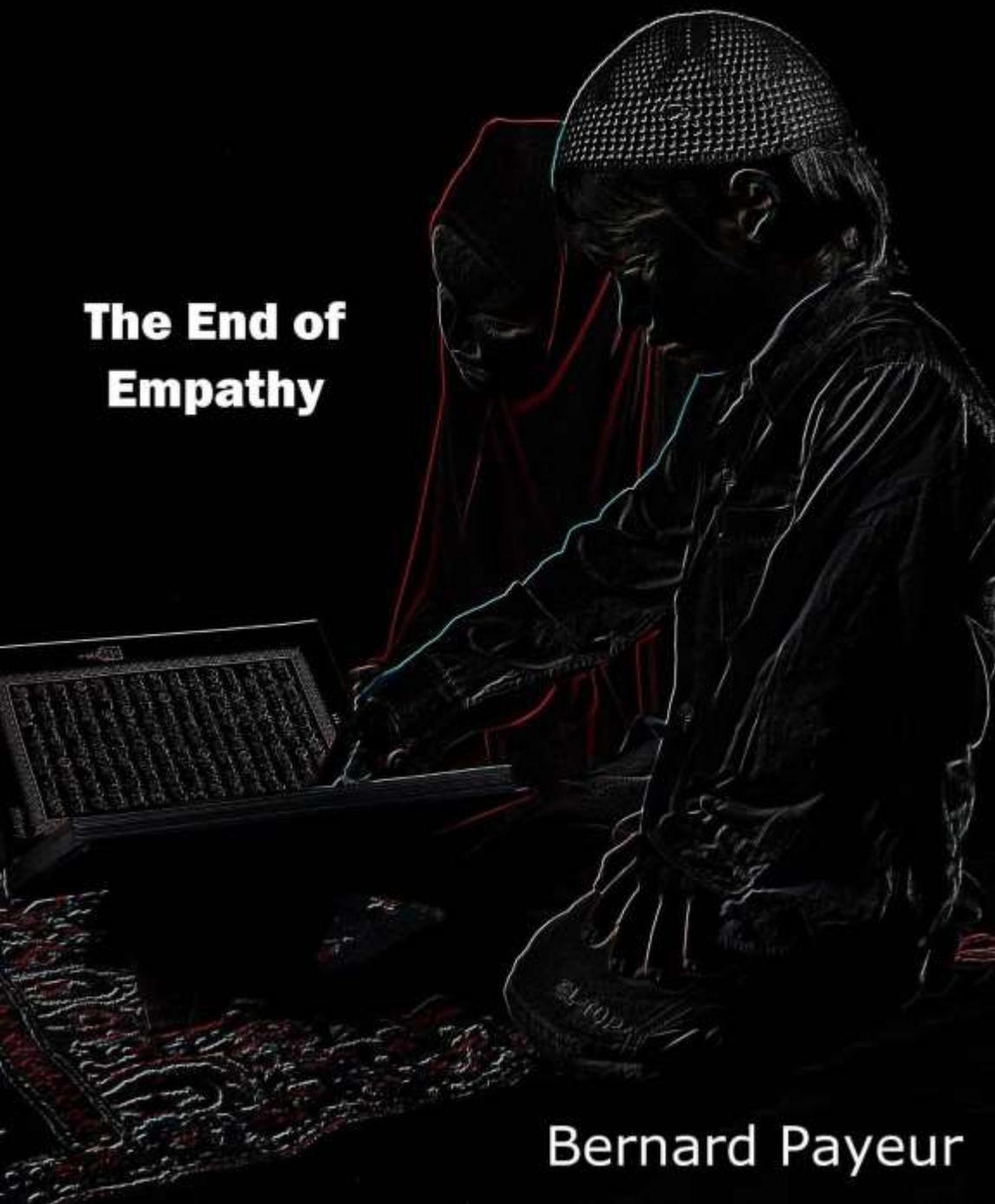


Children and the Koran

**The End of
Empathy**



Bernard Payeur

Children and the Koran

The End of Empathy

Second Edition

Bernard Payeur

Front Cover

The front cover is from an 123RF stock photo that has been embossed for artistic purposes and to obscure the identity of the two children photographed reading the Koran.

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"People are born good.
Evil is a learned behaviour."

Sohrab

To children who, through no fault of their
own, grow up to be killers.

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INTRODUCTION

When I decided to read and study the Koran with the intention of writing about it, I was determined to get a Muslim's interpretation, an interpretation that could only be viewed as being favourable to Islam. I also wanted a translation that was easy to read and understand. The translation that seemed to satisfy these requirements was one by Majid Fakhry, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at the American University of Beirut, which has the seal of approval of Al-Azhar University of Egypt, a world-renowned centre for Islamic study for more than 900 years.

Messrs Garnet Publishing Limited, with reference to your letter dated 5 July, 2000, in respect of your request that this department (Islamic Research) may review your book titled: *An Interpretation of the Qur'an, English Translation of the Meanings. A Bilingual Edition translated by Majid Fakhry.*

After having reviewed this book as requested we have the pleasure to declare that we have no objection to approve this book and put it in circulation or introduced for republication.

Islamic Research Academy, Al-Azhar University

Publishers Weekly wrote of Fakhry's notable accomplishment that it "succeeds in expressing the meanings of the original Arabic in simple readable English."

An English translation of the Koran will run to about 77,700 words or the approximate size of a standard 300-page book. A book, Allah reveals, in which you can study "whatever you choose."

68:35 Shall We consider those who submit like those who are criminals?

68:36 What is the matter with you; how do you judge?

68:37 Or do you have a Book in which you study?

68:38 Wherein there is whatever you choose.

It is a bold statement for a relatively small book where boundless repetitions use up print space that could, perhaps, be put to better use. The Koran is made up of 114 chapters or surahs. When referring to

chapters of the Koran, I use the Arabic transliteration (conversion from one alphabet to another) of chapter, which is surah. Each surah is further divided into ayats, i.e., verses. I have chosen to remain with the English nomenclature of the ayat. There are 6,346 verses in the Koran if you include the 112 unnumbered Basmalabs, the formulaic invocation “in the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful,” which appears at the beginning of every chapter of the Koran except the first and the ninth.

All quotes from the Koran in *Children and the Koran* are from Majid Fakhry’s translation, unless otherwise indicated. Text added by Fakhry within a quoted verse to provide context, is enclosed within square “[]” brackets. Other clarifications by Fakhry, including footnotes, are enclosed in round “()” brackets. On rare occasions, you will find italicized bracketed comments within a verse. These are the author’s. Any underlining of words or phrases is my emphasis, not Fakhry’s. I also use the more familiar “Koran” in my narrative, as opposed to Fakhry’s “Qur’an”.

Is it favored or favoured? Majid Fakhry rendered his excellent translation of the Koran into British English, e.g., favoured.

17:40 Has your Lord, then, favoured you with sons and taken to Himself females from among the angels? Surely, you are uttering a monstrous thing.

Not only have I not changed Fakhry’s translation to conform to American English (that was unthinkable), but I have, in my accompanying narrative, chosen to employ British English with rare forays into Canadian English (yes, there is such a thing).

Many verses such as 44:43-44 must be read together to form a complete sentence or thought; therefore, do not assume a typographical (typo) or grammatical error if a verse does not end with the expected punctuation.

44:43 The Tree of Zaqqum (the Tree of Bitterness) will certainly be

44:44 The food of the sinner.

Also, do not assume a grammatical error if quoted material across multiple paragraphs, i.e., verses, have only one set of closing quotation marks. This is an often misunderstood rule of English grammar. If the quote is more than one paragraph in length, you can get away with only opening quotation marks (“”) at the beginning of each paragraph,

10 Introduction

supplying closing quotation marks (") only at the end of the complete excerpt or quotation.

There is some original text in *Children and the Koran*, e.g., *Getting Kids To Feel Nothing*, but most of what you will find in my latest attempt to draw your attention to "what is written" are excerpts from my others books on the Koran.

FOREWORD

5:33 Indeed, the punishment of those who fight Allah and His Messenger and go around corrupting the land is to be killed, crucified, have their hands and feet cut off on opposite sides, or to be banished from the land. That is a disgrace for them in this life, and in the life to come theirs will be a terrible punishment.

In the Koran, you will find more than a sprinkling of chilling invectives from the alleged Creator of the Universe himself, what would be considered hate speech under normal circumstances. That hate speech, replete with sadistic utterances even more vicious than quoted here, is read and repeated by children every day in Western households, madrassas and mosques. It is hate speech directed at the despised unbelievers, i.e., wrongdoers, who are not deserving of a god's compassion or mercy.

17:82 And We reveal of the Qur'an that which is healing and merciful to the believers, and it yields nothing but perdition for the wrongdoers.

All this divine venom directed at one group can only lead to a deepening dearth of empathy in those who are instructed by trusted adults to read, then regurgitate that same loathing for the target of Allah's pathological hatred as part of their journey to the Khatmi-Qur'an, the ceremony to recognize and celebrate a child's first reciting of the entire Koranic text by the age of seven under the not always gentle tutelage of their mother.

Life in jail for son's murder over Koran studies

A mother who beat her seven-year-old son to death when he failed to memorise passages from the Koran has been jailed for life, for a minimum of 17 years. The judge said she had beaten him for three months leading up to his death, adding: "The cause of the beating was your unreasonable view that he wasn't learning passages quickly enough."

BBC January 7, 2013

An inevitable outcome:

Belgium: signs of radicalization in kindergarten

An internal report of a school obtained by the daily *Het Laatste Nieuws* highlights signs of Islamic "radicalization" in some children. What occurred in a school in Renaix, in East Flanders, prompted the school to express its concerns in an internal report.

The report documents observations made by teachers in 2016 about the behaviour of a number of Muslim children. These include "death threats" to "non-believing" children, mimicking slicing their throat and calling them "pigs."

The children also recited verses from the Koran during recess, refused to shake hands, and some, to attend school on Fridays for religious reasons...

Le Point, August 22, 2017 (my translation)

This deficiency of empathy was evident in Sheema Khan's account of Muslim-Canadian teens defending the murder of 186 children by armed Islamist groups who stormed their school in the Russian town of Beslan in 2004.

On Sept. 3, 2004, I had just finished speaking about the life of Mary – regarded as one of the best women in history¹ – to a group of Muslim teens. Hours before, though, news of a violent end to the Beslan hostage crisis in southern Russia had broken, in which 186 children were killed. Armed Islamist groups had stormed a local school a few days before,

¹ Mary is the only woman mentioned by name in the Koran. Allah cannot avoid saying it in His self-serving account of the birth of her famous son. The infant Jesus, only a few hours after his birth and at the request of his mother who was being accused of having a child out of wedlock, would loudly proclaim that he is a prophet sent by Allah:

19:27 Then she brought him (the child) to her people, carrying him. They said: "O Mary, you have surely committed a strange thing.

19:28 "Sister of Aaron, your father was not an evil man and your mother was not unchaste."

19:29 Whereupon she pointed to him. They said: "How will we talk to one who is still an infant in the cradle?"

19:30 He (Jesus) said: "Indeed, I am the servant of Allah, Who gave me the Book and made me a Prophet.

held teachers and students captive without food or water and wired the gym with explosives.

Rather than continue further discussions about Mary, I wanted to ask the youth about the murder of innocent civilians – especially children – in Beslan.

The males were unequivocal: the Russians got what they deserved, for their brutal war against the Chechens. It was revenge, pure and simple.

Stunned, I asked: Did Prophet Mohammed ever kill children and unarmed adults?

No, they answered.

Did he condone such acts?

No.

Did he condemn such acts?

Yes, they answered.

I concluded: So, who will you follow? Mohammed, or the opposite?

They acknowledged the former.

I thought of this exchange following the terrorist attack in Manchester last week. Much has been written about the life of the assailant, Salman Abedi, a second-generation Libyan born and raised in Britain. His sister surmised that he had acted in revenge for the killing of Muslim children by coalition forces in the Middle East ...

How the Muslim community can tackle the scourge of extremism, Sheema Khan, Special to The Globe and Mail, Tuesday, May 30, 2017

Muhammad may never have personally killed an unarmed child or adult, but he did encourage others to do so. God's last and greatest was a particularly thin-skinned doomsday warner. Some of the men, women and girls assassinated on his behalf had, in song and rhyme, questioned his claim to being an intimate of the Almighty. The first poet to be murdered on his order was al-Nadr. When God's spokesman spotted him among the prisoners captured at the battle of Badr (recommended reading: *Jihad in the Koran*, Boreal Books, *Battle of Badr*), he had him beheaded on the spot.

Next to die was the poetess Asma bint Marwan. She was stabbed to death while sleeping with an infant suckling at her breast. After every murder, the assassin would return to the Mosque to inform Muhammad and be praised for what had been done at his insistence, as did the murderer of Asma bint Marwan who was asked by God's spokesman, "Have you slain the daughter of Marwan?"

This was the word that was first heard from the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him.

When Umayr replied that the job had been carried out with success, Muhammad said, "You have helped God and His apostle, O Umayr!"

When Umayr asked if he would have to bear any evil consequences, the apostle said, "Two goats won't butt their heads about her."

Muhammad then praised Umayr in front of all gathered for prayer for his act of murder, and Umayr went back to his people.

Ibn S'ad

Asma's murder was followed by that of the Jewish poet Abu Afak, who was also killed while he slept.

He waited for an opportunity until a hot night came, and Abu Afak slept in an open place. Salim b. Umayr knew it, so he placed the sword on his liver and pressed it till it reached his bed. The enemy of Allah screamed and the people, who were his followers rushed him, took him to his house and interred him.

Ibn S'ad, a companion of the Prophet

The call for the murder of the poet Ka'b bin Al-Ashraf:

Narrated Jabir bin Abdullah:

Allah's Apostle said, "Who would kill Ka'b bin Al-Ashraf (Ka'b, a poet, who wrote poems lampooning Allah's Messenger) as he has harmed Allah and His Apostle?"

Muhammad bin Maslama (got up and) said, "I will kill him."

So, Muhammad bin Maslama went to Ka'b and said, "I want a loan of one or two Wasqs of food grains."

Ka'b said, "Mortgage your women to me."

Muhammad bin Maslama said, "How can we mortgage our women, and you are the most handsome among the Arabs?"

He said, "Then mortgage your sons to me."

Muhammad said, "How can we mortgage our sons, as the people will abuse them for being mortgaged for one or two Wasqs of food grains? It is shameful for us. But we will mortgage our arms to you."

So, Muhammad bin Maslama promised him that he would come to him next time. They (Muhammad bin Maslama and his companions) came to him as promised and murdered him. Then they went to the Prophet and told him about it.

Bukhari 45.687

The murder of the poet Abu Rafi:

Narrated Al-Bara bin Azib:

Allah's Apostle sent a group of Ansari men to kill Abu-Rafi. One of them set out and entered their (i.e. the enemies) fort. That man said, "I hid myself in a stable for their animals. They closed the fort gate. Later they lost a donkey of theirs, so they went out in its search. I, too, went out along with them, pretending to look for it. They found the donkey and entered their fort. And I, too, entered along with them.

They closed the gate of the fort at night, and kept its keys in a small window where I could see them. When those people slept, I took the keys and opened the gate of the fort and came upon Abu Rafi and said, 'O Abu Rafi.'

When he replied me, I proceeded towards the voice and hit him. He shouted and I came out to come back, pretending to be a helper.

I said, 'O Abu Rafi, changing the tone of my voice.'

He asked me, 'What do you want; woe to your mother?'

I asked him, 'What has happened to you?'

He said, 'I don't know who came to me and hit me.' Then I drove my sword into his belly and pushed it forcibly till it touched the bone. Then I came out, filled with puzzlement and went towards a ladder of theirs in order to get down but I fell down and sprained my foot.

I came to my companions and said, 'I will not leave till I hear the wailing of the women.'

So, I did not leave till I heard the women bewailing Abu Rafi, the merchant of Hijaz. Then I got up, feeling no ailment, (and we proceeded) till we came upon the Prophet and informed him."

Bukhari 52.264

Two girls, who may have been young women when he ordered their assassination, had sung satirical songs as children about Muhammad's claim to being a spokesman for Allah. They were part of the household of a fellow by the name of Khatal. Khatal was one of Muhammad's Zakat (obligatory charity) collectors who later abandoned Islam and returned to Mecca. Khatal sought the protection of the Ka'ba, to no avail.

Narrated Anas bin Malik:

Allah's Apostle entered Mecca in the year of its Conquest wearing an Arabian helmet on his head and when the Prophet took it off, a person came and said, "Ibn Khatal is holding the covering of the Ka'ba (taking refuge in the Ka'ba)."

The Prophet said, "Kill him."

Bukhari 29.72

Then there is the public beheading of more than seven hundred Jewish men and boys of Medina that he orchestrated, and of which, just like the murder of the poets, Khan's audience was probably aware. These types of stories of retribution, which the Koran applauds², may have made believers more accepting of cold blooded murder, even the shredding of children with explosives, if done out of revenge, i.e., "The Russians got what they deserved."

Just like the children of Beslan, it did not matter that the sons beheaded that miserable day along with their fathers were innocent of any crimes against the Muslims, the Jews of Medina having chosen to remain neutral during the successful defence of the city by the believers against Meccan forces (recommended reading: *Jihad in the Koran*, Boreal

² 2:179 In retaliation there is life for you, O people of understanding, that you may be God-fearing.

Books, *Battle of the Ditch*). On orders from Gabriel³, Muhammad lay siege to their settlement and taunted them: "O brothers of monkeys and pigs! Fear me, fear me." The simian reference would make its way into the Koran, providing children with a God-approved name-call for the Jews to go along with Muhammad's "pig" epithet.

2:65 And you surely know those of you who violated the Sabbath; We said to them: "Be [like] dejected apes."

2:66 Thus We made that an example to their contemporaries and to those after them, and an admonition to the righteous.

7:166 Then, when they disdained arrogantly what they were forbidden, We said to them: "Be miserable monkeys."

After twenty-five days, the Banu Qurayzah asked for a mediator. Muhammad sent a fellow by the name of Abu Lubabah who matter-of-factly informed the Jews, via a hand gesture, that God's spokesman had slaughter on his mind.

When they saw him (Lubabah), the men rose to meet him, and the women and children rushed to grab hold of him, weeping before him, so that he felt pity for them. They said to him, "Abu Lubabah, do you think that we should submit to Muhammad's judgment?"

"Yes", he said, but he pointed with his hand to his throat, that it would be slaughter.

Tabari

Lubabah tried to atone for having betrayed Muhammad's confidence even if the Jews did not heed his warning.

³ **Narrated Aisha:**

When Allah's Apostle returned on the day (of the battle) of Al-Khandaq (i.e. Trench), he put down his arms and took a bath. Then Gabriel whose head was covered with dust, came to him saying, "You have put down your arms! By Allah, I have not put down my arms yet."

Allah's Apostle said, "Where (to go now)?"

Gabriel said, "This way," pointing towards the tribe of Bani Quraiza. So Allah's Apostle went out towards them.

Bukhari 52.68

Abu Lubabah felt guilty that he had broken his promise of secrecy with Muhammad. To atone for his 'misdeed' he went straight to the mosque and bound himself with ropes to one of the pillars. This pillar is known as the 'pillar of repentance' or the 'pillars of Abu Lubabah'.

Abul Kasem

Lubabah spent six days chained to his pillar. He was freed by God's spokesman after he received the following revelation:

8:27 O you who believe, do not betray Allah and the Messenger, nor betray your trust knowingly.

The Banu Qurayzah asked to be allowed to go into exile. Muhammad rejected their offer. Ignoring Lubabah's warning, they surrendered en-masse after agreeing to a counter-proposal that a mortally wounded believer by the name of Sad bin Mu'adh decide their fate.

Some people (the Banu Qurayzah) agreed to accept the verdict of Sad bin Mu'adh so the Prophet sent for him. He came riding a donkey, and when he approached the Mosque, the Prophet said, "Get up for the best amongst you." or said, "Get up for your chief."

Then the Prophet said, "O Sad! These people have agreed to accept your verdict."

Sad said, "I judge that their warriors should be killed and their children and women should be taken as captives."

The Prophet said, "You have given a judgment similar to Allah's Judgment."

Bukhari 58.148

A trench was dug in Medina's marketplace and, with Muhammad looking on, as mentioned earlier, more than seven hundred men and boys⁴ of the Banu Qurayzah were beheaded.

The messenger of God commanded that furrows should be dug in the ground for the B. Qurayzah. Then he sat down,

⁴ I was among the captives of Banu Qurayzah. They examined us, and those who had begun to grow hair (pubes) were killed, and those who had not were not killed. I was among those who had not grown hair.

and Ali and al-Zubayr began cutting off their heads in his presence.

Tabari

Khan's technically correct but misleading claim about God's spokesman never personally taking the life of a defenceless person or child, and her explanation as to why Islamic terrorists do what they do, may be suspect, but her reporting does illustrate an appalling and dangerous lack of empathy on the part of Muslim-Canadian youths (and I suspect other Muslim boys who call the West home but are fed a steady diet of Allah's hate-filled words) for children killed by terrorists. Equally distressing is the faith-based tribalism evident in her audience's defence of the indefensible.

Tribalism is one of the consequence of religion. There are other sources of tribalism—nationalism and racism, for instance—but shared religious identity has global reach... it creates in-group loyalty and out-group hostility, even when members of one's own group are acting in abhorrent ways. Muslims often rally to the cause of other Muslims no matter how badly behaved they are, simply because they happen to be Muslims.

Sam Harris in conversation with Maajid Nawaz, Islam and the Future of Tolerance, Harvard University Press, 2015

A lack of empathy, whether it be an instilled pathology or a manifestation of loyalty to one's tribe, which our governments and courts have encouraged by favouring religious distinctiveness over shared secular values, means we can no longer count that love of country or respect for Western values will see us through.

The threat that an absence of empathy and tribalism poses can be significantly reduced if we diminish the hate-that-binds; we must stop a god's pathological loathing for those who believe He is a figment of one man's imagination from corrupting innocence.

