

The Iowa Law Enforcement Academy Meets Fantasy Islam

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According to its website,

The Iowa Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) was created by an act of the Iowa legislature in 1967 with its purpose being to upgrade law enforcement to professional status. The specific goals were to maximize training opportunities for law enforcement officers...^[1]

In furtherance of this training goal, on November 9-10, 2020 the ILEA sponsored an online course titled “Engaging and Building Partnerships with Muslim Americans.”

The presenters were Darryck [sic] Dean, Senior Conciliation Specialist, U.S. Department of Justice, Community Relations Service, and Dr. Zahra Jamal, Associate Director at the Boniuk Institute for Religious Tolerance, Rice University, Houston, TX.

The online course lasted two hours each day, and most of the course focused on learning about Muslim Americans and their involvement in American society, and on

ways to increase community engagement between the Muslim American community and law enforcement.

Dr. Zahra Jamal, a Muslim American, was the main presenter. On the first day she talked about the religion of Islam. Unfortunately, what she presented was her personal version of Islam which had little to do with the Islam based on the commands of Allah in the Koran and the teachings and example of Muhammad (the *Sunnah*). Let's examine some of Jamal's claims about Islam and related matters.

"Jihad is not Holy War"

Jamal was emphatic that *jihad* does not mean "holy war," and she repeated it three times in a row. But in reality *jihad* is associated with "holy war" in many Muslim writings, e.g.:

1. *Jihad: Striving, holy war.*[2]
2. *...the earliest (and therefore fundamental) Qur'anic reference to the question of jihad, or holy war...* (This is found in a translation of the Koran endorsed and distributed by the Council on American-Islamic Relations – CAIR)[3]
3. *...he was taken prisoner in a jihad – that is, a holy war...* (CAIR Koran)[4]
4. *...a woman taken captive in a "holy war" (jihad)...* (CAIR Koran)[5]
5. *And He (Allah) said: Jihad (Islamic holy war) is ordained for you (Muslims)...*[6]
6. *The holy war (jihad) is a collective duty...* (In a chapter titled "The Book of the Holy War (*Kitab al-Jihad*)"[7]
7. *"Holy War." See Jihad. (Subject Index)*[8]

And *jihad* has also been referred to as "holy fighting" and "holy battles":

Al-Jihad (holy fighting) in Allah's Cause (with full force of numbers and weaponry) is given the utmost importance in Islam and is one of its pillars (on which it stands). By Jihad Islam is established, Allah's Word is made superior...and His religion (Islam) is propagated. By abandoning Jihad (may Allah protect us from that) Islam is destroyed and the Muslims fall into an inferior position; their honour [sic] is lost, their lands are stolen, their rule and authority vanish. Jihad is an obligatory duty in Islam on every Muslim, and he who tries to escape from this duty, or does not in his innermost heart wish to fulfil [sic] this duty, dies with one of the qualities of a hypocrite.[9]

Narrated Abu Hurairah: The Prophet said, "Allah assigns for a person who participates in (holy battles) in Allah's Cause and nothing causes him to do so except belief in Allah and in His Messengers, that he will be recompensed by Allah either with a reward, or booty (if he survives) or will be admitted to Paradise (if he is killed in the battle as a martyr)." The Prophet added: "Had I not found it difficult for my followers, then I would not remain behind any Sariya (an army-unit) going for Jihad and I would have loved to be martyred in Allah's Cause and then made alive, and then martyred and then made alive, and then again martyred in His Cause." [10]

Jamal can repeat as many times as she wants that *jihad* does not mean "holy war," but there is a tremendous amount of Muslim scholarship that refutes her claim.

Muhammad said the Greatest *Jihad* was to Battle your own Soul

Jamal stated that "Muhammad said the greatest *jihad* was to battle your own soul and to fight the evil within you." This statement of Jamal's is probably based on a purported saying (*hadith*) of Muhammad in which he talked about the "lesser *jihad*" (warfare) and the "greater *jihad*" (the struggle to better oneself). This saying has become quite popular over the years and is found in many books and articles, and on many websites. But the reality is that this *hadith*, in its various forms, is not attributable to Muhammad. One 17th Century Muslim scholar said this was a statement from among the early Muslims, not from Muhammad. [11] And over many centuries other Muslim scholars have written about this *hadith* and labelled it as a fabricated *hadith*. [12]

However, here is an authoritative *hadith* in which Muhammad talked about the "best" *jihad*:

It was narrated that 'Amr bin 'Abasah said: "I came to the Prophet and said: 'O Messenger of Allah, which Jihad is best'? He said: '(That of a man) whose blood is shed and his horse is wounded.'" [13]

So according to Muhammad, the best *jihad* is that which involves fighting. Nothing about a struggle to better oneself here.

