

Sookhdeo's Paranoia of 'Global Jihad'

Book Review: 'Global Jihad: The Future in the Face of Militant Islam', by Patrick Sookhdeo (2007), pp. 669, ISBN 09787141-2-1

By Hamza A. Bajwa

It would not be an exaggeration to say that no religious group has been subjected to such intense public scrutiny as the Muslims have had to endure over the past few years. Everyday brings a fresh wave of opinions, views and criticisms from all quarters of society, and not all of it is necessarily accurate or true. It is from this milieu that a virulent strain of propagandists has arisen with the insidious aim of painting a false picture of Islam and Muslims. This book by Patrick Sookhdeo, the director of the Institute for the Study of Islam and Christianity (ISIC), and an adviser to British, American and NATO military officials on Islam and Muslims, is just such an example.¹

1Editor's note: Patrick Sookhdeo, an alleged former Muslim originally from Guyana, who is now a British Anglican Canon and director of the obscure *Institute for the Study of Islam and Christianity* in London. He was recently challenged over his views in a radio discussion by Hamza. Also known for his context-dropping, cut and paste quotations and wild claims about Islaam and Muslims, Sookhdeo is the author of *Islam: The Challenge to the Church* (Pewsey: Issac Publishing, 2006); *Islam in Britain: The British Muslim Community in February 2005* (Pewsey: Isaac Publishing, 2005); *Understanding Islamic Terrorism: The Islamic Doctrine of War* (Pewsey: Isaac Publishing, 2004); *A People Betrayed: The Impact of Islamisation on the Christian Community in Pakistan* (Fearn, Ross-shire: Christian Focus Publications, 2002 and Pewsey, Wiltshire : Isaac Publishing, 2002) and other works.

In the London *Spectator* magazine in July 2005, Sookhdeo wrote an article entitled "*The Myth of a Moderate Islam*" wherein he claimed that since terrorists and extremists merely say that they are doing their actions in the name of Islaam, they are therefore to be seen as representing Islaam!? Sookhdeo also states within the article that "**Muslims must with honesty, recognise the violence that has existed in their history**" as if Muslims do not recognise or comment on it!?! Muslims recognise this more so than much of Bani Aadam, not to mention that it is rather the case that many British people deny the atrocities of colonialism and imperialism, or are at least totally ignorant of the history. Many Americans deny the impact of slavery on the African-American and of the destruction of the Native-American, and in Germany, many try to play down the importance of the Holocaust to the extent that Germany has even asked some EU countries to remove any mention of its role in the Holocaust and the Second World War from school and college textbooks!?! Even Bernard Lewis noted that "**the Christian attitude towards Islam was far more bigoted and intolerant than that of the Muslims towards Christianity.**" See Bernard Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery of Europe* (London: Phoenix, 1982), p.297.

The fact of the matter for Sookhdeo to admit himself is that Christian civilisation has given rise to more atrocities than the Muslim world has. Saint Augustine stated "**lead them in**"—i.e. "force them to convert" and the Qur'aan says the exact opposite: "**There is no compulsion in religion**" {Baqarah (2): 256}. Most of the wars in the 20th century have had little to do with Muslims and the vast majority of the estimated 250 million

Before beginning the review of: *Global Jihad: The Future in the Face of Militant Islam*, it is imperative to point out firstly that the subject of Islamic Jihad (in this case: physical jihad) is a specialised and intricate one. The accessibility of primary Arabic sources is a necessary

deaths out of warfare during the 20th century have mostly come from the Western 'Christian' world, with the Muslims accounting for about 10 million of these deaths. The greatest death totals come from World War 1, about 20 million, at least 90 % of which were inflicted by "Christians", and World War 2, 90 million, at least 50% of which were inflicted by "Christians," the majority of the rest occurring in the Far East. There was also the slaughter of 900,000 Rwandans in 1994 in a population that was over 90% Christian, this in fact led to Rwandans embracing Islaam! See: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3561365.stm>

Also the genocide of over 300,000 Muslims and systematic rape of over 100,000 Muslim women by Christian Serbs in Bosnia between 1992 and 1995. So statistically, Christian Civilization is the bloodiest and most violent of all civilizations in all of history, and is responsible for hundreds of millions of deaths. Here is a quotation from Pope Nicholas the fifth, who gave Alfonso the fifth of Portugal in Romanus Pontifex 1454 CE the right to:

"...invade, search out, capture, vanquish, and subdue all Saracens and pagans whatsoever, and other enemies of Christ wherever they live, along with their kingdoms, dukedoms, principalities, lordships and goods, both chattels and real estate, that they hold and possess ... to reduce their persons to perpetual slavery and to take for himself and his heirs their kingdoms..."

Quoted in Muldoon, *Popes, Lawyers and Infidels: The Church and the Non-Christian World 1250-1550* (Liverpool University Press, 1979), p.134. At its outset, the Anglican Church had no better a record of toleration in regard to non-Anglican communions. Of course, time-bound references cannot be taken as our criterion. Here is another time-bound reference; the Charter which the Muslim ruler, Umar, agreed with the Christians of Jerusalem:

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. This charter is granted by 'Umar, Servant of Allah and Prince of the Believers, to the people of Aelia. He grants them security for their persons and their properties, for their churches and their crosses, the little and the great, and for the adherents of the Christian religion. Neither shall their churches be destroyed, nor their substances or areas, nor their crosses or any of their properties, be reduced in any manner. They shall not be coerced in any matter pertaining to their religion, and they shall not be harmed. Nor will any Jews be permitted to live with them in Aelia. Upon the people of Aelia falls the obligation to pay the jizyah; just as the people of Mada'in (Persia) do, as well as to evict from their midst the Byzantine army and the thieves. Whoever of these leaves Aelia will be granted security of person and property until he reaches his destination. Whoever decides to stay in Aelia will also be granted the same and share with the people of Aelia, in their rights and the jizyah. The same applies to the people of Aelia as well as to any other person. Anyone can march with the Byzantines, stay in Aelia or return to his home country, and has until the harvesting of crops to decided. Allah attests to the contents of this treaty, and so do His Prophet, his successors and the believers. Signed: 'Umar ibn al-Khattab Witnessed by: Khalid ibn al-Walid, 'Amr ibn al-'As, 'Abd al-Rahman ibn 'Awf and Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan. Executed in the year 15 AH.