How do we achieve this? We limit a child's exposure to the Koran. We make the Book for adults only. By having you read what children who should be enjoying Babar the Elephant and Cinderella are reading, I hope to persuade you to do just that—for their sake, and ours.

GETTING KIDS TO FEEL NOTHING

How do you get kids to feel nothing? I remember my parents telling me, when I was old enough to appreciate the silliness, about the day I came home crying and vowing to kill the Romans. That was the day I first heard about the crucifixion of Jesus. Later I would learn that was not the message of the Gospels. Do children who grow up with the Koran experience the same transformation?

Christian children are told early on the story of the Crucifixion as an example of pain and suffering endured on their behalf to fire their imaginations and get them to listen to the rest of the story. This is done even when the initial impact is one of hatred for those who cruelly murdered their hero and would-be saviour.

Muhammad lived much of his adult life in comfort and luxury; first, courtesy of his first wife's wealth, which he exhausted on the promotion of his new religion and which brought on a short interlude of poverty, then from the property taken from unbelievers killed in the war he started and pursued to get everyone to worship Allah and only Allah.

Narrated Abu Huraira:

Allah's Apostle said, "I have been ordered to fight with the people till they say, 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allah', and whoever says, 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allah,' his life and property will be saved by me except for Islamic law, and his accounts will be with Allah, (either to punish him or to forgive him.)"

Bukhari 52.196

So what do you tell Muslim children to get them to believe that Muhammad is special, even more special than Jesus, who died in spectacular fashion on his followers' behalf? It is not enough to tell them that the Crucifixion was an illusion concocted by Allah.

4:157 And their saying: "We have killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary and the Messenger of Allah." They neither killed nor crucified him; but it was made to appear so unto them. Indeed, those who differ about him are in doubt about it.

Their knowledge does not go beyond conjecture, and they did not kill him for certain;

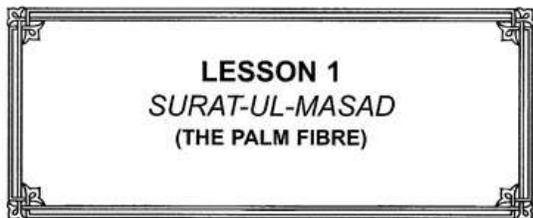
4:158 Rather Allah raised him unto Him. Allah is Mighty and Wise.

Hooked on Sadism

The Koran has a ready-made solution to impressing kids. If you can't wow them with the suffering of the man who brought Your Message to the masses, then gross them out and terrify them with the pain that others will endure for expressing doubts as to his credentials. It is what teachers do every day around the world, and Canada is no exception, to get kids hooked on Muhammad and perhaps inadvertently develop a love of seeing others suffer for their skepticism. The following are pages from the *Islamic Book Series for Children* published by the Islamic School of Ottawa ©2006, materials available worldwide as a teaching aid.



Chapter One



LESSON 1
SURAT-UL-MASAD
(THE PALM FIBRE)

This is the only Surah in the whole Quran that names an enemy of the Prophet (P). The enemy was Abu Lahab. His name means "the flame man".

His real name was Abdul Uzza. He was an uncle of the Prophet (P). The Surah in this lesson talks about Abu Lahab.

God has told Prophet Mohammad (P) to warn his closest relatives. The warning was that they must believe in God, or be punished if they do not. So, the Prophet (P) climbed onto the Safa to tell them. He called them together and said: "If I told you that an army of horse riders would come from the foot of that mountain, would you believe me?" They said: "Yes, because you have never lied to us". This way the Prophet (P) knew he had their faith.

Then he told them the warning. There would be punishment for those without faith. This made Abu Lahab angry. He said: "May you perish! Is this why you brought us here?" Then he threw a stone at the Prophet (P).

God condemned Abu Lahab to perish in Hell. That is where the name "the flame man" comes from - Abu Lahab would be burnt in Hell.

سورة المَسَد

(۱۱۱)

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

۱ - تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ

۲ - مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُ مَالُهُ وَمَا كَسَبَ

۳ - سَيَصْلَىٰ نَارًا ذَاتَ لَهَبٍ

۴ - وَامْرَأَتُهُ حَمَّالَةَ الْحَطَبِ

۵ - فِي جِيدِهَا حَبْلٌ مِّن مَّسَدٍ

The Palm Fibre, Chapter (III)

In the name of God, the Source of Mercy, the Merciful

1. May Abu Lahab's hands perish; certainly he himself will perish;
2. His wealth and gains will not save him;
3. He will be burned in a flaming fire;
4. And his wife, the wood-carrier;
5. Will have around her neck a rope of palm-fibre

What This Surah Teaches Us:

Abu Lahab wished the Prophet (P) to perish. Because of this, God condemned Abu Lahab to perish in Hell. Not even his money would save him. When you die, you can't take anything with you from this world, but there is something that can save you. It is faith. Believe in God and the Prophet (P). Practise the ways of Islam.

If you offend the Prophet (P), you will be an enemy of God. Abu Lahab's wife also offended the Prophet (P). She will be punished too. She will be sent to Hell. In Hell, she will carry thorny bushes on her back all the time. The bushes will hang from a rope of palm fibre tied around her neck. This will be her punishment.

The throwing of a rock may have been added for effect. In the hadiths of the Sunni Canon, where many iterations of the story of Abu Lahab's transgression can be found, there is no mention, as in the following, of a rock thrown in Muhammad's direction:

Narrated Ibn Abbas:

When the Verse: 'And warn your tribe of near kindred.' (26.214) was revealed. Allah's Apostle went out, and when he had ascended As-Safa mountain, he shouted, "O Sabahah!"

The people said, "Who is that?"

Then they gathered around him, whereupon he said, "Do you see? If I inform you that cavalrymen are proceeding up the side of this mountain, will you believe me?"

They said, "We have never heard you telling a lie."

Then he said, "I am a plain warner to you of a coming severe punishment."

Abu Lahab said, "May you perish! You gathered us only for this reason?"

Then Abu Lahab went away. So the "Surat: ul-LAHAB" 'Perish the hands of Abu Lahab!' (111.1) was revealed.

Bukhari 60.495

What we know for sure is that the tethered-like-a-dog wife of Abu Lahab, who will have the abject duty of assisting God in roasting her husband by gathering the wood that the Compassionate will use to stoke the fire, at no time tried to physically harm God's spokesman.

Allah has very much a sadist's understanding of empathy, i.e., feeling someone else's pain: that it can be used to add to the suffering you wish to inflict. This will be part of the lesson that children will take away—along with the denial of compassion for those who do not care for the doomsday prophet as a person or the message he communicated—whether it was their teachers' intention or not.

In many ways, the wife's suffering will be greater than that of her husband; not only will she have to watch her beloved roasted over and over like an animal on a spit, but God has compelled her to be His accomplice in torturing her spouse. The children will know from their reading of the Koran that Abu Lahab's agony will never end. That is how it is in Allah's rotisserie.

4:56 Those who have disbelieved Our Signs, We shall surely cast them into the Fire; every time their skins are burnt, We will replace them by other skins, so that they might taste the punishment. Allah indeed is Mighty and Wise!

Threatening to send people to some unholy horrible place is what gods do to get their way, but Allah in His Koran does not stop there. In that holy book, the hell He created seems to be designed to also satisfy a deep-seated pathology evident in innumerable revelations where He displays all the symptoms of an unabashed sadist who revels in personally ensuring that the intense pain never ends. With such horrific descriptions and a constant refrain of hatred for unbelievers,

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can children raised on such a book ever experience the transformation that I did after wanting to take revenge on the Romans who killed Jesus?

Sheema Khan's Canadian teenagers obviously have not, and this lack of empathy can only increase as we make room in an ostensibly secular school system for kids to shout out sadistic, hate-filled verses during their daily devotion, i.e., prayers⁵. They may not grow up to be radicals, but when the radicals strike they will not feel your pain because they will have been taught to loathe you unconditionally and forever for not wholeheartedly worshipping an Arab's understanding of a Jewish concept. If enough believers don't feel your pain then there is no hope for any of us.

A Real Life Example of the Appeal of Scriptural Sadism

What if you could recreate the sadism that is a hallmark of Allah's Hereafter in the here-and-now? Your run-of-the-mill holy warrior can only do so much. Doctors are another matter, and they are not immune to the seductive cruelty that saturates Islam's Holy Book. Given the opportunity, trained medical personnel can do a very good approximation of the Almighty at his pitiless, cruelest best as revealed in Revelation 4:56, the one about replacing burnt skin.

Issam Abuanza, 37, is a doctor who left his family in the UK in 2014 to join Islamic State in Syria.

On social media, Dr Abuanza has said he wished that a Jordanian pilot burnt alive by IS had taken longer to die.

On his Facebook page he is pictured wearing doctors' scrubs and carrying a gun in a holster. He smiles as he raises his finger in the air - a symbolic gesture to represent the oneness of God that is commonly seen in the iconography of Islamic extremism.

Another image shows him in combat fatigues, cradling an automatic rifle and reading the Koran.

He wrote about the killing by IS militants of the captured Jordanian pilot who was burnt alive, complaining that: "I

⁵ Each prayer must include a minimum of three verses from the Koran not including the seven short verses from the first chapter.

would've liked for them to burn him extremely slowly and I could treat him so we could torch him once more."

BBC News May 24, 2016

Dr. Abuanza, a poster child for Arendt's "banality of evil," was trained to heal and relieve suffering, not to torture and murder, but he could not resist. Imagine the Koran's impact on impressionable young minds, children who are expected to have read or mouthed the entire hateful, sadistic liturgy by the time they are seven years old then, over a period of a year or so and every year for the rest of their lives, repeat and remember it all as part of their daily devotion.

Al-Mughirah

Al-Mughirah, while not mentioned by name, is another disrespectful doubter that has Allah salivating at the prospect of getting His hands on him. It is said that al-Mughirah insulted Muhammad by making a joke about God not favouring him with sons. Instead of providing His beloved mouthpiece with male descendants and making a fool of Mughirah, Allah again prefers boasting of a good roasting rather than do what should be child's play for a god. The promised roasting is not only for giving Muhammad a hard time, but for Mughirah coming to the conclusion, after much reflection, that the Koran was nothing but a fabrication, and a very creepy one at that.

Al-Mughirah was asked by another so-called enemy of God's spokesman, Abu Jahl, to eavesdrop on Muhammad sermonizing and report back about this Koran. Mughirah listened to his allegedly illiterate tribesman recite verses from the 41st surah. After hearing about how Allah had destroyed 'Ad and Thamud, he had heard enough, and returned to tell Abu Jahl what he thought. He told him that it wasn't poetry, soothsaying, or sermonizing but that it made his skin crawl. He had to think about it some more. The next day he told Abu Jahl that, as far as he was concerned, the Koran was sorcery. With that introduction, the following verses should make sense.

74:18 He reflected and reckoned.

74:19 May he perish how he reckoned!

74:20 Again, may he perish how he reckoned!

74:21 Then he considered;

74:22 Then he frowned and turned pale.

74:23 Then he turned back and waxed proud,

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74:24 Saying: "This is indeed nothing but sorcery recounted;

74:25 "This is only the discourse of mortals."

74:26 I will roast him in Saqar (one of the names of Hell)

What may also be considered creepy and excessively sadistic is the Compassionate vowing to burn His brand on the poor man's lips.

68:15 If our verses are recited to him, he says: "Legends of the ancients."

68:16 We shall brand him upon the muzzle.

TEACHING CRUELTY

As mentioned in the *Introduction*, the Koran is a short book—by holy book standards—with boundless repetition, which is ideal if your intent is to constantly reinforce the message. A short book also makes for a more concentrated dose of violence, as pointed out by Richard Wright in his seminal text *The Evolution of God*.

The Koran is a shorter book than the Bible (by a factor of ten); pound for pound, it no doubt features more exhortations to violence.

So if you ask which book is “worse” in terms of belligerence, you might say that qualitatively the Hebrew Bible (and hence the Christian Bible) takes the trophy—thanks to that unrivalled embrace of genocide in Deuteronomy—but that quantitatively the winner is the Koran, at least in terms of the frequency of belligerent passages, if not in absolute numbers. And if, on top of the verses espousing violence in the terrestrial world, you add verses gleefully envisioning the suffering of infidels in the afterlife, the Koran wins the quantitative competition more decisively.

Remove Deuteronomy from the mix, or consider only the Gospels, i.e., the New Testament, and it’s no contest, qualitatively or quantitatively.

Lessons in Cruelty and the Mind of a Child

One of the most pitiless revelations is also one of the most famous verses of the Koran.

5:38 As for the thieves, whether male or female, cut off their hands in punishment for what they did, as an exemplary punishment from Allah. Allah is Mighty and Wise.

Moderate Islamic scholars and religious leaders spend a lot of time trying to explain away pitiless and cruel so-called revealed truths, immutable facts revealed to a mortal by a god, like the above. It is inevitable that every now and then, the true believers, e.g., Islamic State, the Taliban, Boko Haram, etc., will remind them and us that

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Allah's unambiguous instructions are not subject to interpretation. And they are correct, for to do so is to question the wisdom of God, to question God's very sanity, thereby destroying the foundation of your beliefs.

With the Koran as their legal justification, Taliban gunmen executed women and girls in soccer stadiums. Anonymous, frightened, fragile human beings dressed in oppressive burqas—invisible in life, invisible in death—brought into the stadium in the back of pick-up trucks, forced to kneel on the ground, then shot in the back of the head to the obvious pleasure of the bearded young and older men milling around. Bearded men displaying the same lack of mercy and compassion that we have come to expect from many of those who utter *In the Name of Allah the Compassionate, the Merciful* every time Allah's name is mentioned.

The flattering invocation "In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful" begins every chapter of the Koran except Chapter 1, *The Opening* and Chapter 9, *Repentance (Ultimatum* in some translations), which is mostly about making war. Nonetheless, the reader is reminded at least twice in the first chapter (only seven verses), which must be spoken before every prayer praising Allah's merciful and compassionate nature.

THE OPENING

1 Al-Fâtihah

- 1:1 In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful,
- 1:2 Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds,
- 1:3 The Compassionate, the Merciful,
- 1:4 Master of the Day of Judgement,
- 1:5 Only You do we worship, and only You do we implore for help.

What about the Koran's relentless graphic description of sadistic torture and pain? As an adult, you may be able to dismiss Allah's bragging about torturing and burning men, women and children in His Hell as metaphorical excesses, sadistic flights of fancy, but what about Muslim children? Children raised in the Islamic faith are encouraged, if not compelled, to memorize the Koran as early as possible; the prize for the best memorizer is a choice place in Paradise.

What kind of twisted perception of the concept of mercy and compassion will such children be left with after memorizing the following verses about Allah on Judgement Day, not caring about the

people He condemns to burn in Hell in perpetuity for not believing in Him and “for what you used to do”?

52:13 On the Day they will be driven into the Fire of Hell by force.

52:14 “This is the Fire which you used to deny.

52:15 “Is this magic or do you not see?

52:16 “Burn in it. Bear up or do not bear up; it is the same for you. You are only rewarded for what you used to do.”

What kind of warped understanding of the concept of mercy and compassion will Muslim children be left with after reading about how the *Compassionate One* takes obvious pleasure in the punishment He inflicts?

11:105 The day (*Judgement Day*) it comes, no soul shall speak without His Leave. Some of them shall be wretched, some happy.

11:106 As for the wretched, they shall be in the Fire; they shall have therein groaning and moaning;

What happens to the mind, to the personality of a child who commits, must commit to memory not only the horrific verses we have discussed so far, but others that are even more impressive in their attention to detail when it comes to the deliberate, cold-blooded application of torture? For instance, the *Compassionate One* replacing the burnt skin of unbelievers burning in His Hell so that the torment of their skin roasting in His Fire never ends.

In Allah’s Hell, the fantastical vision of pain and torment quickly gives way to the more mundane, but just as gruesome, just as painful torture and never-ending suffering with which any child can relate. For a non-believing adult, the following brutality may seem like the plot of some of the more violent Saturday morning cartoons their kids watch. For believing children the following is real, not the product of a cartoonist’s imagination. Somewhere in time and space, in Allah’s bizarre universe, God is actually doing to real people what some children may fantasize about but eventually dismiss, as they grow older, as *immoral, sadistic behaviour*.

14:16 Behind him is Hell, and he is given stinking water to drink.

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14:17 He sips it but can hardly swallow it, and death surrounds him from every side, but he will not die; and beyond this is still a terrible punishment.

18:29 And say: "The Truth is from your Lord. Whoever wishes, let him believe; and whoever wishes, let him disbelieve." We have prepared for the wrongdoers a Fire whose canopy encompasses them all. If they call for relief, they will be relieved with water like molten brass which scalds the faces. Wretched is that drink and wretched is the resting-place!

22:19 Here are two adversaries who dispute about their Lord. To the unbelievers, garments of fire shall be cut up and over their heads boiling water shall be poured;

22:20 Whereby whatever is in their bellies and in their skin shall be melted.

22:21 And for them are iron rods (to beat their heads with).

22:22 Every time they want, in their gloom, to get out of it (the Fire), they are brought back into it. [And it is said to them]: "Taste the agony of burning."

Such is the punishment from Allah for not believing in His Book and the person who preached its content to mankind, and don't bother saying you're sorry; it won't do you any good.

23:101 And when the Trumpet is blown, they will have no kinship to bind them on that Day and they will not question one another.

23:102 Then, those whose scales are heavy - those are the prosperous.

23:103 But those whose scales are light - those are the ones who have lost their souls. In Hell they will dwell forever.

23:104 The Fire lashes their faces, and therein they shrivel.

23:105 "Were not My Signs (this Qur'an) recited to you, but you used to denounce them as lies?"

23:106 They will say: "Lord, our misery overcame us and we were an erring people.

23:107 "Lord, bring us out of it (Hell); then, if we revert we are indeed wrongdoers."

23:108 He (Allah) said: "Rot in it and do not talk to Me.

It's all about winners and losers, with the losers getting all the pain and the winners, all the pleasure.

23:109 "There was a group of My servants who used to say: 'Lord, we believe, so forgive us and have mercy on us; you are the best of the merciful.'

23:110 "But you took them for a laughingstock, till they made you forget My Name, while you were mocking them.

23:111 "I have rewarded them this day for their forbearance, making them the winners."

Pleasure or pain, which will it be?

47:15 The likeness of the Garden which the God-fearing have been promised is this: rivers of water not stagnant, rivers of milk whose taste has not changed, rivers of wine delighting its drinkers and rivers of distilled honey. Therein they have every variety of fruit and forgiveness from their Lord too. Are they to be compared with those who dwell in the Fire forever and are given to drink boiling water which will rip up their bowels?

What happens to the mind of a child who commits to memory not only the appalling descriptions of what Allah will do in His Hereafter to those who refused to submit to His Will, but what He expects the believers to do, in the here-and-now, to those who would abandon Islam? On at least three occasions, God, in the person of Pharaoh, will remind the child labouring to memorize verses of inconceivable brutality that His recommended punishment for leaving Islam is to have your hands and feet cut off on alternate sides, then to be crucified upon the trunks of trees, palm trees if they can be found.

7:124 "I will surely cut off your hands and your feet on opposite sides; then I will crucify you altogether."

20:71 He (Pharaoh) said: "Do you believe in him before I give you leave? It must be your chief who has taught you magic. I shall then cut your hands and feet on alternate sides, and I will crucify you upon the trunks of palm trees, and you will certainly know whose punishment is sterner and more lasting."

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26:49 He (Pharaoh) said: "You have believed before I gave you leave. He (Moses) is indeed your chief, who taught you sorcery, and so you will learn. I shall cut off your hands and feet alternately and will crucify you all."

As the child memorizes these techniques for inflicting unbelievable pain and humiliation on those who would dare leave Allah's perfect religion for one less perfect, or for no religion at all, he will be reminded that childhood offers no protection from a vengeful, unforgiving god when it comes to unbelievers and apostates. The spontaneous, cold-blooded murder of a child by a fellow by the name Khidr⁶ because Allah fears his lack of commitment to Islam will cause his parents distress, forever etched in the young impressionable mind: *this God does not flinch at killing children who don't do as they are told and replacing them with children who will.*

18:74 Then they departed; but when they met a boy, he (Khidr) killed him. Moses said: "Have you killed an innocent person who has not killed another? You have surely committed a horrible deed."

18:80 "As for the boy, his parents were believers; so we feared that he might overwhelm them with oppression and unbelief.

18:81 "So we wanted that their Lord might replace him with someone better in purity and closer to mercy.

What happens to the mind of a child who commits these horrifying descriptions of pain and suffering to memory? What happens to the mind of a child who is required to repeat many of these cruel, pitiless, sadistic verses as part of the five daily mandatory prayers to a god who claims to be the personification, the embodiment of compassion and mercy?

What do Muslim children dream about after reading about the *Smasher* and people bound to pillars while the *Smasher* creeps towards their hearts to burn them?

⁶ Khidr in the Koran served, for a time, as Moses' spiritual advisor (recommended reading: *Shared Prophets*, Boreal Books, *Moses and Khidr*) Some believe him to be a stand-in for Joshua.

THE BACKBITER

104 Al-Humazah

*In the Name of Allah,
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

104:1 Woe unto every backbiter and slanderer,

104:2 Who amasses wealth and counts it diligently.

104:3 He thinks that his wealth will make him immortal.

104:4 Not at all; he shall be cast into the Smasher.

104:5 And if only you knew what is the Smasher.

104:6 It is Allah's kindled Fire,

104:7 Which attains even the hearts.

104:8 Upon them it is closing in;

104:9 On pillars stretch out.

What do they fantasize about during their waking hours? Do they ever forget the tortured and tormented verses, including those that encourage mutilation of alleged wrongdoers, which they memorized under the benevolent encouragement of their teachers, imams, parents and guardians?

What do these well-intentioned teachers of Islamic "morality" think they are doing? What do they think they are doing when they tell the children to pay particular attention to revelations about Allah's heroes such as the many prophets who disowned parents, family members and close relatives who refused to submit to His Will?

