

## 5. Islamic Obligations: *Jihad, Jizya, and Dhimmi*

“[T]he jihad, reflecting the normal war relations existing between Muslims and non-Muslims, was the state’s instrument for transforming the dar al-harb into the dar al-Islam. It was the product of a warlike people who had embarked on a large-scale movement of expansion. Islam could not abolish the warlike character of the Arabs who were constantly at war with each other; it indeed reaffirmed the war basis of intergroup relationship by institutionalizing war as part of the Muslim legal system and made use of it by transforming war into a holy war designed to be ceaselessly declared against those who failed to become Muslims. The short intervals which are not war — and these, in theory, should not exceed ten years — are periods of peace.”<sup>1</sup>

There are often historical reasons why different peoples exhibit various traits. When war is their normative environment, people learn military prowess or they do not survive. When the normative environment changes, people tend to change as well. But, contrary to common Western beliefs, war is not an aberration, but has been the normative human environment throughout history, not peace.

In ancient times, almost all the world was a world of war. In Egypt, for example, “From the beginnings of the old Kingdom to the climax of the Ptolemaic period, the Egyptian people preserved and maintained themselves. Possessed in turn by Persians, Greeks [Macedonians], Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Turks [Ottomans], French, and English, they remained unchanged.”<sup>2</sup> All the surviving peoples in the Middle East experienced roughly the same mix of attackers, more or less. If we were to speak of the land of the Children of Israel, we would need to add some more conquerors to the list: the Hittites, Assyrians, Babylonians, Sassanids, the Caliphate, Seljuks, Crusaders, and Saladin.

War, not peace, was normative. There was no commonly recognized Power or authority which forbid it. There were no universally accepted norms which constrained it.

“Islam, It will be recalled, abolished all kinds of warfare except the Jihad. Only a war which has an ultimate religious purpose, that is, to enforce God’s law, or to check transgression against it, is a just war. No other form of fighting is permitted within or without the Muslim brotherhood.”<sup>3</sup> According to Muslim jurists, notably Ibn Khaldun, this allows for the jihad and wars against rebels and dissenters. In this way, even the most violent of passions and actions were constrained and restrained by Islam, a particular understanding of submission to God. According to faith, Islam divides the world by definition into the world of Islam, i.e. submission to God, and the world of war.

In human history, there has never been a shortage of holy or unholy wars; nor a shortage of justifications for them. Sometimes political ideologies justify wars in keeping with a global vision

or prescription for a particular area. Such wars differ little from religious wars. They are not solely geo-political.

Jihad also is sometimes about conquering territory and the people and resources they contain, but it is primarily for the furtherance of a global vision. “The Jihad, in other words, is a sanction against polytheism and must be suffered by all non-Muslims who reject Islam, or, in the case of the *dhimmi* (Scripturaries), refused to pay the poll tax.”<sup>4</sup> Because Mohammed had a certain respect for those religious groups, *dhimmi*, that already had a holy book from God, he allowed for the continuance of their religions even though they lived within the world of Islam.

”On his return to Medina from Tebuk the prophet imposed a tax on the *dhimmi* in Medina, Mecca, Khaibar, Yemen, and Nejran, one dinar or thereabouts on the men, and nothing on the women and children.”<sup>5</sup> Since that time, within territory where Islamic power is sufficient, “The Scripturaries can choose one of three propositions: Islam, the poll tax, or the Jihad. If they accept Islam, they are entitled under the law to full citizenship as other believers; if they prefer to remain Scripturaries at the sacrifice of paying the poll tax, they suffer certain disabilities which reduce them to second-class citizens; if they fight they are to be treated in war on the same footing as polytheists.”<sup>6</sup>

The Children of Israel, for example, are not required to accept Islam because God already gave them a Book and made a covenant with them. They are not required to engage in jihad, because that is not in the Book God gave them, though He did require them to fight against the tribes of Canaan in His plan to give them the Holy Land. And if they live within territory considered to be part of the world of Islam, they are not subject to jihad if they pay the *jizya*, i.e. the poll tax. The payment certifies that.

