

Islamophobia

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Why people are afraid of Muslims?

- 1-**Not knowing** what Islam stands for and what do Muslims believe in
- 2-**Prejudice** against foreigners
- 3-**News media** portray Islam as a religion of violence and not respecting the rights of non-Muslims
- 4-The **behavior of radicals and extremists** confirms this violent image of Islam
- 5-Some people **venting their fear, frustration and anger**

Ignorance about Islam & The Muslims

- Very few Americans have read the Qur'an**, most of what they know comes from non-Muslim sources which describe the Qur'an as promoting violence and hatred towards non-Muslims
- Very few Americans know who is Muhammad** and what does he represent to Muslims. They are fed wrong information that he was a war monger, and married too many women
- Most Americans do not know **what is Shari'a law** and that it does not apply to non-Muslims
- It is also **our fault that we as Muslims** are not engaging our neighbors or informing them about Islam

Islamic values are the same as Christian values

1-Belief in God and in being accountable to God: That there is a Day of Judgment, Heaven & Hell

2-Be good to your families and neighbors

3-Establish prayer and give in charity and help the poor and needy

4-Apply your faith in the way you live your life with noble character and morals, get close to God and never despair of his mercy

5-Faith in God's prophets & messengers and following their example

And faith in God's divine books as our constitution

6-Learn and improve and invite to God by our example

The Qur'an came to confirm the Torah & the Bible

“God sent down the book to you in truth, confirming what came before it, and He sent down the Torah and Gospel before, as a guide to mankind”

Al-Imran (The Family of Imran) 3: 3 & 4

The message of Muhammad is a continuation of those messengers before him: ***“The same religion has He established for you as that which He enjoined on Noah, that which He sent by inspiration to you, and that which He enjoined on Abraham, Moses & Jesus, namely that you should remain steadfast in religion and make no divisions therein”***

Ash-Shura' (Consultation) 42: 13

What are the main teachings of Islam?

- 1-Serve God by serving the needs of others:** help the poor, needy and disadvantaged and correct social injustice
- 2-Be good to your neighbors and your families**
- 3-Be kind, caring, just, truthful, forgiving & merciful**
- 4-Be conscious (mindful) of God at all times**
- 5-Rituals of worship**

Be good to your wives and families

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: (The best among you is he who is best to his wife and family) Narrated by Ahmad

Men and women have human dignity, are responsible and accountable

No gender is better or superior to another except through piety

“Indeed the most honored amongst you in the sight of God is the person who is most righteous (of service to others)”

Al-Hujerat (The Apartments) m49: 12

In some Muslim countries women are not treated well because of tribal traditions

Be good to your neighbor

“Worship God and join no partners with him; and do good to your parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbors who are of kin, and neighbors who are strangers, the companion by your side and the wayfarer”

An-Nesa'a (The Women) 4: 36

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: (Whoever believes in God and the Last Day let him be good to his neighbor) narrated by Bokhari

How do we inform others about our faith Islam?

Concentrate on **morals and main teachings**

Show that you **care about your community**

Serve as a **good example**

Our **character & behavior** is more important than our words

Use effective methods of **communication**

Use proper **knowledge & wisdom**

Do not argue

How do we inform others about Islam?

- Refer to verses from **the Qur'an**

It has a profound effect for it guides to the truth and addresses our minds & hearts

- Refer to the **sayings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)**, for he was wise & eloquent

- Be **wise and give relevant answers** to current problems

- Do not glory in the past**

How can we solve current problems?

- Poverty & income inequality**
- The dominance of the **rich & powerful**
- Drugs**
- Crime**
- Lack of **morals**
- Fear of **immigrants**

Poverty & income inequality

There is a right for the poor in the money of the rich

“So give what is due to kindred, the needy and the wayfarer; that is best for those who seek the pleasure of God, and it is they who will prosper”

Ar-Rum (The Romans) 30: 38

“And give to kindred their due rights, as also to the needy and to the wayfarer, but do not squander your wealth as a spendthrift”

Al-Isra’a (Night Journey) 17: 26

Do not let the rich & powerful dominate

“What God has bestowed on his messenger (and taken away) from the people of the townships belongs to God, to his messenger, and to kindred and orphans, the needy and the wayfarer, in order that it may not be merely a circuit between the wealthy among you. So take what the messenger gives you and refrain from what he prohibits you, and fear God, for God is strict in punishment”

Al-Hashr (The Gathering) 59: 7

How to solve the problem of drugs?

