidnapped whoever they encountered on October 7. As horrible as that was, it is no justification for Israel's deliberate, mass, on-going, indiscriminate retaliatory slaughter, despite it also being given the green light by its holy book to commit mass murder. A pox on them, an archaic expression that is both a description and a condemnation of the Koran and the Torah!

Giving to an Islamic Charity

I condemn, not only in words, but with dollars, Netanyahu's ruthless and self-defeating strategy in Gaza of targeting easily replaced holy warriors²⁴, at considerable cost in children's lives, by bequeathing to Islamic Relief Canada a part of my modest estate in the hope that it will be used to alleviate the suffering of children mutilated by Israeli bombs and missiles.

I must admit, I find it a bit strange to be sending money to an organization with the word "Islamic" figuring prominently in its name, having tried in my writings to differentiate between non-militant Muslims and Islamists.

Israel's unconscionable, indiscriminate, retaliatory slaughter of thousands of women and children and its steadfast refusal to grant Palestinians a state while continuing to settle their land may succeed in ending a 1,400-year-old feud between Sunnis and Shias.

Before Hamas's Oct. 7 attacks, Saudi Arabia was open to forging stronger ties with the Israelis. Now, a year into the war in Gaza, it is warming up to its traditional enemy, Iran.

New York Times, Oct. 20, 2024

That does not bode well for its survival, or ours.

²⁴ A fighter in Allah's Cause, a world governed by the Sharia, which is the ultimate goal of most who kill and die for the likes of Hamas, Hezbollah, ISIS, Al-Qaeda etc.

What Worries Me About the Afterlife

December 18, 2024

Islam, like most religions, depends on a fear to keep the believers believing, but more so. It is mostly a fear of the punishment that a god will mete out on a day of judgement to those who violated laws communicated to favoured mortals.

I don't fear what a make-believe god, whose self-serving laws I may have violated, will do with my reanimated corpse in His hellhole. What I fear is the law of conservation of energy, the law that states, "Energy can neither be created nor destroyed - only converted from one form of energy to another." What happens to the energy that both sustains and is part of our conscious and subconscious? Where will it go? If we are nothing more than flesh and blood computers, as argued by Stephen Hawking, our death will be like turning it off.

While I dismiss the Hereafter imagined by primitive men unable to confront their mortality, I do believe that there is more to death than a computer being unplugged. That seems to be borne out by quantum mechanics where the energy that powered our existence, when returned to the Universe, will change how the Universe unfolds; hopefully for the better, if you were a good person.

Hell

(Abbreviated from *The Islamic Hereafter*, Boreal Books)

76:4 We have prepared for the unbelievers chains and fetters and a blazing fire.

89:26 And none shall bind with fetters like His.

The Fire of Hell is not magic.

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."

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The keeper of Allah's Hell is a fellow by the name of Malik.

43:74 Indeed the criminals shall suffer the punishment of Hell forever.

43:75 They will not be relieved and they are in it completely confounded.

43:76 We did not wrong them, but they were the wrongdoers themselves.

43:77 They call out: "O Malik, let your Lord be done with us." He will say: "You are surely staying on."

Another word for Hell is Gehennam.

32:12 If only you could see how the criminals are hanging their heads down before their Lord, saying: "Our Lord, we have seen and heard; so send us back that we might do the righteous deed. Now we believe with certainty."

32:13 Had We wished, We would have granted every soul its guidance, but My Word is now fulfilled: "I shall fill Gehennam (Hell) with jinn and men, all together."

Still another word for Hell is Saqar, a place where everything is flammable.

74:27 If only he²⁵ knew what is Saqar.

74:28 It leaves nothing or spares nothing.

74:29 Scorching mankind.

Saqar is guarded by nineteen angels.

74:30 Upon it stand nineteen guards.

Allah revealed the number of angels guarding Hell as further proof for Christians and Jews that He knows what He is talking about.

74:31 We have only made angels the guardians of the Fire; and we have not fixed their numbers except as a temptation for those who have disbelieved; so that those who received the Book (Christians and Jews) might be certain and those who have believed increase in belief; and that those who received the Book and the believers together may not doubt; and that those in whose hearts there is a sickness

²⁵ al-Mughirah joked about God not having favoured His beloved mouthpiece with male descendants for which he will roast in Hell.

together with the unbelievers might say: "What did Allah mean by this allegory?" Thus Allah leads those whom he wishes astray and guides those whom He wishes rightly. None knows the hosts (*armies*) of your Lord except He. He is only a reminder for mankind.

Hell's Fire will never go out; God will look after that personally.

17:97 Whoever Allah guides is certainly well-guided, and those whom He leaves in error you shall not find for them, besides Allah, any protectors. We shall gather them on the Day of Resurrection, falling on their faces, blind, dumb and deaf. Their dwelling shall be Hell, and whenever it abates, We shall rekindle its flames.

The Compassionate is not above getting His Hands dirty if it means making sure the suffering of unbelievers never subsides. Allah will collectively ensure that once the skin of those He sentenced to roast for an eternity is nothing but ashes in the hot, searing winds of Hell He will personally replace it by a fresh nerve-filled epidermis.

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!

Allah tends to anthropomorphize, i.e., ascribe human features to objects, referring to His beloved Fire as the *Smasher* whose flames burn through the flesh to reach and sear the hearts of people bound to pillars.

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 stretched out.

Hell, however, is a real beast!

67:6 And to those who have disbelieved in their Lord, the punishment of Hell is reserved; and what an evil resort!

67:7 When they are cast into it, they hear its heavy breathing as it boils over.

67:8 It almost bursts with rage. Every time a new throng is

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cast into it, its keepers ask them: Has no warner come to you?"

25:11 No, they deny the Hour (the Last Day); yet We have prepared for those who deny the Hour a blazing Fire.

25:12 When it (Hell) sights them from a distance, they hear its raging and exhalation²⁶.

25:13 And if they are hurled in a narrow space therein, tied up in fetters, they would call out there for ruination.

25:14 Call out today for one ruination, but call out for many ruinations.

Allah appears much more at ease when describing the horrors of Hell than when expounding on the delights to be found in Paradise. The fact that Hell is a place where no distinction is made between men, women and children probably makes it easier to describe than Paradise, with its double standard for men and women. Think evil thoughts of Allah and He will make them come true.

48:6 And that He may punish the hypocrites, men and women, and the unbelievers, men and women, who think evil thoughts of Allah. Upon them is the evil turn of fortune. Allah is wrathful at them, curses them and has prepared Hell for them; and what a wretched fate!

15:43 "Hell shall be the appointed place for them all.

15:44 "Seven gates it has; and to each gate a part of them is assigned."

Those condemned to roast in Allah's Fire exist in a state between life and death.

87:10 He who fears shall remember;

87:11 And the most wretched shall refrain from it;

87:12 He who shall roast in the great Fire,

²⁶ Hell will be dragged to its appointed place on Judgement Day by 4.9 billion 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

87:13 Then, he will neither die therein nor live.

Allah seems to have a fondness for couches.

7:41 Hell shall be their couch and over them shall be canopies [of fire]. Thus We punish the wrongdoers.

38:55 “That is that, but the aggressors shall have the worst resort.

38:56 “Hell, in which they roast. Wretched is their couch!”

Refreshments are available but leave a lot to be desired – unless you happen to be a fan of stinking, boiling water topped with pus.

10:4 Unto him you shall all return; it is Allah’s Promise in truth. He originates the creation, then He brings it back to reward equitably those who believe and do the good deeds. But those who disbelieve shall drink boiling water and shall be severely punished on account of their disbelief.

14:16 Behind him is Hell, and he is given stinking water to drink.

14:17 He sips it but can hardly swallow it, and death surrounds him from every side, but he will not die; and beyond this is still a terrible punishment.

38:57 “That, let them taste it, as boiling water and pus

38:58 “And another of the same kind, manifold.

56:90 But if he is one of the Companions of the Right;

56:91 Then “Peace upon you”, from the Companions of the Right.

56:92 However, if he is one of those who denounce and err (a Companion of the Left);

56:93 Then he will be served boiling water,

56:94 And will be scorched by the Fire.

56:95 That is indeed the certain Truth.

56:96 So, glorify the Name of Your Lord, the Great One.

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You might be able to chase the beverage down with some freezing hail (Verse 78:25), which would indicate that parts of Allah's Hell may indeed freeze over, and that it has some form of cloud cover.

78:21 Hell is, indeed, lying in ambush;

78:22 A refuge for the transgressors;

78:23 Tarrying therein for ages;

78:24 Wherein, they do not taste any coolness or fresh drinks;

78:25 Except for boiling water and freezing hail;

78:26 As an appropriate reward.

78:27 Indeed, they did not expect any reckoning;

78:28 And denounced Our Signs as lies.

78:29 Everything We have enumerated fully in a Book.

78:30 So taste. We will only increase your punishment.

And the food! You will eat like cattle, pus-eating cattle.

47:12 Allah shall admit those who believe and do the righteous deeds into gardens beneath which rivers flow; but the unbelievers shall take their pleasure and eat like cattle, and the Fire shall be their abode.

You will choke on your food trying to get it down. No kidding!

73:11 And let Me deal with those who deny and live in luxury; and give them a little respite.

73:12 We have indeed shackles and a blazing Fire;

73:13 And food upon which they choke and painful punishment.

At the bottom of the lowest level of Hell grows the tree of bitterness, the Zaqqum tree. Like Allah's cocktails for the unbelievers, its fruits leave much to be desired.

44:43 The Tree of Zaqqum (the Tree of Bitterness) will certainly be

44:44 The food of the sinner.

44:45 Like molten lead, which boils in the bellies;

44:46 Like boiling water.

It's not enough that the denizens of Hell will only have boiling drinking water; they will also be showered with it.

44:47 "Take him and trust him into the pit of Hell.

44:48 "Then pour over his head the agony of the boiling water;

44:49 "Saying: 'Taste, you are truly the mighty and noble one.'

44:50 "That is the punishment which you used to doubt."

Workers of the world work, or else have a taste of that horrible tree.

37:58 "Are we going to die,

37:59 Except for our first death? And will we not be punished?"

37:60 Surely this is the great triumph.

37:61 For the like of this, let the workers work.

37:62 Is that a better outcome or the Tree of Bitterness?

37:63 We have made it a temptation for the wrongdoers.

37:64: It is a tree that grows out of the bottom of Hell;

37:65 Its shoots are like the heads of devils.

37:66 They shall eat from it until they fill their bellies.

What is it with God and boiling water?

37:67 In addition, they have with it a mixture of boiling water.

The Tree of Bitterness may just be a way station.

37:68 Then, their return is unto Hell.

Don't expect a warm welcome—or is it, *expect* a warm welcome?

38:59 "This is another throng marching with you; no welcome to them, they will roast in the Fire."

People in Hell will fight amongst themselves, accusing one another of having lied about Allah. They will ask God to increase the punishments of those who misled them.

38:60 They say: "No welcome to you; you have offered it to us in advance, and what a wretched resting-place!"

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38:61 They say: "Our Lord, whoever has offered this to us, multiply his punishment in the Fire."

38:62 And they say: "What is it with us that we do not see men here we used to reckon among the wicked?"

38:63 "We took them for a laughing-stock, or have eyes been diverted away from them?"

38:64 This is perfectly true, the feuding of the people of the Fire.

Families in Hell will have awnings, above and beneath them, made of fire.

39:14 Say (*O Muhammad*): "Allah alone I worship professing to Him my religion sincerely.

39:15 "Worship, then, what you wish, apart from Him." Say: "Indeed, those who have lost themselves and their families on the Day of Resurrection are the real losers. That is truly the manifest lost."

39:16 They shall have over them awnings of fire and under them other awnings. That is what Allah frightens His servants with: "O My servants fear Me, then."

What the Hell is a "three-pronged shade"?

77:29 Go forth to what you used to denounce as lies.

77:30 Go forth to a three-pronged shade²⁷;

77:31 Which neither shades nor avail against the flames.

Even in Hell, clothing is *not* optional.

14:50 Their garments made of pitch, and their faces covered with fire.

People in Hell will not need the services of a barber or hair stylist.

70:15 No, it is truly a blazing fire;

70:16 Which strips off the scalps.

70:17 It summons him who has turned his back and fled;

70:18 And amassed wealth and hoarded it.

²⁷ "Shadow of smoke; three columns: because when a big smoke arises, it is divided into several parts at the top." www.islamicstudies.info

The only entertainment will be fireworks like you have never seen before.

77:32 It (Hell) shoots forth sparks as huge as a castle;

77:33 Which look like golden, camel-herds.

77:34 Woe betide on that Day those who denounce.

The most conceited of deities never tires of labelling those who did not heed His alleged messengers as being arrogant, a sin for which they will burn in Hell.

39:71 And the unbelievers shall be driven to Hell in throngs; so that when they have reached it, its gates will be opened and its keepers will say to them: "Have not Messengers from your own people come to you reciting to you the Revelations of your Lord and warning you against the Encounter of this your Day?" They will say: "Yes, indeed"; but the word of punishment has come to pass against the unbelievers.

39:72 It will be said: "Enter the gates of Hell, dwelling therein forever. Wretched is the dwelling of the arrogant."

I doubt anyone would refuse to worship a god they considered the genuine article out of a mere sense of pride.

40:59 The Hour is indeed coming, no doubt about it; but most people do not believe.

40:60 Your Lord has said: "Call on me and I will answer you. Those who are too proud to worship Me shall enter Hell totally abased."

Have too much fun and you are sure to go to Hell!

40:73 Then it will be said to them: "Where are those you used to set up as associates,

40:74 "Apart from Allah?" They will say: "They strayed away from us. Indeed, we did not call on upon anything formerly." Thus Allah leads the unbelievers astray.

40:75 That is because you used to rejoice on earth in what is other than the truth and because you used to frolic.²⁸

²⁸ "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

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40:76 Enter then the gates of Hell, dwelling therein forever.
Evil is the dwelling of the arrogant.

Another warning about frolicking, i.e., romp.

74:38 Every soul is a hostage to what it has earned;

74:39 Except for the Companions of the Right;

74:40 In Gardens (Paradise), they will ask,

74:41 Concerning the criminals:

74:42 "What drove you into Saqar?"

74:43 They will say: "We were not among those who prayed,

74:44 "And we were not among those who fed the destitute;

74:45 "And we used to romp with the rompers;

74:46 "And we used to deny the Day of Judgement;

74:47 "Till the Certainty came to us."

In keeping with Allah's creative mind when it comes to inflicting pain, His retributions will be in keeping with the sin.

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. Those who hoard gold and silver and do not spend them in Allah's Path, announce to them a very painful punishment.

9:35 On the Day when all that will be heated in the Fire of Hell, and their foreheads, sides and backs will be branded with it. This is what you hoarded for yourselves; taste now what you used to hoard.

You can do the righteous deed and still be a wrongdoer. It's not enough to simply do the good deed; you have to do the good deed according to Allah's standards.

35:36 But the unbelievers shall have the Fire of Hell, wherein they will not be finished off and die, nor will its punishment be lightened for them. Thus we will reward every thankless person.

35:37 Therein they will cry out: "Our Lord, bring us out and

Islam. There is no fun in Islam. There can be no fun and joy in whatever is serious." *Ayatollah Khomeini*

we will do the righteous deed, differently from what we used to do." Did We not prolong your life sufficiently for him to remember who is apt to remember? The warner came to you, so taste now. The wrongdoers shall have no supporter.

Criminals are also those who misinterpreted Allah's warning about not worshipping Satan and only worshipping His Eminence.

36:59 "Be singled out today, O criminals.

36:60 "Did I not exhort you, O Children of Adam, not to worship Satan? For he is a manifest enemy of yours.

36:61 "And worship Me; for this is a straight path.

36:62 "He has surely led astray numerous generations of you. Did you not understand, then?

36:63 "This, then, is Hell which you were promised.

36:64 "Burn in it today for what you used to disbelieve."

Like at the time of Eve, if Allah has to sentence a husband to burn in Hell, his wives will share the blame and join him in the Fire.

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.

Compassionate is not the word!

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.

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!

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21:100 They groan with pain therein (*Hell*) and they do not hear.

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.

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."

23:106 They will say: "Lord, our misery overcame us and we were an erring people.

23:107 "Lord, bring us out of it (*Hell*); then, if we revert we are indeed wrongdoers."

23:108 He (*Allah*) said: "Rot in it and do not talk to Me.

Heaven or Hell: which will it be? Only Allah knows for sure!

17:54 Your Lord knows you best. If He pleases, He will have mercy on you, and if He pleases He will torture you. We have not sent you (*Muhammad*) to be their guardian.

Why I Don't Dare Drink Scotch at Home

December 19, 2024

He has been sober, at this writing, for more than 19 years, after becoming an alcoholic in Kuwait of all places. Right now, I could empty a good bottle of single malt scotch, but I don't dare even try. It's not because it might, in a good way, accelerate my demise, but I am afraid of him finding me dead with a half empty bottle next to me and who knows what that could trigger.

When we first met he wished he could have learned to be a social drinker in control of what he drank, not vice versa, like a normal person, he said. At one point in time he wanted to start a Muslim version of Alcoholics Anonymous because he felt there was a need. If there is a need, he should know.

Days of Pain and Madness

The following is based on what my friend Abbas told me.



A flickering light would squeeze its way through the shutter on his cell door, transforming his face into a reflection of the small steel bars that covered the shutter's opening making it impossible to sleep. To avoid the light, he slept on his side facing the wall, the blood-splattered concrete wall.

Almost every day for the past six months, he had returned on tottering legs from another session with his torturers and, as he tried to steady himself before collapsing on the blood-encrusted lumpy piece of foam that was his bed, he would leave prints in blood on the wall from hands that would not heal.

It all began with one hand forced into a pot of boiling of water, then into a pot of soothing ice-cold water. Then his hand was taken out of the cold water and held firmly on the table; then the questions. Tell them what they wanted to hear and they promised to return his hand to the pot of cold water. Abbas knew that to tell them what he knew, to tell them what they wanted to hear, was a walk further down the hall into the courtyard where a firing squad waited, not the promised freedom.

It had begun with one hand, then the other, and when both hands were just a mash of burnt, blistering flesh where pain had met its match, they turned to his feet: first the hot, then the cold, then the floor, then the questions, then the hot again, then...

The handprints on the wall had merged into a kaleidoscope of patterns, a grotesque fresco that seemed to come alive when he turned to face it to avoid the light from the shutter that was making it impossible for him to sleep; to sleep before they came again and more blood would be splattered on the wall and spilled on the foam mattress next to the mural that was a gory testament to his suffering.

One day he did not stumble to his bed but was dragged and dropped on it by two guards and, as his urine-soaked trousers added to the stench of blood, pus and vomit that permeated his mattress, he cursed it. He cursed the coverless mattress, the previous occupant having used the cover to end his suffering. He cursed the mattress checkered with red and brownish fading bloodstains, his blood and the blood of other unfortunate souls who, like him, stumbled back towards the small comfort offered by that smelly blood-stained piece of foam.

He cursed it, then hugged it with all his might for it was not its fault; it was doing its best to provide him with the little comfort it could under the circumstances. 'I must be going mad', he thought, talking to his mattress. Later that evening he would have further reason to doubt his sanity.

Earlier that morning he had been taken out to the courtyard to be shot. He had been told two days earlier that this morning was to be his last. He was prepared to die. What he was not prepared for was to live. When the bullets only hit the wall against which he stood and not his eyes, his head or his heart, he started to shake uncontrollably; his long-suffering, trembling legs refused to carry him any further in any direction, the puddle of yellowish fluid forming at his feet only adding to the indignity of it all.

That night, as the flickering light from the shutter entered the room and he again turned towards the bloody wall, something magical, something madly diabolical happened. The flickering light became a projector, a beam of light which animated the blood-splattered wall. Suddenly, the bloody spots waved and weaved and jumped about before forming themselves into an infinite number of knots. Then the

knots began moving, sliding up and down the cement wall seeking other knots that matched their muted brownish, reddish and grayish colours. Some of the knots formed themselves into a tree, a decaying brownish leafless tree whose roots gradually dissolved into a brownish wet clay from which oozed the decaying and decayed remains of corpses.

From this bleak brown, red and grey landscape figures emerged, shadowy figures slowly walking behind or next to mule-drawn carts and making their way to the base of the tree where they emptied the carts of their cargo; more human waste to be added to an already satiated earth.

Over this ghoulish panorama reminiscent of the black death, the first of a handful of bearded shouting men begin to appear: first the founder of the earliest religion based on revealed scriptures, the Iranian prophet Zoroaster enveloped in flames, then Moses, followed by Jesus, followed by Muhammad, and finally Khomeini. Abbas instinctively put his hands over his ears; religious icons shouting at him only reminded him of the pain he had endured and now, his near-death experience.

Next to the prison was a mosque. Every day Abbas had to listen to the muezzin calling the faithful to prayer. Every day he had to hear Allah Akbar, God is Greater²⁹. Greater than what he thought when his torturers, on occasion, if it was convenient, would interrupt whatever they were doing to him to prostrate themselves in the direction of Mecca and echo the muezzin's words. Every day, at least three times a day, he listened to the believers' declaration of faith reverberating through and within the walls of the prison. There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, Alí is the Friend of Allah, the Successor of the Messenger of Allah and his first Caliph³⁰.

The flattering invocation, "In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful" that began every prayer had lost all meaning. When he was still capable of rational thought, when his mind was not

²⁹ One interpretation of Allahu Akbar is "God is Greater," the faithful adding the greater than what if they wish to do so.

³⁰ The Shia declaration of faith recognizes Ali, the son-in-law of Muhammad, as both a friend of God and His Messenger's rightful successor in its Declaration of Faith, which the Sunni does not.

completely focused on the pain coursing through his body and the pain to come, he had wondered what went on in the minds of his tormentors when they mouthed those words while performing their obscene, painful duties.

Every morning when the guards had come to mark his stay in prison by making a notch in his scalp with a straight razor, he heard the call to prayer. The day they asked him to place his right hand palm down on the table, then with a hammer broke his knuckles, he heard the call to prayer. He heard the call to prayer the day they put his hands in boiling water; the day they put in his feet; the day...

He did not need to put his hands over his ears for no sound was emanating from the lips that moved on the wall of blood, now the wall of death. Khomeini was the last shouting bearded man. His translucent apparition slowly formed itself into an owl whose feathers took on the grayish and white colour of the old, compassionless man's lengthy, disheveled beard. The owl became the bird in the tree. The owl surveyed with satisfaction the grim scene beneath its wings before taking flight³¹. As it disappeared in the distance its eyes hovered on the horizon gazing, casting an approving final glance at the desolation.

Suddenly, Abbas's flickering white light became a flood of yellow light that illuminated the entire room. It was not the warm life-giving rays of the morning sun, but the light from hundreds of carbon filaments pulsing with electricity that rushed through the shutter in his cell door announcing the beginning of a new day.

He was still staring at the wall, now just a dirty bloody wall, when he heard the key in the lock and a door opening. What would it be today; another trip down the hall to meet with his interrogators or to the courtyard to be shot, or shot at?

It was to be none of those. He was actually quite relieved to hear the usual vulgar insults, which he associated with foul-mouthed American actors on televisions and in films from the time of the Shah, uttered by one of the prison cooks.

"Here is your breakfast you undeserving mother-fucker."

³¹ Prior to the rise of Islam, owls were considered evil omens and bad luck in most Middle Eastern pagan traditions.

The guard, who had opened the cell door and stood watching while the man with the food tray laid it down on the cement floor a few feet from the mattress, chimed in: "Hope you like the shit and piss." It was not unusual for guards to brag about adding their own excrements to the meager rations given to prisoners.

He did not care to look at them. He waited until they were gone then turned around. The tray with the beans, the slimy mix of fried scrambled eggs and potatoes, and a bowl of watery barley soup was where he expected it.

He rolled off his mattress and, kneeling in front of the tray, dug in with both hands. Plastic utensils had been banned after a prisoner had swallowed his, hoping the internal bleeding they would cause would end his suffering.

He stuffed his mouth with his blood-caked, bruised, and now greasy hand, carefully bringing to his lips the bowl of brownish yellow liquid with barely visible bits of barley. He was happy. On the days they served you breakfast they usually didn't torture you, and for Abbas, a day without torture was a good day.

Good Cops - Bad Cops

Abbas does not remember how many days had passed since his last time with his torturer when three guards came for him. It was not to take him to be tortured or the courtyard to be shot, but the infirmary. The nurse who tended to his festering wounds while his guards left them alone to perform the noon prayers took pity on him, or so it would seem. After bandaging his feet, she gave him some money and opened a window to the outside world and asked if was too high for him to jump. He jumped.

Torture was usually followed by execution not a trip to the infirmary. The escape from Bushehr prison may have been facilitated by the Revolutionary Guard who, having failed to convince Abbas through torture and fake executions to reveal the identity of his associates, now hoped he would lead them to them.

Abbas was now on the run, staying for a few days in "safe houses" to give a chance for his wounds to heal and his beard to grow as he made his way towards the Afghan border. The Revolutionary Guard would undoubtedly look for him in the opposite direction, that of Khomeini's mortal enemy: Saddam Hussein.

When his beard was long enough to fit in with the Taliban, he crossed into Afghanistan. On foot, and using whatever transportation was available, somehow he made it to Pakistan. He stayed there for more than a year before circumstances allowed him to purchase a plane ticket for Kuwait. It was while in Kuwait that he became an alcoholic.

He was in Kuwait illegally. To earn a living, he passed himself off as a Christian, obtaining a Christian card on the black market. With his Christian card, he would check into a hotel and have hard liquor delivered to his room. By prior arrangement, groups of Muslim men would pay him a visit, and for a fee, quickly guzzle what he had to offer. To reassure them it was not a setup, he would down a bottle of his booze before anyone else.

It was only a matter of time before the Kuwait government announced another crackdown on those who were in the country illegally. He fled to Poland, then the former Czechoslovakia, and finally to Spain where he was able to obtain the necessary documents to come to Canada where he claimed refugee status.

In Canada, he started a business that he had learned from his father: restoring Persian carpets to their former glory. The money was good and that meant he could afford to drink in excess. He had never learned social drinking. He indulged in the type of drinking he had done in Kuwait, and that meant many a trip to the Ottawa police station for being found intoxicated in a public place.

It was during one of these trips to the Ottawa police station that he was given a lesson in prisoner etiquette. He says he probably had it coming (although I don't see any justification for what happened) because he was "mouthing off", perhaps more than usual. The car pulled over in a darkened section of the street and the officer in the passenger seat got out of the car and got in the back seat with him and started punching him hard in the ribs leaving him in pain and gasping for breath. There was nothing he could do to protect himself with his hands handcuffed behind his back.

As Stacy Bonds, a twenty-something black woman, would discover, you have to be careful about what you say to Ottawa cops; even a simple question might set them off. She was walking home one night when she was stopped by Ottawa's finest. After providing identification, she asked why she had been stopped. For nothing, it

turned out, but that did not deter Ottawa's finest from arresting her for simply asking "Why?"

While in custody, a police video showed Stacy Bonds was kneed twice by a large police woman who steps back to put her considerable weight behind the first kick, followed by another, then grabbing the hair of the petite Ms. Bonds, and smashing her head into the counter, after which the robust policewoman doing all the kicking and the smashing suddenly develops a limp and leaves the scene.

She returns moments later, more or less limp-free, as four burly male police officers now surround Ms. Bonds who is in handcuffs, face down on the floor. The young woman's blouse was stripped, her bra was cut off with a pair of scissors, and a male officer stuck his hand down her pants.

The masculine female officer, who did the kicking and the smashing, still hovers menacingly in the vicinity as if looking for an opportunity to get a few more kicks in before the immobilized young woman is carted away. Ms. Bonds was left in a police cell for three hours, topless with soiled pants while the police drew up charges of resisting arrest and assaulting police officers.

On one visit to the police station, Abbas got a more discreet appreciation of what she would experience. The officers, who were literally holding him up, said that the elevator to where they were taking him was broken and they would have to take the stairs. At the top of the stairs they *accidentally* let go sending him tumbling down.

Abbas does not hold a grudge. He says, for the most part he was well treated, and considers most of the police officers who had to deal with him decent people. I got proof of this when we were walking on a downtown portion of Bank Street and a police officer who recognized him, and whom Abbas recognized, joined us to congratulate him on turning his life around. On another occasion it was a squad car that pulled over to ask him how things were going. Because of the friendly nature of the conversation, I have to assume they were not looking for a reason to pick him up. The most heartwarming was the officer who listened. During his "drunken years", as he calls them, he caused a lot of grief for local merchants and the police, for which he is very sorry. Thanks to the John Howard Society and Alcoholics Anonymous he is a new man.

As part of Alcoholics Anonymous twelve steps program to recovery he has tried to apologize to merchants, to people he treated shabbily, including police officers. Most of the merchants accepted his apology and left it at that; one exception, a large drugstore in the Ottawa community of Vanier from which he had been banned during his "drunken years."

He was looking for medicine for a severely blistered foot when he was detained by security based on a more than two-year old warning that he was not allowed in the store. The police were called.

The officer who answered the call, instead of believing security who told him what he was like before, took the time to listen to the man who talked about the person he is today. The officer then asked store security to apologize to a shopper who was simply looking for something to ease the pain.

Let Me Rephrase That

December 20, 2024

If Ion or Robin reads some of what I have written here, and I am still alive on January 7 when we are scheduled to have dinner again, I may have to do an Allah and rephrase some of my remarks.

Ion and Robin are the only two people from the good old days when Lucette was alive that have continued dining with me at a restaurant on a semi-regular basis. This may have something to do with their steadfast commitment to never reading anything I wrote, and my not insisting they do. I tested that commitment when I gave them a copy of *Love, Sex and Islam* and told Ion that he was mentioned in the first chapter. If he read it, he never let on.

Ion came by his disregard for what I write honestly. Before venturing into Islam I wrote *Shooting the Messenger*, a book about my experience at Foreign Affairs (today Global Affairs). Lucette was very proud of what I accomplished (I published an extended edition following her death). She offered it to our two diplomat neighbours, John and Norm, who told her in no uncertain terms that they did not care to read it.

For many a Christmas, Lucette would invite Ion and Robin for dinner before they left to spend Christmas in the Laurentians. She couldn't help herself, even after I warned her that Ion, the son of a diplomat, would have the same reaction as John and Norm, and he did, adding that he would never read a book that accused his father of being a crook. Unless his father, when rotated back to Ottawa, occupied the position of Area Comptroller as described in *Tokyo Lets the Cat Out of the Bag* or supervised the work of the post's bookkeeper, he may have unwittingly profited from the theft but not have been complicit.

Lucette was somewhat taken aback by the reaction of the usually self-possessed Ion who was sitting across from her when he unleashed his diatribe. I was sitting next to her and surreptitiously put a calming hand on her thigh, and she changed the subject, something a thoughtful hostess will do when something they said or did distressed a guest.

Last Thursday, Ion gave me an opening and I jumped in with both feet thinking this could be our last time together, so who cares. I don't

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remember what he said that got me to expound at length about the difference between Meccan surahs, i.e., chapters of the Koran and Medinan surahs.

The Koran is a mess. Thomas Carlyle [1795 - 1881] described it as “a confused, jumble, crude, incondite, endless iteration. Edward Gibbon’s [1737 - 1794] appraisal was just as damning: “As toilsome a reading as I ever undertook; a wearisome confused jumble.” Nonetheless, scholars have managed to gleam from the mess what are referred to as chapters of revelations sent down when Muhammad lived in Mecca, his hometown, and later when he sought refuge in Medina after being run out of town for insisting that his brethren would burn in hell like their ancestors unless they embraced Islam.

I explained to Ion that if an imam is preaching to an audience that he wants to lull into believing that Islam is about peace, he will usually quote verses from Meccan chapters where peace and understanding is preferred to war and mayhem. If he wants to whip up the believers into a murderous frenzy, he will usually quote from Medinan chapters such as the ninth surah Repentance.

Muhammad, secure in Medina, launched pitiless attacks on unbelievers. The sword became the order of the day, and those who refuse to convert are to be put to death on the spot. This change in strategy required Allah to repudiate much of what he said earlier about living together in peace as in the following example—remember that a verse number bears little or no relationship as to when it was received.

Meccan:

109:6 “You have your religion and I have mine.”

Medinan:

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.

Scholars have identified more than 200 ephemeral eternal truths in keeping with a new belligerent Islam. Being able to identify revelations that have been modified or replaced is essential to understanding the Koran and being able to tell when you are being lied to.

From the *Introduction to Let Me Rephrase That! - Your Layman's Guide to Abrogations*, Boreal Books:

Of all the incongruities that devotees of a religion steeped in incongruities must accept, the concept of abrogation has to be the most outlandish. Abrogation is common in the real world as better information replaces information that is out of date. In the world of revealed truths, retractions should not even be the exception. It defies logic, and therein lies the incongruity, the weirdness.

Scholars and clerics from the Middle Ages (eighth to eleventh century) initially put forth these more than two hundred abrogated revelations, apparently oblivious to the uncomfortable conclusion that can be derived from their endeavour.

The inherent absurdity of an omniscient deity not getting it right the first or even the second time around may explain attempts by contemporary diviners of the Word of God to refute the very concept of abrogation. One such academic, Muhammad Asad (1900-92), argued that verse 10:64 was 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 God's laws. Denffer quotes four revelations to Asad's one, where Allah admits to occasionally 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.

