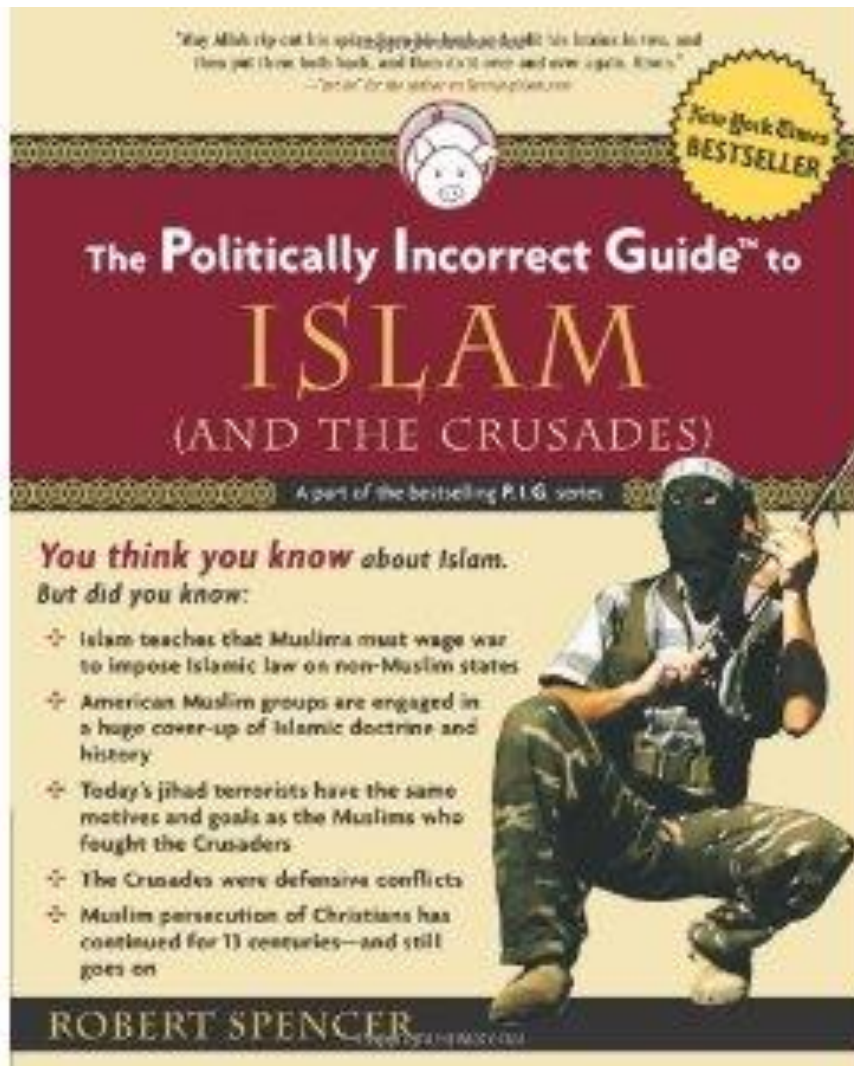


A Summary of The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam by Robert Spencer



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About the Author

Robert Spencer is the director of Jihad Watch and an Adjunct Fellow with the Free Congress Foundation. He is the author of four books on Islam, including *Islam Unveiled: Disturbing Questions About the World's Fastest Growing Faith*, and *Onward Muslim Soldiers: How Jihad Still Threatens America and the West*, as well as eight monographs and hundreds of articles. He resides in a secure, undisclosed location.

