

## Islam: The Eighth Wonder of the World?

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[Ahmad al-Baghdad](#)

"It is the only nation that believes it is in the right – in every way – while all others are wrong."

Translation and Postface by Raymond Ibrahim

As we know, the wonders of the world are seven; but there is an eighth "wonder -of-wonders" not counted among the seven: this is the "Muslim nation [umma]." I specifically did not say the "Islamic nation," for within this Muslim nation are wondrous matters not witnessed by any other nation since Allah Almighty created Adam. Here are some of these wonders:

1. It is the only nation that believes it is in the right—in every way—while all others are wrong;
2. The only nation that exonerates or lightens the punishment of an indicted criminal if he is Muslim and has learned some Quranic verses;
3. The only nation where a cleric evades indictment for inciting murder if he describes one of his adversaries as "an apostate";
4. The only nation that does not penalize a murderer if he killed "an apostate";
5. The only nation that shows leniency and assuages punishments for the "honor killing" of a sister or a wife;
6. The only nation whose holy book [Quran] starts with the word "read" [iqra'] and yet it is

among the least nations that reads books, if any at all;

7. The only nation that still uses the word "infidel" [kafir] against those who oppose its clerics or religious groups;

8. The only nation where the ruling of a fatwa [religious edict] upstages the ruling of the law—and yet it brags about being a nation that upholds the "rule of law";

9. The only nation that does not contribute to the modern era—not even by producing a tooth brush—and yet brags about its extinct civilization.

10. The only nation that insults and condemns the West—yet lives as a parasite relying on the West in every way.

11. The only nation that incarcerates intellectuals for practicing freedom of expression.

12. The only nation that claims to be religious and guards its piety on both the official and the public level—yet there is nothing righteous about it.

13. The only nation that grants its students a PhD in religion;

14. The only nation still governed by the writings of those who died a thousand years ago;

15. The only nation where clerics serve as sycophantic toadies to the rulers, remaining silent about their transgressions, even when they go against Sharia;

16. The only nation that does not acknowledge the International Human Rights Declaration;

17. The only nation that forbids all human arts except calligraphy;

18. The only nation that believes in one religion—yet its various religious groups cannot agree on the exegeses and directives of that one religion;

19. The only nation where clerics blabber endlessly, only to conclude by saying, "Allah only knows," as if people were not already aware;

20. The only nation that believes in exorcizing Jinn from humans—even if by killing the person;

21. The only nation that has an army—and yet is occupied and fears combat;

22. The only nation wherein the Almighty Creator's description applies—"thou wouldst think they were united, but their hearts are divided: that is because they are a people devoid of wisdom" [Quran 59:14];

23. The only nation still inquiring about religious matters and looking for satisfactory answers for over a thousand years;

24. The only nation that asks more about sex than about worship during its one month of fasting every year;

25. The only nation that believes anything and everything its clerics say without questioning or verification.

This nation—with all these unique traits—does it not deserve to be described as the

## "Wonder-of-Wonders"?

Postface: Provided they can be objective, members of a civilization are often best placed to critique that civilization. Accordingly, this article, which recently made the rounds on various Arabic websites, can be seen as a piece of honest criticism of the Islamic world, by one of its own. Written by the late Dr. Ahmad al-Baghdadi (died 2010)—one of Kuwait's best known liberal activists and scholars (he held a PhD in the philosophy of Islamic thought and taught political science)—it recounts how Islamic civilization is the eighth, and greatest, wonder of the world. We quickly discover this is not a compliment: the article highlights some singularly troubling aspects of the Islamic world, from a liberal point of view. For what it is worth, Ahmad al-Baghdadi is not the first Muslim to portray Islamic civilization as a fantastic anachronism that has outstayed its welcome; the prophet of Islam himself, Muhammad, made a similar prophesy in a canonical hadith: "Verily, Islam started as something strange, and it will again revert to being strange just as it started, and it will recede between the two mosques [Mecca and Medina] just as the serpent slithers back into its hole."

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