1-**Education** that drugs destroy the mind and make us slaves to our desires

2-**Rehabilitation**

3-**Preventing** drugs from reaching our borders

4-Severe **punishment** for drug-dealers

Alcohol & drugs destroy our mind

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

(Whatever substance when used clouds the mind, then even small amounts of that substance are forbidden)

Narrated by Ahmad, Abou Dawood, Termedhi & Ibn Hibban

(Alcohol is the root of many grave sins and evils)

Narrated by Tabarani

(Whoever drinks alcohol his prayer will not be accepted for 40 days, but if he repents Allah will accept his repentance; if he keeps drinking many times his repentance will not be accepted, and will be punished) In another narration: **(If he dies he will enter Hell Fire)**

Narrated by Ahmad & Termedhi

(God has cursed those drinking alcohol, those producing it, those marketing it, those serving it) Narrated by Abou Dawood & Hakim

Killing an innocent soul is forbidden in Islam

“Do not kill the soul that God has made sacred except through due process of law”

Al-Isra'a (Night Journey) 17: 33

“That he who kills a soul, unless it be for murder or spreading mischief on earth, it would be as if he killed all of mankind; and if anyone saves a life, it would be as if he saved all of mankind”

Al-Ma'ida (The Table) 5: 32

Lack of morals

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) stressed that the goal of his mission is to implement the most noble of character (Baihaqi)

The Qur'an stresses morals, ethics and noble character in many of its verses

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: (Be conscious of God at all times, and if you commit a sin hasten and do a good deed to wipe it out, and interact with others on the basis of morals and noble character)

Abou Dawood & Termedhi

Fear of immigrants

All of **God's prophets immigrated** to safeguard their convictions

Prophet Ibrahim immigrated: "He said: "I will go to my Lord, He will surely guide me" As-Saffat 37: 99

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) immigrated from Macca to Madinah

Current day immigrants are fleeing from persecution and war, seeking a better life for their families, and are willing to work

America is built on the effort of immigrants, who bring new ideas, work hard and are committed

Diversity is willed by God, in order that we may learn from one another

Christians should learn about other religions since America today is made up of diverse faiths

We see **many faith communities in America today**: Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Atheists, Agnostics etc. We need to understand these different beliefs

We also hear **different languages and see people of different ethnic background and different cultures**, and we need to embrace this diversity and learn from our differences, and not feel threatened.

Our own faith is strengthened when we learn about the faith and beliefs of other people. **We all share the same hopes and fears and have our humanity to unite us**

Diversity is willed by God

“And among his signs is the creation of the heavens and earth, and the differences in your tongues and colors. Indeed in this are signs for those who know”

Ar-Rum (The Romans) 30: 22

“If it was the will of your Lord he would have made mankind one nation, but they will continue to differ, except those on whom your Lord bestows his mercy, and for this did he create them”

Hud (Prophet Hud) 11: 118 & 119

- We should learn from our differences
- We should listen to different points of view
- Our differences is willed by God, we should not fear it

The news media portray Islam as a violent religion and talks about Muslim terrorists

The criminal behavior of ISIS is shown as Muslim terrorists.

Terrorist activities in Syria, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Chechnia, Philipines and other areas are always associated with Islam, implying that the religion of Islam prompts terrorist activities

Main stream Islam is not shown, and the fact that the majority of Muslims are peace-loving human beings is not emphasized

The Qur'an predicted that the image & teachings of Islam will be distorted

“You will be tested and tried in your possessions and in your selves; and you will hear much that will grieve you from those who were given divine revelation before you and from those who worship multiple gods; but if you patiently persevere and guard against evil, that requires resolve”

Al-Imran (The Family of Imran) 3: 187

- Patient perseverance
- Do not behave in a wrong way
- Resolve

Characteristics of extremists and radicals

They only accept their beliefs and are not willing to listen to different points of view, since they believe they are right and everyone else is wrong

Their knowledge is wrong and superficial, and rely on the teachings of their Sheikhs (religious leaders) and not based on proper understanding of the Qur'an

To them others who do not share their ideology are unbelievers and have no rights

Their blind and wrong faith leads them to commit crimes against both Muslims & non-Muslims

Why radicals & extremists behave in a criminal way?

