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LEGITIMIZING JIHAD

Ahmad Musa Jibril at the Boundaries of Law and Radicalism

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Executive Summary

Ahmad Musa Jibril is a U.S.-born cleric of Palestinian descent based in Dearborn, Michigan, whose combination of traditional Salafi education, legal training, and prolific online activity has positioned him as one of the most influential extremist preachers operating in the West. Over time, his discourse—as analyzed in this paper alongside his ideology and digital strategy—has attracted a significant transnational following, positioning him as a pivotal agitator whose Salafi credentials and online reach combine to produce a distinctly radicalizing and dangerous discourse.

Doctrinally, Jibril draws explicitly on classical Salafi authorities and textualist methodologies to justify contemporary militancy: he normalizes armed jihad as a religious obligation and elevates martyrdom as a pedagogical and aspirational ideal. His positionings also include the endorsement of punitive responses to perceived insults to Islam and *takfīr*-adjacent delegitimization of those he deems deviants (notably Shia, state-aligned scholars, and Muslim rulers). Coupled with prescriptive social-isolation measures across family life, education, and gender relations, these discursive strategies create an insulated milieu that materially lowers the threshold from exclusionary rhetoric to potential mobilization.

Politically, Jibril frames the United States as an existential enemy of Islam—rejecting civic participation, military service, and democratic engagement as forms of betrayal of the Muslim faith—and combines this rejection with a valorization of jihad and martyrdom that renders his message strategically combustible. Paradoxically, he delivers this message from within the United States: the report highlights how constitutional protections and Jibril's own legal literacy have enabled him to disseminate an ideology through messages that hover near—and occasionally even seem to edge beyond—the threshold of direct and prosecutable incitement, while sustaining a durable reservoir of radicalizing content.

Introduction

The study of contemporary jihadist discourse increasingly demands attention to individuals who, despite lacking direct involvement in committing acts of terrorism, exert influence through ideological legitimation and digital dissemination. Ahmad Musa Jibril exemplifies this dynamic. A United States-born cleric of Palestinian descent, Jibril's trajectory—spanning a traditional Islamic education in Medina, legal training in the U.S., criminal convictions on multiple charges of fraud, and a subsequent reemergence as a prominent online preacher—illustrates how biography, ideology, and digital outreach converge to shape extremist ecosystems. Although he has never been charged with terrorism, his writings, lectures, and online activities have placed him at the intersection of Salafi orthodoxy, Islamist reformism, and jihadist mobilization, where his words resonate far beyond his immediate audience.

This paper examines Jibril's controversial digital presence through a layered analysis that situates his ideological development within the broader jihadist landscape. His biography reveals the depth of his training under renowned Salafi authorities, while also documenting episodes that signaled radical sympathies. His subsequent legal troubles, culminating in fraud convictions and strict supervised release conditions, highlight the tensions between criminal liability, ideological risk, and constitutional protections in the U.S. context. Against this backdrop, his online activities—from early websites hosting jihadist sermons to his later use of social media platforms to comment on the current Israel-Hamas war in Gaza—demonstrate how digital media have amplified his voice and embedded him in the informational architecture of global jihadism.

Through an analysis of Jibril's biography, digital presence, and discourse, this paper seeks to determine not only the substance of his message but also his underlying ideology and the mechanisms through which it circulates and persists. In doing so, this research highlights broader dilemmas for policymakers, scholars, and digital platforms grappling with the blurred boundaries between protected religious speech and discourse that enables radicalization.

Jibril's Early Life and Religious Education

Ahmed Musa Jibril[1] was born in 1971[2] in Dearborn, a suburb of Detroit, Michigan, into a Palestinian family. During his early childhood, his father, Sheikh Musa Abdullah Jibril, relocated the family to Saudi Arabia in pursuit of advanced Islamic education at the Islamic University of Medina. This event marked the beginning of Jibril's foundational Islamic training and immersion in classical scholarship.[3]

While residing in Medina, Jibril completed the memorization of the Qur'an by the age of 11. He was enrolled in a government school with a specialized Qur'an program, among the first of its kind in the city. When Jibril was 12 years old, upon completion of his father's studies in Medina, the family returned to the U.S.[4]

During this time, Jibril continued his Islamic studies intensively under the guidance of his father. By the end of high school in 1989, he had memorized the entirety of Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, along with their chains of narration. He eventually committed to memorize all the *Kutub al-Tisʿaa*,[5] along with the *Muwaṭṭaʾ* of Imam Malik and works of Ahmad ibn Hanbal, doing so independently of any formal curriculum.[6]

Upon completing high school in the United States, Jibril returned to Medina to pursue a degree in the faculty of shariah. He pursued a rigorous path of traditional learning under renowned scholars during his extended time in Saudi Arabia.[7]

Jibril's ideological leanings are deeply shaped by his academic and theological experiences in Saudi Arabia during the height of Salafi

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[1] Sometimes also spelled Ahmad Musa Jibreel or Ahmad Musa Jebril. Also known by his patronymic Abu Khaled. Also referred to by his followers as *The Imam of the West*.

[2] Brief in Support of Suppression of Client's Statement and Redaction of Fingerprint Card, page 6, *United States v. Ahmad Musa Jebril*, 2:03-cr-80810, (E.D. Mich., filed Nov. 8, 2004). ECF No. 52. https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.mied.35589/gov.uscourts.mied.35589.52.0.pdf

[3] Biography. Ahmad Musa Jibril Official Website. https://ahmadjibril.org/biography/

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] Literally "*The Nine Books*" refers to an expansion of the classical Sunni hadith canon, which originally included the *al-Ṣiḥāḥ al-Sitta* (the Six Authentic Books).

[6] *Op. cit.* Biography. Ahmad Musa Jibril Official Website.

[7] *Ibid.*

institutional dominance, particularly in Medina. In fact, what markedly sets Jibril's training apart from that of most preachers, both within and outside the mainstream, is the high caliber of scholars under whom he studied—a roster that includes some of the most prominent Salafi scholars of the 20th century. The list includes, though is not limited to:

His associations, references, and ideological tone place him within the hardline Salafi orbit, with evident sympathy for certain Sahwa (Islamist-Salafi reformist) and even Salafi-jihadist positions, especially when discussing politics, governance, and Muslim rulers.[8]

- **Shaykh Abd al-Aziz ibn Baz:** Jibril studied under Ibn Baz and even received a written *tazkiya*[9] from him just three months prior to the Shaykh's passing.[10] According to Jibril's own account, in this recommendation, Ibn Baz praised his *daʿwa* efforts and knowledge and encouraged Muslims in the U.S. to benefit from both him and his father.[11] At that time Ibn Baz was the Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia and he is globally recognized as a leading authority of traditional Salafi orthodoxy. Ibn Baz was a staunch critic of democracy, Shiism, and Sufism, and he firmly rejected secularism. He consistently legitimized the Saudi monarchy as the rightful authority, repeatedly stressing the principle *ṭāʿat wali al-amr*.[12]
- **Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani:** Although details are limited, Jibril is reported to have benefited from Albani's works and methodology, particularly in the fields of hadith criticism and *fiqh*.[13] A leading figure of 20th-century Salafism, al-Albani shaped modern Salafi thought through his prolific writings and teaching, emphasizing a return to the textual sources of Islam. He was staunchly anti-innovation and a harsh critic of Shia Islam.

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[8] *Ibid.*

[9] In Islamic scholarly tradition, a *tazkiya* refers to a written document of recommendation, usually issued by a recognized scholar or teacher, attesting to a student's knowledge, character, and reliability.

[10] *Op. cit.* Biography. Ahmad Musa Jibril Official Website.

[11] Document in possession of the authors.

[12] The Arabic concept *ṭāʿat wali al-amr* refers to the religious duty to obey the Muslim ruler, even if unjust, so long as he does not command disobedience to God. It has been central to the legitimization of political authority in many Sunni traditions, particularly within Wahhabi-Salafi thought.

[13] *Op. cit.* Biography. Ahmad Musa Jibril Official Website.

- **Muhammad ibn Salih al-Uthaymin:** Jibril studied several works directly with him and received scholarly approval for his level of understanding.[14] Al-Uthaymin is widely regarded as one of the foremost religious authorities of his generation. His teachings rejected liberal democratic norms, aligning instead with the classical Salafi view of authority and governance
- **Shaykh Hammud al-Uqla al-Shuaybi** was also among his circle of teachers and references during his time in Saudi Arabia.[15] Al-Shuaybi was one of the most notorious radical Salafi-jihadist ideologues in Saudi Arabia and influenced Al Qaeda ideological positionings in the 2000s. Among other things, he praised the 9/11 attacks and was mentor to multiple jihadist thinkers, including Nasir al-Fahd and Ali al-Khudayr.
- **Shaykh Bakr Abu Zayd:** Under Bakr Abu Zayd, Jibril studied the writings of Ibn Taymiyya, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, and Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab in private sessions.[16] Bakr Abu Zayd was a prominent Saudi Salafi scholar and jurist known for his strong opposition to reforms and staunch criticism of Western influence on Muslim societies.
- **Shaykh Safi al-Rahman al-Mubarakpuri:** Best known as the author of *al-Rahiq al-Makhtum* (*The Sealed Nectar*), one of Ahmed's direct teachers in Medina, whom he visited regularly at home.[17] Rooted in the Deobandi and Ahl al-Sunna traditions, Mubarakpuri's scholarship emphasized historical rigor, devotional piety, and the propagation of Sunni orthodoxy.