Quoted in Alistair Duncan, 1972, *The Noble Sanctuary*, London: Longman Group Ltd, p.22.

prerequisite in correctly understanding the stringent rules and principles applicable to Jihad. But with a dearth of such information available to the English-speaking audience, the inevitable consequence is that many will sadly be incapable of distinguishing the truth from the outright fabrications, exaggerations and false conclusions Sookhdeo so deceptively weaves. Hence, and despite being published under the guise of academia, this book is nothing more than a scaremongering manual for the uninformed, which will undoubtedly engender further resentment and hostility towards the Muslims. Unfortunately, this atmosphere of ignorance is the perfect environment for anti-Islamic protagonists like Sookhdeo, Robert Spencer, Daniel Pipes, Nina Shea, Ibn Warraq, Ali Sina, Craig Winn, *et alia*, to thrive in.²

Sookhdeo, a Christian convert from Islam, is himself dedicated to a singular pursuit: to see Islam go through the same reformation Christianity went through. It is precisely this option, out of the fifteen outlined as 'Responses to Islamic Terrorism' in chapter 17, he opts for (p.419). And this is what his book is devoted towards: an attempt at a rational justification for why this solution is the only viable one. He attempts this by constructing the following narrative. By categorising Islam into: radical, classical and traditional, he begins by claiming that the radical Islam of today, which has declared war on the West by theologically justifying acts of terrorism and violence, is supposedly "rooted in classical Islam" (p.8). But, he sees no difference between classical Islam and Islamism, and claims that "violence and terror are found within both" (p.10). At this point, it would be helpful to cite Sookhdeo's definition of this obscure and politically loaded term 'Islamism': "A term used to denote the view of Islam as a comprehensive political ideology that aims at establishing Islamic states under *shari'a* wherever possible by a variety of means" (p.543); "...revivalist Islam, political Islam, Islamic fundamentalism" (p.46). From this, Sookhdeo reasons that because all forms of violent struggle and/or political activism carried out by Muslims – be it religiously sanctioned or otherwise – are acts of "fanaticism, extremism, violence and terrorism"; the only ones immune from this are the apolitical Muslims of traditional Islam. However, this is not going far enough for the baby *must* be thrown out with the bath water. That is why, despite these so-called traditionalists apparent rejection of "violence, from the totality of *shari'a* and from political activism", they too must share the same fate for they too are "gradually being subsumed into classical Islam" (p.8).

Thus, Sookhdeo's prescient account conjures up a phantom enemy that effectively comprises the whole Muslim population. Cue Sookhdeo's call for a "radical reformation of Islam" where the Muslim world will "re-interpret the Qur'an so as to reject religious violence, will advocate a

² **Editor's note:** we could also add to this rogues gallery the likes of Serge Trifkovic, Gerd Wilders, Oriana Fallaci, Bat Yeor (Giselle Littman), Walid Shoebat, Hirsi Ali, Melanie Phillips, Jay Smith, 'Jack Chick' and others.

total separation of religion from state, and will argue for full equality of all citizens under a law based on international norms not on *shari'a*. This will include the reinterpretation of the Medinan Qur'anic passages on violence, the rejection of the *hadith* and *sunnah* as authoritative sources, and the adaptation of *shari'a* from a public legal code to a personal code of conduct and morality” (p.10).

Let it be known: those calling for such a reformation where their “ideal kind of reformed Islam would relegate the *hadith* to a minor source or ignore it altogether. A new *shari'a* would be formulated based on the Qur'an alone, interpreted for modern times. The theory of abrogation would be abandoned or preferably reversed giving the Meccan verses primacy over the Medinan verses in any case of contradiction” (p.413) have done nothing except declare war on Islam. It is known *a priori* that any Muslim who knowingly rejects a single verse of the Qur'an has in effect rejected the Qur'an *in toto*, and is thus excommunicated from Islam. The same is true for a Muslim who rejects the Sunnah *in toto*. There is absolute consensus within the entire corpus of Islamic scholarship over this issue.

Hence, no precedence in Islamic history exists for what Sookhdeo is calling for precisely because Muslims, both past and present, have been completely observant of this fundamental inviolable rule. Sookhdeo's reformational call is, simply put, beyond the realms of possibility. Such a futile cause brings to mind the Arab proverb: “O ye who head-butts the mountain (to obliterate it), (we) have mercy for your head and not the mountain.” Sookhdeo refuses to accept the fact that, for Muslims, the divine injunctions of the *shari'a* serve as a holistic social order legislating for all necessary individualistic needs. This includes prescriptions for military rules of engagement and legitimate forms of empire building and expansionism.

