

# **Legitimate War in Religions**

**Judaism Christianity and Islam**

**by**

**Ahmad Abdel - WAHAB**

**Rt. Maj. - Gen**

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## Preface

This is a short treatise on the concept of legitimate war in religions, as stated in the text of various Holy Scriptures. Man is accustomed to earthquakes, volcanos, floods and whirlwinds, which happen from time to time and have their disastrous effects on life as manifested in the destruction of mankind, crops and installations.

Man is also accustomed to war as a human phenomenon, connected with his existence and behaviour from the very beginning until today and tomorrow. War is a very big disaster to man, nay, it is the horrible disaster at all times.

Past and present happenings prove that war is a regular activity of mankind. That is why religion acknowledged this fact and laid down rules to regulate the acts of war.

It is noteworthy that the number of victims of wars between people of the same religion may be in many cases, more than that of victims of wars between people having different religions. The Bible shows that when Israel lived as separate

tribes among the peoples of the land of Canaan at the time of the Judges, an incident of raping a concubine of a man of Israel caused fierce fighting to break out between the tribe of Benjamin on one side and the other tribes of Israel on the other. The Book of Judges (Chapter 20), states that the men of Israel had destroyed more than 45000 men of Benjamin, which meant that this tribe was about to be completely cut off from Israel.

On the other hand, the Benjaminites destroyed more than 40 000 men of the Israelites, i.e. about 10% of the total number of the men of war.

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Also, the total number of people killed in the Second World Christian War (1939 - 1945), which broke out among the European Christians, exceeded 50 million people! One should add to this the victims of the First World Christian War (1914 - 1918), as well as the victims of the religious wars and persecutions in Christian Europe. That is why Bertrand Russel made this comment:

"At all times, from the age of Constantine (the fourth century) to the end of the seventeenth century, Christians were far more fiercely persecuted by other Christians than by the Roman emperors<sup>(1)</sup>.

\* \*

It is hopeful that this short article might be a memorial for those who desire to tell the truth about this matter of great importance, lest they should not utter an enormity, especially if they are leaders of thought, religions and politics.

Finally, the absolute truth is stated in these words of GOD:

**"GOD loveth not aggressors".**

(II: 190)

AHmad Abdel - WAHAB

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(1) B. Russel: Why I am Not a Christian, P. 27.

# I. The War of Abraham The Friend of God

## **Abraham, The Father of The Prophets:**

He is the spiritual father of all those who believe that God is one, and his religion is the only true one. Jews, Christians and Muslims are agreed upon this fact, and Abraham is highly honoured in their Holy Scriptures.

The Bible Says: "the Lord appeared to Abram, and said to him: I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly.

No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham.. And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you". (Gen 17: 1 - 7)

Also, the first revelation to Moses said: "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob". (Ex 3 : 6).

And in a controversey with the Jews about the meaning of the true sonship, Jesus Christ stated that it is the sonship of faith and work, and not that of the flesh. "Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do what Abraham did but now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth which I heard from God; this is not what Abraham did. You do what your father did.. You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning". (Jn 8 : 39 - 44).

And when the term was prolonged for many hearts which were hardened and had forgotten the reality of the religion of Abraham, Mohammad, the seal of Prophets, came at last to renew the religious building, and to call unto the way of GOD, with wisdom and fair exhortation, in order to establish truely the Religion of the Truth:

"Say: Lo! As for me, my Lord hath guided me unto a straight path, a right religion, the faith of Abraham, the upright, who certainly was not of the polytheists". (VI: 161).



"And afterwards We inspired thee (Muhammad, Saying): Follow the faith of Abraham, as one by nature upright. He was not of the polytheists". (XVI: 123).

"Behold! his Lord said to him (Abraham): Be a Muslim (surrender to Me)! he said: I have become a Muslim (I have surrendered) to the Lord of the Worlds". (II: 131).

"The faith of your father Abraham (is yours). He hath named you Muslims of old time" (XXII: 78).

The Holy Scriptures are agreed upon the fact that Abraham was a friend of God. The LORD said to Isaiah: "But you Israel, my servant.. the offspring of **Abraham, my friend** - Is 41 : 8".

St James, the Christ's brother says: "faith was completed by works, and the scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness **and he was called the friend of God**". (Jas 2: 22 - 23).