We All Believe in One God

Jamal stated that Islam, Christianity, and Judaism have a shared belief "of one God"; the implication is that these three religions all believe in the same God. However, the reality is that the god of Islam, Allah, is not the same as the God of Christians and Jews.

For instance, here is what Allah has to say in the Koran about Christians and Jews:

Allah states that the only religion acceptable to him is Islam (e.g., 3:19 and 3:85); Christians and Jews are disbelievers^[14] (e.g. 2:120, 3:99, 3:110, and 5:65), and Jews are among the worst enemies of Muslims (5:82); Allah curses Christians and Jews (9:30) and states that those who believe that Allah had a Son commit the one unforgiveable sin in Islam, *Shirk*^[15] (e.g. 4:48 and 4:116); Allah states that those who commit *Shirk* will go to Hell (e.g. 3:151 and 5:72-73); Allah states that Christians and Jews are among the worst of creatures and “will abide in the fire of Hell” (98:6); Allah specifically forbids Muslims from being friends with Christians and Jews (5:51), and instead specifically commands Muslims to fight Christians and Jews (9:29).

Islam considers Christianity to be a false religion because Allah states that Jesus was not crucified, but it only appeared so (4:157-158). Islam teaches that Allah took Jesus bodily into paradise and made one of Jesus’ disciples look like Jesus; it was that disciple who was crucified. So Muslims who know their religion look at a crucifix or a painting of the Crucifixion and see an imposter hanging on the cross. And of course, if there was no Crucifixion, there was no Resurrection. So Islam teaches that Christianity is a false religion based on a fraud.

It was noted in the ILEA presentation that both Arab Christians and Arab Jews say “Allah” when speaking about God in Arabic. The implication being that Christians, Jews, and Muslims, by virtue of the fact that they are using the same Arabic word, are in effect all referring to the same divine being. As we have seen in the above section concerning what Islam teaches about Jews and Christians, there is no basis for that claim.

This 2012 ruling at *Islam Question & Answer* pointed out that Muslims are generally advised against using any other word than “Allah” when referring to the god of Islam in order to avoid confusion with what non-Muslims mean when they say “God”:

But what the Muslim should use in his worship... and all other circumstances when referring to Allah, may He be exalted and glorified, is the word “Allah” as it is, because that has become a symbol for the Muslims and something that distinguishes them, and it helps to avoid any confusion between what they mean and what others mean when they say “God” [my emphasis], as others may sometimes be referring to Allah, but sometimes they may be referring to something else...^[16]

English-speaking Christians and Jews say God instead of Allah. So according to this ruling, English-speaking Muslims are supposed to use the name Allah instead of God in order to differentiate themselves from what English-speaking non-Muslims mean when they say God. This underlines again the fact that Allah, the god of Islam, is not the same as the God of Jews and Christians.

This difference is also noted in a 2010 *fatwa* from the Assembly of Muslim Jurists of America (AMJA). This *fatwa* stated:

1. *Christians do not have a holy book or scripture to refer to. What they have is a man-made book that is, unfairly, attributed to Allah SWT [The most glorified, the most high].*
2. *Allah SWT is the one who told us that the Christians and Jews intentionally corrupt and change their scriptures.*
3. *Whoever takes Jesus or the Holy Spirit as a part of one God is a misguided one. Allah SWT has a divine nature, separated from His creatures, and is not integrated with another entity. Also, Allah SWT is the creator and the sustainer of the universe, and involving Prophet Jesus PBUH and the Holy Spirit in Allah's entity necessitate that both Jesus & the Holy Spirit are creators and sustainers as well. Do they believe so? If yes, then they are polytheists, and if not, then they contradict themselves!!* **[17]**

With regard to the Jews, in Koran 9:30 Allah curses the Jews because they say "Uzair (Ezra) is the son of Allah." Jews deny that they claimed Ezra to be the son of any god. This claim by the Jews is dismissed by the AMJA in the following *fatwa*:

Our belief is that the contemporary Tawra [Torah] is a corrupted and intentionally changed one by Jews themselves, that we know about their religion through the Quran and authentic Sunnah of the Prophet...more than what they know about their so called "Religion", and that their statement (No one of them throughout the history claimed that Ezra is the son of God) is a worthless statement that does not worth even discussing it [sic] because Allah swt in the Quran mentioned the opposite. **[18]**

So the Torah has been corrupted and intentionally changed, and the only way to learn about the Jew's "so called 'Religion'" is to disregard what Jews say about their religious beliefs and instead read the words of Allah in the Koran.