When Jibril returned to the U.S., he obtained a Masters in Law (JD/LLM) at the University of Michigan.[18]

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[14] *Ibid.*

[15] *Ibid.*

[16] *Ibid.*

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] *Ibid.*

Jibril's Legal Issues in the U.S.

Before delving into Jibril's ideological profile and extremist discourse, it is useful to outline his legal issues in the U.S., something that also allows us to identify one of the earliest clear signs of radicalization. For that purpose, one must go back to November 1995. That month, a car bomb exploded in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in the parking lot of a three-story building leased by the U.S. government and used by U.S. military and civilian personnel. The blast killed six, including four Americans, and wounded at least 60 others. The day after this bombing, CNN received a fax praising the bombing. The document, reproduced below, originated from the telephone line registered to Ahmad Musa Jibril.[19]

> In the name of Allah, Islamic movement for change, the lands where the sunshine of Islam arose to the world.
> The bombing that happened in Riyadh that got the attention of the world is only the beginning of a new phase that the Saudi government will go through.
> The first and main goal behind this first series of bombing is to kick the Jews, Christians and Infidels from the purified lands of the Arabian peninsula because it is the belief of every Muslim who bears witness that there is no God but One and Mohammed is his messenger. It is one of the last words our profet [sic] said before his souls seperated [sic] his body when he said "Kick the Jews and Christians out of the Arabian Peninsula. No two religions shall remain on the lands of the Arabian Peninsula."
> There will be a series of bombings that will follow no matter how many lives of ours are taken or how many bodies are in prison.
> This is the precise reason why we chose the building we chose.
> [...]
> A second and non-direct goal is a retaliation because of the recent imprisonment of the leaders of the worldwide Islamic uprising over a year and an [sic] half ago among them are Sheik Salman Al-Odeh and Doctor Safar Al-Hawali.
> [...]

Jibril was not charged or prosecuted for involvement with this fax because there was no proof that he bore any actual responsibility for the deaths;

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[19] Government's Supplemental Sentencing Memorandum, pp. 3-4 and Exhibit B, *United States v. Ahmad Musa Jebril and Musa Abdullah Jebril*, 2:03-cr-80810 (E.D. Mich. filed April 27, 2005). ECF No. 76. https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.mied.35589/gov.uscourts.mied.35589.76.0.pdf

however, this incident was cited by U.S. authorities in a court document years later, indicating Jibril's fax very likely placed him on the radar of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) at the time.[20]

Jibril was arrested by the FBI on September 9, 2003, after a federal grand jury returned a multi-count indictment charging various offenses, including money laundering, mail fraud, wire fraud, bank fraud, social security fraud, felon in possession of a firearm, and failure to file income tax returns.[21] It was in this indictment and related court documents that the previously mentioned fax first appeared as part of the evidentiary record.

Though these charges were not terrorism-related, the prosecution introduced evidence during sentencing suggesting that Jibril held extremist views. For example, during the investigation into Jibril and his father the FBI seized a family photo album during the search of a property belonging to Jibril's father. The album caused concern for federal investigators and provided a window into Jibril's, and his father's, mindset.[22]

> *"The album includes photos of Ahmad Jebril as a teenager dressed as a mujihid or holy warrior; photos of very young children holding apparently real firearms, "playing" at holding each other hostage and aiming the weapons at each other's heads."*[23]

After two superseding indictments, Jibril and his father were tried in federal court and a jury convicted them after a three-week trial in November 2004. They were convicted of 42 charges of conspiracy, bank fraud, wire fraud, money laundering, failure to file income tax returns, and felon-in-possession of firearms and ammunition. Jibril was also convicted of fraudulent use of a social security number.[24,25]

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[20] *Ibid.*

[21] *Ibid.*

[22] *Ibid.*

[23] *Ibid.* pp. 2-3.

[24] Government's Sentencing Memorandum, *United States v. Ahmad Musa Jebril and Musa Abdullah Jebril*, 2:03-cr-80810 (E.D. Mich. filed March 14, 2005). ECF No. 64. https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.mied.35589/gov.uscourts.mied.35589.64.0.pdf

[25] Opinion and Order Denying Petitioner's Motion for Summary Judgment, *In re: Ahmad Musa Jebril and Musa Abadallah Jebril, Subhieh Jibril v. United States*, 05-X-70840-DT, Related to Crim. No. 03-80810 (E.D. Mich. filed May 6, 2008). https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCOURTS-mied-2_05-mc-70840/pdf/USCOURTS-mied-2_05-mc-70840-0.pdf

Additionally, Jibril and his father were caught attempting to obstruct justice by bribing a juror. This incident was discovered when the juror came forward and stated she had been approached and offered money to vote not guilty and to persuade her fellow jurors to acquit the Jibrils. The Jibrils were indicted for this conduct in February 2005, along with co-conspirator Radwan Almadrahi, in a three-count indictment. They were specifically charged with conspiring to commit federal crimes, aiding and abetting each other in attempting to bribe a juror, and in attempting to corruptly influence a juror.[26]

In December 2005, Jibril was sentenced to a term of 70 months in federal custody to be followed by a three-year term of supervised release.[27,28] The jury also issued a Special Verdict ordering forfeiture of $200,000.00 in U.S. currency and twelve real estate properties.[29] Jibril was initially incarcerated at the Federal Correctional Institution (FCI) Milan in Michigan, beginning in November 2004, and subsequently moved to FCI Three Rivers in Texas in August 2007.[30,31]

It is important to highlight that although the prosecution intentionally introduced Jibril's extremist ideology during the sentencing phase of his court proceedings to show how he is a potential risk to the public beyond simple

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[26] Government's Sentencing Memorandum, *United States v. Ahmad Musa Jebril and Musa Abdullah Jebril*, 2:03-cr-80810 (E.D. Mich. filed March 14, 2005). ECF No. 64. https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.mied.35589/gov.uscourts.mied.35589.64.0.pdf

[27] Defendant's Reply in Opposition to Government's Motion to Compel Answers to Deposition Questions and to Produce Documents, *United States v. Ahmad Musa Jebril*, 2:03-cr-80810 (E.D. Mich. filed Jan. 27, 2015). ECF No. 179. https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.mied.35589/gov.uscourts.mied.35589.179.0.pdf

[28] Opinion, *United States v. Ahmad Musa Jebril*, 14-1716 (6th Cir. filed Apr. 22, 2015). https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.mied.35589/gov.uscourts.mied.35589.186.0.pdf

[29] Opinion and Order Denying Petitioner's Motion for Summary Judgment, *Subhieh Jebril v. United States*, 2:05-mc-70840 (E.D. Mich. filed May 6, 2008), https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCOURTS-mied-2_05-mc-70840/pdf/USCOURTS-mied-2_05-mc-70840-0.pdf

[30] Memorandum Opinion and Order to Dismiss Certain Claims and Retain Case, *Ahmad Jebril v. Dan Joslin et al.*, C-07-436 (S.D. Tex. Feb. 12, 2008), https://cases.justia.com/federal/district-courts/texas/txsdce/2:2007cv00436/536728/24/0.pdf?ts=1428727295

[31] According to a February 2008 civil rights action filed by Jibril while incarcerated, he identified as a "*Muslim and a serious student of the Quran. He attended the Islamic University of Madinah (Medina) in Saudi Arabia, and has memorized the Quran. He is serving a 100-month sentence for fraud and jury tampering. His father is serving a sentence for fraud stemming from the same indictment.*" The civil rights action indicates Jibril complains that he is labeled as, and treated as, a terrorist—specifically he is bullied and harassed by prison staff. According to British media, "*After some time in prison, he (Jibril) petitioned a judge, saying he was being ill-treated, and adding: 'I am not a terrorist.'*" Culbertson, Alix. "Hate preacher 'who influenced London Bridge terrorist' flees home just days after attack," *The Express*, Jun 8, 2017, https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/814309/Khuram-Butt-London-terror-attack-Ahmad-Musa-Jibril-London-Bridge-Borough-Market

white-collar criminal activity, Jibril was not arrested, charged, or convicted of terrorism offenses. Given the temporal proximity of Jibril's trial to the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks—and the prosecution's emphasis at sentencing on his extremist ideology—it is unsurprising that Jibril received a strong sentence after being convicted of fraud.

In the U.S. federal court system, judges have discretion to impose conditions on supervised release if judges feel those conditions protect the public, deter further crimes, and aid rehabilitation.[32,33] Despite being convicted for fraud, the prosecution's demonstration of Jibril's extremist ideology and past extremist activities allowed the judge to decide to restrict and limit Jibri's Internet access. At the time, jihadist ideology, such as that which Jibril exhibited, increasingly was spread via the internet. Restricting Jibril's internet access was likely seen as a way to disrupt Jibril's ability to radicalize others online.