Also, Al - Qur'an says: "Who is better in religion than he who surrendereth his whole self to

GOD, does good and followeth the creed of Abraham, the true in faith? **For GOD did take Abraham for a friend"**. (IV: 125).

\* \*

This is a word about Abraham, father of the Prophets, and father of the Muslims. As regards the relation between the Muslims and their spiritual father Abraham, the documents of the Vatican Council II (1962 - 65) published by The Catholic Church, states: "The Muslims who believe the faith of Abraham, worship with us the only God, the Merciful, the Judge of mankind on the Last Day<sup>(1)</sup>.

## The War of Abraham

It was a war led by Abraham to fight against the aggression and restore the extorted rights:

“And there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomor'rah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboi'im, and the king of Bela, and they joined battle with them in the vale of

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(1) M. Buccaille: La Bible, Le Coran et La Science, p. 117.

Sid'dim. with Chedorlao'mer the king of Elam and with Tidal king of Goi'im and Am ra - phel king of Shinar, and Ar'i-och king of El-la sar; four kings with five.

And the vale of Siddim was full of slime pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there; and they that remained fled to the mountain. And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way. And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sod'om, and his goods, and departed.

And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew; for he dwelt in the plain of Mam're the Amorite, brother of Esh'col, and brother of A'mer: and these were confederate with Abram.

**And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan.**

And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus.

**And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people.**

And the king of Sod'om went out to meet him, after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer and of the kings that were with him, at the valley of Sha'veh, which is the king's dale.

And Melchiz'edek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.

**And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all” (Gen 14:8-21)**

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## **II. The Wars of Moses**

### **GOD's Speaker**

**1 - Wars to drive out the original inhabitants of the land and to possess it.**

**2 - Wars to abolish idolatry by utterly slaying the idolators and burning their cities with fire.**

“And the LORD spake unto Moses in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho, saying.

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye are passed aver Jordan into the land of Canaan. Then ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their pictures, and destroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places.

And ye shall dispossess the inhabitants of the land, and dwell therein: for I have given you the land to possess it. And ye shall divide the land by lot for an inheritance among your families; and to the more ye shall give the more inheritance, and to the fewer ye shall give the less inheritance:

every mans inheritance shall be in the place where his lot falleth; according to the tribes of your fathers ye shall inherit.

But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell.

Moreover it shall come to pass, that I shall do unto you, as I thought to do unto them”.

(NUMBERS33:50 - 55)

“When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou. And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shall smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto

them; Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.

For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly. But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire". (DEUTERONOMY 7: 1 - 5)

\* \*

“If thou shalt hear say in one of thy cities, which the LORD thy God hath given thee to dwell there, saying, certain men, the children of Belial, are gone out from among you, and have withdrawn the inhabitants of their city, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which ye have not known; then shalt thou inquire, and make search and ask diligently; and behold, if it be true and the thing certain that such abominable thing has been done among you, you shall surely put the inhabi-

tants of that city to the sword destroying it utterly, all who are in it and its cattle with the edge of the sword.. You shall burn the city and its spoil with fire”. (DEUTERÓNOMY 13 : 12 - 10)

\* \*

### **3 - The Wars of Mosse were for the purpose of Enslaving the other Peoples.**

To achieve this, every male of the far cities shall be smitten with the edge of the sword, but women and the children shall be taken as a spoil As for the neighbouring cities, **nothing that breathes shall be saved alive!**

“When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it.

And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, that all the people that is found therein shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee. And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it.

And when the LORD thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword.



But the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the LORD thy God hath given thee.

Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very far off from thee, which are not of the cities of these nations.

But of the cities of these people, which the LORD thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, **thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth.**

But thou shalt utterly destroy them; the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee.

That they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods; so should ye sin against the LORD your God". (DEUTERONMT 20 : 10 - 18)

\* \*

“When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies, and the LORD thy God hath deliverd them into thine hands, and thou hast taken them captive and seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire unto her, that thou woudest have her to thy wife. Then thou shalt bring her home to thine house, and she shall shave her head, and pare her nails.

And she shall put the raiment of her captivity from off her, and shall remain in thine house, and bewail her father and her mother a full month: and after that thou shalt go in unto her, and be her husband, and she shall be thy wife.

And it shall be, if thou have no delight in her, then thou shalt let her go whither she will; but thou shalt not sell her at all for money”.

(DEUTERONOMY 21 : 10 - 14).