The idiosyncrasies that saturate Islamic scriptures, including the concept of abrogation, raises serious doubts about the perfection of the Koran, and by extension, that of its Author.

A Xmas Thing and Jesus' First Words

December 22, 2024.

When making modifications to my will after Lucette's passing, I ask my lawyer to include a clause which stated that, should I die during sex, the woman I am with at the time is entitled to \$10,000 from my estate. He said that such an unusual clause might delay probate, better he said, if I find myself in a situation where the kindness of a loving partner possibly leading to my demise, that I simply make an addition to my will beforehand and leave it in plain view.

It's not what you think. Last fall, I rejected the advances of a beautiful thirty-something professional who wanted nothing more than have sex, no strings attached, with a man my age. This, after my doctor's had assured me that this type of activity would not cause my aneurysm to burst before its time. If only we had gotten to know each other beforehand. The \$10,000 is not about paying for sex, to which I am not averse under the right circumstances; it's about more than that. That more than that, and the other, is what I miss most at this time of year.

Robert Frost in *The Death of the Hired Man* wrote "Home is the place where they have to take you in," and nowhere is this more evident than at Christmas time. This Christmas, like every Christmas since she died, I will spend it by surrounded by her things, which should be enough, but it isn't. I'm sorry sweetheart.



Most Monday evenings in winter finds me at Harmon's Steakhouse at a table for two, occupied by one, with a view of the apartment building—now converted into an apartment hotel—where she lived with her parents during the seven years we dated. Having not been able to connect with that special person, I now imagine myself on Christmas Eve in one of the Business Inn's converted apartment nursing a 12 year old Glenfiddich in the company of a kind-hearted sex worker who has nothing better to do that evening than entertain an old fool's fantasy.

But of course, at this time of year the conversation should not be about me, but about you-know-who.

Jesus Conceived

(Excerpt from *Shared Prophets*, Boreal Books)

For the actual impregnation, Allah sent His do-it-all angel Gabriel, the "Spirit" in Revelation 19:17, in the form of an attractive man.

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.

Birth of Jesus

(Excerpt from *Shared Prophets*, Boreal Books)

23:50 And We made Mary's son and his mother a sign, and We sheltered them on a lofty ground which had [settled] meadows and a spring.

In Allah's account of the birth of Jesus, the Christian Messiah comes into this world under a palm tree on a desert oasis. Like other major events which the Bible describes as occurring in Palestine, and which the Koran centres in or around Mecca, Allah may have wanted to leave the impression that Jesus was born near the city.

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."

With no Joseph, Jesus, with perhaps the assistance of Gabriel, will help in his own delivery.

19:24 Whereupon [the babe (Jesus) or (Gabriel)] called her from beneath her: "Do not grieve. Your Lord has created below you a stream.

19:25 "Shake the trunk of the palm tree towards you and it will drop upon you fresh ripe dates."

19:26 "Eat, drink and rejoice. Then if you see any human say: 'I have vowed to the Compassionate to fast, and so I shall not talk today to any human being.'"

Jesus' First Words

(Excerpt from *Shared Prophets*, Boreal Books)

The infant Jesus, only a few hours after his birth, at the request of his mother who was being accused of having been unchaste, will loudly proclaim that he is not the Son of God but a prophet sent by Allah, who praises Allah and does as Allah commands.

19:27 Then she brought him (the child) to her people, carrying him. They said: "O Mary, you have surely committed a strange thing.

19:28 "Sister of Aaron, your father was not an evil man and your mother was not unchaste."

Was Mary, like Zacharia, expected to announce the birth of her son à la Marcel Marceau? Her pointing to her son in response to accusations of having a child out of wedlock would indicate that she was.

19:29 Whereupon she pointed to him. They said: "How will we talk to one who is still an infant in the cradle?"

Jesus:

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."

Allah echoing the baby Jesus' claim:

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.

How wrong the wrongdoers, i.e., Christians are and how they will be held to account.

19:37 Yet, the sects among them differed. Woe to those who have disbelieved from the spectacle of a great Day!

19:38 How well they will hear and how well they will see, on the Day they will come onto Us; but the wrongdoers today are in manifest error.

19:39 And warn them of the Day of sorrow, when the issue is decided, while they are heedless and do not believe.

Jesus said the meek would inherit the earth. Not so, says Allah.

19:40 It is We Who shall inherit the earth and whomever is on it, and to Us they shall be returned.

Three Precocious Babies

(Abbreviated from *1001 Sayings and Deed of the Prophet Muhammad*, Boreal Books)

Jesus, Muhammad informs us in the following hadith, was one of only three babies to speak almost from the moment of birth. That Jesus spoke from the cradle in the Koran may explain why he only gets a short introduction in the following account of three precocious babies.

Narrated Abu Huraira:

The Prophet said, "None spoke in cradle but three: (The first was) Jesus, (the second was) 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.'"

Bukhari 55.645

Why the Cardiologist Sent Me a Tree for Christmas

December 25, 2024

Dear...,

And a Merry Christmas to you and the family.

As I do every year at this time, on Monday, I visited my doctor's office to deliver a box of her favourite chocolates. She asked if I had heard anything from the Ottawa Heart Institute to whom she had referred my file more than a month ago. Not yet. This could mean that, unlike my doctor, they don't consider my condition an emergency or is simply another symptom of a collapsing health care system.

I would like to think that they owe me one for ignoring my advice 25 years ago, the year that a cardiologist from the Institute sent me a tree for Christmas. Either way, the situation leaves me somewhat ambivalent. But of course, this is the season of hope, whatever that hope is, and my hope for you, your husband and the kids is nothing but the best.

Expect a belated Xmas present [due to the postal strike] in the mail.

Love You

Bernard

Year 2000 at the Heart Institute

(Excerpt from *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books)

While visiting with a friend who had suffered a heart attack, I asked after the name of his cardiologist, thinking it might be the one who sent me a tree for Christmas. It wasn't!

A few days before Christmas 1998, there was a knock at the door. It was a deliveryman from *Fines* with the biggest bouquet of red flowers I had ever seen. It was from Doctor D., a cardiologist with the University of Ottawa Heart Institute, "Canada's largest and foremost

cardiovascular health centre dedicated to understanding, treating and preventing heart disease," not to mention heart transplants.

I asked my wife if it was proper for one man to send another man a bouquet of flowers, for whatever reason, even as a thank you. She pointed out that the poinsettia is a tree, not a flower, and that it is perfectly acceptable for men to send trees to one another.

I first met with Doctor D. at a planned meeting to discuss bug fixes and enhancements to the Institute's patient database and user interface after returning to Ottawa from Montréal. His previous consultant, who could not get out of ZIM consulting fast enough, had asked me to take over. The bug fixes and what were considered minor enhancements only took a few weeks, maybe a month, but Doctor D. was obviously happy enough with my work to send me a tree for Christmas.

It was while performing these modifications that I recommended to Doctor D. that the Institute upgrade to the latest version of ZIM so as to avoid any year 2000 issues. He declined. He said that the Institute would be migrating the ZIM application to PowerBuilder and that the new system would be in place before the new millennium, which was slightly more than a year away at the time. PowerBuilder was no ZIM!

Doctor D. was very concerned about the year 2000. He invited the consultant who had convinced him to switch from ZIM to PowerBuilder to meet with us in his office, where he demanded a personal guarantee that they would have the replacement system up and running before then. The consultant's assurances came in the form of, "If ZIM can do it, we can do it and do it better and faster."

I was now very much an expert in Doctor D.'s complex heart patient information system and offered to help the PowerBuilder team with their learning curve. "Not to worry," the consultant bragged, dismissing my offer; "We're fast learners." Not fast enough, as it would turn out.

I was in Montréal, having breakfast with the friends with whom my wife and I had spent New Year's Eve, when I got a message on my *beeper* asking me to call the Heart Institute. The worst predictions for the year 2000 had come true. In a matter of hours, I was standing with Doctor D. and the nurse-operator of his system trying to make sense

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of the dates that were appearing on the computer screen (which mainly had to do with scheduled treatments and medicine dispensation).

One of my first questions was: "Where is the PowerBuilder replacement?"

"It will not be available for a few more months," was the reply.

PowerBuilder had missed the crucial year 2000 deadline; a deadline that, in the case of the Heart Institute's patient database, could mean the difference between life and death. Performing a major software upgrade in the middle of a crisis of this magnitude where lives may be at stake is not recommended, unless there is no other choice. I asked Doctor's D.'s nurse if she could revert to a manual recordkeeping operation until the PowerBuilder application was ready. She had already done so as soon as the problem became evident, and she could continue doing so for as long as it took for PowerBuilder to get its act together. I recommended that they continue with manual recordkeeping. In my professional opinion, it was the safest course of action until the PowerBuilder application was ready.

My Lucette was not as forgiving when it came to situations like this. "You're never going to get rich that way," she said. She would have recommended that they upgrade then and there and charged a small fortune for doing so; after all, it was their mistake for not listening to my advice in the first place.

She was wrong about the decision I should have made, and mostly right about not getting rich that way, but it was never about the money. If it had been, I would never have blown the whistle way back when. My business had not suffered because I offered honest advice for a reasonable fee; quite the opposite. I would never get rich, but by the same token, I never thought there would come a time when I would again lack for money. The government abandoning ZIM and setting an example for the private industry to follow was only part of it.

Her Renaissance Man

December 26, 2024

It was shortly after Amazon informed us that, what would grow into a layman's guide to the Koran encompassing the entire book, was now available for sale, that a beaming Lucette told me I was her Renaissance Man. I asked her what she meant by that. She said that, when I lost my job with the government, I learned how to prepare and submit legal arguments and appealed my dismissal to the Federal Court and then the Supreme Court of Canada. After that setback, I learned a new computer language and built the Boreal Shell, and now I had taken on the Koran. She said that, like men of the Renaissance, I did not limit my interest to just one thing, and she admired that in me. Her unheralded Renaissance Man, I might add, for which my loving champion blamed the media.

Only In Canada

(Excerpt from *Shooting the Messenger*, Boreal Books)

I would greet her most mornings with a kiss and a cup of coffee before checking my emails. This Canada Day morning was to be like most mornings, except that we would again have something to be thankful for in living in a country that could be so much more. Eye surgery, necessary due to Sjogren syndrome, had actually improved her vision. No muss, no fuss, no cost; thank you, Tommy Douglas. If only that were enough.

The kiss and coffee were often followed by the same one-word question: "Anything?"

"No," I replied.

"Maybe you should just give up," she said. "You will never get their attention; it's pointless."

"If I don't get their attention then I have failed. In everything I have tried to do, I have failed."

I expected the usual encouraging words, "No, you have not. You should be proud of what you have accomplished," and so on and so forth, but not this morning. She paused for a few seconds.

"Only in Canada," she said, "could someone uncover a bunch of thieves, and the thieves get to keep the millions they stole, and their

jobs, and you lose yours. In any other country, when you fought, on your own, because we could not afford a lawyer to try to get your job back, and the Supreme Court granted you a hearing, someone would have noticed.

“In any other country,” she said, “anyone who spent ten years of his life writing what may be one of the best, if not the best book on the Koran, the [mainstream] media would have at least mentioned it.”

The people who demanded an end to my career, and the diplomats who had signed off on my firing—including Ambassador Chrétien, who reluctantly set the process in motion after meeting with his boss, Deputy Minister and future Liberal Minister Marcel Massé—were not your run-of-the-mill petty thieves. As to the media not believing that a layperson could write a definitive book on the Koran that contained the entire text, I, too, would have found that hard to believe. Yet I agree with her: the media had a responsibility to at least investigate the possibility, considering the importance of the book.

When my Lucette said this, money had become an issue. We had hoped to find a publisher for *Pain, Pleasure and Prejudice*, but that turned out to be an exercise in futility. Oxford University Press did go as far as promising to submit it to a “jury” until they found I did not have a PhD. In a subsequent email, they apologized, but, lo and behold, they had just discovered that an Oxford scholar was completing a manuscript along the same lines as my *Layman’s Guide*, therefore *Pain, Pleasure and Prejudice* was no longer in the running. A publisher actually sent me a contract to sign, but there was a catch:

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.

I immediately thought of Tarek Fatah, author and one of the founders in 2001 of the Muslim Canadian Congress and serving as its communications director and spokesperson until 2006. I had seen him interviewed during the debate over the introduction of Sharia tribunals in the province of Ontario and was impressed. He was having a book signing at the National Library on Wellington Street. I drew him aside and explained my dilemma. He made it clear that for a Muslim to endorse a book on the Koran, of all books, by a layperson and a non-believer was “a death sentence.” Findings endorsements that would satisfy a publisher proved predictably unrealistic.

You're an Islamophobe and a Racist, Admit It!

December 27, 2024

Should I achieve the notoriety that I expected while I was alive, my detractors are bound to accuse me—especially those who have not read my books—of being an Islamophobe and a racist, as if Islam was a race and not a religion made up of as many ethnic groups as there are ethnicities.

If you accept my definition of Islamophobia as a rational fear of the irrational then the accusation will have some merit. As for the now ubiquitous parallel accusation of racism, as an oppressive religion seeks to take on the mantle of defender of the oppressed, it is a sentiment we all harbour, to one extent or another, that is both good and bad. It is the bad we must guard against. Those who make that accusation, in conjunction with a fear of Islam, tend to betray racism of the worst kind.

Islamophobia

(Abbreviated from *Fade to Black –
Triumph of the Irrational*, Boreal Books)

Having read this far, you should appreciate that a fear of Islam is a legitimate fear, not a phobia. It is a rational fear of the irrational. 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 demand of believers when it comes to dealing with those for whom He has nothing but contempt that they avoid them, enslave them, or kill them depending on the circumstances.

We have come to a point in our history where criticism of Muhammad and the god for whom he claimed to speak is equated with insulting Islam, thereby making anyone who would offer a contrarian opinion, such as that Islam is not a religion of peace, a target for reprisals that include threats to life and limb. It does not matter that leaders of men, for whom Allah's Words are fighting words, agree with you.

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Islam was never a religion of peace. Islam is the religion of fighting. No one should believe that the war that we are waging is the war of the Islamic State. It is the war of all Muslims, but the Islamic State is spearheading it. It is the war of Muslims against infidels. There is no excuse for any Muslim not to migrate to the Islamic State... joining is a duty on every Muslim. We are calling on you either to join or carry weapons [to fight] wherever you are.

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, in an audio message made public May 14, 2015

The Islamic State taking Allah at His word about being harsh with unbelievers:

9:123 O you who believe, fight those of the unbelievers who are near to you and let them see how harsh you can be. Know that Allah is with the righteous.

If you can't blow them up or shoot them, try to be alone with the infidel and crush his skull with a rock, knife him to death, run him over with your car, throw him off a cliff, strangle him, poison him... It does not matter whether he is a policeman or a civilian, the sentence is the same. They are our enemies and spilling their blood is justified.

Abou Mohammed Al-Adnani, the second most senior leader of the Islamic State after Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

Kill everyone; the evildoers are all targets for us. Don't bother looking for a specific target, just kill them.

Dar al-Islam (Land of War) No. 3 (My translation of an exhortation to believers worldwide published in Islamic State's French language signature magazine.)

Through defamation and by threatening murder and mayhem, Islamists have taken control of the message. A key component of that message is that if you fear Islam you are an Islamophobe and you should be ostracized, if not sanctioned. Should you challenge the designation with horrific quotes designed to terrorise from an implacable deity and its self-proclaimed mouthpiece, expect more accusations that your fear of Islam is unfounded, and to lose that fear or else! Welcome to the Twilight Zone.

Those who would accuse you of Islamophobia would like you to concentrate on the smiling faces and ignore the guns. Don't!



AFP-Jiji: "Combination of pictures showing the five gunmen who carried out the July 1, 2016 attack in Dhaka, during which 20 hostages were slaughtered at a restaurant, posing in front of a flag of the Islamic State group at an undisclosed location." Image may be subject to copyright.

If we are losing the battle, it is partly because of discussion-ending accusations of islamophobia and racism, and laws that make criticism of a person's religious beliefs a crime. After the London bombings of July 2005, the British government saw to it that no serious discussion about the Book or the man that were the inspiration for the slaughter of 54 British citizens ever took place by silencing critics of Islam with threats of fines and imprisonment. The British government, sought to appease would-be cold-blooded mass-murderers through a Munich-like Faustian bargain in the face of opposition from Muslims themselves.

We also recognize that a free society must have the scope to debate, to criticize, proselytise, 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, humanist, secularist urging the British Parliament to reject legislation limiting the rights to criticize religious beliefs and traditions.

A tacit bargain was struck with those for whom terrorism is a means to an end. Put away your bombs, guns and knives and you will be allowed to recruit, largely unopposed, in our corner of the Land of War (anywhere the Sharia is not the law of the land).

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The *Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006* was given royal assent on February 16, 2006. From one day to the next, the country that fought a world war to preserve us from genocidal fanatics became both a more tolerant and intolerant society; more tolerant of religious zealots and less tolerant of their critics. An illustrative caution from a British publisher who considered taking on *Pain, Pleasure and Prejudice* before the subway bombings:

With the new race and religious hate laws coming through [after the London bombings] it could be considered illegal if *Pain, Pleasure and Prejudice* is deemed an attack on a person's religious belief.

The West has implicitly, if not explicitly, accepted Islam's argument that limits should again be placed on criticism of religious beliefs, thereby allowing militant Islam to advance almost unchallenged. This gradual surrender of hard-won fundamental freedoms in the face of religious intolerance is slowly neutering the most effective weapons against the spread of this type of tyranny: freedom of expression and freedom of speech.

If you are accused of being an Islamophobe, wear the label proudly, you're the rational one.

You're a Racist. Admit It!

(Abbreviated from *Canada – The Fractured Nation Interviews*, Boreal Books)

Johnny: Let's talk about your world now that Canada is no more. Do you think the creation of the *North American African-Caribbean League* was a good thing?

Maude: Not really, but it was inevitable.

Johnny: Inevitable! Why?

Maude: During troubled times people will seek refuge with people they trust. Canadian multiculturalism encouraged people to look to their ethnic communities for support. When the troubles came, that is what they did. All those government sponsored commercials railing against racism actually encouraged it by accentuating our differences instead of why we should trust each other. A trust that comes from knowing we share the same values no matter the color of our skin. The *North American African-Caribbean League* became a sanctuary from the real and

imagined threats posed by the “others.” It is a cliché worth repeating, understanding brings down barriers fear creates them.

Johnny: Yet, you leave this safe sanctuary to go out and speak against oppression of women of all races. Why?

Maude: Because they are all my sisters and they are in trouble.

Johnny: Isn't this a form of racism, racism against the male race?

Maude: *The male race?* That's a bit of a stretch even for you Johnny. You should be careful when using that emotionally charged word. It has been my experience that those who accuse others of racism tend to harbour racist sentiments of the worst kind.

Johnny: I am not a racist.

Maude: We are all racist to one degree or another. Faced with a choice in saving a member of our race as opposed to another, we will tend to save one of our race, the same way a mother faced with the choice of saving her child or her neighbours will tend to choose her own. We do it without thinking. What I call premeditated, coldblooded racism is what we have to guard against. Racism that promotes hate; that promotes ideas that one race is superior to the other in all things, that sort of thing. To love your race is okay. To hate or demean other races is not.

Johnny: You won't get an argument from me there. However, I don't agree with your statement that faced with a black and white choice, no pun intended, between saving a member of our race as opposed to a member of another race we will tend to save one from our race. I think we will save the one that we consider a friend whatever his or her racial make-up.

Maude: Johnny, Johnny, Johnny, you continue to surprise me. If what you are saying is that we should all be friends, you won't get an argument from me.

New Year vs. New Year

December 31, 2024

For more than twenty years, Lucette and I celebrated the arrival of the New Year, along with three, sometime four couples, at a neighbour's house. At midnight tonight, I will be toasting a new year in my own company due to having been unable to establish a meaningful connection that might have gotten me an invitation.

Observant Muslims will celebrate, in keeping with Allah's primitive moon calendar, their roaming New Year in 2025 when the crescent moon is first sighted in the western sky after sunset on Wednesday, June 25. In 2026 it will be the evening of June 17; in 2027 it will be June 6, and so on.

Allah's Calendar

(Abbreviated from *Getting to Know Allah*, Boreal Books)

The Islamic calendar is based on a lunar cycle of twelve months of 29 or 30 days, depending on the visibility of the moon, making the *Islamic year* 354 or 355 days long. Why Allah chose the primitive, ever imprecise lunar calendar over the more accurate solar calendar such as the one introduced by Julius Caesar in 45 B.C. remains a mystery. Unlike the lunar calendar, the Julian calendar neatly divides a 365-day year into 12 months and adds a leap day to February every four years.

The first solar calendar was likely 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, camels and some cattle. But what about the rest of the world who would be forced to adopt the lunar calendar as Islam spread across the globe? Allah had to know better; so why choose such an inaccurate way of measuring the passage of time and saddling humanity with it?

Tradition may have dictated Allah's choice of the traverse of the moon for measuring the passage of the months and years, as was

done when the moon was a god worshipped by many of the inhabitants of the Peninsula. Remember, Islam is essentially a synthesis of Jewish beliefs and pagan traditions from which we get the pilgrimages (see Chapter "Pilgrimages - The Hajj and the Umrah," *Getting to Know Allah*, Boreal Books).

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.

The moon's brightness is a reflection of the sun's light, not a light on its own as Allah has made it out to be in Revelation 10:5. Can His fondness for His former illustrious self in the pantheon of gods worshipped by the pre-Islamic Arabs be any more evident?

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 reckoning. Allah did not create that except in truth, expounding the Signs to a people who know.

10:6 Indeed, in the alternation of night and day and in what Allah has created in the heavens and the earth are real signs for people who are God-fearing.

The lunar calendar need not have unnecessarily complicated things by moving through the seasons if Allah had not banned the practice of adding a thirteenth month every now and then. 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. This, Allah claimed, was an attempt by the unbelievers to interfere with his sacred months and He forbade it.

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.

The Names of the Months

The names of the months of the Islamic calendar are said to predate Islam and many reflect weather conditions on the Arabian Peninsula. Allah's adoption of the lunar calendar, where each month begins eleven or ten days earlier every year (not taking into consideration 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*.

- 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

Year Zero

In 637, Caliph Umar decided on the year 622, the year Muhammad fled Mecca and settled with his followers in Medina, as the year zero of the Islamic calendar. The year of this exodus is known as the Hijra or Hegira and is represented as 1 AH or 1 al-Hijra. The Hegira marks the alleged transition from ignorance to enlightenment, the lunar calendar being one of its manifestations.

Souls That Need to Be Persuaded to Change

January 1, 2025

My wish for the New Year, and for years to come, is that we take care of each other, including Daoud's "soul that needs to be persuaded to change," (see the following). It will take time and the courage of your convictions to do what Kamel Daoud feels is needed, but in the end, we will all be better off.

The Lessons of Cologne and Paris

A great liberal betrayal is afoot... I call them regressive leftists; they are in fact reverse racists. They have a poverty of expectation for minority groups, believing them to be homogenous and inherently opposed to human rights values. They are culturally reductive in how they see Eastern—and in my case, Islamic—culture, and they are culturally deterministic in attempting to freeze their ideal of it in order to satisfy their oriental fetish.

While they rightly question every aspect of their own Western culture in the name of progress, they censure liberal Muslims who attempt to do so within Islam, and they choose to side instead with every regressive reactionary in the name of "cultural authenticity" and anticolonialism.

Maajid Nawaz in conversation with Sam Harris, *Islam and the Future of Tolerance*, Harvard University Press, 2015

As we accept more and more refugees and immigrants whose values and beliefs are often at odds with our own, who will change the other for the better, and who is to define what the better is? Today, to favour Western values, even if you are Muslim, is to invite accusations by Islamists and Nawaz's regressive leftists and reactionaries of being an Islamophobe or of spreading Islamophobia. A quising-like collusion that reached absurd heights in France, with all concerned accusing a respected Arab novelist and journalist of being an Islamophobe and inciting Islamophobia. The pejorative label of Islamophobe has become the go-to epithet to put a stop to any

discussion that hits too close to home such as what happened in Cologne.

'No! You cannot touch me!': New footage from Cologne sex attacks reveals how women screamed at their attackers as police realised they are powerless to stop them.

More than 500 women were assaulted and robbed by mobs of immigrant, mostly North African men in the German city during last year's New Year's Eve celebrations.

Harrowing cries of a girl shouting: 'No! You cannot touch me!', can be heard at the beginning of the new footage which was filmed by specially-trained police officials.

Daily Mail, Dec 15, 2016

Angela Merkel says Germany has lost control of the refugee crisis amid public anger over Cologne sex attacks.

The Telegraph Jan 11, 2016

German leaders condemned a "new dimension" of crime after scores of women reported being sexually assaulted as they passed through a group of about 1,000 men during New Year's Eve celebrations in downtown Cologne.

Associated Press - Jan 5, 2016

Algerian novelist and journalist Kamel Daoud is a winner of the coveted Goncourt prize for a first novel, his "Camus-inspired, *The Meursault Investigation*." The assault on his character began after his thinking-man's assessment of the Cologne sexual aggressions; *Cologne - City of Illusion* appeared in *Le Monde*. Following is a portion of the report by Hugh Schofield, BBC News, on what happened next.

On the one hand Daoud deplored the far-right "illusion" which treats all immigrants as potential rapists. But by far the greater part of his anger was directed at the "naive" political left, who in his view deliberately ignore the cultural gulf separating the Arab-Muslim world from Europe. Thus, according to Daoud, Europe welcomes immigrants with visas and material sustenance - but without addressing what really counts, which is the world of values. What Cologne showed, says Daoud, is how sex is "the greatest misery in the world of Allah."

"So is the refugee 'savage'? No. But he is different. And giving him papers and a place in a hostel is not enough. It is

not just the physical body that needs asylum. It is also the soul that needs to be persuaded to change. This Other (the immigrant) comes from a vast, appalling, painful universe - an Arab-Muslim world full of sexual misery, with its sick relationship towards woman, the human body, desire. Merely taking him in is not a cure."

These were strong words, and the reaction came fast. In an opinion piece also in *Le Monde*, a collective of intellectuals and academics delivered an excoriating attack on Daoud, whom they accused of "feeding the Islamophobic fantasies of a growing part of the European population." Daoud, the authors said, had based his argument on a discredited "culturist" analysis. In other words, he made Arab-Muslim culture the determining agent in the behaviour of individuals - turning them into little more than 'zombies'.

"Worse, his call for immigrants to be taught western values was a form of 're-education'. The whole project is scandalous, and not only because of the same old claptrap about the West's mission to civilize and its superior values. More than just the usual colonial paternalism... (Daoud) is effectively saying that the deviant culture of this mass of Muslims is a danger for Europe."

...

For some, Daoud is a hero for speaking unpleasant truths about the culture of North Africa and the Middle East - doubly a hero for saying it not from exile but from his home in Oran. But for his enemies, Daoud is a self-hating Arab who prefers French culture to Algerian, and whose attacks on religion are part-motivated by his own erstwhile flirtation with Islamism (in the 1980s he was a young militant). Worse, they say his arguments play into the hands of the anti-immigrants in Europe who can now use them to nurse their own 'illusions'.

Daoud says he has had enough. In an open letter to Shatz (a friend whose criticisms he respects), he denounces the academics and intellectuals who earlier denounced him. "They do not live in my flesh or in my land, and I find it illegitimate - not to say scandalous - that certain people accuse me of Islamophobia from the safety and comfort of their western cafes."

Cologne is one example of what happens when you accept young men without regard to Daoud's "soul that needs to be persuaded to

change,” Paris is another. Islam’s “sick relationship towards woman” finds its fullest expression in a revelation about women as fields to be ploughed at the discretion of the ploughman.

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.

This blanket dispensation to do with women what you will, despite the fact that Allah probably meant married women, undoubtedly influenced the groping of women in Cologne and the rape of girls and young women in Paris. Samira Bellil wrote about a gang rape phenomenon In the Hell of the Gang Rapes – my translation of *Dans l'enfer des tournantes* – in primarily Muslim suburbs of Paris. The story is about her and young Muslim girls who venture outside the home to live like normal Parisian girls and are befriended by young men whose intention is doing to them what they believe is their God-given right.

Rather than come to the aid of their daughters who have been raped, the mothers in Bellil's book defend the rapists. The girls must have deserved it, just like when they are raped and brutalized by their husbands. There is a reason why a large number of young Muslim women in France choose to make their home their prison. Outside the walls, waiting, are dangerous young men with the Koran on their mind.

Josée Stoquart, in writing for Gallimard Editions, the editors of *Dans l'enfer des tournantes*, echoes Daoud's observations about sex and Islam. She doesn't place the blame for the rapes entirely on young Muslim men. She blames a religion that does not permit even innocent flirtations and fraternization between adolescent Muslim boys and girls in a society where young men are bombarded everyday by sexual and pornographic images and which leads to a very skewed view of what it is to have a romantic relationship.

Here is how Stoquart explains it (my translation):

... [young Muslim men] are caught in a contradiction between the inflexible demands of their cultural origins (religious fundamentalism, seclusion of women, polygamy...) and a cultural environment filled with erotic images. Flirting is not allowed, nor is friendship between

boys and girls thereby heightening the sexual tension. The only sexual education available to these young people is from pornographic films, they have no other representation of what constitute a romantic relationship.

These young people have no barometer and no appreciation of the gravity of their actions. For them "la tournante" is just a game and the girls the objects [of that game].

The girls who are raped become in the eyes of boys and the community "des filles a cave" [basement girls, most of the rapes occur in basements] to whom you can do anything. The violence for these girls is not only physical ... they also have to confront the moral violence of a loss reputation, the shame, the humiliation and the fear of reprisals should they complain [to the authorities].

Alice Does Not Like Gods Who Scare Children

January 2, 2025

Got a *Happy New Year* text from my sister Alice yesterday. Alice, like the protagonist of *Alice Visits a Mosque to Learn about Judgement Day*, would not be impressed with Allah's sadistic treatment of her grandchildren on Judgement Day should that most ominous of days be imminent. Apologists for Allah allowing children to be killed in massacres on His behalf would have you believe He only wants what is best for them, like He did on December 16, 2014. On that day, six Taliban entered a school in the Pakistani city of Peshawar and slaughtered 141 people, including 132 children between eight and eighteen years of age. How a Taliban supporter justified the killing of the children:

Human life only has value among you worldly materialistic thinkers. For us, this human life is only a tiny, meaningless fragment of our existence. Our real destination is the Hereafter. We don't just believe it exists, we know it does. Death is not the end of life. It is the beginning of existence in a world much more beautiful than this. As you know, the [Urdu] word for death is "intiqall." It means transfer, not end.

Paradise is for those of pure hearts. All children have pure hearts. They have not sinned yet... They have not yet been corrupted by [their kafir parents]. We did not end their lives. We gave them new ones in Paradise, where they will be loved more than you can imagine. They will be rewarded for their martyrdom. After all, we also martyr ourselves with them. The last words they heard were the slogan of Takbeer [Allah U Akbar]. Allah Almighty says himself in Surhah Al-Imran [3:169-170] that they are not dead. You will never understand this. If your faith is pure, you will not mourn them, but celebrate their birth into Paradise.

Sam Harris, *Islam and the Future of Tolerance*, Harvard University Press, 2015, p. 86

If Allah really cared about children why allow them to be slaughtered in His Cause, a world ruled by His Book and the sayings and

example of the illiterate who revealed its content, and why needlessly terrify them before they are brought before His Eminence to be judged, and why judge them at all?

Scaring Children White

(Excerpt from *Alice Visits a Mosque to Learn*
about Judgement Day, Boreal Books)

Alice: Rejoicing, getting pleasure from watching another of our kind who has never harmed us in any way, or wished us harm, in excruciating pain! If it wasn't for the sadism, that would be so childish!

Imam: It is not being childish! Allah is not a child or a sadist and neither are the people of Paradise, the believers! Enjoying seeing wicked people getting what they deserve is not sadism, it is celebrating the triumph of good over evil and there is nothing wrong with that. And as to children, they too will not be spared the terror of Judgement Day. Allah said:

73:17 So, how will you guard, if you disbelieve,
against a Day which will make children white with
fear?

Alice: Children being scared white! How awful! What kind of god takes pleasure in scaring children? I thought Jesus was one of Allah's Messengers and Jesus loved and was very protective of the innocent; he even said that the Kingdom of Heaven was theirs?

Imam: Yes, Jesus was a Messenger of Allah, but not His son. That is a lie told by Christians to diminish the Compassionate. To associate other gods with Allah is the sin of shirk. There is no greater sin, and every time Christians say Allah has taken a son, they commit the greatest sin of all.

Alice: What about Jesus saying that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to children?

Imam: HE WAS WRONG! It belongs to Allah. It was to correct such miscommunications that Allah sent the perfect human being, the perfect communicator, His Greatest Messenger, the Prophet Muhammad, *the peace and blessings of God be upon him*, to correct lesser, less capable Messengers like Jesus.

Alice: Still, it is difficult to believe that Jesus was the Messenger of a God who would brag about scaring children to the extent that blood will drain from their faces.

