

Comments on the Handout

The Truth About Islam

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Introduction

On April 7, 2014, Muslim-Americans visited the Iowa state capitol and provided numerous handouts about Islam to state elected-officials. These handouts were supposed to help those officials to better understand Islam.

One of these handouts was titled *The Truth About Islam*. The following statement was in the third paragraph of the handout:

Together with The Quran, the epitome of Classical Arabic, Muslims lives are guided by the examples and sayings of The Prophet. Thousands of sayings have been attributed to The Prophet. Some are accepted as authentic; some traced to The Prophet's companions; some are the subject of debate. Some examples...

This was followed by twenty sayings that were purported to have come from Muhammad. I examined ten of the more specific of those alleged sayings. I found that these ten sayings were mostly based on weak evidence, fabricated, or taken out of context.

1. The first thing created by God was the Intellect.

I have been unable to locate this saying in the *Sound Six* books of *hadiths*¹, the six most authoritative collections of Muhammad's sayings and actions. However, there is an authoritative *hadith* in which Muhammad stated that women were actually *lacking in intellect*:

Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allah delivered a Khutbah [sermon] in which he exhorted them, then he said: "O women! Give charity for you are the majority of the people of the Fire."...He said: "And I have not seen any among those lacking in intellect and religion who are more difficult upon people possessing reason and insight than you." A woman among them said: "And what is the deficiency of her intellect and religion?" He said: "The testimony of two women among you is like the testimony of a man..."

Jami' At-Tirmidhi, No. 2613

So why were the women *lacking in intellect*? Muhammad said it was because it required the testimony of two women to equal that of one man. And where did such a statement originate? It is found in the words of Allah in 2:282 of the Koran:

¹ The *hadiths* (pronounced "hadeeths") are reports about the examples, ways, and teachings of Muhammad believed to have come from those who were with him and observed and heard them. They are second only to the Koran in importance to Islam. And the Koran cannot be understood without relying on the *hadiths*.

...And get two witnesses out of your own men. And if there are not two men (available), then a man and two women, such as you agree for witnesses, so that if one of them (two women) errs, the other can remind her...

So Allah explained in the Koran that two women were needed so that they could help each other remember!

If the first thing created by Allah was the intellect, he apparently did not put much premium on it when it then came time to create women.

2. *The most excellent Jihad is that for the conquest of self.*

This saying is generally considered to have been fabricated. For more details about this fabricated saying by Muhammad, see pp. 115-123 in my book *Islam According to Muhammad, Not Your Neighbor*.

3. *The ink of the scholar is more holy than the blood of the martyr.*

This saying is at best weak, but it is more commonly considered by Muslims to be fabricated, e.g.:

1. <http://islamqa.info/en/11920>
2. <http://www.islamweb.net/emainpage/index.php?page=showfatwa&Option=FatwaId&Id=85115>
3. *100 Fabricated Hadith*, Shaikh Faisal, London 2000, pp. 106-107; located at <http://standup4islam.files.wordpress.com/2013/10/100-fabricated-hadith.pdf>
4. *An Introduction to the Sciences of Hadith*, Suhaib Hassan, Al-Quran Society, London, p. 37 (*Hadith* No. 25); located at http://d1.islamhouse.com/data/en/ih_books/single/en_A_Introduction_to_the_Science_of_Hadith.pdf

This saying also contradicts 4:95 of the Koran:

Not equal are those of the believers who sit (at home), except those who are disabled (by injury or are blind or lame), and those who strive hard and fight in the cause of Allah with their wealth and their lives. Allah has preferred in grades those who strive hard and fight with their wealth and their lives to those who sit (at home). To each, Allah has promised good (Paradise), but Allah has preferred those who strive hard and fight, to those who sit (at home) by a huge reward.

And in 9:111 of the Koran, Allah stated there was one guaranteed way for a Muslim to get into Paradise. But it was not to die as a scholar; rather it was to die as a martyr fighting in the cause of Allah:

Verily, Allah has purchased of the believers their lives and their properties for (the price) that theirs shall be Paradise. They fight in Allah's Cause, so they kill

(others) and are killed. It is a promise in truth which is binding on Him in the Taurat (Torah) and the Injil (Gospel) and the Qur'an. And who is truer to his covenant than Allah? Then rejoice in the bargain which you have concluded. That is the supreme success.

4. No man is a true believer unless he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself.

The phrase “true believer” refers to someone who is a Muslim. And Muhammad used the term “brother” with both a specific meaning, and a general meaning. When used specifically, it referred to a brother in one’s family. But when Muhammad used it in a general sense, such as above, the word “brother” actually referred to another Muslim, e.g.:

Abu Huraira reported that Allah’s Messenger (may peace be upon him) had said: ...A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim. He neither oppresses him nor humiliates him nor looks down upon him...All things of a Muslim are inviolable for his brother in faith; his blood, his wealth and his honour.