\* \* \*

**4 - The wars of Moses were for Revenge, complete Destruction and putting into practice the “Holocaust Policy” which all armies of aggression apply until today.**

“Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way when ye were come forth out of Egypt.

How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary: and he feared not God. Therefore it shall be, when the LORD thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it, that thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; thou shalt not forget it”. (DEUTERONOMY 25 : 17 - 19)

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“The LORD said to Moses: Avenge the people of Israel on the Midianites, of every tribe a thousand, throughout all the tribes of Israel, a thousand of every tribe, twelve thousand armed for war.

And Moses sent them to the war, a thousand of every tribe, together with Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, to the war, with the holy instruments, and the trumpets to blow in his hand.

And they warred against the Midianites, as the LORD commanded Moses; and they slew all the males.

And they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Re'ba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword.

And the children of Israel took all their little ones, and took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods.

And they burnt all their cities wherein they dwelt, and all their goodly castles, with fire.

And they took all the spoil, and all the prey, both of men and of beasts.

And they, brought the captives, and the prey and the spoil, unto Moses and Eleazar the priest, and unto the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the camp at the plains of Moab, which are by Jordan near Jericho.

And Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and all the princes of the congregation, went forth to meet them without the camp.

And Moses was wroth with the officers of the host, with the captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, which came from the battle.

And Moses said unto them: Have ye saved all the women alive?. Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam. to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD.

Now therefore kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him.

But all the women children, that have not known a man by lying with him keep alive for yourselves". (Numbers 31 : 1 - 19).

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### **III. The Wars of Joshua The Successor to Moses**

#### **Joshua the Prophet of The LORD**

Joshua was a prophet with whom GOD spoke. “After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD the LORD said to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ minister,” Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people.. as I was with Moses, so I will be with you.. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; be not frightened, neither be dismayed; for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go”. (Josh 1 : 1 - 9).

\* \*

#### **The Wars of Joshua:**

**Joshua led wars of complete destruction, where the original inhabitants of the land were utterly slaughtered, their cities were set on fire, and all manifestations of life have disappeared!**

“And the LORD said unto Joshua: Fear not, neither be thou dismayed, and arise, go up to Ai:

see, I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his pepole, and his city, and his land.

And thou shalt do to Ai and her king as thou didst unto Jericho and her king: only the spoil therof, and the cattle thereof, shall ye take for a prey unto yourselves: lay thee an ambush for the city behind it. So Joshua arose, and all the pepole of war, to go up against Ai: and Joshua chose out thirty thousand mighty men of valour, and sent them away by night. And he commanded them, saying, Behold, ye shall lie in wait against the city, even behind the city: go not very far from the city, but be ye all ready. And I, and all the people that are with me, will approach unto the city: and it shall come to pass, when they come out against us, as at the first, that we will flee before them. (For they will come out after us,) till we have drawn them from the city; for they will say, They flee before us, as at the first: therefore we will flee before them. Then ye shall rise up from the ambush, and seize upon the city: for the LORD your

God will deliver it into your hand.. and ye shall set the city on fire: according to the commandment of the LORD..

And the LORD said unto Joshua, stretch out the spear that is in thy hand toward Ai; for I will give it into thine hand. And Joshaua stretched out the spear that he had in his hand toward the city.

And the ambush arose quickly out of their place, and they ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand: and they entered into the city and took it and set the city on fire.

And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw, and, behlod, the smoke of the city ascended up to heaven, and they had no power to flee this way or that way: and the pepole that fled to the wilderness turned back upon the pursuers.

And when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambussh had taken the city, and that the smoke of the city ascended, then they turned again, and slew the men of Ai.



And the other issued out of the city against them; so they were in the midst of Israel, some on this side, and some on that side: and they smote them, so that they let none of them remain or escape. And the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joshua.

And it came to pass, when Israel had made an end of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field, in the wilderness wherein they chased them, and when they were chased, and when they were all fallen on the edge of the sword, until they were consumed, that all the Israelites returned unto Ai, and smote it with the edge of the sword”.

(JOSHUA 8 : 1 - 24).

\* \*

## **IV - The Wars of Saul**

### **The Anointed of The LORD**

#### **Saul The Anointed :**

"Samuel (The prophet) said to Saul," The LORD sent me to anoint you king over his people Israel" . (I Sam 15:1)

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#### **Saul The Prophet:**

Saul "went from ther to Nai'oth in Ramah ; and the Spirit of God came upon him also , and as he went he prophesied" . (I Sam 19:23) .