Imam: How many times do I have to say it? Allah loves children, and they will be welcomed in His Paradise if they behaved and feared and worshipped Allah and only Allah when told to do so. Allah on Judgement Day will treat children fairly, just like the adults who submitted, and just like their mothers and fathers, they will appear before him to be judged alone. Allah said:

31:33 O people fear your Lord and beware of the Day when no father shall stand for his child and no infant shall stand for his father in the least. Allah's promise is true, so let not the present life delude you or let any deceiver delude you regarding Allah.

Alice: O MY GOD! The poor children appearing before the same person who scared them almost to death, by themselves [*wipes away a tear*].

Imam: Do not refer to God as a person. He is Allah the Wise, the Magnificent, the All-Powerful.

Alice: I am sorry [*regaining her composure*], you are right; no person that I know or have known is capable of what He is capable of.

Imam: Allah is capable of everything; He is Allah!

Alice: Is it possible that Allah's scaring of children has anything to do with Him making an orphan of His Greatest Messenger when he was only six years old, and wanting to make amends for depriving the Prophet of a normal childhood by getting back at children who grew up with one or both parents?

Imam: Allah does not make amends; He does not need to make amends. Have you not considered that Allah's scaring of children is done for the same reasons He frightens adults, so that they will be scared of Judgement Day and therefore remain loyal, and on the straight path that leads to Paradise?

Alice: I just think that if the Prophet Muhammad had grown up with a loving father and mother, he would have at least tried to temper Allah's terrorist side when it came to children [*sniveling*].

Imam: ALLAH IS NO TERRORIST!

Alice: Of course, it is not what I meant.

Imam: What people mistake for terrorism is simply a caring god acting in the best interest of His loyal followers, making sure they remain loyal by letting them know what is in store for them if they betray His Trust, and humiliating, and yes, scaring their common enemy, the unbelievers; BUT THAT DOES NOT MAKE HIM A TERRORIST!

No Therapy for Her, No Coffee for Me

January 6, 2025

**"Group readies Centretown mosque in former church
and heritage centre"** *Ottawa Citizen* January 4, 2025

The church in question:



The headline triggered a mosque related memory; actually two. The *Ontario Lung Association* rented space in a business mall in the east end of Ottawa where people with breathing difficulties could go to perform exercises geared to their handicap under the direction of a licensed therapist. When asked why there were no sessions scheduled on Friday she gestured towards the large mosque across the street from the mall's parking lot. "There used be," she said, "but they were cancelled due to a lack of places to park." This, in spite of clearly marked handicap spaces next and in front of the entrance to the Lung Association's facility for people who could only walk short distances without experiencing breathing difficulties.

Attached to the mosque was what I assumed was a coffee shop next to a travel agency advertising pilgrimage packages. One day, while Lucette was doing her exercises, I walked in and asked the traditionally attired lady behind the counter for a coffee. She said they did not serve coffee. I pointed to two of the four or five tables

where people were sitting having what looked like coffee. She repeated in a slightly louder voice, "we don't serve coffee here." A burley fellow came out of the small kitchen in the back asked her if there was a problem. She pointed to me and said, "he wants a coffee." The man looked me the eye and said, "we don't serve coffee here, please leave." He might as well have said, "we don't serve unbelievers here" in keeping with Allah's many edicts about not making nice with non-Muslims.

A doctor who had supervised an intern from Saudi Arabia thought he had made a friend. When the Saudi citizen had completed his residency and was getting ready to return home, the good doctor told him how much he had enjoyed their friendship and how he hoped to visit him in Saudi Arabia. The Saudi man told him, in no uncertain terms, that he was not his friend and not to come and visit him. I told the good doctor that it was not personal and gave him a copy of one of my books.

In a 2010 BBC documentary, a leading British Islamic scholar had the following to say to his coreligionists about making nice with unbelievers:

Allah has warned us in the Koran, do not befriend the kuffar³², 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*.

For the verses referred to by Abu Yusuf Riyadh-ul-Haq please see Chapter "Can We Be Friends" in *Shared Prophets*, Boreal Books. Rather than include it here as well, I thought I would have you read another excerpt from *Alice Visits a Mosque to Learn About Judgment Day* where Alice takes care not to befriend the imam, who is explaining to her what Judgement Day is all about, out of fear Allah will burn him in His Hell if he reciprocates.

³² A derogatory term for unbelievers." The term refers to a person who rejects God or who hides, denies, or "covers" the truth." *Wiki*

A Bizarro World

(Abbreviated from *Alice Visits a Mosque to
Learn About Judgment Day*, Boreal Books)

Imam: A sin is what God says it is. Allah said that not believing in Him and only Him is the greatest sin of all, and that believing in Him is believing with unshakable certainty in everything He has revealed.

Alice: But...

Imam: Should not people who commit the greatest sin of all not suffer the greatest punishment? No believer is completely evil all the time, which is why Allah weighs their bad deeds against their good deeds before deciding on their fate. But a person who does not believe in Allah and only Allah is being evil all of the time; committing the greatest sin of all, all of the time. Do you think such a person should be entitled to any mercy or compassion?

Alice: I don't know whether to laugh or cry that such a question would even come up.

Imam: It is not a laughing or a crying matter; it is a simple question that very much defines what Islam is all about. Women are only starting to understand what men who fight in the Way of Allah have understood for a long time.

Alice: It's no joke, I know. Judgement Day cannot be a joke for so many, who you say fight in the Way of Allah, willing to kill those who would dismiss what you have told me, what Allah revealed about Judgement Day, as the ranting of a madman.

Imam: If you can't believe in God, in whom shall you believe? Allah, on many occasions, vouched for His Messenger's sanity, including when He asked people to rise and reflect that there was "no madness" in the Prophet, *the peace and blessings of God be upon him*. Allah said:

15:6 They say: "O you, to whom the Reminder (the Qur'an) is revealed, you are indeed a madman.

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."

Alice: I want to believe in God, in a god who is into reducing suffering not increasing it, and whose mercy is unconditional. I find it difficult to identify with Allah's definition of compassion and mercy, especially after what was revealed about Judgement Day.

Imam: What was revealed is that Allah will show mercy and compassion to those deserving of His Mercy and Compassion, the believers. DO YOU NOT UNDERSTAND?

Alice: I do, in a bizarre sort of way.

Imam: What do you mean?

Alice: I used to read some of my brother's comic books. Superman was my favourite, superman had his doppelganger...

Imam: Doppelganger!?

Alice: An opposite. Bizarro was superman's opposite. He lived on a "bizarro world" where up was down, left was right, go meant stop, goodbye meant hello, and so on. Bizarro is a term often used to describe a person or thing that uses a twisted form of logic.

Imam: "Bizarro world" is an interesting way to describe the world of the unbelievers.

Alice: Bizarro came to mind when Allah revealed that "the charmer" is the name of angels who beat up unbelievers while flying them to who-knows-where - Hell or to be judged; it is so confusing.

Imam: He is Allah; He can call His angels whatever He wants.

Alice: Of course. And He constantly refers to Himself as the Compassionate, the Merciful, yet the actions and verdicts of the Judge presiding over Judgement Day would lead some to believe that His understanding of Compassion and Mercy are different, perhaps even the opposite of what, for example, Western dictionaries define as compassion and mercy.

Imam: A bizarro-world's definition.

Alice: The believers are going to Paradise because they have earned it and have no need of Allah's Compassion or Mercy. As to the criminals He welcomes into Paradise, His Compassion and Mercy amount to a pardon. Wouldn't real compassion and mercy have been to forgive those who, through no fault of their own, and in many cases because of Allah's admitted deliberate premeditated actions, failed to believe?

Imam: They failed to believe because of their arrogance, and Allah does not guide the arrogant.

Alice: Yes, many refused to submit because they were arrogant, I am sure; but for many, the Prophet was and is just another claimant to a special relationship with humanity's alleged invisible friend in the sky. It did not help that his message was so different than that of all the Messengers He said came before and with whom He claimed a kinship – Jesus in particular.

Imam: Jesus simply misunderstood Allah when He revealed that you should love your neighbour. Allah's command was that you should love the believers as you love yourself.

Alice: ... and hate those who do not believe.

Imam: HOW COULD YOU LOVE THOSE FOR WHOM ALLAH HAS RESERVED SUCH A PAINFUL PUNISHMENT?

Alice: And there we are.

Imam: It is time for you to go home, young lady.

Alice: [*picking up her shoes, she turns to leave, but not before adding*] Allah is right, and that makes me sad.

Imam: What makes you sad?

Alice: That we can never be friends. I could not take you as a friend, even if that was what you wished, knowing that by doing so I was dooming you to an eternity of agony on fire in Allah's Hell. I could never be that cruel.

Imam: [*the imam is moved somewhat*] Worship Him and only Him, accept that there will be a Judgement Day as He describes, and believe with certainty and everything will be alright and we can all be friends.

Alice: If only it was that easy. So much pain, so much sorrow, so much horror, and for what?

Imam: For a place in Paradise. Go home and praise Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful, at every opportunity and never forget what was revealed to you today.

Alice: [*leaving the spotlight*] How could I forget? How could anyone forget?

Imam: [*returns to his Friday prayers*]

1:1 In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful,

1:2 Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds,

1:3 The Compassionate, the Merciful,

1:4 Master of the Day of Judgement,

1:5 Only You do we worship, and only You do we implore for help.

END

Charlie! Down, but Not Out!

January 7, 2025

A la mémoire de:

Stéphane Charbonnier

Franck Brinsolaro

Ahmed Merabet

Jean Cabut

Georges Wolinski

Bernard Verlhac

Frédéric Boisseau

Elsa Cayat

Philippe Honoré

Bernard Maris

Mustapha Ourrad

Michel Renaud

I subscribe to the electronic edition of *Le Point*, France's Time Magazine equivalent, so there was no way I was not going to be reminded of the tenth anniversary of the massacre at Charlie Hebdo. Charlie no longer publishes cartoons that risk getting its staff killed, but it remains as irreverent as ever where religion is concerned.

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."

Bukhari 52.220

Terror may earn respect for your religion and lead to a recruitment bonanza, as it often does, but it may not be enough if brave souls find a venue to raise the alarm as to the abject immorality of mass murder as a means to an end such as the man who drew the cartoons and those who publicized them. Thanks to security measures, a number of attempts to butcher Kurt Westergaard, à la Muhammad, failed and he died from natural causes. People at Charlie Hebdo, the French satirical magazine that published the cartoons, were not so lucky. In 2015, twelve cartoonists and staff were shot to death and another eleven injured.

For decades the Arab League (a regional organisation of Arab states in North and Northeast Africa) and other Muslim nations has been trying to get the United Nations to declare the Koran and a deeply morally flawed human being to be sacrosanct; to do what the United Kingdom did, but worldwide.

Two Danish imams saw their opportunity to at least raise the stakes for anyone who would dare challenge the underserved reputation for probity of the former merchant Muhammad. They manufactured truly offensive cartoons of God's confidant indulging in aberrant sex, e.g., sex with animals and slipped them in among the mostly inoffensive Westergaard drawings, and travelled the Middle East inciting violence against those who would publish such cartoons.



The only cartoon published by Charlie Hebdo (as republished in the Canadian Western Standard with English captions), that has anything to do with sex (the celibate Allah's bugaboo), and it's a stretch, is a likeness of Muhammad telling a long

line of suicide bombers making their way to Paradise to be rewarded that heaven has run out of virgins. A Danish cartoonist and a magazine brave enough to publish his drawings brought a religious icon down to earth to the consternation of Muslims around the world. In the Free World a small minority said "BOO" and the Free World

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got a lot less free. Western governments became more tolerant of religious fanatics and less tolerant of their critics.



A Charlie Hebdo cover of an edition dealing with the cartoon protests showed Muhammad in tears lamenting: “It’s hard being loved by jerks” (C’EST DUR D’ÊTRE AIMÉ PAR DES CONS). This was a golden opportunity, not only to call out the “jerks” who Charlie identifies as the fundamentalists who make the Prophet cry: “Muhammad overwhelmed by the fundamentalists” (MAHOMET DÉBORDE PAR LES INTERGRISTES),

but the crying man himself and why he continues to inspire acts of wretched barbarity by followers, whom the Koran has convinced that life is better in the Hereafter.

13:26 Allah enlarges and restricts the provision to whom He pleases. They rejoice at this worldly life, but worldly life is nothing but a fleeting pleasure compared with the life to come.

The cover, along with two cartoons of Muhammad, was part of a lawsuit by the Union of French Islamic Organisations and La Grande Mosquée de Paris. One of the cartoons is the one we showed you earlier where the Prophet tells a long line of suicide bombers making their way to heaven to “Stop, stop we ran out of virgins”; in the other, the so-called “turbombe” cartoon, God’s Messenger is drawn with a bomb ready to explode on his head instead of the customary turban.



During the trial “one witness, a Muslim refugee from Algiers, displayed a Saudi Arabian flag to illustrate that the ‘turbombe’ cartoon was not the first to associate Islam with weaponry - the flag carries the Muslim declaration of faith, the Shahadah, underscored with a sabre.” The lawyers for Charlie also

argued that “the cartoons did not attack Islam, but rather the fundamentalists who acted in Islam’s name.” Freedom of expression eventually won out and the lawsuit was dismissed.

Freedom of expression was reaffirmed by a French court only to be dampened by the murder of twelve men and women who dared to live it. No more satirical cartoons of the perfect human being for Charlie Hebdo. Freedom of speech, however, is still alive at this writing at the magazine. That was evident in its spirited defence of a teenage girl who, according to L’OBS (formerly Le Nouvel Observateur) may have received up to 100,000 messages “threatening her with rape, beheading, burning her with acid...” for expressing her opinion of Allah.

At 16, Mila posted to her Instagram account that she preferred women to men. The young atheist had had enough of being told that Allah did not approve and responded with a video telling her critics what she thought about Islam and the Koran, adding for good measure, that she would like to give God the equivalent of a prostate exam (my translation):

I hate religion... in the Koran there is only hatred, Islam is a piece of shit... I have said what I think; you are not going to hold that against me? There are people who are going to get all excited. I don’t care. I say what I want, what is on my mind. Your religion is a piece of shit. Your god, I stick a finger up his ass, thank you, goodbye.

RTBF (Belgium public broadcaster)

Hatred is what God readily admits He has nurtured with His Koran. You cannot separate the hatred for unbelief from hatred for the unbeliever of which the Koran is a prime example.

49:7 Know that Allah’s Messenger is in your midst. Were he to obey you in much of your affairs (take your advice), you would suffer hardship; but Allah has endeared belief to you and embellished it in your hearts, and He has made you to hate unbelief, sin and disobedience. Such are the rightly guided.

For the hypersensitive believers, the teenager had gone too far; much too far. Her video was blasted as a call to hatred. Mila’s response:

Unlike them, I did not insult anyone, threaten or call for violence against anyone. What I did was blasphemy; it is a general criticism of religions, and nothing other.

In the defence of her right to her opinion about God and what she would do to him given the opportunity, Charlie started off by stating the obvious: "inserting a finger in the divine posterior is not meant to be taken literally; God remaining unlocatable so does his asshole." The magazine then proceeded to quote famous authors such as Antonin Artaud who wrote: "If God really does exist, He is a piece of shit." In the novel *The Marquis de Sade*, the character Vespoli fantasizes about sodomising the Almighty while doing the same to a boy in an insane asylum who claims to be God. In *Les Chants de Maldoror*, the magazine informs us, the author has "humans defecating on the face of a sprawling dead drunk God." The defense ends with a quote from Georges Bataille who asked himself if "God could possibly be a prostitute, a crazy person, even a pig."

I would add *Not Wanted on the Voyage* by Canadian Timothy Findley. In his retelling of the story of the Flood, God is a vindictive, doddering old fool, Noah a tyrant and, in the immemorial battle between the armies of the Archangel Michael and those of Lucifer, the good guys lost. You cannot get more blasphemous than that. Findley died a celebrated award-winning author of natural causes at the age of 71. But that was a different time, a time before the embodiment of the thin-skinned militant religion became a force to be reckoned with in the West.

Mila knows she is being stalked: "The stalkers brag about imprisoning me in my own country, locked up like a rat." In a TV interview she admitted that, in spite of police protection, it was only a matter of time before she was murdered for her remarks.

A Reminder That the Bed of a Holy Warrior Is Not One of Roses

January 11, 2025

UK should consider letting IS members return, terror watchdog says... Since the fall of IS in 2019, thousands of people linked to the group - mostly women and children - have been detained in camps in northern Syria.

BBC January 11, 2025

Western governments have a duty to take the survivors and their children back for not countering, with the truth, the propaganda to which they were exposed! I would have been remiss if I had not mentioned, in my *Farewell Postings*, the women and girls that our governments continues to ignore when it is largely their fault that the survivors, and their offspring, find themselves in the predicament they are in.

Western media and Western governments have been largely reluctant to publicize uncomfortable truths about Islam, such as what women and girls can expect after joining a terrorist organization like The Islamic State (ISIS), and that is really too bad. *What Every Jihadi Bride Should Know* bears repeating over and over.

What Every Jihadi Bride Should Know

To your right is a picture of one of two teenaged girls from Montréal who, in February 2015, escaped to Syria to join the Islamic State never to return. *What Every Jihadi Bride Should Know* is mainly for adolescent girls like her who are enamored with the idea of becoming the bride of a holy warrior, believing they will find fulfillment and purpose in the bed of the ultimate bad boy.



Some may be offended by the following, as you should be. If you have teenaged daughters who might be susceptible to ISIS propaganda, be grateful, for it is meant to take the romanticism out of

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joining the ranks of those who are more interested in killing and violence than love and tenderness.

1) Except for the hair on their head, brides are expected to be, on their wedding night, as hairless as a baby.

Before leaving to join ISIS or a similar organization, get a Brazilian, not forgetting your armpits. Getting rid of your pubic and armpit hair under battlefield conditions will definitely be more unpleasant than a wax treatment at a salon, and the often-brutal ripping of pubic hairs, even if done by another woman, can cause genital deformities.

2) Under no circumstances, before meeting with your welcoming committee, should you apply perfume or mask any body odour with aromatic deodorants or wash your hair with a scented shampoo. (They will not see your hair if you take the reputation-saving precaution of covering it up, but they also must not smell it!) Women are expected not to wear any fragrances when going out in public, only men.

The Prophet of Islam stated: "Any woman who perfumes herself and leaves the house, is deprived from the blessings of the Almighty Allah until she returns home."

Bihar al-Anwar

The Prophet held that perfume worn by a woman was an incitement to lust and we certainly would not want that.

3) Virgins are the most sought-after prize among holy warriors. If you have never had sex and can prove it, it is unlikely you will be asked to do the dishes or volunteer for a suicide mission. Expect to be taken by a commander or to be given as a reward to a holy warrior who has killed the most of Allah's assumed enemies, i.e., the most violent and pitiless.

Don't expect to join your Prince Charming on any unbeliever-slaughtering adventure. You might be a distraction from the job at hand, and we also would not want that. For the Prophet and his out-of-this-world Patron, the sight of a single strand of a woman's hair, the outline of a breast or swaying hips—what Allah refers to as a woman's finery—can cause a man to experience a Pavlovian-like reaction, an uncontrollable urge to hump the owner of such "finery" then and there. That is why He imposed such a severe, uncompromising dress code on women.

24:31 And tell the believing women to cast down their eyes and guard their private parts and not show their finery,

except 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 desire, 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.

4) *In Islam, young men are not expected to learn about sex by forming relationships with the opposite sex outside of marriage. This can lead to unrealistic expectations, such as that your virgin-bride will be as skilled as a "veteran whore" on your wedding night.*

Anticipate a severe beating or violent raping, or both, if you don't live up to a holy warrior's ideal of the perfect bride.

5) *Expect to be treated in accordance with your status as a dim-wit in the eyes of Allah and His spokesman.*

2:282 ... 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...

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 6.301

6) *Expect your first of many pregnancies within a matter of months or less, as all forms of birth control are forbidden, including coitus interruptus which the Prophet frowned upon. One of a handful of hadiths to that effect:*

Narrated Ibn Muhairiz:

I entered the Mosque and saw Abu Said Al-Khudri and sat beside him and asked him about Al-Azl (i.e. coitus interruptus).

Abu Said said, "We went out with Allah's Apostle for the Ghazwa of Banu Al-Mustaliq and we received captives from among the Arab captives and we desired women and celibacy became hard on us and we loved to do coitus interruptus. So when we intended to do coitus interruptus, we said, 'How can we do coitus interruptus before asking Allah's Apostle who is present among us?'"

We asked (him) about it and he said, 'It is better for you not to do so, for if any soul (till the Day of Resurrection) is predestined to exist, it will exist.'

Bukhari 59.459

7) If your hymen is no longer intact, no holy warrior may want you. You may only be asked to cook and wash behind a partition ("If you ask them for an object, ask them from behind a curtain. That is purer for your hearts and theirs" 33:53) for those doing the killing.

You can always volunteer to be a suicide bomber; terrorist groups never have enough of those. The upside: Allah will wed you to that husband you may have been looking for when you joined a terrorist army and you will be able to thumb your nose at the women who preferred to stay home.

4:95 Those of the believers who stay at home while suffering from no injury are not equal to those who fight for the Cause of Allah with their possessions and persons. Allah has raised those who fight with their possessions and persons one degree over those who stay at home; and to each Allah has promised the fairest good. Yet Allah has granted a great reward to those who fight and not to those who stay behind.

The downside: you will have to compete for your new husband's attention with up to 72 houris, irresistible female facsimiles who know more about pleasing a man than Cosmopolitan magazine.

8) In the here-and-now, the wife of a holy warrior, especially a successful one, will have to compete with up to three other wives and as many slave-girls as he has been given from his share of the war booty.

Narrated Abu Huraira:

I heard Allah's Apostle saying, "The example of a Mujahid (Muslim fighter) in Allah's Cause — and Allah knows better who really strives in His Cause—is like a person who fasts and prays continuously. Allah guarantees that He will

admit the Mujahid in His Cause into Paradise if he is killed, otherwise He will return him to his home safely with rewards and war booty."

Bukhari 52.46

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 be equitable, then only one, or what your right hands own (captives of war or slave-girls). This is more likely to enable you to avoid unfairness.

9) It's not considered rape (but you will know better), and there is nothing you can do to stop it because having his way with you, with or without your consent, whenever and wherever he pleases, is a man's God-given right.

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.

You will be expected to sign a marriage contract in which you relinquish all control over what Allah considers your "private parts" to the holy warrior you are about to marry.

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

10) Expect to be beaten unless you do exactly as you are told or in anticipation that you might "rebel" after discovering that the bed of a holy warrior is not a bed of roses.

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 (their sex) 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 ways of harming them; for Allah is Sublime and Great.

314 A Reminder That the Bed of a Holy Warrior Is Not One of Roses

If he beats you like he would his camel, it may be small comfort to know that he can't have his way with you immediately afterward.

Narrated Abdullah bin Zam'a:

The Prophet forbade laughing at a person who passes wind, and said, "How does anyone of you beat his wife as he beats the stallion camel and then he may embrace (sleep with) her?"

Bukhari 73.68

11) A husband sodomizing his spouse, even with her consent, is frowned upon, unless as a form of punishment or to enforce discipline.

It's not the means that matters when it comes to using pain to discipline a wife, but the part of her body a husband chooses upon which to inflict that hurt. A man will not be held to account for the punishment he inflicts, so long as he spares his beloved's face.

Narrated Abu Huraira:

The Prophet said, "If somebody fights (or beats somebody) then he should avoid the face."

Bukhari 46.734

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

12) You will be largely confined to the home of your husband for the rest of your life as if you were a contagious disease.

Narrated Usama bin Zaid:

The Prophet said, "After me I have not left any affliction more harmful to men than women."

Bukhari 62.33

A lifelong quarantine, during which you will only be allowed out dressed in a full-body covering, means you will be deprived of sunlight, therefore are more likely to die before your time from diseases associated with lack of vitamin D—but not before experiencing significant weight gain, headaches, bladder issues, constipation, diarrhea, and so on.

13) *The difference between a blushing bride and a discarded spouse is three short words: "I divorce you!"*

2:229 Divorce may be pronounced twice. Then they (women) are to be retained in a rightful manner or released with kindness. And it is unlawful for you [men] to take back anything of what you have given them, unless both parties fear that they cannot comply with Allah's Bounds (by obeying His commands). If you fear that they cannot do that, then it is no offence if the woman ransoms herself (pays money to be set free). Those are the bounds set by Allah. Do not transgress them. Those who transgress the bounds set by Allah are the wrongdoers.

Don't let "release with kindness" fool you, or God's admonition to the husband not "to take back anything of what you have given them"; that is not the way of someone who fights for sex and possessions. Expect him to make your life even more miserable until you agree to give him back everything, including your dowry, before he divorces you; the meaning of "ransoms herself."

14) *You still want Paradise, even with the limited pleasures it has to offer women? Then above all else, be grateful to your husband, no matter what, for the worst may be yet to come!*

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

15) *Finally, be steadfast in your support of your husband's pathological hatred of unbelievers and heretics, for, should this hatred ever diminish to the extent that he starts questioning what Allah expects of him, he is going to Hell and so are you; like Eve so long ago, you will be blamed for your husband's failings.*

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.

Why the Self-Loathing and the Danger it Represents

January 12, 2025

Taliban 'do not see women as human', says Malala Yousafzai. *BBC Jan. 12, 2024*

I will die not having understood why so many women do what they do, in spite of my first semester at Simon Fraser taking a course on *The Psychology of Women*, and reading a textbook by the same name hoping to improve on a dismal record of forming relationships with girls while in high school. Marina of Pestalozzi College, Margaret... and later Lucette, were not unlike the archetype of the women in the book, not so for the women of Islam.

My getting close and personal with Islam and reading—and yes—watching video testimonials of women and girls who, apparently having lost their self-respect, became convert of a religion that considers them less than human, effectively destroyed the illusion that women like Lucette were the rule, not the exception. In reading Islamic scriptures I began to understand why this is so.

Little Boys Learning to Hate Little Girls and Little Girls to Hate Themselves

(Abbreviated from *Children and the Koran*, Boreal Books)

Little boys don't believe that they are more special than little girls nor do little girls that they are inadequate until they are made to feel that way by adults. If they are born into a traditional Muslim family, their parents will justify playing favourites and their unequal treatment by having the children read a book in which a god does just that, while promising to welcome into his Paradise those who accept that this is the way it was always meant to be and live their lives accordingly.

A child's concept of an invisible omnipotent being is not fully formed at the age you hope to implant an idea that will impact their behaviour for the rest of their lives. This means they may not be receptive to what they are compelled to read, or mouth word for word along with you. Little girls in particular may have difficulty accepting that their little brother is better than they are on the say-so of a ghost who wrote a book.

That is why children's books, like the one we talked about in *Getting Kids to Feel Nothing*, introduced the concept of a god in conjunction with a person whose fabricated suffering children can relate to. This, of course, is not a problem for Christian parents and educators and their example of Jesus. It was, however, a problem for Muslim indoctrinators who had to find a way to get into a child's mind when it is most receptive to being decisively influenced.

Stories about Muhammad, like those you find in *My Book of Islam*, were woven to bring out a child's natural empathy for someone they would come to see as a hero, someone they could trust. That trust, for little girls, will be tested when, to back up Allah's negative assessment of their sex, they are told that their hard-done-by hero, who delivered God's exact words regarding their deficiencies as human beings, more than agreed with what he communicated from on High.

Allah, in His Koran, reminds us that:

- 1) Girls are inferior by at least one degree.

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.

- 2) Girls have trouble remembering things.

2:282 ... 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...

- 3) Girls have no more rights when it comes to sex than an inflatable doll (2:223) that boys may penetrate at their discretion, except when the doll is menstruating (2:222) because that makes the doll dirty.

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.

2:222 And they ask you about menstruation, say: "It is an impurity." So keep away from women during their menstruation and do not approach them (do not have sexual relations with them) until they are clean. Once they get clean get to them as Allah commanded you. Allah loves the repentant and loves those who purify themselves.

- 4) When little boys grow up, because of their superiority and the wealth they will accumulate because of their sex (which they can use to purchase girls to marry), are in charge and can beat up girls for whatever reason, even for what they might be thinking.

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!

- 5) That a wife can be shared among men like so much chattel after a husband has "satisfied his desire for her" and divorced her so that another man can do the same as Muhammad's adopted son did so that God's Messenger could have a go at Zaynab.

How do you explain to pre-pubescent little girls the concept of menstruation and what Allah means when he warns little boys to "not approach" them when it is happening?

What about denying them intimacy, the understood meaning of "abandon them in their beds," and encouraging boys to beat them because of what they might be thinking, e.g., illegal sex, Allah and Muhammad's pathological obsession? It must be equally, if not more, difficult to get the message across to little boys without giving them a premature and precarious understanding of the ins and outs (pun intended) of sexual relations.

You are never sure exactly what your child will retain from Allah's speckled bits of misleading information as to where babies come from. Why would parents want an asexual god who has never married or had children, and is proud of it, to teach their kids about sex and procreation and the rules governing what He refers to as a

female's "private parts"? You would think parents would be the first—mothers in particular, who are responsible for getting a child to the Khatmi-Qur'an—to want to avoid exposing their children to obvious misconceptions and a misogynous philosophy.

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 under the not always benevolent tutelage of their mother.

Life in jail for son's murder over Koran studies

A mother [from Cardiff] 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

Most children complete the first full reading of the Koran between the age of four and seven. It is probably too much to expect a believing mother raised like her mother, and her mother before her... on the Koran, not to drown her children in Allah's Wisdom. This could explain why they put up with the beatings, the confinement, and the degradation and attack those who say, "This is not normal!" Or, are they living up to Muhammad's assessment of their intelligence in repeating what Allah revealed in Revelation 2:282 about a woman's testimony being less worthy than that of a man?

Remember that believing women are initiated into God's opinion of their sex during the first reading of the Koran as children—the start of a thorough indoctrination that will result in them literally hating themselves—making them inclined to submissively yield to the men Allah has made their wardens for life. Men, from boyhood, also can't help but be influenced by God's disparaging assessment of females, which may explain what can best be described as a contempt tinged with desire for the women in their lives.

From that first reading and for the rest of their lives, five times a day (for Sunni Muslims), women and girls will get down on their hands and knees at the back of any room in which they find themselves to worship a god who said those bad things about them, where they

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must loudly proclaim their shortcomings to all as part of their devotion. As mentioned on other occasions, prayers mainly consist of repeating word-for-word verses from the Koran.

They may not fully understand what it means to be sexually assaulted, but during their prayers they are bound to reaffirm that rape is a husband's God-given right, as in revealed truth 2:223, "Your women are a tillage for you..."

They are also bound to reaffirm that it is the right of a believer to rape a wife in front of her unbelieving husband.

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.

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

How psychologically damaging for a woman's self-respect to have to publicly acknowledge that, when all is said and done, she is nothing more than a sexual object created by a misogynous god to reward males, as wives or sex-slaves, for their loyalty.

I can understand the self-loathing that the Koran imbues, early on, in women born into the religion that makes it difficult for them to question their indoctrination later in life. But what about the women and girls who, as non-Muslim children, have not had the Koran drummed into them, who whole-heartedly embrace the Book and the man? Why would the Taliban see women as humans, when so many,

converts in particular, don't consider themselves deserving of the appellation?

Is Islam serving a need for women to be dominated and disciplined by the equivalent of Gwen Stephani's "bad boys" or are they to be compared to Pink's "stupid girls?"

Gwen Stephani's "Bathwater"

So why do we choose the boys that are nasty...
Why do the good girls always want the bad boys...

I still love to wash in your old bath water
Makes me feel like I couldn't love another
I can't help it, you're my kind of man
Whoo-oo, doo-oo
Whoo-doo, doo-oo

No I can't help myself, I can't help myself

Pink's "Stupid Girls"

What happened to the dreams of a girl president
She's dancing in the video next to 50 Cent
They travel in packs of two or three
With their itsy-bitsy doggies and their teeny-weeny tees
Where, oh where, have the smart people gone?
Oh where, oh where could they be?

The confident women of Sumer gave birth to Western civilization.
The submissive women of Islam may help bring it to an end.

The Women of Sumer

The *Epic of Gilgamesh* predates the Hebrew Bible by at least 2000 years, the Koran by an additional 1500 years, more or less. It was carved into clay tablets at the dawn of written history in ancient Sumeria (Sumer). In it, you will find a story about the great flood and the Garden of Eden. How would Islam reconcile variations of the same stories as can be found in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*?

The Koran contains references to twenty-five prophets who came before Muhammad— and there may have been many more—before God got fed up with His Message being badly transmitted or misunderstood and decided to send an illiterate merchant as His last and greatest emissary. An argument could be made that the author of *Gilgamesh* was an early prophet sent by Allah who was misquoted or

misunderstood. For instance, how could someone possibly write that it was a woman, the original Eve, to whom we are indebted for the wisdom with which she endowed man, and which allowed civilization to blossom? From a translation by Stephanie Dalley:

Shambbat loosened her undergarments, opened her legs and
he took in her attractions.

She did not pull away. She took wind of him.

Spread open her garments and he lay upon her.

She did for him, the primitive man, as women do.

His love-making he lavished upon her.

For six days and seven nights Enkidu was aroused and
poured himself into Shambbat.

When he was sated with her charms,

He set his face towards the open country of his cattle.

The gazelles saw Enkidu and scattered.