Muhammad himself stated that the god of Islam was not the God of Jews and Christians, because he said that Jews and Christians who remained with their respective religions and did not believe in Islam would go to Hell:

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Huraira that the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: By Him in whose hand is the life of Muhammad, he who amongst the community of Jews or Christians hears about me but does not affirm his belief in that with which I have been sent and dies in this state (of disbelief), he shall be but one of the denizens of Hell-Fire. **[19]**

In spite of Jamal's implied claim, Allah, the god of Islam, is not the God of the Christians and Jews.

The Sunnah: The Way of the Prophet

Jamal stated that the *Sunnah* is “the way of the prophet” and consists of reports about Muhammad’s “positive interactions” and the “good things” he did.

I don’t know what authoritative Muslim scholars Jamal has been reading, but here is what we find out about Muhammad from the writings of authoritative Muslim scholars from the 8th – 21st Centuries:

1. Muhammad ordered and allowed the torture and killing of non-Muslims;[\[20\]](#)
2. Muhammad supervised the beheading of 600-900 Jewish post-pubescent male captives (including combatants and non-combatants);[\[21\]](#)
3. Muhammad bought and sold slaves;[\[22\]](#)
4. Muhammad allowed captured non-Muslim females to become the sex slaves of their Muslim captors;[\[23\]](#)
5. Muhammad forced the tribes on the Arabian Peninsula to convert to Islam at the point of the sword.[\[24\]](#)

And here are some interesting authoritative *hadiths* about Muhammad:

1. *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.”*[\[25\]](#)
2. *Narrated Abu Qilaba: Anas said, “Some people of ‘Ukl or ‘Uraina tribe came to Al-Madina and its climate did not suit them. So the Prophet ordered them to go to the herd of (milk) camels and to drink their milk and urine (as a medicine). So they went as directed and after they became healthy, they killed the shepherd of the Prophet and drove away all the camels. The news reached the Prophet early in the morning and he sent (men) in their pursuit and they were captured and brought at noon. He then ordered to cut [off] their hands and feet (and it was done), and their eyes were branded with heated pieces of iron. They were put in Al-Harra [a place of stony ground in Medina] and when they asked for water, no water was given them.” Abu Qilaba added, “Those people committed theft, murder, became disbelievers after embracing Islam (Murtadin) and fought against Allah and His Messenger.”*[\[26\]](#)
4. *It was reported from Al-Hasan, from Samurah bin Jundab who said: “The Messenger of Allah said: ‘Kill the old polytheist men, but spare their children.”*[\[27\]](#)

5. *Ibn 'Abbas said that the Messenger of Allah said, "Whoever you catch committing the act of the people of Lut (homosexuality), then kill both parties to the act."* [28]

And Muhammad made this interesting statement about Jews:

Narrated Abu Hurairah: Allah's Messenger said, "The Hour will not be established until you fight against the Jews, and the stone behind which a Jew will be hiding will say, 'O Muslim! There is a Jew hiding behind me, so kill him.'" [29]

This is the *Sunnah* of Muhammad.

When was the Koran written into Book Form?

Jamal stated that the Koran wasn't written down into book form until about 20 years after Muhammad died. In reality, the codification of the Koran started within months of Muhammad's death.

During Muhammad's lifetime the revelation of verses in the Koran had not been collected into one book because the revelations kept occurring, and Muhammad would indicate where among the previously revealed verses a new revelation was to be placed. When Muhammad died in June 632 the revelations ended. While many of the Koran verses had been written down by scribes, other verses had only been memorized by one or more of the Muslims who had reportedly heard them from Muhammad. In the Wars of Apostasy that began after Muhammad's death, some of these Muslims were getting killed in battle. Consequently, in December 632 Abu Bakr, the first Caliph, commanded that all of the verses, whether written down or only memorized, be collected in order to be put into one book. There were a few Muslims who had memorized all of the verses in the order which Muhammad had recited them, so it was in this order that the verses were codified. Only one copy of the Koran was created, and it was kept in safe keeping by Muhammad's widow Hafsa.

