

Hamas's Love for Death and Ceasefires

Written by Andrew Bostom

Friday, 23 November 2012 06:02

It's due to the Quran and prophetic tradition, particularly the Prophet's Treaty of Hudaibiyah....



Palestinians in Gaza celebrate "ceasefire" as victory, chanting, "people of Gaza have won".

No less than 20 rockets were [fired into](#) Israel Wednesday (11/21/12) night within the first three hours *after* the cease-fire understanding between Israel and Hamas ostensibly began at 9 p.m. local time. Despite inauspicious beginnings, following an overnight calm, by Thursday morning (11/22/12), senior Israel Defense Forces (IDF) officials [maintained](#) they believe Hamas and Islamic Jihad intended to [implement the cease-fire with Israel](#), and prevent other jihadist factions from firing into Israel.

Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak clarified that the cease-fire was *not* an agreement with Hamas, but rather a document of "understandings"—between Israel and Egypt, on the one hand, and Egypt and Hamas, on the other. During an interview with Israel Radio, Barak insisted, **"There is no**

agreement. I am holding the paper in my hands." Moreover, Barak and the IDF believe that despite Hamas'

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[public triumphant crowing](#)

, the Gaza regime was privately aware of the significant level of damage its jihadist infrastructure had

[sustained](#)

during Operation Pillar of Defense.

Hamas' renewed jihadist violence against Israel was punctuated, initially, by messages extolling their "love of death" to terrorize and demoralize the Israelis, then suing for a cease-fire when the Israelis retaliated with devastating effectiveness. These actions epitomize the archetypal jihad tactics of Islam's founder Muhammad, idealized as the [eternal model](#) for behaviors that all Muslims should emulate.

Nearly six decades ago (in 1956), Arthur Jeffery, a great modern scholar of Islam, reviewed Guillaume's magisterial English translation of Ibn Ishaq's *Sirat Rasul Allah*, the oldest and most important Muslim biography of Muhammad. Jeffery's review included this trenchant [observation](#)

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Years ago the late Canon Gairdner in Cairo said that the best answer to the numerous apologetic Lives of Muhammad published in the interests of Muslim propaganda in the West would be an unvarnished translation of the earliest Arabic biography of the prophet.

W. H. T. (Canon) Gairdner, in 1915, [highlighted](#) the dilemma posed by Islam's sacralization of Muhammad's timeless behavioral role model, revealed in such pious Muslim biographical works:

As incidents in the life of an Arab conqueror, the tales of raiding, private assassinations and public executions, perpetual enlargements of the harem, and so forth, might be historically explicable and therefore pardonable but it is another matter that they should be taken as a setting forth of the moral ideal for all time.

As recorded by [Palestinian Media Watch](#), Hamas' Al-Qassam Brigades—named after the murderous 1930s jihadist Izz al-Din al-Qassam—issued a November 18, 2012

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[message](#)

addressed to Israeli soldiers, which stated:

From the Al-Qassam Brigades to the Zionist soldiers: The Al-Qassam Brigades *love death more than you love life*
. [emphasis added]

Such macabre, hideous sentiments are intrinsic to Hamas' ideology, and deeply rooted in Islamic theology.

The Preamble to Hamas' 1988 foundational [covenant](#) plainly affirms its abiding, ancient commitment to jihad "martyrdom," in the context of re-conquering all of historical Palestine:

[Hammas] joins arms with all those who wage jihad for the liberation of Palestine. The souls of its jihad fighters meet the souls of all those jihad fighters who sacrificed their lives for the land of Palestine, from the time when the Prophet's companions conquered it until the present.

And the specific [motif](#) of Muslims as "loving death" more than infidels, especially perfidious Jews, love life, also dates back to the advent of Islam.

[According](#) to Islam's seminal early historian, al-Tabari (d. 923), during Abu Bakr's reign as Caliph (i.e., immediately after Muhammad's death), his commander Khalid b. al-Walid's wrote a letter in 634 to a Persian leader in Iraq identified as "Hurmuz," warning of a prototypical expansionist jihad campaign, spearheaded by Muslim warriors enamored of death.