DAR AL-HARB & DAR AL-ISLAM

To reinforce the argument that, minus a reformation, Muslims will invariably be pushed towards adopting a political mindset – the supposed underpinnings of violence, extremism and terrorism, Sookhdeo claims that the “most basic classification” early Muslims dichotomised the world into was: “*Dar al-Islam* [abode of Islam] and *Dar al-Harb* [the abode of war]” (p.84). But this popular line of argument does nothing except expose Sookhdeo's agenda. It seems highly unlikely that this “academic” could have overlooked the fact that the four schools of thought (*madh'hab*) of Sunni Islam, of which he makes numerous mention throughout the book, did not juxtapose *Dar al-Islam* with *Dar al-Harb*, but rather *Dar al-Kufr* (non-Islamic Abode or Abode of Disbelief).

The prominent scholar Professor Khalid al-Anbari furnishes ample proofs to substantiate this relevant point. He states: “...that which the Islamic jurists have developed in dividing the world

into two abodes: the abode or country of disbelief and the abode of Islam; for each of its characteristics and rulings is a form of distinguishing the Muslims from the disbelievers and an assertion of the complete disassociation between disbelief and faith.”³ While in a lecture delivered in 2007, titled ‘Politics in Light of Islam’, the Shaykh said: “*Dar al-Kufr* is divided into two subcategories: *Dar al-'Abad* (abode of treaty/ covenant) and *Dar al-Harb*.” It does not take an academic, therefore, to understand that, by extension, Muslims naturally distinguish between peaceful and violent people.

Moreover, during the first two years of Prophethood, Muhammad (*'alayhi salaatu wa salaam*) and his companions kept their religious identity secret for fear of persecution. This fear was realised when they were divinely instructed to peacefully preach the message in public. During the subsequent 13 long years of torture and suffering, no proof can be found from the two revelatory sources of Islam - the Qur'an and Sunnah – to indicate that these early persecuted Muslims saw their city as an abode of war. As such, *Dar al-Harb* only became a conceptual possibility for them following Muhammad's (*'alayhi salaatu wa salaam*) appointment as state leader of Madinah, and a reality after warfare was divinely sanctioned. And since *Dar al-Harb* was only applicable during times of war, it could only have been the exception to the rule; the rule being that, as a basic classification, the diametric opposite of *Dar al-Islam* was *Dar al-Kufr*. In light of the above, one is compelled to seriously question Sookhdeo's academic integrity for inexplicably failing to make a single mention of *Dar al-Kufr* throughout his entire book despite having recorded the minor and less-obvious sub-classifications of *Dar as-Sulb* (House of Truce) and *Dar asb-Shabada* (House of Testimony) (p.481).

This silence over *Dar al-Kufr*, however, is not something unique to Sookhdeo. On the contrary, it has been the ploy of many post-9/11 anti-Islamic propagandists, including, Nina Shea,⁴ Robert Spencer, Bernard Lewis, Mark Silverburg⁵ *et al.* The aim is to portray Muslims as

³ K. bin A. bin M. al-Anbari (2007), *The Impact of Man-Made Laws in Determining the Judgement of an Abode as Being One of Disbelief or Islam*, (London: Jamiah Media. Translator: Abu H. S. bin 'AbdulGhafur), p.8.

⁴ **Editor's note:** Nina Shea stated in a document for Freedom House entitled “Saudi publications on hate ideology fill American mosques”, on page 13, that the Muslims only view the world in terms of *Dar ul-Islam* (the abode of Islam) and *Dar ul-Harb* (the abode of war) “**and that when Muslims are in the latter, they must behave as if on a mission behind enemy lines**”!! ‘*Saudi Publications on Hate Ideology Fill American Mosques*’ (Washington: Center for Religious Freedom, 2005).

⁵ **Editor's note:** Mark Silverburg, a US attorney and a listed author of the ‘*Ariel Center for Policy Research*’ in Israel, stated in his book *The Quartermasters of Terror: Saudi Arabia and the Global Islamic Jihad* (Wyndham Hill Press, 2005), while referring to Bernard Lewis, that the: “**...Muslim world is divided into two spheres, the House of Islam (Dar al-Islam) and the House of War (Dar al-Harb), which is non-Islamic. In**

theologically inclined towards treating non-Muslim countries as potential enemies to be warred against and conquered. The worrying downside is that this diabolical ploy will engender an atmosphere of hostility and distrust, which will invariably lead to Western Muslims being viewed as the 'other' – the third column.

JIHAD & LAND-GRABBING

In his pursuit to further demonstrate the Muslims' alleged predilection to violence, Sookhdeo claims that "Islam teaches that all lands belong to Allah who has given them to the Muslims" (p.85); and can thus be appropriated through "unconditional jihad against all non-Muslims in *Dar al-Harb*" (p.100). By quoting the controversial cleric, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Sookhdeo asserts that "lands once held by Muslims may never be given up to non-Muslims. Should they be lost in war, it is the duty of all Muslims to retake them, even if this process lasts until the end of the world" (p.89). He adds that "all schools of Islamic law agree that when Muslim land is occupied, jihad is obligatory to retake the land for Islam" (p.90).⁶

Notwithstanding the fact that Islam permits the defence of its own constitution "*against all enemies, foreign and domestic*", this allegation is false. Shaykh 'Abdul-'Aziz ar-Rayyis advances proofs demonstrating that the jihad of warfare can only be fought when certain necessary conditions, including ability, preparation and strength of arms, are fulfilled. He quotes the eminent Saudi scholar, Shaykh Muhammad ibn Salih al-'Uthaymeen, as saying: "It (jihad) is not obligated and it is not permissible without being prepared for it."⁷ Shaykh ar-Rayyis then explicates the meaning of the Qur'anic verse 8:66 stating: "So if the non-Muslims are three times the number of Muslims, fighting would not be obligated on the Muslims and it would be correct for them to retreat and flee as the companions [of Muhammad] did at Mu'tah."⁸ This lays waste to Sookhdeo's allusion that "unconditional jihad" is unceasing and, therefore, Palestine "cannot change its ownership and it cannot revert to non-Muslim rule" (p.92). Take the aftermath to the 1967 Arab-Israeli Six-Day War. Following the defeat of the Arab Nationalist Movement, Israel's

his view, world peace, according to Islam, is achieved only when the world is subjected to Dar al-Islam.