General Overview

Mr. Spencer presents to the reader the truth of Islam as revealed in their scriptures and their tradition and the historical reality that Islam truly both was and is. The main focus of Spencer's book is first to debunk the politically correct assumption that Islam is fundamentally a peaceful religion and then to present Islam as the immediate threat to Christianity and the Western Inheritance. The primary focus of the first section of the book examines the true nature of Islam. Mr. Spencer, in his presentation on the truths of Islam, covers the life of Muhammad and his teachings, the Qur'an as a book of war, Islam as fundamentally a religion of war, Islam as a religion of intolerance, and Islam's relation to the Crusades. After an exposition on the teaching and historical implications of Islam, Spencer examines Islam in relation to modern man. The jihad that was fought against Christianity, or anyone who is not Muslim, is still being waged. However, people like to deny the fact that Islam is fundamentally a religion of war and destruction that seeks to destroy or forcefully convert anyone who is not a Muslim. By an examination of the teachings Islam and its present instances of jihad, Spencer demonstrates that Islamic jihad is as active as ever.

Part I: ISLAM

Spencer delves immediately into the life of the prophet Muhammad. Why does the life of Muhammad matter? "Contrary to what many secularists would have us believe, religions are not entirely determined (or distorted) by the faithful over time. The lives and words of the founders remain central, no matter how long ago they lived." The idea that believers shape a religion is a modern conception founded on the philosophical principle of deconstructionism, which was first fashionable in the 1960's. Deconstructionism teaches the only importance that written words have is that importance which is given by the reader. Following this philosophical path one would come to the conclusion that if it is the reader alone who finds truth then there is no objective truth. Deconstructionism is contrary to all religious teaching, whether Jewish, Christian, Muslim, or Eastern. This is why one must examine the life and teaching of Muhammad. Muhammad is the one who gave Islam its objective truth.

Most Westerners know about the life of Moses or the life of Jesus but they have very little knowledge of the life of Muhammad. Less is known about Muhammad as compared to Moses and Jesus and what is known is highly disputed. Spencer presents information about Muhammad solely from Islamic texts. Spencer is presenting what Muslims themselves will not present. The first fact that Spencer presents is that, "Muhammad ibn Abdallah ibn Abd al-Muttalib (570-632), the prophet of Islam, was a man of war." He was a man of war because he taught his followers that they had to fight for their religion because Allah, their God, had commanded them to take up arms. Muhammad himself, in addition to preaching the command of Allah to take up arms in the name of Allah, fought in numerous battles. It was through the course of those battles that he articulated the numerous Islamic principles that are to be forever followed. These facts, which are proclaimed by Muhammad, are crucial to a proper understanding of what caused the Crusades and what is causing the rise of the present global jihad movement.

Muhammad, prior to assuming the role of a prophet, had experience as a warrior. He participated in two local wars before receiving revelations from Allah through the angel Gabriel in 610. After receiving revelations he began in the service of Allah by preaching to his tribe both the worship of One God and his own position as a prophet. However, he was not well received by his Quraysh brethren in Mecca. They refused to listen to

Muhammad and leave the worship of their gods. Muhammad was enraged with his brethren's refusal to listen to him and cursed them. Muhammad's curse upon his uncle is in the Qur'an, "May the hands of Abu Lahab perish! May he himself perish! Nothing shall his wealth and gains avail him. He shall be burnt in a flaming fire, and his wife, laden with faggots, shall have a rope of fibre around her neck!" (Qur'an 111:1-5).

Muhammad inconsistently turned from violent words to violent actions. In 622, he fled from Mecca to Medina. There, a band of tribal warriors had accepted him as a prophet and pledged loyalty to him. These first Muslim converts began raiding the caravans of the Quraysh, with Muhammad personally leading many of these raids. It was these raids according to Spencer that "kept the nascent Muslim movement solvent and helped form Islamic theology." When the raiders attacked a caravan during the sacred month of Rajab, Muhammad refused to share in the loot. However, shortly after, a new revelation came from Allah, in order to justify the raid. It said that the Quraysh's opposition to Muhammad was a worse transgression than the violation of the sacred month. According to Spencer, "Good had become identified with anything that redounded to the benefit of Muslims, regardless of whether it violated moral or other laws."