Throughout Islamic history, the status of *dhimmi* and the payment of *jizya* have been basic elements of almost all treaties. The two are almost universally seen as demeaning and oppressive by both non-Muslims and Muslims alike. They often were that, but not always.

As is often the case in religious and political matters, there are variations and exceptions across time and place, but it is the most demeaning and oppressive conditions that are embedded in memory. There are substantial reasons for that, but the variations are also part of both text and tradition. The conditions reflected the attitude of the ruler.

Within Islamic territory, *dhimmi* had certain rights as protected people. “Their contractual rights included security of life and property, security of defence and freedom of religious cult in return for loyalty to the Islamic state and the payment of taxes. These rights were not acquired by an individual as such, but only by virtue of his membership in a protected community and they could

be enjoyed by him only as long as he was under the jurisdiction of that community. The *jizya* paid by the *dhimmi*... was to be paid in humiliating conditions.”<sup>7</sup>

The inferiority of *dhimmi* was to be publicly evident. “Thus, according to an early text, the caliph ‘Umar explained his refusal to employ Christians in positions of power in these words: ‘I will not honor them when God has degraded them; I will not glorify them when God has humiliated them; I will not bring them near when God has set them far.’”<sup>8</sup>

The negative aspects are easy to see. “Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah’s Messenger said, ‘Do not salute the Jews and Christians before they salute you, and when you meet one of them on the road force him to go through the narrowest part of it.’”<sup>9</sup>

Ahmed ibn Mohammed Al-Mekkari praised a certain building project of his day, “the action being rendered still more meritorious by the circumstance of Christian slaves from Castille and other infidel countries working in chains at the building instead of the Moslems, thus exalting the true religion and trampling down polytheism.”<sup>10</sup> *Dhimmi* often had no security of life or property. These are facts which should not be ignored, but neither should they be emphasized unto paralysis. There are other facts as well.

It is generally understood in Islam that some kind of peace treaty can be established with *dhimmi*, but we have seen that there is also precedent for establishing some kind of peace treaty between Muslims and others as well. Surah 9:1 speaks of “A repudiation from God and His Messenger to those idolaters with whom you made a treaty”.<sup>11</sup> The repudiation of the treaty can only take place if it is first permissible to make a treaty with idolaters.

“Treaty renders *dhimmah*, referring generally to ‘that which sets up an obligation’ (R). And in this sense *ahl al-dhimmah* can be rendered ‘treaty peoples’ (Q) or ‘those to whom one has an obligation.’”<sup>12</sup> Treaties establish reciprocal, though not necessarily identical or equal, obligations.

It is well-known that Islam establishes different realms in the world, primarily the *dar al-Islam* (the world of submission) and the *dar al-Harb* (the world of war). Not so well-known is the fact that “there were also the ‘Abode of Treaty’ or the ‘Abode of Safety’ (*dal al-sulh* or *dar al-amn*), referring to lands with whom a treaty or pact existed, and other designations to describe the political status of a territory.”<sup>13</sup>

“There was no litmus test of faith which the Muslims applied to determine true belief on the part of the people who came under their political control, other than the self-declarations of those people themselves to be Jews, Christians, or Zoroastrians, and their willingness to pay the *jizya*.”<sup>14</sup> That was a matter for each faith community to determine for itself.

As expressed in the *Constitution of Medinah*, a binding covenant and treaty, “To the Jews their religion (*din*) and to the Muslims their religion....

“Between them [Muslims and Jews] there is help (*nasr*) against whoever wars against the people of this document. Between them is sincere friendship (*nas’h wa-nasiha*) and honorable dealing, not treachery. A man is not guilty of treachery through [the act of] his confederate. There is help for the person wronged.”<sup>15</sup>

A mutual defense pact was part of the treaty, part of the Constitution. A commitment to honesty with one another was part of it, too. And “sincere friendship” was the context in which all relations took place.

“Though the practice of forcing the treaty holders to pay the indemnity in a humbled manner was not unknown in Islamic history, many jurists, such as al-Nawawi, pointed out that the Prophet and Caliphs never did so and said that the treaty people’s indemnity should be received with gentleness, as one would receive payment of a debt. Umar ibn al-Khattab reportedly agreed to call the indemnity ‘charity’ (*sadaqah*) when asked to change its name from *jizyah*.”<sup>16</sup> The cognate word used in Hebrew for “charity” is *tzedakah*. Its root meaning is “righteousness”.