In 644 'Uthman bin Affan became the third Caliph. For many years the Muslim armies had been spreading Islam throughout the region, and in the rapidly growing Muslim world there were starting to be differences in how the Koran was being copied and recited. Consequently, 'Uthman obtained the original copy of the Koran from Hafsa and ordered additional copies to be made. These additional copies were then sent to the various regions of the Muslim empire, and 'Uthman ordered any other existing copies of the Koran, or portions thereof, to be destroyed. [30]

The early Muslim leaders after Muhammad realized the importance of codifying the Koran, and they did not wait until 20 years after Muhammad's death to do so.

Keith Ellison was Sworn into Office using a Koran

Jamal stated that Keith Ellison was sworn into office as a United States Congressman using Thomas Jefferson's Koran. That is not what happened.

In 2007, newly elected Congressman Keith Ellison, a Muslim convert, received extensive news coverage when he was photographed holding his hand on "Jefferson's Koran" while he was supposedly taking his Congressional oath of office. In reality, Ellison had earlier joined the other members of Congress in taking the official oath of office. The media attention had been directed toward Ellison's subsequent "private," ceremonial oath of office. Here is how Ellison had described the matter a few days prior:

When I'm officially sworn in, I will do it the same exact way as every other Congressperson-elect who was sworn in...We will all stand up and in unison lift our hand and swear to uphold that Constitution, and then later, in a private ceremony, of course I'll put my hand on a book that is the basis of my faith, which is Islam...[31]

In spite of Ellison's acknowledgement that he would be holding his hand on the Koran during a "private ceremony" that took place *after* he had already taken the official oath of office, the myth was born that he had taken his official Congressional oath of office holding his hand on the Koran. Jamal is simply perpetuating that myth.

Conclusion

At the ILEA website we find this:

Here at ILEA, we are excited to serve the people of Iowa as we bring excellence in training, testing, and standards to peace officers, telecommunicators, and jailers across the state.[32]

Unfortunately, with this particular class the "excellence in training" about Islam was replaced with Dr. Zahra Jamal's *Fantasy Islam*.

Dr. Stephen M. Kirby is the author of six books about Islam. His latest book is *Islamic Doctrine versus the U.S. Constitution: The Dilemma for Muslim Public Officials*.

[1] <https://ileatraining.org/default.aspx/MenuItemID/302/MenuGroup/Home.htm>

- [2] Mahmoud Ismail Saleh, *Dictionary of Islamic Words & Expressions*, 3rd ed. (Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 2011), p. 116.
- [3] *The Message of the Qur'an*, trans. Muhammad Asad (Bristol, England: The Book Foundation, 2003), n. 167, p. 51.
- [4] Ibid., n. 72, p. 284.
- [5] Ibid., n. 58, p. 727.
- [6] Sheikh 'Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Humaid, "The Call to Jihad (Fighting For Allah's Cause) in the Qur'an," *Interpretation of the Meanings of The Noble Qur'an* (Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Maktaba Dar-us-Salam, 1994), p. 1046. The now deceased sheikh had been in charge of religious affairs at the Grand Mosque in Mecca, where he also taught and issued *fatwas* (Islamic religious judgments). He was also head of the Saudi Senior Judiciary Committee, a member of the Council of Senior Scholars, the head of the Jurisprudence Committee, and a member of the Foundation Committee for the Muslim World League.
- [7] Imam Muwaffaq ad-Din Abdu'llah ibn Ahmad ibn Qudama al-Maqdisi, *The Mainstay Concerning Jurisprudence (Al-Umda fi 'l-Fiqh)*, trans. Muhtar Holland (Ft. Lauderdale, FL: Al-Baz Publishing, Inc., 2009), p. 313.
- [8] Ahmad ibn Naqib al-Misri, *Reliance of the Traveller (Umdat al-Salik), A Classic Manual of Islamic Sacred Law*, edited and translated by Nuh Ha Mim Keller (Revised Edition 1994; rpt. Beltsville, Maryland: Amana Publications, 2008), p. 1162.
- [9] *Interpretation of the Meanings of The Noble Qur'an*, trans. Muhammad Muhsin Khan and Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din Al-Hilali (Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 2007), n. 1, p. 50.
- [10] Muhammad bin Ismail bin Al-Mughirah al-Bukhari, *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, trans. Muhammad Muhsin Khan (Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 1997), Vol. 1, Book 2, No. 36, pp. 72-73.
- [11] Mulla 'Ali al-Qari, *Encyclopedia of Hadith Forgeries*, Trans. Gibril Fouad Haddad (London: Beacon Books, 2014), pp. 105 and 514.
- [12] Stephen M. Kirby, *Islam According to Muhammad, Not Your Neighbor* (Charleston, SC: CreateSpace, 2014), pp. 115-123.

