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Chapter 3 Holy War

Introduction. Washington Post reporting. October 19, 2007, by Jacqueline L. Salmon and Valerie Strauss, Washington Post staff writers:

“U.S. Prodded to Shut Fairfax Saudi School - Federal Panel Wonders Whether Religious Intolerance is Being Fostered. *A federal panel yesterday urged the State Department to shut down a Saudi government supported private school in Northern Virginia unless it can prove it is not teaching religious intolerance. . . . It leveled particular criticism at the Islamic Saudi Academy, which operates two campuses in Fairfax County, expressing “significant concerns” that the school is promoting a brand of religious intolerance that could prove a danger to the United States. . . it is concerned about the textbooks used in the school because those used by schools in Saudi Arabia promote violence against Christians, Jews, Shias, and polytheists.”¹ (Emphasis added)*

What does this have to do with the Last Days? Teaching “religious intolerance”? In Virginia? Or, should we more accurately say, “teaching jihad”?

The Bible tells us that in the Last Days, a false religion will arise that will dominate the entire world and lead to the conversion of all except those whose names are in the Lamb’s book of life. The Bible tells us to look for a “beast” that wages holy war against Jews and Christians. Got any guesses who might fit that criteria? This chapter will be an historical overview of those who have waged “holy war” against Jews and Christians, beginning with the 1st century AD.

As a preview, see if this modern day statement by one of Islam’s “bomb throwers” sounds like *holy war* to you:

“Praise be to God, who revealed the Verse of the Sword to His servant and Messenger in order to establish Truth and eradicate falsehood. Praise be to God, who has said: “When the forbidden months are over, wherever you find the polytheists, kill them, seize them, besiege them, ambush them—but if they turn [to God], maintain the prayer, and pay the prescribed alms, let them go on their way, for God is most forgiving and merciful.” (Qur’an 9:5). . . . And prayers and peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, who said, “I was sent with a sword in my hands so that only God Almighty is worshiped without equal. He put my sustenance in the shadow of my spear, and disgraced and humiliated those who oppose my order. . . .” (From the Hadith collection of ibn Hanbal, vol 5, book 3, no. 5,409). He also said: “Banish the polytheists from the Arabian peninsula.”² (Emphasis supplied)

Holy War versus Other Type of War. First, let’s define some terms. For our purposes, a “holy war” is a war waged by the adherents of a religion on behalf of the supreme being of that religion, including a war waged because of a religious instruction or command within that religion. It is a war that is justified by one’s religion or waged because of one’s religion. The foe in a holy war can be another religion (waged against its followers), or it can be a nation or other people group. A holy war can also be waged by sects

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within the same religion against one another, but the reason for the war is religious in nature. Further, whether or not a war is considered a “just war” (based on fulfilling the “six criteria” of a “just war”³) has no relevance on whether it is considered a holy war. For example, in World War 2, Japan declared war against America as well as other nations around the world. The declaration of war had nothing to do with the religion of Japan, but rather, other non-religious reasons. In modern times,

President George Bush declared a “War on Terror” following the September 11, 2001 attacks on America, including the receipt of Congressional authorization for the use of military force.⁴ This declaration of war was not based on a religious reason but rather the inherent right of a country or nation to defend itself; i.e., what many consider to be a “just war.”⁵ Specific examples of holy wars in history include the Crusades, the Reconquista, the French Wars of Religion, the Thirty Years War, and jihad of Islam.⁶

Consider this example of a call to *holy war* issued by Pope Urban II (at the Council of Clermont, 1095AD, as reported by Robert the Monk):

“From the confines of Jerusalem and from the city of Constantinople a grievous report has gone forth and has repeatedly been brought to our ears; namely, that a race from the kingdom of the Persians, an accursed race, a race wholly alienated from God, . . . , violently invaded the lands of those Christians and has depopulated them by pillage and fire. . . . Let the holy sepulcher of our Lord and Saviour, which is possessed by unclean nations, especially arouse you, But if you are hindered by love of children, parents, or of wife, remember what the Lord says in the Gospel, ‘He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me’, ‘Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.’ Let [this] then be your war cry in combats, because it is given to you by God. When an armed attack is made upon the enemy, this one cry be raised by all the soldiers of God: ‘It is the will of God! It is the will of God!’ [Deus vult! Deus Vult!].”⁷

Consider this modern day example of holy war. This is a “fatwa” (a “fatwa” is an Arabic term for an edict or ruling issued by a cleric of Islam) issued by Osama bin Laden and the World Islamic Front. Notice *who the fatwa* is against:

“On that basis, and in compliance with Allah's order, we issue the following fatwa to all Muslims:

*. . . to kill the Americans and their allies -- civilians and military -- is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it, . . . This is in accordance with the words of Almighty Allah,. . . We -- with Allah's help -- call on every Muslim who believes in Allah and wishes to be rewarded to comply with Allah's order to kill the Americans and plunder their money wherever and whenever they find it. We also call on Muslim ulema, leaders, youths, and soldiers to launch the raid on Satan's U.S. troops and the devil's supporters allying with them, and to displace those who are behind them so that they may learn a lesson.”*⁸ (Emphasis added)

Let's see why it matters.