⁶ **Editor's note:** this claim demonstrates that Sookhdeo, and those like him, find the most extreme and erroneous views among a minority of Muslims and regurgitate them as if they are the only views on a matter. We see this procedure frequently with the Islamophobes who have begun to utilise jihadi rhetoric as proofs for their cause.

⁷ A-A. ar-Rayyis (2006), *The Clear Proofs for Refuting the Doubts of the People of Takfeer and Bombing*, (www.salafimanhaj.com, translator: A-H. ibn K. ibn K. A. ibn K. al-Ashanti), p.35.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p.37.

swift move towards continuing the ethnic cleansing and annexation of the Arabs in the region led some leading Muslim scholars, amongst them Shaykh Nasir ud-Deen al-Albaani, to issue a *fatwa* calling on them to emigrate to an area of safety, whether that be within Palestine or otherwise, to “practice their *deen* [religion] and keep the *fitna* [tribulation] away from them”.⁹ This was on the premise that since the primary conditions for jihad of warfare could not be met; *ipso facto* the need for emigration in order to safeguard one’s security, rights and dignity.¹⁰ This altogether rebuts Sookhdeo’s attempt at fallaciously appealing to numbers by claiming that “many Muslims believe that the restoration of honour can only be achieved by the shedding of blood” (p.107).

THE VISION OF EMPIRE-BUILDING

In using the terrorists’ twisting of Islamic theology as an excuse to effectively call for the complete pacification of the Muslim world, it is unsurprising that Sookhdeo has a problem with Islam’s “Theology of War and Empire-Building” (chapter 5). In political science, empire-building generally refers to the tendency of countries and nations to acquire resources, land, and economic influence outside of their borders in order to expand their size, power and wealth. Since Islam provides an all-encompassing ethos for Muslims, its theology on empire-building is overt and indubitable; and as with all Western countries, it too has a foreign policy with a vision for empire expansionism. The United States National Security Strategy lays bare its elaborate plans in this regard. Israel’s empire-building since 1967 has been to the detriment of the Palestinians; and in violation of over 70 UN resolutions, it continues to brutally and repressively occupy Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

If Sookhdeo truly is “committed to human rights, religious freedom, equality and respect for all”, as he boasts on his ISIC website; and he takes no exception to the empire-building of non-Muslim countries; then by extension, should a country not have the religious freedom to determine its expansionist policies from a divine source if it so chooses? The question, of course, is whether Sookhdeo really does hold true to these commitments of equality and religious freedom. It seems, however, that such espousals simply backfire to expose his double standards.

⁹ M. H. Al Salman (2009), *The Salafis and the Palestinian Issue*, (www.salafimanhaj.com), p.15: http://salafimanhaj.com/pdf/SalafiManhaj_SalafisPalestinian

¹⁰ The Shaykh’s position on migration can be read in his following treatise: M. N. al-Albaani (2004), *The Obligation of Hijrah from the Lands of Shirk and Kufr*, (www.salafimanhaj.com): <http://www.salafimanhaj.com/pdf/obligationofhijrah.pdf>

IJTIHAD & THE SALAF

Throughout the book, Sookhdeo uses to his advantage the difference of opinions that arise through the process *ijtihad*, which he defines as “the process of logical deduction on a legal or theological question”, and which exist between Muslim scholars. It should be noted, however, that a conclusion derived through *ijtihad* is not the *de facto* position of truth in Islam; a well-known understanding perfectly summed up by the great jurist Malik bin Anas: “The truth is only one. Can two opposing opinions be simultaneously correct? The opinion that is correct can only be one.”¹¹ The question is: how is this correct opinion determined?

Perhaps the single most important factor for all Muslims in attempting to resolve theological differences is to search for the correct interpretation and implementation in the sources of the *shari'a* – the Qur'an and Sunnah. However, this can only be done by making recourse to the early generation of righteous Muslims - called the *Salaf as-Salih* - who are *the* final authority on both the correct understanding and proper actualisation of these divine revelatory texts. The *Salaf as-Salih* constitute the first three generations and include the followers of Prophet Muhammad (*'alayhi salaatu wa salaam*), who were direct witnesses to revelation and the most stringent and obedient in terms of their adherence to it, followed by the two succeeding generations. Accordingly, they are the absolute standard by which all Muslims, including the imams of the four schools of thought, are to judge the validity of an Islamic injunction; a significant point Sookhdeo and many of these pseudo-academics conveniently ignore. The reason, of course, is obvious.

This fail-safe methodology not only lays bare the mistakes of all successive Muslim generations; but also refutes Sookhdeo's suggestion that today's “terrorists are simply following a particular interpretation of the sources of Islam” (p.52) in which “...ultimately there is no way of proving or disproving any particular believer's understanding of a religious text” (p. 46). In actual fact, the extremists' errant theological stance is easily exposed and rebutted precisely because of the huge corpus of evidence left behind by the *Salaf as-Salih*. And it is this body of evidence that is being used by some Muslim countries today to successively de-programme and de-radicalise thousands of former-terrorists and help them reintegrate into society as law abiding citizens, which will be discussed later.