There is a Sura that mentions unrighteous reasons why people engage in conversations which they don’t want others to hear or know about. It then addresses the general theme of reconciliation at a personal level. “There is no good in most of their secret converse, save for him who enjoins charity or kindness or reconciliation between men. And whosoever does that, seeking God’s Good Pleasure, We shall grant him a great reward.”<sup>17</sup> For those who are “seeking God’s Good Pleasure” through “charity or kindness or reconciliation between men,” there is “a great reward.”

“God’s Good Pleasure” in those who enjoin “reconciliation between men” is so great that He doesn’t mind if they only say good things, even if they contrive some of those good things. “Narrated Umm Kulthum bint ‘Uqba that she heard Allah’s Messenger saying, ‘He who makes peace between the people by inventing good information or saying good things, is not a liar.’”<sup>18</sup>

Muhammad himself made an effort to reconcile those who were fighting with each other. “Narrated Sahl bin Sa’d: Once the people of Quba’ fought with each other till they threw stones on each other. When Allah’s Messenger was informed about it, he said, ‘Let us go to bring about a reconciliation between them.’”<sup>19</sup> There are many reasons for refusing to be reconciled to an opponent, but good reasons notwithstanding, God still takes pleasure in reconciliation.

“Narrated ‘Aisha: Once Allah’s Messenger heard the loud voices of some opponents quarrelling at the door. One of them was appealing to the other to deduct his debt and asking him to be lenient but the other was saying, ‘By Allah I will not do so.’ Allah’s Messenger went out to them and said,

‘Who is the one swearing by Allah that he would not do a favour?’ That man said, ‘I am that person, O Allah’s Messenger! I will give my opponent whatever he wishes.’”<sup>20</sup>

When faced with a situation similar in nature, but which concerned a choice between jihad or peace, Muhammad himself responded the same way. He said, ”By the Name of Him in Whose Hands my soul is, if they (i.e. the Quraish infidels) ask me anything which will respect the ordinances of Allah, I will grant it to them.”<sup>21</sup>

Those submitted to the revelation of the Quran are admonished: “If two parties among the believers fall to fighting, make peace between them. If one of them aggresses against the other, fight those who aggress until they return to God’s Command. And if they return, make peace between them with justice and act equitably. Truly God loves the just.”<sup>22</sup>

Such peace is intended to be more than just the absence of conflict. It is intended to include the establishment of a relationship, an agreement that establishes reciprocal obligations. That is not limited to relationships between “believers,” no matter how the term is defined, for “All human beings form one family”.

In a holy understanding of this “one family,” contrary to the attitude and actions of Cain, we all have some degree of responsibility for the well-being of one another. That means we are to work together, as much as possible, for the same general purpose, in the needs of the hour. Context and situations change, but the principles remain.

There are incidents in the life of Muhammad that demonstrate this understanding. “...The famous ‘brothering’ (*mu’akhah*), in which the Prophet established relations of ‘brotherhood’ entailing inheritance between pairs of Makkan Emigrants and Madinan Helpers shortly after coming to Madinah, was an early Islamic version of such an alliance, but one with a spiritual and communal purpose.... indicating that kin relations are the legitimate heirs... but also that others to whom one has given one’s *oath* — that is, with whom one has made a pact of alliance — should be given *their share* of inheritance.”<sup>23</sup>

The “brothering” entailed mutual obligations and mutual benefits. It is therefore seen as possible, even advisable, for Muslims and non-Muslims to band together for “an alliance, but one with a spiritual and communal purpose”. That need does not diminish when hostility exists; such an alliance becomes all the more advisable then.

“O you who believe! Be steadfast for God, bearing witness to justice, and let not hatred for a people lead you to be unjust. Be just; that is near to reverence. And reverence God. Surely God is Aware of whatsoever you do.”<sup>24</sup> Hatred is quite a distance removed from justice and reverence.