What do they think they are doing when they invite children to read Allah's often repeated instructions not to associate with unbelievers, and the even more compelling revelations that demand that Christians and Jews who are invited to become Muslim but decline, and refuse to pay a ransom to save their lives, be murdered in cold blood?

What do they think they are doing when they invite children to read revelations that damn and curse people who believe in more than one god, Indians for example, and instruct the believers to kill them on the spot if they are invited to become Muslim but refuse; that for polytheists, not even a ransom can save their lives?

Lebensraum

3:85 Whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted from him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers.

48:28 It is He Who sent forth His Messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth, that He may exalt it above every other religion. Allah suffices as Witness.

Are the Saudis, perhaps unwittingly, taking a page out of *Mein Kampf* by funding madrassas on the Wahhabi model around the world, schools that teach children that Islam is the master religion and all that this implies, including murder on a genocidal scale?

Hitler, in *Mein Kampf*, looked to the East for what he called lebensraum, literally "living space" for the master race. This living space was to be acquired through extermination, enslavement and sterilization of non-Aryan races. It was the moral duty of every Nazi to ensure the survival of the master race by whatever means at his or her disposal.

35:39 It is He Who made you successors in the lands. Then he who disbelieves, his unbelief will recoil upon him; and their unbelief will only increase the unbelievers in contempt in the sight of their Lord. No, their unbelief will only increase the unbelievers in perdition.

Will the practitioners of the master religion one day, with the authority granted them by the Koran as "successors in the lands," see it as their religious and moral duty to cull an overpopulated, starving planet to ensure not only the survival but the supremacy of the master religion, and those who believe, until their god can bring an end to His Creation?

Will this piece of entitlement dogma and lessons in cruelty lead to even greater atrocities than when it was the alleged superior race that laid claim to exclusivity of living space?

Willing Executioners

Are Islamic schools and mosques raising another generation of *willing executioners* unable to empathize with the people, the unbelievers, for whom Allah shows no mercy and reserves such a gruesome, agonizing fate?

In his book *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*, Daniel Jonah Goldhagen presents evidence that the

demonizing of the Jews by Christian churches for the alleged murder of Christ and other offences pre-disposed Germans to accept and participate in the murder of millions of Jews. What kind of monsters does the Koran give birth to through its relentless, unremitting insistence that unbelievers are creatures not worthy of mercy or compassion? That unbelievers are only deserving of the most horrible punishment imaginable?

Most parents try to protect their children from the make-believe violence on television, reminding them that it is all make-believe and that this is not how normal, civilized people behave. In madrassas, teachers are not expected to tell the children, who are memorizing the Koran under their supervision, that the violence is not real or that pitiless cruelty or brutality is unacceptable when dealing with those who won't submit to the will of Allah.

Maybe it is time for the West to restrict religious teachings to places of worship and the home so that children get a respite from the relentless bombardment of the word of God and learn to appreciate the values inherent in a secular society free from religion's more nefarious influence⁷.

If nothing is done to curb this schooling in hate and sadism, what truly horrifying events are we setting in motion as the world gives rise to the next generation of Hitler-like leadership, similar to the one we find in Iran, where burning the unbelievers in an atomic fire is seen as doing God's work? Only doing what He would do if He were here—gather the “kindling for His Hell,” the “fuel for His Fire.”

I realize I may be placing too much emphasis on one preponderant aspect of the Koran, the sadism and the horrific cruelty, but that is in large part what the book is all about. Muslims and non-Muslims should be concerned with the impact of reading, of memorizing, such violent, pitiless text on young minds.

⁷ “Madrassas may also be contributing to the feeling of alienation among Muslim youths in countries which test for proficiency in a wide variety of subjects. The emphasis on memorizing the Koran and on learning Arabic means that students tend to do poorly on these tests. An example is Thailand where, according to Jeffrey Simpson of the *Globe and Mail*, “The average Muslim student spends more time in school than the Buddhist [but] do appreciably worse on national educational tests...” *Battle of the minds' is dividing Thailand's identity*, *Globe and Mail*, March 3, 2007

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What to make of mothers and mothers-to-be who would bite and pinch a child to death? Do you blame them or do you blame their indoctrination into scriptures, when they were children themselves, that reek of sadism and what should be unimaginable cruelties.

I will never forget that awful day and what happened to a little seven-year-old on our street.

The girl had come down to the small neighbourhood shop to buy some sweets when IS militants approached her. The girl, chatting innocently to the old shop owner, was asked by the militants where her home was. She pointed it out before running and hiding.

Her parents come to see what was going on and the IS fighters lectured them about how their daughter was violating Sharia law by being alone with the seller.

Even this innocent young girl was not allowed to enjoy her childhood and go and buy sweets.

After a long debate, the fighters decided the girl's punishment was to be bitten or pinched in her face or on her hands by the women of the Hisba [the religious police], or the more adequately described "monsters of Hisba".

The terrified mother begged them to punish her instead of her young daughter but there is no room for discussion with IS.

The child was punished in front of her screaming mother. The monsters aggressively and repeatedly beat her and pinched her. The child was screaming until she passed out and her heart stopped.

The wailing mother completely lost her mind when she saw her child die in front of her. The whole neighbourhood went mad in fear for our children after that day.

Maha, 36, Al Zuhour neighbourhood

From *Lipstick and dresses return to Mosul's streets*, BBC, May 22, 2017

On May 22, 2017, a 22-year-old man "detonated a shrapnel-laden homemade bomb as people were leaving the Manchester Arena following a concert by Ariana Grande, killing twenty-three people, including the attacker, and

wounding 139, more than half of them children," in what much of the Muslim world refer to as a *sacred explosion*.

What we saw was mainly war wounds... the kind of wounds you would see on a battlefield... shrapnel wounds and the shrapnel included things like nuts and bolts and nails... and to this day we continue to operate on some children.

Dr Ibrar Majid, lead trauma and orthopedic surgeon at the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital, has spoken to the BBC. June 1, 2017

The following excerpt is from a debate hosted by Australia's Channel Seven after the above massacre. Muslim clerics Dr. Jamal Rifi and Sheikh Mohammad Tawhidi argued about the role religion played in the attack.

Tawhidi on the radicalisation of the Manchester bomber and his generation:

Basically we need to be very realistic when dealing with this matter. You have a twenty-two year old who gets radicalised over two, three sermons in a Friday mosque gathering ... this age is an age when someone would expect people to be going out, having fun. But no, we have a large number of youth that are being radicalised.

This happens because of the books that we have, the Islamic scriptures that we have; they push the Muslim youth to believe that if you go out there and kill the infidels, that's how you will gain Paradise.

On the massacres committed in Allah's name being a continuation of a very old war:

For the past one thousand four hundred years we have had a religion of war, that is exactly what we have had, this is not something I am imagining, these are facts. We've had many wars.

How did Islam spread from Saudi Arabia down to Indonesia and Bosnia? All spread by the sword. We had many wars. For someone to come and say that Islamic scriptures have nothing to do with it, I mean, that's against the facts, that's not true.

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in an audio message made public May 14, 2015:

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Islam was never a religion of peace. Islam is the religion of fighting. No-one should believe that the war that we are waging is the war of the Islamic State. It is the war of all Muslims, but the Islamic State is spearheading it. It is the war of Muslims against infidels. There is no excuse for any Muslim not to migrate to the Islamic State... joining is a duty on every Muslim. We are calling on you either to join or carry weapons [to fight] wherever you are.

SAFEGUARDING ANTIPATHY

36:61 “And worship Me; for this is a straight path.

Children make friends easily. That presents a real problem for gods who wish to hem them onto a straight and narrow path toward a Paradise fashioned exclusively for those who buy into their idea of right and wrong and worship them for their proclaimed wisdom and beneficence. Children will not think a playmate whose skin colour is different should be shunned until an adult tells them otherwise. The same goes for a child who has never been exposed to the words of a judgemental, insanely cruel god who plays favourites.

It is not enough for a god, via complicit parents, to dampen a child's empathy for others if once they step outside the door they are exposed to a different message. God forbid they develop a friendship with non-Muslim children and begin questioning why their playmates must suffer horribly for having different beliefs. Best for a prudent deity to warn them to play only with their own kind unless they wish to join their unbelieving mates in Hell.

Can We Be Friends?

3:186 You shall be tried in your possessions and yourselves, and shall hear from those who received the Book before you (the Jews and Christians) and from the idolaters, a lot of abuse; but if you forbear and guard against evil, that indeed is a mark of great determination.

Unbelievers are evil people. Allah will be angry with you if you take them as friends, and “unto Him is the ultimate return,” so beware.

3:28 Let not the believers take the unbelievers for friends, rather than the believers. Whoever does that has nothing to do with Allah, unless you guard against them fully! Allah warns you to beware of Him (warns you of His anger); and unto Him is the ultimate return!

In case you did not get the message the first time:

3:118 O believers, do not take as close friends other than your own people (other than your co-religionists); they will spare

42 Safeguarding Antipathy

no effort to corrupt you and wish to see you suffer. Hatred has already been manifest in what they utter, but what their hearts conceal is greater still. We have made clear Our Signs to you if only you understand.

3:119 There you are, you love them, but they do not love you, and you believe in the entire book (all Scriptures). When they meet you, they say: "We believe", but when they are alone they bite their fingertips with rage. Say: "Die of your fury. Allah knows what is hidden in the hearts!"

3:120 If you are visited by some good fortune it vexes them; and if you are visited by some misfortune, they rejoice at it; but if you forbear and fear Allah, their wiles will not hurt you at all. Allah knows fully what they do!

And again:

4:144 O believers, do not take the unbelievers for friends, instead of the believers. Do you wish to give Allah a clear proof against you?

Once again, with a specific warning about associating with Christians and Jews:

5:51 O believers, do not take the Jews and the Christians as friends; some of them are friends of each other. Whoever of you takes them as friends is surely one of them. Allah indeed does not guide the wrongdoers.

A specific warning about associating with family members who don't believe, even if it means losing money:

9:23 O believers, do not take your fathers and brothers as friends, if they prefer disbelief to belief. Those who take them as friends are the wrongdoers.

9:24 Say: "If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your spouses, your relatives, the wealth you have gained, a trade you fear might slacken, and dwellings you love are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger or than fighting in His way, then wait until Allah fulfils His Decree. Allah does not guide the sinful people.

If a believer associates with unbelievers, God will question his or her motivation, imputing to the believer a desire for the glory that rightly and only belongs to Him.

4:139 Those who take the unbelievers as friends instead of the believers – do they seek glory from them? For all glory belongs to Allah.

A believer is not an unbeliever's keeper and is not expected to participate in any conversation where the Koran is not taken seriously. To take part in such a discussion is risking being labelled a hypocrite by Allah.

6:68 And when you see those who talk scornfully about Our Revelations, turn away from them, until they engage in another discourse. And should the devil cause you to forget, do not sit down with the evil-doing-people.

6:69 The righteous are in no way accountable for them; it is only a reminder so that they may fear [Allah].

4:140 He has revealed to you in the Book that, should you hear the Revelations of Allah being denied or mocked, you should not sit with them until they engage in some other discussion. Otherwise, you are like them. Allah shall assemble all the hypocrites and the unbelievers in Hell;

Hypocrites will be confined to the worst part of the Fire unless they repent and "mend their ways."

4:145 Surely, the hypocrites will be in the lowest depths of the Fire, and you will not find any supporter for them.

4:146 Except for those who repent and mend their ways, hold fast to Allah and are sincere in their obedience to Allah – those will be among the believers; and Allah shall grant the believers a great reward.

4:147 Why should Allah punish you, if you are thankful and faithful? Allah Himself is Thankful, All-Knowing.

If you must leave a discussion, do so gracefully, if haughtily, while reminding those who don't share your beliefs that they are oblivious.

28:55 And when they hear idle talk, they turn away from it and say: "We have our works and you have your works. Peace be upon you; we do not desire the company of the ignorant."

A religion is a solemn thing, so don't associate with religious people who have fun worshipping God and enjoying life.

44 Safeguarding Antipathy

6:70 And leave those who take their religion for sport and who are deluded by the life of this world, and remind by it (the Qur'an), lest any soul should perish of what it has earned (on account of the person's deeds). Apart from Allah, it has no protector or intercessor; and if it offers any ransom, it will not be accepted from it. Such are those who are turned over [to be punished] on account of what they have earned. They will have a drink of boiling water and a very painful punishment, because they disbelieved.

A believer must not take as a friend anyone who would deny or make fun of what Allah has revealed in the Koran, whether they are People of the Book (Christians and Jews)) or your run-of-the-mill unbeliever. If they do so, they will join their friend in Hell.

5:57 O believers, do not take as friends those who take your religion as a mockery or a sport, be they from among those who received the Book before you, or the unbelievers. Fear Allah if you are true believers.

People of the Book as transgressors!

5:59 Say: "O People of the Book, do you resent anything we do other than that we believe in Allah and what has been revealed to us and what was revealed before, and that most of you are transgressors?"

Unbelievers are not welcomed into Allah's Mosques.

9:17 The unbelievers should not enter Allah's Mosques bearing witness thereby against themselves that they are unbelievers. The works of those are vain and in the Fire they will abide forever.

9:18 Only he who believes in Allah and the Hereafter, performs the prayers, gives the alms and fears no one but Allah, shall visit Allah's Mosques. Those shall be reckoned among the rightly guided.

Believers are not expected to take orders from unbelievers, Revelation 33:48.

33:45 O Prophet, We have sent you as witness, a bearer of good news and a warner,

33:46 Calling to Allah by His Leave, and an illuminating beacon.

33:47 Announce to the believers that they will have a generous bounty from Allah.

33:48 And do not obey the unbelievers and the hypocrites, overlook their injury, and trust in Allah. For Allah suffices as Guardian.

Another verse about not being friends with certain people, namely, all the aforementioned.

60:13 O believers, do not befriend a people against whom Allah is wrathful and who have despaired of the Hereafter, just as the unbelievers have despaired of the dwellers of the tombs (*those buried in graves*, Yusuf Ali).

For Allah, a believer has no friends except His Eminence, His spokesman and those who bow down before them.

5:55 Your only friends are Allah, His Messenger and those who believe, performing the prayer and giving the alms, while they bow down.

5:56 Whoever takes Allah, His Messenger and those who believe as friends [must know] that Allah's party is indeed triumphant.

A Muslim who befriends Christians or Jews is an evildoer, Revelation 5:80.

5:77 Say: "O People of the Book, do not exceed the bound of your religion unjustly and do not follow the fancies of a people (your ancestors) who went astray in the past and led others astray and strayed from the Right Path."

5:78 Those of the Children of Israel who disbelieved were cursed by David and Jesus, son of Mary; that, on account of their disobedience and their aggression.

5:79 They used not to forbid one another from committing any of the evils they were committing.

5:80 You (Muhammad): see many of them (*believers*) befriending the unbelievers. Evil is what their soul prompts them to do. They have incurred Allah's Wrath and they will suffer torment forever.

5:81 Had they believed in Allah and the Prophet, and what has been revealed to him, they would not have taken them as friends.

46 Safeguarding Antipathy

Only perverts would claim that Allah is both a god and a father.

9:30 The Jews say: "Ezra is the son of Allah", and the Christians say: "The Messiah is the son of Allah." That is their statement, by their mouths; they emulate the statement of the unbelievers of yore. May Allah damn them; how they are perverted!

The more Muhammad revealed of Allah's Koran, the more some people disbelieved. He need not concern himself with them, as Allah reminds him here (and on other occasions).

5:68 Say: "O People of the Book, you have nothing [that counts] until you observe the Torah and the Gospel and what has been revealed to you from your Lord." Surely that which has been revealed to you (Muhammad) from your Lord will only make many of them increase in arrogance and unbelief; so do not be sorry for the unbelieving people.

One last reminder that those who believe that (Jesus) is the Son of God are "evildoers" and their "dwelling is Hell."

5:72 Those who say that Allah is the Messiah, son of Mary, are unbelievers. The Messiah said: "O Children of Israel, worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord. Surely, he who associates other gods with Allah, Allah forbids him access to Paradise and his dwelling is Hell. The evildoers have no supporters!"

In a 2010 BBC documentary, a leading British Islamic scholar had this to say to his co-religionists about making nice with unbelievers:

Allah has warned us in the Koran, do not befriend the kuffar (a derogatory term for unbelievers), do not align yourself with the kuffar; the verses are so many and so numerous I can't recite every one of them.

From an exhortation made to students from a British madrasa by Abu Yusuf Riyadh-ul-Haq, an Islamic scholar based in the United Kingdom, not to associate with Christians and Jews (BBC documentary, British Schools, Islamic Rules).

Be afraid. Be very afraid.

3:200 O believers, forbear and vie in forbearance and steadfastness; and fear Allah so that you may prosper.

INSTILLING A LIFELONG DESIRE TO KILL AND BE KILLED

'He was a child and came to kill children': ISIL suicide bomber kills 43 – most of them boys – at soccer match.

A total of 43 people died [on the evening of March 25, in Asriya, Iraq] – 29 of them boys younger than 17 who had either been participating in the match or were watching their friends play. The bomber also was a teenager, no more than 15 or 16.

Washington Post, April 8, 2016

Death's Pied Piper

Narrated Anas:

The Prophet said, "A single endeavor (of fighting) in Allah's Cause in the afternoon or in the forenoon is better than all the world and whatever is in it. A place in Paradise as small as the bow or lash of one of you is better than all the world and whatever is in it."

Bukhari 52.53

Narrated Abu Huraira:

I heard Allah's Apostle saying, "The example of a Mujahid (Muslim fighter) in Allah's Cause—and Allah knows better who really strives in His 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, otherwise He will return him to his home safely with rewards and war booty."

Bukhari 52.46

Muhammad's example established fifteen as the age a boy could join the fraternity of holy warriors and to participate in the organized slaughter of unbelievers and abscond with the possessions of those he killed, including wives, daughters and sons whose immature physical

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appearance, i.e., no signs of pubic hair, made them less likely to be murdered, but rather taken into slavery.

Narrated Ibn Umar:

That the Prophet inspected him on the day of Uhud while he was fourteen years old, and the Prophet did not allow him to take part in the battle. He was inspected again by the Prophet on the day of Al-Khandaq (i.e. battle of the Trench) while he was fifteen years old, and the Prophet allowed him to take part in the battle.

Bukhari 59.423

Narrated Abdur-Rahman bin Auf:

While I was standing in the row on the day (of the battle) of Badr, I looked to my right and my left and saw two young Ansari boys, and I wished I had been stronger than they. One of them called my attention saying, "O Uncle! Do you know Abu Jahl?"

I said, "Yes, What do you want from him, O my nephew?"

He said, "I have been informed that he abuses Allah's Apostle. By Him in Whose Hands my life is, if I should see him, then my body will not leave his body till either of us meet his fate."

I was astonished at that talk. Then the other boy called my attention saying the same as the other had said.

After a while I saw Abu Jahl walking amongst the people. I said (to the boys), "Look! This is the man you asked me about." So, both of them attacked him with their swords and struck him to death and returned to Allah's Apostle to inform him of that.

Allah's Apostle asked, "Which of you has killed him?"

Each of them said, "I have killed him."

Allah's Apostle asked, "Have you cleaned your swords?"

They said, "No."

He then looked at their swords and said, "No doubt, you both have killed him and the spoils of the deceased will be given to Muadh bin Amr bin Al-Jamuh."

The two boys were Muadh bin 'Afra and Muadh bin Amr bin Al-Jamuh.

Bukhari 53.369

If they themselves were killed fighting Allah's battles, not to worry — there was the promise of Firdaus.

Narrated Anas:

Um (the mother of) Haritha (a young boy then) came to Allah's Apostle after Haritha had been martyred on the Day (of the battle) of Badr by an arrow thrown by an unknown person.

She said, "O Allah's Apostle! You know the position of Haritha in my heart (i.e. how dear to me he was), so if he is in Paradise, I will not weep for him, or otherwise, you will see what I will do."

The Prophet said, "Are you mad? Is there only one Paradise? There are many Paradises, and he is in the highest Paradise of Firdaus."

The Prophet added, "A forenoon journey or an afternoon journey in Allah's Cause is better than the whole world and whatever is in it; and a place equal to an arrow bow of anyone of you, or a place equal to a foot in Paradise is better than the whole world and whatever is in it; and if one of the women of Paradise looked at the earth, she would fill the whole space between them (the earth and the heaven) with light, and would fill whatever is in between them, with perfume, and the veil of her face is better than the whole world and whatever is in it."

Bukhari 76.572

A veteran of the Iran/Iraq war warned me that what Muhammad said and did (recommended reading: *1001 Sayings and Deeds of the Prophet Muhammad*, Boreal Books) was a much more powerful incentive for young people to go to their death than anything Allah revealed in his Koran. His example, he explained, was not lost on boys as young as 12 years old, perhaps even younger, who, in a tactic sanctioned by Khomeini, were used to clear a path through minefields or in suicidal attacks to test Iraqi defences (experienced soldiers were too valuable to risk in such enterprises).

Before the actual advance across a minefield or terrain to be shredded by enemy artillery, the children were given small plastic keys to hang around their necks, and told this was the key to Paradise. The signal to run to their death was a man in the distance on a black horse, dressed in the black garb copied by Islamic State warriors, brandishing a sword and pointing towards the Iraqi positions. The children were told this was Prophet Muhammad. Their hero would be there to welcome them into Firdaus should they be martyred.

The boy who murdered other boys playing soccer was not born the misguided individual he became. A child is not born a holy warrior. The process of creating suicide bombers and willing executioners for the likes of Islamic State, al-Qaeda, the Taliban, Boko Haram, Al-Shabab, etc., begins with rote learning, by millions of children around the world, of the most pitiless, appalling mainstream piece of religious text ever revealed.

Muhammad's example and his promised out-of-this-world rewards for killing and dying in Allah's Cause would have had a lesser but still significant impact on young minds if his encouragement was not backed by the incendiary words of the god for whom he claimed to speak.

