



## Smite the Midianites!!!

“**AND THEY WARRED** against the Midianites, as the Lord commanded Moses; and they slew all the males.” And, that’s not all: “they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain.” This is the tragic tale of the Midianites, a long forgotten people, who God commanded Moses to tell the Children of Israel to destroy, as recorded in ‘The Fourth Book of Moses, called, Numbers’, Chapter 31, of the *Bible* in the English translation approved by King James in 1611. The massacre included all Midianite boys, and all nursing, pregnant, and potentially pregnant girls and women. All were slain. Only virgins were spared. Moses, or maybe it was the Lord, advised, “All the women children, that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves.” This was the policy of ethnic cleansing and genocide recommended by God to deal with those pesky Midianites.

It seems to have worked, *eventually*, when some time later the Lord again delivered the Midianites into the hands of the Children of Israel. This time, the Midianites and their pals the Amalekites fell before Jerubbaal, “who *is* Gideon”. It seems that when confronted by Gideon’s three hundred men, each with a trumpet in his right hand, and a lamp in his left hand, the numberless host of the enemy “cried, and fled”. This time, it really was curtains for the Midianites. Gideon had the heads of Prince Oreb and Prince

Zeeb brought across the River Jordan and that was the end of that.

This story, as you may well imagine, is probably not very reliable, but its lavish and contradictory elements are meat and drink to those who like to think of the *Bible* as God's Truth, as the inviolable Word of the Lord, as the *literal* truth and divine history, by whose lessons and precepts we should be guided through all our days. These people can wriggle out of any contradiction, any plain absurdity, or any violation of contemporary mores with the greatest of ease. The wonderful tension between the luxurious and murderous sensuality of the *Bible* with its concubines, and plurality of wives, with its severed heads, its riotous assemblies of louche men taunting visiting angels, its idolatry and golden calves, its girls with lips like pomegranate and thighs like milk, and King David's grief at the death of Jonathan: "whose love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women".

An awful lot of ducking and weaving, omissions, and tortured interpretation, have to go on to turn this text into something like a coherent guide for living. This appears, as with the *Torah*, to be the case with the *Quran*. If we like we can turn the *Quran* into a hymn of praise for peace, tolerance and diversity, a ratification for the rather more shifty-eyed intolerance usual among Catholic priests, Imams, and Orthodox rabbis, or a blood curdling text in which the beheading of homosexuals, the stoning of adulterous women, and the murder of apostates, is literally justified by every line of the text recited by the Angel Jibril ("Gabriel") to Muhammad over a twenty-two year period in the seventh century. No errors were made between the oral story and the initial written record made just after the death of the Prophet, and no errors were made between this first written version and the final Arabic text standardised in 653. Every word and every verse is exactly as God told Jibril and Jibril told Muhammad.

This is why the *Quran* has got to be believed. This is evidently the view of Geert Wilders the Dutch

parliamentarian banned from entering Britain by Jacqui Smith, the Home Secretary, last week. Wilders, in his film *Fitna*, makes the unremarkable observation that a fairly large minority of Muslims believe in beheading homosexuals, stoning adulterous women to death, and murdering those born into Muslim families who wish to become Christians, Buddhists, Hindus, Jews or atheists. It is widely known that many Muslims believe that the Quran condemns these 'crimes', and ordains these 'punishments', which are actually enforced by a number of modern Islamic states as an integral part of their application of Sharia law.

However, the Home Secretary while freely granting the right of entry to members of the Muslim Brotherhood and others who understand the Quran in this vile and bloody manner, does not want to upset Muslim sensibilities. Consequently, a veil must be drawn over the face of Islam so that its divisions and complexity are denied in order to allow ministers and their tame Imams and Muslim peers to intone "Islam is a religion of peace" in a state of flagrant denial concerning those committed to enforcing the violent subordination of women, the slaughter of homosexuals, and the murder of apostates.

Geert Wilders has thought the unthinkable and said the unsayable. He has challenged the intrinsically dishonest and partial view of the Labour government and its "Muslim leaders" with his own partial and dishonest account. To compare a seventh century poetic text with the twentieth century ramblings of Adolf Hitler is plainly daft. It is as daft as saying that "Islam is a religion of peace". Its much more complicated than that, and the extent to which Muslims accept the equality of women and homosexuals, and are prepared to defend the civil rights of those who wish to cease being Muslims certainly needs to be extensively discussed. It is entirely reasonable to demand that modern Muslims sign up to the defence of the human and civil rights of the individual.

The importance of this is that if we don't those other 'Peoples of the Book', the Christians and Jews, might

set about advocating the slaughter of disobedient women, sodomites, onanists, adulterers, fornicators, and assorted Midianites. The head of the Anglican Communion in Nigeria, Bishop Akinola, has already responded to pressure from Muslims in that country by trying to outflank them in their hatred of homosexuality, which he has enthusiastically endorsed. The Pope, embattled by secularism and liberalism, and a widespread acceptance of difference, contraception, divorce, and modernity, among the Roman Catholic laity, has recently made his peace with anti-Semitic royalists and late-medievalists in the Catholic Church in an attempt to circle the wagons against a horde of Baptists and other variegated protestants on the one side, and the host of secularism on the other, which threatens the historic position of the Catholic Church not simply in Poland, Spain and Ireland, but throughout Southern and Central America. Meanwhile the Church of England has been attempting to strengthen its ties with Islamic leaders in order to reserve a privileged place for religion, *any religion*, in the schools and in the public life of the country.

For these reasons there is a Holy Alliance to undermine criticism of Islamic institutions and leaders who veer from silence to ambiguity and back again when it comes to demands for the unequivocal defence of the human and civil rights of the individual to do what they like and live how they like – to annoy and insult who they like, to be sceptical, and down right offensive. The majority of Muslims in our country must be won over to the idea that as long as they do not promote racial hatred, discrimination, and violence against those with whom they disagree, or those who they think of as infidels, sinners, and apostates, they can think what they like. Anglican attempts, supported by Roman Catholics, and now by the Labour Government, to shield Islam from entirely legitimate and necessary criticism, must be forcefully rejected with or without the help and lurid apprehensions of rightwing Dutch politicians.