The cattle of open country kept away from his body.

For Enkidu had become smooth; his body was too clean.

His legs, which used to keep pace with his cattle, were at a
standstill.

Enkidu had been diminished; he could not run as before.

Yet he had acquired judgement, had become wiser.

For the Sumerians, it was the goddess Aruru, the mother goddess, who created Enkidu from clay. For desert tribesmen—Jews then Arabs—who would usurp her role in favour of a male progenitor in their creation accounts, she became the seductress, the harlot who caused mankind to be expelled from Paradise.

For the people of Sumer, their cities were Paradise. For the confident men of Sumer it was women as partners, homemakers, and lovers who made this sedentary, civilized lifestyle possible, desirable and enjoyable. For the tribesmen of the desert, trapped and fighting for survival beneath a monotonous, unchanging blue sky and a blaring, scorching sun on a sea of dust and sand, the cities of Sumer would also have been seen as Paradise. Allah's description of Paradise, as an oasis with buildings and with women as pleasure providers, almost fits the description of Sumerian cities and their female citizens, with the exception that in Sumer, *women were not second-class citizens*.

Why would desert tribesmen, who would adapt, if not pervert, many

of the events described in *Gilgamesh*—including the story of the meeting between Shambbat and Enkidu—blame women for mankind’s exile from Paradise? The seduction of Enkidu by Shambbat was seen as a good thing by the people of Sumer; a wild, roving man was civilized by being intimate with a woman.

For the people of Sumer, being “civilized” meant acquiring wisdom: becoming capable of exercising judgement, of assessing situations or circumstances shrewdly and logically and drawing your own reasonable conclusions. For the illiterate, fatalistic tribesmen of the deserts of the Middle East, whose very existence was constantly being tested by elements over which they had no control, that they believed was God’s way of trying their faith, this had to be blasphemy. Paradise was to be denied to mankind because a woman was foolish enough to endow a man with god-like qualities.

It was the Sumerians who, more than five millennia ago, first carved the written word on clay tablets. According to Thomas Cahill, the period before the invention of writing saw an “explosion of technological creativity on a scale that would not be matched until the nineteenth and twentieth century of our era.” Writing may have been a result of mankind’s need to record this leap of knowledge, upon which memory could no longer be counted on to chronicle or manage. Civilization could not progress any further without the means of recording its accomplishments for future generations to build upon.

The society that invented writing worshipped many goddesses. The greatest goddess of all, Ishtar, goddess of love and war, was worshipped by the people of the city of Uruk, perhaps the earliest settlement to deserve the name of city. It was in this ancient Mesopotamian city, on the shore of the Euphrates River, that the first words written five thousand years ago on clay tablets were found. If it was not a woman who imagined those first words, then it was her civilizing influence that allowed the written word to be imagined in the first place.

Muhammad had an illiterate’s fascination with the written word, which he saw as God’s way of establishing immutable limits on mankind’s imagination and free will, not expanding it. This is reflected in the Koran’s meticulous, incontrovertible instructions as to what a believer may or may not do; what a believer may think or say.

If you followed God's written instruction to the letter, He would let you back into Sumer, back into Paradise. Writing, as Allah revealed in Surah 96, *The Clot*, made man arrogant, thinking "himself self-sufficient." This was not why He taught man—but not Muhammad for some reason—to write. He taught man how to write, not to make him more self-sufficient, but less.

96:3 Read by your Most Generous Lord,

96:4 Who taught by the pen.

96:5 He thought man what he did not know.

96:6 Yet, man will, indeed wax arrogant;

96:7 For he thinks himself self-sufficient.

The Koran is not so much a philosophy as it is a set of rules that could have been formulated by a child-like mind in the way they embody a child's certainty in having absolute knowledge of the world around them, and a child's intolerance of others who won't play the game by their rules. This child-like perception of an unchanging world has been competing with the grownup evolving world view of Sumer ever since Muhammad got his marching orders.

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

This child-like unschooled understanding of what the written word is all about is the antithesis of the grown-up view of the people of Sumer who invented writing as a means to expand the capabilities of the human mind; who invented writing so as to allow future generations to build upon, to progress beyond, to question the limits of what their ancestors had ever imagined. The Koran, taken literally, kills the imagination allowing insanity, irrationality's bridesmaid, to settle in. We need the example of the women of Sumer more than ever!

Risking the Wrath of the Enemy Within

January 14, 2025

Islamism is commonly expressed as the desire to enforce a version of Shari'ah as law... An Islamist attempts to impose his version of Islam on society, and a jihadist is an Islamist who attempts to do so by force... Political Islamists seek to impose their views through the ballot box, biding their time until they can infiltrate the institutions of society from within.

Maajid Nawaz, author of *Radical, My Journey out of Islamist Extremism Labels*

Islamists are the enemy within. Should one of their numbers, in the mold of Muhammad who had his critics killed when he got the chance, want to do the same to me and not make a mistake, a recent picture of yours truly is on the cover. You're welcome.

The Enemy Within

(Abbreviated excerpt from *Remembering Uzza – If Islam Was Explained to Me in a Pub*, Boreal Books)

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: 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.

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 7th century. They consider Western civilization a mistake that must be rectified by a return to the time of Muhammad. You let in those for whom the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, reason itself is a blasphemy.

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 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 in³³.

³³ Dialogue beginning with "You welcome this Islamic population" adapted from a letter to the Ottawa Citizen by an individual who goes by the pseudonym Haïm Ittah following a report on the Nice truck attack that killed 84 people including 10 children.

How the West Can Save Itself

January 15, 2025

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.

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

The twenty-first century belongs to Islam.

Stephen Prothero, *God Is Not One*, HarperOne, 2010

The twenty-first, and many centuries to come. Civilizations—if you can call them that—based on religious dogma can be quite resilient because of their ruthlessness in dealing with dissent. The first civilization to be annihilated by the believers was that of the Arabs, and it's been one after the other ever since, e.g., Persia. The Indian civilization survived, a much reduced entity, because there were simply too many that needed killing for refusing to submit to the Will of Allah, i.e., become Muslims. The believers did give it a good try. 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*, the largest known slaughter of an ethnic group occurred during the Muslim conquest of large parts of the Indian subcontinent, e.g., modern-day Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Dr. Lal estimates that between 1000 CE and 1500 CE the population of Hindus decreased by 80 million; meaning that 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. The immensity of the slaughter is even more impressive when you consider the most common weapon used to carry it out was a sword.

The Arabs realised that their civilization was at risk with Mecca's surrender and mounted a resolute counterattack (see Chapter "Battle of Hunayn," *Jihad in the Koran*, Boreal Books) but were unable to dislodge a now entrenched enemy and accepted the inevitable.

The death of us as individuals is inevitable as it seems is the death of civilizations. It does not have to be that way. The future does not have to be Islamic. Daoud offered the beginning of a strategy, that of persuading believers already here to accept Western values. That could prove to be an insurmountable task if we don't limit the influx of "souls that need to be persuaded to change."

The Cleansing of Mecca and Avoiding a Similar Fate

(Abbreviated excerpt from *Remembering Uzza – If
Islam Was Explained to Me in a Pub*, Boreal Books)

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?

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.

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 is 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. Your unthinking tolerance of intolerance,

not unlike that of the Meccans, 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. 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?

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.

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 (see Chapter "A Woman Who Slept Around Confronts Mecca's Conqueror," *Remembering Uzza*, Boreal Books). 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.

A God-free Death and Children Under Siege

January 23, 2025

Lucette declined her ordained cousin's offer to give her the last rites. "Faith," Mark Twain said, "is believing in something that you know to be untrue." Even with the end just moments away Lucette did not seek comfort in what was for her, a lie. She did not need it. The last words she wanted to hear were from the man who loved her and not from a believer in the sadist in the sky responsible for her discomfort.

I doubt that a person's right to a God-free death will ever be denied, but then again, I never expected during my lifetime to see the obliteration, in English-Canada, of a long-standing right to a God-free education.

Supreme Court reaffirms religious liberty in Canada (but not Quebec). Court upholds the right of Muslim students to pray at Calgary private school

National Post, March 28, 2024

This was after two Muslim students deliberately enrolled in a private nondenominational school then appealed the school's decision to stand by its Charter and not make an exception for the uber-religion and provide them with "a space to pray."

61:9 It is He Who sent His Messenger forth with the guidance and the religion of truth, to make it triumph over every religion.

Islam had only been moderately successful in English-Canada—Toronto area schools mostly—in using prayers as a battering ram to breach the wall that existed between Church and State in Canada's public school system, until the Supreme Court of Canada stepped in and completely obliterated it on its behalf by refusing to hear an appeal from Weber Academy against a lower court ruling that required all schools to provide "a space to pray."

It can only get worse! Allah will not listen to a believer's prayer, not only if they do not perform the prayer choreography perfectly, but also if they have not performed wudu, i.e., ritual washing of feet, hands, forearms, ears, nose and hair beforehand.

The Supreme Court's calamitous refusal to even hear arguments in defence of a God-free education means non-Muslim students, outside the province of Québec, may not be safe from the bombardment of the word of God even in school washrooms where believers must declare, prior to wudu, that what they are about to do is *In the Name of God the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful*, and upon completion, a declaration of faith that accentuates their separateness.

I testify that there is no god but Allah, and I also testify that Muhammad is His servant and messenger.

O Allah, make me among those who seek repentance and make me among those who purify themselves.

Believers are also bound to be asked by the perplexed why they are washing their feet in the sink, blowing water out of their nose, cleaning out their ears, etc., only to be lectured about god and worship. Islam is also bound to become the subject of conversation outside the lavatory in whatever space Muhammad's prayer choreography is performed as the marketing genius intended. It is also only a matter of time before a school in English-Canada, for health reasons, as was done in Québec, implements a no wudu in school washrooms regulation and finds itself before a judge for interfering with the performance of prayers—in Islam you cannot have one without the other.



In 2006, a human rights complaint was filed with the Québec Human Rights Commission (Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse) asking the Commission to find fault with the School of Engineering of the University of Quebec (l'École de technologie supérieure) for denying Muslims the right to wash their feet in the school's washroom sinks, and that signs prohibiting such activities were a

slight against Muslims. The school argued that the interdiction against washing your feet in a public sink was a question of health and safety, and the Commission agreed.

The Commission not only agreed that washing one's feet in a public

washroom sink was a hygiene issue, but that the pictogram made this clear to even those who could not read French or were illiterate and was not meant to discriminate against any group. A rare example of the rational imposing its will on the irrational.

Having made a mockery of the secular public school system in English Canada, the Supreme Court of Canada will now attempt to do the same to Québec's secular public school system.

Supreme Court of Canada will hear legal challenge on Quebec secularism law (Bill 21)

CBC Jan. 23, 2025

Bill 21 prohibits public officials in position of authority, such as judges, police officers, and teachers from flaunting their religious affiliation while on the job. Teachers, in particular, who insist on wearing ostentatious religious attire in front of a captive audience of children, are in a position to do irreparable harm to future generations.

(From Remembering Uzza – If Islam Was Explained to Me in a Pub, Boreal Books)

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 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!

Children under Siege

(Abbreviated from *Teach Your Children Well - The Future as a Truism and a Cliché*, Boreal Books)

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

It is both a truism and a cliché that children are the future, and that future will be shaped in the classroom.

The public nondenominational school system in Canada is both the strength and the Achilles' heel of our democratic collective. 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 inquiry and critical thinking; each generation responsible for taking that additional step in the direction of an 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 wrong-headed pursuit ended in the 7th century when a god by the name of Allah ostensibly revealed all we need to know about everything, including how he must be worshipped, to an illiterate by the name of Muhammad.

They would have us now simply sit back and wait for the promised reward of a make-believe afterlife for our uncritical acceptance of what this alleged illiterate insist are immutable truths. His followers have successfully attacked the Achilles' heel of the public school system: its openness to any subject of enquiry.

Most, if not all, religions would like nothing better than to transform classrooms into centres of religious indoctrination instead of education. Provincial governments across Canada appear more and more willing to support these faith-based initiatives that seek to eliminate a child's last refuge from the incessant bombardment of the word of God: *the public school system*.

The secular public school system, in the main, teaches children and young people to think for themselves. The private faith-based system teaches children and young people to let a god do much of their thinking for them. Can democracy, let alone humanity, survive generations raised to blindly accept specious conclusions as to the meaning of life and to follow egotistical instructions as to what we must do to gain access to a purported Paradise in the sky contained in competing texts of questionable authenticity.

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...

Sam Harris, *The End of Faith - Religion, Terror and the Future of Reason*, W. W. Norton & Company, 2004, p. 35.

If children are not exposed to and learn to appreciate the values inherent in a secular, democratic society free from religion's nefarious influence, then religion will return with a vengeance and all will be lost. It has cost countless lives over hundreds of years in order to wrestle the freedoms and liberty we now enjoy from tyrants of both the secular and religious kind. Will these hard-won rights to make our own informed, reasoned choices now be carelessly cast aside within a few generations because religion wants to market its dogma to a captive audience of children?

Organized religion is not unlike a modern corporation that wants to successfully market a product. Just like modern business leaders, from sneaker salesmen to sugared water peddlers, religious leaders know that the best time to get the consumer to buy into their

message, their product, is to get them hooked on their brand while that consumer is still a child or an adolescent in an environment that will make them more receptive, indeed captive, to their advertising.

The American and French Revolutions brought some measure of protection for children from adults wishing to bring their conflicting religious ideologies into the classroom by banning most religious instruction in public schools. After more than a hundred years of relative calm in Western classrooms, with a focus on learning and the development of critical thought (religion's nemesis), religion wants back in, spurred on by a burgeoning *Faith* that will not take "no" for an answer, and whose apparel is literally an article of faith. It is an advertisement for their preference for revealed truths, as opposed to those discovered through scientific inquiry and supported by empirical evidence, that they want to parade in front of children who, because of their age, cannot help but look up to them and asks questions.

Bill 21 does away with passive proselytizing to a captive, receptive audience of school children in an ostensibly secular learning environment. Both passive and active pedagogical proselytizers seek the same outcome: getting the kids hooked on their religion before they know any better. You cannot be an advocate of one and an opponent of the other. In any event, passive classroom proselytisers cannot avoid becoming the active kind when they are inevitably asked by naturally curious children why they don't show their hair, not to mention their face.

I Dream of Lucette, He Dreamt of a Baby and the Koran

February 20, 2025

More than five years after her passing I still dream about her all the time. In my dreams she is alive and well, except for last night. In last night's dream I am looking for her in our old neighbourhood, which in my dreams we have never left. A neighbour shouts "isn't that her over there?" I walk towards to where she is pointing, a flat surface not unlike like the whiteboard in my home office on which I wrote notes to myself. As I get closer, I notice that someone is pinned to that white surface, it is Lucette. As I struggle to remove her lifeless body from whatever is holding her up, I wake up.

For Muhammad, dreams were not only omens, but how God in Paradise communicated to him much of the content of His book, the Koran. The Koran is all over the place as to when it was revealed. In one instance, it is during one night, the night of power³⁴; in another, it is over an entire month, the month of Ramadan³⁵; and in still another instance, it was revealed "piecemeal"³⁶. Nowhere in His Book does Allah mention revealing what He revealed of His Koran in dreams, yet this is how Muhammad's companions remember him receiving many of God's communications.

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.

³⁴ 97:1 We have sent it (the Qur'an) down on the night of Power.

³⁵ 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...

³⁶ 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.

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

Communications from Paradise sent while Muhammad slept would explain the horrific descriptions of Judgement Day and Hell, which mere words could not have conveyed. Aisha remembered her husband receiving "the Divine Inspiration" in what she refers to as "true dreams" while he slept.

Narrated Aisha:

The commencement (of the Divine Inspiration) to Allah's Apostle was in the form of true dreams in his sleep, for he never had a dream but it turned out to be true and clear as the bright daylight. Then he began to like seclusions, so he used to go in seclusion in the cave of Hira where he used to worship Allah continuously for many nights before going back to his family to take the necessary provision (of food) for the stay.

Bukhari 60.478

Dreams, Muhammad explained, convey religious knowledge. What is the Koran, if not religious knowledge?

Narrated Ibn Umar:

I heard Allah's Apostle saying, "While I was sleeping, I was given a bowl full of milk (in a dream), and I drank of it to my fill until I noticed its wetness coming out of my nails, and then I gave the rest of it to Umar."

They (the people) asked, "What have you interpreted (about the dream) O Allah's Apostle?"

He said, "(It is Religious) knowledge."

Bukhari 87.134

And what is Islam, if not "The Religion"?

Narrated Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri:

Allah's Apostle said, "While I was sleeping, some people were displayed before me (in a dream). They were wearing shirts, some of which were merely covering their breasts, and some a bit longer. Then there passed before me, Umar bin Al-Khattab wearing a shirt he was dragging it (on the ground behind him.)"

They (the people) asked, "What have you interpreted (about the dream) O Allah's Apostle?"

He said, "The Religion."

Bukhari 87.136

Why you did not dare wake up a sleeping Muhammad.

Narrated Imran:

... And whenever the Prophet used to sleep, nobody would wake him up till he himself used to get up as we did not know what was happening (being revealed) to him in his sleep.

Bukhari 7.340

In his dreams Muhammad was served food and drink.

Narrated Abu Sa'id:

That he had heard the Prophet saying, "Do not fast continuously (practise Al-Wisal), and if you intend to lengthen your fast, then carry it on only till the Suhur (before the following dawn)."

The people said to him, "But you practice (Al-Wisal), O Allah's Apostle!"

He replied, "I am not similar to you, for during my sleep I have One Who makes me eat and drink."

Bukhari 31.184

It was nightmares, like that about Gog and Magog that convinced Muhammad that Judgement Day was imminent.

Narrated Zainab bint Jahsh:

The Prophet got up from his sleep with a flushed red face and said, "None has the right to be worshipped but Allah. Woe to the Arabs, from the Great evil that is nearly approaching them. Today a gap has been made in the wall of Gog and Magog³⁷ like this." (Sufyan illustrated by this forming the number 90 or 100 with his fingers.)

It was asked, "Shall we be destroyed though there are righteous people among us?"

The Prophet said, "Yes, if evil increased."

Bukhari 88.181

It was in dreams that Muhammad was first shown the baby that was destined to be his child bride. Aisha was as pretty as a picture.

³⁷ One of the signs of an impending Judgement Day in the Koran is that the wall built by Alexander the Great to keep Gog and Magog at bay will be breached.

18:94 They said: "O Dhul-Qarnayn (Alexander the Great), surely Gog and Magog are making mischief in the land. Shall we pay you a tribute so that you may build a barrier between us and them?"

18:95 He said: "What my Lord has empowered me to do is better. So help me forcefully and I will build a barrier between you and them.

18:96 "Bring me large pieces of iron." So that when he had levelled up [the gap] between the two sides, he said: "Blow." And having turned it (the iron) into fire, he said: "Bring me molten brass to pour on it."

18:97 Then, they (Gog and Magog) could neither scale it or make a hole through it.

During the end-times Allah will destroy Alexander's wall allowing the warring factions to fight one another until the trumpet is blown signalling the start of Judgement Day.

18:98 He said: "This is a mercy from my Lord; but when my Lord's Promise comes to pass, He will turn it into rubble, and the Promise of my Lord is ever true."

18:99 And on that day we shall make them surge upon one another, and the trumpet shall be blown, and we shall gather them together.

18:100 On that Day We shall boldly set Hell before the unbelievers.

18:101 Those whose eyes were closed to My Reminder (the Qur'an) and they could not hear [it].

Considering Islam's aversion to lifelike reproductions of people and animals, the following hadith is quite extraordinary.

Narrated Aisha:

That the Prophet said to her, "You have been shown to me twice in my dream. I saw you pictured on a piece of silk and someone said (to me), 'This is your wife.' When I uncovered the picture, I saw that it was yours. I said, 'If this is from Allah, it will be done.'"

Bukhari 58.235

In another hadith, it is Aisha in the flesh wrapped in silk.

Narrated Aisha:

Allah's Apostle said (to me), "You were shown to me twice in (my) dream. Behold, a man was carrying you in a silken piece of cloth and said to me, 'She is your wife, so uncover her,' and behold, it was you."

I would then say (to myself), "If this is from Allah, then it must happen."

Bukhari 87.139

The difference between a dream and a nightmare is its source.

Narrated Abu Qatada:

The Prophet said, "A true good dream is from Allah, and a bad dream is from Satan."

Bukhari 87.113

If that is the case, I have to wonder what Satan is trying to tell me by what He showed me last night. If I don't get to publish this book, you may have your answer.

Of Music and Dogs

February 24, 2025

Question: What is the ruling regarding a beneficial show, such as the news or a commentary on the news, which is disrupted intermittently by a few seconds of music?

Answer: There is no harm in listening to these shows as long as you turn off the radio while the music is being played, since music is unlawful, may Allah make it easy for us to avoid music and may He protect us from its evil.

Shaykh Abdul-`Azeez Bin Baz, Islamic scholar and Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia from 1993 until his death in 1999

I signed up for Amazon Prime for the free deliveries and now, as I spend more time in the past than in the present, it is Amazon Music, which is part of the offering, that I appreciate the most. I simply ask my Amazon speaker to play tunes from the 70s or even the 60s and it bring that past to life. Asking Alexa to play Julio Iglesias makes me feel as if she is here with me.

Lucette was mad about Julio Iglesias. He was not yet well known in Canada when she returned from a vacation in South America with some of his albums. The first time she played his songs for me—for us—I too became a fan. I did not understand a word he sang, but his melodies were captivating, and he had such a beautiful voice. She said his songs were all about love and I believed her. Years later when he started recording in English the same songs I had heard in Spanish, I believed her even more.

Playing musical instruments or listening to music is 16th on Islam's current list of 50 greater or grave sins, sins where the transgressor will spend an eternity of fire in Allah's Hell. It is not a sin to listen to a cappella performances, songs performed without musical accompaniment. It can be quite beguiling.

Geert Wilders, at this writing the Dutch leader of the Party for Freedom (PVV), in the spirit of Theodoor van Gogh³⁸, also made a

³⁸ “Theodoor van Gogh was a Dutch film director. He directed Submission: Part 1, a short film written by Somali writer and politician Ayaan Hirsi Ali, which criticised the treatment of women in Islam in strong terms. On 2 November 2004, he was

film about Islam. What is most striking about Fitna is not the images of the dead and mutilated, but the lyrical and mesmerizing rendition of violent and hate-filled revelations calling for the murder of unbelievers. If you don't understand Arabic, you can almost imagine yourself making love to Allah's words except that, unlike those of Julio, they have next to nothing to do with love.

If the violence and hate that are contained in verses sung without instrumental accompaniment broadcast to the Islamic community in Arabic were broadcast in English on MTV for example, there would be uproar. Non-Muslims would be appalled that impressionable young minds are subjected to so much sadistic violence and hate forcefully expressed in such a captivating lyrical way.

Yesterday, I was listening to a young Muslim podcaster explaining how hard it was for her to give up listening to music. Some will risk Allah's Wrath rather than give it up, like the women and girls I wrote about so many years ago in what remains my all-time favorite posting.

Canada Day 2008

It was not easy finding a good spot that late in the evening to enjoy Blue Rodeo, who were closing out the Canada Day celebrations on Parliament Hill, but I did, on the sidewalk on the south side of Wellington Street in front of the old American Embassy.

A short distance in front of where I was standing, were six teenaged girls attired in Canada Day colours. Some wore white chadors and bright red dresses; others white chadors and white dresses with bright red patterns. Some of them held sparklers. With them were two little girls, who could not have been more than eight, wearing glowing red head ornaments and holding a small Canadian flag.

At my feet, sitting on the edge of the sidewalk, were two older women wearing the traditional black burka without the face covering, watching over the girls enjoying themselves. With the two

murdered by Mohammed Bouyeri, a Dutch-Moroccan Islamist who objected to the film's message."Wiki

The twenty-six-year-old Bouyeri shot van Gogh before slitting his throat as he was pleading "Mercy, mercy; we can talk about this" and pinning a five-page condemnation of Western society to his body.

older women was a small boy. He could not have been more than four.

Blue Rodeo was about halfway through their performance when two men with Errol Flynn-like moustaches, baseball caps as headgear, and wearing a white tee shirt on which was written in bold letters **Canadian, eh!** made their way to where I was standing and the women were sitting. Next to each man, who were undoubtedly part of the security for Canada Day festivities, was a large jet-black Lab on a short leash. As the men and their dogs passed between the women sitting on the sidewalk and the girls watching Blue Rodeo, one of the women pointed at one of the men, then the dog, then the child whose hand she was holding. The men smiled and stopped to let the child pet one of the dogs, then continued on their way.



This was even more extraordinary when you consider that the Prophet, at one point in time, demanded that his followers kill all dogs. The graceful Saluki, one of the oldest known breeds of domesticated dog, probably suffered the most from this declaration. Muhammad later amended his decree to limit the slaughter to black dogs.

Abd Allah B. Mughaffal reported the apostle of Allah as saying: "Were dogs not a species of creature I should command that they all be killed; but kill every pure black one."

Abu Dawud

Still later, this was amended to only black dogs with white spots over their eyes.

Abu Zubair heard Jabir Abdullah saying: Allah's messenger ordered us to kill dogs and we carried out this order so much so that we also killed the dog roaming with a woman from the desert. Then Allah's apostle forbade their killing.

He said: "It is your duty to kill the jet-black (dog) having two spots (on the eyes) for it is a devil."

Sahih Muslim

The reason Muhammad initially ordered the killing of all dogs was because he blamed a puppy for the angel Gabriel not showing up when he was supposed to.

Maimuna (another of the Prophet's wives) reported that one morning Allah's Messenger was silent with grief.

Maimuna said: "Allah's Messenger, I find a change in your mood today."

Allah's Messenger said: "Gabriel had promised me that he would meet me tonight, but he did not meet me. By Allah, he never broke his promises," and Allah's Messenger spent the day in this sad mood. Then it occurred to him that there had been a puppy under their cot. He commanded and it was turned out. He then took some water in his hand and sprinkled it at that place. When it was evening Gabriel met him and he said to him: "You promised me that you would meet me the previous night."

He said: "Yes, but we do not enter a house in which there is a dog or a picture."

Then on that very morning he commanded the killing of the dogs until he announced that the dog kept for the orchards should also be killed, but he spared the dog meant for the protection of extensive fields or big gardens.

Sahih Muslim

With the Canada Day festivities coming to a close, Blue Rodeo asked the crowd to join them in a loud rendition of "O Canada." Both women got up, one taking the child in her arms, for the national anthem.

It was a good day to be Canadian.

Chantal and Anne

February 28, 2025

Just about every morning I open my Facebook page, and seldom close it without first taking a peek at Chantal's and Anne's pages. Chantal's page rarely changes and Anne's page hasn't since she posted her wedding photos almost two years ago. Chantal once worked for me. Anne is the woman that almost got me to leave the woman I loved for a woman I liked.

Chantal

(Abbreviated from *Love, Sex & Islam*, Boreal Books)

Chantal lost her mother to breast cancer when she was in her teens, perhaps earlier. I think Lucette reminded her of her mother, and Chantal reminded my Lucette of the daughter she never had. She got to know Lucette while working for me part-time in the two years I continued as a consultant after returning to Ottawa from Montréal. Most of that time, I worked out of my home office with Chantal helping out.

Lucette and Chantal enjoyed each other's company, and it showed. When Lucette would open the front door and announce her arrival with a joyous, "I'm home," Chantal would bounce down the stairs, shouting, "Lucette's home, Lucette's home," greeting her before she had a chance to close the door behind her. Chantal would often help Lucette with dinner and then stay for part of the evening. Yes, this is the same Chantal that you have already met.

Chantal thought her father would make a better husband for my Lucette and maybe we should introduce them, as I obviously did not deserve the woman who absolutely adored me. She was unable to suppress an expression of disbelief when she said that.

I must admit to fantasizing about being the married man Chantal had been seeing the last few months that she worked for me. Who wouldn't? I don't think Chantal realized the effect she had on me when she stood next to me in shorts or tight jeans that drew attention to her nice round bum as I tried to focus on explaining the work that had to be done that day. The view was even more enticing when she curled up in the fetal position on the office couch to take a nap.

It was a nice distraction, I must admit. What I did not care for was her prattling on about who was enjoying what she had to offer. It was enough having to resist offering to scrub her back when she jumped in the shower before running to meet her adulterer (yes, I am aware of the irony) for a nooner.

I asked her repeatedly not to talk about her sex life with that man.

It was a sunny summer morning; Lucette was away at the Shaw Festival in Niagara-on-the-Lake with a girlfriend, a yearly tradition, when Chantal showed up for work. She went on and on about spending the weekend with her married man on his boat. She was happy and I couldn't take it anymore.

I spoiled it for her, for me, and for my Lucette: I fired her then and there, telling her to leave, and that was that. There was no turning back, which may have been my way of avoiding falling any harder for Chantal and risking hurting my Lucette again.

Anne - Part 2

(Abbreviated from *Love, Sex & Islam*, Boreal Books)

Anne whispered what I came to accept was a contrived, "I love you." I think, for her as well, love—real or imagined—added to the sexual experience. I could not bring myself to tell her I loved her back, though I liked her a lot, as a person and a lover. If I had said I loved her, it would have meant I cared for her more than I cared for my Lucette, and that was simply not the case. Nonetheless, when she asked me to move in with her, I said I would talk it over with Lucette, as silly as that sounds.

That obviously took her aback. "What do you *mean* you want talk it over with your wife?" she said. "You tell her you're leaving, pack your bags, and come over to my place. You don't drag this sort of thing out!"

Talking about things that mattered is what my Lucette and I did all the time. When I brought up the idea of leaving her, she said: "It's Anne, isn't it?" Before I had a chance to answer, in the forthright and confident manner that I admired, she added: "She is not the woman for you. I am!" She would grant me a divorce only after we had gone to a marriage counsellor and been told that our marriage could not be saved. I said my mind was made up. "In that case," she replied, "I will see a counsellor by myself."

She may have been playing for time, hoping that I would come to my senses, which I did, but it was a close thing. During what turned out to be a short affair—as affairs go, I assume—I had never spent the night with Anne. I always went home to my Lucette.

It was another late night at work, and with nothing for her to do, I asked Anne to wait for me at the bar across the street. When I arrived, she was having a drink with the barman and another guy. She got straight to the point. If I didn't spend the night with her, she would spend it with *these guys*, pointing at each grinning face in turn. Lucette was right. She was not the one for me.

My Lucette was already in bed when I got home. It was not that late, but since the day I had told her of my intention to leave her for another woman, she had started going to bed earlier and earlier.

I sat on the floor. She allowed me to take her hand while I apologized for what I had put her through. She admitted that the counselling had ended some time ago, and that the last piece of advice from the counsellor had been that I wasn't worth it, to divorce me, and get on with her life. I also didn't think I was worth it at the time, but I am glad my Lucette did.

"But what if it happens again?"

A line had been crossed. The only guarantee I could give her was that I would never leave her. I would always be there for her when she needed me. She would have to leave me.

That I would always be there to look after her, if she needed looking after, she took for granted. I think I proved that during the more than eight years she struggled with the twin afflictions of lung cancer and kansasii that would eventually compel her to reluctantly leave me forever. Her respirologist, in a final report on my Lucette's condition, noted what he considered extraordinary devotion on the part of a spouse. It wasn't. It was her due and a promise kept.

Anne didn't come into work the next day. She called just before lunch and asked if I would come over. She met me at the door dressed in some sort of swimsuit with frills. I didn't care to come in and told her it was over. She said she was sorry about the night before, and turned around, asking me to follow.

The bottom backside of what I took to be a one-piece swimsuit was nothing more than a piece of crinkly fabric, slightly wider than a G-

string, stretched between two squarish, kissing buttocks. It reminded me of the behind that Cybil Shepherd bared in *The Last Picture Show*.

She started walking up the stairs that led to her bedroom, those attractive buns moving to the rhythm of her slow climb as if begging me to follow. I did. When I got there, she was already sprawled across the bed, resting on her elbows and facing me with legs spread apart and bent at the knees. There was no mistaking that nearly irresistible come-hither look. I stopped looking at her face when she surprised me with another feature of her outfit. She reached down and released a snap holding the V of fabric covering what Allah and Muhammad referred to as her "private parts."

I looked down at an exquisite, manicured patch of curly hair that pointed like the tip of an arrow to a place that looked none the worse for wear despite Anne's reputation for being nice.

Anne inviting me to enter her private domain the way she did was in keeping with Allah's and Muhammad's opinion of women: that they are addicted to sex, and left to their own devices, would open their legs for every Tom, Dick and Harry, and even attempt to rape a man who would rebuff their advances, then claim they were the victim. In Joseph, son of Jacob's story in the Koran, Allah explains why women who complain of rape are usually lying, and how you can tell using the example of the wife of an Egyptian who bought Joseph. She would 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 fact, 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, when relating this encounter, Allah concedes that men can, in rare instances, 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 are, on occasion, forceful in the pursuit of intimacy, Allah makes another generalization about women: *that they are skilled in the art of deception*. Notice the plural, "you women," in verse 12:28:

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."

This perfidious behaviour and their destructive, insatiable urges are why women must be kept under close supervision, under lock and key if necessary.