Jibril was released from prison in March 2012. Six months prior to that he had been released to a halfway house. His supervised release was for a term of three years,[34] but almost immediately after completing his sentence, he was back to his concerning online activities.[35]

In June 2014, a federal judge determined Jibril violated the terms of his supervised release and he was ordered, among other conditions, to wear a GPS electronic tether and submit to his probation officer information pertaining to his social-media accounts until the end of his supervised release in March 2015.[36]

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[32] U.S. Sentencing Commission, *Primer on Supervised Release*, 2021, pp. 1-4, https://www.ussc.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/training/primers/2021_Primer_Supervised_Release.pdf

[33] "*Liman Center Research Helps Inform Proposed Federal Sentencing Guidelines on Supervised Release*." Yale Law School, May 21, 2025. https://law.yale.edu/yls-today/news/liman-center-research-helps-inform-proposed-federal-sentencing-guidelines-supervised

[34] Urgent Motion to Allow Out of Country Travel, *United States v. Ahmad Musa Jebril*, 2:03-cr-80810 (E.D. Mich. filed Nov. 15, 2013), ECF No. 156. https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.mied.35589/gov.uscourts.mied.35589.156.0.pdf

[35] Malik, Shiv and Safi, Michael, "Revealed: The radical clerics using social media to back British jihadists in Syria," *The Guardian*, Apr. 15, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/apr/15/preachers-spiritual-cheerleaders-social-media-syria-london-university

[36] Transcript, Supervised Release Violation Hearing, *United States v. Ahmad Musa Jebril*, 2:03-cr-80810 (E.D. Mich. June 5, 2014), ECF No. 168. https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.mied.35589/gov.uscourts.mied.35589.168.0.pdf

Jibril's Turn from Physical Preaching to Online Influence

During the late 1990s and early 2000s, Jibril was an influential figure among sections of Dearborn's young Muslim community.[37] His first organizational connection appears to be with chapters of the Muslim Students Association (MSA) in Michigan, which hosted him on numerous occasions at local universities in the early 2000s. For all intents and purposes, Jibril was the spiritual leader of at least one MSA chapter based at the University of Michigan-Dearborn (UM-D), and spoke regularly at two other universities, Wayne State University (WSU) and Washtenaw Community College, during this period. Yet, within the local Muslim community, many viewed Jibril as a threat. Jibril's extremist tirades (specifically, his focus on jihad and highly sectarian views on Shi'a Muslims) eventually led to him being permanently banned from at least one mosque in Detroit in 2003. In addition, officials at the Umar bin Khattab Mosque in Brownstown, Michigan, where he also preached, reportedly told its members to avoid Jibril entirely.[38]

While until the early 2000s Jibril seemed to combine his preaching activity in the local sphere with his online presence, since his arrest and conviction he has not been known to serve again as imam in any mosque. It was online, in any case, where Jibril expressed his most extremist views and where he gained his largest support and follower base. Jibril was in fact one of the early adopters of using the internet to spread Salafist material, including jihadist ideas and maintained a web presence starting in the late 1990s. His early internet activities, found on his website *alSalafyoon.com*, and described in detail by federal investigators help to give further insight into his views at the time.

> "From their Michigan home, Jibril and his father created the radical website *AlSalafyoon.com* in the late 1990s. The site featured a library of fanatic sermons, including speeches on the subject of jihad by the spiritual mentor to Osama Bin Laden, Shaykh Abdullah Azzam, and another senior member of Al Qaeda, Abdelrahman Al-Dosari. The site offered web visitors numerous English-language Islamic booklets, pamphlets,

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[37] Meleagrou-Hitchens, Alexander. *Salafism in America. History, Evolution, Radicalization*. Program on Extremism, The George Washington University. October 2018. https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs5746/files/Salafism%20in%20America.pdf

[38] *Ibid*.

> and poems dealing with the topic of jihad. This site hosted discussions with titles such as "We Must Hate the Kafers!"[39]
>
> "*AlSalafyoon.com contained a library of fanatically anti-American sermons by militant Islamic clerics in English and Arabic. From this site, Jibril encouraged his students to spread Islam by the sword, to wage a holy war, and to hate and kill non-Muslims.*"[40]

Through *alSalafyoon.com* Jibril regularly encouraged his followers to spread Islam by the sword through jihad and to hate and kill non-Muslims. In addition, Jibril also used the site to discuss the role of other Salafis and Jihadists as well as to feature content from other fellow extremist preachers.[41] This section included texts on jihad by foundational scholars of Salafi thought such as Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab and Ibn Taymiyya, by Abdullah Azzam, often described as the father of modern jihadism, and by contemporary hardline Salafi and Salafi-Jihadi clerics and ideologues such as Aïd al-Qarni, Salman al-Awda, Nasir al-Fahd,[42] Safar al-Hawali,[43] Ali al-Khudair,[44] Muhammad Al-Munajjid[45] and Hammud al-Uqla al-Shuaybi.[46]

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[39] Government's Supplemental Sentencing Memorandum, pp. 6-7, *United States v. Ahmad Musa Jebril and Musa Abdullah Jebril*, 2:03-cr-80810 (E.D. Mich. filed April 27, 2005). ECF No. 76. https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.mied.35589/gov.uscourts.mied.35589.76.0.pdf

[40] Government's Supplemental Sentencing Memorandum, pp. 6-7, *United States v. Ahmad Musa Jebril and Musa Abdullah Jebril*, 2:03-cr-80810 (E.D. Mich. filed April 27, 2005). ECF No. 76. https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.mied.35589/gov.uscourts.mied.35589.76.0.pdf

[41] For a more detailed account of Jibril's early online activities see: *Op. cit.* Meleagrou-Hitchens, Alexander. *Salafism in America. History, Evolution, Radicalization*. Pp. 99-103.

[42] Nasir al-Fahd is a Saudi Arabian Salafi-Jihadist scholar whose fatwas have encouraged jihad. He was arrested in 2003 by Saudi authorities after preaching to his followers to rise up against the infidels.

[43] Safar al-Hawali is a Saudi cleric who played a key role in the Sahwa movement, known for his hardline Salafist views. He is also known for his fierce opposition to U.S. military presence in Saudi Arabia and his framing of the West as an existential threat to Islam. These ideas strongly influenced Bin Laden and helped shape his worldview.

[44] Ali al-Khudair is a Saudi cleric known for his extremist Salafi-Jihadist positions and for issuing fatwas legitimizing violence against non-Muslims and local regimes as well as declaring several Saudi thinkers as infidels. Ali al-Khudair issued a fatwa calling on his followers to rejoice after the Al Qaeda 9/11 attacks, drafting a list of arguments that according to him justified the attacks.

[45] Muhammad al-Munajjid is a Syrian-born Saudi cleric and the founder of the fatwa website *IslamQA*, one of the most widely consulted online Salafi resources. He has issued controversial rulings advocating slavery, promoted antisemitic views, and declared takfīr on Ahmadis and Shias.

[46] Al-Shuaybi was one of the most notorious radical Salafi-jihadist ideologues in Saudi Arabia and influenced Al Qaeda ideological positionings in the 2000s. Among other things, he praised the 9/11 attacks and was mentor to multiple jihadist thinkers, including Nasir al-Fahd and Ali al-Khudayr.

To exemplify the militant and exhortative tone characteristic of certain materials published on *alSalafyoon.com*, below are some lines from a poem entitled *al-Jihad*:

Extract from a Poem entitled al-Jihad:

Yes, you're neither Sheikh Osama nor Mullah Umar
But, don't forget you're a[n] Ummat of fighter apostle
Why are you waiting go and thrust
In the lines of enemies and have them crushed
Hit them on the neck and send them to hell
If you're killed, you'll be received There well[47]

Shortly before his imprisonment, Jibril had launched a new website, *ahmadjibril.com*. While *alSalafyoon.com* technically remained online, it was not updated during his time in prison. The new site remained online until 2020, though its updates were irregular, and although less explicit than the content found on *alSalafyoon*, the site still carried elements of Jibril's Salafi-jihadist self-style.[48] Jibril did not revive *alSalafyoon.com*, a decision likely motivated by the fact that the site had already been described by federal investigators as "*a library of fanatically anti-American sermons by militant Islamic clerics, in English and in Arabic*"[49] and figured prominently in government arguments.

After over six years in jail, Jibril regained his freedom only to find a new digital landscape. Social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube had transformed how preachers could disseminate content and interact with followers, making the early 2000s' model of static websites largely obsolete. Remarkably, his transition into social media was swift—his first official Twitter account was created in October 2011, months before his release.[50] Although he continued to use *ahmadjibril.com* as a repository for some content, Jibril quickly recognized the strategic potential of new platforms.

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[47] Published in *AlSalafyoon.com*; Archived version in possession of the authors.

[48] *Op. cit.* Meleagrou-Hitchens, Alexander. *Salafism in America. History, Evolution, Radicalization.* Pp. 102-103.

