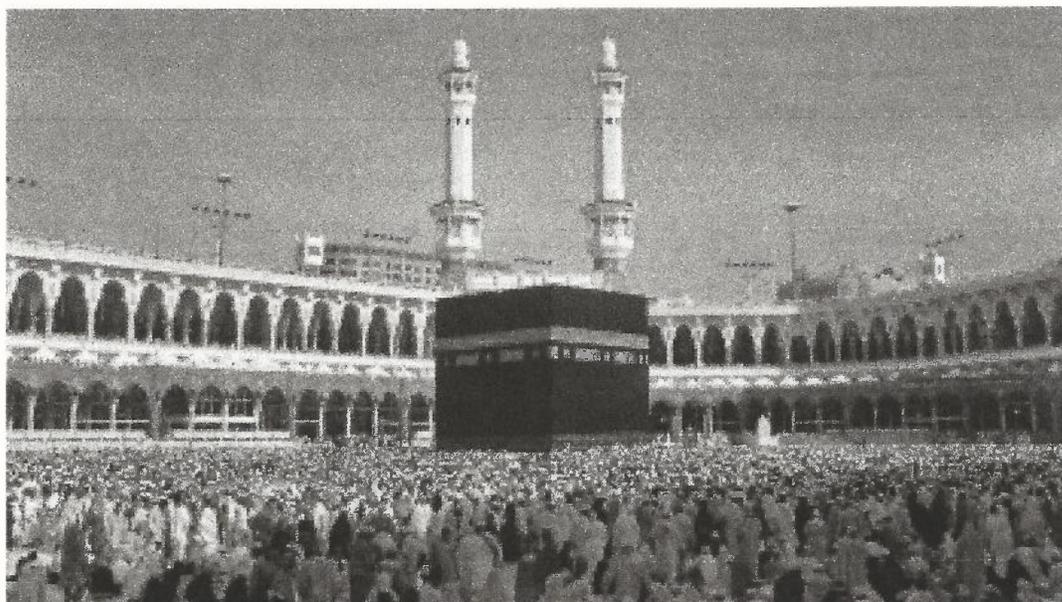


THE MUSLIM REFORM MOVEMENT PLAYS FANTASY ISLAM

Welcome to a personal version of Islam that has nothing to do with Islam.

December 10, 2015 Dr. Stephen M. Kirby



Fantasy Islam: A game in which an audience of non-Muslims wish with all their hearts that Islam was a "Religion of Peace," and a Muslim strives to fulfill that wish by presenting a personal version of Islam that has little foundation in Islamic Doctrine.

In December 2015, a small group of "Muslim reformers" met in Washington DC to discuss the reform of Islam. They stated they were "Muslims who live in the 21st century" who were "in a battle for the soul of Islam." They proclaimed that they stood for "a respectful, merciful and inclusive interpretation of Islam." They called their meeting the Summit of Western Muslim Voices of Reform and named themselves the Muslim Reform Movement. On December 4, 2015, fourteen "founding authors" from this movement signed the *Declaration for Muslim Reform* (<http://aifdemocracy.org/declaration-of-the-muslim-reform-movement-signed-by-aifd-december-4-2015/>), laying out their beliefs.

At the conclusion of the event, two participants posted a signed copy of this *Declaration* on the door of the Islamic Center of Washington DC (a la Martin Luther nailing his 95 *Theses* on the door of the Wittenberg Castle church in 1517). The document was quickly removed, and so far there has been little, if any, support for this reform movement from

the greater Muslim-American community.

Here is the reason for that lack of support: the *Preamble* and *Declaration* are only two pages in length. But in those two pages these “founding authors” fundamentally rejected the commands of Allah in the Koran and the teachings of Muhammad in an effort to create their own *Fantasy Islam* (<http://www.frontpagemag.com/fpm/259380/lure-fantasy-islam-dr-stephen-m-kirby>) that is more compatible with Western, Judeo-Christian values. Let’s examine some parts of that *Declaration for Muslim Reform*.

We reject interpretations of Islam that call for any violence...

So starts out the second paragraph of the *Preamble*. But the commands of Allah in the Koran and the teachings of Muhammad are rife with violence.

The Koran commands Muslims specifically to kill non-Muslims (9:5), specifically to fight against Jews and Christians (9:29), and generally to fight against and be violent toward non-Muslims (e.g., 2:216, 4:74, 5:33, 8:12, 8:39, 8:57, 9:14, 9:73, 9:111, 9:123, 48:29, and 66:9).

Muhammad was proud that he had been made victorious through terror and fear (e.g. *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, No. 2977; and *Sunan An-Nasa’i*, No. 432). He even said, “My livelihood is under the shade of my spear” (*Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Book 56, Chapter 88). “Under the shade of my spear” means war plunder.

