

Al-Islam vs. Radical Islam: Are There Two Islamic Religions?

Every day, we Americans, you and I, Muslims and Non-Muslims, are bombarded with news about Islam, Radical Islam, Muslims, terrorists, and murder all in one breath. While this anti-Islam media diet has resulted in increases in anti-Muslim hate crimes, it is a testimony to the positive qualities of the American intellect that things are not worse.

While we cannot address all of the issues relating to the so-called 'war of civilizations,' we do want to clarify the terms Al-Islam and what is called Radical Islam for our American brothers and sisters.

AL-ISLAM

Most people in the world know that the religion of Islam is the religion of people who call themselves Muslim or Moslem; that we believe in a G-d called Allah, pray 5 times a day, fast during the month of Ramadan, and travel to Mecca with millions of other Muslims around the world to perform some rituals. Most people know that we read a Holy Book called the Qur'an. Indeed, these are our practices.

But foundation and significance of these

rituals is found in the name of the religion itself. Islam means peace. But, Allah (G-d) calls this religion Al-Islam in the Quran, which means The Peace. It is the peace that comes from G-d. Many things can bring us temporary peace, but only G-d brings us true and lasting peace.



How does G-d bring us true and lasting peace? The answer to this question is also found in the name of the Muslim religion. Al-Islam doesn't only mean peace, but it means wholeness, completeness (as in something sound or solid) and security also.

Al-Islam is when things in your life are whole, complete, on sound and solid ground, which gives you the sense of security and assurance that leads to peace of mind and soul.

Muslims want a wholesome life, a complete life, a secure life and a peaceful life. We want a wholesome, complete, secure and peaceful relationship with our own self, our families, our fellow Americans, and our world.

RADICAL ISLAM

What is referred to as Radical Islam by most in the media is labeled by most Muslims as not Islam at all. Murdering innocent children on a school bus is not Al-Islam. Blowing up a building with innocent civilians inside is not Al-Islam. Don't call it Radical Islam, call it terrorism, murder, horrific behavior.

It is true that Al-Islam permits Muslims to defend themselves, to fight back, to go to war with enemies, but Muslims are never sanctioned to commit un-Islamic acts of violence. There are different groups of Muslims, but there is no religion called Radical Islam.

To fight for one's liberty or one's freedom from oppression or one's inalienable rights is as American as apple pie. Al-Islam's advice on fighting is not incompatible with America's values on fighting.

LET US PRAY FOR PEACE

Let us ask the Creator of each of us to help us find solutions to our differences and ways to build upon our compatibilities. Ameen.

The Higher Voice: Within and Without

Each one of us knows that we have strengths and weaknesses; we have our higher self and our lower self. We have a voice within that calls us to our highest thoughts and a voice that calls us to less worthy ideas. We want you to listen to your Higher Voice.

THE HIGHER VOICE

What is meant by the Higher Voice? We are talking about your moral conscience; your moral intelligence. That voice within you that tells you to do what you know is the right thing to do.

It says to you, "Man you need to get yourself together and get a job." It whispers to you, "Pull your pants up, people don't want to see your underwear." It says to you, "I want people to be proud of me."

That is your noble soul speaking. That is your higher voice. You were created with a soul that will guide you to success, if you would only listen to it and follow it.

WITHIN AND WITHOUT

Dear brother and sister, not only does

that voice speak to you from within; it hears the higher voice coming from things without.

Yes, we all have the higher voice within us and sometimes others will speak to you with their higher voice. They will call you to your excellence. They will



encourage you to do better, to have faith that if you follow the higher, it will lead you to higher and better things.

When you hear the higher voice coming from others outside of yourself, pay attention. Take heed my brother and sister, your happiness could depend on it.

NATURE OF THE HIGHER VOICE

Your happiness and peace depends upon this, because your soul's higher voice was created to guide and protect you. Just as your eyes and ears are protections for you, so is the higher voice.

If you disregard the eyes and the ears when they warn you of danger or when they show you the way to success, you ignore them to your own loss! Similar-

ly, when your higher voice from your own soul tries to guide you or warn you, to ignore it is foolish.

Why? Because every part of you was made to serve you; to work for your progress and success. Your hand and feet obey your commands. Your eyes look where you tell them to look and your ears listen to what you tell them to listen to. Your soul was created to speak to your heart and mind with the higher voice. But, it is also an obedient servant. If you ignore it and disregard it, it will eventually shut up and will not try to guide and inspire to obey your wishes.

My friends, do not let the lower, weaker desires and thoughts triumph over the higher voice that warns you against them. Follow the higher voice to a better place in life.

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