

INTERCEDE

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The Roots of Militant Islam

By Fred Farrokh

Militant Islam has been increasingly on the march for several decades. Their strange sounding names have become commonplace: ISIS, al-Qaeda, Boko Haram, Hamas, al-Shabaab, Ansar al-Sharia, Jihad al-Islamiyya, Hizbollah and the Taliban. By listening to and watching Western media, one is left confused and unable to explain these current events: Are these terrorists lone wolves?¹ Are they just plain crazy? Do they represent Muslims at large? Do they follow the teachings of Muhammad? Are they fighting because of economic or political injustice? Where will all of this lead? In this article, I seek to tackle some of these questions by looking into the roots of militant Islam.

Hindrances to Understanding Militant Islam. The Western media and educational establishment provide a significant obstacle to correctly understanding militant Islam. This establishment is based on secular humanism, which sees Christianity as its primary ideological enemy. In the worldview of secularism, all religions are essentially the

same—crutches for the unenlightened and “an opiate for the masses,” as Karl Marx famously claimed. The mainstream Western media realizes that militant Islam thus shares a strange alliance with a common foe—Christianity. Therefore, people in America and Europe are receiving biased and unhelpful explanations about Islam, in general, and militant Islam, in particular, based on a worldview Western secularists dearly want to be true. This same worldview has greatly influenced Western political leadership, which now is ill-equipped to face the threat of militant Islam.

Not all Muslims are Militant. Though the rest of this article will discuss the roots of militant Islam, it is important to note at the outset that Islamic militants do not represent all Muslims. Many Muslims are nominal, hardly practicing their faith. Some Muslims prefer to live in Christian countries, which tend to offer a better standard of living and more freedoms. Still other Muslims are pious and observant, but reject militancy. Sufis, for instance, are Islamic mystics who have

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Until All Have Heard

How then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? – Romans 10:14

Mark Brink

International Director
Global Initiative:
Reaching Muslim Peoples



From 1987 to 2015, *Global Initiative: Reaching Muslim Peoples* has conducted training programs (Islamic Institutes, Muslim Awareness Seminars, etc.) in 68 countries; and 269 cities (including 45 U.S. cities); training 44,265 overseas participants (pastors/laypeople/students/missionaries) and 10,290 students in the U.S. It has been through your generous partnership that *Global Initiative* was raised up at a crucial hour in our Assemblies of God World Missions program to partner with national churches worldwide to offer the hope of the Gospel to over 1.6 billion Muslims.

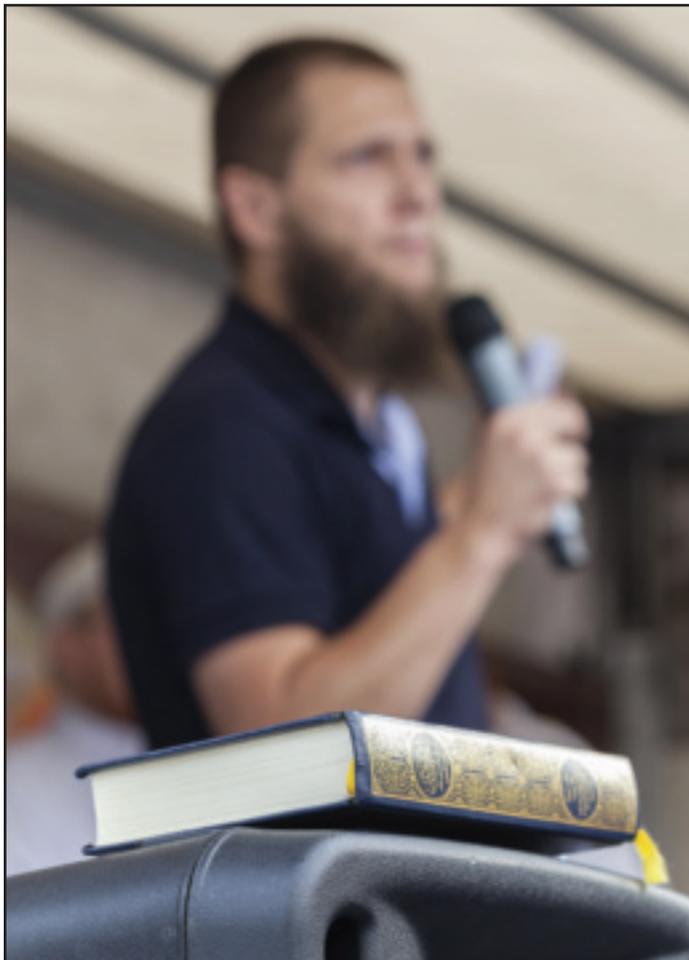
This issue of *Intercede* addresses a very critical movement the church must understand and address in our world today: militant Islam. There is much confusion in the world

