

Iraqi Ayatollah: 'Abducting Women' and 'Destroying Churches' is 'Real Islam'

Raymond Ibrahim writes in [televised interview](#) with Grand Ayatollah Ahmad al-Baghdadi, the leading Shia cleric of Iraq made clear why Islam and the rest of the world can never peacefully coexist.

First he spent some time discussing “defensive jihad,” saying that all capable Muslims are obligated to fight for the “liberation” of “occupied” territory, for instance, Israel ([which forged what we now call the “Muslim world” over the centuries](#)).

According to the ayatollah, when they can—when circumstance permits it, when they are strong enough—Muslims are obligated to go on the offensive and conquer non-Muslims (a fact to be kept in mind as millions of Muslim “refugees” flood the West).

The Muslim cleric repeatedly yelled at the secularized host who kept interrupting him and protesting that Islam cannot teach such intolerance. At one point, he burst out: “I am the scholar of Islam [*al-faqih*]. You are just a journalist. Listen to me!”

Expounded Al-Baghdadi:

If they are people of the book [Jews and Christians] we demand of them the [live according to dhimmi rules](#)].

But if they still refuse—then we fight them, and we abduct their women, and destroy their churches—this is Islam!... Come on, learn what Islam is, are you even a Muslim?!

As for the polytheists [Hindus, Buddhists, etc.] we allow them to choose between Islam and war! This is not the opinion of Ahmad al-Husseini al-Baghdadi, but the opinion of all five schools of jurisprudence [four Sunni and one Shia].

Towards the end of the interview, because the clean-shaven, suit-and-tie-wearing host kept protesting that this cannot be Islam, the ayatollah burst out, pointing at him with contempt and saying, “Who are you? You’re going to tell me what to believe? This is the word of Allah!”

Indeed. Not only is it the word of Islam’s deity, but it is the fundamental, insurmountable obstacle for peace between Muslims and non-Muslims. Al-Baghdadi—and the countless other Muslim clerics, Sunni and Shia, that hold these views—are not “radicals.” For offensive jihad is no less codified than, say, Islam’s Five Pillars, which no Muslim rejects.

The *Encyclopaedia of Islam*’s entry for “jihad” states that the “spread of Islam by arms is a religious *duty* upon Muslims in general ... Jihad must continue to be done until the whole world is under the rule of Islam ... Islam must completely be made over before the doctrine of jihad can be eliminated.”

Islam has yet to “completely be made over.”

Renowned Muslim historian and philosopher Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406) explained jihad as follows:

In the Muslim community, jihad is a religious duty because of the universalism of the Muslim mission and the obligation to convert everybody to Islam either by persuasion or by force. The other religious groups did not have a universal mission, and the jihad was not a religious duty for them, save only for purposes of defense. But Islam is under obligation to gain power over other nations.

Here it's worth noting that even the most offensive jihad is seen as an "altruistic" endeavor, not unlike the "white man's burden" of the 19th century. After all, the ancient argument that "we must reform *your* ways, with *our* ways, for *your* own good" has been one of the most cited justifications for offensive jihad since the 7th century.

Indeed, soon after the death of Islam's prophet Muhammad (634), when his jihadis burst out of the Arabian peninsula, a soon-to-be conquered Persian commander asked the invading Muslims what they wanted. They reportedly replied as follows:

Allah has sent us and brought us here so that we may free those who desire from servitude to earthly rulers and make them servants of Allah, that we may change their poverty into wealth and free them from the tyranny and chaos of [false] religions and bring them to the justice of Islam. He has sent us to bring his religion to all his creatures and call them to Islam. Whoever accepts it from us will be safe, and we shall leave him alone; but whoever refuses, we shall fight until we fulfill the promise of Allah.

Fourteen hundred years later, in March 2009, Saudi legal expert Basem Alem publicly echoed this view:

As a member of the true religion [Islam], I have a greater right to invade [others] in order to impose a certain way of life [according to Sharia], which history has proven to be the best and most just of all civilizations. This is the true meaning of offensive jihad. When we wage jihad, it is not in order to convert people to Islam, but in order to liberate them from the dark slavery in which they live.

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