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#### **The Wars of Saul :**

Saul led wars of complete destruction where all men, women, children, sucklings and cattle were killed with the edge of the sword . When Saul had spared some if the best of the cattle, the LORD rejected him , and the spirit of the LORD departed from him, and an evil spirit from the LORD torment him. Also, the LORD rejected Saul as king and gave the kingdom to David, one of his servants.

"Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt .

Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; **but slay both man and women, infant and suckling ox and sheep, camel and ass .**

And Saul gathered the pebol together, and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand footmen and ten thousand men of Judah .

And Saul came to a city of Amalek and laid wait in the valley .

And Saul said unto the Kenites, Go, depart, get you down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them : for ye showed kindness to all the children of Israel, when they came up out of Egypt. So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites.

And Saul smote the Amalekites from Havilah until thou comest to Shur, that is over against Egypt. And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, **and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.**

But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly .

Then came the word of the LORD unto Samuel, saying .

It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night " . (I SAMUEL 15:2-11)

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## **V . The Wars of David**

### **The Anointed of The LORD**

#### **David The Anointed :**

"The LORD said (to Samuel): Arise, anoint him. Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward " .(I Sam 16:12 - 13)

" Now, these are the last words of David : The oracle of David, the son of Jesse, the oracle of the man who was raised on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, the sweet psalmist of Israel: The spirit of the LORD speaks by me, his word is by my tongue " . (II Sam 23:1-2)

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#### **The Wars of David :**

David led wars of complete destruction, aiming at amassing great spoils and plundering the treasures of the conquered cities.

He achieved that by killing the inhabitants of the land , torturing the captives by putting them under saws and harrows of iron and axes of iron, and made them pass through brickkiln. So, David was an innovator in using such Holocaust!

"And David and his men went up, and invaded the Geshurites, and his Gezrites, and the Amalekites : for those nations were of old the inhabitants of the land, as thou goest to Shur, even unto the land of Egypt .

And David smote the land, **and left neither man nor woman alive**, and took away the sheep, and the oxen, and the asses, and the camels, and the apparel, and came to Achish. and Achish said, Whither have ye made a road today ? And David said, Against the south of Judah, and against the south if the Jerahmeelites, and against the south of the Kenites.

**And David saved neither man nor woman alive, to bring tidings to Gath, saying, Lest they should tell on us, saying: So did David, and so will be his manner all while he dwelleth in the country of the Philistines.**

And Achish believed David saying, He hath made his people Israel utterly to abhor him; therefore he shall be my sevant for ever " .

(1 SAMUEL 27:8-12)

"And after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them: and David took Metheg - ammah out of the hand of the

Philistines. And he smote Moab, and measured them with a line, casting them down to the ground; even with two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive . And so the Moabites became Davids servants, and brought gifts " . (II SAMUEL 8:1 -2)

\* \*

"And Joab sent messengers to David, and said, I have fought against Rabbah and taken the city of waters. Now therefore gather the rest of the people together, and encamp against the city, and take it: lest I take the city and it be called after my name. And david gathered all the people together, and went to Rabbah, and fought against it, and took it. And he took their king's crown from off his head, the weight whereof was a talent of gold with precious stones: and it was set on David's head. And he brought forth the spoil of the city in great abundance.

**And he brought forth the people that were therein, and put them under saws, and under harrows of iron, and made them pass through the brickkiln : and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon"** . (2 SAMUEL 12:27 - 31)

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# War and Peace in Christianity

## Legislative Sources :

In Christianity, legislative power was not entrusted to Christ only, but it has been extended to his disciples, to Paul and to the Fathers of the Church. In this respect, there is the authorization which Christ has given to Peter when he said to him : "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Mt 16 : 19).

This authorization has been extended also to the other disciples, when Christ said : "Truely I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Mt 18 - 18).

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After the departure of Christ, his disciples and some others who joined them, began to preach the Gospel among the Gentiles. There arose the problem of circumcising those new believers, according to the Law of Moses which is the basis of faith for



all. The Law states that circumcision is the everlasting covenant of God between Him and Abraham and his descendants after him. "God said to Abraham, As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you through out their generations. This is my covenant which you shall keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised.. in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant.. Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreshin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenants." (Gen 17 : 9 - 14)

So, according to the Bible, circumcission is an essential mark on the body to distinguish between the children of Abraham in faith, the circumcised, and the others who are uncircumsicised. The problem of circumcision which arose in Antioch, stirred up a dispute among the early Christians. This necessitated going up to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders to discuss this matter . The first Christian Council was held there in A. D. 50, where circumcision had been abrogated!

