

## Re: OT – I may be in the minority

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- *From:* "Barbara Carlson" <[bbcarlson@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:bbcarlson@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx)>
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All of this is interesting and true, and just strengthens my own believe that most religions in their extreme are simply a device for maintaining power over the people. All of those things you cite involve political controls more than religious—religion is just the means to justify the ends.

Barb C.

"Eliyahu" <[lrooff@xxxxxxxxxx](mailto:lrooff@xxxxxxxxxx)> wrote in message  
[news:1146970699.686335.156040@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:1146970699.686335.156040@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

Barbara Carlson wrote:

Anyone who believes the Muslin religion is based on hatred is either ignorant or sadly misinformed! Muhammad was a very remarkable man. He won victories and freedom for his people. The Koran, which Muslims believe is God's word delivered through Muhammad (who was illiterate) is a very beautiful book. I have read an English translation of it. I have Muslin friends.

Many apologists will defend Islam against the charge of intolerance by pointing to the "tolerance" exhibited by the Muslims during the Middle Ages. When Islamic civilisation was at its height, so the myth is spun, Islam was wonderfully tolerant and open–minded towards other religions. While it is true that during this period Islam more often than not refrained from massacring dissenters and rivals (which is often more than can be said for the European Catholicism of the day), to say that Muslims were either tolerant or open–minded is an untidy falsehood. During this era, Jews and Christians living in Muslim lands were reduced to the position of dhimmis. Dhimmitude entailed allowing non–Muslims to remain non–Muslim, so long as certain stringent rules were adhered to, rules which were designed to humiliate the dhimmis and to "demonstrate" the superiority of Islam over the religions of the conquered peoples. Dhimmis were not allowed to engage in any outward show of their religion, such as ringing church bells, praying or reading their Scriptures in public, or disputing about religious

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matters with a Muslim. They were also not allowed to build any religious buildings such as churches or synagogues, nor were they allowed to repair those already existing which wore down with age. They were most often reduced to a position of economic privation and near-slavery. Dhimmi had to wear distinctive clothing that marked them as clearly non-Muslim. Further, the distinctive clothing was often meant to humiliate the wearers. At various times, Jews and Christians would be compelled to wear badges in the shapes of apes and pigs, drawn from the Quranic description of unbelievers as these animals (Surat 2:65, 5:60, 7:166 in your "beautiful book").

Coupled with this position of dhimmitude was the requirement for non-Muslims to pay the jizyah, the religion tax. This was a tax levied specifically upon non-Muslims, usually Christians and Jews, which was the only life-preserving alternative to outright conversion to Islam. The jizyah was designed to "encourage" subject populations to convert to Islam, since conversion meant being relieved of a heavy financial burden. Further, the jizyah, as well as other financial burdens upon dhimmi populations (such as the kharaj, or land tax) were traditionally supported by Muslim theologians through appeal to various passages of the Qur'an, such as Surah 9:29, one of the most obvious passages in the Qur'an commanding Muslims to make war against non-Muslims and to force them into submission.

It similarly promotes anti-Semitism. "The Day of Judgment will not come about until Muslims fight the Jews and kill them. Then, the Jews will hide behind rocks and trees, and the rocks and trees will cry out: 'O Muslim, there is a Jew hiding behind me, come and kill him.'" Sahih al-Bukhari, Vol. 4, Bk. 52, no. 177. Does this sound like a religion of peace? The fact is, although your Muslim friends will try to avoid explaining it, the "peace" they promote is a peace they believe will only come about when the entire world has converted to Islam, accepted their status as dhimmas, or been killed. It's a mistake to try and interpret or understand Islam in western terms without understanding what they mean. For instance, we read that an Islamic nation or faction has proposed a truce, and think of it in our own terms as an intentional step toward peace. In Islamic Law, a truce ("hudna") means a peace treaty with those hostile to Islam, involving a cessation of fighting for a specified period, whether for payment or something else. Interests that justify making a truce are such things as Muslim weakness because of lack of numbers or materiel, or the hope of an enemy becoming Muslim. So we see that in Islam, a "truce" does not mean a state of peace as those in the West would understand it. Rather it means a cessation of hostilities that might lead to a longer lasting peace if it so suits both parties. In an Islamic truce both sides will be free to regroup and rearm for the next battle. When the truce expires the sides will be free to go back to killing each other.

Eliyahu

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