

What does the book *Lying For The Lord, The Paul H. Dunn Stories* have to do with Islamic Terrorism?

Commentary by Lynn Packer

Lying and killing in the name of God.

Both are based on a belief that God permits, instructs or even commands his servants to lie or kill. The liars and killers get God's okay from scripture—like the Bible, Talmud or Quran— or, more personally, from feelings, whisperings, visions or angels.

Whether someone lies, fornicates (polygamy) or kills in God's name, it's all based on the same concept: God asked me/made me/let me do it.

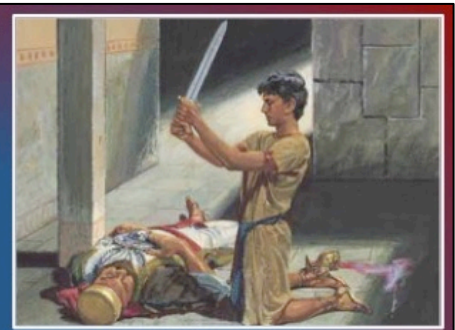
Here's where I'm supposed to point out that killing is much worse than lying. I won't. As an example: The Mormon fraud (affinity fraud) epidemic that continues unabated since the fifties, maybe earlier. The frauds, by LDS on LDS and others, are advanced by lies. Lives have been ruined, families torn apart and suicides committed. Death by a thousand cuts is as fatal as by a single, slashed throat.

It's likely some religious leaders of all faiths have lied or even killed in the name of their Gods. Consider some examples from Mormonism, Islam and Judaism.

- Paul H. Dunn lied to promote himself and Mormonism.
- Mormon Prophet Joseph Smith lied to his followers and reporters to cover up his practice of polygamy.
- Book of Mormon hero Nephi killed by cutting off Laban's head. "Therefore I did obey the voice of the Spirit, and took Laban by the hair of the head, and I smote off his head with his own sword."
- Mormon fundamentalists like Dan Jordan (Ervil Lebaron's group) and Ron Lafferty killed rival polygamists and non-believers.
- In the seventh century, the Prophet t's followers killed, raped and plundered in the



David beheads Goliath



Nephi beheads Laban



Mohammad's cousin beheads a captive



Islamist terrorist beheads a reporter

name of Allah and to spread Islam.

- Today, Islamic terrorists kill, plunder and rape in the name of Allah to spread Islam and to form a caliphate (Islamic state).
- In Old Testament times David lopped off Goliath's head in the name of God. (There are also versions of the story in the Talmud and Quran.)
- Jews returning from Egyptian captivity slaughtered the Amalekites to reclaim their Jewish state. ("Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." 1 Sam 15:3)
- Jewish Zionists terrorized in the name of God to drive the British occupation forces, among others, out of Palestine so they could re-form a Jewish state.

The Book of Mormon is chock full of wars, most of which were between the usually-but-not-always righteous Nephites against the cursed-with-a-dark-skin Lamanites. Their God would often take sides.

And God did hear our cries and did answer our prayers; and we did go forth in his might; yea, we did go forth against the Lamanites, and in one day and a night we did slay three thousand and forty-three; we did slay them even until we had driven them out of our land. *Mosiah 9:18*

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And he that leaded away the righteous into precious lands, and the wicked he destroyed, and curseth the land unto them for their sakes. (1 Nephi 17:38)

Mormons, Muslims, Jews all have promised lands, lands God gave them or is giving them or lands they believe God should be giving them—such as the Islamic State's quest for territory in Syria and Iraq which, if unchecked, will expand to the whole earth.

Many Mormons believe that Zion is now sort of in Utah, but will be officially located in Jackson County, Missouri where a New Jerusalem will be built as the final gathering spot of righteous Mormons in the Last Days, just prior to the Second Coming of Jesus in Missouri. It's also believed by Mormons to be the actual site of the Garden of Eden. Mormon extremists and several splinter groups are already gathering there.

In the early 70s, when I was a reporter for KSL Television, I interviewed renowned Mormon inventor Roger Billings who had developed a hydrogen-powered car, a forerunner to the one Toyota has now begun selling. Billings later embraced polygamy, left the church to form his own, and moved to Missouri. Now he's a prophet and speaks for God.

In the 80's, when I was teaching broadcast journalism at BYU, one of my students was Brenda Wright, who was dating another student, Allen Lafferty. She married him and they had a baby. In July 1994 Allen's brothers, Ron and Dan, went to their brother's home where Dan slit Brenda's and her baby's throats. He later told a reporter, "I held Brenda's hair and did it pretty much the way they did it in the scriptures."

The Laffertys were arrested and charged with murder. At a hearing Ron cited the Book of Mormon story of Nephi cutting off Laban's head to justify the killing.

The Core of Mormon/Islamic/Jewish Fanaticism

The percentage of Mormons who kill in the name of God is certainly way lower than even the extremely low percentage of Muslims who kill in the name of Allah. Even so, the vast majority of non-violent Mormons and Muslims still share some of the blame because of their belief in and support of doctrinal writings and practices that support killing (or lying, etc.) in the name of God.