(Ac 15 : 6 - 29).

This was the beginning of introducing changes and modifications into Christianity across centuries through such councils, so as to suit the conditions prevailing, irrespective of whether they comply with the teaching of Christ in the Gospels or not .

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### **Christian Peace between Theory and Practice:**

In order to spread peace among people, Christ stated two basic ideal rules.

First : "If any one strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." (Mt 5 : 39)

Second : "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you" (Mt 5 : 44).

The Gospels show clearly the impossibility of putting these two ideal rules into practice, even by Christ himself.

As for the first rule, when they began to question the man whom they seized, the gospel according to John says: "The high priest then questioned

Jesus about his disciples and his teaching . Jesus answered him, I have spoken openly to the world .. why do you ask me? Ask those who have heard me.. When he said this, one of the officers standing by struck Jesus with his hand saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest? Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken wrongly, bear witness to the wrong; but if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?" (Jn 18 : 19 - 23).

Thus, Jesus of the Gospels protested against only one strike on his cheek, and did not turn his other's to the officer who struck him, in application of the rule which he had already stated. And on the way to Jerusalem, for cleansing the temple, "he was hungry and seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see if he could find anything on it. When he came to it , he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs . And he said to it, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again". And his disciples heard it . As they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots. And Peter remembered and said

to him, "Master look! The fig tree which you cursed has withered." (Mk 11 : 12 - 20).

Thus, Christ cursed that poor fig tree for no reason except that it brought forth no figs because it was not the season for figs!

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### **Christ and the Sword :**

When Christ felt an approaching danger, he prepared a small force to resist any attempt to arrest him . He asked everyone of his disciples to buy a sword because it was then the time for the sword. "He said to them, "when I sent you out with no purse or bag or sandals, did you lack anything?". They said, "Nothing". He said to them, "But now; let him who has a purse take it, and likewise a bag . And let him who has no sword sell his mantle and buy one.. And they said, "Look Lord, here are two swords" And he said to them, "It is enough" (Lk 22 : 35 - 38).

The scholars of the French Translation, **La Bible de Jerusalem**, comment on the phrase: "a

purse to buy supplies and a sword to have a protection by force", by referring to what Luke has previously mentioned in his gospel (12 : 49 - 52) as a teaching of Christ: "I came to cast fire upon the earth; and would that it were already kindled!.. Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather divisions; for five divided, three against two and two against three.."

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Dr. G. Caird, President of the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies, comments on Lk 22: 38, "here are two swords", saying "it was on this verse that Boniface VIII in A.D. 1302, in his Bull, *Unam Sanctam*, based the doctrine that God has entrusted to the Church the two swords of civil and spiritual authority"<sup>(1)</sup>.

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And in this manner, preaching the original Christian overall peace has been changed into a legitimate war based on the edge of the sword!

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(1) G. Caird : St. Luke, Penguin Books, London, 1963 .

## The Legitimate War in Christianity

Steven Runciman presents in his, **History of The Crusades**, the changes which came over the Christian thought, from preaching an ideal peace to preaching legitimate wars:

"The Christian citizen has a fundamental problem to face: is he entitled to fight for his country ? His religion is a religion of peace; and war means slaughter and destruction . But after the triumph of the Cross, after the Empire has become Christianity, ought not its citizens be ready to take up arms for its welfare ? St. Augustin himself had admitted that wars might be waged by the command of God. The holy war, that is to say, war in the interests of the Church, became permissible, even desirable . Pope Leo IV (847 - 855), in the mid - ninth century, declared that anyone dying in battle for the defence of the Church would receive a heavenly reward. Pope John VIII (879-882), a few years later, ranked the victims of a holy war as martyrs..

War against the infidel .(Muslims!) in Spain thus acquired the status of a holy war; and soon Popes themselves took a hand in its direction .. Pope Alexander II at once promised an indulgence for all who fought for the Cross in Spain and set about collecting an army ..

Pope Gregory VII (1073-1085), invited the princes of Christendom to join in it, and while reminding the world that the Spanish kingdom belonged to the see of St. Peter, declared that Christian knights might enjoy the lands that they conquered from the infidel (Muslims!)..