[13] Muhammad bin Yazeed ibn Majah al-Qazwini, *Sunan Ibn Majah*, trans. Nasiruddin al-Khattab (Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 2007), Vol. 4, No. 2794, p. 65.

[14] For an in-depth look at how the Koran and Muhammad differentiated between the “believers” (Muslims) and the Jews and Christians, see my article “The Fantasy Islam of the University of Chicago’s Fred Donner (Part 1),” *Jihad Watch*, January 30, 2019, <https://www.jihadwatch.org/2019/01/the-fantasy-islam-of-the-university-of-chicagos-fred-donner-part-1>.

[15] *Shirk*: polytheism, worshipping others along with Allah, and/or ascribing partners to Allah (including ascribing a Son to him). By believing that Jesus is the Son of God, Christians commit *Shirk*.

[16] “Translating the names and attributes of Allah into other languages and swearing by them,” *Islam Question & Answer*, April 16, 2012, <https://islamqa.info/en/answers/171528/translating-the-names-and-attributes-of-allah-into-other-languages-and-swearing-by-them>.

[17] Dr. Main Khalid Al-Qudah, “Trinity in the Qur’an,” *Assembly of Muslim Jurists of America*, October 24, 2010, <https://www.amjaonline.org/fatwa/en/82937/trinity-in-the-quran>.

[18] Dr. Main Khalid Al-Qudah, “Ezra, the Son of god [sic],” *Assembly of Muslim Jurists of America*, October 18, 2009, <https://www.amjaonline.org/fatwa/en/80281/ezra-the-son-of-god>.

[19] Abu’l Hussain ‘Asakir-ud-Din Muslim bin Hajjaj al-Qushayri al-Naisaburi, *Sahih Muslim*, trans. ‘Abdul Hamid Siddiqi (New Delhi, India: Adam Publishers and Distributors, 2008), Vol. 1, No. 153, p. 103.

[20] <http://perfectmantruth.com/torture.php>

[21] <http://perfectmantruth.com/beheaded.php>

[22] <http://perfectmantruth.com/slaves.php>

[23] <http://perfectmantruth.com/rapist.php>

[24] Stephen M. Kirby, *Islam’s Militant Prophet: Muhammad and Forced Conversions to Islam* (CreateSpace: Charleston, SC, 2016).

- [25] *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Vol. 4, Book 56, No. 2977, p. 140.
- [26] *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, Book 4, No. 233, pp. 178-179.
- [27] Abu Dawud Sulaiman bin al-Ash'ath bin Ishaq, *Sunan Abu Dawud*, trans. Yaser Qadhi (Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 2008), Vol. 3, No. 2670, p. 296.
- [28] Abu al-Fida' 'Imad Ad-Din Isma'il bin 'Umar bin Kathir al-Qurashi Al-Busrawi, *Tafsir Ibn Kathir* (Abridged), abr. Shaykh Safiur-Rahman al-Mubarakpuri, trans. Jalal Abualrub, et al. (Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 2000), Vol. 2, p. 402.
- [29] *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Vol. 4, Book 56, No. 2926, p. 113.
- [30] For an interesting overview of how the Koran was compiled see Jalal-al-Din 'Abd al-Rahman al-Suyuti, *The Perfect Guide to the Sciences of the Qur'an*, trans. Hamid Algar, et al. (Reading, UK: Garnet Publishing, 2011), pp. 137-153.
- [31] John Nichols, "Keith Ellison and the Jefferson Koran," *The Nation – Blog*, January 3, 2007, <https://www.thenation.com/article/keith-ellison-and-jefferson-koran/>. Also see my article "Congressman Ellison and Jefferson's Koran," *FrontPage Mag*, April 19, 2015, <https://archives.frontpagemag.com/fpm/congressman-ellison-and-jeffersons-koran-dr-stephen-m-kirby/>.
- [32] <https://ileatraining.org/default.aspx/MenuItemID/278/MenuGroup/About.htm>