[49] Op. cit. Government's Supplemental Sentencing Memorandum, page 3, *United States v. Ahmad Musa Jebril and Musa Abdullah Jebril.*

[50] Ahmad Musa Jibril's official Twitter account. https://x.com/ahmadmusajibril

Within two years, he became extremely popular on Facebook[51] and Twitter[52] and his influence had grown to such an extent that he was identified by a British think-tank as one of the top English-speaking religious authorities followed by Western individuals traveling to Syria to join armed groups.[53]

Jibril's rising prominence online drew increasing attention from federal authorities. In June 2014, a U.S. federal judge imposed strict restrictions on his internet activity, citing a violation of the conditions of his supervised release. Although the judge did not explicitly link the decision to Jibril's online preaching, federal officials stated that the restrictions would allow probation officers to monitor his communications closely, particularly given fears that his messaging could indirectly encourage Americans to join foreign fighters in Syria.[54] The ban from posting content online remained in place until March 2015, after which he was once again allowed to return to the digital sphere.[55]

Following the lifting of his internet restrictions, Jibril's numerous official accounts generally went silent. A relative hiatus ensued, roughly spanning from 2015 to 2021, during which his direct output became sparse and irregular, primarily surfacing through unofficial accounts. This period appears to have allowed him to expand his offline networks and refine a more sophisticated digital strategy while trying to navigate the intensified wave of regulatory and corporate responses against problematic content.[56]

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[51] According to the report carried by ICSR, by 2014 Jibril had over 145,000 likes on his fan page. Carter, Joseph A., Maher, Shiraz, Neumann, Peter R., "Measuring Importance and Influence in Syrian Foreign Fighter Networks," ICSR, 2014, page 24. https://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/ICSR-Report-Greenbirds-Measuring-Importance-and-Infleunce-in-Syrian-Foreign-Fighter-Networks.pdf

[52] By 2014 his Twitter account had amassed more than 32,000 followers.

[53] Op. cit. Carter, Joseph A., Maher, Shiraz, Neumann, Peter R., "Measuring Importance and Influence in Syrian Foreign Fighter Networks."

[54] Hosenball, Mark and Ashenfelter, David. "U.S. preacher who inspires Syrian rebels faces Internet monitoring". *Reuters*, June 9, 2014. Archived version retrieved from: https://web.archive.org/web/20161231134040/http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-syria-preacher-idUSKBN0EK26F20140609

[55] Hosenball, Mark and Bell, Alistair. "U.S. online ban of militant Muslim preacher ends". *Reuters*, April 7, 2015. Archived version retrieved from: https://web.archive.org/web/20160616083505/http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-religion-imam-idUSKBN0MY2CP20150407

[56] That period coincided with increased efforts of content moderation on all major platforms. The sheer volume and rapid dissemination of extremist content during the peak of terrorist activity in Syria and Iraq prompted a wave of regulatory and corporate responses, with major platforms aggressively intensifying content removal efforts and enhancing cross-platform coordination. See for context: Clifford, Bennett. "*Moderating Extremism: The State of Online Terrorist Content Removal Policy in the United States*". The Program on Extremism, The George Washington University, December 2021. https://extremism.gwu.edu/moderating-extremism

Although less prolific than before, Jibril's post imprisonment online presence was impactful and remained a radicalizing influence both in the U.S. and globally. Below is a non-exhaustive list of some of the individuals allegedly inspired by the content created by Jibril:

- In 2016, during an FBI investigation into Mohamed Elshinawy for his role in providing material support to ISIS (for which he was later convicted and sentenced in the U.S.),[57] the FBI uncovered evidence that two British co-conspirators had exchanged videos created by Jibril. After identifying the videos in an affidavit, an FBI agent highlighted for the court, *"I know from my training and experience that Ahmad Musa Jibril is an ISIL supporter and Salafi Shaykh from Michigan. Jibril conducts online lectures that advocate jihad and adhere to the extremist ideology."*[58,59]
- In 2016, in Michigan, Khalil Abu-Rayyan pleaded guilty to charges of making a false statement to acquire a firearm and possession of a firearm by a prohibited person. Abu-Rayyan indicated his support for ISIS and his desire to conduct a martyrdom operation, including with the use of firearms.[60] According to press reports, prosecutors produced text messages where Rayyan said he listened to *"clerics like Ahmed Jebril of Dearborn, who prosecutors have said made radical statements…"*[61]
- In 2016, in India, ISIS terrorist Mohammad Farhan Shaikh was arrested by Indian authorities. Farhan Shaikh was influenced by lectures from a set of preachers that included Jibril. Farhan Shaikh *"…started actively collecting information on IS after declaration of caliphate in June 2014."* Shaikh

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[57] "Maryland Man Sentenced to 20 Years in Prison for Providing Material Support to ISIS and Terrorism Financing," U.S. Department of Justice, Press Release, Mar. 30, 2018, https://www.justice.gov/archives/opa/pr/maryland-man-sentenced-20-years-prison-providing-material-support-isis-and-terrorism

[58] Affidavit in Support of Search Warrants (Under Seal), at paragraph 83, 16-3205, 16-3206, 16-3207, 16-3208, (D. Md. Dec. 9, 2016) (related to *United States v. Mohamed Elshinawy*, 1:16-cr-00009 (D. Md. 2015). https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs5746/files/ElshinaawyAffidavitInSupportOfSearchWarrants.pdf. For additional court documents in this case, see "ISIS in America: The cases: Elshinawy, Mohamed," The Program on Extremism, The George Washington University. https://extremism.gwu.edu/cases.

[59] *Op. cit*. Meleagrou-Hitchens, Alexander. *Salafism in America. History, Evolution, Radicalization*. https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs5746/files/Salafism%20in%20America.pdf

[60] "Dearborn Heights Resident Pleads Guilty to Illegal Possession of Firearm," U.S. Attorney's Office, E.D. Mich., Press Release, Sept. 13, 2016. https://www.justice.gov/usao-edmi/pr/dearborn-heights-resident-pleads-guilty-illegal-possession-firearm

[61] Warikoo, Niraj, "Dearborn Heights man accused of supporting ISIS sentenced to 5 years," *Detroit Free Press*, Apr. 6, 2017. https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2017/04/06/khalil-abu-rayyan-isis/100090964/

created an online account in August 2014 primarily to follow IS-related posts, images, videos, and online lectures of numerous online figures, including *"...Ahmad Jibril, who supported and justified the terrorist activities of IS through Quran..."*[62]

- In 2017, in Michigan, Muslim convert Sebastian Gregerson pleaded guilty to charges of unregistered possession of destructive devices. According to the court records, Gregerson made statements, both online and in person, showing support ISIS.[63,64] According to media reports, *"a search warrant says Gregerson had searched online for [Ahmad Musa] Jibril."*[65] *Additional media reports stated, "Gregerson also was interested in Ahmad Jibril, a Dearborn cleric cited as an inspirational leader for Syrian militants, according to court records."*[66]
- In 2017, online videos posted by Jibril—in which he preached his radical version of Islam—are believed to have helped inspire Khuram Butt, one of the three jihadis who killed eight people and injured 48 on the London Bridge and Borough Market in the United Kingdom in 2017.[67,68] According to British media, *"Among Butt's suspected influence is American-born Ahmad Musa Jibril, who lives in Dearborn, Michigan. His lectures remain online."*[69]

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[62] "NIA chargesheet refers to 14 globally known Islamic preachers," *Times of India*, Aug. 1, 2016. https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/nia-chargesheet-refers-to-14-globally-known-islamic-preachers/articleshowprint/53482378.cms

[63] "Detroit Resident Pleads Guilty to Unregistered Possession of Destructive Devices," U.S. Attorney's Office, E.D. Mich., Press Release, March 30, 2017 https://www.justice.gov/usao-edmi/pr/detroit-resident-pleads-guilty-unregistered-possession-destructive-devices

[64] Complaint, *United States v. Gregerson*, 2:16-mj-30339 (E.D. Mich., Filed Aug. 1, 2016) https://assets1.cbsnewsstatic.com/i/cbslocal/wp-content/uploads/sites/15909782/2016/08/complaint.pdf

[65] Jouvenal, Justin. "Maryland imam's advocacy of ISIS lands him at center of terrorism probe," *Washington Post*, Oct. 7, 2016 https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/public-safety/maryland-imams-advocacy-of-isis-lands-him-at-center-of-terrorism-probe/2016/10/06/421c6627-c715-4fe7-a246-70871169cf49_story.html

[66] Snell, Robert. "FBI probes Md. Terror link in Detroit case." *Detroit News*, Sept. 21, 2016. https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/detroit-city/2016/09/21/fbi-probes-md-terror-link-detroit-case/90815642/

[67] Culbertson, Alix. "Hate preacher 'who influenced London Bridge terrorist' flees home just days after attack," *The Express*," Jun 8, 2017. https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/814309/Khuram-Butt-London-terror-attack-Ahmad-Musa-Jibril-London-Bridge-Borough-Market

[68] *Op. cit.* Meleagrou-Hitchens, Alexander. *Salafism in America. History, Evolution, Radicalization.* https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs5746/files/Salafism%20in%20America.pdf

[69] Dearden, Lizzie. "London attack: New suspect arrested as new details emerge around Khuram Butt's radicalisation, *The Independent*, June 10, 2017. https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/london-bridge-attack-borough-arrests-investigation-latest-isis-khuram-butt-radicalisation-ilford-barking-newham-a7782886.html

Beginning in 2021, Jibril significantly redoubled his efforts and launched what appears to be a well-coordinated return to the digital sphere. Although Jibril opened a new official website in early 2022,[70] at the core of his renewed approach lies a network of semi-official accounts that distribute his lectures and writings across all major social media outlets and content distribution platforms—including YouTube, Telegram, Instagram, Tik-Tok, X, etc.[71] These profiles share a defining feature: they explicitly state that they are "managed by students." This recurring disclaimer serves as a subtle disavowal of direct control, insulating Jibril from potential repercussions and reinforcing a pattern of plausible deniability.