Sahih Muslim, No. 2564

And

Narrated 'Abdullah bin 'Umar: Allah's Messenger said, "A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim, so he should not oppress him, nor should he hand him over to an oppressor. Whoever fulfilled the needs of his brother, Allah will fulfill his needs; whoever brought his (Muslim) brother out of a discomfort, Allah will bring him out of the discomforts of the Day of Resurrection..."

Sahih Al-Bukhari, No. 2442

So instead of it being a general admonition likened to the Golden Rule, this statement proclaims that one is not a true Muslim unless he wishes for his fellow Muslim, and none other, what he wishes for himself.

5. When the bier of anyone passes by you, whether Jew, Christian, or Muslim, rise to your feet.

I have been unable to find an authoritative *hadith* in which Muhammad commanded Muslims to stand up for the bier of a “Jew, Christian, or Muslim.” However, there are two authoritative *hadiths* about how, when a funeral procession for a Jew passed by, Muhammad stood up and the Muslims followed his example (*Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Nos. 1311-1312).

But one should not attempt to infer too much from this. Keep in mind the following verses of the Koran: 5:51 forbids Muslims from being friends with Jews (and Christians); 5:82 states that Jews

are among the worst enemies of Islam; 9:29 commands Muslims to fight against Jews (and Christians) until the latter pay the *jizyah* (protection money) “with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued”; and 9:113 prohibits Muslims from asking Allah’s forgiveness for the souls of non-Muslims after those non-Muslims have died. In comparison to these verses, standing up for a bier doesn’t really mean much.

6. ***The thing which is lawful, but disliked by God, is divorce.***

This is simply considered a weak saying – see *One Hundred Weak or Fabricated Traditions*, p. 10, Compiled by Shaykh Ihsan Al-‘Utaibi; located at

http://d1.islamhouse.com/data/en/ih_books/single/en_One_Hundred_famous_Hadith_Weak.pdf

7. ***Heaven lies at the feet of mothers.***

With this wording, this is a weak statement - see *An Introduction to the Sciences of Hadith*, Suhaib Hassan, Al-Quran Society, London, p. 36 (#21); located at:

http://d1.islamhouse.com/data/en/ih_books/single/en_A_Introduction_to_the_Science_of_Hadith.pdf

And the idea is actually taken out of context to make it appear to be a general statement. Here is an authoritative *hadith* about this statement:

It was narrated from Mu’awiyah bin Jahimah As-Sulami, that Jahimah came to the Prophet and said: “O Messenger of Allah! I want to go out and fight (in Jihad) and I have come to ask your advice.” He said: “Do you have a mother?” He said: “Yes.” He said: “Then stay with her, for Paradise is beneath her feet.”

Sunan An-Nasa’i, No. 3106

A longer version of this *hadith* is reported in *Sunan Ibn Majah*, No. 2781; the comments for this *hadith* explain its context, and it was not meant to be a general statement:

In normal cases, Jihad is a collective compulsory duty. So, some people may remain behind. If there is no other son who can take care of the parents, then serving them is more important than going out for Jihad. Just as one gets the reward of Paradise for Jihad, similarly one gets the reward of Paradise for serving them.

So the actual context of the statement by Muhammad is that if one is the only son available to care for his mother, then one is excused from *jihad* in order to care for her; and there is still a reward of Paradise for doing so. However, 4:95 of the Koran reminds us that, without the approval of Muhammad, one should not just arbitrarily sit at home to avoid *jihad*:

Not equal are those of the believers who sit (at home), except those who are disabled (by injury or are blind or lame), and those who strive hard and fight in the cause of Allah with their wealth and their lives. Allah has preferred in grades those who strive hard and fight with their wealth and their lives to those who sit (at home). To each, Allah has promised good (Paradise), but Allah has preferred those who strive hard and fight, to those who sit (at home) by a huge reward.

8. Women are the twin-halves of men.

Instead of it being a general saying of Muhammad, this statement was not only taken out of context, but it came from a weak *hadith*; here is that *hadith*:

'Aishah said that the Prophet was asked about a person who finds some wetness (on his clothes), but does not remember having a wet-dream (what should he do)? (The Prophet) said: "He should perform Ghusl [washing the body to purify oneself]." And (he was also asked about) a person who remembered having a wet dream but did not find any wetness. He said: "Ghusl is not obligatory for him." Umm Sulaim said: "If a woman sees that (sort of dream), must she perform Ghusl?" He replied: "Yes. Women are indeed the twin-halves of men.

Sunan Abu Dawud, No. 236

So Muhammad did state that women are the "twin-halves" of men, but only in a specific context.

9. Actions will be judged according to intentions.

Muhammad actually made a statement like that about intentions:

Narrated 'Umar bin Al-Khattab: I heard Allah's Messenger saying, "The reward of deeds depends upon the intentions and every person will get the reward according to what he has intended..."