A Pitch for Martyrs

*An imagined pitch for suicide bombers using only
verses from one surah*

Revelations about the conduct of hostilities against unbelievers are scattered throughout the Koran, sometimes in highly concentrated form such as in the third surah, "The Family of 'Imran" where the word martyr is first encountered. It is from this surah that I imagined an Al-Qaeda or a Taliban recruiter in the role of prayer leader making a clandestine pitch for martyrs during Friday prayers, which to the uninitiated would not seem out of the ordinary since prayers in Islam are mostly verses from the Koran selected by the prayer leader. A few verses here may have been quoted elsewhere.

*In the Name of Allah,
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

3:1 Alif, Lam, Mim.

3:2 Allah, there is no God but He, the Living, the Everlasting.

3:3 He has revealed the Book (the Koran) to you in truth, confirming what came before it; and He has revealed the Torah and the Gospel,

3:4 Aforetime, as a guidance to mankind. And He also has revealed the Criterion (a reference to the Qur'an as the decisive factor between Good and Evil). Verily, those who have disbelieved in Allah's Signs, a terrible punishment awaits them; Allah is mighty and stern in retribution.

3:5 Indeed, nothing is hidden from Allah whether on earth or in the heavens.

3:6 It is He Who forms you in the wombs as He pleases, there is no God but he, the Mighty, the Wise.

3:8 Lord, do not cause our hearts to vacillate after You have guided us and grant us Your Mercy. You are indeed the Munificent Giver.

3:10 As to the unbelievers, neither their riches nor their children will avail them anything against Allah; in fact, they shall be the fuel of the Fire.

3:11 Like Pharaoh's people and those before them who denounced Our Revelations. Allah smote them on account of their sins. Allah is Stern in retribution!

3:12 Say to those who disbelieve; "You shall be defeated and driven together into Hell; and what an awful resting place."

The heart of the pitch! Life on earth may be good, but Paradise is better?

3:14 Attractive to mankind is made the love of the pleasures of women, children⁸, heaps upon heaps of gold and silver, thoroughbred horses, cattle and cultivatable land. Such is the pleasure of this worldly life, but unto Allah is the fairest return.

3:15 Say: "Shall I tell you about something better than all that?" For those who are God-fearing, from their Lord are gardens beneath which rivers flow, and in which they abide

⁸ In Yusuf Ali's [1872 – 1953] translation, "children" becomes "sons": 3:14 Fair in the eyes of men is the love of things they covet: Women and sons...

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forever [along with] purified spouses and Allah's good pleasure. Allah sees His servants well!

And who are those who seek "purified spouses and Allah's good pleasure"?

3:16 Those who say: "Our Lord, We have believed, so forgive us our sins and guard us against the torments of Hell."

3:17 They are the patient, the truthful, the devout, the charitable and the seekers of forgiveness at daybreak (*when battles are usually engaged*).

If you can't believe God, who can you believe?

3:18 Allah bears witness that there is no God but He, and so do the angels and men of learning. He upholds justice. There is no God but He, the Mighty and Wise One.

The difference between you and them:

3:19 The [true] religion with Allah is Islam. Those who were given the Book (the Jews and the Christians) did not disagree among themselves, except after certain knowledge came to them, out of envy among themselves. Whoever disbelieves in Allah's Revelations will find Allah Swift in retribution!

Those who are not of your religion must be made to submit to your god, by force if necessary.

3:83 Do they desire a religion other than Allah's, after everyone in the heavens and on earth has submitted to Him willingly or unwillingly; and unto Him they shall all be brought back!

3:85 Whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted from him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers.

Believers are the best!

3:110 You were the best nation brought forth to mankind, bidding the right and forbidding the wrong, and believing in Allah. Had the People of the Book believed, it would have been far better for them; some of them are believers, but most of them are sinners.

Not so for your enemy!

3:111 They will only cause you a little harm; and if they fight you, they will turn their backs on you (*run away*), and will have no support.

3:112 Ignominy shall attend them wherever they are found, unless [they are bound] by a covenant from Allah and a covenant from the people. They will incur Allah's anger, and wretchedness shall be stamped on them, because they disbelieved in Allah's Revelations and killed Prophets unjustly. That is because they disobeyed and exceeded the limits (doing what is unlawful).

Whether Allah forgives or punishes an unbeliever, i.e., evil-doers "is no business of yours."

3:128 It is no business of yours whether Allah forgives them or punishes them; for they are indeed evil-doers!

3:131 And guard yourselves against the Fire which has been prepared for the unbelievers.

Now, obey Allah and the Prophet and ask forgiveness.

3:132 And obey Allah and the Messenger, that perchance you may find Mercy.

3:133 And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a Paradise as wide as the heavens and the earth prepared for the God-Fearing;

A reminder that there is a war on, and that God is on their side, therefore they cannot lose if they are steadfast and don't let their emotions get in the way.

3:139 Do not be faint-hearted and do not grieve; you will have the upper hand, if you are true believers.

The first mention of martyrdom:

3:140 If you have been afflicted by a wound, a similar wound has afflicted the others (the unbelievers). Such are the times; We alternate them among the people, so that Allah may know who are the believers and choose martyrs from among you. Allah does not like the evildoers!

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Will you help God help the believers and kill the unbelievers?

3:141 And that Allah might purify the believers and annihilate the unbelievers.

Don't expect to be first to Paradise if you have not helped God rid the world of unbelievers.

3:142 Or did you suppose that you will enter Paradise, before Allah has known who were those of you who have struggled, and those who are steadfast.

You were hoping for death to join Allah in Paradise; now is your chance.

3:143 You were yearning for death before you actually met it. Now you have seen it and you are beholding it.

Role models from the past:

3:146 How many Prophets with whom large multitudes have fought; they were not daunted on account of what befell them in the Cause of Allah. They did not weaken or cringe; and Allah loves the steadfast!

3:147 Their only words were: "Lord, forgive us our sins and our excess in our affairs. Make firm our feet and grant us victory over the unbelieving people."

3:148 Therefore Allah granted them the reward of this life and the excellent reward (Paradise) of the life to come, and Allah loves the beneficent!

Don't trust the unbelievers – trust Me.

3:149 O believers, if you obey the unbelievers, they will turn you upon your heels (turn you away from Islam), and thus you will become complete losers.

3:150 Rather, Allah is your Protector, and He is the Best Supporter!

A reminder to keep on killing until victory is assured, and not to be distracted by booty like the believers at the Battle of Uhud who caused one of the few defeats suffered by the Muslims during the civil war between the pagan Arabs and their Muslim kin.

3:152 Allah fulfilled His Promise to you when, by His Leave, you went on killing them; until you lost heart and dissented

about the affair and disobeyed, after He had shown you what you cherished (the booty)...

We all have to die sometime.

3:168 Those who said to their brethren, while they themselves stayed at home. "Had they obeyed us they would not have been killed?" Say: (Muhammad): "Then ward off death from yourselves, if you are truthful."

The good life after death:

3:157 And were you to be killed or to die in the Way of Allah, forgiveness and Mercy from Allah are far better than what they (the unbelievers) amass.

3:158 And were you to die or to be killed, it is unto Allah that you will be gathered.

3:169 And do not think those who have been killed in the Way of Allah as dead; they are rather living with their Lord, well provided for.

Many of the verses quoted here could be considered an incitement to hate and murder. A cleric using these verses, and these verses alone, as part of a recruitment effort for martyrs in a sermon in Arabic (the lingua franca of Islam), in a mosque or madrasa just about anywhere in the Western world, would not be prosecuted because of Western tolerance of hate speech if it is based on scriptures.

Considering the Koran's unrelenting, unmitigated condemnation and de-humanization of unbelievers, this has to be a reason for concern. Ordinary people do not kill other ordinary people without an extraordinary reason. Suicide bombers would not do what they do if they were not convinced that their murderess enterprise was sanctioned by God. This is why the Koran is such a powerful instrument when it comes to war-mongering, and getting children, when they grow up, to do truly horrific things.

Allah talks up the rewards of killing and dying on His Behalf, but a greater incentive for becoming a martyr is to avoid His nightmarish Judgement Day extravaganza during which He brags about scaring children—whom He will separate from their parents—white.

Children Scared White

(From: *Alice Visits a Mosque to Learn About Judgement Day*, Boreal Books, 2020)

Alice: Rejoicing, getting pleasure from watching another of our kind who has never harmed us in any way, or wished us harm, in excruciating pain! If it wasn't for the sadism, that would be so childish!

Imam: It is not being childish! Allah is not a child or a sadist and neither are the people of Paradise, the believers! Enjoying seeing wicked people getting what they deserve is not sadism, it is celebrating the triumph of good over evil and there is nothing wrong with that. And as to children, they too will not be spared the terror of Judgement Day. Allah said:

73:17 So, how will you guard, if you disbelieve, against a Day which will make children white with fear?

Alice: Children being scared white! How awful! What kind of god takes pleasure in scaring children? I thought Jesus was one of Allah's Messengers and Jesus loved and was very protective of the innocent; he even said that the Kingdom of Heaven was theirs?

Imam: Yes, Jesus was a Messenger of Allah, but not His son. That is a lie told by Christians to diminish the Compassionate. To associate other gods with Allah is the sin of shirk. There is no greater sin, and every time Christians say Allah has taken a son, they commit the greatest sin of all.

Alice: What about Jesus saying that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to children?

Imam: HE WAS WRONG! It belongs to Allah. It was to correct such miscommunications that Allah sent the perfect human being, the perfect communicator, His Greatest Messenger, the Prophet Muhammad, *the peace and blessings of God be upon him*, to correct lesser, less capable Messengers like Jesus.

Alice: Still, it is difficult to believe that Jesus was the Messenger of a God who would brag about scaring children to the extent that blood will drain from their faces.

Imam: How many times do I have to say it? Allah loves children, and they will be welcomed in His Paradise if they behaved and feared and worshipped Allah and only Allah when told to do so. Allah on

Judgement Day will treat children fairly, just like the adults who submitted, and just like their mothers and fathers, they will appear before him to be judged alone. Allah said:

31:33 O people fear your Lord and beware of the Day when no father shall stand for his child and no infant shall stand for his father in the least. Allah's promise is true, so let not the present life delude you or let any deceiver delude you regarding Allah.

Alice: O MY GOD! The poor children appearing before the same person who scared them almost to death, by themselves [*wipes away a tear*].

Imam: Do not refer to God as a person. He is Allah the Wise, the Magnificent, the All-Powerful.

Alice: I am sorry [*regaining her composure*], you are right; no person that I know or have known is capable of what He is capable of.

Imam: Allah is capable of everything; He is Allah!

Alice: Is it possible that Allah's scaring of children has anything to do with Him making an orphan of His Greatest Messenger when he was only six years old, and wanting to make amends for depriving the Prophet of a normal childhood by getting back at children who grew up with one or both parents?

Imam: Allah does not make amends; He does not need to make amends. Have you not considered that Allah's scaring of children is done for the same reasons He frightens adults, so that they will be scared of Judgement Day and therefore remain loyal, and on the straight path that leads to Paradise?

Alice: I just think that if the Prophet Muhammad had grown up with a loving father and mother, he would have at least tried to temper Allah's terrorist side when it came to children [*sniveling*].

Imam: ALLAH IS NO TERRORIST!

Alice: Of course, it is not what I meant.

Imam: What people mistake for terrorism is simply a caring god acting in the best interest of His loyal followers, making sure they remain loyal by letting them know what is in store for them if they betray His Trust, and humiliating, and yes, scaring their common enemy, the unbelievers; BUT THAT DOES NOT MAKE HIM A TERRORIST.

LITTLE BOYS LEARNING TO HATE LITTLE GIRLS AND LITTLE GIRLS TO HATE THEMSELVES

Narrated abu Said al-Khudri:

The Prophet said, "Isn't the witness of a woman equal half that of a man?"

The women said, "Yes."

He said: "This is because of the deficiency of the woman's mind."

Bukhari 48.286

Little boys don't believe that they are more special than little girls and little girls, that they are inadequate until they are made to feel that way by adults. If they are born into a traditional Muslim family, their parents will justify playing favourites and their unequal treatment by having the children read a book in which a god does just that, while promising to welcome into his Paradise those who accept that this is the way it was always meant to be and live their lives accordingly.

A child's concept of an invisible omnipotent being is not fully formed at the age you hope to implant an idea that will impact their behaviour for the rest of their lives. This means they may not be receptive to what they are compelled to read, or mouth word for word along with you. Little girls in particular may have difficulty accepting that their little brother is better than they are on the say-so of a ghost who wrote a book.

That is why children's books, like the one we talked about in *Getting Kids To Feel Nothing*, introduce the concept of a god in conjunction with something or someone children can relate to: a person. This, of course, is not a problem for Christian parents and educators with their earlier variation of the same god having taken on all the attributes of a man. It was, however, a problem for the earliest clerics who had to find a way to get into a child's mind when it is most receptive to being decisively influenced.

Around Muhammad, stories like those you find in *My Book of Islam* were woven to bring out a child's natural empathy for someone they would come to see as a hero, someone they could trust. That trust, for little girls, will be tested when, to back up Allah's negative assessment of their sex, they are told that their hard-done-by hero—who delivered God's exact words regarding their deficiencies as human beings—more than agreed with what he communicated from on High.

Allah, in His Koran, reminds us that:

- 1) Girls are inferior by at least one degree.

2:228 Divorced women should keep away from men for three menstrual periods. And it is not lawful for them to conceal that which Allah has created in their wombs, if they truly believe in Allah and the Last Day. Their husbands have the right in the meantime to take them back, should they seek reconciliation; and women have rights equal to what is incumbent upon them according to what is just, although men are one degree above them (what is meant here is that the men have a superior authority). Allah is Mighty, Wise.

- 2) Girls have trouble remembering things.

2:282 ... And call to witness two witnesses of your men; if not two men, then one man and two women from such witnesses you approve of, so that if one of them (the two women) fails to remember, the other will remind her...

- 3) Girls have no more rights when it comes to sex than an inflatable doll (2:223) that boys may penetrate at their discretion, except when the doll is menstruating (2:222) because that makes the doll dirty.

2:223 Your women are a tillage for you. So get to your tillage whenever you like. Do good for yourselves, fear Allah and know that you shall meet Him. And give good news to the believers.

2:222 And they ask you about menstruation, say: "It is an impurity." So keep away from women during their menstruation and do not approach them (do not have sexual relations with them) until they are clean. Once they get clean get to them as Allah commanded you. Allah loves the repentant and loves those who purify themselves.

- 4) When little boys grow up, because of their superiority and the wealth they will accumulate because of their sex (which they can use to purchase girls to marry), are in charge and can beat up girls for whatever reason, even for what they might be thinking.

4:34 Men are in charge of women, because Allah has made some of them excel the others, and because they spend some of their wealth. Hence righteous women are obedient, guarding the unseen which Allah has guarded. And those of them that you fear might rebel, admonish them and abandon them in their beds and beat them. Should they obey you, do not seek a way of harming them; for Allah is Sublime and Great!

- 5) That a wife can be shared among men like so much chattel after a husband has "satisfied his desire for her" and divorced her so that another man can do the same (Appendix: Zaynab).

How do you explain to pre-pubescent little girls the concept of menstruation and what Allah means when he warns little boys to "not approach" them when it is happening? What about denying them intimacy, the understood meaning of "abandon them in their beds," and encouraging boys to beat them because of what they might be thinking, e.g., illegal sex, Allah and Muhammad's pathological obsession? It must be equally, if not more, difficult to get the message across to little boys without giving them a premature and precarious understanding of the ins and outs (pun intended) of sexual relations.

You could decide to take advantage of the fact that they will also be exposed to God's befuddling description as to where babies come from and the gestation process and combine it all into a comprehensive, if precipitated, explanation of procreation and marriage.

Allah has a dubious and definitely skewed understanding of conception. For example, God knows there is a connection between a female's menstrual cycle and babies, as demonstrated in His admonition to divorced women to "keep away from men for three menstrual periods," revealed truth 2:228. However, in His explanation of conception, the man's sperm is all that is necessary, with the woman serving only as a receptacle for his life-giving seed.

16:4 He created man from a sperm-drop and, behold, he is a professed disputant.

35:11 Allah created you from dust, then from a sperm, then made you into couples. No female bears or gives birth, save with His knowledge, and no man advances in years or his life-span is diminished, except as ordained in the Book. That indeed is an easy matter for Allah.

36:77 Does not man see that We created him from a sperm; and behold he is a manifest trouble-maker?

56:57 We have created you, if only you would believe!

56:58 Have you seen the semen you emit?

56:59 Do you create it, or are We the Creators?

80:18 Of what did He create him?

80:19 Of a sperm, He created him and determined him.

Allah may have been aware of the connection between a female's menstrual cycle and the eventual birth of a child but perhaps not the role a woman's eggs plays in reproduction. This would explain His focus on the sperm as all that is needed, and His labeling of the discharge of a woman's unfertilized eggs as an impurity. This would also explain His getting the gestation period wrong.

Of all the things God got wrong about conception and the growth of the embryo (recommended reading: *Getting to Know Allah*, Boreal Books, *Allah and the Beginnings of Life*), the gestation period is a whopper.

2:233 Mothers shall suckle their children for two whole years; [that is] for those who wish to complete the suckling. Those to whom the children are born (the fathers) shall maintain and clothe them kindly. No soul is charged beyond its capacity. No mother should suffer on account of her child and he to whom a child is born should not suffer on account of his child. The same [duties (the maintenance and clothing of divorced women)] devolve upon the [father's] heir (if the heir is a child and has a guardian the latter would be charged with those duties). But they commit no offence if by mutual agreement and following consultation they choose to wean the child. You also commit no offence if you engage wet-

nurses, provided that you give them what you promised to give kindly. Fear Allah and know that Allah has knowledge of what you do.

If the weaning period is included in the suckling period (24 months) then Allah, in the following verse where He decrees that the gestation and weaning period combined total thirty months, has underestimated the gestation period of the human fetus by three months ($30 - 24 = 6$ months gestation time).

46:15 We have commanded man to be kind to his parents; his mother bore him painfully and delivered him painfully, his gestation and weaning totalling thirty months. When he is fully grown and turns forty, he will say: "Lord, inspire me to be thankful for the favour, with which You have favoured me and favoured my parents; and to do a righteous deed, well-pleasing to You. Grant me righteousness in my progeny; I have truly repented to You and one of those who submit.

You are never sure exactly what your child will retain from Allah's speckled bits of misleading information as to where babies come from. Why would parents want an asexual god who has never married or had children, and is proud of it, to teach their kids about sex and procreation and the rules governing what He refers to as a female's "private parts"? You would think parents would be the first—mothers in particular, who are responsible for getting a child to the Khatmi-Qur'an—to want to avoid exposing their children to persuasive, obvious misconceptions and a misogynous philosophy.

In reality, it is probably too much to expect a believing mother, who has been conditioned like her mother and her mother before her, not to drown her children in Allah's Wisdom. She has been cowed and lowered to the status of the animals to which Muhammad compared her.

Narrated Aisha:

"The things which annul the prayers were mentioned before me. They said, Prayer is annulled by a dog, a donkey and a woman (if they pass in front of the praying people)..."

Bukhari 9.490

Aisha said [to Muhammad]: "You have made us equal to the dogs and the asses."

Sahih Muslim

Women are mere animals who will burn in Hell for eternity for not being grateful enough for all the good things those with exclusive, unrestricted access to their “private parts” have generously provided for them out of the goodness of their hearts.

Narrated Uqba:

The Prophet said: "The stipulations most entitled to be abided by are those with which you are given the right to enjoy the (women's) private parts (i.e. the stipulations of the marriage contract)."

Bukhari 62.81

Narrated Ibn Abbas:

The Prophet said: "I was shown the Hell-fire and that the majority of its dwellers were women who were ungrateful."

It was asked, "Do they disbelieve in Allah?" (or are they ungrateful to Allah?)

He replied, "They are ungrateful to their husbands and are ungrateful for the favors and the good (charitable deeds) done to them.

Bukhari 2.28

Why would women put up with the beatings, the confinement, and the degradation yet attack those who say, “This is not normal”? Is it really that females are what God and His spokesperson said they are: mentally deficient?

Unlike the Creator of Everything and His spokesman, don't be too quick to judge. Remember that believing women are initiated to God's opinion of their sex during the first reading of the Koran as children – the start of a thorough indoctrination that will result in women literally hating themselves – making them inclined to adjectively yield to the men Allah has made their wardens for life. Men, from boyhood, also can't help but be influenced by God's disparaging assessment of females, which may explain what can best be described as a contempt tinged with desire for the women in their lives.

From that first reading and for the rest of their lives, five times a day (for Sunni Muslims), women and girls will get down on their hands and knees at the back of any room in which they find themselves to worship a god who said those bad things about them, where they must loudly proclaim their shortcomings to all as part of their devotion. As

mentioned earlier, prayers mainly consist of repeating word-for-word revealed truths from the Koran.

They may not fully understand what it means to be sexually assaulted, but during their prayers they are bound to reaffirm that their rape is a husband's God-given right, as in revealed truth 2:223, "Your women are a tillage for you..."

They are also bound to reaffirm that it is the right of a believer to rape a wife in front of her unbelieving husband.

4:24 Or married women except those your right hands possess (captives of war or slave-girls). This is Allah's decree for you. Beyond these it is lawful for you to seek, by means of your wealth, any women, to marry and not to debauch. Those of them you have enjoyed, you should give them their dowry as a matter of obligation; but you are not liable to reproach for whatever you mutually agree upon, apart from the obligatory payment (the dowry). Allah is indeed All-Knowing, Wise.

According to a saying of Muhammad, this revelation was sent to reduce the resistance of some believers to raping their female captives in front of their husbands.

The Apostle of Allah (may peace be upon him) sent a military expedition to Awtas on the occasion of the battle of Hunain. They met their enemy and fought with them. They defeated them and took them captives.

Some of the Companions of the Apostle of Allah (may peace be upon him) were reluctant to have intercourse with the female captives in the presence of their husbands who were unbelievers. So Allah, the Exalted, sent down the Qur'anic verse: (4:24) "And all married women (are forbidden) unto you save those (captives) whom your right hands possess."