Bible Prophecies of Holy War. Why is the type of war important? Look at these Bible passages and see if you don't see holy war described:

1. Daniel 7:7-28, the vision of the prophet Daniel. The prophet Daniel has a vision. In his dream are four beasts. The first a lion, the second a bear, the third a leopard. Each beast devours its predecessor; the fourth beast devours the prior three beasts (Daniel 7:7). The three beasts symbolize the political kingdoms of Babylon, Persia, and Greece (2:38, 8:20-21) which defeat each other successively in human history.⁹ The 4th beast is described as "different" from the three beasts before it (7:7, 19). The three kingdoms were all political kingdoms. The 4th kingdom will not be. Notice whom the beast wages his war against:

^{NAS} Daniel 7:21 *"I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them 22 until the Ancient of Days came, . . ."*

The battle waged by the 4th beast is a battle waged against the "saints," i.e., the followers of Jesus Christ.¹⁰ Since the battle is specifically described as being waged against a religion (as opposed to a nation or political kingdom), then this battle must have a *religious motivation*. Further, as we will discuss more fully in our next chapter, the 4th beast is described as "different" from the prior three beasts (Daniel 7:7,19). This leads us to the logical interpretation that since the battle is waged against a religion, the "different" nature of the beast that wages this battle is also religious. That is, the beast is a religious kingdom and the war being waged is a holy war.

This interpretation (that the "different" nature of the beast refers to religion) can also be seen in the New Testament book of Revelation. In Revelation 13, a beast appears rising from the sea. The beast looks like a leopard, has feet like a bear, and a mouth like a lion (the same three beasts as Daniel 7, but now all three are absorbed into one final beast). The beast is given the power, authority, and throne of the dragon (satan). Notice how many times the word "worship" appears in the text:

^{NAS} Revelation 13:4 *"and they worshiped the dragon, because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?" . . . 8 And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain. . . 12 And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, . . .15 And there was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast might even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed."* (Emphasis added)

Why use the word "worship" to describe humanity's response to the beast? A soldier might respect his general; might revere him as a great leader even fear him. But worship him? I respect the President of the

“Worship” is what people give to their god; to the “spiritual head” of their faith whatever that might be. So how do you explain the “worship” references to the beast unless the beast is the spiritual head of a religion?

United States even if I don’t agree with some of his policies. *But I don’t* worship him. “Worship” is what people give to their god; to the “spiritual head” of their faith whatever that might be. So how do you explain the “worship” references to the beast unless the beast is the spiritual head of a religion? See also, Revelation 14:11, 16:2, 19:20, 20:4.

One more observation about the beast from the sea and the saints: *the beast wages a religious war.*

^{NAS} Revelation 13:7 *And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them; . . .”*

2. Revelation 12, the Apostle John’s heavenly vision. The great red dragon, satan, wages war against a “woman” and her “offspring.” The woman is almost universally interpreted by Bible scholars to symbolize the true covenant people of Israel.¹¹ The woman’s offspring is defined by the text itself. Verse 17 provides:

^{NAS} Revelation 12:17 *And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.*

Once again, the text is specific. Just as the war waged by the 4th beast of Daniel 7 was against the “saints,” so this war is waged against the saints. More specifically, Revelation 12 tells us who the saints are: the covenant people of Israel and those who “hold to the testimony of Jesus,” meaning Christians. Thus, to the dragon waging the war, this war is a holy war.

3. Revelation 17 and 18, the Harlot Who Rides the Scarlet Beast. Another beast appears. This one is scarlet in color. A woman rides this beast. She is described as a harlot. Notice one of the characteristics the text provides for the woman :

^{NAS} Revelation 17:6 *“And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. And when I saw her, I wondered greatly.”*

The woman is *drunk with the blood of the saints*. She has also waged a religious war against her religious foe. To her, *this war is a holy war*.

Look also at the scarlet beast the woman rides:

^{NAS} Revelation 17:14 *“These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful.”*

This beast wages war against the “Lamb,” a prophecy that, once again, *will be fulfilled in a religious*

conflict. Hallelujah for the followers of the Lamb – this holy war turns out different than the prior ones. The Lamb will be victorious in this last war!

The Bible Describes a Holy War that Extends Over Many Years. As we will see, history is filled with many wars that have been waged for religious reasons, particularly during the medieval and earlier periods. Many of these wars are short term in duration, i.e., thirty years or less. The holy war that the Bible pictures is a long term war. It is pictured first in Daniel, then in Revelation 12, 13, and 17. These passages, in total, represent the whole of human history subsequent to the age of conquest of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, Persians, and Greek kingdoms. Thus, the holy war we are looking for is one that will last for an extended period of years.

Thus, the Bible prophesies of a spiritual kingdom that will wage a religious war. This conquest will be specifically waged against Jews and Christians.

