

Islamic Radicals Destroy Prophet Jonah's Tomb

The Islamic State's explosive destruction of the historic grave site of Jonah highlights the irony of Islam. And that irony is that this religion, which makes much of "holiness"—even to the point of killing people and violently destroying things it sees as an affront to holiness—is actually itself very unholy and a force for unholiness.

First, Islam's teachings distort the truth about God, which is misleading at best and blasphemous at worst.

Second, Islamic culture abuses and exploits people, kills innocent bystanders and even sends children into marketplaces with knapsack bombs attached to them—children who are made in God's image. Indeed, Islam's past and present record of genocide is unholy.

Third, Islam obstructs justice around the world. Islam and its leaders thwart the progress of countries, businesses and international initiatives that would better the human condition.

Fourth, Islam reneges on treaties and agreements. According to the Judeo-Christian Scriptures, to lie, betray people and violate your word is unholy.

Fifth, Islam does not recognize sacred space or areas that are universally recognized as holy ground. In Jerusalem, for example, Muslims have defaced centuries-old places and buildings that are integral parts of Jewish and Christian traditions. Much of old Jerusalem has—at one time or another—been buried under dirt and rubble by Muslims attempting to revise history in favor of Islam and eradicate evidence of Jewish or Christian history, which, of course, predates Islam by centuries

Recently, I was in Jerusalem for two weeks. A group of young Muslim girls in burqas on the Temple Mount were proselytizing for Islam, and they told our group that “the Jews have no claim here ... Jerusalem is the city of Islam.” They claimed that the supposedly historical and archaeological references to Judaism in the city were “planted here by the Jews, who are lying rats.”

Now, driven by this ideology, the tomb of Jonah has been blown up—one more historical reference obliterated as non-Muslims in the region scatter for safety. The truth is that the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), which is leading insurgencies in both countries, along with similar Islamic groups do not recognize the liberties or religious freedom of others. And when voices of dissent are raised against Islamic theology, culture and practice, their solution is not meaningful discourse but bloodshed, acts of violence, betrayal of agreements and worldwide thuggery in the name of their god.

This is unholy. How odd, for a religion that prides itself upon its supposed holiness. Yet, we are supposed to rest easy tonight knowing that the world has been purged of the tomb of Jonah? Significantly, Jonah was the prophet who told the Ninevites to turn from paganism to the true God—Whom the Hebrews called Yahweh. The God of Jonah was the genuinely holy Savior God, Who would one day send His Son to die on behalf of the world's sin.

The holiness depicted in Christianity is about a God Who loved the world so much that He sent His Only Son to be the forgiver and to restore a fallen world to Himself. As John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

This kind of holiness depends totally on the power and love of God—no explosives needed.

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