

The Koranic World View As It Relates to Muslims in the U.S. Military



Objectives

- **Identify what the Koran inculcates in the minds of Muslims and the potential implications this may have for the U.S. military.**
- **Describe the nature of the religious conflicts that Muslims may have with the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.**
- **Identify Muslim soldiers that may be having religious conflicts with the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.**

Definition of Islam

- Arabic 'islām, submission,
- from 'aslama, to surrender, resign oneself,
- from Syriac 'ašlem, to make peace, surrender,
- derived stem of *šlem*, to be complete.]



Definitions

- **Islam:** The name of the Muslim religion
- **Muslims:** The people who practice Islam
- **Islamist:** Advocates rule by Gods law- Islamic political rule/Sharia law i.e. (No separation of Church and State)
- **Fatwa:** Religious rulings/legal opinions from a Islamic leaders/scholars

Concept of Jihad

[Arabic jihād, from jahada, *to strive*; see ghd in Semitic roots.].

1. *Islam* An individual's striving for spiritual self-perfection.
 2. *Islam* A Muslim holy war or spiritual struggle against infidels.
 3. A crusade or struggle: *"The war against smoking is turning into a jihad against people who smoke"* (Fortune).
- Struggles inside ones self are termed '**the Greater Jihad**' and.
 - Struggles with outside forces '**the lesser Jihad.**'

Islam

- **Sunni:** 85% of Muslims; term refers to traditions followed by Muhammad (SAWS) and early Muslims.
- **Shia:** 15% of Muslims; term refers to the party of Ali (cousin and son of law of the Prophet); they felt he should have assumed leadership; highest concentration in Iran.

Statistics

- **Muslims World wide:** 1.2 billion
- **Muslim in the U.S.:** Numbers range from 2-8 million.
- **Christians World wide:** 1.9 billion
- **Hinduism World wide:** 881 million
- **Buddhism World wide:** 360 million
- **Judaism World wide:** 14 million

Statistics: Largest Muslim Populations

Indonesia: 170,310,000

Iran: 60,790,000

Pakistan: 136,000,000

Egypt: 53,730,000

Bangladesh 106,050,000

Nigeria: 47,720,000

India: 103,000,000

China: >37,108,000

Turkey: 62,410,000

18% of Arab Origin

Military Statistics

- **Pentagon** officials say there were **4,070 self-declared Muslims** in the U.S. Armed Forces in May 2001, the last time a count was made.
- **Qaseem Uqdah**: heads the American Muslim Armed Forces and Veterans Affairs Council in Washington, D.C., counts upwards of **15,000** soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines and Coast Guard members-2001
- The largest group of Muslims is African-American, followed by Indo-Pakistanis, Arabs and Caucasians in the military.

Military Statistics

- According to some reports, estimated of about **1-3,000** members of the U.S. armed forces converted to Islam while stationed in the Persian Gulf in the early 1990s.

Fatwa: Muslims in U.S. military

- Fatwa: Religious rulings/legal opinions from a Islamic leaders/scholars
- No single authority- conflicting Fatwa's
- Fatwa my U.S. Muslim clerics are vague and ambiguous- under duress?
- Non U.S. Scholars issued Fatwa clearly stating no
- "It's getting harder and harder for Muslims in the service to morally justify being in a military that seems constantly engaged against fellow Muslims."

Muslims in the Military

- [4.93] And whoever kills a believer intentionally, his punishment is hell; he shall abide in it, and Allah will send His wrath on him and curse him and prepare for him a painful chastisement.
- [17.33] And do not kill anyone whose killing Allah has forbidden, except for a just cause...