Now then. Embrace Islam so that you may be safe, or else make a treaty of protection for yourself and your people, *for I have brought you a people who love death as you love life* [emphasis added].

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“Martyrdom operations” have [always](#) been intimately associated with the institution of jihad. Professor Franz Rosenthal, in a magisterial 1946 essay (titled, “On Suicide in Islam”), observed that Islam’s foundational texts sanctioned such acts of jihad martyrdom and held them in the highest esteem:

...death as the result of “suicidal” missions and of the desire of martyrdom occurs not infrequently, since [such] death is considered highly commendable according to Muslim religious concepts.

Koran [9:111](#) provides an unequivocal, celebratory invocation of martyrdom during jihad:

Lo! Allah hath bought from the believers their lives and their wealth because the Garden will be theirs: they shall fight in the way of Allah and shall slay and be slain.

And Muhammad himself celebrated jihad martyrdom as the supreme act of Islamic devotion in the most important canonical hadith collection [Sahih Bukhari, Volume 4, Book 52, Numbers 53 and 54]:

Narrated Anas bin Malik: The Prophet said, “Nobody who dies and finds good from Allah (in the Hereafter) would wish to come back to this world even if he were given the whole world and whatever is in it, except the martyr who, on seeing the superiority of martyrdom, would like to come back to the world and get killed again (in Allah’s Cause).”

Narrated Abu Huraira: “The Prophet said, ‘By Him in Whose Hands my life is! Were it not for some men amongst the believers who dislike to be left behind me and whom I cannot provide with means of conveyance, I would certainly never remain behind any Sariya’ (army-unit) setting out in Allah’s Cause. By Him in Whose Hands my life is! I would love to be martyred in Allah’s Cause and then get resurrected and then get martyred, and then get resurrected again and then get martyred and then get resurrected again and then get resurrected again and then get martyred.”

Imbuing such tactics with supreme “holiness,” Muhammad became the ultimate prototype [sanc](#)

[tioning jihad terror](#)

, as recorded in this canonical hadith (Sahih Bukhari Volume 4, Book 52, Number 220):

Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah's Apostle 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)."

Muhammad, well-practiced at his own canonical dictum, "War is deceit" (from *Sahih Bukhari Volume 4, Book 52, Number 267*

), also conceived the tactical doctrine of a

[temporary truce](#)

, or "hudna," when infidels thwarted the Muslims' jihad depredations, and had them at a military disadvantage. This

[doctrine](#)

is based upon what Islam's classical legists characterized as "the truce which the Prophet concluded with the unbelievers in the year of Hudaibiyyah." Later, Muhammad unilaterally broke this agreement, when the Muslims regained military superiority, and vanquished the Meccan "unbelievers." As I conveyed to a

[confused Charles Krauthammer](#)

during 2009 when Hamas' previous sustained jihad campaign was reversed by the IDF, such bellicose dogma was described lucidly by

[Antoine Fattal](#)

(in 1958), a seminal Lebanese scholar of Islamic and modern international law:

Connected with the notion of jihad is the distinction between dar al-harb (territory or "house" of war) and dar al-islam (house of Islam). The latter includes all territories subject to Moslem authority. It is in a state of perpetual war with the dar al-harb. The inhabitants of the dar al-harb are harbis, who are not answerable to the Islamic authority and whose persons and goods are mubah, that is, at the mercy of Believers. However, when Muslims are in a subordinate state, they can negotiate a truce with the Harbis lasting no more than ten years, which they are obliged to revoke unilaterally as soon as they regain the upper hand, following the example of the Prophet after Hudaibiyya.

Abiding the teachings of Islam's prophet Muhammad, Hamas' leadership, jihadist rocketeers, and homicide bombers, fully supported by the [pious Muslim masses](#) who empower Hamas, continue to demonstrate they "love death"—especially if their "martyrdom" kills or terrorizes Israeli Jews. Also consistent with Muhammad's example, and the actions of jihadists worldwide across space and time, when these tactics of jihad terror are thwarted, Hamas pleads for a

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cease-fire (or "hudna"), to regain a tactical advantage, pending renewal of its jihadist aggression.

Dr. Andrew Bostom's new book is, "[Sharia versus Freedom – The Legacy of Islamic Totalitarianism](#)"