and also in the church as to how to respond to this extreme ideology. Governments must grapple with how a free society should deal with Muslim immigration and the threat that Islamic militants could be among these immigrants coming to the West. As Pentecostal believers, we must consider what the kingdom perspective is on this issue and how the Holy Spirit must give us discernment and empowerment to touch the Muslim world for Christ.

As *Global Initiative* endeavors to equip the church to reach Muslim peoples and our world evaluates its response to militant Islam, I am reminded of a young Jewish girl by the name of Esther and how she became the queen of Persia. She was promoted to a very prominent place of influence at a time when God’s people were facing annihilation at the hands of a deceptive enemy. She had a decision to make. Would she remain silent or disinterested? Her uncle Mordecai reminds her of her responsibility:

“For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place and you and your father’s house will perish. And who knows whether you have not attained royalty for such a time as this?” (Esther 4:14)

Global Initiative is positioned “for such a time as this” to assist the church to understand Islam and more importantly, to equip her with the tools to share the gospel of Christ, which is the only answer for militant Islam. I encourage you to partner with us in a couple of different ways to advance the Kingdom of God to Muslim peoples. First, commit to intercession for Muslims. Join the thousands of Jumaa prayer warriors who fast and pray during the noon meal on Fridays. But even move beyond just the Friday prayer time to intercede daily for Muslims as you become aware of prayer points through various media. Our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against the forces of darkness that hold Muslim peoples in its demonic ideology. Second, reach out with love and the gospel to the Muslims in your city. Let the first message that a Muslim immigrant hears be the witness of Christ and the love of Christ through friendship. May God use us to be salt and light to the lost Muslims of our world. 





Muslim World News

Cleric sentenced to death

Nigeria

A sharia court in Kano, Nigeria has sentenced a Tijjaniyya cleric, Abdul Inyass to death for blasphemy. The court upheld the death sentence passed on Inyass by a lower sharia court.

The verdict ends nine months of secret trial. Inyass and 13 others were arrested last May in Kano during a religious function in the city for blasphemy.

Abdul Inyass was taken to Kano to face trial for blasphemy and inciting violence that led to the burning of a sharia court. State counsel Lamido Sorondinki said five witnesses, including the police, had testified before the court. An upper sharia court sentenced Inyass' accomplices, which included a woman and eight others, to death.

The Sufi preacher Inyass was accused of having issued a statement that mocked the prophet during a religious ceremony. — *The Post Oracle*

Pastor hacked to death

Uganda

Evangelical church members in eastern Uganda are mourning a pastor who was killed amid ongoing Islamic attacks against Christian converts in the region. Pastor Bongo Martin was hacked to death when he and other church members resisted an effort by Muslims to take over their land, local Christians said.

The Christians arrived when Muslims reportedly placed a boundary fence with poles and barbed wire around land of the Pentecostal Church Ministry congregation in

Nansololo village near Mazuba, in Namudumba District. Before he was killed the pastor was reportedly told by an imam that he had been warned "many times" that Muslims do not want the church to be located near a mosque. He also opposed reports that the congregation "has been taking our members to your church."

The incident came shortly after friends and family said a Christian policeman, Ismail Kuloba, was shot dead Dec. 8, in the town of Komodo. — *BosNewsLife*

Clergyman arrested as pilgrimage threat

Bangladesh

Bangladeshi police detained Rev. Gilbert Biswas for preaching the gospel and selling religious booklets during Bishwa Ijtema, the second largest Islamic pilgrimage in the world after the Hajj, which is held every year in Tongi (near Dhaka), on the banks of the Turag River.

Deployed to provide security to the event, police justified his arrest on "security grounds" because of his "suspicious behaviour". One officer said that "no one can proclaim the gospel on other religious sites."

Technically, Bangladesh's constitution guarantees citizens the right to profess, practice and propagate faith. "We are very concerned about the arrest of Rev. Gilbert Biswas," said a fellow clergyman, anonymous for security reasons. "He did not commit any crime and was arrested illegally by the police, which has not yet released him."