Adverse Events

- Hasan Akbar: 101st Airborne Division's 326th Engineer Battalion- Through grenades killing/wounding many.
- Army Capt. James Yee- charged with espionage; later acquitted
- Marine Cpl. Waseef Ali Hassoun; deserted in Iraq; Cited dissaproval of war as a Muslim.
- Army Sergeant Abdullah William Webster; refused to deploy to Iraq based on religious beliefs

Evaluation ideas/hints

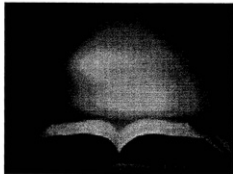
- **Name:** Kareem Abdu-Jabbar (Ferdinand Lewis Alcindor, Jr.) - hint about religious nature of parents.
- **Devotion:** Koran, prayers, etc
- **Perceived support** of unit/fellow soldiers/military

Evaluation Ideas/hints

- Family perception.
- Don't doubt their loyalty to U.S. → God vs Country.
- It must be hard for you to balance Islamic beliefs that might be conflicting with current war; feelings of guilt; Is it what you expected.
- Mentor/chaplain.

Koran

- Koran was revealed 1400 hundred years ago(early 7th century AD)- the word of God.
- Progressive revelation: verses were revealed as situations/events presented
- Hadiths/Sira/Asbab nasool: aids in context and order.
- Rule of abrogation



Rule of Abrogation

- *"None of Our revelations do We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, but We substitute something better or similar: Knowest thou not that Allah Hath power over all things?" Surah 2: 106*
- *"When We substitute one revelation for another, and Allah knows best what He reveals (in stages), they say, "Thou art but a forger": but most of them understand not." Surah 16:101*

The Koran: Miracle

- [2.23] And if you are in doubt as to that which We have revealed to Our servant, then produce a chapter like it and call on your witnesses besides Allah if you are truthful.
- [2.24] But if you do (it) not and never shall you do (it), then be on your guard against the fire of which men and stones are the fuel; it is prepared for the unbelievers.
- [15:9] We have sent down the reminder, and we will preserve it.

Five Pillars of Islam

- **Shahadah:** Testifying our allegiance to God
(I declare that there is no god Except God, and I declare that Muhammad (SAWS) is the messenger of God)
- **Salat:** Daily Prayer
- **Zakat:** Annual charity
- **Saum:** Month-long fasting
- **Hajj:** The Pilgrimage to Mecca

Articles of Faith: Believing the following

1. Allah (SWT)
2. Angels (Gabriel, Michael)
3. Books of Allah (Gospel, Torah, Koran, etc)
4. Prophets of Allah [Abraham, Jesus, Mohammad (SAWS)]
5. Day of Judgment
6. Supremacy of God's will (Predestination)

Purpose of Life

- I created the Jinn and humankind only that they might worship Me. [51:56]
- He [Allah] created life and death that He might put you to the test and find out which of you acquitted himself best.[67:1 – 2]

Concept of Complete Submission

- O you who believe! Enter into Islam completely, whole-heartedly... [2:208]

Complete Submission

- Abraham (SAWS)- Gold Standard
- Was indeed a model, devoutly obedient [16:120]
- Verily, Abraham was without doubt, forbearing....[11:75]
- Allah took him as an intimate friend [4:125]

Story of Abraham (SAWS)

- [37.102] And when he attained to working with him, he said: O my son! surely I have seen in a dream that I should sacrifice you.... He said: O my father! do what you are commanded; if Allah please, you will find me of the patient ones.
- [37.106] Most surely this is a manifest trial.
- [37.108] And We perpetuated (praise) to him among the later generations.
- [37.109] Peace be on Ibrahim.
- [37.110] Thus do We reward the doers of good.
- [37.111] Surely he was one of Our believing servants.

Lack of Submission

- [2.65] And certainly you have known those among you who exceeded the limits of the Sabbath, so We said to them: Be (as) apes, despised and hated.
- [5.60] Say: Shall I inform you of (him who is) worse than this in retribution from Allah? (Worse is he) whom Allah has cursed and brought His wrath upon, and of whom He made **apes** and swine..
- [7.166] Therefore when they revoltingly persisted in what they had been forbidden, We said to them: Be (as) **apes**, despised and hated.