By the close of the eleventh century the idea of the holy war had thus been carried into practice<sup>(1)</sup>

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### **Use of The Sword to Spread Christianity :**

Suffice it to mention here just two examples, to show how Christianity entered Europe, as stated in the documents of the Christian missionaries themselves .

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1 - S. Runciman : A History of the Crusades I, PP. 81-92 .

## Christianization of Germany :

Stephen Neil writes in his " History of Christian Missions " :

"Charlemagne is without question one of the greatest figures in history both of the Church and of the world.. Here we are concerned mainly with the extension of the Christian realm through the campaigns of Charlemagne against the Saxons. In Charlemagne's day the Saxons were the menace, the emperor decided that they must be brought and kept under his control by a mixture of armed force and religion. From 772 till 798 we read of a constant succession of campaigns, conversions, conspiracies and repressions.. Once a German tribe had been conquered, its conversion was included in the terms of peace , as the price to be paid for enjoying the protection of the emperor and the good government that his arms ensured. But this meant an association of the new religion with the conquering power that could only be dangerous . Any spark of patriotism, any movement of resistance to the dominant race, could only take



the form of of equally violent opposition to the Christian faith . So every uprising of the people was accompanied by a resurgence of paganism; and the long tale of martyrdoms and massacres sheds a lurid light on the process by which the Saxons were finally converted. **Charlemagne put to death 4500 Saxons in a single day.**

The **Capitulatio de partibus Saxoniae** lays down savage penalties for the infringement of a whole variety of Christian rules :

**Any unbaptized Saxon who attempts to hide among his own people and refuses to accept baptism shall be put to death .**

Anyone who plots with the pagans against the Christians shall be put to death <sup>(1)</sup>.

\*

### **Christianization of the Baltic States :**

"To the south and east of the Baltic, lived Wends, Prussians, Lithuanians, and a mass of other races, united only in one thing - their determination never to be Christians. Nowhere did the Gospel make slower or more laborious progress than here .

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(1) S, Neil: A History of Christian Missions, pp. 78 - 80.

Whatever we may think of the method finally used, history cannot deny that **the addition of these regions to the Christian world was brought about by the campaigns of the Order of Teutonic Knights** . The Teutonic knights of St. Mary's Hospital at Jerusalem, had gradually been drawn into the service of the Church on its Prussian frontier. The understanding was that the order was entitled to annex to its dominions any lands of the pagans that it might conquer, **on condition that Christian instruction was given to the conquered people in compensation for the ownership of their lands which was taken from them.** (Later,, when bishops were appointed for this area, the Pope varied the gift : two - thirds to the conquerors, and one third to the bishops) .

The pagans, valiant though they were, could not stand before the disciplined chivalry of the Empire. Fifty years were spent in the conquest; at the end of that time resistance was over and Prussia had been added to the Christian realm” .<sup>(1)</sup>

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(1) Ibid., pp. 109 - 110.

This shows some of the relations between Christianity and the sword, especially in Europe. **Herbert Fisher** summerizes the conversion of Europe to Christianity as follows :

"The historian will observe that the conversion of Europe to Christianity was, after the first heroic age of poverty and enthusiasm, mainly the result of material calculation or political pressure .

The Goths, the Franks, the Saxons, the Scandinavians went over to Christianity not as individuals directed by an inner light, but as peoples subject to mass suggestion and under the direction of political chiefs. <sup>(1)</sup>

\* \* \*

Thus the war became legitimate to compel the early Europeans, and others, to be converted to Christianity

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(1) H. Fisher: A History of Europe, p. 199.

## **War and Peace in Islam**

### **God commands : Never begin aggression :**

“And let not the hatred of some people in (once) shutting you out of the Sacred Mosque . lead you to transgression (And hostility on your part). Help ye one another in righteousness and piety, but help ye not another in sin and rancour : fear God : for God is strict in punishment” . (V: 2)

\* \*

“Fight in the cause of God Those who fight you, but do not begin aggression; for God loveth not aggressors”. (II : 190)

\* \*

### **War is Waged to Repel Aggression, with No Excess in Killing :**

“And so for all things prohibited, there is the law of equality, if then any one transgresses the prohibition against you, transgress ye likewise . against him, but fear God, and know that God is with those . who restrain themselves . And spend of your substance in the cause of God, and make

not your own hands contribute to (your) destruction; but do good; for God loveth those who do good". (II : 194 - 195)

