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Op-Ed: Fantasy Islam

A rebuttal to the recent article by Adnan Oktar amid the controversy in Israel concerning the bona fides of the group he heads.

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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.

Fantasy Islam is a popular game among many non-Muslims and so-called "moderate" or "reformist" Muslims. And in his recent [Arutz Sheva article](#) ("A call for sanity: How the Quran-abiding Muslims view the Jews") Adnan Oktar shows a mastery of that game.

Oktar was very critical of those who take Koran verses "out of context," and pointed out the fact that "in some cases one would need other verses to understand a verse." But in his article he often proceeded to do the first while ignoring the latter.

Jews according to the Quran

Oktar had a section of his article titled "Jews according to the Quran," and used some Koran verses to indicate the respect for Jews supposedly found in the Koran.

Oktar used a portion of 2:62 of the Koran to claim that Allah praises "righteous people among Jews and Christians." Here is the complete verse:

Verily, those who believe and those who are Jews and Christians, and Sabians, whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and does righteous good deeds shall have their reward with their Lord, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.

But Oktar is taking this verse out of context and ignoring a related verse in the Koran. For centuries Muslim scholars have understood that in terms of non-Muslims this verse only pertained to good deeds done before the advent of Islam. After the advent of Islam, people needed to believe in Allah, the god of Islam, and Muhammad to receive their reward (*Tafsir Al-Qurtubi*, Vol. 1, p. 267; *Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, Vol. 1, p. 249; *Tafsir Al-Jalalayn*, p. 23; and *Tafsir Ahsanul-Bayan*, Vol. 1, pp. 71-72).

And Oktar left out the fact that 2:62 had actually been abrogated by 3:85 (*Tafsir Al-Qurtubi*, Vol. 1, p. 267; *Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, Vol. 1, pp. 248-249; *Tafsir Ahsanul-Bayan*, Vol. 1, p. 72; and *The Noble Qur'an*, p. 24, n. 2). Here is 3:85:

And whosoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers.

Oktar used another verse in the Koran to indicate that there are Jews that are considered to be righteous:

Those who have faith and those who are Jews and the Sabaeans and the Christians, all who have faith in God and the Last Day and act rightly will feel no fear and will know no sorrow. (Qur'an, 5:69)

But as with 2:62, Muslim scholars understand this verse to mean only that one need have no fear or sorrow as long as they believed in Allah and their deeds conformed to "Muhammad's Law" (*Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, Vol. 3, p. 232; and *Tafsir As-Sa'di*, Vol. 1, pp. 522-523). And 5:69 was also



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abrogated by 3:85 (*The Noble Qur'an*, p. 169, n. 1).

Oktar wrote that "our Lord draws attention to a distinguished people amongst the Jews," and then quoted the follow Koran verse:

Among the people of Moses there is a group who guide by the truth and act justly in accordance with it. (Qur'an, 7:159)



But this verse is understood to mean that these *distinguished people amongst the Jews* are those Jews who believe in Allah, embrace Islam, and recite the verses of the Koran (*Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, Vol. 4, pp. 185-187; *Tafsir Ahsanul-Bayan*, Vol. 2, p. 234; *Tafsir As-Sa'di*, Vol. 2, p. 66). So how can they still be Jews?

As Oktar pointed out, context is important. So to provide some additional context, take into consideration what Muhammad himself had to say about the status of Jews and Christians who remained faithful to their religions after the advent of Islam:

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. (Sahih Muslim, No. 153)

The Koran and Prophet Muhammad's loving embrace of the Jews

Oktar wrote that: "As one reads the Quran in its entirety, it will become plainly clear that there is no adverse viewing of the Jews...Indeed, Prophet Mohammed was a great example with his loving, embracing attitude towards them..."

No "adverse viewing of the Jews" in the Koran? I don't know what Koran Oktar is using, but I use *The Noble Qur'an* by Darussalam Publishers. In this Koran we find such things as: Muslims are forbidden from being friends with Jews (5:51); the Jews are among the worst enemies of Muslims (5:82); Muslims are specifically commanded to fight Jews (9:29); Allah curses the Jews (9:30); and Jews are among the worst of creatures and will live in the Fires of Hell (98:6).

And here are some examples of Muhammad's "loving, embracing attitude" toward the Jews:

Muhammad drove the Jewish tribes out of Medina, supervised the beheading of 600-900 captured Jewish males (combatants and non-combatants), and had this to say:

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.'" (Sahih Al-Bukhari, No. 2926)

Here are some additional comments Muhammad made about the Jews:

It was narrated from 'Amr bin Shu'aib, from his father, from his grandfather, that the Messenger of Allah ruled that the blood money for the People of the Book is half of that of the blood money for the Muslims, and they are the Jews and Christians. (Sunan Ibn Majah, No. 2644)

Abu Huraira reported that Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) had said: Do not greet the Jews and the Christians before they greet you and when you meet any one of them on the roads force him to go to the narrowest part of it. (Sahih Muslim, No. 2167)

Abu Burda reported on the authority of his father that Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him) said: No Muslim would die but Allah would admit instead of him a Jew or a Christian in Hell-Fire. (Sahih Muslim, No. 2767R1)

And on his deathbed Muhammad gave one last command:

It has been narrated by 'Umar b. al-Khattab that he heard the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) saying: I will expel the Jews and Christians from the Arabian Peninsula and will not leave any but Muslims. (Sahih Muslim, No. 1767)

Conclusion

"Quran-abiding Muslims" are required to follow the commands of Allah found in the verses of the Koran. And among those verses is one specifically commanding Muslims to follow the teachings and example of Muhammad (59:7). The commands of Allah and the teachings and example of Muhammad are rife with anger and hostility toward the Jews.

Nevertheless, the final paragraph of Oktar's article started out with these



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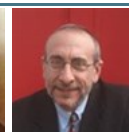
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words:

"We cannot allow ourselves to be swallowed by anger and hatred when our religion commands us the opposite."


Only by being a Master of Fantasy Islam could Oktar cap off his article with those last words.

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A cartoon illustration of a man in a brown suit and red tie, pointing his right hand towards the right. Above him, the text reads "IF WE DON'T KNOW WHERE HE STANDS," and below him, "HOW CAN WE TRUST HIM?".

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