Beyond this semi-official core, a broader constellation of channels and accounts functions as a media ecosystem dedicated exclusively to the dissemination of Jibril's content.[72] These accounts, often styled to resemble professional media brands, can be found across most platforms and while their number and aggregate reach are difficult to ascertain due to their decentralized nature, they nonetheless demonstrate a remarkable degree of coordination and consistency.

Equally critical to this apparatus is the role played by Jibril's highly engaged follower base. This community not only amplifies his message but also repackages it into different platform-optimized formats for maximum impact. Long-form lectures are systematically broken down into short "digestible pills," optimized for virality and widely shared on platforms such as TikTok, Instagram Reels, and WhatsApp.

Since 2021, both the volume and production quality of Jibril-related content have increased significantly. Those managing and distributing his output demonstrate a keen awareness of digital visibility dynamics,[73] skillfully leveraging algorithms, search engine optimization, and cross-platform

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[70] Ahmad Musa Jibril's current official website. https://ahmadjibril.org/

[71] As of July 2025, Ahmad Musa Jibril's official accounts managed by his students were present in the following platforms: TikTok (46.3 K followers); X (23 K followers); Instagram (18.3 K followers); Telegram (11.2 K subs); Facebook (5.5 K followers).

[72] These channels—present in all most common platforms—include but are not limited to: Project Guiding Light; Global Message; Lanterns of Tawheed; Al-Nasr Media and Haqq Hurts the Hypocrites.

[73] In addition to mainstream video platforms such as YouTube, both semi-official and unofficial channels dedicated exclusively to disseminating his content have also sought visibility on alternative platforms like Rumble and Odysee, as well as on audio-based platforms such as Spotify and other podcast services.

adaptation. In addition, Jibril's ecosystem is significantly enhanced by a network of supporters who translate and dub his materials into other languages, producing a steady stream of content in Spanish, Russian, German, French, and Italian.

Critical Themes in Jibril's Discourse

To understand the full impact of Ahmed Musa Jibril's preaching, before attempting any ideological or doctrinal classification, it is necessary to move beyond simple biography and instead evaluate the patterns of argumentation, moral exhortation, and social prescriptions that recur across his lectures. In the pages that follow, we identify the thematic axes which together comprise the backbone of Jibril's mobilizing discourse. Each axis represents not merely a set of isolated statements, but a coherent cluster of ideas and rhetorical moves through which listeners are urged to view every aspect of personal, communal, and political life through a narrowly literalist Salafi lens.

The following analysis combines elements of qualitative content analysis and discourse analysis to interrogate the public corpus of Jibril's output. While Jibril offers in-person courses to a small circle of devoted students, all the contents presented below have been systematically extracted from the written and audiovisual materials that he and his network of students and followers disseminate via social media. Specifically, we have reviewed all publicly available texts and recordings shared on the official channels managed by Jibril's students—including lecture transcripts, audiovisual products, and social-media posts[74]—as well as the multimedia productions of allied media initiatives directly linked to him.[75]

Jibril's Understanding of Tawḥīd

Considering his ideological commitments, it is unsurprising that the principle of *tawḥīd* permeates virtually every facet of Jibril's discourse. His multi-part video series, *The Tawheed Series: Explanation of the Three Fundamental*

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[74] A full list of these channels and accounts is provided in the previous section.

[75] The connection between Ahmed Musa Jibril and these platforms is inferred from the distinctive quality and organization of their content, the consistent frequency and cadence of their postings, and the fact that they publish almost exclusively original material attributable to Jibril—content that could only plausibly have been supplied directly by him.

Principles,[76] available on his official website both in video and transcript form, offers the most comprehensive articulation of this creed and serves as a conceptual linchpin for the rest of his theological production. Across thirty-seven lessons,[77] Jibril not only explains the foundational elements of *tawḥīd*, but constructs a totalizing worldview in which metaphysical fidelity to God's oneness is inextricably linked to sociopolitical disavowal of all other systems of life.

In line with classical *atharī* and *wahābī* formulations, Jibril divides *tawḥīd* into the well-established triad of *rubūbiyya* (God's lordship), *ulūhiyya* (God's exclusive right to be worshipped), and *al-asmāʾ wa-l-ṣifāt* (God's names and attributes). While these divisions are widely accepted in Salafi orthodoxy, Jibril emphasizes the primacy of *ulūhiyya* as the true locus of contemporary deviation. Echoing the position of Ibn Baz and Ibn Uthaymin, he repeatedly insists that even pagans at the time of the Prophet affirmed God's lordship—what distinguishes the believer is their uncompromising exclusive devotion to God alone. This framing allows him to pivot seamlessly from theological abstraction to critique of contemporary Muslim societies: outward belief in God is insufficient if one submits to any non-divine authority, whether political or legal.

Jibril's *tawḥīd* is thus inseparable from a rigid conception of *ḥākimiyya*—God's exclusive right to legislate. While he personally resists adding *ḥākimiyya* as a separate fourth category of *tawḥīd*, he concedes that it is justifiably emphasized due to "*an epidemic of rulers who do not govern by the sharīʿa of Allah.*" This concern places Jibril within the ideological lineage of radical thinkers such as Sayyid Qutb or al-Shuaybi, even if his rhetorical tone is cloaked in didactic Salafi vocabulary. He is clear that submission to secular law, acceptance of democratic norms, or legal reforms within Muslim countries are all grave infractions of *tawḥīd*, and often indicative of *shirk*[78] or outright apostasy.

His interpretation also draws frequent analogies between *rubūbiyyah* and *ulūhiyyah* on one hand, and *īmān* and Islam on the other—a hermeneutic

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[76] Musa Jibril, Ahmad. "*The Tawheed Series: Explanation of The 3 Fundamental Principles*". Ahmed Musa Jibril official website. https://ahmadjibril.org/the-tawheed-series-explanation-of-the-3-fundamental-principles/

[77] Total duration of the lectures series is more than 35 hours.

[78] The concept of *shirk* refers to the act of associating partners or rivals with God in his divinity, attributes, or exclusive right to worship. Within Islamic theology, it is regarded as the gravest sin, as it directly contravenes the principle of *tawḥīd* or divine oneness.

strategy well documented in the writings of Hanbali theologians like Ibn Taymiyya[79] and later crystallized by Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab. As in their works, Jibril emphasizes that failure to act upon the necessary consequences of recognizing God's lordship (*rubūbiyyah*) renders one's affirmation meaningless. He further illustrates this with practical examples, such as receiving a gift but thanking someone else—a set of analogies that make the concept of *shirk* immediately graspable to his audience.

Such a formulation of *tawḥīd* inevitably collapses theological fidelity into political allegiance, thereby enabling a powerful binary logic that shapes Jibril's entire rhetorical project. Those who fall short of his standards—by participating in democratic systems, deferring to secular legislation, or remaining silent in the face of such deviations—are not merely mistaken, but spiritually compromised. It is within this rigid paradigm that the boundaries of in-group and out-group are drawn: affirmation of divine unity must be accompanied by an equally forceful disavowal of its perceived violators. The result is an exclusionary vision of Islam that treats ambiguity with suspicion, elevates ideological purity, and constructs a moral hierarchy in which only those who uphold Jibril's reading of *tawḥīd* are granted full religious legitimacy. This epistemic infrastructure of *tafrīq*—of division, discrimination and distancing—underpins many of the themes that follow, beginning with his rhetorical patterns of dehumanization and implicit *takfīr*.

Militant Jihad and Martyrdom

Jibril next elevates militant jihad—both collective and individual—as the necessary corollary of his uncompromising *tawḥīd*. In his "*The True Meaning of Jihad*" lecture, he makes it clear that only through full implementation of Sharia and armed jihad—described as "*pure tawḥīd,*"— can Muslims succeed.[80] According to Jibril, when Muslims are oppressed or under occupation, when Muslim rulers fail to enforce sharia, or worse, collaborate with enemy powers, one does not need the permission of rulers to defend the faithful by force and the obligation of *qitāl* becomes immediate and personal—no sanction required.[81] Such is the centrality of militant jihad in his framework

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[79] See for context: Vasalou, Sophia. *Ibn Taymiyya's Theological Ethics*. Oxford University Press, 2007.

