

*It IS about Islam: Exposing the Truth about ISIS,  
Al-Qaeda, Iran, and the Caliphate*

Glenn Beck

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Glenn Beck through *It IS About Islam: Exposing the Truth about ISIS, Al-Qaeda, Iran and the Caliphate* attempts to portray Islam as trying to destroy the liberal world and more particularly the West; ‘destroy all of us’ (sic). Considering the fact that Beck is a controversial figure, he seems to align himself against Islam, viz., Islamic terrorism in the discourse of the kind of terrorism that Daesh represent. In his narrative, the author tries to shrug ‘political correctness’ and project Islamism and not Islam in a way, which may lead certain readers to think of the author as ‘Islamobhobe’. In this regard, the author maintains that ‘there is a crucial distinction to be made between Islam and Islamism’. According to the author, the book is a free enquiry and ‘narration of the truth’ about Islamists and the fundamental things they believe.

To give a context to his subject of study, the author begins his narrative with Thomas Jefferson, one of the American founding fathers consulting the Quran before he became the first American President to go to war with Islamic radicals in the 1801 with the North African Barbary states. According to Beck, Jefferson was highly suspicious of Islam for which he read the Quran to better understand Islam. The author, therefore, suggests the readers to follow the path of Thomas Jefferson and consult the primary sources and original texts of Islam in an effort to better understand how millions of Muslims interpret their faith.

The author claims that Islam is a supremacist ideology. He substantiates his claim by declaring that Islamist fanatics plot to kill those who do not willingly submit to Islam. Due to such supremacist tendencies, the author rues over how the power of Islam has already changed 'our' ways of life. For the author political Islam is at the root of everything that terrorists from Daesh, Al-Qaeda, Hezbollah, and Hamas say and do. The author dwells on Iran and ISIS and how both of them whilst different, have a converging goal of expanding Islamism. According to the author, the Islamic State and Iran are forcing the Islamic world into two camps, opposed to each other by virtue of a 1300-year-old split but united in their embrace of radical Islamism and totalitarian, apocalyptic ideology. Further, according to the author, Islam is a theology that encourages terrorism and that groups such as ISIS are merely following its teachings. While the author projects Islam as the ideology that is possessed by the desire to destroy America, annihilate Israel and abolish human freedom, he debunks a series of 13 lies about Islam. He debunks claims of Islam being a peaceful religion. The author also summarises jihadi's 20-year plan starting in the year 2000, which is supposed to culminate in a Caliphate global victory in 2020. In the summary, he highlights the mass attacks on western targets that started in 2016. Also, the author is of the view that considering the trajectory of the jihad, by 2020, 1.5 billion Muslims will join the Caliphate that will ensure the definitive victory.

In this context, the author is of the view that mass uprising in the Middle East such as Arab Spring was really about the ascendance of Islamic supremacy, with Islamist parties such as Muslim Brotherhood using the euphoria to take power. For him, ISIS is hijacking the legitimate demands of the Islamic world forcing many Muslims to sympathise with them even if they object to their brutal tactics. The inference that one can draw out of such a narrative is that the author is presenting Islam as a cross-sectarian apocalypticism where the Iranian clerics and ISIS, all Sunnis and Shia converge to expedite the end of the world.

In the book, the author concludes that Islam has become an intolerant religion for which he feels there is a need for Islamic reformation. Unfortunately, the author subsequently finds that while religion such as

Christianity has undergone reformations, Islam has not since Islam and state still is not separated. For any Islamic believer, the perfect state is one governed by Sharia. As such, the author believes that terrorist organisations such as ISIS' Caliphate have sort of become a self-fulfilling prophecy as Islamist radicals flock to join weak but Allah-ordained political entity destined to spread to the corners of the earth. For the author, such eventuality epitomises end of times itself. The book also addresses 'what can be done' wherein the author emphasises to get his country (America) back. According to the author, his leaders have failed him and their media is against them. He further goes on to state that American constitution has eroded and their culture is becoming more secular. He rues over the fact that many Americans have forgotten who they are as a people and a country and above all Americans have forgotten God. According to Beck, reversion to strict religious rule in the Middle East can only be met with America's own reversion to Christian nationalism.

Throughout the book, the author is preoccupied with presenting Islam in trying to bring an end to the humanity and the world. He identifies Muslims as either for or against extremism. Such an assessment is at best narrow considering the fact that vast majority of Muslims are as dismayed as anyone else by the atrocities carried out Islamist terrorism. The author mostly emphasises the title '*It is About Islam*' and not so much about its delinquent practitioners; its misinterpretations or its insensitive use in powering a nation. Throughout his book, the author tries to assert Islam being the main culprit while at the same time negating his claims with absolutist indictment.

As far as terrorism is concerned, the book reiterates the known fact about ISIS and its threats to the world and despite the political correctness in its discourse it still remains an Islamic terrorist organisation. However, one can argue that the author's selection of quotes from select radical Islamic thinkers and Islamist extremists does not suffice to tag Islam as a religion as terror enabler. Recognising that every Muslim does not sympathise or support the aims of Islamic extremists is always a better approach than trying to claim that Islam is inherently violent, as the author claims. As a matter of fact, one can safely argue that the brand of Islam the author

describes and condemns is an ideology followed by a fraction of over a billion followers.

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