While there may be many causes of Islamic terrorism, there remains the root cause: Basic tenets and past accepted conduct of Islam itself. Those practices and ideologies give credence to religious fanatics, zealots, fanatics, crazies, wingnuts and whack jobs who maim and kill in the name of God because they perceive what they do is deeply embedded in scripture and precedent.

U.S. President Barack Obama and CNN commentator Fareed Zakaria both hint at the need to deal with the root cause of Islamic terrorism, but both fall short of directly attacking the root cause: Muslim scripture and historical acts of violence.

President Obama:

Muslim leaders here and around the globe have to continue working with us to decisively and unequivocally reject the hateful ideology that groups like ISIL and al Qaeda promote; to speak out against not just acts of violence, but also those interpretations of Islam that are incompatible with the values of religious tolerance, mutual respect, and human dignity.

...It is time for the world — especially Muslim communities — to explicitly, forcefully, and consistently reject the ideology of organizations like al Qaeda and ISIL. It is one of the tasks of all great religions to accommodate devout faith with a modern, multicultural world. No children are born hating, and no children —anywhere—should be educated to hate other people.

...lest we get on our high horse and think this is unique to some other place, remember that during the Crusades and the Inquisition, people committed terrible deeds in the name of Christ," he said. "In our home country, slavery and Jim Crow all too often was justified in the name of Christ.

President Obama is tap-dancing around the issue. It is about the “hateful ideology” and “interpretations of Islam” President Obama talks about, but he does not explain or give details.

It's not that Islamist terrorists are misinterpreting the Quran. It's that they're actually interpreting it accurately and believing what they read. And acting on their beliefs. It does not take a rocket scientist to figure out what Muhammad and his armies were doing and who Muhammad said ordered it.

Fareed Zakaria, a non-practicing Muslim, mirrored the President's comments:

In fact, the enemy is radical Islam, an ideology that has spread over the past four decades — for a variety of reasons — and now infects alienated young men and women across the Muslim world. The fight against it must, at its core, be against the ideology itself. And that can be done only by Muslims — they alone can purge their faith of this extremism.

Zakaria is the same tap dance.

Like Obama he comes close, using the term *ideology*. But it's not an ideology radical Islamists invented. As fundamentalists they're merely going back to their roots.

Zakaria should fully describe the ideology he is talking about and exactly what Muslims need to do to fix it. If Zakaria means what I think he means, and if he did say it publicly, he would probably set off a firestorm of protest by mainstream Muslims against CNN. It



What do Barack Obama and Fareed Zakaria mean by Muslim ideology?

may be true they reject the savagery of their fundamentalist brothers and sisters, but how quick would they be to reject the doctrine upon which the savagery is based?

Certainly neither the President nor Zakaria wants to come out and flat out say no angel appeared to Muhammad and God did not tell Mohamed to kill in his name any more than they would want to say no God would have told Nephi and David to cut off heads. Or, most radioactive of all, say that God really did not set apart the land of Israel for the Jews.

At the heart of the problem is the acceptance, by mainstream, religious majorities of scripture and historical practices that are embraced by the extreme minorities.

Lying For The Lord, The Paul H. Dunn Stories

So, what does this book have to do with Islamic terrorism?

Mormons can't put the Muslim house in order. As the President and Zakaria said, Muslim fanaticism is mostly a problem for mainstream Muslims to solve. But Mormons could put their own house in order and set an example for Muslims to follow.

Mormons could consider whether their scripture that supports bad behavior was really dictated by God. For example, whether polygamy was really a commandment from God, whether a God would have told Nephi to cut off Laban's head, and whether God would use dark skin as a curse. Mormons could try purging their faith of ideologies that inspire Mormon fundamentalists.

My book chronicles the LDS Church's creation of its hardline Church Education System (CES) in the fifties, whereby youth are not *educated* but

indoctrinated. It's the same education concept as in the Muslim world where hardliners indoctrinate children, turning some into Holy War jihadists. Ditto Judaism.

Certainly parents should teach their children about their beliefs whether in God or anything else. And, if inclined, take their children to their church or a variety of churches for religious instruction. But parents should also teach their children how to think for themselves, how to make their own choices and give them some idea what choices are possible.

Parents who pass some of their children's moral education to preachers, Imams, Sunday school teachers, priests, pastors, Rabbis et al.— should insist their children are taught, not indoctrinated.

Protecting religious freedom

While all who oppose Islamic terrorism should insist that Muslims put their own house in order, at the same time the world needs to open its doors to Muslims and members of other faiths or no faith who are fleeing Islamic terrorism.

Unfortunately demagogues like Donald Trump would take America in the other direction. He called for a “total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country's representatives can figure out what is going on.”

To whip up an anti-Islam frenzy Trump said he “watched the World Trade Center go down” and he saw “on the other side of New Jersey where you have large Arab populations” he “watched in Jersey City where thousands and thousands of people were cheering as that building was coming down.” Trump may have just as well put his face on an ISIS recruiting poster.