Abu Dawud 2.2150

How psychologically damaging for a woman's self-respect to have to publicly acknowledge that, when all is said and done, she is, in essence, nothing more than a sexual object created by a god to reward males for their loyalty, whether as wives or as captives.

What may be a bizarre consequence of women's instilled self-loading is the rise of the female suicide bomber. It is a relatively new phenomena with women perhaps trying to prove they are worthy of more

consideration by doing what get Allah's attention and respect. They may get the Almighty to notice them, even praise their self-sacrifice, but the reward for the barbarity they will commit on His behalf will be nowhere near what male suicide bombers get. According to a Hamas website, the best a female martyr can expect if she died a spinster is to be "married to one of the people of Paradise."

[Question] I wanted to ask: what is the reward of a female martyr who performs a martyrdom operation; does she marry 72 of the houris?

[Answer] ... The female martyr gains the same rewards as does the male, with the exception of this one aspect [the houris], so that the female martyr will be with the same husband with whom she dies. "And those who have believed and their progeny, followed them in belief. We shall join their progeny to them. We shall not deprive them of any of their work; every man shall be bound by what he has earned" 52:21. The one who is martyred and has no husband will be married to one of the people of Paradise.

David Cook, Understanding Jihad, p.146

An Evil Affliction

Narrated Abdullah bin Umar:

Allah's Apostle said, "Evil omen is in the women, the house and the horse."

Bukhari 62.30

Narrated Usama bin Zaid:

The Prophet said, "After me I have not left any affliction more harmful to men than women."

Bukhari 62.33

Muhammad's reference to women as evil may have something to do with the story of Joseph, son of Jacob. That story, more than any other telling-tales from the Bible that made their way into the Koran—with the usual confusing modifications—may be responsible for much of the disdain that believing men have for women, if not outright hate. When you hear or read about women and girls in countries governed by Islamic law being jailed after reporting sexual assault, blame Allah's account of the story of Joseph.

Children can easily identify with the central character, which is one reason I suspect the authors of *My Book on Islam* included it in their catechism. Again—unfortunately, like much of what you find in the Koran—you cannot divorce the text from the message, whether it be one of hate, cruelty, intolerance or, in this instance, judgement of women as sexual predators and liars.

Joseph, Son of Jacob

(The story of Joseph leading up to his being thrown in jail.
From: *Shared Prophets*, Boreal Books, 2012)

The Vision

Joseph, the eleventh of Jacob's twelve sons and first son of Rachel, not only gets an entire surah named after him, but the surah is also almost exclusively about him. Allah, in the Koran, unlike his earlier appearance in the Bible, can't be bothered with the names of the supporting cast. Nowhere is this more evident than in the story of Joseph where his brothers are just "the brothers" or "the brother"; no Benjamin, no Simeon, no Judah, no Reuben... Joseph's surah begins with Allah praising His Arabic version of the Koran.

THE PROPHET JOSEPH

12 Yûsuf

*In the Name of Allah,
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

12:1 Alif - Lam - Ra.

These are the verses of the clear Book.

12:2 We have revealed it as an Arabic Qur'an, that perchance you may understand.

12:3 We narrate to you (*Muhammad*) the fairest narratives in revealing to you this Qur'an, although you were, prior to it, one of the headless.

With those formalities out of the way, Joseph makes his entrance.

12:4 When Joseph said to his father: "O my father, I saw [in my dream] eleven planets and the sun and the moon, I saw them prostrating themselves before me."

His father warns him not to tell his brothers about his dream that he will become one of God's chosen.

12:5 He said: "My son do not relate your dream to your brothers, lest they plot evil against you. Surely, the Devil is the sworn enemy of man."

12:6 And thus your Lord will chose you and teach you the interpretation of dreams and will perfect His Grace upon you and upon the family of Jacob, as He has perfected it formerly upon your two fathers⁹, Abraham and Isaac. Surely your Lord is Allah Knowing, Wise.

12:7 There are indeed in Joseph and his brothers signs for the inquiring.

Sold Into Slavery

As in the Bible, it is the affection that their father bestows on Joseph and Joseph's dreams that causes his brothers to plot against him. In the next verse, Allah mentions another brother—possibly Benjamin, the youngest of the brothers.

12:8 When they said: "Joseph and his brother are dearer to our father than the rest of us, although we are a large group. Our father is truly in manifest error."

What to do?

12:09 "Kill Joseph or cast him away in some land that your father's love may be wholly yours, and you may become after him a righteous people."

12:10 One of them said: "Do not kill Joseph, but rather throw him in the bottom of the pit, so that some traveller may pick him up, if you must do anything."

But first they have to persuade their father to let Joseph come out and play.

12:11 They said: "Our father, why do you not trust us with Joseph? We certainly wish him well.

12:12 "Send him forth with us tomorrow that he may frolic and play, and we will surely take care of him."

Jacob is worried that if he lets Joseph out of his sight, he will be eaten by wolves.

⁹ In three of seven translations consulted, "two fathers" becomes "forefathers."

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12:13 He said: "It grieves me to let you take him away; and I fear that the wolf may devour him while you are not watching him."

12:14 They said: "If the wolf should devour him while we are a large group, we should then be the real losers."

It's in the pit with Joseph. While the brothers were plotting, Allah was keeping Joseph apprised of what they intended to do.

12:15 But when they took him away and decided to cast him in the bottom of the pit, We revealed to him: "You should tell them about their intention while they are unaware."

12:16 And they came to their father in the evening weeping.

In the Bible, Joseph is 17 years old when the brothers decide to get rid of him, which means that his ten half-brothers (he and his younger brother, Benjamin, were the only sons of Rachel, Jacob's second wife, the first being Leah) were older; some had to be much older, but in the Koran they all behave like children and their explanation for Joseph's disappearance is a child's explanation.

12:17 They said: "Our father, we went away racing and left Joseph by our baggage; and so the wolf devoured him. You will not believe us even if we are truthful."

12:18 And they stained his shirt with false blood. He said: "Rather, your souls tempted you to do something. So come gentle patience! To Allah I turn for help against what you say."

In the Bible, Midianite traders find Joseph in the pit and sell him to Ishmaelites on their way to Egypt. In the Koran, it is an unidentified group of travelers who send down buckets to get water from the "pit," which appears to have been a functioning well, and discover Joseph, whom they sell to an Egyptian.

12:19 And some travellers came, and they sent their water-drawer, who let down his bucket. He said: "Good news! Here is a boy." And they hid him as merchandise, Allah being fully aware of what they were doing.

12:20 And they sold him for a cheap price, a number of dirhams, since they were not interested in him.

Joseph and the Governor's Wife

Joseph's story will provide an opportunity for Allah to offer an opinion on rape and why women who complain of being raped are usually lying, and how you can tell, using the example of the wife of the Egyptian who bought Joseph. She will attempt to seduce the reluctant Joseph after being told by her husband to make his stay an honourable one.

12:21 And the Egyptian who bought him said to his wife: "Make his stay honourable; perhaps he will profit us or we may take him for a son." Thus We established Joseph in the land and taught him the interpretation of dreams. Allah has control over His Affairs though most people do not know.

12:22 When he was fully grown, We gave him judgement and knowledge, and thus We reward the beneficent.

12:23 And the woman, in whose house he was, sought to seduce him. She closed the doors firmly and said: "Come." He said: "Allah forbid. It is my Lord who gave me a good abode. Surely, the wrongdoers do not prosper."

12:24 Certainly she made for him and he would have made for her if it were not for a sign from his Lord. And that was to divert him from evil and indecency. He was indeed one of Our sincere servants.

A woman can also be expected to lie about sexual assault, for example falsely accusing a man of attempted rape when in reality she was the aggressor.

12:25 They raced to the door, and she ripped his shirt from behind. When they met her husband at the door, she said: "What is the penalty of one who intended evil for your wife except imprisonment or severe punishment?"

Exceptionally, Allah, when relating this encounter, concedes that men can, on rare occasions, be the aggressors and how you can tell.

12:26 He (Joseph) said: "She sought to seduce me." And a member of her household bore witness: "If his shirt was torn from the front, then she is telling the truth and he is a liar.

12:27 "But if his shirt is torn from behind, then she lies and he is one of the truthful."

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While admitting that men can, on occasion, be forceful in the pursuit of intimacy, Allah makes another generalization about women...*that they are skilled in the art of deception*. Notice the plural form of woman, "you women," in verse 12:28.

12:28 When he (the husband) saw that his shirt was torn from behind, he said: "This is part of your guile, you women. Your guile is indeed very great.

Her husband asked Joseph to overlook his wife's attempt at getting him to share an intimate moment and told his wife to ask forgiveness for her sins.

12:29 "Joseph, overlook this matter; and you woman, ask forgiveness for your sin. You are indeed one of the sinners."

In the Bible, the husband is a fellow by the name of Potiphar, "an officer of Pharaoh and the captain of the guard"; in the Koran, he is "the governor."

12:30 And some women in the city said: "The wife of the governor has been seeking to seduce her slave; he has infatuated her with his love. We see her in manifest error.

The husband's wife, rather than ask Allah's forgiveness for having sinned, invites Joseph to dine and perhaps exchange more than the usual pleasantries (it all depends on your interpretation of "Come out unto them" in the following verse) with some of the women who have been spreading rumours about her attempt to seduce him.

12:31 When she heard about their wives, she sent after them and prepared for each of them a dining couch. Then she gave each of them a knife and said to him (Joseph): "Come out unto them." But when they saw him, they admired him and cut their hands and said: "Allah forbid! This is no mortal, he is but a noble angel."

The women are completely mesmerized by Joseph's presence and cut themselves. Whatever the governor's wife had in mind, her *wily* guests want none of it after seeing Joseph, and neither does he, judging by her reaction.

12:32 She said: "This is the one you reproached me for. I have in fact sought to seduce him, but he held back. If he will not do what I command him, he will surely be imprisoned and will be one of the humbled."

Joseph in Jail

In the Bible, Joseph is thrown in jail because the husband of the wife who tried to seduce him believed her lies about Joseph coming on to her. In the Koran, as can be expected, Joseph is not thrown in jail because of a woman's accusation that he tried to have sex with her against her will; that would be unthinkable. It is Joseph who insists that Allah make it so to get away from his owner's wife and her friends who may—by his expression "their guile"—also have wanted him, a prospect that he is finding more and more difficult to resist.

12:33 He said: "My Lord, prison is dearer to me than that which they call me to. If you do not rid me of their guile, I will be inclined towards them and will be one of the ignorant."

Allah grants Joseph his wish, with a little help from the governor and his entourage.

12:34 Thereupon his Lord answered his prayer and so rid him of their guile. He is indeed the Hearer, the Knower.

12:35 Then it occurred to them after they had seen the signs (signs of Joseph's innocence) to imprison him for some time.

Joseph, Son of Jacob: My Book on Islam

The last two pages of *Prophet Yusuf: Part 1* from *My Book on Islam*. There is no Joseph demanding to be thrown in jail. What the children are expected to remember is that a woman lied about wanting to seduce a man and an innocent man paid the price. That is what women do. Got that?

The wife had to think of a way to protect herself. She did not want her husband to know what she had done. She said: "He tried to do evil with me. Why don't you throw him into prison? He should be punished."

"It was she who tried to tempt me," said Joseph (P).

The husband did not know who to believe. One of her relatives had come to the house with him. He said: "If his shirt is torn from the front, she is telling the truth. It will mean she was trying to get away, but if it is torn from the back, then she is lying. It will mean that she was trying to hold on to him."

The husband looked at Joseph's shirt. He saw that it was torn from behind. He knew that his wife had lied. He said to his wife: "Woman, ask pardon for your sins. You have done wrong."

He did not want anyone to know what happened. He told Joseph (P) not to tell anyone. But somehow, people heard about what had happened. All women in the town talked about it. The wife tried to tell them that it was not her fault. She said Joseph (P) was just too handsome to leave him alone.

She thought she could show them why. She invited them to a banquet at her house. All the women came. They were served some fruit. Each one had a knife to peel the fruit. Soon they were using the knives to cut the fruit. The wife ordered Joseph (P) to come into the room.

When Joseph (*P*) walked in, the women were amazed. They had never seen such a handsome man. They were so surprised, they forgot they had knives and they all cut their hands. The women said: "God be praised! This is no man. This is a noble angel!"

The wife said: "You see? You all blamed me. How could I leave him alone? But he does not want me. I will have him thrown into prison!"

CONFOUNDING LITTLE GIRLS

33:53 O believers, do not enter the houses of the Prophet, unless you are invited to a meal, without awaiting the hour; but if you are invited, then enter; but when you have eaten, disperse, without lingering for idle talk. That is vexing to the Prophet who might be wary of you, but Allah is not wary of the truth. If you ask them (the wives of the Prophet) for an object, ask them from behind a curtain. That is purer for your hearts and theirs. You should never hurt the Messenger of Allah, nor take his wives in marriage after him. That is truly abominable in the sight of Allah.

The Koran was revealed by a jealous middle-aged man who not only kept his wives out of sight—“If you ask them for an object, ask them from behind a curtain”¹⁰—but would control their lives from beyond the grave. For Muslim women, having sex with a man other than their husband is flirting with a gruesome death and spending an eternity on fire in the depths of Allah’s Hell. God’s warning to men about taking “his [Muhammad’s] wives in marriage after him,” some of whom were still teenagers when he died at the age of 63, meant the wives he left behind would never experience being intimate with a man again.

God’s spokesman had fourteen official wives. For twenty-three years he was married to one woman, Khadijah. After her death, Muhammad did not marry again until he was past fifty. His next wife was again a widow. He then married Aisha, the nine-year-old daughter of his good friend and close collaborator, Abu Bakr.

The barely nineteen-year-old Hafsa would become wife number four while Muhammad was fifty-four. Over the next nine years, God’s spokesman would marry again ten times, if you count the beautiful Rayhanah,¹¹ a widow of Banu Qurayzah, the doomed Jewish tribe

¹⁰ The niqab, the face-covering veil, is a believing woman’s portable curtain and her way of keeping within God’s injunction to only have dealings with men other than her husband “from behind a curtain” when out in public.

¹¹ Virgil Gheorghiu, in *La vie de Mahomet, Robert Laffont, 1962*, writes that Rayhanah only agreed to become Muhammad’s concubine, considering it unseemly to accept his marriage proposal after he had just ordered the beheading of the men

mentioned in the *Foreword*, whom Muhammad selected as part of his share of the booty.

After the battle of the Trench [Rayhanah was] marched into the courtyard with the several hundred other women and their children to be claimed as a reward by the Muslim soldiers, while the Qurayzah men were led away to be executed.

Tamam Kahn, Untold - A History of the Wives of Prophet Muhammad, Monkfish Book Publishing, 2010

All of Muhammad's young wives were reputed to be women of exceptional beauty. His last wife was, depending on what you read, between thirty and thirty-nine years his junior; his second-to-last wife was forty-seven years younger. Then, of course, there were the slave girls he got as his reward but did not marry.

God admitted that His spokesperson had difficulty getting the younger females he had accumulated to behave like mature married women. Muhammad's reputation was everything. These young women not only talked among themselves but also pranked the old man. He could not be seen to be unable to control his wives or for his private life to become public knowledge. Thank goodness God was watching when His spokesman divulged that he had eaten some honey to a teenaged acquisition who then betrayed his confidence by telling another not much older wife. Allah wasted no time in telling His cherished mouthpiece some of what he had seen and heard.

66:3 And when the Prophet confided to one of his wives a certain matter (his eating of honey); and she divulged it, and Allah disclosed it to him too, He made known part of it, but withheld the other part. Then, when he told her about it, she said: "Who told you this?" He said: "The All-Knowing, All-Informed told me."

God suspected a conspiracy against His spokesperson. To nip the rebellion in the bud, He quickly sent down another revelation warning the two women of the formidable force allied against them: God himself, most of the believers and all the angels, including the mighty Gabriel, supported their husband.

of her tribe, including her husband. He offered to spare her father, who declined the Prophet's offer of mercy, devastated at having no more tribe to lead.

66:4 If you two (the two wives of the Prophet) repent onto Allah, then your hearts will have certainly inclined; but if you band together against him, then Allah is his Master. Gabriel, the righteous among the believers and the angels thereupon are his supporters, too.

This had to be about more than one wife divulging to another that their husband-in-common had eaten some honey for Allah to put His prestige on the line, throwing in everything but the kitchen sink to force Aisha and Hafsa¹² to keep quiet. Then came the really big threat: *divorce*. Should their husband decide on that course of action, God would give him, in exchange, better wives:

66:5 Perhaps, his Lord will, if he divorces you, give him in exchange wives better than you, submissive, believing, obedient, penitent, devout, fasting, either previously married or virgins.

Allah never tires of stating the obvious if you don't abide by His instructions.

66:6 O believers, guard yourselves and your families against a Fire whose fuel is people and stones; its overseers are harsh, terrible angels who do not disobey what Allah commands, but will do what they are commanded.

It may not have been the risk of ending up on Allah's barbecue that persuaded the girls to be more discreet, but rather the threat of divorce. Little girls are made aware from their first reading of the Koran, and in their prayers from that time onward, what Aisha and Hafsa already knew about divorce: it must be avoided at any cost. If that means submitting to whatever is demanded of them by the enforcers of God's

¹² **Narrated Abdullah bin 'Abbas:**

I had been eager to ask 'Umar about the two ladies from among the wives of the Prophet regarding whom Allah said: If you two turn in repentance to Allah your hearts are indeed so inclined (to oppose what the Prophet likes) (66:4)...

I said, "O Chief of the believers! Who were the two ladies from among the wives of the Prophet to whom Allah said: 'If you two return in repentance (66:4)?"

He said, "I am astonished at your question, O Ibn 'Abbas. They were Aisha and Hafsa."

Bukhari 43.648

Decrees concerning them that is their husbands, so be it, otherwise risk destitution in this life and an even worse fate in the next.

The threat of divorce may only have made Aisha and Hafsa more circumspect when it came to pranking their husband. The girls last pranked the sexagenarian, whose bed they shared, the year before he died. The prank would cause God's spokesman to divorce the last young woman he would marry—the naïve, teenaged Asma—before the marriage was even consummated.

At first Aisha and Hafsa appeared to welcome Asma when she arrived as a bride. They hennaed her hands and feet and combed her hair pretending to give her love advice, while teaching her the words for the divorce formula. They dared to persuade her that repeating those words would make the Prophet love her more. He, of course, heard the formula as a powerful repudiation, and sent her home, although she protested that she had been tricked. She was from that time considered married, and so bound not to marry another man.

Tamam Kahn, Untold - A History of the Wives of Prophet Muhammad, Monkfish Book Publishing, 2010

Divorce

Allah's revealed truths pertaining to divorce are said to be an improvement over pre-Islamic laws and traditions. These must have been abysmal for God's revelations pertaining to the split-up of legally married couples to be considered an improvement where women are concerned.

A husband does not need a reason or permission to divorce any of his wives. He simply has to tell her, "I divorce you," and wait until his soon-to-be ex-wife has experienced three menstrual cycles, then it's over. For a woman, it is a little more complicated. She can, however, simplify the whole process and remain in God's good books if she agrees to pay her husband a ransom.

2:229 Divorce may be pronounced twice. Then they (women) are to be retained in a rightful manner or released with kindness. And it is unlawful for you [men] to take back anything of what you have given them unless both parties fear that they cannot comply with Allah's Bounds (by obeying His commands). If you fear that they cannot do that,

then it is no offence if the woman ransoms herself [pays money to be set free]. Those are the bounds set by Allah. Do not transgress them. Those who transgress the bounds set by Allah are the wrongdoers.

Once being informed by her husband that they are no longer husband and wife, a divorced woman is expected to leave the family home after experiencing her third menstrual cycle. Her former husband can allow her to stay longer if he wishes, as long as it is not for ulterior motives, for example to obtain a larger ransom.

2:231 If you divorce [your] women and they reach the end of their [waiting] period, retain them in an honourable manner or release them in an honourable manner. Do not, however, retain them for the sake of causing them harm and in order to commit aggression (by forcing them to ransom themselves, or by retaining them for a longer period). Whoever does that shall do wrong to himself. Do not make a mockery of Allah's Revelations; and remember the Grace Allah has bestowed upon you, and the Book (the Koran) and the wisdom He has revealed to you in order to admonish you. Fear Allah and know that He knows everything.

God recommends that divorced women be provided with an affordable provision. Don't assume that this is like alimony; it is usually for no more than a year, and they may have to pay for this *sustenance* depending on your interpretation of "affordable provision."

2:241 Divorce women should be provided with an affordable provision. This is incumbent on the righteous.

2:242 Thus Allah makes clear to you His Revelations, so that you may understand.

If you have never touched a lawfully wedded spouse, you can send her away on a moment's notice as long as it is done in an *honourable* way.

33:49 O believers, if you marry believing women then divorce them, before touching them, you owe them no fixed term to reckon. So make provision for them and set them free in an honourable way.

Six of the fourteen revealed truths pertaining to divorce can be found in an aptly titled surah.

THE DIVORCE

65 At-Talâq

*In the Name of Allah,
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

65:1 O Prophet, if you divorce your women, divorce them when they have completed their menstrual period. Calculate the period and fear Allah your Lord. Do not drive them out of their homes, and let them not go out, unless they have committed a manifest foul act. Those are the bounds of Allah. He who transgresses the bounds of Allah has surely wronged himself. You do not know, Allah may perhaps bring about something new after that.

If the divorce leaves the divorcer inconvenienced in any way and he has followed Allah's instructions to the letter, God will right the situation. As to the divorcee, she is on her own, unless her former husband decides to keep her in some other capacity.

65:2 Then, when they have reached their term, retain them honourably or part with them honourably, calling two just witnesses from among yourselves. Administer the witnessing to Allah Himself. By that is exhorted whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day. He who fears Allah, He will grant him a way out;

65:3 And He will provide for him from sources he could never conceive. He who puts his trust in Allah, Allah will be sufficient unto him. Allah shall attain His goal. Allah has meted out a measure for everything.

How long should you retain a woman or a girl who is not menstruating, such as a child bride, or one who is pregnant?