"Now the judge wants to read the booklet Rev. Gilbert Biswas distributed," he added. "After reading it, he will give his verdict." — *Asia News*

a more allegorical way of interpreting their sacred texts than their militant co-religionists. In summary, many Muslims are friendly, hospitable, open-minded, and desire quality relationships with their Christian friends and neighbors. All Muslims need the gospel, whether they are militants or not.

Why the Past is the Key to Understanding the Present. Understanding contemporary militant Islam—at least at a basic level—is much simpler than many may think. The key to understanding Islamic militancy, jihad and terrorism is to look back at the genesis of Islam, to the life and teachings of Muhammad. Muhammad’s life example and teachings serve both as an inspiration for the militants, as well as the justification for their actions.

Muhammad’s View of Jesus — “Errorism”. “Errorism” is not a word you will find in the dictionary. I use it here because it represents the spiritual error and false teachings of Muhammad regarding Jesus—errorism that precedes terrorism. Muhammad lived from A.D. 570 to 632. He knew Christians worshipped Jesus Christ and they believed He died on the cross for the sins of humanity. Jesus Christ is mentioned many times in the Quran, which is the holy book of Muslims.

Nevertheless, Muhammad rejected the biblical Jesus. He cleverly presented a caricature of Jesus. The quranic Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, was considered a prophet, and did miracles. Yet the quranic Jesus was not God in the flesh (Sura 112:3), he was not the Eternal Son (Suras 4:171; 9:30), and he did not die on the cross (Sura 4:157-158). Muhammad taught that in the last days Jesus will return to earth, break the sign of the cross, kill pigs, and lead Muslims in Islamic prayers (Sahih Bukhari, Volume 4, Book 55, Hadith 657). Then this Islamic Jesus will lead jihad (holy struggle/war) against infidels, get married, die, and be buried next to Muhammad in Medina, Saudi Arabia. In short, Muhammad converted the Lord Jesus Christ into a devoted, militant Muslim who serves the prophet of Islam and his militant agenda.

Muhammad rejected the Prince of Peace, so it is not surprising he became a man of war. As Christians we understand that “having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1). Sadly, Muhammad did not experience this peace with God. In fact, Muhammad set up a theological system



based on salvation by works (Sura 101:6-11). In all these things, Muhammad missed God’s plan of righteousness and sought to establish his own.

Jihad in the Cause of Allah. Muhammad was an overcomer. He was orphaned as a young boy, his parents dying by the time he was six years old. At 40, he felt the Angel Gabriel spoke to him, and he began to preach a message which he called “Islam.” Muhammad emphasized strict monotheism. Since his kinsmen were polytheists, they mocked and rejected him. But Muhammad again persevered and eked out a small but growing following of disciples who were called “Muslims.”

Due to persecution in Mecca, Muhammad and the Muslim community emigrated to Medina in A.D. 622, in a key event known as the Hijra. Medina was an oasis populated by farmers. But the Meccan Muslims who emigrated to Medina were traders who were not familiar with agriculture. In considering how the Muslims would support themselves, Muhammad and his followers decided to utilize the well-accepted Arab practice of the desert raid, or *razzia*, in which one tribe would raid the caravans of another, stealing their goods.

Militant Islam

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Within a year of the Hijra, Muslims began raiding caravans of the Meccans who rejected Muhammad. Muhammad's uncle led the first raid, which was a successful heist. Muhammad himself led three of the subsequent raids against the Meccans. Of course, blood was shed. The Meccans, realizing their way of business was in jeopardy, sent a fighting force to Medina, which the Muslims defeated in March 624 at the Battle of Badr.

The Muslims took Meccan prisoners at Badr. Muhammad's lieutenant Umar (who became the second caliph) wanted to kill them all. But Muhammad, knowing the Muslims needed money, allowed many of the POWs to be ransomed by wealthy relatives. However, two learned men who had previously ridiculed Muhammad were shown no mercy. Muhammad ordered them beheaded. One pleaded with Muhammad, "Who will look after my young sons?" Muhammad famously replied, "Hell!"²

In his decade at Medina, Muhammad transformed and sanctified the Arabian practice of the desert raid into "jihad" or "holy struggle." Muhammad's biographer W.M. Watt states: "The normal Arab practice of the *razza-ia* was taken over by the Islamic community. In being

taken over, it was transformed. It became an activity of believers against unbelievers, and wherefore took place within a religious context. The Emigrants were described as 'striving with goods and persons in the way of God.'"³