The Muslims moved on to further violence. The first major battle that the Muslims won was the battle of Badr. With this victory, certain attitudes and assumptions were being planted in the minds of Muslims, which remain with many of them to this day: "Allah will grant victory to his people against foes that are superior in numbers or firepower, so long as they remain faithful to his commands, victories entitled the Muslims to appropriate the possessions of the vanquished as booty, bloody vengeance against one's enemies belongs not solely to the Lord, but also to those who submit to him on earth. That is the meaning of the word Islam: submission, prisoners taken in battle against the Muslims may be put to death at the discretion of Muslim leaders, those who reject Islam are "the vilest of creatures" (Qur'an) and thus deserve no mercy. Anyone who insults or even opposes Muhammad or his people deserves a humiliating death – by beheading if possible; this is in accordance with Allah's command to "smite the necks" of the "unbelievers" [Qur'an 47:4]). It was the Badr that was the first practical example of what came to be known as the Islamic doctrine of jihad. A Revelation from Allah revealed that the defeat was a punishment for their unfaithfulness to Islam. This doctrine of defeat for unfaithfulness and victory for faithfulness was then later exemplified after the Muslim victory at the Battle of Trench.

The dishonesty of Islam was established by Muhammad in the events surrounding the Treaty of Hudaibiyya. In 628 Muhammad was inspired to perform a pilgrimage to Mecca. The Quraysh, his enemy, was guarding the city and he agreed to return home without making the pilgrimage. Muhammad also shocked his people by agreeing to further terms that were disadvantageous to Muslims in the Treaty of Hudaibiyya. Contrary to all facts, Muhammad insisted that the Muslims had been victorious, producing a new revelation from Allah: "Verily We have granted thee a manifest victory" (Qur'an 48:1). This was followed by a promise that Muslims would gain much booty. Muhammad then broke the Treaty by not allowing a woman of the Quraysh to return home. From this it could be discerned that only what was advantageous to Islam is good. Spencer further comments that for Islam, "nothing was good except what was advantageous to Islam, and nothing evil except what hindered it. Once the treaty was formally discarded, Islamic jurists, enunciated the principle that, in general, truces were to be concluded for no longer than ten years and only entered into for the purpose of allowing weakened Muslim forces to gain strength."

In the second chapter, Spencer classifies the Qur'an, the revelations of Allah to Muhammad, as a book of war: "The Qur'an is unique among the sacred writings of the world in counseling its adherents to make war against unbelievers." There are over a hundred verses that exhort Muslims to wage war against unbelievers, this type of war is called jihad. Jihad comes from the verbal jihadi which means to strive hard. One meaning of the term is to strive hard on the battlefield on the behalf of Allah. This is the jihad, which is advocated to such a degree in the Qur'an against both those who have rejected Islam and those who profess to be believers but do not follow the faith in its fullness.

What about the common politically correct assumption that the Qur'an really teaches tolerance and peace? This assumption is entirely false with no scriptural foundation. The closest that the Qur'an comes to counseling tolerance and peace is the advice that unbelievers are to be left alone in their errors in order that Allah may deal with them, "Say: O disbelievers! I worship not that which ye worship; nor worship ye that which I worship. And I shall not worship that which ye worship. Nor will ye worship that which I worship. Unto you your religion, and unto me my religion," (Qur'an 109:1-6). And also, "Have patience with what they say, and leave them with noble dignity. And leave Me alone to deal with those in possession of the good things of life, who deny the Truth; and bear with them for a little while," (Qur'an 73:10-11). Allah will deal with unbelievers through his commission to believers.

Islam apologists will admit that the Qur'an does not leave relations between believers and unbelievers at the live-and-let-live stage. Muslim interreligious relations almost always progress to war. Why are Muslims to engage in war? The answer given by Muslims is that they are to fight in self-defense. However, what constitutes self-defense in their commission to, "fight them until persecution is not more, and religion is for Allah," (Qur'an 2:190-193)? A sufficient provocation can be that one is not Muslim. Once hostilities between Islam and anyone else have begun, Muslims are to, "slay them wherever you find them, and drive them out of the places whence they drove you out, for persecution is worse than slaughter. And fight not with them at the Inviolable Place of Worship until they first attack you there, but if they attack you there, slay them. Such is the reward of disbelievers. But if they desist, then lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."