The Forgiver and Punisher

- [39.53] Say: O my servants! who have acted extravagantly against their own souls, do not despair of the mercy of Allah; surely Allah forgives the faults altogether; surely He is the Forgiving the Merciful.
- [29:21] He punishes whom He wills, and shows mercy to who He wills; and to Him you will be returned.

Fearing God

- [22:01] O mankind? Fear your Lord and be dutiful to Him! Verily, the earthquake of the Hour (of Judgement) is a terrible thing.
- [33:70] O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allah and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth.
- [39:14] Say (O Muhammad): “Verily if I disobey my Lord, I am afraid of the torment of the great Day.”
- [79:40-41] But as for him who feared standing before his Lord, and restrained himself from impure evil desires and lusts. Verily Paradise will be his abode.

Rewards Slide

- **[76:12]** And their recompense shall be Paradise, and silken garments, because they were patient.
- **[76:13]** Reclining therein on raised thrones, they will see there neither the excessive heat of the sun, nor the excessive bitter cold,
- **[76:14]** And the shade thereof is close upon them, and the bunches of fruit thereof will hang low within their reach.
- **[76:15]** And amongst them will be passed round vessels of silver and cups of crystal.

Rewards Slide Cont

- **[76:16]** Crystal-clear, made of silver. They will determine the measure thereof.
- **[76:17]** And they will be given to drink there of a cup (of wine) mixed with Zanjabil (ginger),
- **[76:18]** A spring there, called Salsabil.
- **[76:19]** And round about them will (serve) boys of everlasting youth. If you see them, you would think them scattered pearls.
- **[76:20]** And when you look there (in Paradise), you will see a delight and a great dominion.

Reward Slide Cont

- [76:21] Their garments will be of fine green silk, and gold embroidery. They will be adorned with bracelets of silver, and their Lord will give them a pure drink.
- [76:22] (and it will be said to them):
“Verily, this is a reward for you, and your endeavor has been accepted.”

Rewards Cont

- [47:15] The description of Paradise which the Pious have been promised (is that) in it are rivers of water the taste and smell of which are not changed, rivers of milk of which the taste never changes, rivers of wine delicious to those who drink, and rivers of clarified honey (clear and pure) therein for them is every kind of fruit, and forgiveness from their Lord....

Punishment Verses

- [8.50] And if you could see when the angels take away the souls of those who disbelieve (at death); they smite their faces and their backs, and (saying): Taste the punishment of blazing fire.
- [44:43] Verily, the tree of Zaqquq.
- [44:44] Will be the food of sinners.
- [44:45] Like boiling oil, it will boil in the bellies,
- [44:46] Like the boiling of scalding water.
- [44:47] (It will be said) "Seize him and drag him into the midst of blazing fire,

Punishment Versus Cont

- [44:48] "Then pour over his head the torment of the boiling water".
- [44:49] "Taste you (this) verily, you were (pretending to be) the mighty, the generous!
- [44:50] "Verily, this is that whereof you used to doubt!"
- [44:56] Surely, those who disbelieved in Our Ayat (verses, signs, etc), We shall burn them in Fire. As often as their skins are roasted through, We shall change them for other skins that they may taste the punishment. Truly, Allah is Ever Most Powerful, All-Wise.

Example: Jihad-rule of Abrogation

- In Mecca Muslims were not permitted to defend themselves/fight. Their only job was to deliver the message (peaceful verses)
- Emigration to Medina: self defense was allowed
- Then offensive fighting was allowed
- Later verses abrogated former ie: peaceful verses no longer apply
- Indeed at one point Islamic empire spanned from Morocco/Spain to the Border of India/China.

Verses Enjoining Peace and Forgiveness

- [2.109] **pardon and forgive**, so that Allah should bring about His command; surely Allah has power over all things.
- [7.199] Take to **forgiveness** and enjoin good and **turn aside from the ignorant**.
- [41.34] And not alike are the good and the evil. Repel (evil) with what is best, when lo! he between whom and you was enmity would be as if he were a **warm friend**.