Who Has Waged Holy War in History? With these two factors in mind, i.e., war against both Jews and Christians, and secondly, a religious war, the field of potential candidates is narrowed significantly. Israel (including Jews as a religious group), standing alone, has historically had many enemies. The Assyrians (721BC), Babylonians (586BC), Greeks (350BC), Romans (Ancient Roman Empire, 44BC - 476AD), Byzantines (Eastern Roman Empire, 476AD - 1453AD) and Muslims (635AD - present). *But which of these nations also makes war against Christians? And which of these engages in that war as an act of religious duty, i.e., a holy war?*

Rome, Byzantine, and Islam are the only ones of the aforementioned group whose dominion does not end prior to the birth of Christianity. Therefore, we can automatically eliminate Assyria, Babylon, and Greece because their dominion precedes the birth of Christianity (Daniel 7:12). The short list, therefore, includes Rome, Byzantine, and Islam. In addition, we must also add the Holy Roman Empire as well as the Roman Catholic Church – not as a country, but as a religion.

Ancient Roman Empire. Ancient Roman military conquests were not waged for religious reasons but non-religious reasons. Rome's conquests provided the economic power and resources (through an expanding tax base) that Rome needed to sustain its existing populations and grow its military. Although the Rome Empire did not wage conquests against Jews or Christians for religious reasons, persecution of Christians occurred on numerous occasions under separate Roman Emperors. Ergun and Emil Caner in their book, *Christian Jihad*, record ten separate persecutions by Roman Emperors, beginning with Nero in 64AD. The horrors inflicted upon Christians who stood firm in their faith rather than recant are worth the read. Caner lists the Roman Emperors of these ten persecutions to include: Nero (67AD), Domitian (81AD), Trajan (108AD), Marcus Aurelius Antonious (162AD), Severus (192AD), Maximinus (235AD), Decius (249AD), Valerian (257AD), Aurelian (274AD), and Diocletian (303AD).¹²

Historian Justo L. Gonzalez describes the 1st century religious context of Rome as multi-cultural in nature, and composed of the worship of many gods. From a Roman perspective, the unity of conquered peoples was best insured as long as everyone believed that all worshiped the same gods, but with different names for those gods.¹³ Christians and Jews stood out in this context by virtue of their belief in one true God, to

the exclusion of all other gods. Thus, Christians and Jews were seen as fanatics and exclusionists, impacting the uniformity and unity of Roman society. Thus, *they must be removed*.¹⁴

From the time of Roman Emperor Nero (54 - 69AD) to the conversion of Emperor Constantine (early 4th century AD), Christians were persecuted (according to Historian Peter Stearns, this persecution was not constant.¹⁵). The most prevalent reason for this persecution was the refusal of Jews and Christians to honor the Emperor as God. According to Gonzalez, Romans saw the worship of the ruling Roman emperor as a means of fostering societal unity and a test of loyalty to the Emperor. For Christians to refuse to worship the emperor (including the refusal to burn incense before the emperor's image) was an act of disloyalty that required condemnation and action by the Roman authorities.¹⁶

The Roman Empire (Western Empire) began its decline in power in the 3rd and 4th centuries. It was forever impacted by Christianity, when, in the early 4th century, the Roman Emperor, Constantine, was converted to Christianity around 312 AD.¹⁷ Historian Peter Stearns estimates that at the time of Constantine's conversion, 10% of the Roman Empire was already Christianized.¹⁸ Constantine's conversion all but ended Roman persecution of Christians for the remainder of the duration of the Empire in the formal issuing in 313AD of the *Edict of Milan*, a document jointly entered into between Constantine (the Emperor of the Western Roman Empire) and Licinius Augustus, the Emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire.¹⁹

With Constantine's conversion, Christianity continued its spread through the entire Roman Empire, which by the 4th century included Spain, Italy, Greece, the Middle East (not the Arabian Peninsula), Egypt, and Northern Africa. This spread continued after the collapse of the Western Roman Empire (generally accepted to be September 4, 476AD when Romulus Augustus was deposed; and further defined by the defeat of the Romans at the hands of the Germanic peoples.²⁰). Historian Gonzalez reports that the decline and collapse of the Roman Empire did not result in the decline of Christianity within those regions previously under the dominion of the Roman Empire. Conquered Christians felt the need to teach their faith to the victors (the Germanics). Slowly, "through the unrecorded witness of thousands of Christians, the invaders accepted the Christian faith, and eventually from their stock came new generations of leaders for the church."²¹

Following the collapse of the Western Roman Empire, the Eastern Empire (the "Byzantine" Empire) emerged, with its capital city, Constantinople. A brief description of the Byzantine Empire is given by Stearns,

*"The Byzantine Empire unfolded initially as part of the greater Roman Empire. Then, as this framework shattered with Roman decline, it took on a life of its own, particularly from the reign of Justinian (527 - 565CE) onward. It centered on a territory different from and smaller than the eastern Mediterranean as Rome had defined it. This was the result of new pressures, particularly the surge of Islam throughout north Africa and the bulk of the Middle East. Despite many attacks, the Empire flourished until the 11th century. . . . in some senses the Byzantine Empire began in the 4th century when the Romans set up their eastern capital in Constantinople. . . ."*²²

The Byzantine Empire did not include the persecution of Jews and Christians.