¹¹ Ibn 'Abdil Barr, *Jaami' Bayaanul 'Ilm*, (Cairo: al-Muneerah Press, vol.2), p.32.

BREAKING TRUCES AT WHIM

A typical strategy employed by Sookhdeo *et. al.* to sophistically obfuscate the truth is through the citation of obscure sources and figures aggrandised as experts and authorities on Islam. In spite of the claim that his book “represents more what Muslims believe about their early history as based on Muslim source texts” (p.51), the truth is that directly referencing and citing Islam's primary sources and scholastic elite is purposefully disregarded lest it expose his efforts. His book is essentially a compendium of quotes gleaned from secondary and tertiary sources.

An example of this is when he quotes the notorious obscurantist Ali Sina in an attempt to suggest that non-Muslim owners residing in an Islamic state governed by the *Shariah* “can at best remain only as tenants on their former lands; their tenancy rights can be abolished by the caliphs if he considers it for the good of the Muslims” (p.89). Sina boldly claims: “Muslims can break a truce whenever they feel it wise to do so” (p.102). It seems inconceivable that this academic failed to uncover stern warnings issued in the Qur'an and Sunnah against such conniving and treacherous acts of betrayal. This assertion is simply obliterated by the sheer volume of primary Islamic evidences prohibiting what in Arabic is termed *khiyanah* (treachery).

The inviolable rights of non-Muslims in a Muslim state were enshrined in the very first treaty drawn up by Prophet Muhammad (*'alayhi salaatu wa salaam*) following his acceptance of leadership at the behest of the tribal leaders of Madinah - a treaty that later came to be known as the Madinan Charter. According to the authentic historical accounts of Ibn Hisham and Ibn Ishaq, this charter ensured rights of freedom for the Jews residing in Madinah at the time to live in peace and security. It stipulated: “Those Jews who follow the believers will be helped and will be treated with equality”; “No Jew will be wronged for being a Jew”; and all Jewish tribes would “be treated as one community with the believers. The Jews have their religion. This will also apply to their freedom”.

In fact, the importance placed on the human rights of non-Muslims was such that, in accordance to the *fiqh* (juridical) principle: “What matters are motives and meanings, not mere words and forms”, a covenant of security could be reached by a mere indicatory gesture. The scholar Ibn Munaasif said: “I say: every term or word, in whatever language, and anything written with any handwriting, or any sign, symbol or the likes which are understood wherein the Muslim (and non-Muslim) combatant feels assured that they have a covenant of security – is taken to be a covenant of security at the time whether the Muslim intends it to be or not. It has to be fulfilled and adhered to.” (*Kitaab al-Injaad*, p.309) He added: “There is no known difference among the Muslims in regards to the prohibition of treachery and betrayal... in regards to the trust and covenant of security” (Ibid, pp.309-10). Such was the justice of Islam that the second

Caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khattab would exact capital punishment by executing any Muslim involved in killing a non-Muslim with whom such a covenant was tacitly secured.¹² The only circumstances under which a covenant of *dhimmah* (protection) is annulled is when the covenantee withholds from paying the *jizyah*, withholds from adhering to the general regulations of Islam, fights against the Muslims, or violates what is stipulated in a contract. Had Islam inculcated this type of conniving behaviour that Sookhdeo and Sina are so anxious to portray, a clear precedence would have been set by the Prophet (*'alayhi salaatu wa salaam*) himself. And yet an impartial perusal of history bears witness to the fact that it was not Muhammad (*'alayhi salaatu wa salaam*), but rather his enemies who spared no opportunity to bring to an end his life and his prophetic call.

The Prophet (*'alayhi salaatu wa salaam*) never initiated war through the breaking of treaties, nor employed barbaric forms of torture techniques, nor ordered the mass mutilation of defeated foes. Despite witnessing thousands of his beloved followers molested, tortured and murdered as a result of continuous acts of deceit on the part of his enemies, the Prophet Muhammad's (*'alayhi salaatu wa salaam*) magnanimous and merciful nature was no better demonstrated than the clemency he granted his bitter rivals after returning to his city of exile - Makkah - twenty years later. "O Quraish! What do you think I am about to do you?" He asked his fellow countrymen. "O noble brother and son of a noble brother! We expect nothing but kindness from you," responded a nation who prior to his Prophetic appointment had unanimously acknowledged his noble character with the soubriquet: *'As-Sadiq al-Ameen'* (The Truthful and the Trustworthy). He responded: "Go, for you are free."

The example set by Muhammad (*'alayhi salaatu wa salaam*) in honouring treaties and affording non-Muslims full and complete rights was also strictly emulated by the four rightly guided caliphs after him. 'Umar's treaty with the Christian notables of Iylia, in Jerusalem, began: "Peace is given to one and all in Iylia; peace of life and property and peace to their church, cross, sick, healthy and to the followers of all religions." It continued: "Nobody [Muslims] is allowed to reside in their church, nor will they be demolished nor are their boundaries to be damaged nor their cross to be desecrated nor their religion to be defiled." For any Greeks or Romans choosing to leave, the treaty provided an escort ensuring "perfect safety until they reach a place of safety"; and was fully ratified and confirmed by signatory witnesses from some of the elite of Muhammad's

¹² Ibn Munaasif, *Kitab ul-Jihaad fee Abwaab il-Jihaad*, vol.2, p.307.

followers “Khalid ibn al-Walid, ‘Amr ibn al-‘As, ‘Abd al-Rahman ibn ‘Awf and Mu’awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan”.¹³

In light of the above, it stands to reason that Islam is free of those Muslims who in contradistinction to the example of their Prophet (*‘alayhi salaatu wa salaam*) are found guilty of violating the *Shari’a*.