[80] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*The True Meaning Of Jihad*". Ahmad Musa Jibril's official website, 2024. https://archive.org/details/true-meaning-of-jihad_202501

[81] *Ibid*.

that on numerous occasions he entertains the possibility of elevating it to the status of a pillar of Islam.[82] He even goes as far as to equate the ritual of fasting in Ramadan—one of the five pillars of Islam—with the duty of armed struggle:[83]

> *"Today many of the Ummah, [الا من رحم الله],[84] see the verses of jihad in the Qur'an and the Sunna, the verses of qitāl in the Qur'an and the Sunna, like some sisters see the verses of polygamy. The entire Umma looks forward for fasting, they love fasting in Ramadan. [...] Preparation, in happiness, in positive change, in the mood... It becomes very apparent anyway you go. Allah SWT said [كتب عليكم الصيام].[85] They look forward for it because Allah SWT said "Fasting is ordained on you." The same one who said fasting is ordained on you said [كتب عليكم القتال].[86] Jihad, jihad is ordained upon you. You can't say wallah, I love fasting, it's good, so I'm gonna take it and I'm going to believe in it, and I am gonna practice it. But qitāl and Jihad, no, I don't believe in that. [أفتؤمنون ببعض الكتاب وتكفرون ببعض].[87]*

What makes Jibril's apology for jihad particularly alarming is that it does not remain in the realm of abstract theology. He issues explicit calls for Muslims in the West—especially the youth—to adopt his militant vision and translate it into action: "*Now with the current ongoing events that have exposed all, the Muslims in the West, especially the youth from amongst them, need to wake up. The current events are a wakeup call for Muslims to start normalizing mentioning Jihad's proper meaning and putting it back into their vocabulary. Jihad must be a common, normal term on the tongues, on your social media, in the Masajid,[88] and elsewhere.*"[89]

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82 Musa, Ahmad Jibril. "*Is Jihad A Sixth Pillar Of Islam?*" Global Message YouTube Channel. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ijEByJTLHiE

83 Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*The entire ummah look forward for fasting but reject jihad*". On Youth YouTube channel, 2025. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNJlw1YY4AM

84 Qur'an (44:42). Translation: *except for those whom God has mercy on*. This expression is often used to indicate that while something is generally true or applies to most people, there are exceptions for those whom God has specifically favored with His mercy.

85 Qur'an (2:283). Translation provided by Ahmad Musa Jibril in the same lecture: *Fasting is ordained on you*.

86 Qur'an (2:216). Translation provided by Ahmad Musa Jibril in the same lecture: *Jihad is ordained upon you*.

87 Qur'an (2:85). Translation: *So do you believe in part of the Scripture and reject the rest?*

88 Plural of *masjid*, meaning "mosques".

89 *Op. cit.* Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*The True Meaning Of Jihad*".

Projecting his ideological framework onto contemporary battlegrounds, Jibril constructs a full-fledged militant jihadist narrative in which the release of Muslim prisoners is a divine mandate. In his view, rescuing fellow Muslims from enemy prisons, a recurring theme in jihadist propaganda, becomes a litmus test of faith and honor;[90] failing to free captives implies weak belief, whereas rescuing them is a sacred obligation.[91] Referring to the prisoners held in camps like al-Hol and Roj—many of whom were captured in Baghuz, the site of ISIS's final stand in early 2019 before it was retaken by the Syrian Democratic Forces with support from the U.S.-led Combined Joint Task Force—Operation Inherent Resolve—Jibril asserts that "*We must aid the weak prisoners until not a single one of us remains alive, and we must do so physically if we're able to*," adding that "*Real men don't stand cross-armed when their noble and pure sisters are held captive.*"[92] In fact, according to Jibril, one cannot "*be selective in what cause you stand for when it's Muslims being massacred or oppressed. It's hypocrisy to weep or be hurt over a Muslim mother who died in the rubble of her house in Gaza embracing her infant, then rejoice over the killing of a mother embracing her infant who was bombed by 86 nations in Baghuz*."[93]

One striking example of Jibril's rhetorical maneuvering in relation to the broader jihadist movement is his tacit endorsement of Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, ISIS former spokesperson, referring to him as a "Shaykh" while illustrating the practice of *mubāhala*, an invocation of divine curse against one's adversary.[94] In his justification for the practice, he lays out scriptural[95] and historical support by citing a broad range of classical authorities, including Ibn Abbas, Ibn Taymiyya, Ibn al-Qayyim, or Ibn Masoud among others. He then goes on to include "*Shaykh Abu Muhammad al-Adnani,*" offering the ISIS spokesman's 2014 *mubāhala*—issued against Jabhat al-

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[90] Among the prisoners.

[91] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*Be Patient, O Sisters!*" Project Guiding Light, 2023. https://bayyinah.xyz/bepatientosisters.html#:~:text=captives%20very%20simple%20and%20very

[92] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*The Ulama On The Obligation of Aiding & Freeing Our Muslim Prisoners*". Global Message YouTube channel, 2023. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CQkbE6Rvngs

[93] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*Palestine Is Not A Nationalist Cause, Palestine Is For The Ummah!*". Global Message YouTube channel. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YxmFAMnK76E

[94] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*Mubahala*". Bejtul'Muhaxhirin YouTube channel. Originally published in 2014. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n3PtypHWpWM

[95] Qur'an (3:61)

Nusra[96]—as a valid example. At the time, al-Adnani publicly dared God to curse ISIS if it was indeed a deviant group: "*O Allah, if this state is a state of the Kharijites, then shatter its backbone, slay its leaders, cast down its flag, and guide its soldiers to the truth* [...]."[97] By presenting al-Adnani as a Shaykh and his words as a legitimate expression of religious sincerity—at a moment when ISIS was still rapidly expanding—Jibril not only lent clerical authority to a designated terrorist leader, but also collapsed the line between classical Islamic rhetoric and contemporary jihadist performance.

In addition, the concept of martyrdom also emerges with power within Jibril's rhetorical universe, not only as a noble outcome of armed struggle but as a pedagogical imperative and aspirational endpoint, particularly for Muslim youth. In one of his lectures, he states unequivocally: "*If you can't raise your child telling him you want him to grow up to be a mujāhid and a shahīd then you're the root of the problem!*"[98] This declaration is not framed as an emotional outburst, but as part of a larger moral indictment against what he sees as a culture of religious complacency, in which parents fail to instill in their children the ultimate values of sacrifice and struggle for God's cause.

To reinforce this vision, Jibril draws on early Islamic examples, invoking the stories of Anas ibn al-Nadr and Umayr ibn al-Humam—companions of the Prophet celebrated for their courage and willingness to die in battle. These figures are not presented merely as historical anecdotes, but as archetypes to be emulated by contemporary Muslims. By casting martyrdom as the culmination of true belief and the pinnacle of religious commitment, Jibril blurs the line between historical valor and present-day militancy. His valorization of martyrdom functions as a powerful emotional lever and an ideological recruitment tool, as the death of the martyrs is vindicated by divine vengeance and historical permanence.[99] Thus, according to Jibril's

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[96] Al-Adnani's full *mubāhala* for reference: "*O Allah, if this state is a state of the Khārijites, then shatter its backbone, slay its leaders, cast down its flag, and guide its soldiers to the truth. And O Allah, if it is an Islamic state, ruling by your book and the Sunnah of your Prophet, and striving against your enemies, then establish it, honor it, grant it victory, secure it firmly on the earth, and make it a caliphate upon the prophetic methodology*"

[97] Al-Adnani, Abu Muhammad. (April 2014) "*Mā kāna hadha manhajunā wa-lan yakūn* [ما كان هذا منهجنا ولن يكون]."

[98] *Op. cit.* Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*The True Meaning Of Jihad*".

[99] *Op. cit.* Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "The *Ghurabā'* series".

narrative, dying in battle for Islam is not an exceptional destiny but an attainable, even desirable, goal for the committed believer.[100]

Finally, it is absolutely necessary to address Jibril's explicit endorsement of the capital punishment in response to perceived offenses against Islam. In a formal fatwa issued in the wake of satirical depictions of the Prophet he asserts: "*What is the hokm* (legal ruling) *on this? The hokm of this is not to write to the editor. The hokm on this is we need a hero to chop the head of the guy who did it. And I say even if he's going to jail*,"[101] further reinforcing his stance by invoking Saladin as the paradigmatic exemplar whose sword "*avenged every insult to the Prophet*," concluding that "*anyone who speaks ill of Muhammad deserves no less.*"

Social Hostility: An Islamic Counter-Society Inside Society

In Jibril's ideological framework, social cohesion is only achievable through strict adherence to an uncompromising interpretation of Islam—one that is intrinsically hostile to pluralism, integration, or coexistence with non-Islamic norms. The ideal Islamic household, according to Jibril, is one that is fully insulated from the outside world—not only physically but epistemologically. Secular and even Islamic schools are depicted as dangerous pipelines of deviance that "*Aside from destroying the Aqida, are normalizing sins like free mixing, music, drugs, alcohol, and zina… A level of decadence animals won't even accept.*"[102] Homeschooling is presented as the only acceptable educational model, shielding children from a world that, in his telling, is designed to erode their belief and moral discipline. Adopting a phrase from the Saudi Salafi scholar Bakr Abu Zayd, Jibril concludes that "*Whoever willingly places his children in schools knowing those schools have curriculums and activities that will take the children out of their Deen, or will instill doubts in their 'Aqeedah, then that person is a Murtadd.*"[103]

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[100] *Op. cit.* Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*The True Meaning Of Jihad*".

