

GLAD TIDINGS

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

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GOD’S MODERNITY

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This past week we have seen the Muslim world erupt violently over a cartoon. A Danish newspaper depicted Mohammad, the Muslim founder, in an unfavorable way. Muslims reacted by publicly protesting, burning buildings and crying out for the incarceration and death of those responsible for the cartoon.

We, in Western society may be able to understand public protesting, but burning and killing over a cartoon is hard for many to fathom. One may stick the cross of Christ in a bottle of urine and call it art. Christians may not like it, but our country founded upon freedom of speech allows even the most unpopular speech to be expressed. A “Christian” erupting to kill the so-called artist would bring the wrath of our society and the punishment of our government upon such a one. Even those who burn down abortion clinics in the name of Christianity are brought to justice, not encouraged to burn more.

The problem with the Muslim world is that their doctrine allows and even encourages such deadly retaliation in the face

of Mohammad’s enemies. *“Therefore strike off their heads, and strike off all the ends of their fingers. This shall they suffer; because they have resisted God and his apostle: and whosoever shall oppose God and his apostle, verily God will be severe in punishing him (Koran 8:12).* Making a “great slaughter” among the Non-Muslim believers was to continue until the enemy asked for “a ransom” or “laid down its arms” (Koran 47:4).

One glaring problem for the Muslims, who would like their religion to spread, is that their “Holy Book” is mired in the seventh century. Moderates today may overlook the exhortation to kill unbelievers, but the so-called radicals can quote such death from their own Scripture and point to the very words of the Prophet whom they are supposed to follow.

Our God of the Bible could have kept us in the teachings of Moses. As true followers, we would today be executing adulterous couples (Leviticus 20:10) and stoning to death rebellious children (Deuteronomy 21:18-21). We would also be offering up animal sacrifices (Leviticus 1-9).

God’s final plan was not to establish a theocracy on earth as He did among the Jews, but to establish a spiritual kingdom in Christ (John 18:36). Thus today we can live for Christ and obey the laws of any secular government, as long as man’s laws do not conflict with and compromise God’s laws (cf. Romans 13:1-7).

God established the New Covenant in Christ in the first Century. It is more modern than Mohammed’s seventh century work. We can live by the commandments of Christ established long ago, without burning buildings. No one can point to the gospel of Christ and set forth chapter and verse for us to kill our enemies. Christ established a religion that will bless man. Even those who do not follow Christ are blessed through Christians (Matthew 5:43-48, Ephesians 6:5-8).

I marvel in the far reaching wisdom of God. He gave us a Book that is as modern as today’s newspaper. I can live faithfully for Christ even in the modern world. Muslims, with their book, are having trouble.