Conclusion. The ancient Roman Empire (up to the collapse of the Empire in the 5th century) did not wage holy war as military conquest; however, *individual Roman emperors did wage “war” against Christians* through the form of persecution of believers. Christianity’s refusal to worship the Emperor as God resulted in condemnation by Roman authorities; and, death resulted to many believers, specifically because of their faith. This persecution ended with the conversion of Constantine in 312AD and the execution of the Edict of Milan, a document jointly entered into by both Western and Eastern Roman Empires (Byzantine Empire).

The Holy Roman Empire. In the late eighth century, Charlemagne (Charles the Great) of France led his armies to conquer the Saxons and Frisians. Forced baptism and conversion to Christianity was required by Charlemagne resulting in the baptism of thousands of pagans, including the death of those who refused baptism.²³ Charlemagne was crowned emperor on 12/25/800 by Pope Leo III reviving the Western Roman Empire – *under the blessings of the church.*²⁴ Thereafter, the Roman Empire was completely divided between the Empire in the West and the Byzantine Empire in the East. The revived empire (the Western Empire) was called the “Holy Roman Empire” because Pope Leo III declared King Charles as having been chosen by God as emperor.²⁵ With Charlemagne’s crown coming at the hand of the Western Roman Church an alignment between the Church and State began which would eventually lead to the unfolding of Christianity’s darkest hour - *the Crusades.*

History does not reveal persecution or military conquest for religious reasons against Jews or Christians by the Holy Roman Empire. Conquest did occur against pagans who were forced to convert to Christianity.

The Crusades. The timing of the Crusades came at a time when Christians of Palestine were being subjected to ever increasing brutalities at the hand of the Seljuk Turks.²⁶ Ergun and Emir Caner in their book, *Christian Jihad*, quote from a letter (1071AD) to King Henry IV of England from Pope Gregory VII as follows,

“Christians . . . [who] are being daily butchered like herds of cattle, have humbly sent to me. . . begging that I [help] in whatever way I can, lest – God, forbid!– the Christian religion perish completely in our times. . . . I have taken steps to rouse and stir up certain Christians who long to lay down their lives for their brethren by defending the law of Christ . . . Already more than fifty thousand men have prepared themselves so that, if they can have me as their Pontiff and leader, they may raise up their mailed fist against God’s enemies and, under God’s leadership, go all the way to the Lord’s sepulcher.”²⁷

Pope Gregory was unsuccessful in gathering sufficient forces to march against the Turks; however, almost twenty-five years later, Pope Urban II, Gregory’s successor, issued a call to “retake the land” from the Amelekites. This call proved to be successful and began the centuries long Crusades. Urban’s initial appeal went out on November 27, 1095 at the Council of Clermont to a gathering of bishops. Caner reports that the “essence of Urban’s sermon concerned their sense of chivalry, patriotism, and allegiance to the Church for the purpose of promised salvation.”²⁸ (Emphasis added). Critical to one’s understanding of the Church’s role in the Crusades is what Pope Urban promised to each of those who would “take up the cross” to retake the Holy Land - *they were granted a guarantee of personal salvation!* Caner states,

“Cessation of violence was not the ultimate aim of the war, but rather eternal forgiveness and the promise of heaven. The new war theory was both brutal and unbiblical. Urban promised that whoever lifted arms against the Muslims entered into a holy war and would be saved. Either by shedding the blood of the infidels, or by dying on the battlefield, the warrior was promised eternal salvation.”²⁹
(Emphasis added)

The emblem of the cross was designed by Urban and was affixed to the uniforms of all soldiers. All priests were empowered to give the sacred symbol and its promised blessing to any who joined the army, regardless of their allegiance to Jesus Christ. In fact, personal belief in Jesus Christ, his death on the cross according to the scriptures, his resurrection on the third day according to the scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:3-4), became irrelevant for one’s salvation. *Salvation was guaranteed to the warrior of the cross! (Sounds like Islam’s promise of salvation to modern day suicide bombers!*³⁰)

On June 13, 1099, the Crusaders launched their only successful onslaught against the Turks who held Jerusalem. Their victory was celebrated with unbridled vengeance against the Muslims. Caner quotes a chronicler of the event as follows:

Some of our men . . . cut off the heads of their enemies; others shot them with arrows, so that they fell from towers; others tortured them longer by casting them into flames. . . it was necessary to pick one’s way over the bodies of men and horses. But these were small matters compared to what happened at the Temple of Solomon. . . Men rode in blood up to their knees and bridle reins. Indeed it was a just and splendid judgment of God that this place should be filled with the blood of the unbelievers, since it had suffered so long from their blasphemies. . . .”³¹

The First Crusade was the only successful expedition during the next three centuries of battle for the Holy Land; and, Jerusalem was held by the Crusaders for 88 years over the next 900.³² When the city eventually returned to the Islamic powers under Saladin (1187AD), it would remain under Muslim dominion until the 20th century.³³ Yet, for well over three hundred years, the Crusades would continue. Countless deaths would occur, including men, women, and even children.