\* \*

### **War is Waged for the Cause of the Feeble and the Oppressed :**

“And why should ye not fight in the cause of God and of those who, being weak are ill-treated (and oppressed)? men, women, and children, whose cry is : "Our Lord"! Rescue us from this town, whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from Thee one who will protect; and raise for us from Thee one who will help". (IV : 75)

\* \*

### **No War Without a Declaration in Advance:**

“If thou fearest treachery from any group, throw back (their covenant) to them, (so as to be) on equal terms : for God loveth not the treacherous”. (VIII : 58).

\*

In application to this divine command, it came to pass that Muawiyya decided to camp near the Romans so that when his pact with them comes to term, he would suddenly attack them. An old man, on his riding animal heard of this, then he shouted : God is the Greatest! God is the Greatest! Fulfillment! No betrayal! Prophet Muhammad (p. b. u. h.) said: Whoe has a pact with others, he should keep it to the end of its term unless he declares to them openly that henceforth the pact is over and he shall have the right to attack them. When Muawiyya heard that, he cancelled his decision <sup>(1)</sup>.

Also, Saeed-ibn-Uthman subjected Samarkand peacefully to the Ummayad Khalifa, on paying a certain amount of money, in return for enjoying his protection. After the death of Saeed, Qutaiba - ibn-Muslim succeeded him, and suddenly attacked Samarkand and conquered it without a declaration in advance. The people in Samarkand received the matter unwillingly until Omar - ibn -

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(1) Al - Qur'an Commentaries of Ibn - Kathir.

Abdel - Aziz became a Khalifa in the year AH 99. He was famous for justice. This encouraged the inhabitants of Samarkand to complain to him of what Qotaiba did when he had suddenly attacked them without a notice in advance. The Khalifa received the delegation, listened carefully to the complaint, then wrote a letter to the governor of Samarkand, Solaiman-ibn-Abissarh, to investigate the case thoroughly . The governor sent the case to Jumai - ibn - Hader, the Judge of Samarkkand. The Judge called their witnesses from the inhabitants of Samarkand, as well as others from the Muslim army who fought under the leadership of Qutaiba. They all testified that Qutaiba. attacked Samarkand forcibly without a notice in advance . When the Judje realised this fact he passed his resounding sentence which decreed that the Muslim army should withdraw from Samarkand, as well as all Muslims who entered it after the Muslim conquest. The governor of Samarkand sent to the Khalifa informing him and asking his advice. The Khalifa replied that the judgement

should become fully operative. While Samarkand was in turbullnnce because of this judgement which nobody would have dreamt of, there came to the governer a delegatian of the inhabitants of Samarkand confessing that they never imagined that such a thing could happen, neither from the Judge nor from the Khalifa . Therefore, they renounced their former complaint, and asked then that the situation remains unchanged.

This case, with all its accompanying incidemts, was a cause for many people in Samerkand to be converted to Islam . Samarkand became after that one of the most flourshing centers of Islamic civilization .

This is quite suffiicient to prove that Muslim moralities are applicable, though ideal.

\* \*

**GOD does Not Love Those who Make Mischief in the Earth .**

“There is the type of man whose speech about this world's life may dazzle thee, and he calls God to witness about what is in his heart; yet he is the most contentious of enemies.



When he turns his back, his aim everywhere is to spread mischief through the earth and destroy crops and cattle. But God lovethh not mischief. When it is said to him, "Fear God" he is led by arrogance to (more) crime . Enough for him is hell". (II : 204 - 206).

\*

Prophet Muhammad recommended the leaders of the armies "not to betray, not to act treacherously, not to make a dreadful example of your enemy, and never kill young children. If you meet an enemy from among the polytheists, call them to Islam. If they accept, be satisfied with that and stop fighting them."<sup>(1)</sup>

Also, such was the recommendation of the first Khalifa Abu - Bakr, to Usamma ibn- Zeid, the youngest leader of the Muslim army, at that time: not to betray, not to act treacherously, not to make a dreadful example of the enemy, not to kill a child not an old man nor a woman. He also said:

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(1) This speech was narrated by : Muslim, in his Book.

