Islam is Anti-Semitic



No. Islam is not.

Not to be facetious but to help answer this question we have to look at the word antisemitism and see what it means;

> Hostility towards and discrimination against Jewish people (although there are other Semitic peoples, notably the Arabs, anti-Semitism is only used to refer to prejudice against Jewish people). - Oxford Reference

Based on this is the Quran anti-Semitic?

To be clear the Quran does attack certain views and practices that were prevalent among the Jews of Arabia , but not because they were Jews but because the Quran came as a warning and a rebuke against evil and wrongful practices and to guide

people towards the truth.

One example is where the Quran attacks the Jewish concept that they are the chosen people and that salvation belongs to them alone. This is from the following verse.

> Whether they are the ones who believe (in the Arabian Prophet), or whether they are Jews, Christians or Sabians – all who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and do righteous deeds – their reward is surely secure with their Lord; they need have no fear, nor shall they grieve. - Quran 2:62

This is understood as a direct refutation of the concept of exclusive salvation. This understanding is derived from the context and i'raab (grammatical analysis) of the verse. Also to be clear this doesn't mean that we believe that Jews or Christians are upon the right path right now, rather the verse refers to people in the past (ie before Islam) that these people as a collective will be saved. This is because 3:85 informs us that Islam is the only acceptable religious belief after the revelation of Islam is Islam.

Again, Islam **harshly criticises Jews** for disbelieving **but does not preach hatred against Jews**.

There's a lot of nonsense peddled around by self-proclaimed experts on Islam who have never read Islamic texts or studied early Islamic-Jewish history. They seem to have increased their fear-mongering efforts lately as a result of the ongoing war between Hamas and Israel, and they're growing more unhinged by the day.

Myth #1: Islam says not to take Jews as friends:

This claim arises from mistranslation of this verse.

> يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ أَوْلِيَاءَ ۘ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ۘ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُم مِّنكُمْ فَإِنَّهُ مِنْهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ
>
> O you who have believed, do not take the Jews and the Christians as walis. They are [in fact] walis of one another. And whoever is an ally to them among you - then indeed, he is [one] of them. Indeed, Allah guides not the wrongdoing people. - Quran 5:51

The Arabic word “Wali” can mean a lot of things. It could be used in reference to friends, allies or masters. In this context, it means taking them as masters while forsaking God (Allah).

Also, God commands Muslims elsewhere in the Qur'an to befriend their disbelieving parents.

> وَإِن جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَىٰ أَن تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا ۖ وَصَاحِبْهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا ۖ وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ ۚ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ (15)
>
> But if they endeavor to make you associate with Me that of which you have no knowledge, do not obey them but befriend them in [this] world with kindness and follow the way of those who turn back to Me [in repentance]. Then to Me will be your return, and I will inform you about what you used to do. Quran - 31:15

Not to mention that the Prophet himself had a Jewish friend. Mukhayriq ibn al-Nadhir was a rabbi in Medina who died defending Muslims at the Battle of Uhud. The Prophet called him the best of Jews and he is referred to as “the first Jewish martyr for Islam”.

Myth #2: Prophet Muhammad expelled all Jews from Medina:

There were 20 tribes residing in Medina at the time of the migration. Only three tribes were expelled: **Banu Nadir, Banu Qainuqa, and Banu Qurayza**.

Qainuqa was expelled after a series of clashes that ended in their defeat.

Banu Nadir and Banu Qurayza were expelled (or massacred in Qurayza's case, depending on the source) after they colluded with the Meccans to finish off Muslims in the aftermath of the Battle of Uhud and during the Battle of the Trench. They literally broke the Constitution of Medina that ensured coexistence between the various factions inhabiting the city, conspiring with foreign enemies to slaughter their neighbours.

Constitution of Medina - Wikipedia

The following is a translation into English of what was alleged (by Ibn Hisham in the early 800s CE) to have been the text of the Constitution of Medina by Muslim scholar Muhamad Hamidullah based on the following sources: the Seerah of Ibn Hishamhich quotes the Seerah of Ibn Ishaq, [30] Abu Ubaid's Kitab-al-Amwal, and Ibn Kathir's al-Bidayah-wan-Nihaya . [31] A comparative translation of the two versions by Ibn Ishaq in Ibn Hisham's recension and Abu Ubaid has been published by Michael Lecker, who highlights the differences between the two texts. [32] Lecker explains that he has "tried to make the translation very clear so as not to require any marginal notes for its understanding. The clauses have been numbered, to facilitate easy reference. Since this numbering has been agreed upon and is the same in Germany, Holland, Italy, and other places, so whenever I have had to differ I have indicated my difference by subdividing the clause into (a), (b), etc., so as not to interfere with the international numbering.] [32] Muhammad's Quraysh (or Quraish) tribe appear in the document as both a principal constituent of the community and the enemy. The Quraysh referred to are sometimes the followers of Muhammad as "migrants" or "believers", but other times, the word refers to those members of the tribe who expelled Muhammad and his followers from Mecca, the Qurayshi capital.) A Translation of the Constitution of

the City-State of Madina in the Time of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم)

(1) This is a prescript of Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم), the Prophet and Messenger of God (to operate) between the faithful and the followers of Islam from among the Quraish and the people of Madina and those who may be under them, may join them and take part in wars in their company.