[101] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*The Decisive Fatwa For The One Who Insults The Prophet Muhammad*". Islam and Holy Quran Archive. https://archive.org/details/TheDecisiveFatwa

[102] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*Can The Shari'ah Be Implemented Gradually?*" Global Message YouTube channel, 2025. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SvA0Y6zp5wc

[103] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. Telegram post from Shaykh Ahmad Gems. May 17, 2025. https://t.me/ShaykhAhmadGemz/1234

Such is the centrality Jibril accords to ideological insulation in education that, in February 2024, he launched a project through his social media platforms aimed at producing educational books and materials for children. *The Comprehensive University of Jibril*[104] is "designed to foster a generation grounded in authentic Islamic Monotheism that goes back to the original roots of the Prophet and the methodology of his companions."[105] Most of the materials—available for free download—are targeted at children between the ages of 3 and 10 and are infused with Jibril's uncompromising ideological worldview. The content includes phrases and theological constructs that are arguably unsuitable for children of such young ages, reflecting Jibril's commitment to shaping not only early religious identity but also early sectarian boundaries. Some examples include:

> *"As Muslims we denounce and hate Taghout as they violate the right of Allah, which is to be worshipped. [...] A popular example of Taghout today are presidents and prime ministers. They make people commit Shirk by voting for them in democratic elections, and make laws that replace and oppose the Shari'ah of Allah*".[106]

> "*It is from the evil ways of the unbelievers and the evil effects of colonization in the Muslim countries that Muslims have fallen victim to paying minor attention to this cardinal Sunnah of starting with the right side first. The seeds of negligence were planted by the enemies of Allah. Notice how the beautiful Arabic language, the language Allah chose His final message to be conveyed in starts from the blessed right side, and the majority of languages such as the English language, on the contrary, begins from the left side. They teach us to write with our left hand, eat with our left hand, drink with our left hand etc., the same hand we clean ourselves with. This is from the evilness and trickery of Shaytaan who seeks only to misguide mankind. It is without a doubt that this is one of the reasons we find blessings absent in our lives.*"[107]

> "*For married women, their husband's preferences are a priority. If a husband desires a specific length, such as long hair, the wife is required*

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[104] As of July 2025, the Telegram channel *The Comprehensive University of Jibril* had 1,730 subscribers, with average post views ranging between 1,500 and 10,000.

[105] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. Telegram post from The Comprehensive University of Jibril, Februrary 2, 2024. https://t.me/JaamiatuJibril/106

[106] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*Children's Aqeeda Book.*" The Comprehensive University of Jibril, February 2, 2024. Page 15.

[107] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*Start With Your Right Side.*" The Comprehensive University of Jibril, February 29, 2024. Page 5.

to listen and obey. She should only trim or cut her hair with his permission and for a valid reason."[108]

"*One of the many difficulties that have come with mass living among the disbelievers is the confusion it has brought about to the basics of the religion and softness in the hearts for them particularly in times of their festivities. The children rather than growing up with the beautiful manners and characteristics of the Muslims, the Quran in their hearts and the love of Allah in their minds, they adopt (unwillingly even) the evil characteristics and despicable ways of the unbelievers.* [...] *The enemies of Islam have consistently plotted, schemed and conspired to divert Muslims from their religion and weaken their adherence to it. By Allah, they did not welcome Muslims into their lands out of affection, but rather to seize the future generations of "Muslims and stray them from Islam. They beautified their lands after stealing from our resources and wreaking havoc and corruption on Earth. They are determined to spread harm, evil and discomfort to the Muslims. In the lands of disbelief, the man lacks true authority over his family. Rebellion, disputes, and quarrels frequently occur between a man and his family. If he doesn't meet their demands, the non-believing police act as the arbiters. As a result, he witnesses the abomination and the indecency within his family, yet feels powerless to intervene. The judges enforce unfair, unjust man-made laws, while the police unjustly imprison and persecute rather than help. Children from Muslim families are removed and placed with non-Muslim families for upbringing. They manipulate the minds of children, strip women of their modesty, and remove the protective zeal from men, creating a society that is destructive and lost."*[109]

"*It is completely forbidden to participate in the festivities of the disbelievers. Whether it is through direct involvement or seemingly innocuous acts like gift-giving, greeting or preparing festive meals specific to that festival. Engaging in such actions is categorically impermissible and unjustifiable. [...] Participating with the disbelievers in their holidays is a type of helping them with sin and transgression. Hence, it is obligatory upon every Muslim male and female to abandon that and not let others influence them as they wish to lead you astray just as they are astray."*[110]

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[108] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*Rulings Pertaining to the Hair.*" The Comprehensive University of Jibril, November 22, 2024. Page 9.

[109] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*The Festive Muslim.*" The Comprehensive University of Jibril, December 19, 2024. Pp. 4-5.

[110] *Ibid.* Pp. 6-7.

Jibril's rejection of normative social models is further reinforced through his absolutist positions on gender, family, and moral regulation. For example, Jibril categorically denies the validity of differing scholarly opinions on the *niqāb*, despite well-documented disagreement across the Sunni legal schools, declaring: "*Niqāb is a Fareedah (obligation) from Allah... no doubt about it.*"[111] In addition to declaring the *niqāb* a mandatory garment for women, Jibril also normalizes male physical discipline in marriage, describing domestic violence as a religiously sanctioned sequence to avoid divorce: "*First, talk to them (women). You know, you communicate to your wife. Maybe she doesn't know what's wrong, you teach her what's wrong from what's right. Second, don't sleep with them. Why is it don't sleep with them? Because when a man sleeps with a woman it's sorts of a weapon she has on him. He has desires for her and it's a weapon she has against him. So, if she loses that weapon, then she's going to reconsider. The third one after that, that's to hit them*"[112]

The focus on women, their agency, their body, their sexuality and even their independence is covered extensively in Jibril's lectures about the family. Even women presence in public life is filtered through the lens of male control, particularly via the concept of *ghīrah*, which Jibril deploys not as a virtue of protective jealousy but as a tool to preemptively police female visibility. In his view, even the slightest husband's public display of affection toward his wife risks provoking desire in other men, potentially leading to widespread immorality. The burden is placed entirely on women: their visibility and desirability must be controlled to preserve moral order. Tolerating or normalizing such expressions of affection are the path towards assimilation of Western society values, "*a society of vicious monsters and animals.*"[113]

Jibril's commitment to doctrinal insulation extends well beyond the individual, the household or education. In his worldview any deviation from his absolute theological conformity is not merely a sin, but a direct threat to the fabric of

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111 Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*Clarifying Proofs Used Against the Obligation of Niqāb*". Ahmad Musa Jibril's official website, March 2023. Page 5. https://ahmadjibril.org/clarifying-proofs-used-against-the-obligation-of-niqab-الخثعمية-حديث/

112 Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*Gems Of Marriage & Divorce.*" Ahmad Jibril's Archives. Pp. 6-7. November 2018. https://archive.org/details/GemsOfMarriageAndDivorcebyAhmadJibril/page/n7/mode/2up

113 Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*The Ruling on Public Displays of Affection Between Spouses*". Haqq Hursts Hypocrites, Transcript of a Q&A video recorded in 2022. https://dn720004.ca.archive.org/0/items/public-displays-of-affection-between-spouses/The%20Ruling%20on%20Public%20Displays%20of%20Affection%20Between%20Spouses.pdf

the Muslim community. Apostasy in particular is not treated as a matter of personal belief but framed as the gravest form of betrayal, "*a form of treason, subversion, and sedition. And it's sedition against Allah, and His Messenger, and the Dīn, and the believers.*"

Jibril draws on classical sources to argue that the punishment for apostasy in an Islamic state is death, and that even outside such a state, the appropriate social response should be total and permanent ostracization, even from close family members. "*A Murtadd or Murtaddah is obviously much worse than a Fāsiq, but he's even worse than an original Kāfir,*" he affirms, citing Ibn Taymiyya and other scholars to justify not only the severity of the punishment but the full social exclusion that should follow. Severing all ties, including speaking, sitting, or interacting with them, is cast as a religious obligation: "*A Muslim should keep away, forsake, abandon that person - even if he's the closest of relatives.*" "*One who associates with such a family member or mingles with them, after advising them, hasn't really gotten to know Allah.*" Under the logic of *al-walā' wal-barā'*,[114] this rupture is portrayed as a minimum threshold of piety—"*the least Muslims can do to combat the spread of riddah in all its forms is to show their displeasure at it, by abandoning those who fall for it.*"[115]

Vilification of Muslim Rulers and Religious Elites

In Jibril's ideological framework, social fragmentation within the Muslim world is not merely a byproduct of modernity or external aggression alone, but the direct result of betrayal from within. At the heart of his worldview is a scathing condemnation of Muslim rulers, state-aligned scholars, and elites, whom he consistently depicts as morally bankrupt and spiritually compromised. Far from seeing them as misguided, he refers to rulers in the Arabian Peninsula as "*prostitutes*" and "*traitors*," accusing them of siding with the enemies of Islam and abandoning divine mandates such as *tawḥīd* and

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[114] The Islamic doctrinal concept of *al-walā' wal-barā'*, usually translated as "loyalty and disavowal," denotes the obligation to show loyalty (*walā'*) to God, Islam, and the Muslim community, while maintaining disavowal (*barā'*) of disbelief, polytheism, and those deemed enemies of the faith. In modern jihadist thought, the concept has been expanded and weaponized to frame rigid boundaries between believers and non-believers, often serving as a justification for exclusivism and takfīr.