But across history and cultures, individuals and empires find a way to justify hatred. Sometimes the reasons extend in both directions. But “whosoever transgresses against the limits set by God, those are the wrongdoers.... These are the limits set by God, which He makes clear to a people who know.”<sup>25</sup>

“For example, Ibn ‘Abbas said, ‘Do not kill women, children, old men, or those who offer peace and restrain their hand. If you do that, you will have transgressed against them’ (T).”<sup>26</sup> This is embodied in the Cairo Declaration, where Article 3 states:

“(a) In the event of the use of force and in case of armed conflict, it is not permissible to kill non-belligerents such as old men, women and children. The wounded and the sick shall have the right to medical treatment; and prisoners of war shall have the right to be fed, sheltered and clothed. It is prohibited to mutilate or dismember dead bodies. It is required to exchange prisoners of war and to arrange visits or reunions of families separated by circumstances of war.

“(b) It is prohibited to cut down trees, to destroy crops or livestock, to destroy the enemy’s civilian buildings and installations by shelling, blasting or any other means.”<sup>27</sup>

The Declaration states that the observance of these and other prohibitions is not optional. I.e. those who violate these prohibitions place themselves outside “the Islamic religion,” no matter how they justify their actions. And if they justify their actions in the name of Allah, then, “The Prophet said, ‘If anyone swears a false oath on this pulpit of mine, he will have prepared his place in Hell.’”<sup>28</sup>

The Cairo Declaration continues: “Believing that fundamental rights and freedoms according to Islam are an integral part of the Islamic religion and that no one shall have the right as a matter of principle to abolish them either in whole or in part or to violate or ignore them in as much as they are binding divine commands, which are contained in the Revealed Books of Allah and which were sent through the last of His Prophets to complete the preceding divine messages and that safeguarding those fundamental rights and freedoms is an act of worship whereas the neglect or violation thereof is an abominable sin, and that the safeguarding of those fundamental rights and freedom is an individual responsibility of every person and a collective responsibility of the entire Ummah”.<sup>29</sup>

To do these forbidden things, or to support and justify those who do, is a demonstration of unbelief. Cain dismissed that responsibility. In effect, he rebuked God by saying, “Am I the guardian of my brother?” He said that after he had killed his own brother.

As part of the worship which Allah has commanded, everyone who is part of the Islamic community, the *Ummah*, has the divinely imposed obligation to safeguard these fundamental

human rights. Presumably that would entail taking some kind of action against those who commit the “abominable sin” of violating these prohibitions, especially if they do so in the name of Islam.

### **Poll-tax /Jizya**

“*Jizyah* means the rendering of a thing owed (T) and as a legal matter amounts to an indemnity or tribute from non-Muslim communities residing within the Islamic state with whom Muslims have a treaty. Such treaty holders paid this indemnity, but were exempt from paying the alms (*zakah*) or contributing to military defense, as Muslims were obliged to do”.<sup>30</sup>

“Some non-Muslim groups lived in territory directly under the rule of Muslims, paying the indemnity, but retaining considerable autonomy as to their own affairs... In the other main type of arrangement, treaty holders governed their own territory, but, according to treaty stipulations, paid the *jizyah* and provided no help to any enemy of the Muslims; in return, the Muslim community offered protection to the treaty holders.”<sup>31</sup>

The latter type of treaty was made between distinctly governed communities. Their territories were separate, but they were joined by a commitment to defense. The payment of *jizya* confirmed the relationship. As Khalid ibn al-Walid wrote about the Christians of Damascus after he had conquered the city, “In the Name of Allah, the compassionate, the merciful... So long as they pay the poll-tax, nothing but good shall befall them.”<sup>32</sup> The receipt of *jizya* suspended the obligation of *jihad*.

The poll-tax added an extra layer of protection to those who made a treaty with the followers of Muhammad. It was an advantage that was available to the Peoples of the Book, but Muhammad made other treaties which guaranteed his recognition of the authority of an indigenous ruler. “Narrated Abu Humaid As-Sa’idi: ‘We accompanied the Prophet in the Ghazwa of Tabuk and the King of ‘Aila presented a white mule and a cloak as a gift to the Prophet. And the Prophet wrote to him a peace treaty allowing him to keep authority over his country.’”<sup>33</sup>

The promise of the Prophet in making the treaty was sufficient to guarantee that he would keep it. How much greater is the commitment to keep a treaty that is affirmed by the payment of *jizya*. It is evidence of an additional obligation before Allah.