A leading Muslim apologist was asked the question if Islam is to attack even those non-Muslims which do not act against Islam because of the Islamic requirement to propagate Islam? His answer provides an example of the present Islamic threat found in jihad: "You should understand that we Muslims firmly believe that the person who doesn't believe in Allah as he is required to, is a disbeliever who would be doomed to Hell eternally. Thus one of the primary responsibilities of the Muslim ruler is to spread Islam throughout the world, thus saving people from eternal damnation." Muslims cannot live in peace with the rest of the world. They seek to conquer through jihad.

Another significant point that is used for jihad is the Islamic doctrine of abrogation, as seen previously where Allah changes or cancels things previously stated. This means that any peaceful verses that are found in the command are canceled by any later verses that advocate the principles of jihad. For Allah says, "None of Our revelations do We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, but We substitute something better or similar: knowest thou not that Allah Hath power over all things?" (Qur'an 2:106). The violent verses of the ninth sura abrogate any prior peaceful verses that modern Muslim might use to show Islam as politically correct. Also most Muslim authorities agree that the ninth sura is probably the last revealed section of the Qur'an. In contrast to Christian Scripture where the only passages of commissioned war were against people of certain distinction for a certain reasons, the command to fight unbelievers in Islam is open-ended and universal.

In addition to the Qur'an, there is the Hadith, the traditions of Muhammad that also illustrate how fundamental jihad principles are to Islam. Spencer illustrates that the Hadith are, "volumes upon volumes of stories of Muhammad in which he (and sometimes his followers) explains how and in what situations various verses of the Qur'an came to him, pronounces on disputed questions, and leads by example." It is the Hadith that is second only to the Qur'an. There is no mistaking the centrality of violent jihad as found in Islam. Muhammad said that, besides converting to Islam, the best act that one could do would be to participate in jihad warfare. Muhammad also warned that Muslims who did not engage in jihad would be punished. There are three choices that Muslims are to offer to non-Muslims: accept Islam; pay the jizya, the poll-tax on non-Muslims; and war with Muslims. One is also able to see these three options legislated in Islamic law.

How is it that faced with this overwhelming amount of evidence at the violence of Islam every Muslim is not a terrorist? The necessity of jihad violence is referenced numerous times in the Qur'an, but not every Muslim knows all the teachings of the Qur'an. One of the reasons for this is that because the Qur'an is written in classical Arabic and must be recited that way, and only a small number of Muslims actually have any idea

what the text actually says. Most memorize the Qur'an without any conception of what it says. The teachings of Islam are never really learned but they can be remember: "where Muslims do coexist peacefully with non-Muslims, as in Central Asia and elsewhere it is not because the teachings of jihad have been reformed or rejected; they have simply been ignored, and history teaches us that they can be remembered at any time."

Christians and Jews are classified by Muslims as the dhimmis, which means both the protected and the guilty. They are the protected in a sense because they have had some revelation from Allah, yet they are guilty in another sense because they have rejected Muhammad as the prophet who completed the revelation of Allah. Because of the Christian status as dhimmis, Muslims are able to subject Christians and Jews to harsh treatment. This includes things such as seizure of Churches, extra taxes, execution, or exile into slavery. The extra tax was called the jizya, which was to be paid often in a very demeaning form. All of these factors of persecution help Muslims to force conversions. Dhimmitude is not a thing of the past and its enforcement can be seen legislated in every Islamic country. For example, "Apostasy – leaving the faith – is a capital offense in Islamic law. Egyptian officials arrested twenty-two Christians, many of them former Muslims who had secretly converted to Christianity, in October 2003. They were questioned and tortured; authorities suspected that several of them were trying to bring other Muslims to Christianity." Christians are not able to live peacefully in those countries.