The Quran teaches Muhammad is the life example for all Muslims (33:21). Muhammad practiced what he preached, giving many teachings on jihad and terrorism. Space permits room only for a few. The prophet of Islam stated: "The example of a Mujahid [holy warrior] in Allah's 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" (Sahih Bukhari, Vol. 4, Book 52, Hadith 46). Another teaching of Muhammad declares: "A single endeavor (of fighting) in Allah's Cause in the forenoon or in the afternoon is better than the world and whatever is in it" (Sahih Bukhari, Vol. 4, Book 52, Hadith 50). These are the same statements cited by jihadists today.

Terrorism. The prospect of raids and death terrorized Muhammad's opponents. He claimed, "I have been made victorious through terror cast in the hearts of the unbelievers" (Sahih Bukhari, Vol. 4, Book 52, Hadith 220). It is no surprise, then, when disciples of Muhammad today seek to emulate Muhammad by terrorizing unbelievers. They seek to intimidate so they can ultimately defeat and control. The rules of warfare practiced by Western nations were greatly impacted by Christian ethics, hence their rules regarding mandatory uniforms, and safeguarding non-combatant civilians and POWs. Yet, militant Muslims employ an "ends justify the means" policy. If burning POWs in cages or raping civilian women terrorizes opponents and weakens the will to fight, groups like ISIS see no ethical dilemma in employing these tactics.

In the first 50 years of Islam, all significant Muslim leaders were also militants. The first caliphs: Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, Ali, and Muawiya all used the sword to spread Islam. Within a few generations, they forcefully conquered all of the Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia, and parts of Europe.

Contemporary Islamic Militancy. The goal of the militant Muslims of today is the same goal set out by Muhammad: Islamic world domination. Sura 9:29 states: "Fight those who do not believe in Allah or in the Last

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Day and who do not consider unlawful what Allah and His Messenger have made unlawful and who do not adopt the religion of truth from those who were given the Scripture—[fight] until they give the *jizyah* [religious tax] willingly while they are humbled.”

Fourteen centuries have passed since Muhammad’s time. The past half century has witnessed a strong resurgence of militant Islam, based on the Quran, and the example of Muhammad. This worldview has been supported and promoted by many Sunni and Shia scholars. Perhaps the most influential Sunni scholar has been Sayyid Qutb, an Egyptian who was hanged by his government in 1966. Qutb was a great influence on Osama bin Laden, and on bin Laden’s successor, Ayman al-Zawahiri, as well as many other contemporary jihadists.

Qutb pointed Muslims to the example of Muhammad and early Islam. He wrote: “At one time this Message [Islam] created a generation—the generation of the Companions of the Prophet—without comparison in the history of Islam, even in the entire history of man...The spring from which the Companions of the Prophet—peace be on him—drank was the Quran—only the Quran And the Hadith [authentic sayings] of the Prophet and his teachings were offspring of this fountainhead.”⁴

Qutb also stated that early Muslim caliphs practiced offensive warfare against infidels, not just defensive warfare. This is required to bring about the goal of Islamic world domination. He chastises pacifistic Muslims as ignorant (“*jahili*”) defeatists. In his famous work, *Milestones Along the Way*, in Chapter 4, “Jihad in the Cause of Allah,” Qutb calls for the overthrow of all earthly governments that deprive humanity of the right to live under the Law of God as given by Muhammad.

Though the jihadist perspective is not the only valid interpretation of Islam, it is on the rise today. Militants seek to overthrow infidel governments, and bring them into the “Dar al-Islam” (“Abode of Islam”). Even attacks by lone wolves are part of a larger plan for Islamic world domination, not a protest against perceived injustices.