(2) They shall constitute a separate political unit (Ummat) as distinguished from all the people (of the world).

(3) The emigrants from the Quraish shall be (responsible) for own their ward; and shall pay their blood money in mutual collaboration and shall secure the release of their own prisoners by paying their ransom from themselves so that the mutual dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

(4) And **Banu ‘Awf** shall be responsible for their own ward and shall pay their blood money in mutual collaboration, and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom from themselves so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

(5) And **Banu Al-Harith-ibn-Khazraj** shall be responsible for their own ward and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom from themselves, so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

(6) And **Banu Sa‘ida** shall be responsible for their own ward and shall pay their blood money in mutual collaboration, and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom from themselves so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

The remaining 17 Jewish tribes continued living in Medina peacefully with

Muslims. Constitution of Medina - Wikipedia

Many conveniently forget to mention these important details before going on a rant of “Barbaric Mozlem Savages!” because it doesn't fit their narrative.

Before the Prophet died, he mortgaged his shield to a Jew in Medina in return for a debt. Aisha narrated:

> The Prophet died while his shield was mortgaged with a Jew for 30 Saa’ of wheat (a Saa’ equals approximately one and a half kilograms) The debt was later payed either by Abu Bakr or Ali. It was also reported that Jews were still living in Medina during Umar's tenure.- Sahih Bukhari

Umar ibn al-Khattab, may God be pleased with him, passed by the door of a group of people, and there was a questioner asking: A blind old man, so he touched his arm from behind and said: From which of the People of the Book are you? He said: A Jew. He said: What brought you here? He said: I ask the jizya, the need and the age. So Umar took him by the hand to his house. He gave him something from the house, then he sent for the treasurer of Bayt ul-Maal (Where zakat is kept) and said: Look at this man and his likes, by God we did not do justice to him. Do we consume his youth and then let him down at his age? “Alms are only for the poor and the needy” And the poor are the Muslims, and this is one of the needy among the People of the Book. He then relieved him from the jizya and taxes that were imposed on him.

Myth #3: Ah! But you see, Muslims kill non-believers, Jews are non-believers, so that’s it! You want to kill Jews!

.. alright, where, if anywhere, in the Qur'an does it say that non-believers must be killed and in what context?

It's not mentioned anywhere that non-Muslims must be killed. There are verses discussing wars and conflicts, but verses that allegedly incite hatred against non-Muslims exist only in the minds of ill-informed and bigoted individuals.

The following verse is usually taken out of context by some people to prove that Islam is a “violent cult" that seeks to convert everyone using force.

> But once the Sacred Months have passed, kill the polytheists wherever you find them, capture them, besiege them, and lie in wait for them on every way. But if they repent, perform prayers, and pay alms-tax, then set them free. Indeed, Allah is the All-Forgiving, Most Merciful. Quran 9:5

They take this single text and try to present it as evidence that the Qur'an is a violent book that orders the killing of non-Muslims. But they usually omit mentioning the verse that precedes it and the one that follows. Why? Because those verses debunk their fallacies.

> As for the polytheists who have honoured every term of their treaty with you and have not supported an enemy against you, honour your treaty with them until the end of it's term. Surely Allah loves those who are mindful of him. Quran 9:4

> And if anyone from the polytheists asks for your protection, grant it to them so they may hear the word of Allah, then escort them to a place of safety, for they are people who have no knowledge. Quran 9:6

See? Those three verses clearly say that only the polytheists who attack Muslims without provocation are to be fought, but those who cherry pick what they want wouldn't know that.

Now, why were such verses revealed in the first place? In 628, Muslims of Medina and the Meccan polytheists signed a 10 year-old truce called the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah.

Two years later, the Meccans along with Banu Bakr broke the truce and massacred Banu Khuza'ah, a tribe aligned with Medina. This incident took place during the Muslim holy months, when fighting is forbidden. As a result, a verse that allowed Muslims to exact vengeance, after the holy months, was revealed.

It's also mentioned elsewhere that Muslims are forbidden from killing non-combatants.

> Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; for Allah loves not transgressors. Quran 2:190

Now, are Muslims ordered to kill non-Muslims? Only enemy combatants who attack Muslims without provocation.

In order to understand the Qur'an, one must read it all without cherry picking, especially when it comes to verses about warfare. Reading about early Islamic history would also help in understanding why such verses were originally revealed.

At last, do you think the man who preached tolerance towards Jews would order their killing right and left?

> It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Abu Laila that while Qais b. Sa'd and Sahl b. Hunaif were both in Qadislyya a bier passed by them and they both stood up. They were told that it was the bier of one of the people of the land (non-Muslim). They said that a bier passed before the Prophet (ﷺ) and he stood up.

> He was told that he (the dead man) was a Jew. Upon this he remarked: Was he not a human being? Sahih Muslim

So to summarise, the Quran isn't anti-Semitic, but it does criticise certain aspects of Jewish belief. It would be dishonest to conflate criticism of a belief system with racial prejudice against an ethnic group/religious group.

This article was written by Muhammed Kaseb whom happens to live in Alexandria, Egypt.