“Do not uproot date palms, nor burn them, nor cut down fruitful trees. Do not slay any sheep, nor a cow, nor a camel, except for food. You shall pass by people who devoted themselves entirely to worship in monasteries, leave them to their devotion. <sup>(1)</sup>

\* \*

**Islamic Power is Devoted to Construction and Populationg the Earth; as well as Achieving Security for All People, including Non - Muslims :**

“God 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 God Loveth those who are just. God only forbids you, with regard to those who fight you for (your) faith, and drive you out of your homes, and support (others) in driving you out from turning to them. (for friendship and protection). It is such as turn to them (in these circumstances), that do wrong”. (LX: 8 - 9).

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(1) Al - Tabari : History of Nations and Kings; vol. III, p. 213 .

“If God does not push some men by means of others there would surely have been pulled down : monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques, in which the name of God is oft mentioned. God will certainly aid those who aid his (cause); for verily God is strong, Almighty”. (XXII : 40).

\* \*

“If one amongst the Pagans ask thee for asylum, grant it to him, so that he may hear the word of God; and then escort him to where he can be secure that is because they are men without knowledge”. (V : 6).

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### **Rules of Treatment of Prisoners of War :**

**- Setting Free either : as an act of Generosity, or for a Ransom .**

“Bind a bond firmly (on them) : thereafter (is the time for) either generosity or ransom: until the war lays down its burdens. This (are ye commanded) : but if it had been God's will he could certainly have exacted retribution from them (Himself);

but (He lets you fight) in order to test you, some with others”. (XLV II : 4).

\* \*

**- Being Generous with the Captive is an act which Affords the Pleasure of God :**

“And they feed, for the love of God, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive” (LXXVI : 8).

**Peace is obligatory on all Moslems:**

“Ye who believe! enter into peace whole heartedly; and follow not the footsteps of the devil, for he is to you an avowed enemy. If ye backslide after the clear (signs) have come to you, then know that God is Exalted in Power, Wise”.

(LXXVI: 8).

\* \*

**Muslims Must Incline to Peace, on Condition that their Enemy shall Incline to Peace too :**

But if the enemy incline towards peace, do thou (also) incline towards peace, and trust in God : for He is the One that heareth and knoweth (all things). (VIII : 61 - 26).

\* \*

## **Peace is One of the Fair Names of God :**

“God is He, than Whom there is no other god; the Sovereign, the Holy one, **Peace**, the Guardian of Faith, the Preserver of Safety, the Exalted in might, the Irresistible, the Supreme. (LIX : 23).

\* \*

## **The Home of Peace is one of the Names of Paradise:**

“But God doth call to the **Home of Peace** : He doth guide whom He pleaseth to a way that is straight. to those who do right is a goodly (reward) - yea, more (than in measure) no darkness nor shame shall covr their faces! They are Comanions of the Garden; they will abide therein” (for ever). (X : 25 - 26).

\* \*

“For them will be a Home of Peace in the presence of their Lord : He will be their friend, because they practised” (righteousness). (VI : 127).

\* \*

Their salutation on the Day they meet Him will be "**Peace!**"; and He has prepared for them a generous reward" . (XXXIII : 44).

### **Muslims are asked to Spread Peace on Earth among all, Including the Impudent:**

"And the servants of (GOD) Most gracious are those: who walk on the earth in humility, and when the impudent address them, they say : **peace!**" (XXV : 63).

\*\*\*

In the end : the Arabic word *sa - li - ma* gives the infinitive from which come the derivatives: *salaam* (peace); *Islam* (submission to GOD's will); *salamah* (safety); *is - tis - lam* (surrender) etc.

**Also, it should be mentioned that the word : sword, has never been mentioned, at all, in Al-Qur'an whose total words exceed: 77000 words!**

Moreover, the total number of all those who were killed in the fighting between the Muslims

and the Disbelievers, during the life of Prophet Muhammad, is as follows: <sup>(1)</sup>.

	Muslims	Disbelievers
Reconnaissance detachments	197	35
Military battles	129	865
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	326	900

Grand total = 1226

**Compare this with 4500 Saxons killed by Charlemagne in only one day, to Compel the Saxons to become Christians. This gives the decisive answer to the question:**

**Which religion was spread by the sword:**

**Christianity or Islam?**

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(1) Maj - Gen - Dr. Mohammad Salah - Eddin Kamel: Principles of War: Comparative Study between Classical and Islamic Military Schools. Nasser High Military Academy, Cairo.

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