

MUSLIM PUBLIC AFFAIRS CENTRE, NIGERIA

# Islam Versus Terrorism

*“Those who make mischief in the earth: theirs is the curse” Qur’an 13: 25*

MPAC, Nigeria



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Islam has not only forbidden terror and violence, but also abhors even the slightest imposition of any idea on another human being. Allah Almighty says: **(Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from Error: whoever rejects evil and believes in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks. And Allah hears and knows all things.)** (Al-Baqarah 2: 256)

He Almighty also says: **(So remind, you need only to remind. You cannot compel them to believe.)** (Al-Ghashiyah 88: 22)

Some people who say they are acting in the name of religion may misunderstand their religion or practice it wrongly. For this reason, it is a mistake to form any idea of that religion from the activities of these people. The best way to understand Islam is through its holy source. The holy source of Islam is the Qur'an; and the model of morality in the Qur'an is completely different from the image of it formed in the minds of some Westerners. The Qur'an is based on the concepts of morality, love, compassion, mercy, modesty, self-sacrifice, tolerance and peace, and a Muslim who truly lives according to these moral precepts is highly refined, thoughtful, tolerant, trustworthy and accommodating. To those around him he gives love, respect, peace of mind and a sense of the joy of life.

### **Islam Is a Religion of Peace & Well-Being:**

The word Islam has the same meaning as "peace" in Arabic. Islam is a religion that came down to offer humanity a life filled with the peace and well-being in which Allah's eternal mercy and compassion is manifested in the world. Allah invites all people to accept the moral teachings of the Qur'an as a model whereby mercy, compassion, tolerance and peace may be experienced in the world. In verse 208 of *Surat Al-Baqarah*, this command is given: **(You who believe! Enter absolutely into peace (Islam). Do not follow in the footsteps of Satan. He is an outright enemy to you.)**

As we see in this verse, people will experience well-being and happiness by living according to the moral teaching of the Qur'an.

### **ALLAH CONDEMNS MISCHIEF**

Allah has commanded humanity to avoid evil; He has forbidden immorality, rebellion, cruelty, aggressiveness, murder and bloodshed. Those who do not obey this command of Allah are walking in the steps of Satan, as the Qur'an says in the verse above, and have adopted an attitude that Allah has clearly declared unlawful. Of the many verses that bear on this subject, here are only two:

**(But as for those who break Allah's contract after it has been agreed and sever what Allah has commanded to be joined, and cause corruption in the earth, the**

**curse will be upon them. They will have the Evil Abode.)** (Ar-Ra'd 13: 25)

He Almighty also says: **(Seek the abode of the hereafter with what Allah has given you, without forgetting your portion of the world. And do good as Allah has been good to you. And do not seek to cause mischief on earth. Allah does not love mischief makers.)** (Al-Qasas 28: 77)

As we can see, Allah has forbidden every kind of mischievous acts in Islam including terrorism and violence, and condemned those who commit such deeds. A Muslim lends beauty to the world and improves it.

### **Islam Defends Tolerance And Freedom of Speech:**

Islam is a religion, which fosters freedom of life, ideas and thought. It has forbidden tension and conflict among people, calumny, suspicion and even having negative thoughts about another individual.

To force anyone to believe in a religion or to practice it is against the spirit and essence of Islam. Because it is necessary that faith be accepted with free will and conscience. Of course, Muslims may urge one another to keep the moral precepts taught in the Qur'an, but they never use compulsion. In any case, an individual cannot be induced to the practice of religion by either threat or offering him a worldly privilege.

### **Allah Has Commanded Tolerance And Forgiveness**

In *Surat Al-A'raf*, verse 199, the phrase **(practice forgiveness)**, expresses the concept of forgiveness and tolerance which is one of the basic principles of Islam.

When we look at Islamic history, we can see clearly how Muslims established this important precept of the moral teaching of the Qur'an in their social life. At every point in their advance, Muslims destroyed unlawful practices and created a free and tolerant environment. In the areas of religion, language and culture, they made it possible for people totally opposite to each other to live under the same roof in freedom and peace,

### **GOD CONDEMNS MISCHIEF**

God has commanded humanity to avoid evil; he has forbidden immorality, rebellion, cruelty, aggressiveness, murder and bloodshed. Those who do not obey this command of God are walking in the steps of Satan, as it says in the verse above, and have adopted an attitude that God has clearly declared unlawful. Of the many verses that bear on this subject, here are only two:

But as for those who break God's contract after it has been agreed and sever what God has commanded to be joined, and cause corruption in the earth, the curse will be upon them. They will have the Evil Abode. (Surat ar-Ra'd: 25)

Seek the abode of the hereafter with what God has given you, without forgetting your portion of the world. And do good as God has been good to you. And do not seek to cause mischief on earth. God does not love mischief makers.' (Surat al-Qasas: 77)

As we can see, God has forbidden every kind of mischievous acts in the religion of Islam including terrorism and violence, and condemned those who commit such deeds. A Muslim lends beauty to the world and improves it.

## ISLAM DEFENDS TOLERANCE AND FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Islam has not only forbidden terror and violence, but also even the slightest imposition of any idea on another human being.

There is no compulsion in religion. Right guidance has become clearly distinct from error. Anyone who rejects false gods and believes in God has grasped the Firmest Handhold, which will never give way. God is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. (Surat al-Baqara: 256)

So remind, you need only to remind. You cannot compel them to believe. (Surat al-Ghashiyah: 22)

## GOD HAS MADE THE KILLING OF INNOCENT PEOPLE UNLAWFUL

According to the Qur'an, one of the greatest sins is to kill a human being who has committed no fault:

...If someone kills another person - unless it is in retaliation for someone else or for causing corruption in the earth - it is as if he had murdered all mankind. And if anyone gives life to another person, it is as if he had given life to all mankind. Our Messengers came to them with Clear Signs but even after that many of them committed outrages in the earth. (Surat al-Ma'ida: 32)

Those who do not call on any other deity together with God and do not kill anyone God has made inviolate, except with the right to do so, and do not fornicate; anyone who does that will receive an evil punishment. (Surat al-Furqan: 68)

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thereby giving to those subject to them the advantages of knowledge, wealth and position.

Likewise, one of the most important reasons that the large and widespread Ottoman Empire was able to sustain its existence for so many centuries was that its way of life was directed by the tolerance and understanding brought by Islam. For centuries, their tolerance and compassion have characterized Muslims. In every period of time they have been the most just and merciful of people. All ethnic groups within this multi-national community freely practiced the religions they have followed for years and enjoyed every opportunity to live in their own cultures and worship in their own way.

Indeed, the particular tolerance of Muslims, when practiced as commanded in the Qur'an, can alone bring peace and well-being to the whole world. The Qur'an refers to this particular kind of tolerance:

**(The good deed and the evil deed are not alike. Repel the evil deed with one which is better, then lo! he, between whom and thee there was enmity (will become) as though he was a bosom friend.)** (Fussilat 41: 34)

### Conclusion:

All this shows that the moral teaching offered to humanity by Islam is one that will bring peace, happiness and justice to the world. The barbarism that is happening in the world today under the name of "Islamic Terrorism" is completely removed from the moral teachings of the Qur'an; it is the work of ignorant, bigoted people, criminals who have nothing to do with religion. The solution which will be applied against these individuals and groups who are trying to commit their deeds of savagery under the guise of Islam, will be the instruction of people in the true moral teaching of Islam.

In other words, the religion of Islam and the moral teaching of the Qur'an are not the supporters of terrorism and the terrorists, but the remedy by which the world can be saved from the scourge of terrorism.