- 1- Wrong and superficial knowledge of Islam & its teachings
- 2-Poverty and no hope in the future
- 3-Oppression and lack of freedom
- 4-Occupation of Muslim land by foreign powers allows extremists to recruit young vulnerable people

Misconceptions about Islam & the Muslims

1-Muslims do not hate non-Muslims: What does the Qur'an say about the relationship between Muslims & non-Muslims?

2-Do not kill an innocent soul

3-Muslims are forbidden from forcing non-Muslims against their will

4-Muhammad did not write the Qur'an

5-Shari'a applies only to Muslims

6-Islam is compatible with Western democracy

Muslims do not hate non-Muslims

How can we hate other human beings who have not wronged us?

You can hate their wrong beliefs that is not based on knowledge

Or evidence

We are told in the Qur'an to treat Jews & Christians with kindness and justice, and to talk to them and work with them, as long as they are not enemy combatants

Qur'anic guidelines that govern the relationship between Muslims & non-Muslims

1-Kindness and justice

2-Talking to each other in a good way

3-Working together to improve life for everyone

4-Respecting the right of every person to his faith & tradition

5-Not prejudging the fate of others

6-Marrying from among non-Muslims

7-Inviting to God with wisdom & good example

Treat non-Muslims with kindness & justice

“God forbids you not regarding those who fight you not because of your faith, nor drive you out of your homes from treating them with kindness and justice, for God loves those who are just”

Al-Mumtahina (Woman to be examined) 60: 8

Talk to each other in a good way

“Tell my servants that they should say that which is best, for Satan incites enmity and hatred among them, for Satan to man is an avowed enemy”

Al-Isra'a (Night Journey) 17: 53

“argue not with the people of the Book except in the best possible way; and say: “We believe in what was sent down to us, and what was sent down to you, our God and your God is one and to him we submit in Islam”

Al-Ankabut (The Spider) 29: 46

Work together in virtue and righteousness

“And work together and cooperate in virtue and righteousness, not in sin or transgression, and be conscious of God, for God is severe in retribution”

Al-Maida (The Table) 5: 2

Do not force others to Islam against their will

“Let there be no compulsion in religion, truth stands clear from error”

Al-Baqara (The Cow) 2: 256

“Let him who will believe, and let him who will reject faith”

Al-Kahf (The Cave) 18: 29

“If it was the will of your Lord then everyone on earth would have believed! Are you then forcing people to believe against their will”

Yunus (Jonah) 10: 99

Do not prejudge the fate of others

“Your job O Muhammad is to deliver the message, it is up to Us to hold them to account”

Ar-Ra’d (The Thunder) 13: 40

Muhammad did not force others to Islam against their will

He signed a **peace treaty with the Jews of Madinah** respecting their rights to their faith and ensuring their safety

He **allowed the Christian delegation from Najran to pray** in his mosque according to their faith

Safeguard places of worship

“If it was not for God checking one group of people against another places of worship, like monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques would have been destroyed”

Al-Hajj (Pilgrimage) 22: 40

Human life is sacred; Do not kill an innocent soul

“Do not kill the soul that God has made sacred except through due process of law”

Al-Isra'a (Night Journey) 17: 33

“Because of this we ordained on the Children of Israel that he who kills a soul, unless it be for murder, or spreading mischief on earth, it is considered as if he killed all of mankind; and if anyone saves a soul, it is considered as if he saved all of humanity”

Al-Ma'ida (The Table) 5: 32

Throughout history non-Muslims were treated well in Muslim countries

- No one was forced to become a Muslim against his will
- The lives, properties, faith and freedom of non-Muslims was safeguarded under Muslim rule
- In Muslim Spain all three faiths: Islam, Christianity & Judaism lived in peace and flourished
- Many Jews had prominent positions in Muslim governments
- It is only after the Spanish inquisition that both Muslims & Jews fled Spain to protect their faith & convictions

Some people are angry and vent their frustration against foreigners & immigrants

- Some want to stop immigration because in their views immigrants are taking their jobs
- Some are fearful because they do not know or understand other cultures, and some do not want to associate with people who are different from them
- The economic downturn and lack of good jobs add to this frustration
- Some white people are concerned and alarmed as they see themselves more and more a minority in America today

How to deal with this frustration & concerns?