That Anne liked sex is obvious. It's a natural urge that, in my opinion, women find easier to control than men. Allah perhaps—His spokesman almost definitely—was projecting personal insecurities when urging women to cover up, and tasking their fathers, and later their husbands, to make sure they did. This is not to protect women from themselves, but from the weakness of men unable to control their lust for females who expose even the most innocuous part of their anatomy, with Muhammad the poster boy for such men.

Anne's brazen exhibitionism should have, according to our in-and-out-of-this-world dynamic duo, caused me to experience a Pavlovian-

like reaction, an uncontrollable urge to dive right in, then and there, and jump her bones. Instead, I repeated that it was over and went back to work.

Wanting to experience the closeness, the physical intimacy that only intercourse makes possible, let alone the desire to procreate, is an urge that both sexes use to influence the other. Anne's provocative display of what Allah and His spokesperson consider to be for her husband's eyes only was obviously meant to influence my behaviour toward her, by reminding me what I would be missing if I broke up with her over what had transpired the day before. It didn't work, but there is absolutely nothing wrong with her sending such a clear and unambiguous memorable message.

Anne was on probation. The next day when she was supposed to return to work, there was no Anne. Dennis, the public servant to whom I reported, said that he had kicked her off the team because she was a disruptive influence (she wasn't). Why now? I don't know. Being on probation, she risked losing her job. A heated argument ensued. We almost came to blows. If it was about the affair, I was just as responsible, if not more, and it was none of his business. I quit in protest. Before I could make it out the door, I was intercepted by Dennis' boss who invited me into his office. He knew I was worried about Anne losing her job. He assured me that, before that happened, he would find her a better one elsewhere, as long as I did not quit. He was true to his word.

It took a few weeks to secure the position, during which time Anne would have nothing more to do with me, avoiding me like the proverbial plague. The last time I saw her at work, I was having a cigarette (I quit smoking a long time ago) in a place I used to go to be alone with my thoughts. She came by to say thank you. She would shortly be taking a new position in another building and had just found out that by quitting my job—if only for a few minutes, as it turned out—I had saved hers.

My Most Viewed Posting

March 4, 2025

As I stared up at a dark ceiling in the middle of the night thinking of my ultimate failure, to which this book is a testimonial, I found hope, in remembering a disturbing posting, that it was not all for naught. Almost twenty years ago I posted an excerpt from *Canada – The Fractured Interviews* that almost immediately become my most downloaded page, and by a wide margin—and it has not relented to this day. My books contain many uncomfortable truths about Islam, but perhaps none more appalling than what was revealed about the depraved mindset of Iran’s ruling theocracy in Ayatollah Khomeini’s published dissertation in which he condones the sodomizing of baby girls and bestiality as being in conformity with Sharia law. If it helps to bring about the downfall of his successors it will have been time well spent.

Khomeini on Sodomy and Bestiality

(Excerpt from *Canada – The Fractured Nation Interviews*)

Muhammad: For a Muslim father there can be no greater satisfaction than giving your daughter to a deserving older man or cleric. As the Ayatollah Khomeini wrote in the *Tahrirulvasyleh*, his monumental collection of commentaries on Islamic jurisprudence and morality, “It is better for a girl to marry in such a time when she would begin menstruation at her husband's house rather than her father's home. Any father marrying his daughter so young will have a permanent place in heaven.”

Johnny: The Ayatollah Khomeini—now, there is one holy man with whom I am quite familiar!

Muhammad: We are all very familiar with the great and revered teacher, the Grand Ayatollah Khomeini.

Johnny: This may be a bit off topic – actually, just about this entire conversation has been off topic—but since you quoted the late “great” Ayatollah Khomeini on the subject of how old a girl should be before she is given away in marriage; what do you think of Khomeini’s views on bestiality and the sodomizing of baby girls?

Muhammad: What do you mean? The Ayatollah Khomeini said many things. He is a hero. The Islamic Republic is a tribute to his courage, his determination and clear Islamic thinking. What he did in Iran served as a model for us when the opportunity presented itself for Muslims across Canada to create their own Islamic republic in miniature, the Islamic municipalities. God could not have chosen a better example to follow. He could not have chosen a better mouthpiece.

Johnny: Yes, but out of that mouth came such statements, statements that struck many people as strange, even by Islamic standards. Take, for example, his views on sodomizing baby girls. I remember his instructions by heart, they were so, so...disgust—disturbing. What I remember him saying was: “A man can have sexual pleasure from a child as young as a baby. However, he should not penetrate; sodomizing the child is OK. If the man penetrates and damages the child, then he should be responsible for her subsistence all her life. This girl, however, does not count as one of his four permanent wives. The man will not be eligible to marry the girl’s sister.”

Muhammad: Your point would be?

Johnny: He even had views on sex with animals. For example, his advice on sex with chickens.

Muhammad: Khomeini was nothing if not thorough. You are taking what he wrote out of context. The *Tahrir olvasyleh*, better known as *The Political, Philosophical, Social and Religious Principles of Ayatollah Khomeini*, was a monumental achievement, a clear and precise guide for his disciples. They would have understood what the master meant. It was not intended for uninformed unbelievers looking to discredit the faith and one of its revered teachers.

Johnny: Well, what did he mean?

Muhammad: Khomeini was well aware of the voraciousness of a man’s sexual appetite. In fact, the Koran and the Prophet’s, *the peace and blessings of God be upon him*, instructions for the seclusion of women—the so-called Islamic prison that some writers, mostly dead writers, have claimed Islam is for Muslim women—was for their own protection. These so-called prisons are to protect them from

this manly weakness which they are bound to provoke in men other than their husband.

Johnny: What does that have to do with sodomizing baby girls and copulating with chickens?

Muhammad: A good Muslim man can only have sexual relations with his wives, the women to whom he is legally married. What if a wife is not around when an overwhelming urge to copulate comes over him, but a female child is? Allah, *The Loving*, does not condone the sodomizing of a child, nor does the Ayatollah Khomeini – even under the most intense sexual duress. The revered Ayatollah’s views on the sodomizing of baby girls is meant as a warning to the would-be sodomizer that Allah, *The Finder*, will expect him to look after the welfare of that child if he damages her in any way. This is a very strong incentive against such an act.

Johnny: How about a cold shower or getting re-acquainted with your right-hand as a means of relieving the sexual tension and sparing the baby?

Muhammad: Idiot. Water in the deserts of Arabia, the ancestral home of Islam, was a precious commodity not to be wasted on relieving sexual tension. As for your crude reference to masturbation, the Messenger of God is unequivocal on the subject: “he who masturbates is cursed.” Better to sodomize a baby and pay the price if damage ensues than to be cursed by Allah, *The All Seeing*, and spend an eternity in hell.

Johnny: Since you put it that way! What about his view on bestiality, specifically sex with chickens as explained by Azar Nafisi in her memoir *Reading Lolita in Teheran*?

Muhammad: Women are simply not capable of understanding the logic behind the instructions of a great and learned man like the Ayatollah Khomeini. Even the learned and well-read Ayatollah Khomeini could not foresee what questions his disciples would ask. Quite a few would have come to hear the Master from remote farms and villages, and he did not want God’s mouthpiece to be perceived as ignorant in the ways of peasants and young boys. Peasant boys coming of age when the only relief of sexual tensions would have been a domesticated animal such as a lamb, a calf—yes, even a chicken, though the

mechanics of such a union escape me – but the mechanics of such a union would not have escaped a great Islamic scholar like the Ayatollah Khomeini, whose attention to the smallest of details when it came to matters of the flesh, eh...of the faith, is well-known.

Johnny: Sex with chickens; that is mind-boggling, not to say gross.

Muhammad: [showing signs of frustration] Does anyone really care about whether a chicken or any other barnyard animal is used to satisfy a man's sexual urge? Better than sodomizing a child! *The Political, Philosophical, Social and Religious Principles of Ayatollah Khomeini* is not a guide to sex with barnyard animals, but a guide to what you do with that animal afterwards. The Ayatollah Khomeini believed that, in some circumstances, by having sex with an animal you had rendered that animal impure for consumption. The sex with chickens reference was just the Ayatollah imagining a question from a student about whether a chicken could be eaten after penetration; whether it had become impure in the eyes of Allah, *the Provider*, and whether eating it would offend Him.

Johnny: So, what can you do with a chicken after you have sex with it?

Muhammad: According to our cultured and learned Ayatollah Khomeini, neither the man who has copulated with the chicken nor his immediate family or his next-door neighbours can eat of that chicken's meat, but it is acceptable for a neighbour who lives two doors away.

Johnny: Interesting.

Muhammad: The learned Ayatollah Khomeini did not come by his knowledge and scholarship by ignoring the more intimate details of human existence. He pondered these relationships – man-child, man-animal relationships – which lesser minds in the decadent West ignored, so as to ensure that even these relationships did not deviate from any behaviour that was acceptable to Allah, *Lord of the Universe*. He was an example for us all who are interested in living our lives as Allah, *The Watchful*, intended to the smallest detail.

Johnny: An example indeed!

If Not God, Who Do You Call Upon at Times Like These?

March 8, 2025



There is seldom a night these days that, before I fall asleep, I don't call on Lucette to come and get me like she used to do every Friday around supper time when I returned by train from Montréal.

The Broken Condom

(Abbreviated from *Love, Sex and Islam*,
Boreal Books)

The year was 1993. It was early in the first year of two consulting contracts that would keep me in Montréal five days a week for the next five years or so when, after more than 10 years of marriage, I had my first one-night stand. It was a one-night affair that would prove to my wife that I still loved her, and loved her very much.

1993 was also the year the Montréal Canadiens won the Stanley Cup. No Canadian team has won it since. I was at one of Montréal's landmark bars on Crescent Street when the Canadiens hoisted the trophy symbolic of hockey supremacy. The crowd at Winnies not only erupted in cheers, but it was hugs all around. The last person I hugged, or hugged again, was a thirty-something female lawyer with whom I had gotten acquainted while watching the game. When it was time to leave, the celebrating around the corner on St. Catherine Street, Montréal's main commercial east-west thoroughfare, had gotten out hand with looting and an overturned police car on fire. We decided to retreat to my apartment at the Chateau Royale, the only apartment hotel on Crescent Street.

She had condoms, but not very good ones, as it would turn out. Something didn't feel right, but it felt good, and she didn't seem to mind so we continued doing what we were doing. When it was all over, I noticed that the condom was rolled up like a wrinkled cellophane wrapper at the base of a drooping culprit. The AIDS scare

was at its zenith, and I had just had unprotected sex, for all intents and purposes, with a stranger.

It was the second time since our wedding night that I had intimate relations with a woman other than my wife. The first indiscretion was not a one-night stand, and it left my Lucette doubting that I still loved her. A busted condom would set her mind at ease.

Needless to say, I felt a bit sheepish when she met me at the Ottawa train station that Friday around supper time. As usual, she had prepared everything for a most romantic dinner, a prelude to a special night, and often a special weekend to make up for the five days I had been away. I was not hungry. She asked what was wrong. I told her about the condom incident and that sex was out of the question for at least ten days (from what I understood at the time, this was the earliest the AIDS virus could be detected), if she still wanted have sex with me.

She rose from her chair, stood next to mine and asked me to move it a little. She then sat on my lap, put her arms around my neck and kissed me. It was a lovely and totally unexpected gesture which left me wondering.

"You must really love me," she said, "to admit having sex with another woman to protect me."

I didn't know what to say.

She got up and took my hand. "Let's go upstairs," she said. "We can use those leftover condoms in your night table from when Margaret used to visit you at your old place."

...

During our time together Lucette proved her love in tangible ways that made those other things that lovers do to express their affection for their partner pale in comparison. One of those profound, undeserved expressions of how she felt about me occurred on the Sunday following that Friday admission of infidelity.

We were in bed. I would again be leaving on an early train to Montréal the next morning. I had already put on a condom when she reached down, and instead of doing what I thought she was going to do, she pulled it off.

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"I don't think you have AIDS," she said, "and even if you did, and I got it, it wouldn't matter as long as we are together."

During the height of the AIDS epidemic, the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta reported that Montréal had the dubious distinction of having a higher proportion of HIV-infected women than any other metropolitan area in all of North America. When I returned from Montréal for good, I found the time to read all three volumes of the findings of the Krever Inquiry into the contamination of the Canadian blood supply by the HIV and hepatitis C virus. What I consider my most important and pitiful non-Islam related posting was the result.

The Pamphlet

Former Canadian health minister Monique Begin says her willingness to take the blame for the country's tainted-blood scandal is a matter of "personal morality and integrity" as well as a demonstration of "ministerial responsibility."

Begin, who served as the minister of health and welfare from 1976 to 1984, accepted the blame in a letter to the Commission on Inquiry on the Blood System in Canada writing that "politicians must definitely be accountable, and I am therefore prepared to join the 'named' people to answer the inquiries of your commission."

Blame Me for Blood Scandal Begin Says *Toronto Globe and Mail* (08/21/96)

Five Years in the Making

The Canadian Red Cross was one of the last such organisation to acknowledge that the AIDS virus was transmitted via blood transfusions and blood components and therefore did very little to protect the blood supply at a critical time. *The Pamphlet* is the story about how it took almost five years to develop and distribute a simple pamphlet that correctly identified those who should not give blood because of the risk that they were carriers of the AIDS and hepatitis C virus.

The report by the Commission of Inquiry on the Blood System in Canada (Krever Commission) on which *The Pamphlet* is based, is an straightforward indictment of the collective ignorance, misplaced self-interest and stupidity on the part of the then official guardians of the nation's blood supply.

In the heartbreaking story of how AIDS and hepatitis C came to Canada, Monique Begin, the Minister of Health at the time (1976 to 1984) was the only public official courageous, and decent enough, to admit that she made mistakes. Her biggest was allowing a small but vocal group of her constituents to dictate public health policy. Considering what was known about AIDS at the time, the Haitian protest against being asked to refrain from donating blood was understandable, but the Minister of Health should have known better.

Monique Begin should have been aware that the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta had identified Haitians as members of a group judged as high-risk carriers of the AIDS virus and should have let science dictate public health policy, not her fear of offending high-risk donors and voters. The other high-risk groups identified by the CDC were homosexuals and intravenous drug users.

There are many lessons to be learned from the careless contamination of the Canadian blood supply, being aware of the inherent danger in labeling a person or an organization racist when that person or that organisation is just trying to do the right thing is one of them.

How It All Began

It's the seventies, Québec is given the right to choose its own immigrants and for the province, the main consideration is that immigrants speak French. For the French-speaking people of a poor, over-populated island in the Caribbean, this is a call for a mass migration northward, with 90 percent of all Haitian immigrants choosing to live in the province of Quebec, with Montreal becoming the home base for the largest Haitian community in Canada. Unbeknownst to their would-be benefactors, the new arrivals carry with them the seeds of a new disease that will have a devastating impact on the society that welcomes them.

In 1981, the CDC noticed an alarming rate of a rare cancer (Kaposi's Sarcoma) in otherwise-healthy gay men. They first called the disease "gay cancer" but soon renamed it GRID ("gay-related immune deficiency"). The next year, as more is learned about this new disease it is renamed AIDS for *Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome*. In March 1983, the American Red Cross, the American Association of Blood Banks, and the Council of Community Blood Centers endorsed a recommendation made three days earlier by the United States

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Department of Health and Human Services that urges members of groups at high risk of contracting AIDS to refrain from donating blood or selling plasma.

High-risk groups were identified as persons with AIDS, sexual partners of persons with AIDS, persons with symptoms and signs suggestive of AIDS, sexually active homosexual or bisexual men with multiple partners, Haitian entrants to the United States, present or past users of intravenous drugs, and sexual partners of individuals at high risk of contracting AIDS.

Measures To Reduce The Risk Of Contamination Vol. 1 p. 193.
Commission of Inquiry on the Blood System in Canada

That same year, 4,749 cases of AIDS were confirmed in the U.S.; 2,122 of those who contracted the virus have died. The American Red Cross and the American Association of Blood Banks began a vigorous campaign to inform donors and to stop members of the high-risk groups from donating blood. The Canadian Red Cross does not take the American recommendations seriously believing that the problem to be solved is a public relations one. It will not even put information about high-risk groups in the pamphlet given to all potential blood donors informing them under what conditions they should not give blood.

The Red Cross recognized that it was facing a difficult public relations problem. In response, an ad hoc meeting of senior personnel was held at the national office on 10 March 1983. In attendance were Dr Perrault, Dr Davey, Dr Derrick, a senior person from the blood donor recruitment service, and several members of the public relations department. They decided that the Red Cross would promote a policy of voluntary self-exclusion: the voluntary withdrawal of those at high risk, as opposed to active exclusion of members of high-risk groups. In particular it would inform persons at high risk of contracting AIDS, through their community leaders, that they should not donate blood. The meeting also decided that the donor questionnaire would include only questions about health, including questions about the signs and symptoms of AIDS, and none about membership in risk groups.

Measures To Reduce The Risk Of Contamination Vol. 1 p. 231.
Commission of Inquiry on the Blood System in Canada

Following the meeting on March 10th, 1983 and in response to the American actions to stop members of high-risk groups from giving blood, the Canadian Red Cross issued a mixed-message press release that asked members of high risks groups not to give blood, while maintaining that AIDS is not transmitted via blood transfusions. If high risk donors still want to give blood, the Red Cross assures them that they can do so without fear of being challenged.

The Canadian Red Cross Society advises members of groups identified as high risk of carrying Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) not to give blood... to date there is no conclusive evidence that AIDS is transmitted though (sic) the blood or blood products and no cases of AIDS in Canada can be linked to blood transfusions...

The Red Cross is not considering questioning potential donors at blood clinics concerning their sexual preference or their racial origins.

Measures To Reduce The Risk Of Contamination Vol. 1 p. 231.
Commission of Inquiry on the Blood System in Canada

Even this timid approach to weeding out potential carriers of the AIDS virus did not sit well with Canada's Haitian community or Haitian diplomats. Here is what the Krever Commission had to say about the Haitian protest:

Members of the Haitian community, particularly in Montreal, resented the implicit stigma and discrimination in being described as at high risk. Canadians of Haitian descent denounced the Red Cross's position as racist. A complaint was lodged with the Quebec Human Rights Commission. The Haitian Red Cross complained to the League of Red Cross Societies about the actions of the Canadian Red Cross and the American Red Cross. The Haitian embassy in Ottawa and the Haitian consulates in Toronto and Montreal protested to the Red Cross. Haitians picketed the Ottawa blood centre. Blood donor clinics in Montreal lost support. The Red Cross was particularly sensitive to the accusation that it was acting in a racist manner, an accusation that struck at the heart of its identity as a humanitarian and non-discriminatory organization. The accusation was also potentially damaging to efforts to recruit voluntary donors. All of this came at a time when

the Red Cross was already facing criticism for shortages of blood in major cities.

Measures To Reduce The Risk Of Contamination Vol. 1 p. 231.
Commission of Inquiry on the Blood System in Canada

Community leaders met with officials from the Red Cross and the federal government to discuss the reference to recent Haitian immigrants as being high-risk carriers of the AIDS virus. Blood donations from people from the country that would soon be identified as having the highest proportion of HIV-infected men in the Western hemisphere, perhaps the world, would be allowed to give blood without a question being asked. As fear grew that the epidemic would spread, pressure was put on the Red Cross to be more specific about potential carriers of the AIDS virus in its self-exclusion pamphlet.

The Red Cross, like the proverbial scalded cat, wouldn't budge. In a meeting with City of Toronto public health officials on May 26, William Mindell, the city's coordinator of community health, reported the following to his colleagues about his meeting with a Dr. John Derrick:

The CRC BTS [Canadian Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service] medical advisory committee is very conservative and won't threaten the system they've developed. John Derrick feels public pressure may yet force more overt precautionary measures on the part of the donor clinics within the next few months (confidential opinion)... They were still reeling from their public statements regarding Haitian donors and the clamour it had caused re: defending against charges of racism. It had occupied a tremendous amount of their time and they had little interest in going through it again... They noted that the situation had calmed, but they were still not able to agree on a joint statement to be issued with the Haitian community.

Measures To Reduce The Risk Of Contamination Vol. 1 p. 231.
Commission of Inquiry on the Blood System in Canada

The Question Is Finally Asked

Did the Red Cross eventually get around to identifying groups that had a high-risk of being infected with the AIDS virus in its self-exclusion pamphlet? Yes and no!

On 1 May 1984 (sic), the Red Cross pamphlet, *An Important Message to Our Donors*, which had been completed two weeks earlier, began to be used in Red Cross blood centres. Every centre was given a three-month supply and instructed to give the pamphlet to prospective donors as part of the pre-donation procedure. Unlike the American Red Cross's pamphlet produced in January 1984, the Canadian Red Cross's pamphlet did not define "multiple partners," nor did it include persons with symptoms of AIDS in the groups of persons who should not donate blood. There was no requirement that donors acknowledge that they had read the pamphlet, either by signing the pamphlet or by being interviewed by a nurse. There was no statement at the end asking donors to call the blood centre after donating if they believed that their donations should not be used for transfusion.

Measures To Reduce The Risk Of Contamination Vol. 1 p. 231.
Commission of Inquiry on the Blood System in Canada

Over 14 months too late and even then, as Krever points out, they still could not get it right. Some people did not understand the wording, regular blood donors didn't bother reading it thinking there was nothing new, and even if the blood collection staff knew the pamphlet wasn't read or understood they could not intervene by asking the donor if he or she was in a high risk-group. Knowing that the pamphlet-based self-exclusion system was not working some medical directors and nurses took it upon themselves to exclude contaminated blood from the system.

Some medical directors reported that they had been taking measures of their own to exclude donations from persons believed to be at high risk of transmitting AIDS. In the province of British Columbia, for example, nurses who suspected that a donor belonged to a high-risk group tagged the donation, withdrew it from the system, and later destroyed it. Other medical directors used similar procedures to identify suspect donations for destruction.

Measures To Reduce The Risk Of Contamination Vol. 1 p. 228.
Commission of Inquiry on the Blood System in Canada

When Dr. Perrault heard about this practice, he ordered it stopped as the minutes of a medical directors' meeting confirms:

Dr. Perrault stated that blood collected from high risk

group donors is not to be singled out at the moment. Some Centres had it held in Quality Control testing and others had disposed of it.

Measures To Reduce The Risk Of Contamination Vol. 1 p. 231.
Commission of Inquiry on the Blood System in Canada

Some medical directors ignored Dr. Perrault's directive including Dr Thomas Bowen, the medical director of the Calgary blood centre.

Dr. Bowen understood that medical directors had been told not to mark suspect donations in any special manner. Nevertheless, from the summer of 1983 to the autumn of 1985 the Calgary blood centre continued to use a "black dot" procedure; if a donor appeared unwell, had new tattoos, or was suspected of being at high risk of contracting AIDS, nurses marked the donation with a black dot to signify that it was not to be used for transfusion. Dr Bowen felt that this ought to be within the discretion of nurses with solid clinical judgment. He did not tell the national office about this practice, which he believed to be sound, because it did not conform to what he believed to be the policy of the national office that donations of persons at high risk who had not self-excluded were to be used. He did not tell the national office of his practice because he did not want to be told to stop.

Measures To Reduce The Risk Of Contamination. Vol. 1 p. 267.
Commission of Inquiry on the Blood System in Canada

It took almost another year and half for the Red Cross to revisit the pamphlet fiasco. A revised pamphlet was sent out in August 1985. It too was found deficient, and another revision was sent out in January 1986. Of course, the pamphlet was not the problem. The problem was always the Red Cross forbidding its blood collection staff from asking a potential donor if he or she was a member of a high-risk group, and if so, stopping them from giving blood. In the autumn of 1988, more than five years after the warning about the contamination of the blood supply, the Red Cross finally allowed its blood collection staff to do just that.

The last word on *The Pamphlet* I will leave to a lawyer for the Red Cross who had to remind Dr. Perrault about the Red Cross's obligations when asked by Dr. Perrault "What would be the legal aspects if an issue is made of the right of donors to give blood?"

Mr. Worsoff stated that it is not a matter of the donor having a right to donate blood rather it is a case of the Red Cross having both a moral and legal obligation to assure the safety of the blood it accepts for processing and distribution. The evidence of possible unacceptability of the blood does not have to be conclusive – the decision can be made on a basis of “reasonable doubt” as to its suitability. With reference to the AIDS problem in particular, the premise is not that the CRC [Canadian Red Cross] has to justify beyond any scientific doubt that there is a link between the designated “high risk groups” and the development of AIDS since, if there is even a possibility of transmission via blood, CRC has the moral and legal obligation to protect the blood recipient above all.

Measures To Reduce The Risk Of Contamination Vol. 1 p. 231. Commission of Inquiry on the Blood System in Canada

Too bad Dr. Perrault did not follow his lawyer’s advice.

Charges are Laid

The Krever Commission doesn’t dwell very long on the link between politics, immigration and the contamination of the Canadian blood supply by the AIDS and hepatitis C virus and rightly so.

It is the so-called professionals at the Red Cross and the Health Protection Branch of Health Canada that must assume a large share of the blame. They should have known better, including Dr. Perrault who feared more being called racist and losing blood donors than protecting the recipient of that blood from a killer virus contained within. And, of course, the managers of the Health Protection Branch of Health Canada who could have ordered the Red Cross to do be more vigilant. They had the power, but as one manager put it “they had more pressing paperwork on their desk.”

In November 2002, five years after the release of the Krever report on the tainted-blood scandal, the RCMP finally laid charges against four individuals and one company in connection with the scandal. From Health Canada we have Dr. John Furesz, the former director of the bureau of biologics at the federal government's Health Protection Branch and Dr. Wark Boucher former chief of the blood products division of the bureau of biologics in the Health Protection Branch who are charged with three counts of criminal negligence causing bodily harm and one count of common nuisance by endangering the

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public. Dr. Perrault, the former director of the Canadian Red Cross Society's blood transfusion service, is charged with three counts of criminal negligence causing bodily harm and seven counts of common nuisance by endangering the public.

Postmortem

On October 1, 2007, after an 18-month long trial Ontario Superior Court Justice Mary Lou Benotto acquitted the AIDS doctors of any wrongdoing. More than 3,000 men, women and children are known to have died as a result of receiving tainted blood products courtesy of the AIDS doctors. Twenty years after this preventable tragedy, a Canadian Court ruled that the victims had only themselves to blame.

Avoiding Hell on Earth

March 10, 2025

If we are witnessing the beginning of a runaway greenhouse effect as rising temperatures worldwide suggest, then dying sooner rather than later may be a good thing.

What is a runaway greenhouse effect? Think of a baking oven with a door (greenhouse gases) that can't be opened and a heating element that cannot be turned off (the sun). The oven will eventually melt and whatever was baking inside will have been burnt to a crisp. This is what will happen to the earth if the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere reaches a tipping point. If we are lucky, the average world-wide temperature will stop rising after reaching a new equilibrium—that does not seem to be happening—and save billions from being toasted or baked, depending on where they live. Many will simply starve to death from the collapse of the oceans' food chain and a climate that is no longer conducive to large scale farming or any farming at all in many areas of the world.

In my discontinued book, *Canada – The Fractured Nation Interviews*, I predicted that the world would ban the mining and processing of tar to extract the world's dirtiest crude because of the inordinate amount of greenhouse gases it generates. That has not happened, and Canada's extensive and growing tar mining operations may prove to be the straw that tips the world's temperature into doomsday territory.

My book also did not anticipate English-Canada, in particular, to embrace the mining of tar the way it did. This embrace reflected in the lack of objections to the English media going along with the oil and gas industry rebranding the Tar Sands as Oil Sands³⁹. It worked! More Canadians than ever are now under the impression that digging up tar-coated sand, then washing the tar from the sand with hot water and steam, then processing the resulting mess to extract the dirtiest of crude while channelling the now toxic fresh water and its contaminants into tailing ponds that have grown into killer lakes for migratory birds and threaten to poison the Athabasca watershed

³⁹ The French-Canadian media continued calling it what it was: “Les sables bitumineux.”

(167,000-square-kilometers) and beyond does not create anymore greenhouse gases, and is no more environmentally damaging than the straightforward process of refining what gushes from a typical oil well.

Canada is well on its way, if it is not already, to becoming the world's largest per capita producer of greenhouse gases. The greenhouses gases generated from the mining and processing of Canadian tar-coated sands to make the dirtiest crude on the planet will nullify many global efforts to reduce the doomsday gas and avoid a planet-wide catastrophe.

Islam, of all the religions who thrive on human misery and seek to bring about the end-times on a promise of a better life in the sky, is in the best position to exploit the ramping chaos that globing warming is causing with legions of fanatics conditioned to relish killing those who cherish life in the here-and-now.

Allah on the Present Life

(Abbreviated from *Getting to Know Allah*, Boreal Books)

28:60 Whatever you have been given is merely the pleasure of this life and its finery; but what Allah has in His possession is better and more lasting. Do you not understand?

If you are content with your life in the here-and-now, the Fire will be waiting.

10:7 Those who do not hope to meet Us and are content with the present life and are at ease in it, and those who pay no heed to our signs;

10:8 Their refuge is the Fire, on account of [what] they used to do.

Allah never misses an opportunity to remind people how life is better in the Hereafter, in spite of the good life in the here-and-now.

13:26 Allah enlarges and restricts the provision to whom He pleases. They rejoice at this worldly life, but worldly life is nothing but a fleeting pleasure compared with the life to come.

Those who are far astray:

14:3 Those who prefer the present life to the Hereafter and

bar others from Allah's Path and seek to make it crooked,
are far astray.

Your striving for the Hereafter will be much appreciated.

17:19 But as for those who desire the Hereafter and strive for it, as they should, while they are believers, their effort will be appreciated.

17:20 For them all – these and those – We shall provide from Allah's Bounty; and the Bounty of your Lord will not be denied to anyone.

If you don't care for amusements or sports, then Paradise is the place for you!

29:64 The present life is nothing but amusement and sport, but the Hereafter is real life, if only they knew.

Don't be deluded by the present life.

35:5 O people, Allah's Promise is true, so do not let the present life delude you and do not let the Deceiver (Satan) delude you concerning Allah.

If you want more from this life, you may get it, but eternal Paradise will be out of the question.

42:20 He who wishes the tillage of the Hereafter, We will increase his tillage, and he who wishes the tillage of the present life, We will give him thereof; but in the Hereafter, he will have no share.

The present life as "the enjoyment of vanity," among other things:

57:20 Know that the present life is but sport and diversion, adornment, boasting among you and rivalry in amassing wealth and children. It is like rain whose vegetation delighted the unbelievers, then it withered and you see it turning yellow and then it becomes stubble. In the Hereafter there is a terrible punishment, forgiveness from Allah and good pleasure. The present life is but the enjoyment of vanity.

Live a passionless present life and Paradise will be waiting.

79:34 Then when the Great Calamity (*Judgement Day*) shall come;

79:35 On the Day that man will remember what he has done;

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79:36 And Hell shall be exhibited to whoever can see.

79:37 Then, as to him who has transgressed,

79:38 And preferred the present life;

79:39 Hell, indeed, is the refuge.

79:40 But as to him who fears the station of his Lord, and
forbids his soul from passion;

79:41 Then, Paradise is the refuge.

Life is better in the Hereafter, but don't take my word for it.

87:16 No, you prefer the present life;

87:17 Whereas the Hereafter is better and more lasting.

87:18 That, indeed, is in the ancients scrolls,

87:19 The scrolls of Abraham and Moses.

A Celebration of Life as a Reason to Yearn for Death

March 15, 2025

This morning finds me in bed clicking through postings looking for something memorable. Again, I am drawn to a chapter from *Love, Sex and Islam*. The fact that *Cancer Girl* allows me to again talk about my beloved partner may have influenced my selection. Perhaps, but it is Lucette's toast to life at the beginning of this book, and how a death cult masquerading as a religion, has perverted a celebration of life into a reason to yearn for death—the central message of *Cancer Girl*—that was the deciding factor.

Cancer Girl

(Abbreviated from *Love, Sex & Islam*, Boreal Books)

I did not know it then, but after almost five years, my time in Montréal was almost up when I met a young woman to whom I will refer as *cancer girl*.

Just like Norm from Cheers, I had my favourite seat at the bar. When I made it to *Thursdays* after work that day, the stool next to me was occupied by a young woman who didn't seem interested in talking to anyone. She may have been there most of the afternoon, judging from the way she was slumped over her drink. She wasn't drunk, though; just despondent. That morning, she had received confirmation that she had cancer, one of those below-the-belt types. Her prognosis, she was told, was good but there were no guarantees. She might need to wear a wig at some point during her treatment. If that was all, she was fortunate. Muslim women may not, under any circumstances, add to their God-given hair, even if God decides to take most of it back.

Narrated Sa'id bin Al-Musaiyab:

Mu'awiya came to Medina for the last time and delivered a sermon. He took out a tuft of hair and said, "I thought that none used to do this (i.e. use false hair) except Jews. The Prophet labelled such practice, (i.e. the use of false hair), as cheating."

Bukhari 72.821

God's spokesperson cursed an unfortunate woman who only wanted to improve her appearance after a sickness caused her hair to fall out.

Narrated Asma (the daughter of Abu' Bakr):

A woman came to Allah's Apostle and said, "I married my daughter to someone, but she became sick and all her hair fell out, and (because of that) her husband does not like her. May I let her use false hair?"

On that the Prophet cursed such a lady as artificially lengthening (her or someone else's) hair or got her hair lengthened artificially.