Caner records the impact of the Crusades against the people of Israel. Unfortunately for the history of the Crusaders, and Christianity, in general, the Crusaders did not limit their attack to the “sons of the Amekites”:

“The savagery with which the Christians treated the Jewish population forever scarred Judeo Christian relations. Crusaders called the Jews “Christ-killers,” and sentenced them to death for the crime of Deicide: murdering God. As one historian notes, the Jews were given the option: “Embrace the Cross or die!” The savagery that followed has scarred the Jewish community to this day:

[Twelve thousand] Jews in the Rhine Valley alone were killed as the first Crusade passed through. Some Jewish writers refer to these events as the “first holocaust.” Once the army reached Jerusalem and broke through the city walls, they slaughtered all the inhabitants that they could find (men, women, children, newborns). After locating about 6,000 Jews holed up in the synagogue, they set

*the building on fire; the Jews were burned alive. The Crusaders found that about 30,000 Muslims had fled to the al Aqsa Mosque. The latter were also slaughtered without mercy.*¹³⁴

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The Crusades clearly constitute holy war within our context. They were waged for a religious reason; and, in fact, offered salvation to all who gave or shed blood against Islam. However, this holy war was waged *against Islam* (and, at time, Jews³⁵), *not against Christians*.

Roman Catholic Church's Persecutions of Christians. History is filled with many instances of the deaths of those the Roman Catholic Church considered heretics. Brief mention must be made of what has been called the "unholy alliance" of the Church and the State.³⁶

Beginning in the 12th century, the Church began a centuries long practice of confronting what it deemed to be heresy through a series of "inquisitions." The "Inquisitions" were begun, first, against the "Donatists" (in the 4th century), the "Cathars," and then the "Waldensians." The Church had jurisdiction only over baptized members of the Church (which encompassed most of the population).³⁷ The Inquisitions generally include four different separate historical occurrences: the Medieval Inquisition, the Spanish Inquisition, the Portugese Inquisition, and the Roman Inquisition. A review of history of these persecutions is beyond the scope of this writing. However, it is important to note that the Inquisitions included the participation of some of the most notable in medieval Christian history, e.g., Martin Luther (1483-1546), and Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531). The Inquisitions included the Church's persecution of "Anabaptists" (from the Greek word meaning "re-baptizers") in the 16th century whose members believed in the importance of one's public profession of faith in Jesus Christ, followed by believer's baptism by immersion. Anabaptists (forerunners of the Amish and Mennonite faiths) believed infant baptism was not valid and that the combination of church and state was wholly destructive to the Church. Caner in his book, *Christian Jihad*, quotes Martin Luther on the Anabaptists as follows:

*"[Anabaptists] are in no case to be tolerated. . . . These are thieves and murderers of whom Christ spoke in John 7, persons who invade another man's parish and who usurp another man's office. . . . They must neither be tolerated nor listened to, even though they seek to teach the pure Gospel, yes, even if they are angelic and simon-pure Gabriels from heaven. . . . If he refuses [to keep his mouth shut]. . . consign the scamp into the hands of his proper master."*³⁸

Caner continues,

*"Luther, then, advocated that Anabaptists be hung for heresy, the only proper punishment for a treasonous wretch. There was no other option for the radicals for they were a threat not only to society; but to Christianity in general."*³⁹

Martin Luther, the "accidental" initiator of the Protestant Reformation, is one of the most renowned Christians in human history. How does one understand this great man of faith to support the hanging of

Anabaptists for their different interpretations of the same Bible that Martin later labored so stringently to uphold? Caner offers this explanation:

How could Luther . . . accept such horrendous acts? What justification could they possibly give that would rationalize this behavior? . . . As pastors of the flock of God, the Reformers of the state churches believed they were protecting the souls of those who were given to them. As a matter of fact, for these Reformers to stand idly by as Anabaptists and other radicals moved in their cities was in their minds analogous to watching wolves devour helpless sheep without a fight from the responsible shepherd.⁴⁰

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Thus, we must conclude that the Roman Catholic Church has waged holy war against Jews or Christians at times during her history. The Anabaptists, the Waldensians, and perhaps many others, during the periods of the separate Inquisitions are Christians whose lives were claimed in the name of religion.⁴¹

Conclusion. To summarize: emperors of the ancient Roman Empire persecuted Christians because of their faith. After the conversion of Constantine in 312AD, the persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire ended. Many years later, the Holy Roman Empire arguably waged holy war against pagans, but not against Christians. The Roman Catholic Church in the Crusades clearly waged holy war; *but not against Christians*. However, the Roman Catholic Church did wage holy war against Christians during the Inquisitions. Thus, Rome at various times during its history meets the criteria of *shedding the blood of the saints*.

