

Dear friend of the Islamic State,

I wish I could meet with you in person, rather than through this letter. However, I don't know how to do that, so please accept this letter from me.

I admire your strong faith in and great dedication to God, the Creator of the Universe. I also appreciate your desire to make this world a better place, where no one is worshiped but God Himself. As some men of faith once said, 'We were created to worship God and enjoy a relationship with Him forever.'<sup>1</sup>

When I was praying for you, pictures came to mind of your friends having their faces covered with black shawls. I asked God why they do that and understood that the reason is fear. I'm so sorry that your friends are living in such fear that they don't want their faces to be seen on pictures or by the people they fight and kill. What is there to be afraid of if you do God's will? The apostle John wrote, 'Perfect love casts out fear.'<sup>2</sup> God's love is perfect, and if we are willing to receive His love, there will be no more room for fear in our hearts.

Then I wondered why your flag is black, instead of green or any other color. Black is the color of death and your flag reminds me of the flag of the pirates in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century. They robbed ships on the seas and oceans of the world and mercilessly killed those who opposed them. They chose the color black to intimidate people with fear and death. Your black shawls and flag point out that you are living in a world of darkness and death, rather than in the light. I feel really sorry about that, because you are actually far away from God. "God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all"<sup>3</sup> and "whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God."<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, "everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed."<sup>5</sup>

I realize it is very difficult to come into God's light, because then our filthiness becomes visible. The good news is that there is hope for the dirt in our hearts. There is a beautiful story of a man who was wearing filthy clothes – a symbol of his sins. Satan came to accuse him so that God would judge him for his bad works. Then this man was given clean clothes to wear.<sup>6</sup> The same is true for all believers who follow the teachings of the prophet Jesus and put their trust in him today. They will be clothed in white.<sup>7</sup>

My prayer for you is that you will know God's perfect love that casts out all fear, including the fear of death and the fear of the Day of Judgment.

I also pray that you may accept God's forgiveness for all your bad deeds and that your heart will be made clean. God offers this forgiveness through the prophet Jesus, who died and gave His life in his jihad against evil. If you confess your sins, God is faithful and just to forgive you your sins and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness.<sup>8</sup> Then you will experience true and lasting peace. And then God will make His Spirit to dwell in you; which is not 'a spirit of fear, but of power and love and self-control.'<sup>9</sup>

Perhaps you pride yourself in being a faithful servant of God, but He wants something better than that. He longs to have a closer relationship with you, like a father and a son. Servants are not free and don't receive an inheritance from their master. God gives eternal life as an inheritance to those who, through repentance and accepting God's Spirit in their heart, have become God's spiritual children.

God's destiny for Ishmael was to be free, like a wild donkey in the desert. Now He wants you to be free as well. He wants to enjoy a relationship with you that is as close as the prophet

Abraham, the friend of God. Jesus said to His followers, " You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends. "<sup>10</sup>

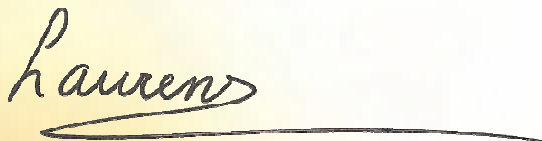
I am filled with great hope for you, because God often sends Jesus the Messiah to Muslims in dreams and visions. This is Jesus, the Word of God, who was born of the virgin Mary and who was taken up into heaven. God loves the Arabs so much, that He already sent Jesus as heavenly messenger to Hagar, the mother of Ishmael.<sup>11</sup> It is difficult to comprehend that Jesus already appeared to the mother of the Arabs, but this is what God says in the Holy Book.

One time Jesus even appeared to a religious young man who did not seek Him at all. This devout believer named Saul tried to stop the followers of the Messiah. He was sure that he was doing God's will, probably as sure as your friends are today about killing Christians. Suddenly he was blinded by a bright light and heard a voice from heaven, saying, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.'<sup>12</sup> Thus God showed Saul that he was actually fighting against Him, and led him onto the way of life. Saul received the name Paul and became a great servant of God. He was used by God to bring many people to repentance and to do great miracles, even raising someone from the dead.<sup>13</sup>

So, if Jesus the Messiah appears to you today, accept him and allow him to change you into a person full of love and self-control. Then God will be able to use you in the jihad of love, following the example of Jesus. He never fought his enemies with weapons but always dealt with them in love and forgiveness. Even when he was being crucified, he prayed for the murderers and asked God to forgive them.<sup>14</sup> Likewise, God will give you the power and love to do the same toward your enemies.

May the words of Jesus the Messiah become true of you, 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.'<sup>15</sup> If we all seek peace through God's love and forgiveness, then true and lasting peace will be established on earth.

God bless you and keep you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laurens". The signature is written in dark ink and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

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<sup>1</sup> Westminster Shorter Catechism, Question #1 <http://www.reformed.org/documents/WSC.html>

<sup>2</sup> 1 John 4:18 in the Holy Book. The text here is from the English Standard Version translation

<sup>3</sup> 1 John 1:5 in the Holy Book

<sup>4</sup> John 3:21 in the Holy Book

<sup>5</sup> John 3:20 in the Holy Book

<sup>6</sup> See Zechariah 3:1-5 in the Holy Book

<sup>7</sup> See Revelation 7:12-15 in the Holy Book

<sup>8</sup> See 1 John 1:9 in the Holy Book

<sup>9</sup> 2 Timothy 1:7 in the Holy Book

<sup>10</sup> John 15:14-15 in the Holy Book

<sup>11</sup> See Genesis 16:7 in the Holy Book

<sup>12</sup> Acts 9:5 in the Holy Book

<sup>13</sup> See Acts 20:9-10 in the Holy Book

<sup>14</sup> See Luke 23:34 in the Holy Book

<sup>15</sup> Matthew 5:9 in the Holy Book