

A Few Snippets of History

Edict of Milan 313 AD

Here are the rescript's main provisions:

“Our purpose is to grant both to the Christians and to all others full authority to follow whatever worship each person has desired, whereby whatsoever Divinity dwells in heaven may be benevolent and propitious to us, and to all who are placed under our authority. Therefore we thought it salutary and most proper to establish our purpose that no person whatever should be refused complete toleration, who has given up his mind either to the cult of the Christians or to the religion which he personally feels best suited to himself. It is our pleasure to abolish all conditions whatever which were embodied in former orders directed to your office about the Christians, that every one of those who have a common wish to follow the religion of the Christians may from this moment freely and unconditionally proceed to observe the same without any annoyance or disquiet.”

It's too bad that the Edict of Milan (the Edict of Tolerance) proclaimed in 313AD by the new emperor of the west, Constantine, and Licinius, the emperor of the east, did not survive. Just 22 years later, in 325AD, the Council of Nicaea was dressing up what would be the religion of the realm. Ecclesiastical leaders became corrupt when they joined hands with the secular powers. William Langland would pen these words in his book 'Piers Plowman' a thousand years later, in the 1,300's:

“When the kindness of Constantine gave Holy Church endowments
In lands and leases, lordships and servants,
The Romans heard an angel cry on high above them,
“This day dos Ecclesiae has drunk venom
And all who have Peter's power are poisoned forever.”

Corruption on a grand scale. Whoever cannot see that is blind, blind, blind.

Fast forward with me another 55 years, from 325AD to 380AD. The Edict of Toleration is... over.

Enter the Edict of Thessaloniki, 380AD:

EMPERORS GRATIAN, VALENTINIAN AND THEODOSIUS AUGUSTI.
EDICT TO THE PEOPLE OF CONSTANTINOPE.

“It is our desire that all the various nations which are subject to our Clemency and Moderation, should continue to profess that religion, which was delivered to the Romans, as it has been preserved by faithful tradition, and which is now professed by the Pontiff Damasus and by Peter, Bishop of Alexandria, a man of apostolic holiness. According to the apostolic teaching and the doctrine of the Gospel, let us believe in the one deity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, in equal majesty and in a holy Trinity. We authorize the followers of this law to assume the title of Catholic Christians; but as for the others, since, in our judgment they are foolish madmen, we decree that they shall be branded with the ignominious name of heretics, and shall not presume to give to their conventicles the name of churches. They will suffer in the first place the chastisement of the divine condemnation and in the second the punishment of our authority which in accordance with the will of Heaven we shall decide to inflict.”

GIVEN IN THESSALONICA ON THE THIRD DAY FROM THE CALENDARS OF MARCH, DURING THE FIFTH CONSULATE OF GRATIAN AUGUSTUS AND FIRST OF THEODOSIUS AUGUSTUS.

The once persecuted now became the persecutors. 300 years to go before Muhammad and his armies would begin their conquest, resisting the decree of Romanism, issuing his own edict known as “Aslim Taslam”:

Aslim Taslam (Arabic: أسلم بـ&سلم) is a phrase meaning “submit (to God, i.e., by accepting Islam) and you will get salvation,” taken from the letters sent by the Islamic prophet Muhammad to various kings and rulers in which he urged them to convert to Islam.

“In the name of God the Beneficent, the Merciful:
(This letter is) from Muhammad, son of Abdullah, to Heraclius the Great (ruler) of the Romans (Byzantines). Peace be upon him, he who follows the right path. Furthermore I invite thee to Islam; become a Muslim and thou shalt be safe (from Hell or God’s punishment), and God will double thy reward (as your people will follow along and be saved because of you), and if thou rejectest, thou shalt bear the sins of the Arisiyins (the peasants, your people).”

“(And I recite to you God’s Statement:) Say (O Muhammad): ‘O people of the scripture! Come to a word common to you and us that we worship none but God and that we associate nothing in worship with Him, and that none of us shall take others as Lords beside God. Then, if they turn away, say: ‘Bear witness that we are Muslims’ (those who have surrendered to God).”

Well, it appears to me that Mohammad learned this totalitarian rule stuff pretty well. If the popes and emperors can do it, he can do it. He and his successors would battle the popes of Rome and the bishop of Constantinople for lands and allegiances, conquering lands from the Atlantic Ocean (Morocco) to China. And while the Muslims slew in the name of Mohammad, proceeding from the papal throne in Rome would be pogroms against Jews, the Inquisition (1200s), the Edict of Expulsion in 1492, Requirement of the Americas in 1520, sending millions of native Americans to their deaths—rivers of heartache and bloodshed.

Just imagine all that violence done in the name of the Prince of Peace. The irony here is if you study the New Testament, there is not a shred of teaching to back up pogroms, forced conversions, or subjugation of people. Not a shred. Was any of this violence representative of the Lowly Nazarene? Jesus himself said, “by their fruits ye shall know them.” Quite frankly, the violence perpetrated in the name of Christianity was fraud, pure and simple, bonafide grapes of thorns and figs of thistles.

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