

The Islam Conundrum

A dictionary defines religion as,

'The expression of man's belief and reverence for a superhuman power recognized as the Creator and Governor of the universe.'

By this definition Islam qualifies as religion, and so do numberless other faiths. A definition this broad is ambiguous and must be further defined with the specific tenets and practices of the belief.

Simply because someone or some people say that they believe in a superhuman deity and revere him, the belief is accorded the privileged status of religion?

It is generally assumed that religion addresses issues of importance to daily life as well as matters that transcend it. Religion is thought to exercise a civilizing influence by ordering the social life, promoting spirituality, as well as advancing an array of human virtues. Zoroaster, for instance, based his faith on the triad of goodly thoughts, goodly speech and goodly deeds; Moses framed the fundamentals of his faith in the Ten Commandments; and Jesus placed love at the core of his religion.

Many people adhere to religion for providing them with comfort and a compass in life. It is these assumed benevolent features of religion that confer its special status. Yet concern with religion overreaching has led societies to enact safeguards against that possibility. Some, for instance, feared that Christ was a rebellious Jew aiming to challenge the ruling Romans. Perhaps to assuage this fear, Christ emphatically proclaimed, 'Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's.' But to this day, there are those who still believe that the Christ was a mere social revolutionary.

In the case of Islam, there is no ambiguity at all. The mosque

and the state were one and the same from the very start. During his lifetime, Muhammad embodied in his person all three branches of worldly secular governance—the legislative, the judiciary and the executive—as well as the religious domain. As a messenger of Allah, he transmitted Allah's laws, adjudicated according to those laws and implemented Allah's design. He also prescribed a set of religious instructions for the spiritual life of the faithful.

After Muhammad, Islamic rule was continued by Caliphs and Imams. To this day, wherever it is able, Islam governs as the state, either directly as is the case in Saudi Arabia, or indirectly as practiced in places such as the Islamic Republic of Iran.

When religion crosses the line that separates it from the state, serious problems present themselves. In the case of Islam, the rule of the people, by the people, for the people is supplanted by the rule of Allah, by the faithful to Allah, for the pleasure of Allah.

Other problems arise. Liberty, deeply cherished by democracies, is replaced by submission—unquestioning obedience and adherence to the dictates and precepts of the all-knowing and all-wise Allah. It is this total form of submission that, among other things, prompted Muslims to systematically burn libraries of the lands they invaded. They justified their action by contending that the Quran, the comprehensive unerring book of Allah, contained all perfect knowledge that humanity needed. To this day, in places where Islam rules many books are banned, newspapers and magazines are systematically either censored or shut down, and other non-print media are methodically blocked.

The contempt for free inquiry is encapsulated in the statement of Muhammad,

'Al-elmo noghtatan katharoho al-jaheloon'—Knowledge is only

one dot, expanded by the ignorant.

Once liberty is surrendered for submission, a host of serious consequences present themselves. The individual becomes little more than a passive obedient vessel of Allah and his perspective of himself and life drastically changes. Once he submits to the all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-alls, then he is absolved of the responsibility of having to chart his own way in life.

There is considerable allure in submission to a powerful being that is willing and able to take care of the person. It is not a bad arrangement. The problem is that all past claimants have invariably been proven as either frauds or failures in honoring their part of the bargain. Islam is no exception. A cursory glance is enough to show the condition of Muhammad's flock. In spite of huge material wealth, Muslims in the oil-rich countries are imprisoned in the paralyzing mentality of submission and all the terrible ancillaries that go with it.

There is no reason to believe that Muslims have inferior intelligence. Their state of existence is strictly a function of the doctrine of Islam: a doctrine of nihilism, ignorance, and violence that denigrates this life and fixes the starry eye of the faithful on the next life. A case in point is the Islamic madrassahs in places like Pakistan. Never mind the girls. Girls are not in the calculus—women are incidental in Islam. Consider boys. Millions of young boys are enrolled in madrassahs—religious boarding schools—learning very little beside memorizing and reciting the Quran. This is a case of total submission: Islam at its best, as championed by the oil-money-flushed Saudi patrons of the Wahhabi sect.

Sadly enough, instead of Muslims marching out of the suffocating swamps of submission to the meadow of liberty, Allah's faithful aim to drag the rest of humanity into the deadly Islamic quagmire. Islam may have been an improvement to

the life of the savages that roamed the Arabian deserts some 1400 years ago. The 21st century world, in spite of all its problems and challenges, is not willing to surrender to the clearly failed and failing Islamic experiment.

© 2017 Amil Imani – All Rights Reserved