



Islamic Prejudice, Islamic Denial

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For last week's "Dispatches" program on Britain's Channel Four, a reporter with a hidden camera entered Birmingham's Green Lane mosque (which has won praise from Britain's Muslim peer, Lord Ahmed) and other leading mosques in Britain. He found they preached Islamic supremacism, hatred of Jews and Christians, and the subjugation of women.

The mosques, of course, are in heavy damage-control mode. A [press release](#) at the Green Lane mosque website complains that "it is extremely disappointing but not at all surprising that 'Dispatches' has chosen to portray Muslims in the worst possible light. 'Dispatches' has opted for sensationalism over substance with total disregard for peaceful community relations." And not only that: "This so-called 'un-

dercover' investigation merely panders to age-old anti-Muslim prejudices by employing the time-honoured tradition of cherry picking statements and presenting them in the most inflammatory manner."

The statement doesn't address the obvious fact that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to cherry-pick statements anywhere near as hateful and inflammatory as those recorded in the Green Lane mosque from proceedings in any Jewish, Christian, Hindu, or Buddhist house of worship.

Among the statements recorded in the Green Lane mosque were these about women:

- "Allah has created the woman – even if she gets a Ph.D. – deficient. Her intellect is incomplete,

deficient. She may be suffering from hormones that will make her emotional. It takes two witnesses of a woman to equal the one witness of the man."

- "By the age of ten, it becomes an obligation on us to force her to wear *hijab*, and if she doesn't wear *hijab*, we hit her."
- "Men are in charge of women. Wherever he goes she should follow him, and she shouldn't be allowed leave the house without his permission."

How inflammatory! How extremist!
And how inveterately Qur'anic!

The Muslim holy book declares that a woman's testimony is worth half that of a man: "Get two witnesses, out of your own men, and if there are not two men, then a man and two women, such as ye choose, for witnesses, so that if one of them errs, the other can remind her" (Qur'an 2:282). It also says that men are in charge of women, and that disobedient women should be beaten: "Men are in charge of women, because Allah hath made the one of them to excel the other, and because they spend of their property (for the support of women). So good women are the obedient, guarding in secret that which Allah hath guarded. As for those from whom ye fear rebellion, admonish them and banish them to beds apart, and scourge them" (4:34).

The same is true of other statements made in the mosque, including these about Britain and the Islamic state:

- "You have to live like a state within a state until you take over."
- "We want the laws of Islam to be practiced, we want to do away with the man-made laws."
- "Muslims shouldn't be satisfied with living in other than the total Islamic state."
- "I encourage all of you to be from amongst them, to begin to cultivate ourselves for the time that is fast approaching where the tables are going to turn and the Muslims are going to be in the position of being uppermost in strength, and when that happens, people won't get killed - unjustly."
- "Allah has decreed this thing, that I am going to be dominant. The dominance of course is a political dominance."

Such statements have been vividly expressed in the writings of twentieth century *jihad* theorists such as the Egyptian Sayyid Qutb and the Pakistani Syed Abul Ala Maududi. Said Qutb:

It is not the function of Islam to compromise with the concepts of *Jahiliyya* [the society of unbelievers] which are current in the world or to co-exist in the same land together with a jahili system....Islam cannot accept any mixing with *Jahiliyyah*. Either Islam will remain, or *Jahiliyyah*; no half-half situation is possible. Command belongs to Allah, or otherwise to *Jahiliyyah*; Allah's *Shari'a* [law] will prevail, or else people's desires...*The foremost duty of Islam is to depose Jahiliyyah from the leadership of man....*

Maududi likewise wrote that non-Muslims have “absolutely no right to seize the reins of power in any part of God’s earth, nor to direct the collective affairs of human beings according to their own misconceived doctrines.” If they do, “the believers would be under an obligation to do their utmost to dislodge them from political power and to make them live in subservience to the Islamic way of life.”

But Qutb and Maududi did not originate these ideas. They are an extrapolation of Qur’anic passages such as 9:29, which assumes that Muslims will wield state power over Jews and Christians, exacting from them a poll tax (*jizya*) and making sure that they pay it “with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued.” There is no concept in the Qur’an, Islamic tradition, or Islamic law of non-Muslims living as equals with Muslims in an Islamic state: Muslims must be in a superior position. The Muslim prophet Muhammad emphasized this when he told his followers:

Fight in the name of Allah and in the way of Allah. Fight against those who disbelieve in Allah. Make a holy war...When you meet your enemies who are polytheists, invite them to three courses of action. If they respond to any one of these you also accept it and withhold yourself from doing them any harm. Invite them to (accept) Islam; if they respond to you, accept it from them and desist from fighting against them...If they refuse to accept Islam, demand from them the *Jizya*. If they agree to pay, accept it from them

and hold off your hands. If they refuse to pay the tax, seek Allah’s help and fight them. (Sahih Muslim 4294)

Of course, there are many ways to understand all these passages and others like them. But the fact that the views expressed by the Muslims in the Channel Four documentary can be found in the Islamic scriptures without much effort suggests that the problem is far larger than a few mosques that were thought to be “moderate” but turn out to be “extremist.” It is a problem that is deeply rooted within traditional Islam, and must be treated as such. Muslims in Britain who sincerely reject the idea that Islam must be dominant and that Islamic law must be instituted in Britain, and that women and non-Muslims must be subjugated, and who accept the idea that non-Muslims and Muslims should live together as equals on an indefinite basis, should not condemn the “Dispatches” documentary. Instead, they should welcome it as a opportunity not only to expel “extremists” from their ranks, and to formulate a comprehensive rejection and refutation of their literalist understanding of the Qur’an and Sunnah.

But so far they are not doing that. Instead, the Muslim Council of Britain, the Muslim Public Affairs Committee of the United Kingdom, the Federation of Student Islamic Societies, and the UK Islamic Mission [have all denounced the program](#) as “Islamophobic.” None have taken even a single step to combat the spread of the understanding of Islam depicted in the show, or to

mitigate the elements of Islam that incite to violence and inculcate Islamic supremacism.

And that itself is very, very telling.

Robert Spencer is a scholar of Islamic history, theology, and law and the director of [Jihad Watch](#). He is the author of five books, seven monographs, and hundreds of articles about jihad and Islamic terrorism, including [Islam Unveiled: Disturbing Questions About the World's Fastest Growing Faith](#) and [The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam \(and the Crusades\)](#). He is also an Adjunct Fellow with the Free Congress Foundation.