Sahih Al-Bukhari, No. 1

And in the following *hadith*, Muhammad applied the idea of intentions specifically to dying while fighting in the Cause of Allah (*Al-Jihad*):

It was reported from 'Abdullah bin 'Amr, may Allah be pleased with him, who said: "O Messenger of Allah! Inform me about Al-Jihad and military expeditions." He said: "O 'Abdullah bin 'Amr! If you fight with endurance seeking from Allah your reward, Allah will resurrect you showing endurance and seeking your reward from Allah, and if you fight showing off, seeking to acquire much (of worldly gains), Allah will resurrect you with your showing off seeking to

acquire much. O 'Abdullah bin 'Amr, with whatever intention you fight or are killed, Allah will resurrect you in that condition."

Sunan Abu Dawud, No. 2519

Muhammad said that a Muslim who died with no intention of fighting in *jihad*, died the death of a hypocrite:

It has been narrated on the authority of Abu Huraira that the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) said: One who died but did not fight in the way of Allah nor did he express any desire (or determination) for Jihad died the death of a hypocrite.

Sahih Muslim, No. 1910

So when it comes to *jihad*, intentions are very important.

10. Assist any person oppressed, whether Muslim or non-Muslim.

I have been unable to locate this saying in the *Sound Six* books of *hadith*; it appears to have been fabricated to include the phrase “non-Muslim.” But here are two authoritative *hadiths* that provide the context when Muslims are to assist someone being oppressed, or even an oppressor:

Narrated 'Abdullah bin 'Umar: Allah's Messenger said, "A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim, so he should not oppress him, nor should he hand him over to an oppressor.

Sahih Al-Bukhari, No. 2442

And

Narrated Anas: Allah's Messenger said, "Help your brother, whether he is an oppressor or he is an oppressed one. People asked, "O Allah's Messenger! It is all right to help him if he is oppressed, but how should we help him if he is an oppressor?" The Prophet said, "By preventing him from oppressing others."

Sahih Al-Bukhari, No. 2444

So when it comes to assisting the oppressed, or even the oppressor, a Muslim is commanded to do so only when it involves a brother Muslim.

The Handout's Final Paragraph

In the final paragraph of the handout is the following statement: *All persons are equal before God.* This is a nice statement, but the reality is that Allah disagrees with it.

Allah states in the Koran that Muslims are the “best of creatures”:

Chapter 98, Verse 7

Verily, those who believe [in the Oneness of Allah, and in His Messenger (Muhammad) including all obligations ordered by Islam] and do righteous good deeds, they are the best of creatures.

This is reiterated in 3:110 where Muslims are proclaimed to be “the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind.”

In contrast, Allah states that Jews, Christians, and other non-Muslims are among “the worst of creatures”:

Chapter 98, Verse 6

Verily, those who disbelieve (in the religion of Islam, the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad) from among the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) and Al-Mushrikun, will abide in the fire of Hell. They are the worst of creatures.

And 8:22 states that non-Muslims in general are “the worst of living creatures.”

So how can all people be equal before Allah, when Allah specifically says they are not?

Some Actual Authoritative Statements by Muhammad

This handout stated

...Muslims lives are guided by the examples and sayings of The Prophet.

This is because the Koran states that Muhammad spoke for Allah (4:80), and he is considered the timeless standard of good conduct for Muslims (33:21). But how can Muslims be guided by Muhammad when phrases attributed to him are taken out of context, based on weak sources, or even fabricated?

To start learning things that guide “Muslims lives,” let's consider the following authoritative examples and sayings of Muhammad:

Narrated Abu Hurairah: Allah's Messenger said, "I have been sent with the shortest expressions bearing the widest meanings, and I have been made victorious with terror (cast in the hearts of the enemy), and while I was sleeping, the keys of the treasures of the world were brought to me and put in my hand."

Sahih Al-Bukhari, No. 2977

It was narrated that Jabir bin 'Abdullah said: "The Messenger of Allah said: 'I have been given five things that were not given to anyone before me: I have been supported with fear being struck into the hearts of my enemy for a distance of one month's travel..."

Sunan An-Nasa'i, No. 432

Narrated Ibn 'Umar that the Prophet said, "My livelihood is under the shade of my spear [war plunder], and he who disobeys my orders will be humiliated by paying Jizya."

Sahih Al-Bukhari, Vol. 4, Book 56, Chapter 88

...Imam Ahmad narrated that Ibn 'Umar said that the Messenger of Allah said, I was sent with the sword just before the Last Hour, so that Allah is worshipped alone without partners. My sustenance was provided for me from under the shadow of my spear. Those who oppose my command were humiliated and made inferior, and whoever imitates a people, he is one of them.

Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Vol. 1, pp. 321-322

It has been narrated on the authority of 'Abdullah b. 'Umar that the Messenger of Allah said: I have been commanded to fight against people till they testify that there is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, they establish the prayer, and pay the Zakat. If they do it, their blood and property are guaranteed protection on my behalf except when justified by law, and their affairs rest with Allah.

Sahih Muslim, No. 22

If someone changes his religion - then strike off his head!

Al-Muwatta of Imam Malik ibn Anas, 36.18.15 (in a section titled Judgement [sic] on Abandonment of Islam)