“The poll-tax or *jizya* was required to be paid by the People of the Book to the Islamic state according to verse 9:29 of the Qur’an and certain *hadith*. This tax, unlike feudal taxation in Europe,

did not constitute an economic hardship for non-Muslims living under Muslim rule. The tax was seen as the legitimate right of the Islamic state, given that all peoples — Muslim and non-Muslim — benefited from the military protection of the state, the freedom of the roads, and trade, etc. Although the *jizya* was paid by non-Muslims, Muslims were also taxed through the *zakat*, a required religious tax not levied on other communities....”<sup>34</sup>

In all cases, paying the *jizya* brought protection. “...[I]n Egypt we can point to the example of ‘Amr ibn al-As, a companion of the Prophet and the commander of Muslim forces on the Egyptian front. He concluded a treaty with the Bishop of Alexandria on the orders of the Caliph Umar, guaranteeing the safety of the city and agreeing to return certain Christian captives taken by the Muslims after an initial skirmish. According to al-Tabari, Umar’s instructions to Amr were as follows: ‘...propose to the ruler of Alexandria that he give you the *jizya* in the understanding that those of their people who were taken prisoner and two are still in your care be offered the choice between Islam and the religion of their own people. Should any one of them opt for Islam, then he belongs to the Muslims, with the same privileges and obligations as they. And he who opts for the religion of his own people has to pay the same *jizya* as will be imposed on his co-religionists.’”<sup>35</sup>

“Other allusions to this kind of activity can be found in al-Tabari’s *Ta’rikh* where he notes, for instance, a treaty signed during the reign of the caliph Umar by Suraqah ibn Amr in 22 A.H./642 C.E. Suraqah was a commander of Muslim forces in Armenia, which was predominantly Christian. The treaty discusses the poll-tax which the Christian population is to pay to the Islamic government, unless they are willing to supply soldiers to the *jihad* effort, in which case the poll-tax would be cancelled.”<sup>36</sup>

Al-Tabari specifically said, “Military service shall be instead of their paying tribute. But those of them who are not needed for military service and who remain inactive have similar tribute obligations to the people of Azerbaijan [in general].... If they perform military service, they are exempt from [all] this.”<sup>37</sup>

So there were options that are not generally recognized. In lieu of any payment at all, the People of the Book could commit to assisting in military defense. In other cases, the payment, though required, could be made as charity rather than as tribute. Either action suspended the Islamic obligation of *jihad*, thereby eliminating the religious disposition to war.

In a real sense, the basis for the treaty relationship was “prostration;” not to the Islamic government, but to God Himself; and not the physical action in and of itself, but the submission of Self it is intended to illustrate. In submission to God, one bows the head and the body in humility. I.e., we submit our thoughts and our strength before Him. The traditional Jewish view is captured in the liturgical prayer *Aleinu*: “...We bend the knees and bow down and give thanks before the King, the King of kings, the Holy One, blessed is He...”



It does not entail the abandonment of thought or emotion, but is rather the abandonment of “autonomy,” i.e. the Self is the highest Law. I resolve that my own will and desires will not be decisive in how I choose to act. Instead, I choose to bow down, to submit myself to the authority and Law of the One above me. I will use all that I am in service to Him.

The Hebrew Scriptures say that the Lord made a covenant with the Children of Israel, and commanded them, “You shall not fear other gods, nor bow down to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to them; but the Lord, who brought you up from the land of Egypt with great power and a stretched out arm, you shall fear Him and you shall bow down to Him, and you shall offer sacrifice to Him.”<sup>38</sup> From the days of Moses on, the Children of Israel are commanded to bow down only to the God who brought them out of Egypt. The Quran speaks of that God as the only true God.