THE JIZYA

The *jizya* is so often misrepresented as some crippling dehumanising tax. And as with all the previous examples of disinformation, the aim is to enforce the idea that non-Muslims living under a *Shari’a*-governed state will be relegated to a subhuman status. Sookhdeo is no different; though he fails to provide any specific example of how this *dhimmi* group were “submitted to various humiliating restrictions about clothes, houses, transport, etc.” (p.102). Likewise, he fails to mention that payment of the *jizya* is subject to the decision of the Muslim ruler. The great jurist Ibn Taymiyyah mentioned that Prophet Muhammad (*‘alayhi salaatu wa salaam*) did not take *jizya* from the Jews after entering Madinah (*as-Saarim al-Maslool*, p.62 – a point also made by Imam ash-Shafi’ee). Instead, he drew up the aforementioned treaty, which they eventually violated.

Would Sookhdeo’s misrepresentations endure if it was known that the *jizya* is an annual head-tax levied only on non-Muslim male citizens residing in an Islamic state? As for non-Muslim women and children, including destitute males unable to afford payment and the old – they are exempt. It is, therefore, important that the rights secured by those under this contractual agreement (*dhimmah*) during the early period of Islam be delineated so as to see past Sookhdeo’s prevarications.

Although, the taxation does signify a sense of subordination, obedience and loyalty to the state; unlike Muslim citizens, however, the tax is in lieu of any obligation towards military service while ensuring the *dhimmi* full protection to live in peace and security. Thusly, the *dhimmi* was afforded full rights to benefit from public services including employment and education. They had the right to practice their religion peacefully, but proselytisation efforts were strictly prohibited. They set up their own civil courts dealing with marriage and divorce, inheritance, and internal disputes; yet, for the most part, were subject to Islamic criminal law. They could freely engage in commerce. They held high-level non-religious governmental posts. They even had the freedom to engage in some Islamically forbidden matters, such as the imbibing of alcohol and

¹³ A. S. K. Najeebabadi, A. S. Najeebabadi, Ş. al-R. Mubārakfūrī, A. R. Abdullah, M. T. Salafī (2000), *The History of Islam*, (Darussalam), vol.1, p.356.

consumption of pork, with the condition that it not be made available or affect the Muslim community.

The establishment of a social welfare system meant that extremely poor non-Muslim citizens were just as eligible as their Muslim counterparts to receive welfare payments from the public treasury (*bayt al-maal*), to which the *jizya* and other funds, including *zakah* (obligatory almsgiving for all Muslims), import taxes, and land levies, were added. Hence, when 'Umar added the clause that "whatever this treaty contains is to be fulfilled by Allah, the Caliphs of Islam and the entire Muslim community provided the Iyilians pay the *Jizya*", because both parties had equal access to state welfare, government services, and public amenities, it was only fair that both pay into the state treasury.¹⁴

A CASE OF SHODDY RESEARCH

An example of Sookhdeo's substandard research, replete throughout his book, is no better demonstrated than his nescient evaluation of Wahhabism, Salafiyya (which he also calls neo-Wahhabism), and Salafi-Jihadists. The woeful conclusions that he arrives at effectively aligns him with policy-makers and pseudo-experts intent on laying blame where it does not belong. Long time member of Egypt's political party 'The Muslim Brotherhood' and chairman of CFSOT UK, Dr El-Helbawy, although no friend of the Salafis, sums up Sookhdeo's *modus operandi* as follows: "The Western media, government and think-tanks are going down the wrong route by associating (and in some cases reducing) the violence to Islamic schools of thought. In the 1980s the West associated much of the politically-motivated violence to the Shi'a school of thought, whereas today it associates the violence with the Salafi school of thought. This intellectual uncertainty and rhetorical volatility is indicative of profound confusion and lack of understanding. This is reflected in the way the media and think-tanks interpret and understand Islamic terms Jihad or Islamic tradition like Wahhabism."¹⁵

In this regard, Haneef Oliver debunks the erroneous link made by the popular media between Osamah Bin Laden (al-Qa'ida) and Salafiyya. He convincingly argues that Bin Laden and his ilk are "fervent opponents of Salafism and followers of the Qutbist¹⁶ wing of the

¹⁴ See Bassam Zawadi's *The Status of Non-Muslims In the Islamic State*: http://www.call-to-monotheism.com/the_status_of_non_muslims_in_the_islamic_state

¹⁵ Dr K. El-Helbawy (January 2008), *Islamism Digest magazine* (Centre for the Study of Terrorism (CFSOT UK)), pg.5.

¹⁶ A reference to the popular political dissident and leading Muslim Brotherhood figurehead, Sayyid Qutb, who was executed by the Egyptian government in 1966.

khawarij".¹⁷ Oliver states that any connection made between al-Qa'ida and Salafism is "nothing but a media-fabrication", a "groundless lie [that] has been repeated and then mimicked enough times that people have come to accept this to be an established fact".¹⁸ It seems that Sookhdeo has conveniently jumped on just such a bandwagon.