It was, of course, a lie. But Trump knows, as Paul Dunn did, he has followers who are more than willing to believe. Both men understood the formula: big



Lying with abandon. Is the greater problem the fact so many want to hear and believe the lies?

whoppers=big numbers of followers. It seems the bigger the lies the more attractive they are to their fans, who want to believe the lies. No General Authority was more popular than Paul Dunn.

(At least the LDS Church is sending millions of dollars in aid to Syrian refugees who are in camps in the Middle East and Europe. In addition, Utah's Mormon governor, Gary Herbert, made national news when he bucked governors in his own party and said Utah would allow refugees into the state.)

Joseph Smith, the founding prophet of Mormonism, was referred to as “the modern Mahomet” in 1842 by the *New York Herald*. The two founding prophets—Joseph Smith and Muhammad—had a lot on common. Both believed prophets did

not end with Jesus (although Muhammad believed they did with him). Both claimed to have been visited by angels. Both wrote scripture they claimed was based on revelation from God. Both preached and practiced polygamy. Both formed militias or armies, although the Mormon prophet spread his word with missionaries not soldiers. Both believed the religion they founded was the only true church.

Hugh Nibley, a former BYU professor and a guru to many intellectual Mormons, wrote about Muhammad in a church publication. "In fact, early Mormon leaders saw no reason why Muhammad should not be considered a true prophet, for there have been many prophets, great and small, in the past whose words are not in the Bible," he wrote.

Joseph Smith, at a time Mormons were being persecuted in Missouri, compared his mission to Muhammad's. "I will be to this generation a second Muhammad, whose motto in treating for peace was 'the Alcoran (Quran) or the Sword.' So shall it eventually be with us—'Joseph Smith or the Sword!'"

James Albert Toronto is a professor of Arabic language and Islamic religion at BYU wrote "A Latter-day Saint Perspective on Muhammad." Toronto disregarded Islam's violent past (and present) saying said both Muslims and Mormons may have been slighted in histories written about them.

As early as 1855, at a time when Christian literature generally ridiculed Muhammad as the Antichrist and the archenemy of Western civilization, Elders George A. Smith (1817–75) and Parley P. Pratt (1807–57) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles delivered lengthy sermons demonstrating an accurate and balanced understanding of Islamic history and speaking highly of Muhammad's leadership. Elder Smith observed that Muhammad was "descended from Abraham and was no doubt raised up by God on purpose" to preach against idolatry. He sympathized with the plight of Muslims, who, like Latter-day Saints, found it difficult "to get an honest history" written about them.

Too often, however, what adherents of many religions want to believe is *honest* history is really *whitewashed* history. But it's also true that there is a long list of good things Islam has shared with the world. Even so, the Quran still portrays a vengeful, brutal God who incites his servants to violent acts. It's scripture that has to be included in any honest history.

I will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve. Therefore strike off their heads and strike off every fingertip of them. Quran (8:12)

Glen Roberts, who edits the *thereligionofpeace.com* web site, attacks some of Islam's scriptural tenets as an outsider, as anon-Muslim. His criticism is not subtle:

Muhammad was a military leader, laying siege to towns, massacring the men, raping their women, enslaving their children, and taking the property of others as his own. On several occasions he rejected offers of surrender from the besieged inhabitants and even butchered captives. He inspired his followers to battle when they did not feel it was right to fight, promising them slaves and booty if they did and threatening them with Hell if they did not. Muhammad

allowed his men to rape traumatized women captured in battle, usually on the very day their husbands and family members were slaughtered.

Roberts also writes, “Many Muslims are peaceful and do not want to believe what the Quran really says. They prefer a more narrow interpretation that is closer to the Judeo-Christian ethic. Some just ignore harsher passages.”

He also says, “No Muslim should be harmed, harassed, stereotyped or treated any differently anywhere in the world solely on account of their status as a Muslim,” he denounces “any act of vandalism against mosques or other property, including juvenile attempts to offend Muslims by desecrating copies of the Quran,” and “the best way of discrediting the Quran is to tell non-Muslims what it actually says about them.”

As to how Muslims should be treated, Roberts is correct. None should be discriminated against, harassed or harmed because of what a very few radical Islamists do, like cutting off people’s heads and blowing up blameless people.

But discrediting underlying Islamic principals and scripture would be most effective if it were done from the inside, by active Muslims, by those who should throw out the bathwater and keep the baby. Or, citing Jesus’s parable about the wheat and the tares: “First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.” It’s time the vast Muslim majorly gathered the tares.

I’m not suggesting moderate Islamists round up and burn radical Islamists. The tares are the bad doctrine and perverted ideology. I am suggesting they kill radical Islam at its roots, by not killing people, but by eliminating the basis on which so many people are radicalized. The first step is to denounce the scripture and traditions that justify killing and other immoral acts done in the name of God. Begin with the root of the problem and then work up.

In summary

Yes, Muslim extremism is mostly a problem for Muslims to solve. But Mormons, Catholics and Jews can all set an example by disavowing the scriptural precedents that ignite their loony members.

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