Has Islam Waged Holy War throughout its History? In 610AD, around the age of 40, the Prophet Muhammad received his first and only revelation of the Qur'an while on retreat near Mecca.⁴² For 23 years following this night, Muhammad remembered aspects of this revelation and applied them to actual occurrences in his life and the lives of his followers. These recollections of Muhammad over the ensuing years were collected after his death in the "Qur'an," the holy book for Muslims. By the year 622, the new religion had grown within the Bedouin desert clans. Muhammad and his small band of desert tribesmen became a threat to the leading tribe of Mecca, the Quraysh. On September 17, 622, Muhammad and his followers fled for their lives to Medina. This celebrated journey is known as the "Hijrah" (emigration) and is considered by Muslims to be the first year of Islam and the beginning of the Muslim calendar.⁴³ In the years following 622, Muhammad was able to achieve a feat that no human being has achieved either before or since: he was able to unite the entire Arabian Peninsula under a single banner. However, in the year 632, only ten years into the Islamic era, Muhammad died after complaining of headaches.⁴⁴ Because of the suddenness of his death, Muhammad had not selected a successor (referred to as "caliph") to lead Islam. This important task was left to his inner circle of followers, referred to as his "Companions." There were two possible choices. Ali ibn Abi Talib (hereafter "Ali"), Muhammad's son-in-law and husband of Muhammad's daughter Fatima, and Abu Bakr as-Sadiq (hereafter "Abu Bakr"), a close companion of Muhammad and his first convert to Islam. Ali was the closest male relative of Muhammad and many followers believed he should be caliph by virtue of his blood relationship to Muhammad. However, others believed that Ali was too young and leadership was of critical importance *due to the likelihood of desertion*

among the bedouin tribesmen who had aligned together under Muhammad's leadership. Ultimately, the majority chose Abu Bakr as the first caliph of Islam.

When Muhammad died unexpectedly in 632AD, Islam all but disintegrated. Islam's founder had died; and Muslims saw their alignment together as contingent upon Muhammad's continued leadership. With his death, many left the faith, becoming apostates. The job of returning the apostates to Islam became the primary role of the 1st caliph of Islam, Abu Bakr.⁴⁵ The Ridda Wars (Apostate Wars) ensued.⁴⁶ At first Abu Bakr had little success in returning the apostates to Islam. Raiding parties were sent out to non-Muslim areas to procure subsistence for the struggling band of Muslims. These raiding parties were successful. Victory after victory occurred. The success of the raiding parties caused the apostate Muslims to return to Islam.⁴⁷

Syria fell in 634AD. Jerusalem surrendered to Islam in 636 AD.⁴⁸ The Arab conquest then spread over land and sea. Historian Bat Ye'or describes it,

"Led by brilliant and fearless leaders, the Muslims overcame the Persian armies and seized Babylonia, Susiana, Mesopotamia, Armenia, and Persia, pushing on as far as the Sind (713) and beyond the Syr-Daria (751). In the West, they conquered all the Christian provinces of the eastern Mediterranean, from Syria and Palestine to Egypt, North Africa and through Spain, before suffering defeats at Narbonne (720) and at Poitiers (732).⁴⁹

By the end of the tenth century, the 1st wave of Islamization of the Middle East had reached its zenith. The once predominant and powerful Christendom had all but disappeared in Palestine. The land that Christ had walked, the churches that the Apostle Paul had planted, were now under the dominion of Islam.

The second wave of Islamization was through the Turks beginning in the 13th century. Yet, unlike the first wave of Arabic conquest which met resistance at every turn, the Turks embraced Islam. By the beginning of the 14th century, the Islamized Turks plundered their way across Europe and the Balkans, beginning an occupation that would last 500 years.⁵⁰ Constantinople would not fall until 1453, but fall it did, and Istanbul became the name of this once great Byzantine city. With the fall of Constantinople, the mighty Byzantine Empire, the successor to the Western Roman Empire, ended. Next, Serbia was conquered in 1459; then Bosnia in 1463, and Herzegovina in 1483. Turkish expansion continued with the conquest of Wallachia, Moldavia, and eastern Hungary and was only checked in Vienna in 1683 and Poland in 1687.⁵¹

Have Islam's Wars Been Religiously Motivated, i.e., Holy War? Renowned historian, Bernard Lewis, defines "jihad" as follows:

The term so translated is jihad, an Arabic word with the literal meaning of "effort," "striving," or "struggle." In the Qur'an and still more in the Traditions, commonly though not invariably followed by the words "in the path of God," it has usually been understood as meaning "to wage war." The great collections of hadith (traditions) all contain a section devoted to jihad, in which the military meaning predominates. . . According to Muslim teaching, jihad is one of the basic commandments of the faith, an obligation of the Muslim community as a whole; in a defensive war, it becomes a personal

obligation of every adult male Muslim. In such a situation, the Muslim ruler might issue a general call to arms. The basis of the obligation of jihad is the universality of the Muslim revelation. God's word and God's message are for all mankind; it is the duty of those who have accepted them to strive unceasingly to convert or at least to subjugate those who have not. This obligation is without limit of time or space. It must continue until the whole world has either accepted the Islamic faith or submitted to the power of the Islamic state.⁵² (Arabic transliterations omitted from quote)

Author Ibn Warraq defines the term as follows:

“As for religious minorities, the relations of Muslims and non-Muslims are set in a context of a war: jihad. The totalitarian nature of Islam is nowhere more apparent than in the concept of jihad, the holy war, whose ultimate aim is to conquer the entire world and submit it to the one true faith, to the law of Allah. To Islam alone has been granted the truth – there is no possibility of salvation outside it. It is the sacred duty – an incumbent religious duty established in the Qur'an and the Traditions⁵³ – of all Muslims to bring it to all humanity. Jihad is a divine institution, enjoined specially for the purpose of advancing Islam. Muslims must strive, fight, and kill in the name of God:

Qur'an 9:5-6: 'Kill those who join other gods with God wherever you may find them.'