In general, the ill-defined appellation 'Wahhabism' has been used by certain Muslim sects, particularly the plethora of Sufi groups, to derogatively label any and all opponents deemed to be practicing a puritanical and extreme interpretation of Islam. Oliver, however, correctly identifies a "different and contemporary usage" for this broad-based term. He says: "Anybody who belongs to any of the current Qutbist type groups or movements that call for political overthrows, endless blind purported Jihads which are based upon principles other than those of the *Sharee'ah* and led by people who have no knowledge based background in Islamic scholarship, are entered into a giant umbrella group called 'Wahhaabism'. This is done even though these followers of Sayyid Qutb despise the *Salafee* scholars and their creed."¹⁹ He surmises that "in a mad rush to identify the culprit" of the 9/11 terror attacks in New York, "the overnight Islaamic 'experts' mixed up the contemporary Qutbist *Kharij* methodology of the groups of *takfeer* with the orthodox *Salafee* methodology".²⁰

This confusion could have arisen as a result of non-Salafi elements having adopted the Salafist tag to secure certain political objectives. A leading Salafi organisation in Britain noted that the revolutionists Mohammad Abduh and Rasheed Ridhaa, who opposed British Colonialist rule in Egypt after the turn of the 20th century, were strategically "hiding under the veil of Salafiyah". Salafi Publications suggest that Ridhaa's disciple, Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood and a member of Hasafi Sufis (a Sufi order said to be antithetical to Salafism), "also made a false claim to Salafiyah, and like his predecessors, Mohammad Abduh and Rasheed Ridhaa, used this to attempt to broaden the horizons of his Brotherhood... [and thus] attempting to bridge the gap between the Sufi and the Salafi orientation was just a political move that would help to bring more people into his movement".²¹

¹⁷ H. J. Oliver (2004), *The Wahhabi Myth – Dispelling Prevalent Fallacies and the Fictitious Link with Bin Laden*, (Troid Publishing), p.37.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.41.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.160.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.138-9.

²¹ SalafiPublications.Com (2003), *Historical Development of the Methodologies of al-Ikhwaan al-Muslimeen and their Effect and Influence upon Contemporary Salafee Dawah: Part 8*, (www.spubs.com, Article ID: MNJ180008, version 2.00), p.19.

Sookhdeo ironically deduces that “a new lexicon which renames a table as a ‘chair’ does not alter the form or function of the object which has been renamed”. This principle is precisely what many prominent Salafi scholars have used to expose any and all false claimants to Salafiyah. The prominent Saudi scholar Shaykh Salih al-Fawzan declared that if going by the label Salafi was “just a claim made by someone, then it is not permissible to call himself Salafee, while he is upon something other than the methodology of the Salaf”²². Hence, this nuanced subject *vis-à-vis* Salafism (Wahhabism) and Qutbist inspired Jihadism, requires a more intellectually robust approach than what these overnight experts on Islam are willing to exercise.

It is, therefore, unsurprising to find Sookhdeo making the bewilderingly nonsensical claim that “Salafis see themselves as more radical purifiers of Islam further than the Wahhabis” or that “Al-Qa’eda is a global Sunni Islamist Salafi-Jihadi” group (p.292-3)! His confusion is soundly typified by his inability (or again perhaps his unwillingness) to recognise the correct nomenclature suggested by a report published by the Combating Terrorism Center he himself cites. The report recommends in its conclusion: “1. Label the Jihadi movement ‘Qutubism’ rather than jihadi or Salafi-Jihadi. Jihadis hate this appellation as it suggests that they follow a mere human rather than God and that they are a deviant sect. 2. Publish statements by influential Saudi *salafi* clerics that denounce *jihadi* terrorism... 4. Disseminate negative facets of jihadism, such as violence against civilians, goal of a totalitarian state, mistreatment of women and *takfir*” (p.310-311). A significant question that Sookhdeo would do well to answer is: which Muslim sect has had a more vigorous and forceful pursuit in stemming the tide of the Qutbist Jihadist ideology than the Salafis?

THE DEPROGRAMMING SOLUTION

This rhetorical question brings us back to Sookhdeo’s preferred solution to the problem of ‘Global Jihad’. So what is a workable and realistic approach to reducing the very real threat of the spread of what Islam, and not Sookhdeo, sees as fanaticism, extremism, violence, terrorism, oppression and treachery?

In his final chapter ‘Responses to Islamic Terrorism’, Sookhdeo makes mention of a tried-and-tested, non-violent method that has shown a high rate of success; and yet chooses to

²² S. bin F. bin A. al-Fawzaan (2004), *Beneficial Answers to Questions on Innovated Methodologies (Manhaj Q&A Series Book 1)*, (USA: Al-Ibaanah, Compiled and Commented on by: J. bin F. al-Haarithe), pp.41-42.

conveniently brush it aside in order to make room for his overarching objective: a call for an Islamic reformation. The untenability of his preferred solution has already been dismantled. Hence, the only viable approach to this threat is one of “dialogue, counselling and deprogramming” (pg.417), which has been utilised for a decade, with great success, in countries such as Saudi Arabia, Yemen; and is being considered by others across the world, including France and Jordan. Dr El-Helbawy also recognises this as the best “treatment”. In his article “Terrorism: Root Causes and Proper Treatment, Proposed Measures”, he observes: “Instead of sending extremists to prison, provisions should be made to detain them in specialised treatment centres. This is premised on the understanding that in many cases extremists are sick people and as such they require treatment, not punishment.”²³