Sometimes, Jews who lived in the *dar al-Islam* as *dhimmis* in past centuries were able to act as though there were no restrictions whatsoever. In one situation, it was said, “They have their own religious chief, called the Head of the Dispersion. In the reign of MuktaDir, one Daud b. Zakkai filled the post. Benjamin of Tudela paints a highly colored picture of the power and importance of this dignitary, who was at that time Daniel b. Khasdai. With his ten assistants he was the judge of all the Jews. The Muslims called him ‘Our Lord, the son of David.’ He had authority over all Jews in the caliph’s dominions.”<sup>39</sup>

The payment of a poll tax or some kind of tribute is often mentioned in the Hebrew Holy Scriptures. Sometimes the Children of Israel paid it to the Lord or to a foreign king. Sometimes they received tribute from other kingdoms or peoples.

The first instance concerns a poll tax that God required Israel to give in His service. “And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ‘When you take the census of the people of Israel according to their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul to the Lord, when you count them; that there should be no plague among them, when you count them. This they shall give, every one who passes among those who are counted, half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary; a shekel is twenty gerahs; a half shekel shall be the offering of the Lord. Every one who passes among those who are counted, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering to the Lord.’”<sup>40</sup>

The description is unusual in that this required financial offering would be for “every man a ransom for his soul”. Usually that is the role of one sacrifice or another. Therefore it is not unseemly to note that the purpose of this poll-tax as a ransom against the plague can be compared to a poll-tax for the prevention of war. The common purpose is the preservation of life against an enemy that destroys.

Though we understand that people do not always submit to what their God commands, Muslims are forbidden to transgress the peace established by the payment of the poll-tax. “The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said, ‘Whoever kills a person having a treaty with the Muslims, shall not smell the smell of Paradise though its smell is perceived from a distance of forty years [of travel].’”<sup>41</sup>

When King Solomon planned to build a house for the Lord in Jerusalem, he wanted to use the famous cedars of Lebanon. So he made an agreement with Hiram, King of Tyre. It was a financial transaction, but it was more than that.

“And Hiram gave Solomon cedar trees and cypress trees according to all his wishes. And Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand measures of wheat for food for his household, and twenty measures of pure oil; thus gave Solomon to Hiram year by year. And the Lord gave Solomon wisdom, as He promised him; and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon; and the two made a covenant together.”<sup>42</sup>

It was a mutually advantageous transaction, but it turned into a covenant of peace. Solomon was motivated to build a House for the Lord. God wanted much more than that, for He did not need a place to stay. He wanted a place that would gather all the Children of Adam to Himself.

When Solomon, the King of Israel, dedicated the *Beit haMikdash*, the House of the Holy Place, to the Lord, he prayed: “But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain You; how much less this house that I have built? Yet have regard for the prayer of your servant, and for his supplication, O Lord my God, to listen to the cry and to the prayer, which your servant prays before you today; that Your eyes may be open toward this house night and day, toward the place of which you have said, ‘My Name shall be there; that You may listen to the prayer which your servant will make toward this place. And listen to the supplication of Your servant, and of Your people Israel, when they will pray toward this place; and may You hear in heaven Your dwelling place; and when You hear, forgive. ...

“And also concerning a stranger, who is not of Your people Israel, but comes from a far country for Your Name’s sake — for they will hear of Your great Name, and of Your strong hand, and of Your stretched out arm — when he shall come and pray toward this house; May You hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calls to you for; that all people of the earth may know Your Name, to fear you, as do your people Israel; and that they may know that this house, which I have built, is called by Your Name.”<sup>43</sup>

In the Night Journey of Muhammad, we are told that he came from a far country to the place of this House. He was not of the people of Israel, but he came because he had heard of God’s great Name — the greatness of what God had done. Muhammad came and prayed. Two thousand years

earlier, King Solomon had prayed and asked God to listen to the prayer of the stranger who will come to this place from a far country.<sup>44</sup>

As God had said through Isaiah the prophet: “Also the sons of the stranger, who join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, and to love the Name of the Lord, to be His servants, every one who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it, and all who hold fast to My covenant; even them will I bring to My Holy Mountain, and make them joyful in My House of Prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon My Altar; for My House shall be called a House of Prayer for all peoples. The Lord God who gathers those of Israel who have been thrust away says, ‘Yet will I gather others to him, beside those who are already gathered.’”<sup>45</sup>

There are layers to this prophecy and promise. God will gather to the *Beit haMikdash* those of Israel who have been thrust out. Then He will gather others, i.e. not of Israel, to this House and this place also. That is why it was worthwhile for Solomon to give a yearly amount to Hiram, King of Tyre. That is why it was wise of Hiram to employ his people and their skills to help build this House. It was part of God’s plan for humanity.