It is a widespread myth that Islam respects and honors women: women are inferior to men since it is written "men have authority over women because God has made the one superior to the other," (Qur'an 4:34); it allows women to be used at will, "your women are a tilth for you to cultivate so go to your tilth as ye will," (Qur'an 2:223); and husbands are to beat their disobedient wives, "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). Childhood marriages are also allowed in the Qur'an. Women possess no freedom outside of their spouse. They can be forbidden to leave the house without their husbands and they cannot travel alone.

Another aspect of Muslim maltreatment is that women are treated as sexual objects and marriage is merely a license for the sexual act. Islamic divorce is very simple for the man and extremely non-beneficial in all aspects for the woman. All the man has to do is to tell the women that, "I divorce you." Islam also allows for temporary wives. Possessing a temporary wife is a way for Islamic men to gain a type of short-term respectable female companionship. The Islamic conception of rape may be the most threatening to women. Already in court a woman's testimony is worth half of what a man's is and in rape accusations it is necessary to have four male witnesses or else the woman will be herself held responsible.

Islamic culture is not a very uplifting environment for its participants. There is no concept of natural virtue since lying, killing, and stealing are not always wrong. There is no push for cultural advancement. What types of cultural advancement are Muslim countries lacking? They are lacking in art, music, science, and technology. The only thing that Muslims seek to advance is themselves militarily – not the betterment of the human person.

The lure of Islamic paradise has a greater lure than most believe. What is included in the Islamic conception of paradise? Spencer classifies it as, "everything a seventh-century Arabian desert-dweller could possibly dream of: gold and fine material things, fruits, wine, water, women... and boys." The joys of sex are the biggest temptation in Islamic paradise. These women were beautifully voluptuous, of modest gaze, and forever virgins. Also included in this paradise is wine, which they could not consume on earth, and little boys to be used in a homosexual nature. The surest way to enter paradise is to die as a Muslim martyr. Paradise is for those who, "slay and are slain," for Allah: "for theirs in return is the garden of Paradise. . . A promise binding on Him in truth" (Qur'an).

The Islamic counterpart was a huge part of the Crusades for which no one bothers to apologize. Islam had been a huge military threat to Christianity for 450 years prior to the Crusades. Four of Christendom's primary cities

were within striking distance of the Islamic world: Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. How was it that Islam spread? Was it through preaching of the Islamic Gospel? No, Islam spread through the sword. Islam, as has been shown, is fundamentally a violent religion and it is through submission that people are converted. It was against the spread of Islam and all the Islamic doctrine as seen above that the Crusade were fought.

Part II: THE CRUSADES

Why were the Crusades initiated? Pope Urban who called for the First Crusade at the Council of Clermont in 1095, according to the evidence Spence uncovers, “was calling for a defensive action – one that was long overdue.” The Christian empire of Byzantium had been almost annihilated as it was reduced to little more than Greece. The Byzantine Emperor had asked the Pope for help. Pope Urban said the following, “They have killed and captured many, and have destroyed the Churches and devastated the empire. If you permit them to continue thus for a while with impunity, the faithful of God will be much more widely attacked by them. On this account I, or rather the Lord, beseech you as Christ’s heralds to publish this everywhere and to persuade all people of whatever rank, foot-soldiers and knights, poor and rich, to carry aid promptly to those Christians and to destroy that vile race from the lands of our friends. . . . Moreover, Christ commands it.” Christians took up arms and answered the Holy Father’s call to defend its Christian Heritage.

The goals and actions of the Christians in the Crusade have been widely distorted. Christians did not establish European colonies in the Middle East. What the westerners did conquer was for their Eastern Brethren. Any land conquered was to revert to Byzantine Empire, the original possessor. The conquering of Jerusalem was not the slaughter that it is said to be today, the capture and the blood that was spilled was completely in alignment with the military standards of the day. The Muslim battle standards were the same. The Muslims were either equally or more bloody than the Crusades because Muslim warfare was combined with jihad once a place was captured. And lastly, Pope John Paul II never apologized for the Crusades. What was distorted was a line that was said on the “Day of Pardon.” Pope John Paul said thus, “We cannot fail to recognize *the infidelities to the Gospel committed by some of our brethren*, especially during the second millennium. Let us ask pardon for the divisions which have occurred among Christians, for the violence some have used in the service of truth and for the distrustful and hostile attitudes taken towards the followers of other religions.”

