

# GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

Vol. XI

December 29, 2002

No. 51

## “HOLY WAR”

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The Muslim world looks at “Jihad” in three distinct ways. The term literally means “striving” or “struggling” for God and His ways. A Muslim is then practicing “Jihad” on one level when he or she is merely “striving against sin” in one’s own life. The second level of “Jihad” occurs when one branches out to motivate others to strive against sin. The third level of “Jihad” occurs when one uses militant means to force purity upon others.

“Peace loving” Muslims emphasize the first two levels of “Jihad”. Some Muslims have no problem with imploring the third level to force others to comply with God’s standards. Some Muslims therefore cringe when reading in western publications of what happened on September 11, 2001 as “Jihad” or a “Holy War” upon “unbelievers” or “infidels”. Their view of “Jihad” has been sidetracked in the public eye by those they view as “fanatic” Muslims who do not mind practicing the third level of striving for God.

Do we have the same problem with how the world looks at “Christianity”? We determine

that abortion is contradictory to the sanctity of life taught in the Bible. So, we determine to not practice it in our own life. We then may move to a second level and try to convince others of the evil of abortion. But someone comes along and in the name of “Christianity” and murders a doctor doing abortions, or bombs his clinic where the procedures are conducted.

What do the true Christians do? They denounce loudly the murderer and bomber, pointing out that such practices contradict the Gospel of Christ, and are not sanctioned at all by Christ. Why don’t we hear the Muslim world crying out against their “fanatics”?

It may be that they know that the third level of “Jihad” is taught in the Muslim “Holy Book”, the Koran. There are times when the Muslim is authorized to “kill the idolaters wheresoever ye shall find them, and take them prisoners and besiege them, and lay wait for them in every convenient place” (Sura 9 verse 5). The Muslim is authorized to “fight for the religion of God against those who fight against you... and kill them wherever ye find them, and turn them out of that whereof they

have dispossessed you;” (Sura 2, verse 190-192). The militant Muslim turns to the Koran for his authority for war because “War is enjoined you against the Infidels;” (Sura 2, verse. 216).

While the true Christian is to “fight the good fight of the faith” (I Timothy 6:10), he or she understands that such warfare is to be fought with spiritual means. The inspired apostle Paul writes, “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, (for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds), casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:3-5).

The Christian is militant. But he or she does not war according to the flesh. In striving for God, he or she is to put sin to death in one’s own life, and persuade others to do the same in their obedience unto Christ. But nowhere does the New Testament authorize the “killing” of unbelievers.