Sometimes the kings of Israel received tribute from others.<sup>46</sup> Sometimes they paid tribute to others.<sup>47</sup> Israel had to humbly accept that it is God who “changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings, and sets up kings...”<sup>48</sup> “For it is not from the east nor from the west, nor from the mountains of the desert, but God is the judge. He brings one low, and raises up another.”<sup>49</sup> Failure to pay the tribute usually resulted in war.

Josephus recorded that when Rome ruled over the land, Caesar “also laid a tribute upon the Jews wheresoever they were and enjoined every one of them to bring two drachmae every year into the Capitol, as they used to pay the same to the Temple at Jerusalem. And this was the state of the Jewish affairs at this time.”<sup>50</sup>

The Holy Scriptures in Greek record that some people tried to trap Jesus concerning this poll-tax. They asked him, “Is it permitted to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?” If he said, “Yes,” they would denounce him to the people as an anti-patriotic collaborator with the occupying Romans.

There were Zealots in the land then, as there are now, who were ready to kill anyone who cooperated with the occupying power. There is no record in any text of God asking or commissioning them to do this. They appointed themselves to this task of killing their own brethren.

If Yeshua responded, “No, it is not permitted to pay the poll-tax,” then these men would denounce him to Caesar as a rabble-rousing rebel. These pretenders were disciples of those whose only concern was their own power. The Zealots themselves proclaimed that it was forbidden to pay the poll-tax to Caesar; they were doing everything they could to drive the Romans out of the land,

without weighing the likely consequences of their actions or seeking to know the will of God. The fruit of their efforts was the destruction of the Temple, the City, and all Israel.

Matthew records that Jesus responded “Give back to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”<sup>51</sup> He left them to figure out for themselves what God wanted them to do with what they had.

Though there may be similarities, our time is not the same as the time of Moses or the time of Muhammed. Religious zealots often convince themselves, and others, that their own times are identical to an earlier exceptional time, and therefore the actions required are identical. The Hebrew Scriptures provide guidance to Jews, the Arabic Scriptures provide guidance to Muslims. But zealots, though convinced of their own righteousness, do not take the prayerful time to listen and discern, to humbly know the times and the seasons.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. *War and Peace in the Law of Islam*, Majid Khadduri, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1955), Pp. 53-54
2. Shelomo Dov Goitein, *Jews and Arabs: Their Contacts Through the Ages*, (New York: Schocken Books, 1964) P. 232
3. *War and Peace in the Law of Islam*, Khadduri, P. 72f
4. Khadduri, P. 59
5. *The Caliphs and their Non-Muslim Subjects*, A.S. Tritton, ( London : F.Cass, 1970) Page 204
6. Khadduri, Page 81
7. Ann Lambton, *State and Government in Medieval Islam*, (NY: Oxford U. Press, 1981), p.204
8. Bernard Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam*, (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1988) p.12
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10. Al-Mekkari, Ahmed ibn Mohammed, *The History of the Mohammedan Dynasties in Spain*, trans, by Pascual de Gayangos, Vol. I, (NY:Johnson Reprint Corp., 1964) P.228

11. Quran, Repentance/*al-Tawbah* 9:1

12. *The Study Quran*, in the comment on 9:8, at 29483.

13. Caner K. Dagli, "Conquest and Conversion, War and Peace in the Quran," *The Study Quran*. at 99038

14. "The Myth of a Militant Islam," David Dakake, *Islam, Fundamentalism, and the Betrayal of Tradition: Essays by Western Muslim Scholars*, edited by Joseph E. B. Lumbard, World Wisdom Inc, 2009, p.20.