Sookhdeo refers to the “Committee for Religious Dialogue with Al-Qa’eda Supporters in Yemen”, which by 2005 had rehabilitated and released 350 suspects. Its chairman, religious judge Humud al-Hattar, reportedly said: “We believe that we have eliminated 90 percent of the ideology that had formed the basis for terrorist operations in Yemen.” But, the most impressive results have come from the Salafi, Saudi State which has innovatively made use of a variety of approaches in its fight against the terrorist ideology. In September 2003, the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia (Washington, DC) published a report on the ‘Initiatives and Actions taken by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the War on Terrorism’ and recorded its counter-terror efforts since 9/11.²⁴

Sookhdeo also mentions a committee that “includes over a hundred leading clerics and some 30 psychiatrists and psychologists” established by the Saudi Interior Ministry, which by January 2006 had released over 400 prisoners. An equally successful initiative called Al-Sakina Campaign involved “some forty *‘ulama* [scholars] with Internet skills and with psychiatric training... [who] carefully studied 130 websites linked to al-Qa’eda” (pg.418) in order to engage and tackle extremist views across the internet.

It does not stop there. In December 2005, *The Daily Telegraph* reported a “ground-breaking television series” called “Deceit in the Name of Jihad”, which included interviews with repentant Saudi jihadists who “fought alongside Muslim fanatics in Afghanistan and Iraq before realising they had been ‘brainwashed’ by al-Qaeda recruiters”. The programme was followed by an “unprecedented live phone-in, during which callers are encouraged to debate the ‘deviant

²³ Dr K. El-Helbawy, *op. cit.*

²⁴ <http://www.saudiembassy.net/NewsLink/WOT2003/WOTSept03.pdf>

ideology' of militant Islam".²⁵ The *Guardian* (of London) reported that "officials in Riyadh say they have seen an 80-90% success rate in a 'counter-radicalisation' campaign designed to wean extremists detained by the security forces off the 'takfiri' ideology... Two thousand men had been through the programme, with 700 released and a negligible rate of re-offending, said General Mansour al-Turki, the government security spokesman".²⁶

While in November 2007, Saudi authorities said they had "released more than 1,500 reformed extremists" through the efforts of a Counselling Committee setup in 2004 comprising of 100 members including "religious scholars, preachers, specialists in religious doctrine and law, psychologists and social workers... The committee is tasked with the duty of reforming youths in an intellectual and rational manner on the basis of Shariah. "The committee has met around 5,000 times to offer counseling to 3,200 people, who were accused of embracing the takfeer ideology. The committee has successfully completed reforming 1,500 people,' [Professor Muhammad] Al-Nujaimi said". He added: "After several graded sessions with the committee, and having been convinced of their misguided vision, they renounced their erroneous ideologies, including the concept of driving out all infidels from the Arabian Peninsula."²⁷

In March 2008, The Observer's Jason Burke reported on a year long programme involving psychologists who were "turning militants into model citizens as they 'deradicalise' and providing education and financial help with marriages and cars". Abdulrahman al-Hadlaq, a Ministry of Interior official, was said to have "charted the lives of nearly 700 militants to help construct the programme", which included "lectures in jail [that] concentrate on key theological areas - the Islamic theory of jihad, takfir, or excommunication, and relations with non-Muslims."²⁸ On their release, the ex-prisoners are sent to the new rehabilitation centre - seven others are planned as well as a series of purpose-built prisons with capacity for 6,400 militants - where they undergo further religious instruction, psychological counselling, do team sports and even art therapy".

Such is the Saudi success that Mamoun Fandy, an expert on Saudi Arabia at the Institute for International Strategic Studies, conceded: "The Saudis are approaching the problem of

²⁵ H.de Quetteville (10 Dec 2005), *Saudis tackle extremism through medium of TV*, (UK: The Daily Telegraph): <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/saudiArabia/1505254/Saudis-tackle-extremism-through-medium-of-TV.html>

²⁶ I. Black (2 April 2007), *Saudis claim 80% success in re-educating al-Qaida militants*, (UK: The Guardian): <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2007/apr/02/alqaida.saudiArabia>

²⁷ Arab News (26 Nov 2007), *Saudi Arabia Releases 1,500 Repentant Jihadists*.

²⁸ **Editor's note:** Refer to: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FiFTn8iR_aw

radicalisation in a systematic and serious way”.²⁹ So why is this meritorious approach so successful? The famous futurist Alvin Toffler once wrote that what will be needed in the future is “a world of Sun Tzu technology in which the best victories are those that come without combat and in which information superiority can prevent or even win wars before they begin”. In order to truly minimise the spread of terrorism, not just on the lesser physical plane, but most importantly the ideological; the precursory ideas that threaten to implant a terrorist mindset must be permanently uprooted. And the success exemplified by the Saudis lies in the definitive exposition of the Qutbist Jihadist ideology. However, this could not have been achieved by those involved in this information warfare without making recourse to that absolute standard, which exposes all theological deviations and heresies, established by the first three Muslim generations – *as-Salaf as-Salih*.

As mentioned in the conclusion to my debate with Sookhdeo on Premier Christian Radio, what we (those involved in using every permissible means to battle against the Qutbist Jihadist ideology) do not need are Christians stultifying our efforts with conspiratorial ramblings and the misrepresentation of our religion.³⁰

²⁹ J. Burke (March 9 2008), *Saudis offer pioneering therapy for ex-jihadists*, (The Observer): <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/mar/09/saudi-arabia-terrorism>

³⁰ Freelance journalist Ben White has also reviewed Sookhdeo's 'Global Jihad': <http://www.benwhite.org.uk/2009/01/24/review-patrick-sookhdeos-global-jihad-the-future-in-the-face-of-militant-islam/>