Defensive Verses

- Permission (to fight) is given to those (believers) who are fought against, because they have been wronged; and surely, Allah is able to give them victory.[22:39]
- Those who have been expelled from their homes unjustly only because they said: "Our Lord is Allah."....Verily, Allah will help those who help his (cause). Truly, Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty.[22:40]

Defensive Jihad Cont

- O you who believe! What is the matter with you, that when you are asked to march forth in the cause of Allah, you **cling heavily to the earth?** Are you pleased with the life of this world rather than the Hereafter? **But little is the enjoyment of the life of this world compared to the Hereafter.**[9:38]

Defensive Jihad Cont

- 9:39: “If you do not go forth, He will chastise you with a **painful chastisement** and bring in your place a people other than you, and you will do Him no harm; and Allah has power over all things.”

Defensive Verses Cont

- Verse 60:08 "Allah forbids you not, with regard to **those who fight you not for (your) Faith** nor drive you out of your homes, from **dealing kindly and justly** with them: for Allah loveth those who are just."

Defensive Jihad Cont

- Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but **do not transgress limits**; for Allah loveth not transgressors.[2:190].
- **But if they cease**, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.[2:192]

Verse of the Sword

- So when the Sacred Months have passed, then fight the Mushrikin wherever you find them, and capture them, and lie in wait for them in each and every ambush. **But if they repent and perform the Salah, and give the Zakah, then leave their way free.** Verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. [9:05]

Verse of the Sword Cont

- [Muslim 1:53] “I have been commanded to fight the people until they testify that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, establish the prayer and pay the Zakah.”

Offensive Jihad Cont

- 9:29: “Fight those who do not believe in Allah, nor in the latter day, nor do they prohibit what Allah and His Messenger have prohibited, nor follow the religion of truth, out of those who have been given the Book, **until they pay the tax in acknowledgment of superiority and they are in a state of subjection.**”

Offensive Islam If the Future

- Al-Bukhaari (2222) and Muslim (155) : The Messenger of Allah (SAWS) said: “By the One in Whose hand is my soul, soon the son of Maryam will descend among you as a just judge. He will break the cross, kill the pigs and abolish the jizyah, and money will become abundant until no one will accept it.”

History Cont

- Islam “spread by the sword”?
- [2.256] There is no compulsion in **religion**; truly the right way has become clearly distinct from error; therefore, whoever disbelieves in the Shaitan and believes in Allah he indeed has laid hold on the firmest handle, which shall not break off, and Allah is Hearing, Knowing

Different Paths to Heaven?

- [2.62] Surely those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Christians, and the Sabians, whoever believes in Allah and the Last day and does good, they shall have their **reward** from their Lord, and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve.
- [3.85] And **whoever desires a religion other than Islam**, it shall not be accepted from him, and in the hereafter he shall be one of the losers.

Comments

- Osama Bin Laden
- Taliban
- Suicide bombers
- Iran
- If Muslim groups can convince Muslims that they are fighting for God against injustices of the “infidels”; ie: enemies of Islam, then Muslims can become a potent adversary ie: suicide bombing, etc.
- We love death more then you love life!

Conclusions

- God expects full loyalty. Promises heaven and threatens with Hell.
- Muslims may be seen as moderate (compromising) but God is not.
- "I love the Koran and being a Muslim, but I don't want to live under Islamic rule".
- Fighting to establish an Islamic State to please God, even by force, is condoned by the Islam .
- Muslims Soldiers should not serve in any capacity that renders them at risk to hurting/killing believers unjustly → will vary!

Recommendation

- Department of Defense should allow Muslims Soldiers the option of being released as “Conscientious objectors” to increase troop morale and decrease adverse events.

Punishment Slides

- [41:24] Then, if they bear the torment patiently, then the Fire is the home for them, and if they seek to please Allah, yet they are not of those who will ever be allowed to please Allah.
- [41:29] And those who disbelieve will say: “Our Lord! Show us those among the jinn and men who led us astray: that we may crush them under our feet so that they become the lowest.”