What exactly did the Crusades accomplish? The Crusades did not regain the Holy Land for Christian pilgrims, but the Crusades helped to halt the Muslim conquest of Western Europe. Islam still sought to take Spain; therefore, the Crusades ensured that the remainder of the world was safe, even if just for a short while, from the conquest of Islam. The Crusades united the West and enabled them to form an army that would not have otherwise been created. The Crusades strengthened Europe.

Part III: TODAY’S JIHAD

The jihad that was fought from Muhammad continues to this day. An example of a jihad prompt is given by Spencer, “We ask Allah to turn this Ramadan into a month of glory, victory, and might, to hoist high in (this month) the banner of religion, to strengthen Islam and the Muslims, to humiliate polytheism and polytheists, to wave the banner of monotheism, to firmly plant the banner of Jihad, and to smite the perverts and the obstinate.” For Muslims the conflict must end with the hegemony of Islam. It is, in the words of Osama bin Laden, “so that Allah’s Word and religion reign supreme.”

Aren’t the Muslims who want to establish Islamic government throughout the world just a very small minority? Spencer quotes Daniel Pipes who says that ten to fifteen percent of world’s Muslims support the jihadist agenda. Another quote was at fifty percent and another is quoted as saying, “There are a billion plus Muslims in the Arab world, 90 percent of whom support Hamas.” Obviously, Islam is not friendly to the remainder of the world.

A big problem that the West now faces is Islamophobia, a term coined by the UN to spread Islamic “tolerance” in the West. Islamophobia consists of attacking the entire religion of Islam as a problem for the world, condemning all of Islam and its history as extremist, treating all conflicts involving Muslims as the fault of Muslims themselves, and inciting war against Islam as a whole. Islamophobia says that Westerners are being ‘intolerant’ of and distorting a religion that they need to accept as a part of their culture. The Islam that Muslims live corresponds to the Koran, to everything that Islamophobia say that Islam is not.

Islamophobia tends to ignore the modern examples of jihad in order to better ‘tolerate’ Islam. For example, “on March 1, 1994, on the Brooklyn Bridge, a Muslim named Rashid Baz started shooting at a van filled with Hasidic boys, murdering one of them. FBI: it was ‘road rage.’ On August 6, 2003, in Houston, a Muslim named Mohammad Ali Alayed slashed the throat of his friend Ariel Sellouk, a Jew. Alayed had broken off his friendship with Sellouk when he began to become more devout in his Islam. On the night of the murder, Alayed called Sellouk and they went out to a bar together before going back to Alayed’s apartment, where Alayed killed his friend. The two were not seen arguing at the bar. Although Alayed killed Sellouk after the fashion of jihadist murders in Iraq and went to a mosque after committing the murder, authorities said they ‘could not find any evident that Sellouk . . . was killed because of his race or religion.’” It is not known if officials are trying not to alarm Americans or protect innocent Muslims from backlash, but whatever their motivations, the United States has been keeping Americans away from the true nature of the Islamic threat.

What are the major cultural phenomena that are present in today’s society? Islam is conquering Europe by their immigration numbers. As Europe is failing to replace itself, Islamics are filling the gap more and more. Jihad is very prevalent in Europe because as one critic says, “Europe began thirty years ago to travel down a path of appeasement, accommodation, and cultural abdication in pursuit of shortsighted political and economic benefits.” Western Europe is becoming Islamized. What Spencer identifies throughout the entire book is summarized here in one sentence, “What I am calling for is a general recognition that we are already in war between two vastly different ideas of how to govern states and order societies, and in this struggle the West has nothing to apologize for and a great deal to defend.”