Bukhari 72.818

In another account of the poor woman's plea to allow her daughter to wear a wig to save her marriage, it is an equally insensitive God who will curse her if she does.

Narrated Aisha:

An Ansari woman gave her daughter in marriage and the hair of the latter started falling out. The Ansari women came to the Prophet and mentioned that to him and said, "Her (my daughter's) husband suggested that I should let her wear false hair."

The Prophet said, "No, (don't do that) for Allah sends His curses upon such ladies who lengthen their hair artificially."

Bukhari 62.133

Allah will also curse the one who assists in lengthening the hair of another. Don't do it; it's not worth it!

Narrated Aisha:

An Ansari girl was married and she became sick and all her hair fell out intending to provide her with false hair. They asked the Prophet who said, "Allah has cursed the lady who artificially lengthens (her or someone else's) hair and also the one who gets her hair lengthened."

Bukhari 72.817

Just like with Jasmine, we ended up at my apartment on the couch, but with me on my back and my cancer girl on top, both fully dressed and talking late into the evening. I had to work the next morning, so at some point I had to get to bed. She said she would rather sleep on

the couch if that was okay. Getting a pillow and a blanket, I made her as comfortable as I could. She kept her clothes on, if only temporarily. I don't know how long I had been asleep when I was awakened by the light from the bathroom. She was standing in my doorway naked, the light from the bathroom behind her silhouetting her pleasantly curvy figure. She turned around to switch off the light and crawled into bed with me.

I don't usually sleep on my back but that is how I greeted her. She stretched out next to me and put her head on my chest. I know women don't usually join you in bed with nothing on because they just want to cuddle, but sex was not where my mind was at, and I was dead tired. I fell back asleep almost immediately, only to be awakened with her on top, riding me as if her life depended on it. There was no mistaking the urgency, but I didn't let her finish.

Maybe I was dreaming of my Lucette making love to me, which my cancer girl took advantage of. That would explain my reaction when I was woken up by her frenzied lovemaking and didn't see the woman I expected. I literally picked her up and pushed her aside. I am sorry for that. I should have let her finish and then taken her in my arms and told her everything was going to be alright.

When my Lucette was mistakenly diagnosed with an aggressive cancer in both lungs and given four to six months to live, then too, making love took on a renewed urgency while she awaited the result of a second biopsy that would reveal she only had cancer in one lung and an infection in the other. When her father died, through tears, she had also asked me to make love to her; the same happened when her mother died. What my cancer girl and my Lucette wanted to do at a time when death was in the air was celebrate life.

A man from the Dark Ages, and the god for whom he claimed to speak, perverted the celebration of life that is consensual sex, transforming it into sex that will be there for the taking in Paradise as an incentive to kill and be killed on behalf of a pitiless, thin-skinned deity who can't be bothered to do his own dirty work.

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!

3:141 And that Allah might purify the believers and annihilate the unbelievers.

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.

3:143 You were yearning for death before you actually met it. Now you have seen it and you are beholding it.

Kill and die on behalf of Allah, and you will be beholden to death for the promised reward of female facsimiles that will provide you with assembly-line sex for an eternity.

56:22 And wide-eyed houris,

56:23 Like hidden pearls;

56:24 As a reward for what they used to do.

Muhammad's praise of houris was unrestrained and, like the god he spoke for, was shameless in using their appeal to get gullible young men to kill and be killed on their behalf.

Narrated Anas:

The Prophet said, "A single endeavor (of fighting) in Allah's Cause in the afternoon or in the forenoon is better than all the world and whatever is in it. A place in Paradise as small as the bow or lash of one of you is better than all the world and whatever is in it. And if a houri from Paradise appeared to the people of the earth, she would fill the space between Heaven and the Earth with light and pleasant scent and her head cover is better than the world and whatever is in it."

Bukhari 52.53

Islam is the only mainstream religion that promises limitless fornication opportunities in exchange for the murder of its detractors. The immorality of killing those who refuse to accept your god as their own and being rewarded with female facsimiles to do with as you please plumbed new depths of depravity.

Why the Lies about Islamophobia, Jihad and the Sharia

March 18, 2025

Taqiya is the Islamic Doctrine of Dissimulation, i.e., lying as a means of advancing Allah's Cause, a world ruled by the Sharia. The Doctrine of Dissimulation, like much of what is unedifying in Islamic scriptures, has its roots in the Koran.

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."

When I started boreal.ca in 2003, it was not dominated by current events involving Islam, and how they were related to what is written in Islamic Scriptures. It was only after immersing myself in Islamic scriptures that I changed the focus of boreal.ca, having decided that Islam represented a clear and present danger to an evolving history that had largely shaken off the shackles of dogma only to see it return with a vengeance spearheaded by a militant dissimulating supremacist religion.

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.

61:9 It is He Who sent His Messenger forth with the guidance and the religion of truth, to make it triumph over every religion.

In getting the government to create and fund an office dedicated to the dissemination of its propaganda under the guise of combatting Islamophobia, the "religion of truth" has already triumphed over every other religion in Canada.

On March 3, 2025, the Canadian Department of Heritage published *The Canadian Guide to Understanding and Combatting Islamophobia* prepared by *The Special Representative on Combatting Islamophobia*, Ms. Amira Elghawaby. Following is my farewell rebuttal of egregious claims about Islamophobia, Jihad and the Sharia found in this so-called *guide*.

1. Islamophobia

I will say it again, Islamophobia is a rational fear of the irrational and you need not apologize for being a rational person.

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 well-meaning people who don't 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 contempt that they avoid them, enslave them, or kill them depending on the circumstances. Fear is what terrorism in the name of Allah is all about.

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.

From *The Enemy Within*, Remembering Uzza - If Islam Was Explained to Me in a Pub, Boreal Books.

2. Jihad

David Cook, author of *Understanding Jihad*, defines jihad as "'Warfare with spiritual significance' [and this] is the primary and root meaning of the term as it has been defined by classical Muslim jurists and legal scholars." *The Encyclopedia of Islam* agrees: "In law, according to general doctrine and in historical tradition, the jihad consists of

military action with the object of the expansion of Islam and, if need be, of its defence.”

The Canadian Guide to Understanding and Combatting Islamophobia would have you believe that “jihad” is an “effort to overcome base desires... [a] struggle against oneself” and not about making war on unbelievers. As if to add insult to injury in expressing such a disingenuous description of Jihad, the government’s *guide* goes on to claim that “the term holy war has no root in Islamic terminology,” when the entire concept of a holy war originated with Islam not the Crusades. Evidence is the Koran itself, and then there is Abdallah b. al-Mubarak’s [726-797] *Kitab al-Jihad* (Book of Holy War) which summarizes the redemptive value of killing and dying in the name of God.

The slain [in jihad] are three [types of] men. A believer, who struggles with himself and his possessions in the path of God, such that when he meets the enemy [in battle] he fights them until he is killed. This martyr (*shahid*) is tested, [and is] in the camp of God under His throne; the prophets do not exceed him [in merit] except by the level of prophecy.

[Then] a believer, committing offences and sins against himself, who struggles with himself and his possessions in the path of God; such that when he meets the enemy [in battle] he fights until he is killed. This cleansing wipes away his offences and his sins – behold the sword wipes [away] sins! – and he will be let into heaven by whatever gate he wishes. ...

[Then] a hypocrite who struggles with himself and his possessions in the path of God; such that when he meets the enemy [in battle] he fights until he is killed. This [man] is in hell since the sword does not wipe away hypocrisy.

David Cook, cf. Ibn al-Mubarak, Understanding Jihad, p.14.

Later writings would expand on his concept that killing and being killed “in the path of Allah” has two redeeming features: atonement for your sins and rank in heaven. 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 God that wipes away sins—the exception being one who dies in “the path of Allah” but whose loyalty was not always

constant: the hypocrite. The most willing to die and the most bloodthirsty get the most benefits:

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.

The Koran, and al-Mubarak's book, along with Muhammad echoing Allah's call for a merciless universal war against unbelievers, is some of the strongest evidence we have that the concept of a holy war originated with Islam, not Christianity. The Koran, the definitive text, was revealed in the 7th century and al-Mubarak's *Book of Holy War* written in the 8th; 400 and 300 years, respectively, before the first Crusade.

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...

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 and Maajid Nawaz, *Islam and the Future of Tolerance*, Harvard University Press, 2015

3. Sharia

The objective of Shar'iah is to establish justice and peace in society.

The Canadian Guide to Understanding and Combatting Islamophobia

There is a grain of truth, a horrible truth for any normal person, in how the Sharia is a means to an end that Western law strives to achieve without resorting to murder, mutilation, threats and whipping. "Sharia", as explained in the guide, "is derived from two main sources: the Quran, which is considered the direct word of [Allah], and hadith—thousands of sayings and practices [of Muhammad]." And there's the rub. The Sharia is, in essence, a brutal petrified legal tradition based on scriptures from the Dark Ages that Islamists would see become the law of the land everywhere. This legal tradition has largely been canonized by the four main Sunni schools of Islamic jurisprudence (madhhabs): Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali. All the schools stipulate that legal rulings must be based on the Koran and/or the hadiths.

Except for the Hanbali, all the schools allow for the extrapolating of legal precedents from scriptures for unusual situation while remaining faithful to their intent. For example, the first Muslim in space was Sultan bin Salman Al Saud of Saudi Arabia. But, it was not until the first Malaysian, Sheikh Muszaphar Shukor, was scheduled to blast into space aboard a Russian rocket in October 2007, on his way to the International Space Station, that serious questions as to

how Muslims spending time in space were going to perform mandatory religious rituals, such as the five daily prayers, were answered. One hundred and fifty Islamic scholars, scientists, and astronauts were brought together and arrived at a consensus as to what was practical and desirable under the circumstances.

Dr. Shabir Ali in answering the question, "How are the four schools of Islamic Jurisprudence different?" on his weekly broadcast *Let The Koran Speak*, explained how they effectively snuffed out human reasoning in arriving at legal rulings:

At this time there is more of an emphasis on the received tradition (*a verse from the Koran or a saying or the example of Muhammad, including his silent approval of actions done in his presence or of which he was aware*) and the suspicion of using reasons (sic). So that's to be staved off at all cost. We have a tradition that speaks to the matter, that's the end of the matter.

An example from a discussion involving Abu Hanifah (b. 700 - d. 767), founder of the Hanafi Madhhab considered the most progressive of the four mainstream Sunni schools of Islamic jurisprudence.

Hanifah: Who is weaker, man or woman?

Baqir: Woman.

Hanifah: Which of them is entitled to larger share in inheritance?

Baqir: The man.

Hanifah: If I had been making deductions by analogy, I should have said that the woman should get the larger share, since on the face of it the weaker one is entitled to more consideration. But I have not said so.

With the four mainstream schools in agreement on the fundamentals, and a vast repertoire of precedents (14,000+ are part of the Sunni canon) based on often confounding sayings and example of a Dark Ages illiterate who claimed to speak on an omnipotent god's behalf, scholars (and I used this term advisably here) from the various schools of Islamic jurisprudence are often left with arguing points of law that the uninitiated observer might consider trivial if not nonsensical. For example, semen in Al-Shafi doctrine is considered "ritually pure and thus the presence of traces of it on a garment does

not represent an obstacle to prayer. By contrast, the Maliki position requires such traces to be washed off before the garment can be worn for prayer."⁴⁰ Then there are the established transcending differences of opinion, such as those on the subject of abortion with the Hanafi School being the most flexible, allowing abortions "through the first 120 days of pregnancy" based on when Muhammad said a soul is breathed into the still developing fetus.

Narrated Abdullah bin Mus'ud:

Allah's Apostle, the true and truly inspired said, "(The matter of the Creation of) a human being is put together in the womb of the mother in forty days, and then he becomes a clot of thick blood for a similar period, and then a piece of flesh for a similar period. Then Allah sends an angel who is ordered to write four things. He is ordered to write down his (i.e. the new creature's) deeds, his livelihood, his (date of) death, and whether he will be blessed or wretched (in religion). Then the soul is breathed into him...

Bukhari 54.430

In this short introduction to Islamic law we will only deal with the law as it pertains to the transgressions of believers against God.

The most serious offences under the Sharia are known as the Greater Sins (or Grave Sins), of which there are more than forty at this writing. The Greater Sins are those where the Koran or a saying of Muhammad explicitly states or implies, or where there is a consensus among scholars, that those who commit these sins will go to Hell.

17:38 The evil of all this is hateful in the sight of your Lord.

Following are the forty Greater Sins – in descending order of evilness, with "associating other gods with Allah" at the top of the list – for which there exists a verse in the Koran or a saying of Muhammad about the sinner going to Hell:

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.

⁴⁰ Ahmed El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law*, Cambridge University Press, 2013, p. 209.

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).

Then there are the ten made up grave sins based on a consensus among scholars that the sinner is going to Hell:

41. Backbiting.
42. Telling tales.
43. Insulting a believer.
44. Intrigue, deception and breaking covenants.
45. Hoarding and selling on the black-market.
46. Disrespect of the Qur'an.
47. Disrespect of Ka'ba.
48. Disrespect to Masajid (mosque).
49. Disrespect of the Tomb of the Prophet.
50. Disrespect to the soil of Imam Husain's Grave (Shia Islam).

For the purpose of explaining Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) in terms more familiar to non-Muslims, I divide the Sharia (God's Law or Islamic law) into two broad categories: Criminal Law and Family Law. This definition and division you may find completely spurious as you come to terms with the reality of the Sharia.

Criminal Law

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

All of the Greater Sins can be considered criminal offences punishable by death, mutilation, retaliation in kind, a severe whipping or blood money. The two most serious offenses for which death is demanded are associating other gods with Allah and fornicating with other than your spouse. The next two most serious crimes, based on the severity of the punishment, are theft and murder. Mutilation is Allah's decreed punishment for stealing someone else's property:

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.

A saying of Muhammad established the low threshold at which Allah's horrific punishment for stealing can be imposed.

Narrated Abu Huraira:

Allah's Apostle said, "Allah curses the thief who steals an egg (or a helmet) for which his hand is to be cut off, or steals a rope, for which his hand is to be cut off."

Bukhari 81.791

The punishment for what Western jurisprudence considers the lesser crime—and by a wide margin—can exceed that of murder. Murderers, under the Sharia, can escape any form of punishment by simply paying blood money to the victim's relatives or having someone else die for their crime, such as a slave or a wife.

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.

Allah made blood money a fit punishment for unintentional murder, what western jurisprudence defines as manslaughter. Muhammad reminded the believers of the cost of a human life during what is referred to as his last sermon, i.e., *The Prophet's Last Khutba*.

And intentional murder shall be punished according to Talion law; where the murderess 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 Muhammad's by Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah [1908-2002]:

Muhammad came to that determination based on his grandfather, Abd al-Muttalib, substituting camels as payment after promising Allah to sacrifice his tenth son to Him if He gave him ten male heirs. When the time came for Muttalib to keep his side of the bargain, he consulted a dervish to find out if he could fulfil his promise to God in some other manner that did not involve killing his tenth son, Abdullah, the future father of the Prophet Muhammad of all people.

The dervish Muttalib consulted was no ordinary soothsayer; he was a dervish with jinns in his employ, jinns that specialized in eavesdropping on Allah's conversations with his angels. To try to answer his client's question, the dervish sent his jinns to eavesdrop on God. One reported that Allah, in a conversation with an angel, had indicated that He would be happy with a sacrifice of camels; but how many camels? The dervish then threw some dice (bone fragments of some type) to find out. The answer they gave was one hundred camels as the price of a human life, and that is the equivalent price to this day that can be demanded by an aggrieved family in return for the State sparing a murderer's life.

This payment cannot exceed the equivalent of 100 camels that would be unIslamic. To simplify things for visitors to the Kingdom, as reported by Author Yaroslav Trofimov, in *Faith at War, A Journey on the Frontlines of Islam* (Henry Holt, 2005) the Saudis have prepared a "death compensation schedule." In 2002, the penalty for accidentally killing a male believer was 100,000 riyal (about \$27,000 Canadian); a male Christian or Jew 50,000 riyals; practitioners of other religions a mere 6,666.66 riyal; a non-believing woman, a real bargain at about 3,333 riyal. The schedule read by Trofimov makes no mention of a monetary penalty for accidentally killing a believing woman. What would be the point! The chance of a visitor to the Kingdom coming into contact with a Saudi woman or girl is almost nil.

Misdemeanors

A misdemeanor, in most common law legal systems, is a lesser criminal act. Misdemeanors are generally punished much less severely than felonies (usually crimes involving violence). Minor sins under the Sharia could be considered misdemeanors. Minor sins range from being too close to a member of the opposite sex to whom you are not related, cursing, imitating the dress or lifestyle of the kuffar (a pejorative term for non-Muslims), to forgetting to lower your gaze when encountering a member of the opposite sex, to entering a house by the back door.

24:30 Tell the believers to cast down their eyes and guard their private parts. This is purer for them. Allah is conversant with what they do.

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.

The punishment for minor sins under the Sharia can be quite severe and varies depending on the school of Islamic jurisprudence which holds sway over a town, region or country. Take the punishment for the minor sin of Khalwat, the sin of close proximity. You are guilty of Khalwat if you are too close to a non-relative of the opposite sex, or in the company of a member of the opposite sex for no legitimate reason under the law. In Iran, the punishment for committing Khalwat is up to 99 lashes; in Malaysia, it is a fine or up to two years in jail, or both.

Family Law

Western Law explicitly recognizes that men and women are equal as human beings and before the Law. Allah emphatically denies this! Men, in the Koran, are superior to women by at least one degree, whatever a degree is, but it is a lot.

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.

That superiority is reflected in a better memory, Revelation 2:282. What Muhammad described as a "deficiency of the woman's mind."

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...

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

That superiority is reflected in how a marriage can be ended by a husband simply telling a spouse that he is divorcing her. He does not need a reason or anyone's permission to do so. He simply has to tell her, "I divorce you" and wait until his soon-to-be-ex-wife has experienced three menstrual cycles, and it's over. To avoid returning her dowry and other things he may have given her, he may make her life so difficult that she will ask for a divorce, which he will grant if she "ransoms herself" by returning what he has given her, leaving her more or less destitute unless another man will have her.

2:229 Divorce may be pronounced twice. Then they (women) are to be retained in a rightful manner or released with kindness. And it is unlawful for you [men] to take back anything of what you have given them unless both parties fear that they cannot comply with Allah's Bounds (by obeying His commands). If you fear that they cannot do that, then it is no offence if the woman ransoms herself [pays money to be set free]. Those are the bounds set by Allah. Do not transgress them. Those who transgress the bounds set by Allah are the wrongdoers.

In Western Family Law, divorce proceedings are meant to ensure an equitable distribution of jointly owned property so that neither partner is left destitute after the separation. Under the Sharia, a divorced wife has no recognized right to any property or wealth acquired during the marriage – including the family home.

Male superiority is reflected in the disposition of an inheritance.

4:11 Allah commands you, with respect to your children, that the male shall inherit the equivalent of the share of two females. If there be more than two females, then they should receive two-thirds of what he (the deceased father) leaves; but if there is only one female, she is entitled to one-half. To each of his parents, one-sixth of what he leaves, if

he has any children; but if he has no children, then his parents will inherit him, the mother receiving one third. But if he has any brothers, then his mother receives one-sixth, after any will he had made or any debt he had incurred [is taken care of] Your fathers and sons – you know not who of them is of greater advantage to you. This is a law from Allah; Allah surely is All-Knowing, Forbearing

In Western Family Law, a wife is entitled to her fair share of a deceased husband's estate, usually half. Under the Sharia, she is only entitled to a quarter of what he leaves behind; if there are children, it is one eighth.

4:12 You are entitled to half of what your wives leave, if they have no children; but if they have any children, then you are entitled to one-quarter of what they leave, after any will they had made or any loan they had incurred [is taken care of]. And they are entitled to one-quarter of what you leave, if you have no children; but if you have any children, then they are entitled to one-eighth of what you leave, after any will you had made or loan you had incurred [is taken care of]. And if a man or a woman dies having no children or parents, but has a brother or sister, then each shall have one-sixth; if they are more than that, then they shall share one-third, after any will made or debt incurred [is taken care of] without prejudice. This is a Commandment from Allah, and Allah is All-Knowing, Forbearing.

An often repeated verse about a husband having a God-given right to beat a wife, including for what he thinks she may have on her mind:

4:34 ... 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 ways of harming them; for Allah is Sublime and Great.

The Koran grants a husband the right to beat his wife, but it is a saying of Muhammad which 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

Under Sharia law, a husband has a God-given right to demand sex

from a spouse who, under a Sharia-mandated pre-nuptial contract, agreed to give her husband unrestricted access to her "private parts."

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

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.

A wife-beater cannot flog a spouse as he would a slave or a prized camel and then demand sex in the evening.

Narrated Abdullah bin Zam'a:

The Prophet said, "None of you should flog his wife as he flogs a slave and then have sexual intercourse with her in the last part of the day."

Bukhari 62.132

Narrated Abdullah bin Zam'a:

The Prophet forbade laughing at a person who passes wind, and said, "How does anyone of you beat his wife as he beats the stallion camel and then he may embrace (sleep with) her?"

Bukhari 73.68

Western Family Law tries to strike a balance between the rights and obligations of the marital partners with laws that seek to militate against harming the other either financially or physically. That is simply not the case with the Sharia where the husband has rights and the wife obligations. And of course, under the Sharia, men can marry children whose silence at the prospect of such a union Muhammad deemed their acquiescence.

Maude of the *Fractured Nation Interviews* does not blame the Prophet for the sad state of affairs for women and girls under the Sharia.

Maude: Look, I will get back to [again making quotes in the air] "*The Fracture*" but what I have to say about the man

most responsible for women's oppression is also important
...

Johnny: I understand your frustration but it's off topic!

Maude: OFF TOPIC? Where have you been! It's not off topic, not off topic at all! Many of these women are former Canadian citizens who had no choice in the matter. Overnight, their home became their prison; their former home being within the boundaries of this un-holy *Holy Alliance of Muslim Municipalities*. Why am I spelling it out for you? You're not a child, you are well informed, you know what's going on. This is ridiculous. Maybe I should just leave [making like she's about to get up].

Johnny: Please don't. Say what you have to say. I'm sure my Muslim viewers will understand, but if you could try to be brief so we can return to a more general discussion on this week's topic.

Maude: Thank you. I will try to be brief and if anyone shows up at your door after the show to blow your brains out for anything I've said, I will give you my address so you can send them over to my place.

Johnny: Please, be serious.

Maude: I am being serious!

Johnny: Please finish what you want to say about the Prophet so we can get on with talking about *The Fracture*,

Maude: Look, I'm not a prude. Men will be men, boys will be boys. Most men, especially middle-age men if they're not gay lust after women other than their wives or girlfriends, especially younger woman and don't give it a second thought. It's human nature. For Christ's sake even Jimmy Carter that most Christian of Presidents in the good meaning of the word, admitted in a Playboy interview that he had "looked on a lot of women with lust."

Johnny: So a Christian President and the Prophet Muhammad lusted after women, which you admit is no big deal. What is your point?

Maude It's no big deal if you don't, like this Prophet Muhammad use your position as the self-appointed Messenger of God to make your fantasies come true using

tactics that civilized society, or what used to pass for civilized society, would find morally questionable.

Johnny: Muslims hold the Prophet Muhammad as the personification of moral and civilized behaviour, an example to be emulated in every way.

Maude: And there's the rub. Is it morally acceptable for an older man, or woman for that matter, to use his or her position of power, wealth or simply experience to influence a member of the smooth-skin, hard-body generation to have sex with the wrinkled, flabby one?

Johnny: I don't think we have time to get into that.

Maude: The short answer seems to be, not a problem. Not a problem as long as there is no physical, psychological or spiritual violence – real or implied – in the immemorial – some would say immoral – quest by older folks to copulate with younger folks to use a W. Bush expression. What if you could turn this implied moral impediment that the pursuit of relationships with young women and girls must not include physical, psychological or spiritual threats on its head and not only allow *but condone* the use of physical, psychological and spiritual threats to coerce an unwilling partner into an unwanted sexual relationship?

Johnny: That would be despicable.

Maude: This Muhammad did just that and has become a hero to millions of middle-aged men, septuagenarians, octogenarians, balding, greying, pot-bellied, bearded men around the world who before he came along could only fantasize about sex with teenage girls, even children.

Johnny: I don't believe this.

Maude: Believe it! He was so clever in doing this that young Muslim men willingly give up having relationships with young women and girls of their generation in favour of letting these middle-age, septuagenarians, octogenarians, balding, greying, pot-bellied, bearded men be a virgin's introduction to sexual relations.

Johnny: If it is true, I don't think that was what the Prophet intended?

Maude: Except for marrying a child and setting a horrible example, I don't really blame this Prophet Muhammad; I

blame his followers, especially the Muslim clergy. Here was a man, just beyond middle-age, who was given the opportunity to fulfill every middle-age man's fantasy and he took it. He had the power to change the relationship between a man and a woman from a relatively balanced relationship for the time to one of complete female subservience, and this is what he did. Fifteen, fourteen-hundred years later, this relationship, if you can call it that, is viewed as normal by hundreds of millions of Muslim men, and women for that matter.

Two Indelible Examples of Sharia Barbarity

The Crime of Apostasy

Narrated Ikrima:

Prophet said: "If somebody (a Muslim) discards his religion, kill him."

Bukhari 52.260

Today, apostates in jurisdictions governed by the Sharia are usually simply beheaded, with ISIS being the exception. The punishment for apostasy under the Sharia is based on what pharaoh threatened, on at least three occasions, to do to his magicians who, after having failed to better Moses's magic, became Muslims (for the five accounts of Moses' meeting with Pharaoh see Chapter/Section "Moses - Moses and Pharaoh's Magicians," *Shared Prophets*, Boreal Books).

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."

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.”

26:47 They said: “We believe now in the Lord of the Worlds;

26:48 “The Lord of Moses and Aaron.”

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.”

Illegal Intercourse

The Canadian Guide to Understanding and Combatting Islamophobia would have you believe that stoning women to death is simply Islam’s way of “establish[ing] justice and peace in society.”

Woman stoned to death in Afghanistan over accusation of adultery

The men surround the woman as she stands in a hole dug into the stony ground, only her head pokes above the surface. Then they begin to pick up rocks and hurl them at her again and again from close range. Her agonized cries grow louder as the barrage of stones intensifies.

The 19-year-old woman, identified as Rokhshana, had been forced to marry against her will and recently fled with another man, said Seema Joyenda, the governor of Ghor province.

The couple were caught after two days, and the Taliban leader of the village ordered that Rokhshana be stoned to death for adultery.

CNN November 4, 2015

When Muhammad was first asked about the punishment for adultery he deferred to Allah who had to give it some thought. In the meantime, He told His spokesman to confine adulteresses until they died, unless He “opens another way for them.”

4:15 As for those of your women who commit adultery, call four witnesses from your own against them; and if they testify then detain them in the houses till death overtakes them or Allah opens another way for them.

If two men were found guilty of adultery, the punishment was typically less severe. The reference to two men in the following may suggest that the question that Muhammad was asked and passed on to God had to do with wife swapping, something the Meccans did before God's spokesman banned the practice⁴¹.

4:16 If two [men] of you commit it, punish them both. If they repent and mend their ways, then leave them alone. Allah is truly All-Forgiving, Merciful.

God eventually found "another way" and informed His spokesman.

24:2 The adulteress and the adulterer, whip each one of them a hundred lashes; and let no pity move you in Allah's religion, regarding them; if you believe in Allah and the Hereafter. And let a group of believers witness their punishment.

The Prophet in sentencing people, women and girls mostly, to be stoned for illegal intercourse may have exceeded his authority. Syed Shahabuddin writing in the *Milli Gazette*, Indian Muslim's leading English newspaper, reminds us that in the Koran, flogging is the punishment for adultery, not stoning, and that Allah is the final authority. Even Muhammad could not substitute his own opinion for that of the god for whom he claimed to speak. If that is the case, why are people still being stoned for illegal intercourse? According to

⁴¹ **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: She was the wife of Abu Sufyan. She was the only woman to leave her face and hair uncovered among those assembled to hear their conqueror deliver his instructions on the night of Mecca's surrender. 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.

From *Remembering Uzza*, Boreal Books,

Shahabuddin, this is because "some [Islamic] scholars support 'Rajm' (stoning) by attributing a statement to the second Caliph Umar (second successor to the Prophet Muhammad) that a revelation on the subject had been received but had been lost."

Narrated Ibn Abbas:

Umar said, "I am afraid that after a long time has passed, people may say, "We do not find the Verses of the Rajam (stoning to death) in the Holy Book," and consequently they may go astray by leaving an obligation that Allah has revealed. Lo! I confirm that the penalty of Rajam be inflicted on him who commits illegal sexual intercourse, if he is already married and the crime is proved by witnesses or pregnancy or confession."

Umar added, "Surely Allah's Apostle carried out the penalty of Rajam, and so did we after him."

Bukhari 82.816

Muhammad, based on the following hadith, and others, obviously believed in sentencing women and girls to be stoned that he was applying God's law as revealed in the Koran. Please note that, in the following hadith, the man is spared the harsher punishment.

Narrated Abu Huraira and Zaid bin Khalid Al-Juhani:

A bedouin came to Allah's Apostle and said, "O Allah's apostle! I ask you by Allah to judge my case according to Allah's Laws."

His opponent, who was more learned than he, said, "Yes, judge between us according to Allah's Laws, and allow me to speak."

Allah's Apostle said, "Speak."

He (i.e. the bedouin or the other man) said, "My son was working as a laborer for this (man) and he committed illegal sexual intercourse with his wife. The people told me that it was obligatory that my son should be stoned to death, so in lieu of that I ransomed my son by paying one hundred sheep and a slave girl. Then I asked the religious scholars about it, and they informed me that my son must be lashed one hundred lashes, and be exiled for one year, and the wife of this (man) must be stoned to death."

Allah's Apostle said, "By Him in Whose Hands my soul is, I

will judge between you according to Allah's Laws. The slave-girl and the sheep are to be returned to you, your son is to receive a hundred lashes and be exiled for one year. You, Unais, go to the wife of this (man) and if she confesses her guilt, stone her to death."

Unais went to that woman next morning and she confessed. Allah's Apostle ordered that she be stoned to death.

Bukhari 50.885

God, in His Koran, changed his mind on more than 200 occasions, but only once did he change His mind three times on one subject.

The most bizarre revelations in the Koran are those concerning wine: the different verses progressively leading to its interdiction are in response to Umar asking God to clarify what He means. Exegetes tell us that Umar ardently wished that wine be explicitly prohibited by a revealed truth: "Dear God," he said, "show us what we must do concerning wine. It makes us lose both our mind and our money." It was then that God revealed: "O believers, do not approach prayer while you are drunk, until you know what you say!" (4:43)

Umar is completely unhappy with God's response when Muhammad reads him the verse; the prohibition against wine is not explicit enough as far as he is concerned. As if to satisfy Umar, the exegetes tell us, in all seriousness, God sends down another revelation: "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." (2:219)

It's still not enough for Umar; he wants wine explicitly prohibited. It is then that a third revelation is received: "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?" (5:91) This time Umar appears satisfied: "Very good! I now consider the matter settled."

Hela Ouardi, *Meutre à la mosquée*, Albin Michel, 2021, p. 55-56 (my translation).

For the lost verse to exist, Allah would have had to change his mind on the punishment for illegal intercourse as often as He did for wine. Nonetheless, there you have it. Shahabuddin, in commenting on the

stoning sentence of Amina Lawal (her sentence was later commuted, but she had to leave the country), explained why it is always women who get stoned when the punishment is supposed to apply equally to both sexes.

Apart from the brutality of the 'Rajm' (stoning), repugnant to conscience, here is an element of gender injustice in the operation of the traditional law which allows the male partner to get off scot-free, even if he has coerced and raped the female. If the woman lodges a complaint, her complaint is taken as a testimony against herself and, therefore, amounts to admission and requires no further evidence while it is necessary to get 4 witnesses against the man. Also the woman may bear a child, as in Amina's case (Amina Lawal was sentenced to death by stoning by a Nigerian Islamic Sharia Court. Amina had an 8 month old daughter), which is admitted as evidence of zina (guilt) against the woman. Man suffers from no such disability.

An unmarried slave girl who had sex was shown some mercy by the man with the oxymoronic moniker for compassion, but not much.

Narrated Abu Huraira and Said bin Khalid:

The verdict of Allah's Apostle was sought about an unmarried slave girl guilty of illegal intercourse. He replied, "If she commits illegal sexual intercourse, then flog her (fifty stripes), and if she commits illegal sexual intercourse (after that for the second time), then flog her (fifty stripes), and if she commits illegal sexual intercourse (for the third time), then flog her (fifty stripes) and sell her for even a hair rope."

Bukhari 82.822

God punishment for non-Muslims who have sex with other than their lawfully wedded spouses is unexpected and a little bit weird.

24:3 The adulterer shall marry none but an adulteress or an idolatress; and the adulteress none shall marry her but an adulterer or idolater. That has been forbidden the believers.

A Diffusion of Authority

There is nothing in the Koran, or the hadiths about Sharia tribunals. They are very much a modern construct to give the appearance of due process where there is none, and a way of getting Western government to allow the Sharia to operate where it has no business.