Muhammad is the standard of conduct for Muslims. Muhammad supervised the beheading of 600-900 captured Jewish males, including non-combatants, and over the years ordered individuals killed for criticizing Islam. Muhammad even ordered poets to be killed. The following is a portion of a letter written shortly after the Muslim conquest of Mecca in 630 AD. It was sent to a non-Muslim poet who used to satirize Muhammad, from the poet’s brother:

Allah's Messenger killed some men in Makkah who used to satirize and harm him, and the poets who survived fled in all directions for their lives. So, if you want to save your skin, hasten to Allah's Messenger. He never kills those who come to him repenting. If you refuse to do as I say, it is up to you to try to save your skin by any means.

The Sealed Nectar, p. 521

Violence and Islam go hand-in-hand.

We reject bigotry, oppression and violence against all people based on any prejudice, including... sexual orientation...

We find this in A3 of the *Declaration*. But Muhammad cursed lesbians and gays (*Sahih Al-Bukhari*, No. 5886) and said that whoever is caught in a homosexual act should be killed (*Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, Vol. 2, p. 402).

We...consider all people equal...

This is found in B2 of the *Declaration*. Muhammad felt differently. He said that Jews and Christians were worth only half of a Muslim (*Sunan Ibn Majah*, No. 2644). He said that women were deficient in intelligence and religion (*Sahih Al-Bukhari*, No. 304), and that it took the freeing of two female slaves to equal the virtue of freeing one male slave (*Jami' At-Tirmidhi*, No. 1547). The Koran forbids Muslim women from marrying a non-Muslim (2:221), but a Muslim man can marry Jewish and Christian women (5:5). And the Koran states that Jews and Christians are among the worst of people (98:6), while Muslims are the best of people (98:7).

We support equal rights for women, including equal rights to inheritance, witness...

This is found in B3 of the *Declaration*. But this statement is a specific rejection of two verses in the Koran. 4:12 states that a woman only inherits one half of what a man would get, and this means that if there is more than one wife, all the wives will have to share that one-half portion. 2:282 states that in property matters it takes the testimony of two women to equal that of one man. Are these verses not the words of Allah?

Sharia is manmade.

This is an amazing claim made in C1 of the *Declaration*. In reality, Sharia Law is Islamic Sacred Law based on the commands of Allah found in the Koran and on the teachings and example of Muhammad, who spoke for Allah. Does the word *blasphemy* come to mind?

Every individual has the right to publicly express criticism of Islam.

This is another amazing claim, found in C2 of the *Declaration*. After all, in the Koran Allah states that Islam was perfected during the time of Muhammad (5:3). How then can something that is perfect be criticized? And there are many verses that specifically prohibit criticism of Islam, Allah, or Muhammad (e.g. 4:59, 4:115, 9:63, 33:36, 33:57, and 59:7).

Muhammad did not like criticism. For example, he personally ordered the killing of certain individuals who had criticized him or Islam ('Amsa' Bint Marwan, Abu 'Afak, Ka'b bin al-Ashraf, and Abu Rafi'). And he gave retroactive approval to the separate killings by Muslims of three individuals who had earlier criticized him or Islam.

Apostasy is not a crime.

This statement is in C3 of the *Declaration*. These reformers are rejecting 4:89 of the Koran which commands the killing of those who leave Islam. They are also rejecting specific statements from their prophet Muhammad, who stated that death was the penalty for those who left Islam (e.g. *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Nos. 3017 and 6878; and *Al-Muwatta of Imam Malik ibn Anas*, 36.18.15, in which Muhammad specified death by beheading for apostasy).

Conclusion

In an effort to “reform” Islam, a small band of aspiring Muslim reformers met in the capital of a non-Muslim country, proclaimed themselves to be “founding authors” (why not go all the way and say Founding Fathers?), created a document that rejected Muhammad’s Islam in favor of Western, Judeo-Christian values, and then followed the example of an earlier non-Muslim who wanted to “reform” his own non-Muslim religion.

If folks are serious about religious reform, one thinks they would like to maintain some connection to their own religious traditions as a basis for that reform. But the Muslim Reform Movement has apparently decided otherwise and seems more interested in establishing a connection with the non-Muslim Western world as the basis for their reform. Such is the luxury of playing *Fantasy Islam*. And this is the reason why there seems to be little, if any, support coming from the greater Muslim-American community for this small group of aspiring reformers. It is only attention from the non-Muslim world that will sustain the Muslim Reform Movement.

👉 **Tags:** Islam, moderate islam, reform

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