Qur'an 4:76: 'Those who believe fight in the cause of God.'

Qur'an 8:12: 'I will instill terror into the hearts of the Infidels, strike off their heads then, and strike off from them every fingertip.'”

Barbaric, ancient verse, without modern relevancy, you say? Consider the following:

“CONFLICT IN IRAQ. Hostages' fingers sent to U.S. officials in Iraq. The fingers of five hostages -- one of them a University of Florida student -- were sent to U.S. officials in Baghdad. BY HANNAH ALLAM, DOMINICK TAO AND JENNIFER LEBOVICH, March 13, 2008.

BAGHDAD -- U.S. authorities in Baghdad have received severed fingers belonging to five men -- one of them a student on leave from the University of Florida -- who were taken hostage more than a year ago in Iraq, U.S. officials said Wednesday. Four of the men had been working as contractors when they were captured in a brazen ambush of their 43-truck supply convoy on Nov. 16, 2006. Authorities confirmed the five fingers belonged to hostages Jonathon Cote, 25, a UF student; Joshua Munns, of Redding, Calif.; Paul Johnson Reuben, of Buffalo, Minn.; Bert Nussbaumer of Vienna, Austria, and Ronald J. Withrow, an American who was kidnaped separately from the others. The FBI is investigating the grisly development.⁵⁴

Conclusion. *Islam has waged holy war against Jews and Christians since its inception in the 7th century AD. Ancient Rome also waged holy war against Jews and Christians through persecutions inflicted upon both faiths through ten separate Roman Emperors. Following the decline of the Western Roman Empire and the emergence of the Holy Roman Empire, the Roman Catholic Church took on the mantle of holy warrior as it killed those it considered heretics (as well as the Jewish people who came to be known as “Christ-killers”). The Crusades did likewise relative to the massacre of Jews. We must conclude that*

history has two candidates for the beast of the Last Days – Rome, in whatever its form, and Islam. It will take the whole of scripture to determine which is the match for the beast of the Last Days!

Chapter 3 Endnotes.

1 Washington Post, October 19, 2007, section B, p. 1, by Jacqueline L. Salmon and Valerie Strauss, Washington Post Staff Writers.

2 The words are those of Osama bin Laden who quotes from the Qur'an (Muslim holy book) and from the "hadith," the collection of the sayings of Muhammad. Bruce Lawrence, Editor, *Messages to the World, the Statements of Osama bin Laden*, p 187.

3 "Just War" criteria have been developed by Christian theologians beginning with Augustine of Hippo (354 - 430AD). The just war criteria was developed by Augustine as a means of helping Christians with the ethics of war. Unlike pagans, Christians were to be guided with by the teachings of Jesus Christ, including to "love thy enemies." Thomas Aquinas (1225 - 1274) also contributed greatly to the criteria which sought to develop a "blue print" for Christians to engage in ethical warfare. This effort resulted in six broad requirements to be met for Christian warfare to be considered "just": 1) Just cause - force may be used to correct or limit a public evil, in self-defense, or to preempt an anticipated attack. 2) Legitimate authority - only a legitimately constituted public authority may declare war. 3) Right intention - the ultimate goal of the use of force is to reestablish peace. 4) Probability of success - force may not be used in a futile cause. 5) Proportionality of violence - the overall destruction expected from the use of force must be outweighed by the good to be achieved by the force. 6) Principle of last resort - force may only be used after all peaceful alternatives have been genuinely attempted and failed. See Ergun Mehmet Caner and Emir Fethi Caner, *Christian Jihad*, pp. 67 - 69 for further discussion.

4 Available at, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_on_Terrorism, at March 6, 2008.

5 There are six criteria which characterize a conflict as a "just war," including: 1) a just cause; 2) the declaration of war by a legitimate authority; 3) a right intention; 4) a probability of success; 5) a proportionality of violence; 6) the principle of last resort. See Ergun Mehmet Caner and Emir Fethi Caner, *Christian Jihad*, p. 68 - 69.

6 Available at, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holy_War, at February 28, 2008.

7 Available at, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/urban2a.html>, at March 29, 2008.

8 Available at, <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/docs/980223-fatwa.htm>, at March 6, 2008.

9 Stephen Miller, Daniel, *The New American Commentary*, p. 95. David Jeremiah, *The Handwriting on the Wall, Volume 1*, p. 50-51; John F. Walvoord, *Every Prophecy of the Bible*, p 218.