65:4 As for those of your women who have despaired of menstruation, if you are in doubt, then their term shall be three months; and those too who have not menstruated yet. As to those women with child, their term shall be upon delivering their burden. He who fears Allah, Allah will grant him relief in his affair.

65:5 That is Allah's Command, which He has sent down to you; and he who fears Allah, He will acquit him of his sins and amplify his reward.

A wife can be disposed of without further ado except in the case of a spouse pregnant with her soon-to-be ex-husband's child. In this instance, her husband has the option of paying her a wage to suckle his newborn or finding someone else if they can't come to an agreement.

65:6 Put them up where you are lodged, according to your means, and do not badger them so as to make life difficult for them. If they are with child, support them until they deliver their burden; and if they suckle for you, then pay them their wages. Confer with each other honourably; but if you are at odds, let another woman suckle him.

God is unclear, apart from that ransom thing, as to how a believing woman can get a divorce if she doesn't have the money to buy her freedom and her husband won't let her go, unless there is something in it for him.

A husband's wealth remains largely unchanged after a divorce, especially if he gets to keep all or part of the dowry¹³ as part of the ransom, the wife's only means of support after she has been sent packing.

Little girls learning God's rules regarding their easy disposal if their future husband is unhappy with them will be reminded about what Allah said about their deficiencies in mind and body, e.g., bad memory, menstruation. As if this wasn't demeaning enough leave it to a god, who chose a merchant as his ultimate spokesman, to quantify their shortcomings in our equivalent of dollars and cents.

Dad Dies: Who Gets What!

Which came first: the divine instructions that led to the seclusion of believing women or those that made it easier for men to accumulate wealth at the expense of believing women? An argument could be made that the first made the second inevitable.

The severe dress code, the denial of an education at least equal to a man's, and the restrictions placed on women's freedom of movement in traditional Islamic communities make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for women to work in well-remunerated jobs outside the home. Also, most of the wealth that a female may accumulate, over which her husband or male guardian has almost complete control, must under Allah's inheritance and property laws, sooner or later —

¹³ In Islam, the dowry is the obligatory gift a husband gives to his new wife.

usually sooner – end up in the pockets of her husband, her husband's brothers, her husband's parents and her male offspring. The net result is to make women almost totally subservient and beholden to the men who have the means of providing them with everything from the basic necessities of life to simple luxuries.

The following is a revelation pertaining to the disposition of a recently deceased father's property, the infamous two-for-one verse where God decrees that a sister is only entitled to half the share of a brother.

4:11 Allah commands you, with respect to your children, that the male shall inherit the equivalent of the share of two females. If there be more than two females, then they should receive two-thirds of what he (the deceased father) leaves; but if there is only one female, she is entitled to one-half. To each of his parents, one-sixth of what he leaves, if he has any children; but if he has no children, then his parents will inherit him, the mother receiving one third. But if he has any brothers, then his mother receives one-sixth, after any will he had made or any debt he had incurred [is taken care of]...

The verse ends with God acknowledging that it is difficult to choose who is the better investment, fathers or sons (daughters and mothers are not mentioned) when it comes to the proceeds of an inheritance, and finishes with the usual praise for the rule maker.

4:11 Your fathers and sons – you know not who of them is of greater advantage to you. This is a law from Allah; Allah surely is All-Knowing, Forbearing.

Lest they missed it the first time, God reminds the believers of His two-for-one rule in His instructions on the disposition of an inheritance when the only beneficiaries are brothers and sisters of the deceased.

4:176 [If] they consult you, say: "Allah enjoins you regarding him who dies leaving neither children nor parents. If he leaves a sister; she is entitled to half of what he leaves behind; and he inherits her if she has no children. If he leaves two sisters, they are entitled to two-thirds of what he leaves behind; but if they are brothers and sisters the male will have the equivalent of the share of two females. Allah makes it clear to you lest you go astray. Allah has full knowledge of everything!"

What about the family home? From my reading of the following revelation, the former wives of the dearly departed are allowed to stay

in the family home for up to a year before the relatives of the deceased husband move in and they have to move out.

2:240 Those of you who die leaving wives behind should bequeath to them a year's provision without turning [them] out (from their homes). If however, they leave [their homes], then you (the relatives of the dead) incur no offence for what they do in a rightful way to themselves. Allah is Mighty, Wise.

Little girls will be told that the reason little boys get a bigger share is because God compels them, when they grow up, to spend some of that money looking after them.

4:34 Men are in charge of women, because Allah has made some of them excel the others, and because they spend some of their wealth. Hence righteous women are obedient, guarding the unseen which Allah has guarded. And those of them that you fear might rebel, admonish them and abandon them in their beds and beat them. Should they obey you, do not seek a way of harming them; for Allah is Sublime and Great!

A Vicious Circle

It really is a clever set-up worthy of a god. Making women dependent and beholden to the very men who, on the basis of divine decrees—whether they be about what a woman is entitled to as a result of a divorce or the death of a parent—have legally deprived them of their rightful property, which would have given them the freedom to make their own choices on how they wished to live their lives.

Little girls repeating Allah's instructions pertaining to divorce and wills as part of their initiation into the Faith are too young to appreciate the inherent injustice. Further, if their indoctrination is thorough and sustained into adulthood, they will never question why *a woman, under a system that has made her dependent on men for her wellbeing, is denied her fair share because she is dependent on men for her wellbeing*. Of course, if she dares express misgivings, she knows from her reading of the Koran that the Fire will be waiting.

4:13 These are the Ordinances from Allah, and whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, He will admit into Gardens beneath which rivers flow, abiding therein forever. That is the great victory!

4:14 But whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger and transgresses His bounds, He will admit into the Fire, wherein he shall abide forever, and his will be a demeaning punishment

KILLERS KEEPERS

There are no universal moral absolutes in the Koran like not killing or absconding with another person's property. What we could consider moral absolutes, in that holy book, only apply to believers. Unlike the believers, unbelievers have no inalienable right to life or property. They exist at the pleasure of the believers. A believer who is in a position to do so is expected to deal harshly with unbelievers.

9:123 O you who believe, fight those of the unbelievers who are near to you and let them see how harsh you can be. Know that Allah is with the righteous.

If the unbelievers are People of the Book, i.e., Jews and Christians, he can tax them or kill them if they refuse to submissively pay the Jizya, a poll-tax (a tax levied on people rather than on property) so that their lives might be spared.

9:29 Fight those among the People of the Book who do not believe in Allah and the Last Day, do not forbid what Allah and His Messenger have forbidden and do not profess the true religion, till they pay the poll-tax out of hand and submissively.

Not People of the Book? It is convert or die! The property of the unbelievers, the so-called booty, is the reward in the here-and-now, with expectations of an even greater reward in the Hereafter for a believer who rids the world of unbelievers.

Muslim children mouthing the Koran learn that the property of those they may eventually murder in Allah's Cause is theirs to keep by special dispensation from God for Muslims only.

8:68 But for a prior ordinance of Allah, you would have been afflicted on account of what you have taken (an ordinance which made it lawful for Muslims to take spoils and captives) by a terrible punishment.

What is considered further confirmation of the believers' preponderant property rights is Muhammad saying, "While I was sleeping, the keys of the treasures of the world were brought to me and put in my hand."

This appeared in a hadith where he endorses terror as a tactic to get people to submit to the god for whom he claimed to speak.

Narrated Abu Huraira:

Allah's Apostle said, "I have been sent with the shortest expressions bearing the widest meanings, and I have been made victorious with terror (cast in the hearts of the enemy), and while I was sleeping, the keys of the treasures of the world were brought to me and put in my hand."

Bukhari 52.220

Booty, the wives and daughters of the unbelievers in particular, played a significant part in attracting young men to Islam. In making war on the unbelievers, Allah reminded the believers not to let the booty distract them (like happened at Uhud) from their immediate goal, which is shedding the blood of those who refuse to submit to His Will.

8:67 It is not up to any Prophet to take captives except after too much blood is shed (after the enemy is hard hit and subdued) in the land. You desire the fleeting goods of this world, but Allah desires the Hereafter, and Allah is Mighty, Wise.

When a stranger greeted a Muslim with the expression "As-salam 'alaykum" ('Peace be on you'), it signified that he was one of them. Some ignored the utterance and killed the greeter to get at his property, assuming he was lying. God warned the believers not to let their lust for booty cause them to kill a believer by mistake.

4:94 O believers, if you journey in the Way of Allah, be discerning and do not say to him who greets you: "You are not a believer", seeking the fleeting goods of the present life. For with Allah are abundant gains. This is how you were before and Allah has been gracious to you; so discern well. Allah is indeed fully aware of what you do!

SLAVE GIRLS, OH BOY!

30:29 Yet, the wrongdoers have followed their fancies without knowledge. Who, then, will guide those whom Allah has led astray and who have no supporters?

30:30 So, set you face towards religion uprightly. It is the original nature according to which Allah fashioned mankind. There is no altering Allah's Creation. That is the true religion; but most men do not know.

In 2002, the United Nations reported that the number of people forced into slavery around the world had risen to an estimated twenty-seven million. Irshad Manji, the author of *The Trouble with Islam: A Wake-up Call For Honesty and Change*, mentions the resurgence of the slave trade in African countries that have adopted the Koran as the equivalent of their constitution. Slavery, slave girls in particular, are part of "the true religion" and there is no getting around it; that would be "altering Allah's Creation." Slave girls were very much in the news in the territory conquered by the Koran-abiding Islamic State. They were the main attraction for many of the young men who answered the call of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi to come and fight under its Black Banner.

The Koran explicitly sanctions slavery, and what the Koran allows no one can deny; that would be like contradicting God. When Allah reveals the sex of a slave in a revelation, she is always female. She is "what your right hands possess." Slave girls are usually captives of war (the wives and daughters of an enemy killed in battle) or females given as settlement of a debt or other obligations such as compensation to resolve a blood-feud.

In verses where the sex of the slave is not mentioned, you have to assume it is a male slave that God is suggesting should be freed, as in the following revelation where He recommends a husband free a slave as penance for ignoring his wife's sexual needs, after claiming she reminded him of his mother, and then wanting to get back together to indulge in more than social intercourse.

58:3 And those who say of their wives: "You are like our mother's back", then retract what they said, have to free a

slave before touching each other. That is what you are admonished, and Allah is Fully Aware of what you do.

For a female slave to gain her freedom is not that simple. Her only choice may be exchanging one type of servitude for another. Under normal circumstances, slaves were only freed when they had the means to look after themselves. The seclusion of women and their property-like status meant that a female slave could never be expected to be able to look after herself. Her slave status was more or less a lifetime thing. That is, unless she was a believer and her proprietor decided to make her one of his four permanent wives, or gave her in marriage to another believer in return for some benefit or to settle an obligation.

2:221 Do not marry unbelieving women (polytheists) until they believe. A believing slave-girl is certainly better than an unbelieving woman, even if the latter pleases you. And do not give your women (believing women) in marriage to polytheists until they believe. A believing slave is certainly better than a polytheist, even if the latter pleases you. Those (the polytheists) call to the Fire and Allah calls to Paradise and Forgiveness by His Leave; and He makes clear His Revelations to mankind so that they may be mindful.

Don't give your slave girls so much that they might be mistaken for women who are entitled to slightly more, e.g., spouses.

16:71 Allah has favoured some of you over others in provision; but those favoured will not give their provision to those whom their right hands possess so as to be equal therein. Will they then deny Allah's blessings?

Explaining the sanctity of slavery, to a daughter in particular who may ask why there is nothing in Allah's Book about slave boys for her, must be difficult, if it is even attempted – which I doubt. That is the beauty of rote learning. No explanation required.

The Koran's explicit condoning of slavery, females preferred, and the increase in the number of slaves around the world, especially in countries where traditional Islam finds acceptance, has to be particularly worrisome for non-traditional believers and unbelievers alike. To condition children to accept slavery as "normal" because it has Allah's Seal of Approval is as abhorrent as the practice itself and can only make a bad situation worse.

88 Slave Girls, Oh Boy!

The question remains: why did God, in revelations that were meant to guide mankind for thousands of years, not simply abolish slavery? Believers would say it is because Allah sees nothing wrong in enslaving your fellow men, women and children as long as it is done in accordance with the standard slavery practices prescribed in the Koran. They are probably right. Also, in the brutal, inescapable logic of Islam, how could a believer make amends for a transgression where a slave is part of the penance if he was not allowed to own slaves in the first place?

There may be another reason. Allah was very fond of Muhammad. His abolition of slavery would not only have made his mission to get people to submit to His Will that much more difficult but would have severely impacted His spokesman's net worth. Reason enough perhaps?

Muhammad would not part with his slave girls even to help out the daughter who gave him two grandsons.

Narrated Ali:

Fatima complained of what she suffered from the hand mill and from grinding, when she got the news that some slave girls of the booty had been brought to Allah's Apostle. She went to him to ask for a maid-servant, but she could not find him, and told Aisha of her need. When the Prophet came, Aisha informed him of that.

The Prophet came to our house when we had gone to our beds. (On seeing the Prophet) we were going to get up, but he said, 'Keep at your places.'

I felt the coolness of the Prophet's feet on my chest. Then he said, "Shall I tell you a thing which is better than what you asked me for? When you go to your beds, say: Allahu Akbar (i.e. Allah is Greater)' for 34 times, and Alhamdu Lillah (i.e. all the praises are for Allah)' for 33 times, and Subhan Allah (i.e. Glorified be Allah) for 33 times. This is better for you than what you have requested."

Bukhari 53.344

ALLAH REALLY HATES HOMOSEXUALS

God really hates homosexuals and this loathing is reflected in two 2016 surveys of adult Muslims attitude towards homosexuals. In Britain, more than 52% would not tolerate them; in Canada, that number has risen to 43%¹⁴. Could exposing children to Allah's thinking on sexual relations between men have something to do with it, and should we be worried?

29:44 Allah created the heavens and the earth in truth. Surely there is in that a sign for those who believe.

29:45 Recite what has been revealed to you of the Book and perform the prayer. Prayer surely forbids the foul act and abomination. Allah's remembrance is greater and Allah knows what you do.

In a previous chapter, I alluded to the difficulties mothers face in looking to provide their six- and seven-year-olds with a coherent understanding of sex between men and women, including where babies come from, using the Koran as their guide. Then there is what God refers to as "the foul act." The "foul" act, as Allah explains early on in chapter 7, is when men approach other men "lustily."

Explaining what God means by "lustily" will be easy for mothers of inquisitive daughters and sons compared to describing sodomy. Allah will remind the believers what He thinks about homosexual relationships in at least four retellings of the story of Lot, in four different surahs no less. In one retelling, He even includes Abraham. Could His feelings on this matter be any clearer?

Surah 7, The Ramparts

Before the people of Lot, homosexuality was unknown in the ancient world.

¹⁴ Almost half of believers polled, 43%, agreed with the statement: 'Homosexuality SHOULD NOT be accepted by society'.

Environics' Survey of Muslims in Canada, 2016

7:80 And [remember] Lot when he said to his people: "Do you commit indecencies which no one in the whole world committed before you?"

7:81 "You approach men instead of women lustfully; you are rather a people given to excess."

7:82 His people's response was simply to say: "Expel them (Lot and his people) from your city; for they are men who wish to remain chaste."

7:83 So We delivered him and his household, except for his wife who stayed behind.

Surah 26, The Poets

26:160 The people of Lot denounced the Messengers as liars.

26:161 When their brother Lot said to them; "Do you not fear God?"

26:162 "I am a faithful Messenger to you;

26:163 "So, fear Allah and obey me.

26:164 "I do not ask you any wage for this; my wage is with the Lord of the Worlds.

26:165 "Do you approach the males from all of mankind;

26:166 "And leave the wives that your Lord created for you? No, you are a transgressing people."

26:167 They said: "If you will not desist, O Lot, you will certainly be one of those expelled."

26:168 He said: "I am a detester of your deed.

26:169 "Lord, save me and my family from what they do."

26:170 So, We delivered him and his family, all together.

26:171 Except for an old woman who was one of those who lingered behind.

Surah 27, The Ants

27:53 And We delivered those who believed and were God-fearing.

27:54 And Lot, when he said to his people: "Do you commit the foul act, while you perceive?"

27:55 "What then, do you approach men lustfully, instead of women? No, you are an ignorant people."

27:56 The only response of his people was to say: "Drive the family of Lot out of your city. They are a people who keep themselves clean."

27:57 We delivered him and his family, except for his wife; We decreed that she should stay behind.

Surah 29, The Spider

Further confirmation that, before the people of Lot did it, sodomy was unknown in the ancient world:

29:28 And [remember] Lot, when he said to his people: "You are committing the foul act (sodomy) which no one in the whole world committed before you."

29:29 "You approach men and waylay the traveler and commit in your gatherings reprehensible acts." To which the only reply of his people was: "Bring upon us Allah's punishment if you are truthful."

29:30 He said: "Lord, support me against the workers of corruption."

29:31 When Our Emissaries (the angels) brought Abraham the good news, they said: "We are going to destroy the inhabitants of this city. Its inhabitants have indeed been wrongdoers."

29:32 He said: "Lot is in it"; they said: "We know better who is in it. We shall deliver him and his household, except for his wife¹⁵; for she is one of those who will stay behind."

¹⁵ The woman left behind obviously fascinates Allah. In *The Spider*, He mentions her not once, but twice. The second time:

29:33 Then, when our Emissaries came to Lot, he was troubled and distressed on their account, and they said: "Do not fear and do not grieve; and we shall deliver you and your household, except for your wife; she is one of those who will stay behind."

PARADISE, THE FINAL OBSCENITY

In Paradise, husbands will be having almost non-stop sex, the best thing heaven has to offer, while wives remain secluded in “pavilions” waiting for their husband to pay them a visit—if he can tear himself away from his houris and voluptuous maidens all vying for his attention. I would not explain this arrangement to children so it becomes their life goal to do whatever it takes to get there (and the sooner, the better) , but obviously this is not beyond the capability of mothers and the clerics and educators who support their efforts to get their progeny to the Khatmi-Koran and beyond.

The idea of Paradise must be depressing for Muslim men who aspire to more than a hedonistic lifestyle when they die to know that, in the end, the best that Allah’s afterlife has to offer is permanent erections and non-stop, assembly-line sex with perpetual virgins and houris.

In teaching her children, a mother will have to address questions about round-breasted mates, blushing maidens, pure virgins and houris—whom children may somewhat correctly equate with robots in the shape of little girls—and what they are doing in Paradise. Mothers may want to avail themselves of the opinions of clerics and scholars as I have in the following excerpt *from Love, Sex and Islam* (Boreal Books, 2020):

Seven Stacked Sexopoles

56:15 Upon beds interwoven with gold;

56:16 Reclining upon them, facing each other.

56:17 While immortal youths go around them,

56:18 With goblets, pitchers and a cup of limpid drink.

56:19 Their heads do not ache from it and they do not become intoxicated.

56:20 And with such fruit as they care to choose;

56:21 And such flesh of fowl as they desire;

56:22 And wide-eyed houris,

56:23 Like hidden pearls;

56:24 As a reward for what they used to do.

In addition to houris, the lounging men enjoying a meal of chicken and fruit with non-alcoholic beverages will be offered a selection of wide-eyed maidens who "resemble hidden pearls."

37:45 A cup of pure spring water shall be passed around them;

37:46 Snow-white, a delight to drinkers.

37:47 Wherein there is no gall and they are not intoxicated by it.

37:48 And they also shall have wide-eyed maidens averting their gaze.

37:49 They resemble hidden pearls.

Scholars are all over the place as to who these maidens are. Respected Islamic information site Islamicstudies.info speculates that these maidens are probably "innocent girls who died immature and Allah will recreate them as young and beautiful women." That is as good a far-fetched explanation as any.

In addition to the houris skilled in the sexual arts, some believers will also be able to enjoy extra-virginal virgins.

56:35 We have formed them originally;

56:36 And made them pure virgins,

56:37 Tender and unageing,

56:38 For the Companions of the Right;

56:39 A throng of the ancients,

56:40 And a throng of the latecomers.

The Companions of the Right refers to "of the Right Hand," i.e., believers who were given their book of good and bad deeds in their right hand on Judgement Day before being admitted into Paradise. Remember, in Islam, right is good, left is bad. As to "the ancients," one explanation is that it is a reference to those who first embraced Islam, and conversely "the latecomers" were the last to do so. Why God would make such a distinction is not clear as is His distinction between your run-of-the-mill virgin and a pure one, until you read Islamicstudies.info's explanation of Revelation 56:36:

This signifies the virtuous women of the world, who will enter Paradise on the basis of their faith and good works. Allah will make them young no matter how aged they might have died in the world; will make them beautiful whether or not they were beautiful in the world; and will make them virgins whether they died virgins in the world or after bearing children. If their husbands also entered Paradise with them, they would be joined with them. Otherwise, Allah will wed them to another dweller in Paradise.

The maidens may be hot, but the jinn are even hotter. Literally!

55:56 Therein are maidens lowering their glances and they have not been touched, before them by any man or jinn.

55:15 And He created the jinn from tongues of fire.

Of all the characters in the Koran, jinns (referred to collectively as the jinn) are the most fascinating. The caricature of the genie is undoubtedly based on this creature of the Koran. The jinn are Allah's most versatile and mischievous creation. They even have a chapter of the Koran named after them: Surah 72, *The Jinn*. Pre-Islamic Arabs believed in the existence of the jinn, which may explain their significant presence throughout the Koran.

The jinn are a race of their own. Both humans and the jinn will be asked to deny the bounties that are the couches they recline upon and the fruit trees within reach.

55:31 We shall attend to you, O two races (Jinn and humans)?

...

55:54 Reclining upon couches whose linings are of brocade and the fruits of the two gardens are near at hand.

55:55 So, which of your Lord's Bounties do you both (jinn and humans) deny?

What to make of a curious revelation where wives are to be found reclining with their husbands, surrounded by their spouses' promised rewards?

36:55 Today the Companions of Paradise are busy enjoying themselves;

36:56 Together with their spouses they are reclining on couches in the shade.

