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# Is the Islamic State Afraid to Attack Israel?

Earlier this year the Islamic State published an article explaining why it has not yet attacked Israel. As of this writing, however, ISIS seems to be “testing the water” by attacking all around. A full frontal attack on Israel could be due to fear of what Israel might do should ISIS strike.

“Palestine is not the Muslims’ primary cause, the article argues; ending Saudi control of Mecca and Medina takes precedence.” Among ISIS’s many concerns, Palestine should not get preferential treatment, they say.

On March 15, the Islamic State weekly newspaper *al-Naba* ran a story entitled, “Beit Al Maqdis [Jerusalem] ...First and Foremost an Issue of Shari’a Law,” in which the terror group justified its lack of attacks on Israel to the wider Muslim community. The Islamic State has not carried out an orchestrated attack on Israel, though independent cells inspired by the terror group’s ideology have been arrested by Israeli security forces. Several dozen Israeli Arabs are said to have been recruited by IS, and terrorists including Nashat Milhem – who murdered three Israelis in Tel Aviv on January 1 – have identified with ISIS.

Israel to the wider Muslim community. The Islamic State has not carried out an orchestrated attack on Israel, though independent cells inspired by the terror group’s ideology have been arrested by Israeli security forces, several dozen Israeli Arabs are said to have been recruited by IS, and terrorists including Nashat Milhem – who murdered three Israelis in Tel Aviv on January 1 – have identified with ISIS.

Israeli officials have warned that ISIS will turn its attention to Israel at some stage. In the article, which was translated by watchdog group MEMRI, the Islamic State argued that the Palestinian cause does not take precedence over any other jihadi struggle. “If we look at the reality of the world today, we will find that it is completely ruled by polytheism and its laws, except for the regions where Allah made it possible for the Islamic State to establish the religion.... Therefore, jihad in Palestine is equal to jihad elsewhere,” the article said.



**COUNTRIES WITH ISIS PROVINCES** (The map was commissioned by the White House)

The article also harshly criticized Arab “exaggerators” who have pressed the decades-old belief that “Palestine is the Muslims’ primary cause.” Among those mentioned in this context were the former Arab nationalist leaders Egyptian Gamal Abdel Nasser and Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, “who traded in the Palestinian issue and sold delusions to their followers,” the article said.

# Saudi Arabia - Ruled by Infidels?

There is a place, however, where jihad does take precedence, according to the article: in the Arab states that are governed by “tyrants.” First and foremost among these is the Saudi kingdom, where the two Islamic cities of Mecca and Medina must be rescued from the Saudi royal family. “The apostate [tyrants] who rule the lands of Islam are graver infidels than [the Jews], and war against them takes precedence over war against the original infidels,” the article said.

Despite the fact that the ISIS ranks in Syria and Iraq are swelled by fighters from across the world, the article calls for jihadists to take the fight to “infidels” elsewhere. “Fighting the Jews should be left to Muslims in Israel/Palestine, while Syrian Muslims should fight Bashar Assad and Egyptian Muslims should fight Abdel-Fattah el-Sisi. Only when a Muslim’s native land has fallen under proper Islamic rule,” the article said, “should Muslims attack the adjacent infidel land.”

The key argument the article makes is that once the Arab regimes, which supposedly defend Israel, are toppled, then jihadi forces can arrive “at the borders of [the] Jew[ish] State and confront its army directly.” While much of the article seeks to diminish the importance of the Palestinian cause among jihadists, the author still believes it is the religious duty of every Muslim to help rescue Palestine from the “environs of the Jews.” This is because the land was once part of the Islamic empire, and therefore, there is a religious imperative for all Muslims to help bring it back into the “house of Islam” the article said.

The article said that Muslims worldwide, therefore, have a duty to send aid – money or men – to the Palestinians fighting Israel. And lastly, if they can’t come to the Middle East or do not have money, it argues, they can attack “the Jews and their allies wherever they find them, [by] killing them, destroying their property, and harming their interests in any way they can.” (*The Times of Israel* article).

Pray that God will give Israel the strength to overcome this enemy that thrives on killing and bloodshed.

***“Their feet rush into sin; they are swift to shed innocent blood. Their thoughts are evil thoughts, ruin and destruction mark their ways...the way of peace they have not known” (Isaiah 59:7-8).***

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