The Sharia grants anyone in authority the right to judge and pronounce sentence. In the example of the stoning of 19-year-old Rokhshana it was the “leader of the village”, i.e., the mayor who made the decision that she should be brutally killed. That authority started with the husband who has the right to beat a spouse as harshly as he feels she deserves for whatever offence she may have committed. This diffusion of authority means that the barbarity in the application Sharia law can be excessive, as in the following example:

Lipstick and dresses return to Mosul’s streets *BBC May 22, 2017*

People living in the Iraqi city of Mosul, overrun by so-called Islamic State (IS) three years ago, have described a life of terror, with children killed for minor misdemeanours, public floggings and regular disappearances...

Maha, 36, Al Zuhour neighbourhood: I will never forget that awful day and what happened to a little seven-year-old on our street. The girl had come down to the small neighbourhood shop to buy some sweets when IS militants approached her.

The girl, chatting innocently to the old shop owner, was asked by the militants where her home was. She pointed it out before running and hiding. Her parents come to see what was going on and the IS fighters lectured them about how their daughter was violating Sharia law by being alone with the seller.

Even this innocent young girl was not allowed to enjoy her childhood and go and buy sweets. After a long debate, the fighters decided the girl's punishment was to be bitten or pinched in her face or on her hands by the women of the Hisba [the religious police], or the more adequately described "monsters of Hisba".

The terrified mother begged them to punish her instead of her young daughter but there is no room for discussion with IS. The child was punished in front of her screaming mother. The monsters aggressively and repeatedly beat her and pinched her. The child was screaming until she passed out and her heart stopped.

The wailing mother completely lost her mind when she saw her child die in front of her. The whole neighbourhood went mad in fear for our children after that day.

Islamic Law is Forever Expanding

New sins, mostly of the minor variety, and new rules to govern every waking moment of a believer's existence are constantly being created. Sunni scholars use what they call "analogical reasoning "or qiyās to come up with a new law to fit a novel or changed circumstance. It is a process whereby one or more hadiths are compared and contrasted with revelations in the Koran in an attempt to identify a crime and suitable punishment of which God would approve.

Shias reject Sunni analogical reasoning because it might lead to contrary opinions or divergence of beliefs. Shias do their own narrowly focused rational to come up with new laws. They call their process 'Aql. To avoid divergence of beliefs caused by discordant reasoning, the most revered and learned Islamic scholars among them, e.g., the Ayatollah Khomeini when he was alive, are accepted as the final authority as to whose reasoning will take precedence.

The competition among scholars to create new laws or interpretations of existing regulations has been more or less formalized and recognized in what is referred to as the "science of fiqh."

Thinking of 9/11

March 21, 2025

Like millions of you, I watched on television what happened that awful day. No matter how I meet my end, it can never compare to the horrific way the 9/11 victims died. Some blown to bits, others burnt alive by exploding jet fuel and still others jumping to their deaths in the plaza below to escape the fire above; the survivors of the initial attack crushed between slabs of concrete as the buildings collapsed, their lives squeezed out of them like so much toothpaste. As I am thinking about them, a posting to that effect and another lie told about Islam.

When Killing 2,996 People Is Like Killing All of Mankind

In the history of the modern world, there were probably never a more representative sample of humanity than the nearly three thousand people whose life was brutally ended out on September 11, 2001. They gave truth to a lie that was a snippet of Verse 5:32 about "whoever kills a soul is like one who has killed the whole of mankind" which was repeated ad nauseam by influential people who should have known better in the days that followed their slaughter. Even President George W. Bush, who repeated an expression that is not found in the Koran about Islam being a "Religion of Peace", fell for the deception. Revelation 5:32 was proof, clerics and community leaders argued, that Allah did not approve of the attacks, conveniently leaving out the portion about retaliation (*italics mine*).

5:30 Then his soul prompted him to kill his brother; and so he killed him and became one of the losers.

5:31 Then Allah sent forth a raven digging the earth to show him how to bury his brother's corpse. He said: "Woe is me, am I unable to be like this raven and bury the corpse of my brother?" Thus he became one of the remorseful.

5:32 For that reason (the murder of Abel by Cain), 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 all of mankind. Our

Messengers came to them with the clear proofs; but afterwards many of them continued to commit excesses in the land.

In the next verse in this series, it is clear that Allah, by equating "corrupting the land" to fighting Him and His Messenger, is making all non-Muslims candidates for a gruesome death.

5:33 Indeed, the punishment of those who fight Allah and His Messenger and go around corrupting the land⁴² 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.

If they *repent*, in effect become Muslims, you may spare their lives. But you already knew that!

5:34 Except for those who repent before you overpower them. Know, then, that Allah is All Forgiving, Merciful

⁴² This verse is often used by Sharia law-based regimes, such as Iran, to justify the imprisonment and executions of dissidents.

Iran executes German-Iranian dissident Sharmahd was sentenced to death last year for "corruption on Earth" *BBC October 29, 2024*

Crazy Commerce and a Parasitic Economy

April 2, 2025

In watching Trump on CNN announcing worldwide tariffs on a day he called *Liberation Day*, I was reminded of another man's unorthodox approach to trade and commerce. His instructions concerning trade in goods, if applied today, would cripple the modern economy as assuredly as Trump's tariffs.

Selling It!

(Abbreviated from *1,001 Sayings and Deeds
of the Prophet Muhammad*, Boreal Books)

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

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. For example, in attempting to make post-Islamic commerce conform to scriptures, such as the Koran's prohibition against earning interest, he would have changed the nature of bartering everywhere in the Muslim world if Islamic law had been 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 Islam's founder was in promulgating ostensibly immutable laws (remember, the sayings and example of Muhammad are legal precedents if they do not contradict the Koran) governing the exchange of goods between sellers and buyers. What if the world economy was subjected to the ultimate micro-manager's trade diktats? 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 governments to negotiate large scale sales of staples such as rice, wheat, corn... anything, for that matter, on behalf of producers.

Narrated Ibn Umar:

The Prophet said, "He who buys foodstuff should not sell it till he has received it."

Bukhari 34.343

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., purchases made over the phone or the internet would be haram.

Narrated Haklm 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 risk of a beating, that if you bought perishables without first insisting on them being measured or weighed before your eyes, you must 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 lifetime 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

Muhammad's life experience was mostly that of trader and merchant. 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. He was scandalized to discover that date-bearing palms were artificially pollinated, and ordered the practice stopped. He reinstituted the practice the following year after date production plummeted, but insisted it be done when he wasn't present. Of course, this did not mean he could not regulate the sale of the fruits of date-palms that were 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

Dates being a staple of the Arab diet and a favourite of God's spokesperson meant that the vast majority of hadiths about the sale of fruits and vegetable refer to dates.

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

A word you should get familiar with, which you will now frequently encounter, is 'Sa' as a unit of measurement⁴³.

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

You cannot sell dates that are still on the tree.

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."

⁴³ "The Sā' is an ancient measurement of volume from the Islamic world with cultural and religious significance. While its exact volume is uncertain, the Arabic word Sā' translates to "small container," related to the Quranic word ṣuwā' ("cup, goblet")."Wiki

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

What about fruits that do not turn red when ripe?

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.

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

Muhammad's knowledge of trade practices during the Dark Ages, in what we now call the Middle East, was undoubtedly unparalleled. However, his knowledge of animal husbandry, or 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 Muhammad, a rite of passage for all of those selected to speak on God's behalf.

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

As can be expected, the hadiths concerning the sale of livestock are very much about what grazed in Muhammad's neighbourhood and what was 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 camels and sheep that need milking.

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."

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

Transfer of ownership of a pregnant camel must await the birth of the calf.

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 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 to 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

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.

Narrated Abu Huraira:

The Prophet forbade the wearing of a gold ring.

Bukhari 72.754

A Parasitic Economy

Muhammad's instructions pertaining to commerce transactions were not always followed, but not so for Allah's instruction on how the believers could have a functioning economy while fighting among themselves when not fighting the unbelievers. He created a parasitical economy that survived on indentured labour, i.e., slavery, plunder, and taxing those He considered His lesser enemies: the People of the Book. Christians and Jews are not to be killed, even if they refuse to become Muslims, as long as they are submissive and agree to pay a poll-tax (a tax levied on people rather than on property), the Jizya,

The Jizya Revelation:

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.

The Revelation confirming a believer's right to the property of an unbeliever, including his wives and daughters:

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.

Plunder and the taxes levied on Christians and Jews remained the primary economic engine of the burgeoning Islamic empire until the Ottoman host was broken beneath the walls of Vienna in the year 1683. If the Ottomans' had allowed more Christians to convert and join their ranks, Vienna might not have survived the assault.

When the Ottomans conquered the Balkans, many preferred their rule to that of their former feudal lords and would have gladly converted to Islam had they been allowed. As Jason Goodwin informs us in *Lords of the Horizon, A History of the Ottoman Empire* (Vintage, 1999), the last great Islamic empire had a quota on conversions to Islam:

In the Balkans ... no efforts were made to convert Christians to Islam. Sixteenth-century cadastral registers suggests that only about 300 families in the entire Balkan region converted in any year ... The empire wanted tax-paying subjects, not Muslims.

When Europe followed its success at Vienna with the reconquest of the Balkans, the Ottoman Empire lost a significant source of this tax revenue which it could no longer make up through plunder.

The slavery component of the parasitic economy remains a significant, often out-of-sight, problem in many Muslim countries, even in Saudi Arabia which officially banned the practice in 1962.

Although slavery no longer officially exists in the Kingdom, the condition of Indians and other Third World workers isn't far removed from medieval serfdom; newspapers all over the Persian Gulf are full of "absconder notices" that feature mug shots of runaway help and offer compensation for their capture.

From a visit to a Riyadh slum by Yaroslav Trofimov author of *Faith at War, A Journey On The Frontlines of Islam* (Henry Holt, 2005)

Slavery is also making a comeback in Africa with the spread of the slavery gospel of the Koran by the likes of Boko Haram and Islamic State offshoots.

It is often difficult to ascertain the moral or ethical imperative on which Allah bases His instructions for humankind in His Koran. For example, His condoning of slavery (see Chapter "Slavery," *Getting to Know Allah*, Boreal Books) and condemning the practice of lending money at interest (see Chapter "Allah Despises the Riba-Eaters," *Getting to Know Allah*, Boreal Books). Both convey an economic advantage to the slave-owner and the money-lender respectively. However, the transaction involving only money 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 servitude.

Good Friday, Good Grades and No Valentines

April 18, 2025

Good Friday used to have a real significance for me. That was before I lost my religion in my late teens, under what circumstances I can only speculate. It was probably too much reading, which I did even more in my teens; a lot of it science fiction. Science fiction can be an effective antidote to the fiction that is part of a Catholic, or any religion-heavy education. Reading Western-style fiction is frowned upon in Islam, not only because it takes away from time you could spend worshipping Allah, but also may cause your imagination to stray from the straight and narrow, as it probably did for me.

I used to love the 3pm service that commemorated the Crucifixion; not only because of the pageantry, but, more importantly, I was not part of it. I served as altar boy for one of the regular Sunday masses, and the seven-in-the-morning weekday mass. I had only enough time to get back home, have a quick breakfast of cereal or toast and rush to school which, thankfully, was just next door.

Getting up early to perform my altar boy duties before getting to class did not interfere with my grades. Every year, when final grades were handed out, I was the top male student in my class. In all eight elementary school years, Solange Hardi, my first crush, consistently beat me for the top spot. Good grades, I got to appreciate, were more of a hindrance to getting girls wanting to be with you, even at that age, if you did not exhibit some bad boy qualities, or other non-cerebral attributes.

Every year before class on Valentine's Day, starting in the third or fourth grade, the girls were given the opportunity (or maybe they just snuck in) to place a valentine in the desk of a boy they liked. I used to pretend that I didn't care that no valentines were ever left in my desk while some kids got a handful, my brother Albert being one of them.

A Lone Diner's Lament

April 20, 2025

How I miss the turkey and fixings Lucette used to cook at Easter that we used to eat with friends. I thought of walking across the street and having dinner at Cooper's Gastropub, but how pathetic a figure I would have been having dinner alone at Easter. My family doctor of more than thirty years tells me to try harder to make friends in the condo building where I now live, but I just can't. It would probably be easier for me to join a cult whose members frequently dine together. The apostles seldom ate alone and their last supper with Jesus was catered by none other than Allah.

The Last Supper

(Excerpt from *Shared Prophets*, Boreal Books)

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."

If Allah has to do a miracle for someone to believe and that person later renounces their faith, that person is going to be in for some serious pain in the afterlife, and perhaps this one.

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."

Neda

April 21, 2025

Neda! I forgot Neda! How could I forget Neda? Last night I went to be bed quite pleased with myself after a quick review of a print copy of *Farewell Postings* only to wake up in the middle of night with Neda starring back at me.



January 23, 1982 – June 20, 2009

She lies in the Tehran street with her headscarf half-off, blood pooling around her jeans and white sneakers.

“Don't be afraid, Neda dear, don't be afraid,” a white-haired man says desperately in Persian. Another man presses on her chest, trying to keep her alive.

Scarlet blood gushes from her nose and mouth and courses across her pale face. Men and women scream in horror as they realize she is dead or dying.

CAIRO – The Associated Press, Monday, Jun. 22, 2009

Neda was shot by a sniper during a peaceful demonstration in favour of fair elections. Despite not being the end of the world – as far as we know – it was in keeping with an admonition of Muhammad, quoted earlier, about killing young people, whom he accused of propagating “foolish thoughts and ideas.” He said to kill them wherever you find them (echoing Allah) and be amply rewarded on Judgement Day for doing so.

2:191 Kill them wherever you find them and drive them out from wherever they drove you out. 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 for the unbelievers.

The killing of Neda may have been the Supreme Leader of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's way of warning the demonstrators that he was ready to kill them all, as he would make clear in a subsequent speech where he quoted Allah about slaughter being preferable to sedition.

Should he decide on slaughter to avoid his faith-based government being toppled, like Khomeini before him, he will call upon the theocracy's equivalent of a private army of more than a million zealots, the Revolutionary Guards, to do the killing. So far, the Guards, in dealing with a new challenge to the rule of the Ayatollahs, the hijab protest, have tried to impress upon recalcitrant wearers, and their male supporters, of the need for them to cover their hair in public by not killing them, but by blinding them in one eye.



Persian social media is full of young people who say they were shot in the eye by security forces.

Iran protests: Victims shot in eyes hold on to hopes. *BBC April 3, 2023*

When I first met Abbas, I expressed the view that with Khomeini's victory, a progressive Islam for Iran might be in the cards. He was not of that opinion. Islam was now ruled by ruthless religious fanatics, he said. Things could only get worse and stay that way for a long time. He pointed to the Catholic Church's dominance in Europe and how many centuries it took to break that stranglehold. He held out more

hope for Saudi Arabia because they were not ruled by a theocracy, therefore could change with the times. How right he was.



SpaceX mission lifts off with former NASA astronaut, three paying customers... the mission is making history as stem cell researcher Rayyanah Barnawi becomes the first

woman from Saudi Arabia to travel to space.

CNN May 22, 2023

Ali Al Qarni, another Saudi astronaut on this historic mission (the first Muslim in space was Saudi), at a news briefing said: "We are holding hands, we are working together for the betterment of humanity and just trying to innovate." WOW! The Prophet, in his grave, was probably incredulous when informed by his angel visitors that a young Muslim woman was spending days unveiled in close proximity of men to whom she is not related or married to and doing science—what she should not have been capable of—with no partition separating them. This is clearly an innovation in the religion for which the Saudis should be praised, for they did it in spite of Muhammad's admonition that "every innovation is a misguidance and every misguidance goes to Hell fire."

In Paradise, Muhammad will be given, by a grateful God, an impressive mansion by an immense lake, the Kauthar, along with the river that feeds it, also referred to as the Kauthar. Allah will prevent him from offering some of his former companions water from the lake because, to quote Muhammad quoting God, "they introduced new things into the religion after you."

Narrated Abdullah:

The Prophet said, "I am your predecessor at the Lake-Fount (Kauthar) and some men amongst you will be brought to me, and when I will try to hand them some water, they will be pulled away from me by force whereupon I will say, 'O Lord, my companions!' Then the Almighty will say, 'You do not know what they did after you left, they introduced new things into the religion after you.'"

Bukhari 88.173

Can we be clearer on the concept? The current Saudi leadership offers hope that Islam can be reformed, and damn the Ayatollahs.

The Agony of Halal

April 22 202

The moral progress [of a nation] can be judged by the way its animals are treated.

Gandhi

Halal meat is meat from an animal that has been tortured to death.

Anonymous

Today, the Globe and Mail had an article about how “Canada's small scale goat farming industry is struggling to keep up with increasing demand,” mainly from the Muslim communities. It reminded me of a cause dear to my heart. *Farewell Postings* may be my last opportunity to again make a case against the gratuitous cruelty that is ritual slaughter and why it has no place in a civilized society. Unlike the brutality prescribed for transgressors and unbelievers, all the Koran has to say about animal slaughter is that you must pronounce God’s name over an animal you intend to kill – except at the Hajj where He expects you to decorate it beforehand.

2:173 He has only forbidden you [to eat] carrion, blood, pork and that over which (when slaughtered) any name other than that of Allah is invoked. But he who is constrained (constrained to eat those forbidden things) without intending to disobey or transgress, will commit no sin. Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.

5:97 Allah has made the Ka’ba, the Sacred House, a foundation of religion for all mankind, together with the Sacred Month and the sacrificial offerings and their garlands, so that you may know that Allah knows what is in the heavens and on the earth, and that Allah knows everything very well.

The ritual slaughter of animals by pilgrims at the Hajj is today largely outsourced, and the decorating beforehand of the animal to be tortured to death has largely been abandoned.

Usually, the post office is where you send mail or pay your bills. In Saudi Arabia during the hajj, it’s where you pay for your animal sacrifice.

It costs 460 riyals, or about \$120, to have a sheep slaughtered. The sacrifice, known as the hadi, is incumbent on all pilgrims, who must donate at least two-thirds of the meat to the poor.

Modern pilgrims usually have a slaughterhouse near Mecca do this for them, via the local post office.

How do you know your animal was sacrificed? By text message, of course.

New York Times, *Postcards from the Hajj*, Diaa Hadid, Sept 10, 2016

How it's actually done at the Hajj:

[In] sweaty slaughterhouse on the edge of Mecca: Men in stained robes hauled flailing sheep into the building. One man dragged his prey by its leg, and another carried one of the animals on his back.

New York Times, *Postcards from the Hajj*, Diaa Hadid, Sept 10, 2016

For the cruelty to animals, like the brutality that is the stoning of those to whom they have been compared, we have to look to the example of Muhammad.

Narrated Zaid bin Jubair:

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

Narrated Anas:

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

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) on the time it takes for an animal slaughtered as Muhammad demonstrated to die while experiencing excruciating pain. 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. 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 stunned⁴⁴ prior to bleeding experiences. It's not for the squeamish. Again, the translation is mine, as are explanatory comments surrounded by round brackets.

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 drawn out killing the fully conscious animal 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.

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 methods of slaughters 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;

⁴⁴ Modern, non-ritual slaughtering use what is commonly referred to as a captive bolt pistol to render the animal unconscious "to prevent the pain and suffering of the animal during the bleeding (exsanguination) process (which is itself necessary to prevent meat spoilage) during butchering. The principle behind captive bolt stunning is a forceful strike on the forehead using a bolt to induce unconsciousness." Wiki

- 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 are concerned, the vertebral arteries are not cut when the incision is done ...; different anastomosis (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...

Only six months after winning the 2019 election, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau made the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) responsible for ensuring that animals, whose flesh was destined for the table of believers, had been tortured to death, grotesquely upending the CFIA's mandate which, until then, had been to ensure the humane and largely painless killing of food animals in slaughterhouses under its purview. It was to be expected as Muslims were now a significant political force whom an obsequious Trudeau assiduously courted before and during the election campaign. In some respect it was only fair, with observant Jews having always had access to meat and meat by-products from animals that had been domestically ritually tortured to death. Trudeau took it one step further in having Canadian food inspectors do the halal certification previously done by imams stationed in slaughterhouses licenced to torture food animals to death.

When to Kill Your Progeny

April 29, 2025

Almost six years on, and I still often wakeup in the middle of the night thinking of her and needing her advice. Last night it was about adding an excerpt that would add more pages to an already lengthy text. As mentioned early on, Lucette planned her passing after becoming aware that the first draft of *Remembering Uzza* was complete. Actually, there is a bit more to it than that. After 460+ pages she said it was enough and to end it. I did, and a short time later she arranged her assisted suicide. Since what I want to add will keep the pages below what I consider her threshold, I think she will be okay with it. The excerpt that I have chosen to include here, after talking it over—yes, it was a somewhat a one-sided conversion, but a conversation nonetheless—contains revelations where Allah sanctions the killing of a son you fear will grow up to question His Revelations.

Moses and Khidr

(Abbreviated from *Shared Prophets*, Boreal Books)

Moses and Khidr is about an expedition to the Red Sea during which Moses will be joined by a mysterious fellow by the name of Khidr. During their time together they will encounter a boy whom Khidr will kill without any hesitation or apparent provocation. The story of Moses and Khidr begins with Moses determined to find where the Gulf of Aqaba and the Gulf of Suez meet. Why Moses would want to do this is not mentioned.

18:60 And [remember] when Moses said to his servant (he is believed to be Joshua): “I will not give up until I reach the confluence of the two seas (the Gulf of Aqaba and the Gulf of Suez in the Red Sea), or else walk on for years.”

18:61 Then, when they reached their confluence, they forgot their fish, and thus it slipped into the sea unhindered.

18:62 But when they had passed on, he said to his servant: “Bring us our food; we have been exposed in our travels to a lot of fatigue.”

18:63 He (the servant) said: “Do you see; when we repaired to the rock, I forgot the fish. It was only the Devil who made

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me forget it; and so it slipped away into the sea in a strange way.”

18:64 He (Moses) said: “This is what we were seeking”; and so they turned back retracing their steps.

On their way back they encounter Khidr, a servant of Allah who knows God’s mind.

18:65 And so they found one of Our servants whom We had accorded a mercy of our Own and had imparted to him knowledge from Ourselves.

What happened next requires little or no explanation.

18:66 Moses said to him (Khidr): “Shall I follow you so that you may teach me of the good you have been taught.”

18:67 He (Khidr) said: “You will not be able to bear with me.”

18:68 “And how will you bear with what you have no knowledge of?”

18:69 He (Moses) said: “You will find me, Allah willing, patient and I will not disobey any orders of yours.”

18:70 He said: “If you follow me, do not ask me about anything, until I make mention of it.”

18:71 So, they set out; but no sooner had they boarded the ship that he made a hole in it. He (Moses) said: “Have you made a hole in it so as to drown its passengers? You have indeed done a grievous thing.”

18:72 He (Khidr) said: “Did I not tell you that you will not be able to bear with me?”

18:73 He (Moses) said: “Do not reproach me for what I have forgotten, and do not overburden me with hardship.”

18:74 Then they departed; but when they met a boy, he (Khidr) killed him. Moses said: “Have you killed an innocent person who has not killed another? You have surely committed a horrible deed.”

18:75 He (Khidr) said: “Did I not tell you that you will not be able to bear with me?”

18:76 He (Moses) said: “If I ask about anything after this, do not keep company with me. You have received an excuse from me.”

18:77 So they went on, until they reached the inhabitants of a town. Whereupon they asked its inhabitants for food, but they refused to offer them hospitality. Then, they found in it a wall about to fall down, and so he (Khidr) straightened it. He (Moses) said: "Had you wished, you could have been paid for that."

It is after they reach the town mentioned in Revelation 18:77 that Khidr explains why he sunk a ship drowning everyone on board and why he killed a seemingly innocent boy.

18:78 He (Khidr) said: "This is where we part company. [Now] I will tell you the interpretation of that which you could not bear patiently with.

The reason given for sinking the ship would justify the taking of innocent lives if it means denying your enemy a sought-after prize.

18:79 "As for the ship, it belonged to some poor fellows who worked upon the sea. I wanted to damage it, because, on their trail, there was a king, who was seizing every ship by force.

As for the killing of the boy:

18:80 "As for the boy, his parents were believers; so we feared that he might overwhelm them with oppression and unbelief.

18:81 "So we wanted that their Lord might replace him with someone better in purity and closer to mercy.

For Allah, protecting the believers by killing unbelievers with whom they might come into contact and who might inadvertently lead them astray, even their children, is an act of mercy. The boy murdered by Khidr may not have been actively trying to convert his parents, but his normal familial contact with his mom and dad meant his parents were regularly exposed to other beliefs and other points of view. Better to kill a seemingly wayward child, or for some else to do so, and not risk Hell's Fire.

In Islamic traditions, Khidr continues to guide the perplexed and those who invoke his name. Some believe he is an angel who functions as a guide to those who seek God; others that he is a perfect Wali, one whom God has taken as a friend, a Saint.

Mothers' Day

May 11, 2025

Have a nice Mother's Day maman. I am sorry I did not visit your grave the last time I was in Kamloops. I don't doubt that it's a spacious grave, and that you have been shown your final destination and it is Paradise for you more than fulfill your duty to a sometimes difficult husband, and will not be joining the vast majority of mothers whose final destination is Hell.

Hell is For Mothers

(Excerpt from *Remembering Uzza – If Islam Was Explained to Me in a Pub*, Boreal Books)

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: It will be because of our ungratefulness⁴⁵.

Bob: Ungrateful to whom?

Uzza: Our husbands for one⁴⁶.

⁴⁵ **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

⁴⁶ **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

Archie: That is sick, sick, sick, sick! That means Allah's favourite firewood⁴⁷ 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 menstruating⁴⁸.

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 as unlikely as that may be, 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 consent⁴⁹.

Archie: Just another way the Prophet made it easy for old men to have their way with children.

⁴⁷ 72:15 But those who have diverged, have been firewood for Hell;

⁴⁸ 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

⁴⁹ **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

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.

Archie: And, like I said before, most of them will be mothers.

Bob: It is a good thing that everyone who enters Paradise will be thirty-something⁵⁰. If not, you would have a lot of motherless children in Paradise crawling, or laying there crying, pleading for their mothers.

Gerry: Even worse. On Judgment Day, Hell, a monster that can speak⁵¹, will be positioned just below Paradise, dragged into its final position by an army of angels⁵². The believers will just have to look down to feast their eyes on their tormented former friends⁵³ and relatives whom Allah has condemned to burn for an eternity.

⁵⁰ 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

⁵¹ 50:30 "On the Day We shall say to Hell: 'Are you full?', and it shall respond: 'Is there more to come?'"

⁵² 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

⁵³ 37:50 Then, they will advance one towards the other asking each other.

37:51 One of them will say: "I had a comrade;

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 other⁵⁴. 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.

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.

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."

⁵⁴ The people of Paradise and the people of Hell will be within shouting distance of each other.

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;

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.

Why My Running from a Bear Matters

May 24, 2025

I woke up this morning remembering a close encounter with a large black bear. It was late in the day when I left my fellow scouts—yes, I was a scout at one time—to go for a walk down a well-trodden trail by the lake. I was maybe fifteen minutes into my walk when, from the underbrush, ambled out a large black bear. I stood there motionless as he stopped in the middle of the trail and turned his head to look at me. There could not have been more than five or six feet between us. Ignoring everything I had been told about encounters with bears, I turned around and started running down the trail looking over my shoulder expecting to see it bearing down on me. I guess it couldn't be bothered.

One meaning of Bernard is, "as brave as a bear." For most of my life I have not lived up to my animal moniker, preferring to run away from trouble as I did that day. When I tell people what I write about, a typical reaction is "how brave." That is both an indictment of Islam and a mischaracterization of yours truly. The risk I take in writing about a violent, militant religion from the comfort of my home, after a life lived, is nothing compared to the risk we expose young people with their life ahead of them when we send them to fight the likes of the Taliban and ISIS.

The Major

Lucette and I were invited to a reception at a cottage on Lac Gagnon less than a two hours drive from Ottawa. The hostess, who had read *Pain, Pleasure and Prejudice*, came over to me and said there was someone I should talk to. The man to whom she introduced me was a major in the Canadian Armed Forces who had recently returned from another tour of duty in Afghanistan. She introduced me as a person who had written a book on the Koran. After shaking hands and introducing myself, I quickly added that it was a self-published book. I never want to leave the impression that I am a published author in the traditional sense.

Anticipating his first question, I explained, in so many words, that I had decided to write a book on the Koran that anyone with a high school education could read and understand because I thought it was important that Canadians know what motivates Al-Qaida, the Taliban, and those who would impose Islam on the rest of us by force. During our conversation he acknowledged that, not only ordinary Canadians should be more familiar with the Koran, but the military should teach less Clausewitz and more Koran, if we hope to better counter the tactics of the Taliban and be trusted by the people we are trying to help.

Carl von Clausewitz [1780-1831] was a Prussian General and author of *On War*, which conventional military types consider the definitive instruction manual on modern warfare. I remember him from a history course as the guy who said that war was an extension of diplomacy, or more exactly, "the continuation of policy by other means." He also argued the merits of defensive warfare.

The Major asked if I was familiar with the verse about terrorizing your enemy. I said I was, assuming he was referring to verse 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..." or perhaps verse 8:60 "And make ready for them whatever you can of fighting men and horses, to terrify thereby the enemies of Allah and your enemy, as well as others besides them whom you do not know, but Allah knows well..."

I was initially taken aback. I have had a number of military officers as neighbours and friends over the years, and built a small non-classified software application for the military in Ottawa. All of the officers I got to know as friends and clients were ignorant of the message of the Koran. Like most Canadians I talked to about the Koran, they believed it to be like the Bible, so why bother.

The Major agreed that the Koran was not like the Bible at all. I could not help myself. Was he familiar with the Verse of the Sword (verse 9:5), the verse about killing unbelievers wherever you find them unless they accept Islam? Of course he was! What about its complement, the verse of the Salvific Covenant (verse 9:111), "do this for me (kill the unbelievers) and I will give you Paradise"? He was familiar with that one as well.

I was on a roll and may have gotten carried away. What about the verse on not negotiating with your enemies while you have the upper hand (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.")

Not only was he familiar with it, but I believe he quoted a portion of it. I apologized for badgering him that way, but I was so impressed. I asked him if I should write the commandant of the RMC (Royal Military College, Kingston) about making my book part of the officers' curriculum. He said it could not hurt, that you could not have enough information about your opponent.

During our conversation we talked about how the current Islamic insurgence is just another manifestation of orthodox Islam's inexorable struggle, dating back to the time of the Prophet to create a world-wide Caliphate - one all-powerful leader in the style of the Prophet Muhammad, one religion and a rule of law based on the Koran and Muhammad's sayings and example, the hadiths.

He promised to visit my website. I mentioned that Riyadh was a regular visitor and Peshawar (Taliban dominated region of Pakistan) an occasional one. He said something about this not necessarily being a good thing. The risk I was taking from the comfort of my home was nothing compared to the risk he and others like him were taking to safeguard our way of life and our values. It was the least I could do. The life I was exposing to a small risk was a life lived, a life the young people who die fighting for me and the vulnerable people of Afghanistan would never know, and I told him so before we parted company.

There were other military personnel at this gathering, including a woman who also had recently served in Afghanistan. Looking at her reminded me of Master Cpl. Kristal Giesebrecht, 34, who was killed on June 26, 2010, along with Pvt. Andrew Miller, 21, while rushing to defuse a mine found in the doorway of a home. The woman who had introduced me to the major now wanted me to talk to her. I couldn't, not only because of the sudden sadness in remembering the loss of a life in the service of others in a forlorn struggle in a strange land. She was enjoying herself, why spoil it?

A Path to Peace Between Palestinians and Israelis

June 7, 2025

One of my first memories is of a man crying. I had been playing with his son in a sandbox that afternoon. It was not a real sandbox, just a pile of sand dumped in the middle of a muddy driveway. The boy's father, who was in the gravel hauling business came home at the end of the day, unaware that his son was still playing on the pile of sand, drove over him.

My older sister took me to my friend's house to see him one last time. I was standing in front of the open coffin admiring how good he looked in his tidy little suit and tie, his black hair combed back all slick and shiny, when the tiny coffin started rocking back and forth and a voice started to shout. I looked up and noticed a man with his hands resting on the open end of the coffin, jerking it back and forth and yelling, "Wake up! You're not dead; wake up!" (Réveilles toé! T'es pas mort; réveilles toé!) over and over again. The man was crying, with big tears running down his face.

I was reminded of that memory last night as I was sitting at my favourite patio going over what I thought was the final draft of *Farewell Postings* while taking in the sights and sounds of Elgin Street on a Saturday evening. There were the girls and the well-behaved dogs out for a walk with their owners, but it was the families that held my attention, many had to be from the Middle East. For some reason, along with the memory of my dead playmate's crying father was that of Palestinian fathers crying over the corpses of their dead children, 10 of them following an Israeli missile strike that appears to have targeted a group of boys and girls playing foosball on a Gaza street. When I got home I took another look at the CNN video showing their lifeless bodies next to a foosball table damaged by shrapnel, and I started to cry.