Wives will avert their gazes as they compete with wide-eyed maidens, pure virgins and the houris for the attention of their lolling husbands.

38:49 This is a Reminder and the God-fearing will surely have a fair resort.

38:50 Gardens of Eden whereof the gates are wide-open for them.

38:51 Reclining therein and calling for abundant fruit and beverage.

38:52 And they have mates of equal age, averting their gaze.

38:53 "This is what you are promised for the Day of Reckoning.

38:54 "This is our provision which will not end."

According to Allah's spokesman, "And they have mates of equal age" from Revelation 38:52 means that, upon entering Paradise, men and the odd woman will be transformed into 30- or 33-year-olds. This is revealed in a saheeh hadith, a saying of Muhammad that is considered "sound and healthy."

With regard to their ages, they will all enter Paradise at the age of strength and youth, thirty-three years old. It was narrated from Mu'aadh ibn Jabal that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "The people of Paradise will enter Paradise hairless, beardless with their eyes anointed with kohl, aged thirty or thirty-three years."

al-Tirmidhi 2545

That only leaves the "round-breasted mates," those provided with an Allah-supplied breast enhancement who were previously deficient in that respect.

78:31 The God-fearing will score a victory,

78:32 Gardens and vineyards,

78:33 And round-breasted mates,

78:34 And a brim-full cup.

55:77 So, which of your Lord's Bounties do you both (Jinn and humans) deny?

55:78 Blessed be the Name of your Lord, full of majesty and splendour.

Deserving males who would rather have white-skinned, immortal boys waiting on them instead of purified wives, virtuous blushing maidens, pure virgins, or voluptuous, aroused houris will not be disappointed.

52:24 And boys of their own will go around them, as if they were hidden pearls.

76:19 And there go round them immortal boys; when you see them, you will think that they are scattered pearls.

What do you call a place where men lounge, reclining, drinking with other men and picking from platters of food while deciding which female, or perhaps adolescent boy, on parade will next service them? A whorehouse comes to mind.

Just like the operator of a well-run brothel, Allah keeps His supply of facsimiles and the real thing out of reach until needed.

55:70 Therein are beautiful virtuous maidens.

55:72 Wide-eyed, cloistered in pavilions.

55:74 No man or jinn touched them before.

55:76 Reclining upon green cushions and superb rugs.

You could, perhaps, compare it to a whorehouse in Shia Islam territory that recognizes temporary marriages, if Allah allowed such marriages in Paradise. The alleged branding of the houris only reinforces the permanency of a match made in Heaven.

44:54 Thus it will be; and we gave them wide-eyed houris in marriage.

52:20 Reclining on ranged couches, and We shall wed them to wide-eyed houris.

According to Malcolm Clark, Professor Emeritus of Religion at Butler University, in a Tradition of the Prophet, one of the houris' voluptuous breasts is branded with the name of her husband and the other with the name of her husband's benefactor, Allah. This will certainly make it easier for men to keep track of their herd of houris, making accidental fornication with another owner's filly less likely.

Even if temporary marriages were allowed in the Hereafter, a whorehouse is where you go to have sex. In Paradise, you may have

sex just about anywhere, anytime: on those open air couches is assumed; in the tent; and in the apartment, house or palace you have been assigned by Allah depending on your devotion to His Cause while in the land where a digestive track is not a luxury.

Jabir reported:

I heard Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him) as saying that the inmates of Paradise would eat and drink but would neither spit, nor pass water, nor void excrement, nor suffer catarrh. It was said: Then, what would happen with food?

Thereupon he said: They would belch and sweat (and it would be over with their food), and their sweat would be that of musk and they would glorify and praise Allah as easily as you breathe.

Sahih Muslim 40.6798

Believers will even engage in sex in mosques, which, in Paradise, are private property.

Narrated Ubdaidullah Al-Khawlani:

I heard Uthman bin Affan saying, when people argued too much about his intention to reconstruct the mosque of Allah's Apostle, "You have talked too much. I heard the Prophet saying, 'Whoever built a mosque, Allah would build for him a similar place in Paradise.'"

Bukhari 8.441

In Paradise, from His perch in the 7th heaven—it is a safe assumption that the greatest god of all can see through anything—Allah, like the ultimate voyeur, will be able to watch His favourite gender doing it ad nauseam, having provided them, according to a respected 16th cleric, with permanent erections with which to pummel, one after the other, the engineered “appetizing vaginas” with regenerative hymens.

Each time we sleep with a houri we find her virgin. Besides, the penis of the Elected never softens. The erection is eternal; the sensation that you feel each time you make love is utterly delicious and out of this world and were you to experience it in this world you would faint. Each chosen one [Muslim] will marry seventy [sic] houris, besides the women he married on earth, and all will have appetizing vaginas.

Al-Suyuti (died 1505)

Men will be able to do it 24/7 since they won't require sleep or grow weary from all that pounding, and they will be grateful to Allah for that as well.

15:48 They shall not be touched by fatigue therein, nor will they be driven out.

35:34 They say: "Praise be to Allah Who lifted off our sorrow. Our Lord is indeed All-Forgiving, All-Thankful.

35:35 "He who out of His Bounty has made us dwell in the Abode of Everlasting Life, where no fatigue will touch us, nor any weariness."

People having sex everywhere Allah looks will be the result of men having, apart from toasting their good fortune and praising God, next to nothing else to do, with no definitive truth left to discover and everything done for them—including making what they eat disappear like magic once it has entered the esophagus, so that even a trip to the can is unnecessary.

The most pathetic reason why fornication will be so prevalent in Paradise is that you will have no one to care for. Any young daughters still at home when they died will, when resurrected, be your age and married off by Allah to a guy you never met. The same goes for male children, now thirty-something men; Allah will have married them off to houris and spinsters and given them a place of their own. All your male relatives, including your father, grandfather and so on, will have similarly been looked after, now thirty-something and enjoying their own real and fake females. Some may even be enjoying a greater number than you on a higher level of Paradise because of a more ghastly murderous sacrifice in Allah's Cause, a level to which you will not have access, even if a stairway between the different levels Paradises is available.

With everyone fornicating their brains out because they have not much else to do, a more apt description for Paradise than a whorehouse might be a sex metropolis or more precisely, seven sexopoles; like different layers of a wedding cake, each is separated and held up by pillars not unlike those that stop the entirety of Paradise from crashing into the Earth. On the top layer, reminiscent of the statuette of the bride and groom, Allah sits on His Throne with His beloved spokesperson, the one who explained it all, by His side.

Cleric Mohammed Yusuf, the deceased leader of Boko Haram, Nigeria's largest gathering of holy warriors (whose designation literally means "non-Islamic education is a sin"), said in a 2009 BBC interview that a round Earth, space, and the stars are all an illusion created by Allah. He maintained that the universe is what the Koran says it is: a seven-layered Paradise anchored to a flat Earth with the sun acting as a large lamp to illuminate it all.

78:12 And built above you seven mighty [heavens]?

78:13 And created a shining lamp?

Much of our earthly existence is occupied with the pursuit of knowledge and the ultimate truth. Who would have thought that the ultimate truth, exclusively revealed to a 7th century illiterate, is a seven-stacked oasis? Or that the layer closest to the earth is a well-guarded canopy lit by lamps which we mistook for stars?

21:32 And We made the sky a well-guarded canopy; and they still turn away from its signs.

41:12 Then He completed them as seven heavens in two days and assigned to each heaven its proper order. And We adorned the lower heaven with lamps as protection (from the demons). That is the determination of the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing.

Muhammad, in his description of Paradise, reminded his listeners that there are ways to ensure a place in the best accommodations Paradise has to offer.

Narrated Samura:

The Prophet said, "Last night two men came to me (in a dream) and made me ascend a tree and then admitted me into a better and superior house, better of which I have never seen. One of them said, 'This house is the house of martyrs.'"

Bukhari 52.49

What God's spokesman refers to as Firdaus may be the place to find the best houris a god can manufacture.

Narrated Anas:

Um (the mother of) Haritha came to Allah's Apostle after Haritha had been martyred on the Day (of the battle) of Badr by an arrow thrown by an unknown person.

She said, "O Allah's Apostle! You know the position of Haritha in my heart (i.e. how dear to me he was), so if he is in Paradise, I will not weep for him, or otherwise, you will see what I will do."

The Prophet said, "Are you mad? Is there only one Paradise? There are many Paradises, and he is in the highest Paradise of Firdaus."

The Prophet added, "A forenoon journey or an afternoon journey in Allah's Cause is better than the whole world and whatever is in it; and a place equal to an arrow bow of anyone of you, or a place equal to a foot in Paradise is better than the whole world and whatever is in it; and if one of the women of Paradise looked at the earth, she would fill the whole space between them (the earth and the heaven) with light, and would fill whatever is in between them, with perfume, and the veil of her face is better than the whole world and whatever is in it."

Bukhari 76.572

The 9/11 terrorists obviously took Muhammad at his word. Right now they are in Firdaus pounding houris on their couches, feasting on fresh hymens and grapes for an eternity, all the while enjoying the spectacle of the men, women and children they slaughtered roasting in Hell.

Sex is Allah's reward for doing good, with men like the 9/11 terrorists obviously doing the most good in His eyes.

55:60 Shall the reward of beneficence be other than beneficence?

Was it worth it, the promised sex in return for so many innocent people dying a horrible death? Some blown to bits, others burnt alive by exploding jet fuel and still others jumping to their deaths in the plaza below to escape the fire above; the survivors of the initial attack crushed between slabs of concrete as the buildings collapsed, their lives squeezed out of them like so much toothpaste.

Even if sex *is* better in the Hereafter, most people would not think it worth the price. But, what if it isn't? What if sex is *not* better in the Hereafter and you could prove it and change the minds of people like Muhammad Atta, the ringleader of the 9/11 terrorists?

THE PETRA-KHIDR INFLUENCE

In a world filled with weapons of mass destruction, it has to be the height of folly to justify to children Allah's slaughter of countless innocent men, women and children by doing to their cities what could be duplicated today by a terrorist with a nuclear weapon acting on His behalf. In the Koran, not satisfied with Sodom and Gomorrah, whose names He can't be bothered to remember, God brags about annihilating more than a handful of cities as an example of His pitiless, devastating might.

Not surprisingly, perhaps, the cities Allah crows about destroying were ones with which Muhammad was familiar, from stories he heard and from stumbling unto ruins, as is undoubtedly the case with Petra. He could not have avoided it on his numerous treks north from Mecca to Syria during his more than two decades as an itinerant merchant. This was before the Almighty chose him as His mouthpiece.

To Allah and Muhammad, Petra was Thamud. The people of Thamud were wiped out for not heeding the warning of the prophet Salih, the only non-biblical seer, apart from Muhammad, found in the Koran (recommended reading: *Getting to Know Allah*, Boreal Books, *Salih and the Destruction of Thamud*). God is very proud of what He did to the inhabitants of Petra and their city. In at least nine surahs, Thamud is mentioned as a place and a people that He obliterated. If not for this last admission, you might confuse Allah's passion for Petra with that of a tourist who visits an impressive faraway shrine and keeps on returning to it during conversations to impress his friends.

My Book of Islam tells a most succinct and coherent, if simplified, account of the genocide, complete with an outline of the still-existing façade carved in rock. The authors, of course, reassure children that God got the believers to leave before He unleashed his murderous wrath; as if this made it alright, even if He did not have to, according Khidr.

Khidr makes another of the most chilling and far-reaching observations in the Koran, whose significance was all too evident in the attack on the World Trade Center. Allah uses his sinking of a ship, he and Moses

boarded to justify killing believers if it means unbelievers will not escape with their lives.

18:71 So, they set out; but no sooner had they boarded the ship that he made a hole in it. He (Moses) said: "Have you made a hole in it so as to drown its passengers? You have indeed done a grievous thing."

At the end of their journey together, Khidr tells Moses why he sunk the ship.

18:79 "As for the ship, it belonged to some poor fellows who worked upon the sea. I wanted to damage it, because, on their trail, there was a king, who was seizing every ship by force.

Should the kids still harbour any doubts about killing a bunch of believers later in life and leaving a few dead believers as collateral damage, they may be provided assurances that God will do right by the believers they may kill in their zeal to rid the world of those who won't acknowledge Allah's Supremacy. They have His spokesman's word on it:

Narrated Ibn Umar:

Allah's Apostle said, "If Allah sends punishment upon a nation then it befalls upon the whole population indiscriminately and then they will be resurrected (and judged) according to their deeds."

Bukhari 88.224

The usual excuse for Allah turning a city into rubble and crushing its inhabitants beneath—that is, when He is not showering them with hot rocks or shrivelling them to death in hot hurricane force winds—is a disregard of a stranger's or kin's warning of His pitiless vengeance if they did not do as they were told. In *My Book of Islam*, the children are informed it is the killing of the warner's camel, a white she-camel provided as proof that Salih is indeed an emissary from the Almighty that sends God on another of His trademark genocidal rampages. In the Koran, the camel is only hamstrung, but killing the camel requires no explanation, and for children it is a better justification for what comes after.

In one surah, the camel is hamstrung after Salih requests that it be allowed to graze.

11:64 "O my people, here is the she-camel of Allah, a sign onto you. Let her graze in Allah's land and do not do her any harm, lest a swift punishment should overtake you."

11:65 However, they hamstrung her, and so he said: "[You can] stay in your houses [only] for three days. This is a promise which will not be belied."

11:66 Then, when our Command came, We saved Salih and those who believed with him, by a mercy of Our Own, from the disgrace of that day. Your Lord is truly the Strong, and Mighty.

11:67 And the evildoers were overtaken by the [thundering] cry and they lay prostrate in their own homes,

11:68 As if they never dwelt therein. Truly, Thamud disbelieved their Lord. Away with Thamud!

In another, the camel is hamstrung after Salih asks that they respect its drinking schedule.

26:155 He said: "This is a she-camel; this has a drinking day, and you have a fixed drinking day.

26:156 "Do not cause her any harm, or else the punishment of a Great Day will smite you."

26:157 However, they hamstrung her, and became full of remorse.

It did not matter that the people who hamstrung the camel regretted their action; it is "Away with Thamud!"

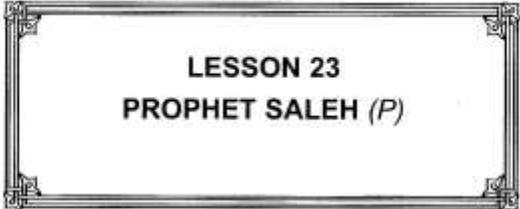
11:66 Then, when our Command came, We saved Salih and those who believed with him, by a mercy of Our Own, from the disgrace of that day. Your Lord is truly the Strong, and Mighty.

11:67 And the evildoers were overtaken by the [thundering] cry and they lay prostrate in their own homes,

11:68 As if they never dwelt therein. Truly, Thamud disbelieved their Lord. Away with Thamud!

The story of the destruction of Thamud is explained to children in *My Book of Islam*. In that book's account, it is Salih asking that the camel's drinking schedule be respected that sets off a series of unfortunate

events starting with the cutting of the camel's hamstring in the Koran; in *My Book of Islam*, as mentioned earlier, the camel is killed.



LESSON 23
PROPHET SALEH (P)

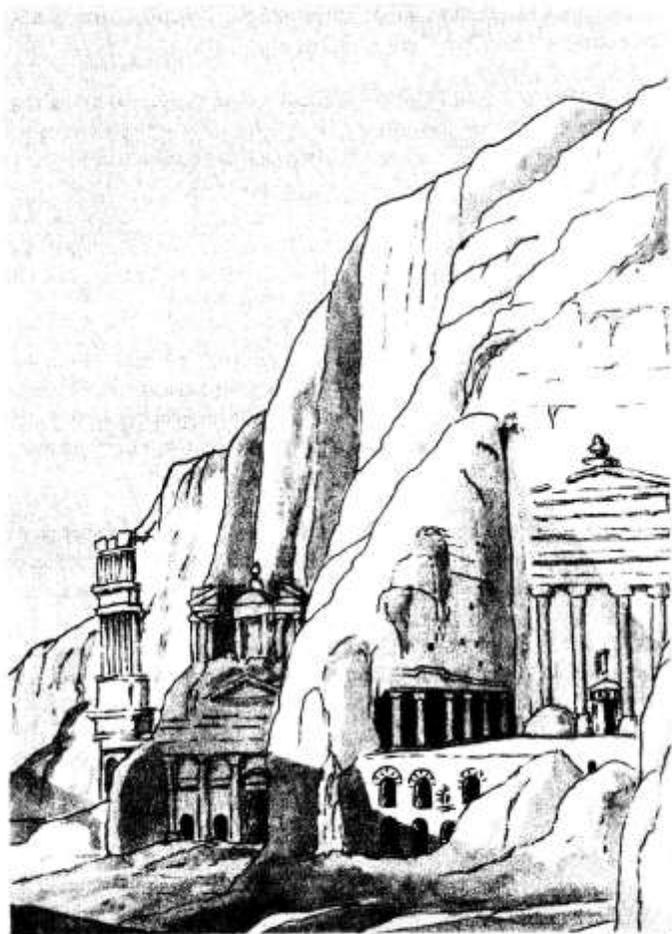
There once lived a tribe called Thamud. They lived in a town called Hijr. This is in Jordan. Prophet Saleh (P) was sent by God to teach Thamud.

The Thamud tribesmen were skilled in stone-cutting. They made their homes by cutting holes in the sides of a mountain. Fruit and water were plentiful. Thamud lived peacefully, but they worshipped idols.

Prophet Saleh (P) was sent to teach them the true religion. He told them they were wrong to worship idols. God was the only one to worship.

The Thamud tribe used to like Saleh (P). Now they said, "Our fathers worshipped these gods. Would you now forbid us to do the same? No, Saleh. We strongly doubt the faith to which you call us."

"My people", said the Prophet Saleh (P). You must have fear of God. I am indeed a messenger to you. Fear God and follow me. I do not want you to reward me. Only God can reward me. Are you just going to sit here, with all your gardens and food? Are you just going to live in your mountains and be lazy? Have fear and follow me. Do not be evil people."



"But you are just a human like us", they replied. "If what you say is true, then show us a sign."

Prophet Saleh (*P*) asked God to give him a sign. God gave him a she-camel. He said. "This she-camel is your sign. She will drink from the same water as you. Do not harm her, for God will punish you."

There were some people who believed him, but most of them did not. They did not want the camel to share the water. They killed her and defied God. Then they said to Prophet Saleh (*P*): "Let us see this punishment that you talked about."

"You have only three days to live in your houses", he said. "Then you will see." The people did not worry. They did not believe him. Some of them were so evil, they planned to kill Saleh (*P*) and his family. But God saved them. He told Prophet Saleh (*P*) to take his family out of the town. Those who believed were also to go with him.

Three days after the camel was killed. God sent down his punishment. The sound of thunder and an earthquake hit the town. The people were wiped out. No one was saved except Saleh (*P*) and the believers.

Today, the remains of those houses can still be seen. This story remains as an example to all people. The power of God is great. Those who defy God could be punished.

Combine 1) the horrific example that Allah made of Petra and other cities that suffered a similar fate, 2) His approval of merciless attacks against unbelievers that result in the mass death of the innocent and the faithful, and 3) His promise of the highest rank in Paradise for whoever dies while eradicating the greatest number of unbelievers, and what evil do you expect will come to pass?

If you know what is going to happen, why do you not insist that the Koran be restricted to adults only if it will lessen the risk of your children and grandchildren dying in nuclear fire so that a man indoctrinated as a child into the most violent, pitiless theology there is can improve his standing in Paradise?

IMAGINATION, FREEWILL AND THE LIES CHILDREN ARE TOLD

So far we have talked about how words that are an invitation to hate, an incitement to violence and which glorify and revel in cruelty can warp a child's mind and lead not only to a loss of empathy but sadism. There is another, perhaps even more insidious impact in exposing children to the work of an author who insists he has all the answers.

Long before Werner Heisenberg discovered the *Uncertainty Principal*, Allah gave us its opposite, thereby pre-emptively voiding Heisenberg's discovery along with those of Copernicus, Galileo, Newton, Pasteur, Einstein, Niels Bohr, Galen and Company.

45:20 This (Qur'an) is an illumination for mankind, a guidance and mercy unto a people who believe with certainty.

It is not because Muslim children are born less inquisitive that the Muslim world, which constitutes 21 percent of the world's population (2011), has produced, at this writing, only two Nobel Prize laureates in the physical sciences (1979 physics, 1999 chemistry).

God's *Certainty Decree* not only denies much of the progress made in the physical sciences but also humanity's moral development elevating larceny, slavery, murder and rape into rights and virtues. And, did I mention lying?

4:71 O believers, be on your guard; so march in detachments or march altogether.

4:72 Indeed, among you is one who will stay behind, so that if a disaster befalls you, he will say: "Allah has favoured me, since I have not been a martyr with them."

4:73 If, however, a bounty from God comes to you, he will say, as though there was no friendship between you and him: "Would that I had been with them; then I would have won a great victory."

God would even have Mary, shortly after giving birth, lie about Him providing for her and the son whose paternity He vociferously denies throughout the Koran.

19:22 So, she conceived him and she withdrew with him to a distant place.

19:23 Then labour pangs drove her towards the trunk of a palm tree. She said: "I wish I had died before this and had become completely forgotten."

19:24 Whereupon [the babe (Jesus) or (Gabriel)] called her from beneath her: "Do not grieve. Your Lord has created below you a stream.

19:25 "Shake the trunk of the palm tree towards you and it will drop upon you fresh ripe dates."

19:26 "Eat, drink and rejoice. Then if you see any human say: 'I have vowed to the Compassionate to fast, and so I shall not talk today to any human being.'"

Civilization's progress is very much the story of people who refused to believe with certainty. If enough of us subscribe to Allah's *Certainty Decree* — especially His dubious understanding of natural phenomena, which is very much evocative of superstitions from the age in which He communicated His Wisdom to Muhammad—then the march of civilization will not only come to end, it will become a march backwards in time to the period known as the Dark Ages.