- The demographics of America is changing and it is made up of diverse groups, including Blacks, Latinos, Whites, Asians & others
- We should address income inequality and create good jobs
- Diversity enriches our lives, we should not be afraid
- We need to learn and understand other faiths & traditions

Islam is compatible with Western democracy and there is no clash of civilization

Muslims **obey the law** of the land

The principles of the American constitution, namely justice, accountability, freedom and the pursuit of happiness are Qur'anic principles revealed in the Qur'an more than 1400 years ago.

Justice in the Qur'an

“O you who believe stand up for God, as witnesses for justice; and let not the hatred of others towards you make you deviate from justice; be just, this is closer to piety, and be conscious of God, for God is well-aware of all that you do”

Al-Ma'ida (The Table) 5: 8

“O you who believe stand up for justice, as witnesses for Allah, even against yourselves or your parents or your kin, and whether it be against rich or poor, for Allah can best protect both. Follow not your lusts lest you swerve, and if you distort justice or decline to do justice, indeed Allah is well-acquainted with all that you do”

An-Nesa'a (Women) 4: 135

We have freedom of choice and we are accountable

Man was given a free choice: to believe or to reject faith, hence man is responsible and accountable for his choice.

We are not forced to believe against our will

Accountability in the Qur'an

“On the day when each soul will come pleading for itself, and each soul will be requited according to its deeds, and none will be wronged”

An-Nahl (The Bees) 16: 111

“And fear the Day when you shall be brought back to Allah, then shall every soul be paid what it earned, and none will be dealt with unjustly”

Al-Baqara (The Cow) 2: 281

The Pursuit of Happiness

“Say: “Who has made forbidden the beautiful things that Allah has produced for His servants, and the good and pure things which He has provided for sustenance?”

Al-Araf 7: 32

Islamophobia: how should Christians respond?

There is a difference between Islam, a noble divine religion and the behavior of Muslim extremists. Islam safeguards the life, property and freedom of non-Muslims, whereas Muslim terrorists kill non-Muslims as well as Muslims who do not share their ideology

In the same way there is a difference between Christianity, a noble divine religion and the behavior of some Christians who are bigots

Do not blame the religion for the wrong behavior of few fanatics and criminals. Learn about true Islam & its teachings and support your Muslim neighbors and fellow human beings

Do not associate Islam with terrorism. These terrorists kill more Muslims than non-Muslims. They claim to be Muslims but behave against the teachings of the Qur'an

Islamophobia: How should Muslims react?

The Qur'an states:

“You will be tested and tried in your possessions and in yourselves, and you will hear a lot that will grieve you from those who were given divine revelation before you. But if you patiently persevere, and guard against evil, that requires resolve & determination”

Al-Imran (The Family of Imran) 3: 187

- Patient perseverance
- Not doing wrong
- Resolve & determination

Lone wolf attacks can happen from deranged people who are brain washed

As Muslims if we spot persons who have extremist ideas or behavior we do **report them** to the authorities

The way **to combat a twisted ideology is by exposing its fallacy** and wrong teachings and contrasting it to the proper teachings of religion, whether this wrong ideology is Muslim, Christian or Jewish

“For the scum disappears like froth cast out, while that which is for the good of mankind remains on the earth”

Ar-Ra'd (Thunder) 13: 17

Shari'a law applies only to Muslims

Shari'a does not apply to non-Muslims

Shari'a is everything that we do in our daily life, not just punishment

Prayer, fasting, charity, being good to our parents, family & neighbors, doing our job to the best of our ability, reaching out and helping those in need is Shari'a

Islam did not spread by the sword

It did spread **through the efforts of Muslim merchants** who lived among the native people and helped them. They invited to God through their example by their kind caring character and through their righteous behavior.

Muslims are encouraged in the Qur'an to **invite to God with wisdom and good example**, and with clear conviction

“Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good example”

An-Nahl (The Bees) 16: 125

“Say: “This is my way, I do invite to God with clear conviction, I and those who follow me” Youseff (Joseph) 12: 108

Islamic Jihad: What is Jihad?

Jihad means **striving against our vain desires and against the temptations of Satan and obeying God** and living our lives as he commands.