10 Stephen Miller, p. 209.

11 Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation 8 - 22, An Exegetical Commentary*, p. 120. Garland Eldon Ladd, *A Commentary on The Revelation*, p. 167. . It is also important that we realize the significance of an interpretation that fails to include Israel within the interpretation of Revelation 12. Jesus put it this way: ^{NAS} Luke 11:23 "He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me, scatters." In Revelation 12 there are two sides: God's side and the devil's side. Clearly, the Christian Church is envisioned to be on God's side by virtue of its inclusion in Revelation 12:17 – "the dragon . . . went off to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus." If the Jewish people are not included as a foe *against satan* (along with the Christian Church), then they are a foe *against God*; it is either one side or the other, not a third side. In order for Old Testament passages such as Micah 4 cited above to be fulfilled, then the Jewish people would, by necessity, have to be included by God in the prophecy of Revelation 12. The interpretation of the woman as Israel also allows for the fulfillment of New Testament prophecy of the salvation of Israel in the Last Days: ^{NAS} Romans 11:25 "For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in;²⁶ and thus all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, "The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob."²⁷ "And this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins."²⁸ From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God's choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers;²⁹ for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable."

Chapter 3 Endnotes.

12Ergun Mehmet Caner and Emir Fethi Caner, *Christian Jihad*, pp. 39 - 45.

13Justo L. Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity*, Volume I, p. 15.

14Gonzalez, p. 15.

15Stearns., p. 168.

16Gonzalez, p. 16.

17Bart Ehrman, *Misquoting Jesus*, p 72.

18Stearns, p 265.

19Leonard B. Glick, *Abraham's Heirs, Jews and Christians in Medieval Europe*, p 26.

20Available at, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decline_of_the_Roman_Empire, at March 26, 2008.

21Gonzalez, p. 218.

22Stearns, p 355 - 356.

23Gonzalez, p. 268-270.

24Gonzalez, p. 266.

25Ergun Mehmet Caner and Emir Fethi Caner, *Christian Jihad*, p. 73.

26Caner, p. 84-85.

27Caner, p. 85.

28Caner, p. 88.

29Caner, p. 89.

30According to Cyril Glasse', *Concise Encyclopedia of Islam*, p. 210, any Muslim who dies in a genuine jihad has special merit and enters paradise (heaven) directly. 72 virgins are said to await the martyr for his personal sexual fulfillment and enjoyment.

31Caner, p. 100.

32Thomas F. Madden, *A Concise History of the Crusades*, p. 213.

33"After World War I, the League of Nations approved the British Mandate of Palestine with the intent of creating a "national home for the Jewish people." In 1947, the United Nations approved the partition of the Mandate of Palestine into two states, one Jewish and one Arab The Arab League rejected the plan, but on May 14, 1948, Israel declared its independence. The new country's victory in the subsequent Arab-Israeli War expanded the borders of the Jewish state beyond those in the UN Partition Plan. Since then, Israel has been in conflict with many of the neighboring Arab countries, resulting in several major wars and decades of violence until this day. Since its foundation, Israel's boundaries and even the State's very right to exist have been subject to dispute, although Israel has signed peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan, and efforts are being made to reach a

Chapter 3 Endnotes.

permanent accord with the Palestinians.” See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israel>, at April 5, 2008.

34Caner, p. 199.

35Thomas F. Madden, *A Concise history of the Crusades*, pp. 20-21.

36Caner, p. 65f.

37Available at, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inquisition>, at April 6, 2008.

38Verduin, *Reformers and Their Stepchildren*, p. 48, as quoted by Caner, p. 162-163.

39Caner, p. 163.

40Caner, p. 166.

41.It is agreed that where the Church's persecutions were against Christians, e.g., the Waldensians during the Inquisitions, such persecution would meet the Biblical requirement. Historian Mortimer Chambers lists the number killed during this period as follows: “*The number of heretics who were executed is not known exactly, but it was probably several hundred. Fines, confiscations of property, and imprisonment were the usual punishment for all but the most obstinate heretics. The Inquisitions has a terrible effect upon the medieval Church, because it associated the papacy with persecution and bloodshed.*” See Mortimer Chambers et al, *The Western Experience, Volume 1 to the 18th Century*, p. 313.

42Glasse', p 280.

43Ibid., p 281.

44Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad, A Biography of the Prophet*, p. 255-256.

45Bernard Lewis, *The Arabs in History*, p. 50.

46Peter Stearns et al., p 287.

47Bernard Lewis, p. 50.

48Sir William Muir, *The Caliphate: the Rise, Decline and Fall from Original Sources*, p. 142.

49Bat Ye'or, *The Decline of Eastern Christianity under Islam, From jihad to Dhimmitude*, p 43.

50Paul Fregosi, *jihad*, p 209.

51Bat Ye'or. p 54 - 55.

52Bernard Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam*, p. 72-73.

53For Muslims there are two sources of religious reference: First, the Qur'an, which is their revealed scriptures as provided to them by the Prophet Muhammad through his revelation by “Angel Gabriel,” and, two, the “Sunnah,” plus the “Hadith.” The Sunnah is the customary practice of the Islamic community in observation of his actions and listening to the teachings of the Prophet during his lifetime. “Hadiths are narrative accounts of these same actions and pronouncements, rather like “hearsay” records of what the Muhammad did and said.” See Timothy R. Furnish, *Holiest Wars, Islamic Mahdis, Their Jihads, and Osama*

Chapter 3 Endnotes.

bin Laden, p. 11.

54 Available at, <http://www.miamiherald.com/news/world/story/454624.html>, at March 13, 2008.