Let Muslims See the Real Jesus. The silver lining in the resurgence of militant Islam is that many Muslims are becoming disillusioned with Islam. More Muslims are

open now to the gospel than ever before. A recent global survey estimates 9 million Muslims have come to faith in Jesus in this generation!⁵ Revivals are breaking out in many Muslim countries and communities. Part of this is due to the revulsion caused by militant Islam. One Christian minister among Muslim reports:

“A few weeks ago I received an email from one of my students. She’s working among Muslim women and had just gotten off the phone with one of her friends who was weeping uncontrollably. My student initially assumed someone in her family had died. However, once my student’s friend regained her composure she made a startling statement: ‘I have been a Muslim for 41 years and in all that time have never questioned Islam. But now I have decided to leave it.’ When my student asked her, ‘Why?’ she related that she had been watching ISIS videos, and, because of the brutality that they justified as being the ‘methods of the Prophet,’ she decided to leave Islam.”⁶

Muhammad and his early followers were characterized by militancy. Compare this with Jesus, who led no army. When Peter sought to defend Jesus by the sword, Jesus rebuked him. Jesus’ apostles went into the world to preach the gospel, armed only with the love of God. Let us follow the example of Jesus and his disciples by taking the gospel of peace to the end of the world. May this message touch many Muslim lives, including those of militant Muslims, who trade the covenant of Muhammad for the new covenant of our Lord Jesus Christ. The days of spiritual harvest are upon us! 

¹ nbcnews.com/news/us-news/how-isis-uses-twitter-lone-wolves-carry-out-attacks-free-n353996

² Maxine Rodinson, *Muhammad*. Translated by Anne Carter, Pantheon Books, NY, 1971, p. 167.

³ W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 108.

⁴ Sayyid Qutb, *Milestones Along the Way*, pp. 2-3. English translation: majalla.org/books/2005/qutb-milestone.pdf

⁵ Patrick Johnstone and Duane A. Miller, “Believers in Christ from a Muslim Background: A Global Census,” *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion*, vol. 11, Article 10, 2015.

⁶ commanetwork.com/how-is-isis-spreading-the-gospel



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Friday, March 4, 2016. Please pray

...for a Global Initiative team member conducting an Institute for Islamic Studies in Northern Asia during Mar. 5-11.

...for European ministry outreaches to newly-arrived Muslim refugees.

...for Arabs in Palestine who have come to the Lord from Muslim backgrounds.

Friday, March 11, 2016. Please pray

...for Christians in Iran, as tensions mount between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

...for the need in Finland for more Arabic speakers to help with outreach ministries to newly-arrived Syrians and Iraqis.

...for peace and justice to prevail in the Middle East, especially in Syria and Iraq.

Friday, March 18, 2016. Please pray

...for national churches in sub-Saharan Africa who are placing a priority on reaching Muslim unreached people groups on their continent.

...for four Muslim Turks who have recently come to Christ in a major Turkish city.

...for social media ministry efforts to connect with seeking Muslims.

Friday, March 25, 2016. Please pray

...for a class on Islam and Animism being taught in Ethiopia by a Global Initiative team member during Mar. 28 – Apr. 1.

...for wisdom for church planters in predominately Muslim areas of Indonesia.

...for Zainah (pseudonym) in Algeria, as she relates her newfound faith in Jesus to her family.

***I URGE, THEN, FIRST OF ALL THAT REQUESTS, PRAYERS, INTERCESSION AND
THANKSGIVING BE MADE FOR EVERYONE. – 1 TIMOTHY 2:1, NIV***



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Friday, April 1, 2016. Please pray

*...for Institute of Islamic Studies classes at an Asian seminary during Apr. 4-8.
...for Latin American missionaries who are serving in Muslim countries.
...for "street children's programs" in several Muslim cities of North Africa.*

Friday, April 8, 2016. Please pray

*...for Institute of Islamic Studies classes at an Asian seminary during Apr. 11-25.
...for seeking Muslims who are experiencing dreams and visions of Jesus.
...for the 1.6 million Nochi Chechens of Russia; 99% are Muslim.*

Friday, April 15, 2016. Please pray

*...for Institute of Islamic Studies classes at an Asian seminary during Apr. 18-22.
...for Bible Societies in Muslim countries who faithfully distribute the Scripture.
...for Halime (pseudonym), a former Muslim lady who connects faithfully via Facebook with Muslims in Turkey.*

Friday, April 22, 2016. Please pray

*...for Institute of Islamic Studies classes at an Asian seminary during Apr. 25-29.
...for wisdom for churches in northwest Pakistan who are seeing Muslims come to their outreach programs.
...for encouragement for a faithful church planter in the predominately Muslim area of West Bengal, India.*

Friday, April 29, 2016. Please pray

*...for the SAT-7 Turkish channel as it regularly broadcasts programs to the country of Turkey.
...for protection for Nigerian Christians as they resist terror from Boko Haram.
...for a Women's Center in the north of England as they minister primarily to Muslim women.*

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