Israeli precision-guided munition likely killed group of children playing foosball in Gaza, weapons experts say

CNN March 3, 2024

The New York Times also reported, on a number of occasions, on what the evidence suggests is the targeted killing of children by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). Whether it is rogue elements of the IDF or official policy that is the cause of all this grief, it has to stop, and we do this by stopping the killing and looking for common ground.

The Arabs of Palestine could have easily overwhelmed the Jews of Palestine at any point following the Muslim conquest of the territory in 638, but they didn't, only to find themselves at their mercy. They will not make that same mistake again. Israel must show some humility and compassion before it is too late, and that means scaling down, not up, the Zionist dream before it becomes a holocaustic nightmare and the world shrugs, leaving it to reap the whirlwind.

We could start a dialogue between the Palestinians and Israelis beginning with when Muslim Arabs and Jews got along. The Jews would, as a matter of course, have to acknowledge that they made a mistake when they denied Muhammad's prophethood; in effect, recognizing the Palestinians as equals. Discussions like those that undoubtedly took place during the drafting of the Constitution of Medina would follow with the intent of drafting an agreement to govern a two-state Federation.

Had it not been for the Jews of Medina, Islam would have been stillborn. The Jews of Medina joined their Arab neighbours to save Muhammad from certain death by granting him, and his followers, asylum when his Meccan kin were hot on his heels intent on killing him for preaching what they considered an intolerant, violent and hate-filled message.

Muslims and Jews initially got along like family; after all, they both worshipped the same god, and both traced their lineage to the biblical Abraham. Muhammad, under the newly created Constitution of Medina, was even granted authority to arbitrate disputes between Muslims and Jews, in part, because of his knowledge of the Torah. The Koran, apart from a brief self-serving interpretation of the life of Jesus and his mother and scattered accounts of Muhammad's struggle for legitimacy (recommended *From Merchant to Messenger - Muhammad's struggle for legitimacy as revealed in the Koran*, Boreal Books), is very much a synthesis of Jewish beliefs and pagan traditions.

Even before Muhammad's flight to Medina, Allah was so impressed by the Jews that He gave them the Holy Land.

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.

It all fell apart when the Jews of Medina insisted that Muhammad could not be a prophet of Allah because God only spoke to mankind via His Chosen People. Before the breakup, Muslims prayed in the direction of Jerusalem, but that would change as mistrust and animosity developed between the two Semite people. In the following verses Allah gives His reasons for this about-face (no pun intended).

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.

The Sykes-Picot Betrayal Haunts Us Still

(Abbreviated from *Remembering Uzza – If Islam Was Explained to Me in a Pub*, Boreal Books)

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.

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.

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?

Who Are You Calling Stupid?

(Abbreviated from *Remembering Uzza – If Islam Was Explained to Me in a Pub*, Boreal Books)

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"⁵⁵.

Gerry: Conjecturing correctly, as it turned out.

⁵⁵ 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.

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: Are you calling me 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 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 contains⁵⁶. 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 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* being "a dogmatic, narrow-minded people"⁵⁷ is a sad testament to what happens to even the brightest when scriptures overwhelm the mind.

⁵⁶ 45:20 This (Qur'an) is an illumination for mankind, a guidance and mercy unto a people who believe with certainty.

⁵⁷ 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

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?

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, 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 caliphs of the time actively supported this sensible open-minded interpretation, allowing it to thrive until dogma reasserted itself with a vengeance and revelation again smothered reason.

Archie: That is really too bad.

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 preoccupation of the ignorant⁵⁸, 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.

Uzza: That is funny, because that is what the leaders of Mecca intimated Muhammad intended when he told them he was sent by God to instruct them on how to behave; that he wanted to rule over them⁵⁹.

⁵⁸ What Islam considers “a preoccupation of the ignorant” may explain the following:

Spain translates as many books into Spanish each year as the entire Arab worlds has translated into Arabic since the ninth century.

Sam Harris, *The End of Faith - Religion, Terror and the Future of Reason*, 2004, W. W. Norton

⁵⁹ 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*).

Abul A’la Moududi [1903-1979]. pre-eminent Islamic scholar and 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*.

Playing Into the Hands of Islamists

July 30, 2025

The short-sightedness of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA)—the renamed Canadian Jewish Congress—in seeking, through the courts, to insulate from government interference norm-defying Jewish schools such as those found in Hasidic communities and barbaric religious traditions such as torturing food animals to death to render their meat *kosher* is playing into the hands of Islamists.

Jewish judicial intervention has paved the way for Islamists, who do not, as matter of faith, acknowledge the Separation of Church and State, to undermine the very foundation of the secular state, if not our democracy. A reminder of what Islamists are all about:

Islamism is commonly expressed as the desire to enforce a version of Shari’ah as law... An Islamist attempts to impose his version of Islam on society, and a jihadist is an Islamist who attempts to do so by force... Political Islamists seek to impose their views through the ballot box, biding their time until they can infiltrate the institutions of society from within.

Maajid Nawaz, author of *Radical, My Journey out of Islamist Extremism Labels*

I may now live long enough to see the unraveling of the Canadian secular state where there will be no place safe from the bombardment of the Word of God and what He stands for.

Secularism on trial: Supreme Court sees record number of interveners (38) in Bill 21 case.

Montreal Gazette, July 30, 2015

Two of the interveners, who will join the CIJA to argue, in essence, that religion has a God-given right to be omnipresent and the State is powerless to intervene are the National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM) which bills itself as “Canada’s largest Muslim advocacy and

lobby organization”⁶⁰ and the all-encompassing Muslim Association of Canada⁶¹ (MAC).

Matthew 22:21 Render unto Caesar the things that are
Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's.

Those who refuse to grant Caesar his due would have you believe that it is a matter of human rights. It isn't! It is a matter of jurisdiction.

How we got to this momentous crossroad can be traced to a 1985 decision of the Supreme Court of Canada. In the case of *Ontario Human Rights Commission and Theresa O'Malley vs. Simpsons-Sears Limited* the Canadian Jewish Congress was undoubtedly the most influential of the 7 interveners (the others being Canadian Human Rights Commission, Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission, Manitoba Human Rights Commission, Alberta Human Rights Commission, Canadian Association for the Mentally Retarded, Coalition of Provincial Organizations of the Handicapped). The decision of the Court in *O'Malley vs. Simpsons-Sears* not only opened the floodgates to religious accommodations, but, for all practical purposes, elevated religious observances to preponderant rights, an outcome that Bill 21, *An Act respecting the laicity of the State*, finds incompatible with the functioning of an ostensibly secular state.

⁶⁰ Ms. Amira Elghawaby, the author of the disingenuous *Canadian Guide to Understanding and Combatting Islamophobia*, as communications director of the NCCM, prior to her appointment as *Special Representative on Combatting Islamophobia*, opposed a Senate initiative to vet foreign imams as a way of keeping radical preachers out of Canadian mosques.

⁶¹ Who We Are (from the Muslim Association of Canada website)

As an Islamic organization we understand Islam as outlined in the Quran, the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (Sunnah) and mainstream 'Sunni' Islamic scholarship. MAC's understanding of Islam is one of balance and moderation, constructive engagement in society, focus on personal and communal empowerment, and establishing value-based organizations, as articulated in the writings of the renowned reformist, Imam Hasan Al-Banna.

The problem with Western Civilization as expounded by Hassan al Banna founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, an organization that has inspired terrorist acts since its founding in the late 1920s:

Doomed be the Western civilization which follows us at every step. It is constantly at war with us. It started an awful battle, and this battle it is fighting with such bewitching and enchanting objects as knowledge, wealth, civilization, plans and politics, luxury goods and articles of enjoyment and pleasure, with which we have not thus far been familiar.

The First Accommodation

(Abbreviated from *Teach Your Children Well - The
Future as a Truism and a Cliché*, Boreal Books)

The Constitution of 1982 may boast that “Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God,” and the first freedom guaranteed under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms may be religion but it was not the *Constitution* or the *Charter* on which the Supreme Court based its watershed decision that gave scriptures precedence over man-made laws. The precedent-setting case was one alleging discrimination in the workplace.

The decision in *Ontario Human Rights Commission and Theresa O'Malley vs. Simpsons-Sears Limited* is cited by Bouchard-Taylor as the watershed ruling that opened the floodgates to religious accommodation in Canadian law.

O'Malley vs. Simpsons-Sears was not a Charter challenge but a challenge under the Ontario Human Rights Code. The Supreme Court of Canada had to decide whether the retailer, Simpson-Sears, was guilty of discrimination based on creed contrary to the Ontario Human Rights Code R.S.O. 1980, c. 340, s. 4(1)(g).

Ms. O'Malley had joined Simpsons-Sears in 1971. As a condition of full-time employment, she was required to work Friday evenings on a rotating basis, and two Saturdays out of three. In 1978, Ms. O'Malley became a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Seventh-day Adventists must strictly observe the Sabbath from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday. As a result of her newfound-faith, Ms. O'Malley could no longer work on Friday evenings and Saturdays, the busiest time of the week for most retailers, and Simpsons-Sears was no exception.

To accommodate her religious beliefs, Simpsons-Sears offered her part-time employment and told her that if a permanent position became available that did not require her to work on Friday evenings and Saturdays, and for which she was qualified, she would be considered for the job.

The Federal Court of Appeal considered this more than a sufficient attempt to accommodate Ms. O'Malley's religious beliefs. The Court, cognizant that Simpsons-Sear could not completely satisfy Ms. O'Malley's demands without discriminating against employees who

did not share her beliefs and would find their working conditions adversely affected, accepted Simpson-Sears' sensible fairness argument that "*an employment rule, honestly made for sound economic and business reasons and equally applicable to all*" was not discriminatory.

Not so, said the Supreme Court of Canada in overturning the Federal Court ruling. The Supreme Court of Canada, in its decision in favour of the *Ontario Human Rights Commission* and Ms. O'Malley, wrote that "the Court of Appeal, having decided that intentional discrimination had to be shown, did not consider the question of accommodation." The fact that Simpson-Sears, in everything it did to be accommodating to Ms. O'Malley, had tried to be fair to all its employees and not discriminate did not matter. It had a duty, according to the Supreme Court of Canada, to accommodate the religious beliefs of Ms. O'Malley even if, in seeking to accommodate those beliefs, it discriminated against those who did not share them.

This concept of "reasonable accommodation" in the workplace of one group at the expense of another was extended by the Supreme Court of Canada to the educational sector in 2006. The Supreme Court, in *Multani v. Commission scolaire Marguerite-Bourgeoys*, ruled that children could bring concealed weapons to school—in this case a dagger, the kirpan—if it was a requirement of their religion. They could do this even if it placed both armed and unarmed children at some risk during normal schoolyard confrontations and gave an advantage to the children carrying concealed weapons.

Beryl Wajsman of the Institute for Public Affairs of Montreal said that the Kirpan decision "[raised] religious sacrament to the level of secular right." Actually, it raised it above, mirroring its precedence in the Charter of Rights.

The deliberate discrimination—for all intents and purposes, the meaning of *reasonable accommodation* in Canadian law in favour of those for whom revealed truths trump the empirical kind—is now understood to apply everywhere in Canadian society from "labour relations, public and private-sector suppliers of goods and services, lawmakers, and regulatory authorities."⁶²

⁶² Report to the Québec Minister of Education on *Integration and Reasonable Accommodation in the Schools* (2007).

AFTERWORD

Ruthless Successors in the Land

The world, from the point of view of Islam, is divided into the "House of Islam" and the "House of War", and this latter designation should indicate how many Muslims believe their differences with those who do not share their faith will be ultimately resolved.

While there are undoubtedly some "moderate" Muslims who have decided to overlook the irrescindable militancy of their religion, Islam is undeniably a religion of conquest. The only future devout Muslims can envisage—as Muslims—is one in which 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, *End of Faith*, W. W. Norton, 2004, p. 110

In conflict situations... [there is] a powerful resistance to killing one's own kind, a resistance that exists in every healthy member of every species.

Konrad Lorenz, in his definitive book, *On Aggression*, notes that it is rare for animals of the same species to fight to the death. In their territorial and mating battles, animals with horns will butt their heads together in a relatively harmless fashion, but against any other species they will go to the side and attempt to gut and gore.

Similarly, piranha will fight one another with raps of their tails but they will turn their teeth on anything and everything else, and rattlesnakes will wrestle each other but they have no hesitation to turn their fangs on anything else. Lorenz suggests that this 'non-specicidal' tendency is imprinted into the genetic code in order to safeguard the survival of the species.

From *A Resistance to Killing* by Lieutenant Colonel Dave Grossman

Only lunatics, sociopaths/psychopaths, those who have been conditioned to kill as a reflexive reaction (soldiers) and finally those

who believe they are doing God's work will kill another human being in cold blood. 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. This has led the military to find ways to overcome this resistance in a normal person to killing another human being, even in theaters of war.

The modern military has largely overcome this reluctance to kill 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. The Koran has 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 people's strong genetic predisposition against killing one of their own kind by concentrating on a thorough indoctrination in the Koran. As mentioned in a previous chapter, it starts as soon as a child can, with the assistance of an adult, usually its mother, to mouth the words. This home-schooling in what philosopher Robert Redeker, writing in *Le Figaro*, described "as a book of incredible violence", is usually followed by a more formal and structured indoctrination at a madrassa (Islamic school). But it does not stop there.

What the child has been taught at home, and at school, is reinforced every day of their lives through mandatory daily prayers where they are compelled to repeat some of the most sadistic scriptures known to man (see Chapter "Lessons in Cruelty," *Children and the Koran*, Boreal Books). The type of stuff that a contemporary of Muhammad, after hearing him recite verses about how Allah annihilated the people of 'Ad and Thamud (present-day Petra, see Chapter "Salih and the

Destruction of Thamud," *Getting to Know Allah*, Boreal Books) made him turn pale.

74:18 He reflected and reckoned.

74:19 May he perish how he reckoned!

74:20 Again, may he perish how he reckoned!

74:21 Then he considered;

74:22 Then he frowned and turned pale.

74:23 Then he turned back and waxed proud,

74:24 Saying: "This is indeed nothing but sorcery recounted;

74:25 "This is only the discourse of mortals."

74:26 I will roast him in Saqar (one of the names of Hell)

Then there is a male believer's God-given right, Revelation 8:68, when they reach the age of 15, in keeping with Muhammad's example, to join the fraternity of holy warriors⁶³ and to participate in the organized slaughter of unbelievers and abscond with their property⁶⁴ which includes their wives and daughters.

⁶³ **Narrated Ibn Umar:**

That the Prophet inspected him on the day of Uhud while he was fourteen years old, and the Prophet did not allow him to take part in the battle. He was inspected again by the Prophet on the day of Al-Khandaq (i.e. battle of the Trench) while he was fifteen years old, and the Prophet allowed him to take part in the battle.

Bukhari 59.423

⁶⁴ **Narrated Abdur-Rahman bin Auf:**

While I was standing in the row on the day (of the battle) of Badr, I looked to my right and my left and saw two young Ansari boys, and I wished I had been stronger than they. One of them called my attention saying, "O Uncle! Do you know Abu Jahl?"

I said, "Yes, What do you want from him, O my nephew?"

He said, "I have been informed that he abuses Allah's Apostle. By Him in Whose Hands my life is, if I should see him, then my body will not leave his body till either of us meet his fate."

I was astonished at that talk. Then the other boy called my attention saying the same as the other had said.

After a while I saw Abu Jahl walking amongst the people. I said (to the boys), "Look! This is the man you asked me about." So, both of them attacked him with their swords and struck him to death and returned to Allah's Apostle to inform him of that.

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.

Revelation 8:68 in action:

80 Yazidi men from the village of Kawju were shot dead by Islamic State holy warriors and their wives and daughters taken, it is speculated, to the city of Tal Afar, a gathering area for foreign fighters.

BBC Aug 16, 2014

[Islamic State] terrorists explained in a new publication their justification for taking women and using them as sex slaves, saying simply that it's a practice that's as old as Sharia law — and allowed by Islamic beliefs.

Washington Times Oct 13, 2014

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 in a warming world, with dwindling populations fighting for survival, to exterminate the competition and thereby ensure that only believers are left alive when

Allah's Apostle asked, "Which of you has killed him?"

Each of them said, "I Have killed him."

Allah's Apostle asked, "Have you cleaned your swords?"

They said, "No."

He then looked at their swords and said, "No doubt, you both have killed him and the spoils of the deceased will be given to Muadh bin Amr bin Al-Jamuh."

Bukhari 53.369

Allah brings about the an end to His Creation and rewards those who cleansed it of unbelievers, saving Him the trouble.

If global warming leads to a type of Mad Max world where it is a fight for survival under a pitiless sun, it is a battle that the believers should win decisively having been conditioned to be ruthless with Allah's despised unbelievers.

9:123 O you who believe, fight those of the unbelievers who are near to you and let them see how harsh you can be. Know that Allah is with the righteous.

The Morning After

(Excerpt from *Fade to Black – Triumph of the Irrational*, Boreal Books)

110:1 When Allah's Support and victory come,

110:2 And you see people entering Allah's religion in throngs;

110:3 Then, magnify the Praise of your Lord and seek His Forgiveness. He is indeed All-Forgiving.

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.

Should extraterrestrials visit this world after Islam emerges triumphant from the battle between progress and backwardness, 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 landscape where the exercise of freewill means death, they will witness a form of collective conditioning where everyone, like mindless 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 in praise of a fabled narcissistic deity that cannot be praised enough.

In looking for intelligent life with which to communicate, they will be accosted by intimidating bearded men only interested in converting them and warning them against making contact with the odd furtive figure scurrying about engulfed by a black tent-like garment.

They may notice that the victors have taken a bulldozer to many of the wonders of the ancient, medieval, and modern world, sparing only structures that could be repurposed as mosques; but not before any statues, frescoes, paintings, etc., contained within have been completely destroyed, as have all statues and works of art everywhere that displayed even abstract representations of humans and animals.

They may watch in horror and bewilderment as a sobbing young female, buried up to her shoulders, strains to avoid rocks aimed at her head thrown by more unshaven thugs in flowing robes, and turbans, intent on killing her as part of some barbaric retribution ritual in front of cheering onlookers shouting how great is their god.

Perhaps not far from that beautiful tear-filled face being torn apart by jagged rocks, our visitors may spy a teenaged girl tied to a post being mercilessly whipped. Should they enquired as to why one female is been stoned and the other whipped, it will be explained to them that, while both committed illegal intercourse, the female sentenced to die by having her skull cracked by a well-aimed stone was a married woman who cheated on her husband; the girl sentenced to fifty stripes of the whip is a sex-slave who had intercourse with someone other than her owner, without her owner's permission.

They may stumble upon a large group of mostly men crowding together on a plaza, some distance from the entrance to a tall building, all looking up at the sky. Suddenly, literally out of the blue, falling objects come into view. It is two people whose piercing screams end with their bodies smashing into paving stones.

Instead of being taken aback, the men start clapping while shouting how great their god is, just like when that pitiful creature was being stoned to death. One may interrupt his rejoicing to explain to our visitors that the mangled bodies are those of homosexuals. Their scriptures, he may elaborate, call for them to be thrown off a cliff. However, a tall building, their scholars have determined, will do just as well.

They may witness an Islamic-style crucifixion where an arm and a leg on opposite sides are lobbed off; a regular crucifixion, they are told, is not cruel and gruesome enough for those who abandon what they refer to as "the perfect religion."

They may come across men arguing among themselves at a bazaar, or other venues where goods are traded and sold, about the value of shackled people on display: men, boys, and old women marketed as labourers and young females as sex-slaves.

They may be appalled by the way animals whose meat is destined for the dinner table are tortured to death in public, only to be told that this how a fellow by the name of Muhammad demonstrated it should be done long ago, and they must do it the same way to stay in the good graces of the god for whom he claimed to speak.

They may wonder about the scarcity of female children, of a certain age, playing in the street and playgrounds compared to boys of the same age. They will be told that they have been married off in keeping with the example of a man they revere as the embodiment of the perfect human, who married and had sex with a nine-year-old by the name of Aisha.

What about the young beggars? And why are so many missing a hand?

Most of them, they will be told, are Muslim orphans from the wars fought to make believers out of unbelievers. What may not be revealed is that, before their god disenfranchised adopted sons, so that His self-indulgent mouthpiece could marry his daughter-in-law, orphaned boys were almost unknown.

As for the missing hands, it is because these boys were caught stealing. Under a more than a thousand year old legal tradition, that the locals will refer to as their god's law or the Sharia, they will be informed that the punishment for petty thievery, adultery... to

murder falls into four categories: a grisly death, mutilation, flogging or blood-money, with mutilation their god's prescribed punishment for stealing. By the end of their visit, our aliens from a rational place, will have come to appreciate that those who praise this almighty Allah whenever they apply his decreed form of punishment, no matter how abhorrent, are, in essence, thanking him for replacing evolving man-made laws, from what they refer to as "the time of ignorance", with a book of revealed truths.

They will also undoubtedly have an idea, from intercepted television signals, of what the people of earth were like before the enlightened world of Islam completely subjugated that of the ignorant: when progress was not a sin, when compassion was more than just a word, when women were allowed to show their face in public, when grown men marrying children was not a universal practice, when...

These visitors from a place the Koran is unaware of may even wonder how such a reversal could have come about, and why anyone but the insane would kill and die to create such a bleak future for humankind.

Wars Never-Ending

(Abbreviated from *Fade to Black – Triumph
of the Irrational*, Boreal Books)

The triumph of Islam will not mean the end of the bloodshed. Quite the opposite! War is endemic in Islam, whether it is this ongoing war to get everyone to submit to the Will of Allah or brutal civil wars over booty, leadership and dogma, like the three that engulfed the believers in quick succession following Muhammad's passing.

Narrated Said bin Al-Musaiyab:

When the first civil strife (in Islam) took place because of the murder of Uthman, it left none of the Badr warriors alive (the first real battle for control of the Peninsula).

When the second civil strife, that is the battle of Al-Harra, took place, it left none of the Hudaibiya treaty companions alive. Then the third civil strife took place and it did not subside till it had exhausted all the strength of the people.

Bukhari 59.358

The war instigated by the Sunni-dominated Islamic State is a modern manifestation of the civil wars and wars of conquest that have been

emblematic of Islam from the beginning. It was during Muhammad's tenure as caliph, during the war to convert the Arabs of the Peninsula that Allah warned the believers to be discerning after learning Muslims were killing Muslims to abscond with their possessions.

4:94 O believers, if you journey in the Way of Allah, be discerning and do not say to him who greets you: "You are not a believer", seeking the fleeting goods of the present life⁶⁵. For with Allah are abundant gains. This is how you were before and Allah has been gracious to you; so discern well. Allah is indeed fully aware of what you do!

After the triumph of Islam, Muslims will again become the target of other Muslims, with dead unbelievers no longer a reliable source of wealth, women and slaves as penance⁶⁶ or for whatever. Expect the following groups, whom Allah accuses of capital crimes, to become the target and the excuse for exceedingly bloody, booty-fueled conflicts that will persist until Judgement Day, when Allah is expected to bring an end to the mess He created.

Hypocrites

Hypocrites is the most common accusation that Allah, in His Koran,

⁶⁵ Moududi:

Whenever a Muslim was in danger of being harmed inadvertently by other Muslims during the fighting, he resorted to either the Islamic greeting (as-salam alaykum, 'peace be on you') or the Islamic creed 'There is no god save Allah' (ili-Il) in order to indicate that he was their brother-in-faith. The Muslims, however, often suspected this to be merely a ruse of the enemy and therefore sometimes disregarded the utterance of the Islamic greeting or the Islamic creed, and killed such people and seized their belongings as booty.

⁶⁶ 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...

The freeing of a slave is also the penance if you ignore your wife's sexual needs, claiming she reminds you of your mother, and then wish to get back together to indulge in more than social intercourse.

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.

A slave could also be freed as penance for a broken oath.

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...

levels at Muslims He suspects of being disloyal or of being Muslims in appearance only.

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.

Killing alleged hypocrites has always been Allah's way, and "you will never find any alteration of Allah's Way."

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.

Apostates

Apostates are hypocrites on whose hearts Allah has placed a seal, Revelation 63:3, meaning they will never believe again.

63:1 When the hypocrites come to you, they say: "We bear witness that you are indeed Allah's Messenger." Allah knows that you are indeed His Messenger and Allah bears witness that the hypocrites are liars.

63:2 They take their oaths as a shield and so they bar other people from the Path of Allah. Evil is what they used to do.

63:3 That is because they believed, then disbelieved; and so a seal was set upon their hearts. Therefore, they do not understand at all.

Muhammad confirmed that they too must be killed on the spot.

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

The True Unbelievers

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.

Reformers

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, thought 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 Rashad Khalifa's translation of Verse 2:12, reformers are evildoers!

2:12 In fact, they are evildoers, but they do not perceive.

The most dangerous time for young would-be reformers will be the days leading up to Judgement Day.

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

Conscientious Objectors

47:20 The believers say: "If only a surah is sent down", but when a sound surah is sent down and fighting is mentioned

therein, you will see those in whose heart is a sickness look at you like one who has fainted in the throes of death. Far better for them,

47:21 Would have been obedience and a fair word! So when the matter is resolved, it would have been better for them to be true to Allah.

EPILOGUE

Fatal Fantasies

My grandfather was murdered by one of his sons during an alleged hunting accident. The boys were out hunting with the old man when they got to a small lake where the group of maybe six or eight split into two, one going to the right the other to the left to make their way around the lake. When the group with grandfather reached a small clearing by the lake, they stopped ostensibly to let the old man rest. A shot rang out from the other side of the water. My father insisted that he had never agreed to the killing, which he admitted was deliberate, not naming the brother who fired the fatal shot by name. Decades later it was my old man who was murdered by someone close; a woman with whom he formed a relationship after mom died from a bad heart.

I remember a few occasions when my old man came home drunker than the proverbial skunk as we were getting ready for bed and took out a large knife from a kitchen drawer and with a hand on my mother's shoulder guided her to their bedroom telling her it was her last night on earth. It was up to my oldest brother, who was still a teenager, and the only sibling my father would listen to at times like these, to get the old man to give up the knife. On another occasion, I remember the police, in the middle of the day, coming to my mother's rescue. They knew the old man, so they did not come in with guns drawn but simply extended a hand and he gave them the knife. They asked my mother if she wanted to press charges. She didn't and never would. She had married him for better or for worst and would always stand by him knowing that, in spite of the threats, he would never harm her physically! In those days the police could not charge her husband without her consent.

When her husband threatened her, she would assure her crying children she would be alright. That was mother. The woman, who murdered my father after both had been drinking heavily and he had made his trademark threat then went to bed, took him seriously. When he fell asleep, she did to him what he threatened to do to her.

Nobel Laureate Steven Weinberg, was wrong when he said only religion could get good people to do bad things. My father was a

good person and so was probably the woman who killed him. She was found guilty of manslaughter and given a suspended sentence largely, I suspect, because my oldest sister Lea testified on her behalf and told the court what our father was like when he drank.

My father, when he was sober for most of the day, if only once a week on Sundays when booze was only available from bootleggers, was what you expected from the head of the family. On most Sundays, except in wintertime, early in the morning he would take us boys fishing along a narrow river that wound its ways through a forest of pine trees about forty miles out of town. We followed him only for so long before he disappeared into the underbrush, to reappear maybe six hours later with a basket filled with rainbow trout. We all returned to where we left the car and drove home for a feast of freshly caught fish that had been kept alive by my father placing the basket in the fast-flowing cold water of the Skunk River while he fished and then in a cooler for the drive home. Sunday supper was my father's thing. If it wasn't fish it was a large turkey, ham or roast... that he cooked then presided over a lovely family dinner.

When I started writing about the Koran, Lucette half-jokingly said that I wanted to continue the tradition of at least one male member of my family getting murdered every generation. That was not the fantasy that could easily have become reality in the days and months after she died, but for the lack of a gun. Lucette wished to die among her things in the almost century-old cottage-like house that was our home for more than thirty years.



For that to happen, I needed my stolen pension to pay the interest on a line of credit that had been at its limit for some time; if not, we would have to sell the house which would make her wish to die surrounded by the familiar in a place she loved, impossible. Perhaps I could shame a government that was willing to shell out in excess of forty million dollars to four individuals for the alleged abuse of their Charter Rights as a result of the actions of foreigners, to part with pennies on the dollar for domestic abuse of one's Charter Rights. Abdullah Almalki, Ahmad Abou-Elmatti and Muayyed Nureddin—who, through their own carelessness in visiting Syria during Middle East hostilities, and honest mistakes made by government officials engaged in counter Islamic terrorism in uncertain times, found themselves at the mercy of coreligionists, shared a \$31-million tax-free windfall. Khadr would get \$10.5 million for the alleged violation of his Charter Rights while in American custody at Guantanamo.

I wrote to the Honourable Chrystia Freeland, Minister of Global Affairs (the renamed Foreign Affairs).

July 10, 2017

Dear Ms. Freeland,

At a news conference on Parliament Hill on July 7, you Minister, the Honourable Jody Wilson-Raybould Minister of Justice, and the Honourable Ralph Goodale Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, to quote the *Ottawa Citizen* “drove home the point that the settlement dealt exclusively with the fact Khadr's Charter Rights were violated by the previous Conservative government.”

That is awfully decent of all of you. In the hope that this is not only for show I ask you to do right by me and my wife as you say your government has done by Mr. Khadr, Abdullah Almalki, Ahmad Abou-Elmatti and Muayyed Nureddin.

For denying me my Charter Rights, in this instance due process, I ask only for what was taken away from me then, nothing more, nothing less. A pittance considering; but that is alright. After all, it was not the taxpayers' fault.

Sincerely Yours,

Bernard Payeur

The Decision

(Abbreviated from *Shooting the Messenger -
Till Death Do Us Part*, Boreal Books)

The end was near. I had been served with a notice that shortly, at management's discretion no less; I would be required to serve a ten-day suspension. After serving this suspension, as required by law, I would be asked one last time to deliver the impossible report. If I could not deliver that report, I would be considered to have refused a legitimate request of management three times. Then, and only then, could I be lawfully dismissed for insubordination.

Foreign Affairs was in such in a hurry to fire me once Deputy Minister Marcel Massé, with the Right Honourable Joe Clark onside, gave the go-ahead, that my actual right to due process was ignored. I was dismissed before I had served a suspension *as required by law* and, *as required by law*, having served this suspension, asked one last time to deliver the impossible report. If I failed to do so, then and only then could I be dismissed for alleged insubordination.

To get around my right to *due process* Foreign Affairs simply deemed that I had served the ten-day suspension, and *deemed* that after serving the *deemed* suspension I was *deemed* to have been asked to end the alleged insubordination and *deemed* to have refused. What does Thomas W. Brown think of all this *deeming* that actions that did not occur have occurred?

I have no reason to believe that more progressive disciplinary measures meted out prior to March 22, 1985 would have *any effect whatsoever on the grievor*. It would only have made a more classical approach to progressive discipline.

Decision of Thomas W. Brown in Bernard Payeur v. TREASURY BOARD (Foreign Affairs), p. 114.

The classical approach is synonymous with the right to due process...

Khadr, who confessed to killing, as a teenager, an army medic while fighting with his father for the Taliban got 10 million dollars because a government lawyer sent to interview him in Guantanamo allegedly breached his constitutional rights by questioning him as if he was an adult. A government lawyer intimidated a judge into casually

dismissing my constitutional right to due process and I can't even get an acknowledgement from a member of the trio that made Khadr a multi-millionaire. Chrystia Freeland was our last hope. Without the return of my stolen pension to pay the bills, our house was sold to a developer who demolished it to make room for an infill.



In this fatal fantasy, I show up at the large front desk that welcomes visitors to Global Affairs HQ and inform them that I have a book that I would like to personally give to the Minister. When told to leave the book with them, I take out a gun and fire a shot into the air as I make my way to the elevator that will take me to the floor where the Minister can be found, only to be met by a hail of bullets. I fall to ground still clutching my now blood-stained copy of *Shooting the Messenger – Till Death Do Us Part*, a murder no longer a metaphor.

That fantasy is no longer likely because, unlike my Lucette, I have lost the courage to say “today is the day that I die” and go through with it. I now pin my hopes on getting noticed by someone I offended because of something I wrote about Allah and His sidekick, spotting me enjoying a glass of wine at my favourite outdoor patio on Elgin Street—or any other venue for that matter, doing whatever—and without warning slicing my throat, if not completely taking my head off.



Of course, if I wanted to get notice without waiting for Islam's unkindest cut, I would trigger a Pavlovian-like collective reaction in the ummah (the community of believers) by publicly burning the book in which they have been indoctrinated. The problem is, I don't believe in burning books no matter the content. I prefer an honest objective discussion like the type I have been promoting with my books and postings. If I had the inclination, and the courage to burn the Book, I would do it in remembrance of a woman who was falsely accused of doing so and was set upon by a rabid mob of the easily offended whose picture of her pleading for mercy remains imprinted on my brain.



[Wiki Commons](#)

Woman falsely accused of burning Koran is killed by mob.

The 27-year-old religious scholar Farkhunda was beaten, pushed from a roof, run over by a car and set alight before her body was thrown in the Kabul River.

Globe and Mail, March 23, 2015

That children raised on a steady diet of the Koran would, when grown up, do this to another human being, for whatever reason, should give you pause. The reason for my last, and what I consider my most important recommendation; that you read *Children and the Koran - The End of Empathy*, Boreal Books, to fully grasp the implication of this wretched scene.