The Dark Ages is when we saw revealed truths come into their own. In Europe, the catalyst was the Catholic Church; in the Middle East, that honour went to Islam, a product of the period. Europe emerged from its Dark Ages, in part, because the Bible was not as dogmatic as the clergy would have the faithful believe, and enforcement proved problematic with the central message of the Gospels being about loving your enemies.

William Tyndale's (1494-1536) translation of the Bible into English ended the dominance of the clergy once and for all and ensured that the Renaissance would not simply be a flash-in-the-pan. The Arabs were not that lucky. Their civilization, before the doom and gloom that was emblematic of the Dark Ages arrived on the Peninsula to stay, was a civilization that loved life and all it had to offer.

I am not aware in the entire history of civilisation of a more gracious, more loving, more vibrant society than that of the Arabs before Islam ... [it was a time] ... of unbound freedom, lofty sentiments, a nomadic and chivalrous way of life, [a land] of fantasy, joy, mischievousness, bawdy impious poetry, refined love-making ...

Ernest Renan, cf. Robert Montagne, La Civilisation du désert

Islam came along and imposed a love of death with a book that offered no compromise, and the Arabs became the Words in both outlook and demeanour.

They were a people of primary colours; or rather of black and white ... They were a dogmatic people, despising doubt, our modern crown of thorns. They did not understand our metaphysical difficulties, our introspective questioning. They only knew truth and untruth, belief and unbelief, without our hesitating retinue of finer shades.

This people was black and white not merely in clarity, but in apposition. Their thoughts were at ease only in extremes ... they never compromised; they pursued the logic of several incompatible opinions to absurd ends, without perceiving the incongruity.

They were a limited, narrow-minded people, whose inert intellect lay fallow in curious resignation. Their imaginations were vivid, but not creative.

T.E. Lawrence, Seven Pillars of Wisdom

Tyndale translated a much more complex and lengthy document than the Koran with its simple repetitive sentences and uncomplicated recurrent message of *fear Allah and hate anyone who doesn't and gain Paradise*.

There is no denying the Koran is unlike the religious text westerners are most familiar with, the Bible. For one thing, it is more monotonous. The Bible, is a cornucopia of genres: the cosmic mythology of Genesis, the legal and ritual code of Leviticus, a multibook national history of Israel, the complaints and alarms of the prophets, the pithy self-help and deep reflection of the wisdom literature, the poetry of the Psalms, the gospel profiles of Jesus, the mystical theology of John, the

early church history Acts, the apocalyptic visions of Revelation and Daniel and so on.

Richard Wright, The Evolution of God

You seldom hear a Christian minister say that unless you read the Bible in the original Hebrew, Greek or Latin, you will misunderstand the message. Yet, this is the argument that is made by clerics and scholars to discourage non-Muslim adults who have not mastered Arabic from reading a translation of the Koran whose message they expect children to grasp, but not an experienced translator. Could those who know better, but try to dissuade non-Muslims from reading an approved translation of a book they encourage children to commit to memory, be lying about the difficulties, as Allah expects them to do if it will confuse His enemies as to His Message?

What children are expected to easily comprehend is that the world is black and white, truth and untruth, and that if they believe in the truth with all their might, god will be kind. If they don't, then they are bad people to whom bad things will happen.

17:81 And say (Muhammad): "The truth has come and falsehood has perished. Falsehood is ever perishing."

17:82 And We reveal of the Qur'an that which is healing and merciful to the believers, and it yields nothing but perdition for the wrongdoers.

This is Allah's uncompromising position and it is this inflexible view of the spiritual world and an almost total wrongheaded view of the physical, e.g., the Earth is flat, which children are expected to accept without question as soon as they can mouth His words over and over so that they are indelibly imprinted in memory and available at a thought's notice.

Other holy books ask you to reflect on God's words. The Koran is not meant to be reflected upon but committed to memory through rote learning. Benefitting a conquering religion, it is not unlike a military manual whose objective is to condition recruits into reacting to any situation in a reflexive, i.e., unthinking, and predictable manner.

Immersing children into the Koran also dampens what should be a child's blossoming lifelong curiosity about his surroundings. For a believing parent, it is literally a god-send. The answer to a child's every question from, "Why is the sky blue?" to "Where do babies come from?" is all there in the Book, even when it isn't. As children grow

into adulthood and face what should be daunting decisions requiring Lawrence's "introspective questioning," those easy answers become even more attractive and provide further incentive to believe with certainty. And in that, you have the reason Muslims have remained stuck in a self-imposed Dark Age.

Not unlike ignorance, believing in the Koran "is healing and merciful" to quote God, for it requires little mental effort except mind-numbing repetition. Like a muscle that gets no exercise, the brain atrophies. Give a child's imagination free rein and you guard against this degenerate condition. Humanity needs a child's unfettered imagination and curiosity as an adult to solve the real problems that threaten to bring the march of civilization, if not life itself, to an end.

I would further postulate that when a religion puts too many restrictions on the imagination, insanity is the result. This would explain the suicide bomber and his ilk.

33:36 It is not up to any believer, man or woman, when Allah and His Messenger have passed a judgement, to have any choice in their affairs. Whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger have gone astray in a manifest manner.

Free will, which allows us to put what we imagine to the test, is effectively extinguished by Revelation 33:36. Why not exercise our free will to imagine a world where the Koran is for adults only and put it to the test?

A BRILLIANT MALEVOLENT IDEA

It is not the innocent little boys who grow up to be cold-blooded killers and suicidal mass murderers in Allah's Cause who are the crowning testament of the diabolical brilliance of the man who came up with the idea of teaching children the Koran. No, that dubious honour goes to the grown-up little girls, now young women and mothers who accept that:

- 1) in actual dollars and cents, they are worth half of the little boys they grew up with; and
- 2) in a marriage, their husband can do with them what he will, then discard them like so much used furniture.

Immersing children into the Koran has allowed a religion with revealed truths that grant men superior rights to wealth and property to go along with their authoritative rights over those the Book is openly contemptuous of, not only to survive, but to thrive. That disdain is again on display in Allah's decrees granting the lion's share of any bequests to his favourite gender and in His Revelations pertaining to divorce in which He ratifies a wife's chattel-like status.

Imagine the difference between a daughter learning these things, and so much more, when she is eighteen, instead of six or seven.

ALLAH'S WORSE NIGHTMARE

If you have read the Koran and I asked you, "What is Allah's worst nightmare?" you would probably say Judgement Day, that descent into madness and pain. I was not asking about God's nightmarish end-of-days extravaganza, but what would cause *Him* to wake up, if He needed any sleep, in the proverbial cold sweat? That would be, if a child's natural nascent empathy was not snuffed out early on, but left unmolested until they were old enough to seek His Wisdom on their own as Alice does in *Alice Visits a Mosque to Learn about Judgement Day*.

Following is the conclusion of her conversation with an imam, a moderate scholar of Islam by any definition, whom, because of the empathy that was allowed to survive, she will not befriend. I'll let her explain why.

Excerpt from:

Alice Visits a Mosque to Learn About Judgement Day

Boreal Books, 2012

Alice: What is right about allowing criminals into Paradise but sending honest, decent people, men and women, and children too young to understand, to burn in Hell for not believing?

Imam: A sin is what God says it is. Allah said that not believing in Him and only Him is the greatest sin of all, and that believing in Him is believing with unshakable certainty in everything He has revealed.

Alice: But...

Imam: Should not people who commit the greatest sin of all not suffer the greatest punishment? No believer is completely evil all the time, which is why Allah weighs their bad deeds against their good deeds before deciding on their fate. But a person who does not believe in Allah and only Allah is being evil all of the time; committing the greatest sin of all, all of the time; the greatest evil of all, all of the time.

Do you think such a person should be entitled to any mercy or compassion?

Alice: I don't know whether to laugh or cry that such a question would even come up.

Imam: It is not a laughing or a crying matter; it is a simple question which very much defines what Islam is all about. Women are only starting to understand what men who fight in the Way of Allah have understood for a long time.

Alice: It's no joke, I know. Judgement Day cannot be a joke for so many who you say fight in the Way of Allah, willing to kill those who would dismiss what you have told me, what Allah revealed about Judgement Day, as the ranting of a madman.

Imam: If you can't believe in God, in whom shall you believe? Allah, on many occasions, vouched for His Messenger's sanity, including when He asked people to rise and reflect that there was "no madness" in the Prophet, *the peace and blessings of God be upon him*. Allah said.

15:6 They say: "O you, to whom the Reminder (the Qur'an) is revealed, you are indeed a madman.

34:46 Say: "I only give you one exhortation, that you arise for Allah in couples and singly, then to reflect that there is no madness in your companion (the Prophet). He is merely a warner on the eve of a terrible punishment."

Alice: I want to believe in God, in a god who is into reducing suffering not increasing it, and whose mercy is unconditional. I find it difficult to identify with Allah's definition of compassion and mercy, especially after what was revealed about Judgement Day.

Imam: What was revealed is that Allah will show mercy and compassion to those deserving of His Mercy and Compassion, the believers. DO YOU NOT UNDERSTAND?

Alice: I do, in a bizarre sort of way.

Imam: What do you mean?

Alice: I used to read some of my brother's comic books. Superman was my favorite. Superman had his doppelganger...

Imam: Doppelganger???

Alice: An opposite. Bizarro was Superman's opposite. He lived on a "bizarro world" where up was down, left was right, go meant stop, goodbye meant hello. Bizarro is a term often used to describe a person or thing that uses a twisted form of logic.

Imam: "Bizarro world" is an interesting way to describe the world of the unbelievers.

Alice: Bizarro came to mind when Allah revealed that "the charmer" is the name of angels who beat up unbelievers while flying them to who-knows-where - Hell or to be judged; it is so confusing.

Imam: He is Allah; He can call His angels whatever He wants.

Alice: Of course. And He constantly refers to Himself as the Compassionate, the Merciful, yet the actions and verdicts of the Judge presiding over Judgement Day would lead some to believe that His understanding of Compassion and Mercy are different, perhaps even the opposite of what, for example, Western dictionaries define as compassion and mercy.

Imam: A bizarro-world's definition.

Alice: The believers are going to Paradise because they have earned it and have no need of Allah's Compassion or Mercy. As to the criminals He welcomes into Paradise, His Compassion and Mercy amount to a pardon. Wouldn't real compassion and mercy have been to forgive those who, through no fault of their own, and in many cases because of Allah's admitted deliberate premeditated actions, failed to believe?

Imam: They failed to believe because of their arrogance, and Allah does not guide the arrogant.

Alice: Yes, many refused to submit because they were arrogant, I am sure; but for many, the Prophet was and is just another claimant to a special relationship with humanity's alleged invisible friend in the sky. It did not help that his message was so different than that of all the Messengers he said came before and with whom he claimed a kinship - Jesus in particular.

Imam: Jesus simply misunderstood Allah when He revealed that you should love your neighbour. Allah's command was that you should love the believers as you love yourself.

Alice: ... and hate those who do not believe.

Imam: HOW COULD YOU LOVE THOSE FOR WHOM ALLAH HAS RESERVED SUCH A PAINFUL PUNISHMENT?

Alice: And there we are.

Imam: It is time for you to go home, young lady.

Alice: [*picking up her shoes, she turns to leave, but not before adding*] Allah is right, and that makes me sad.

Imam: What makes you sad?

Alice: That we can never be friends. I could not take you as a friend, even if that was what you wished, knowing that by doing so I was dooming you to an eternity of agony on fire in Allah's Hell. I could never be that cruel.

Imam: [*the imam is moved somewhat*] Worship Him and only Him, accept that there will be a Judgement Day as He describes, and believe with certainty and everything will be alright and we can all be friends.

Alice: If only it was that easy. So much pain, so much sorrow, so much horror, and for what?

Imam: For a place in Paradise. Go home and praise Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful, at every opportunity and never forget what was revealed to you today.

Alice: [*leaving the spotlight*] How could I forget? How could anyone forget?

Imam: [*returns to his Friday prayers*] 1:1 In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful, 1:2 Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, 1:3 The Compassionate, the Merciful, 1:4 Master of the Day of Judgement, 1:5 Only You do we worship, and only You do we implore for help.

END

TEACH YOUR CHILDREN WELL

Teach Your Children Well.
Children are our future;
Teach them well and let them lead the way.

Greatest Love of All by Whitney Houston
Lyrics by Michael Masser and Linda Creed

That children are the future is both a truism and a cliché. As long as they are taught that the human journey is a journey in the pursuit of knowledge through scientific enquiry and critical thinking, we have nothing to worry about. Each generation responsible for taking that additional step in the direction of the elusive ultimate truth, which, if ever discovered, would mean the end of the human journey as we know it.

The empirical pursuit of knowledge about our universe and our place in it, a gift from the Greeks of antiquity rediscovered during the Renaissance and the period known as the Enlightenment, is facing a serious challenge from those who believe that this journey ended long ago. These people believe that we should now spend much of our time at prayer and in worship of the One who can't be praised enough, while waiting for the promised rewards of a hedonistic afterlife for our uncritical acceptance of *revealed truths* made known to an alleged illiterate from the Shaper of the universe himself.

More parents than ever in the West are naming their children after this man (Muhammad, and its variations, is now the most common boy's name in England), a testament to the growing influence of the Book that damns everything that came before and every people and society that would come after that were not willing to submit to the Will of its alleged author. What came after is Islam antithesis, what we know as Western Civilization, a "fragile exception" that we take for granted at our risk and peril.

After centuries of strife, the West has learned to separate religion and politics - to establish the legitimacy of its leaders without referring to divine command. There is little reason to

expect the rest of the world – the Islamic world in particular – will follow.

We in the West find it incomprehensible that theological ideas still inflame the minds of men, stirring up messianic passions that can leave societies in ruin. We had assumed that this was no longer possible, that human beings had learned to separate religious questions from political ones, that political theology died in 16th-century Europe. We were wrong. It's we who are the fragile exception.

Mark Lilla, The Stillborn God: Religion, Politics and the Modern West (2007)

The Morning After

The clash we are witnessing around the world is not a clash of religions or a clash of civilization. It is a clash between civilization and backwardness, between the civilized and the primitive, between rationality and barbarity.

It is a clash between freedom and oppression, between democracy and dictatorship. It is a clash between human rights, on one hand and the violation of these rights on the other. It is a clash between those who treat women like beasts, and those who treat them like human beings.

Wafa Sultan, outspoken Syrian-American woman during a debate broadcast on Al-jazeera

Should Islam emerge triumphant from the battle between progress and backwardness, and extra-terrestrials visit this world, they will find it devoid of music, devoid of colour, devoid of fun and laughter, devoid of songs sung by females, devoid of the beauty of a woman's face and form, devoid of art that is not limited to meaningless geographical figures and above all, devoid of wonder, spontaneity and imagination.

In this bleak, predictable world where the exercise of free will means death, they will witness a form of collective conditioning where everyone, like pre-programmed automatons, constantly interrupt whatever they are doing to get down on their hands and knees and kiss the ground and mouth many of the same phrases they spoke just earlier, and will repeat later in praise of a mythical narcissistic deity.

They may watch in horror as bearded men in flowing robes and turbans, in front of a crowd of cheering onlookers shouting how great is their god, gleefully throw rocks at some pleading, pitiful and gentle creature buried up to her neck, in an attempt to kill her.

They may come across men arguing among themselves at a bazaar or other venues where goods are traded and sold about the value of people on display, some of them in chains; men, boys and old women marketed as slave labour and young females as sex slaves.

The visitors will undoubtedly have an idea, from intercepted radio and television signals, of what the people of Earth were like when progress was not everywhere a sin, and empirical knowledge came from enquiry and reason, not from a self-proclaimed spokesperson for an unseen, all-powerful overlord. They may even wonder how such a reversal could have come about, and why anyone but the insane would fight, kill and die to create such a desolate future for humankind.

APPENDIX

Zaynab

(From: *Love, Sex and Islam*, Boreal Books, 2020)

Allah was extremely attentive to His spokesperson's sexual needs. This is evident, for example, in a revealed truth (an immutable fact communicated to a mortal by a god) where he laid out, in some detail, all the females Muhammad *could* have sex with, including "believing women" who threw themselves at him because of his exalted position. I interpret the phrase "who gives herself freely to the Prophet" in the following revelation as allowing Muhammad to break one of Allah's most strict prohibitions: sex outside of marriage.

33:50 O Prophet, we have made lawful, for you, your wives, whose dowry you have paid, what your right hand owns (slave-girls) out of the spoils of war that Allah gave you, the daughters of your paternal uncles, the daughters of your paternal aunts, the daughters of your maternal uncles, the daughters of your maternal aunts who emigrated with you, and any believing woman who gives herself freely to the Prophet, if the Prophet desires to marry her, granted exclusively to you, but not the believers. We know what We have prescribed for them, regarding their wives and what their right hands own, so that you may not be at fault. Allah is All-Forgiving, Merciful.

Muhammad's outspoken child bride Aisha told her husband how she felt about Allah's readiness to indulge him in everything sexual. This included something as mundane as granting her husband – in the most sacred of scriptural text, of all things – the right to reschedule a wife's turn in his coitus rotation, or even denying a spouse the pleasure of his company for as long as he wished.

33:51 You may defer any of them you wish, and take in any of them that you wish or any that you may have cut off. So you are not liable to reproach. For thus it is more likely that they will be delighted and will not grieve, but be content with what you have given each one of them. Allah knows what is within your hearts; and Allah is All-Knowing, Clement.

Narrated Aisha:

I used to look down upon those ladies who had given themselves to Allah's Apostle and I used to say, "Can a lady give herself (to a man)?" But when Allah revealed: "You (O Muhammad) can postpone (the turn of) whom you will of them (your wives), and you may receive any of them whom you will; and there is no blame on you if you invite one whose turn you have set aside (temporarily).'¹ (33:51) I said (to the Prophet), "I feel that your Lord hastens in fulfilling your wishes and desires."

Bukhari 60.311

Allah's most pathetic pandering to His spokesperson's all-consuming lust would prove particularly detrimental to both the physical and emotional wellbeing of orphans.

Muhammad was already married to six women, not counting concubines and slave girls, who could, depending on the circumstances, satisfy any sexual yearning, when he walked in on his daughter-in-law Zaynab when she was almost naked. He just had to have her.

During the time of ignorance (before Islam on the Arabian Peninsula), men adopted orphaned boys who then became part of the adopted father's lineage and were considered *de facto* progeny, e.g., a legitimate heir. Because laws and traditions at this time did not distinguish between an adopted or natural-born son, the taboo against marrying your natural son's wife extended to adopted descendants.

A legal way had to be found for Muhammad to marry his daughter-in-law, who also just happened to be his cousin. The Law-Maker was only too happy to oblige His greatest and last spokesperson by changing the status of adopted sons from sons to "brothers in religion," Revelation 33:5.

33:4 Allah did not create two hearts within the breast of any man; and He did not make your wives, whom you compare to your mothers' backs; and He did not make your [adopted] sons your sons in fact. That is your own claim, by your words of mouth. Allah speaks the truth and He guides to the Right Path.

33:5 Assign them to their own fathers. That is more equitable in the sight of Allah; but if you do not know their real fathers, then they are your brothers in religion, your adopted fellow

Muslims. You are not at fault if you err therein; but only in what your hearts intend. Allah is ever All-Forgiving, All-Merciful.

Demoting adopted sons to “brothers in religion” made their wives, upon divorce, eligible to be taken in marriage by the adoptive father.

33:37 And [remember] when you said to him whom Allah favoured and you favoured: (this is addressed to Zayd regarding his wife Zaynab) “Hold on to your wife and fear Allah”, while you concealed within yourself what Allah would reveal and feared other men, whereas Allah had a better right to be feared by you. Then, when Zayd had satisfied his desire for her, We gave her to you in marriage; so that the believers should not be at fault, regarding the wives of their adopted sons, once they have satisfied their desire for them. For Allah’s Command must be accomplished.

Leave it to Allah to come up with an excuse for Zayd wanting to divorce Zaynab, which neatly encapsulates His view of women as commodities. It has nothing to do with Zayd wanting to please his father-in-law and the most powerful Arab ever, but because he “had satisfied his desire for her.” This left God free to give her to His cherished spokesman so that he, in turn, could quench his craving for his irresistible cousin.

After Zayd prudently divorced Zaynab, Muhammad was free to marry the object of his lust, Allah having relegated her former husband to no more than an acquaintance for whom His spokesman provided room and board.

Orphaned boys were almost unknown in the Arab world until Allah changed their status so that His spokesman could marry his adopted son's wife. The revelation changing the relationship between adopted sons and their surrogate parents—allowing Muhammad to add his former daughter-in-law to his collection of wives, concubines and slave girls—resulted in an untold number of children in the Islamic world from that day onward with no living person to call father.

God may have regretted creating orphans, where before there were only sons, so that His spokesman could satisfy his lust for his cousin and daughter-in-law, to send more than a handful of revelations about looking after their welfare.

Muhammad's adopted son, now brother-in-religion, would die in one of the innumerable bloody, pitiless battles waged to convert the people of the Peninsula and beyond. God's spokesman ordered that the women mourning Zayd's passing (Zaid in the following hadith) a little too loudly be silenced, but that proved impossible.

Narrated Aisha:

When the news of the martyrdom of Zaid bin Haritha, Ja'far and 'Abdullah bin Rawaha came, the Prophet sat down looking sad, and I was looking through the chink of the door. A man came and said, "O Allah's Apostle! The women of Ja'far," and then he mentioned their crying.

The Prophet (p.b.u.h) ordered him to stop them from crying. The man went and came back and said, "I tried to stop them but they disobeyed."

The Prophet (p.b.u.h) ordered him for the second time to forbid them. He went again and came back and said, "They did not listen to me, (or "us": the sub-narrator Muhammad bin Haushab is in doubt as to which is right)."

'Aisha added: The Prophet said, "Put dust in their mouths."

I said (to that man), "May Allah stick your nose in the dust (i.e. humiliate you). By Allah, you could not (stop the women from crying) to fulfill the order, besides you did not relieve Allah's Apostle from fatigue."

Bukhari 23.392