"...For various opinions on this issue see Ibn Rushd, Bidayat al-mujtahid, in Peters, *Jihad* Pp.24-25"

[https://books.google.com/books?id=uTUnWkJ4kmMC&pg=PA3&source=gbs\\_toc\\_r&cad=3#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?id=uTUnWkJ4kmMC&pg=PA3&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=3#v=onepage&q&f=false)

15. The Myth of a Militant Islam," Dakake, *Islam, Fundamentalism, and the Betrayal of Tradition:*, p.21,22. Citing The Constitution of Medina, Watt, Humannad, p.22.

16. *The Study Quran* comment on 9:29 in at 29797.

17. Quran, Women/*al-Nisa* 4:114

18. Al-Bukhari, 1184. Chapter 9. He who makes peace between the people is not a liar. [3:857-O.B.] p.560

19. Al-Bukhari, 1185. Chapter 10. The saying of the ruler to his companions, "Let us go to bring about a reconciliation (between people)." [3:858-O.B.] p.560

20. Al-Bukhari, 1188. Chapter 13. Should the *Imam* suggest reconciliation? [3:868-O.B.] p.562

21. Al-Bukhari, The Book of Conditions, Chapter 4, 1192. The conditions of Jihad and peace treaties with (non-Muslim) warriors, and the writing of conditions. p.565

22. Quran, The Private Apartments/*al-Hujurat*, 49:9. As previously illustrated, there are passages where some Jews and Christians are treated as believers, e.g. 2:62, The Cow/*al-Barqarah*, ."Truly those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Sabeans, and the Christians — whosoever believes in God and the Last Day and works righteousness shall have their reward with their Lord. No fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve." Jesus said, "There is good for the peacemakers, because they will be called children of God." Matthew/Matityahu 5:9

23. *The Study Quran*, comment on 2:33 at 12908.

24. Quran, The Table Spread/*al-Maidah* 5:8

25. Quran, The Cow/*al-Barqarah* 2:229-230
26. *The Study Quran*, in the comment on 2:190-194 at 6295
27. Cairo Declaration
28. Al-Bukhari, 1215. Narrated by Jabir: Reported by Ahmad, Abu Da'ud and An-Nasa'i; Ibn Hibban graded it Sahih (sound)
29. Cairo Declaration.
30. *The Study Quran*, comment on 9:29 at 29787.
31. *The Study Quran*, comment on 9:29 at 29803.
32. "The Myth of a Militant Islam," David Dakake, *Islam, Fundamentalism, and the Betrayal of Tradition: Essays by Western Muslim Scholars*, edited by Joseph E. B. Lombard, p.18, See n.51
33. Sahih Al-Bukhari, CHAPTER 99. If the *Imam* concludes a truce with the king of a country, will peace be observed in regard to all the people of that country? #1340. [4:387-O.B.] p.635
34. "The Myth of a Militant Islam," Dakake, p.33, n51
35. "The Myth of a Militant Islam," Dakake, p. 19. citing Al-Tabari, *History*, pp.164-165.
36. "The Myth of a Militant Islam," Dakake, p. 22
37. "The Myth of a Militant Islam," Dakake, p. 37, fn.79, citing Al-Tabari, *The History of al-Tabari*, v. XIVm, p.36
38. 2Kings 17:36
39. *The Caliphs and their Non-Muslim Subjects*, A.S. Tritton, (London: F.Cass, 1970), Page 96
40. Exodus 30:11–14
41. "Abdullah ibn Amr reported," Sahih al-Bukhārī 53. The Book of Jihad, Chapter 100, 1341
42. 1Kings 5:10-12/24-26H
43. 1Kings 8:27-30,41-43
44. The Scriptures in Greek record the visit of an Ethiopian official to worship God at the Temple in Jerusalem. (Acts 8:27-39)

45. Isaiah 56:6-8

46. E.g. 2Kings 3:4-5; 2Chronicles 27:5

47. E.g. 2Kings 17:3

48. Daniel 2:21

49. Psalm 75:7-8 in Hebrew, cf. 1Samuel 2:7

50. Josephus, *The Jewish War*, 7.6.6.218

51. Matthias 22:15-22