Jihad also means **correcting misconceptions about religion** and inviting others to God through good example

If a country is attacked then Jihad is to rise up and defend your country against aggression

Therefore, fighting is a small aspect of Jihad

There is nothing in the Qur'an called Holy war, such a term is a Christian concept. There is nothing holy about war, only destruction and misery

No one can call for Jihad except a leader accepted by all or a group of scholars when the need arises for such Jihad. Therefore **the call of ISIS for Jihad has no merit** or validity. **Muslim scholars all over the world have condemned the actions of ISIS**

Misconceptions about Muhammad ?

- He did not write the Qur'an:** The Qur'an is a divine revelation
- He was not a war monger:** He fought to defend his state against aggression
- He was married to one woman for 25 years** when he was in the prime of his life. After he became head of state he married other women for political and social reasons
- He was kind, gentle, caring, truthful,** forgiving, just and merciful
- He was **sincere and devoted to God** and did not care about the material things in life

Muhammad was not a war monger

The battles he was involved in were **defensive in nature**

Fighting in the Qur'an is only allowed to defend our country against aggression, not to annex land or force others against their will

“Fight in the cause of God those who fight you, and commit no transgression for God loves not transgressors”

Al-Baqara (The Cow) 2: 191

Muhammad (PBUH) was married to one wife Khadeeja for 25 years

He married her when he was 25 years old, and she was his only wife for 25 years till she died. After she died he needed someone to take care of his daughters

He married Aesha and Hafsa to cement the relationship with their fathers

He married two wives of the martyrs of Badr & Ohod to set a precedent

He married the daughters of two tribe chiefs who were defeated to reconcile the hearts

He married Zainab to correct a misconception

His marriages were for social & political reasons being head of state and to be understood in the context of that time

The norm in Islam is only one wife. Allowance is given to marry another wife under exceptional circumstances: a wife is barren or chronically sick

Muhammad (PBUH) was sent to implement morals & noble character

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

(Indeed I have been sent to implement morals and the most noble of character)

Narrated by Hakim & Baihaqi

Muhammad's noble character and excellent morals

He was **honest & truthful**, and never lied

He was **kind, caring, forgiving & merciful**

“There has come to you a messenger from among yourselves. It pains him that you should suffer, he cares about you, he is kind and forgiving with the believers” At-Tawba (Repentance) 9: 128

He was **just** even with his enemies

He was **humble & not arrogant**: (Do not glorify me)

He was a **devoted worshipper** & submitted to God & had trust in him

He was **eloquent** and commanding in his speech

He was **wise** and able to solve problems & have a vision

He **worked tirelessly** and was full of energy

How did Muhammad solve the problems in Madinah?

- 1-Bond of **brotherhood** between residents & immigrants: to shift the economic burden from the state to individuals
- 2-The **mosque is the focal activity** in the life of Muslims: It is where they meet, know one another, pray together and work together
- 3-Pact of **cooperation between Muslims & Jews**: The life, possessions and freedom of all is safeguarded
- 4-**Education and inviting to God**: to spread useful knowledge so that the message does not end by the death of the messenger
- 5-**Protect and safeguard your city against aggression**

As God's messenger Muhammad's orders must be obeyed

“Whoever obeys the messenger obeys Allah”

An-Nesa'a (Women) 4: 80

“O you who believe obey Allah, and obey his messenger and those charged with authority among you”

An-Nesa'a (Women) 4: 59

“But no by your Lord they have no real faith until they make you judge in all disputes among them, and find no resistance in their souls regarding your decisions, and submit fully”

An-Nesa'a (Women) 4: 65

“Whatever the messenger gives you take it, and whatever he forbids you avoid” Al-Hashr (The Gathering) 59: 7

Follow the example of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in his character & behavior

“You have indeed in the messenger of God a good example to follow for those who rest their hope on meeting God and the Last Day, and who remember God often”

Al-Ahzab (The Confederates) 33: 21

Sources of knowledge in Islam

Muhammad was given the Qur'an by inspiration from God

Muhammad also was inspired by God to explain the Qur'an and to teach morals and proper conduct.

Therefore the **two sources of knowledge in Islam are:**

1-The Qur'an (God's own words)

2-The Sunnah (tradition) of Prophet Muhammad