[115] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*The Ruling on Keeping Ties With Murtadd Family Members*". Haqq Hursts Hypocrites, Transcript of a Q&A video recorded in 2022. https://dn720004.ca.archive.org/0/items/public-displays-of-affection-between-spouses/The%20Ruling%20on%20Public%20Displays%20of%20Affection%20Between%20Spouses.pdf

jihād.[116] Nowhere is his contempt more visible than in his criticism of Saudi Arabia's rulers and scholars. Jibril refers to them not with reverence, but as a symbol of moral collapse and state-sanctioned heresy. He accuses them of abandoning its religious mission, "*spreading filth and fusūq*" and "*changing* (religion) *and claiming the ḥarām is ḥalāl, which is kufr.*"[117] His rhetoric, rooted in the relentless labeling of Muslim leaders as *ṭāghūt*, cultivates an atmosphere of delegitimization that renders entire governments and their institutions religiously suspect and politically expendable.

Jibril's discourse on Muslim rulers is anchored in a stark binary: those who uphold militant *tawḥīd*—though he never identifies any by name—and those who have betrayed it. He condemns political participation, cooperation with non-Muslim powers, and any form of religious compromise as hallmarks of a "defeatist mentality" fostered by leaders who have pacified the ummah, abandoned jihad, and cooperated with enemies like the U.S. and Israel.[118] As a corrective, he calls upon Muslim youth to revive Islam through *ʿizzah* (honor), *yaqīn* (certainty in divine assistance), and *thabāt* (steadfastness), by returning to *tawḥīd* and armed jihad as the only divine remedy for the Muslim world's political and moral decay.[119]

Even ritual worship is weaponized in Jibril's ideological framework, as he repeatedly warns against performing prayer behind state-aligned imams whom he deems deviants. One of such examples, not the only one, is Muhammad al-Isa—head of the Muslim World League, and a frequent target of jihadist ire. "*Salāh behind the Zindīq Muhammad al-Īsa, who was appointed to deliver the khutbah of hajj, is not permissible, and whoever prays behind him should repeat his salāh.*"[120] He further warns referring to such scholars and imams: "*When the West say he's moderate, it means he*

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[116] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*The Prostitutes Of Today In The Arabian Peninsula*." Global Message YouTube channel, 2024. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oyXuuslscoc

[117] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*The Fiqh of Sins*." Ahmad Musa Jibril official website. October 2024. https://ahmadjibril.org/the-fiqh-of-sins/

[118] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*The Blessed Victorious End*". Ahmad Musa Jibril's official website, December 2023. https://ahmadjibril.org/?s=VICTORIOUS+&e_search_props=c81a840-121

[119] *Ibid*.

[120] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. Telegram post from Shaykh Ahmad Gems. January 5, 2023. https://t.me/ShaykhAhmadGemz/882

gave them his alliance and became their puppet. It's an accusation to his deen not a praise!"[121]

In short, Jibril's vision offers no space for institutional Islam as it currently exists. Legitimate leadership no longer stems from statehood, scholarship, or institutional authority—it flows instead from militant adherence to a pure and oppositional *tawḥīd*. Furthermore, beyond institutions, Jibril's suspicion extends to scholars, academics, and religious professionals across the Muslim world whom he views as enablers of secular regimes. Within this logic, regimes are apostate by default, and allegiance to them constitutes a betrayal not just of faith, but of the *ummah* itself.

Takfīr–dehumanization

Jibril's discursive universe relies heavily on a stark moral dichotomy between the *muwahhidīn*—those who uphold his narrow conception of God's unity—and the rest of the world, including—according to his lectures—the vast majority of Muslims. This is evident in his repeated condemnations of any form of religious or social solidarity with individuals he deems deviant. In a lengthy explanation in the context of a question and answer session, he declared that "*It's not permissible by 'ijmā*[122] *to befriend a Fāsiq*[123] *or Mubtadi'*[124] *or Kāfir, for their Fisq or Kufr or for their Bid'a,*"[125] establishing a totalizing framework in which proximity to the impure—whether sinners, innovators, or simple unbelievers—undermines one's own moral standing. This is not merely a call for theological discernment but a blueprint for active social fragmentation. In Jibril's opinion, loyalty to God demands isolation from everyone else; befriending non-Muslims or doctrinal deviants is framed as an implicit betrayal of divine allegiance.

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[121] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. Telegram post from Shaykh Ahmad Gems. May 15, 2025. https://t.me/ShaykhAhmadGemz/1233

[122] Considered by Muslims as one of the secondary sources of shariah, '*ijmā* refers to the consensus or agreement of Islamic scholars on a matter of religious law.

[123] Someone who violates Islamic law, a sinner.

[124] A religious innovator—someone who introduces *bidʿa* (innovation) into Islam, particularly in matters of creed or worship.

[125] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*The Ruling on Befriending a Kāfir, Fāsiq, or Mubtadi*". Transcript of a Q&A by Haqq Hurts Hypocrites, 2021. https://ia800403.us.archive.org/34/items/bad-friends-in-islam/The%20Ruling%20on%20Bad%20Friends.pdf

His logic extends to all Muslims living in Western countries, his main target public. In a lengthy exposition on *hijra*, Jibril reduces Muslims in the West to three categories: those who practice Islam the way he understands it, who can remain outside the Muslim world because they openly reject *kufr*; those who cannot practice Islam according to Jibril's vision and are therefore obligated to leave; and those who cannot travel to a Muslim country and are excursed due to their weakness.[126] According to Jibril, the implications are clear: remaining in non-Muslim societies without active repudiation of their values places one in disbelief or hypocrisy. In fact, he explicitly warns against assimilation and rejects the legitimacy of Western Muslim identities, going as far as equating geographic and ideological proximity to non-Muslims with moral and theological corruption.[127] This rhetorical posture is not a marginal note; it is woven throughout his teaching, making *takfīr*-adjacent suspicion a central pillar of his project.

Perhaps most striking is Jibril's treatment of mainstream religious scholars and preachers, whom he frequently mocks or delegitimizes for their engagement with institutional religion, interfaith dialogue, or political participation. These figures are not merely portrayed as misguided, but as religious actors who have aligned themselves with falsehood for the sake of comfort, visibility, or state approval. In Jibril's framing, the credibility of a religious figure is inversely proportional to their public standing: the more celebrated, recognized, or materially secure they are, the more likely they are to be implicated in *shirk* or *nifāq*.[128] His rhetoric stops short of issuing formal *takfīr*, but functions adjacent to it by constructing a rigid binary between the *muwahhidīn* and a vast, demonized spectrum of others. This cosmic struggle culminates in his series on the *Ghurabāʾ*—"the Strangers"—who are elevated precisely because of their social isolation, rejection of worldly recognition, and willingness to endure persecution. According to Jibril, they do not want fame, nor are they recognized or want to be recognized, and are targeted precisely for their doctrinal purity. In valorizing these figures, Jibril constructs an ideal of embattled piety that resonates strongly with jihadist martyrdom narratives, laying the

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126 Jibril, Ahmad Musa "*Advice On Hijrah*". Ahmad Musa Jibril's official website, 2024. https://ahmadjibril.org/advice-on-hijrah-you-be-the-judge/

127 *Ibid*.

128 Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "The *Ghurabāʾ* series". Ahmad Musa Jibril's official website, 2024. https://ahmadjibril.org/the-ghuraba-series/

rhetorical and theological groundwork for alienation, confrontation, and, potentially, radicalization.

This adversarial framing reaches theological climax in Jibril's interpretation of divine retribution. Natural disasters, economic collapses, and wars are presented not as neutral events, but as cosmic punishment for the mistreatment of *muwahhidīn*. The death of these figures is vindicated by what he calls *intiqām*—divine revenge—which both sacralizes their struggle and affirms the righteousness of their cause.[129] As such, Jibril's discourse functions less as an exegesis of Islamic creed and more as a sanctified narrative of ideological warfare, where isolation is a virtue, social engagement is a sign of betrayal, and dissent from his creed is met with existential suspicion.

America: The Divine Enemy

Jibril's view of the U.S. is it is not just a morally corrupt society—it is the main enemy in the spiritual, political, and military struggle of Muslims worldwide. His characterizations of America go far beyond cultural critique: "*America is a vicious enemy of Muslims*," he states, listing it "*among the top nations in the history of the earth who have crimes against Muslims*."[130] For Jibril, the U.S. is not just guilty by association or negligence, it is the main actor actively participating in the global oppression and extermination of Muslims. His rhetoric blends classical theological language with modern political outrage, thereby framing anti-American hostility as a religious obligation and aligning it with the divine duty of jihad.

In one of his extended lectures, Jibril invokes several apocalyptic hadiths about an end-times alliance between Muslims and "the Romans"—interpreted as the U.S. and Europe—who initially join forces to combat a common enemy. The tone and framing of his assertions strongly suggest that this prophecy is being fulfilled now, as "*all the Arabic and Muslim countries are under peace treaties with the United States.*"

According to Jibril's reading of Islamic eschatology, and the way he contextualizes it within the current geopolitical landscape, this temporary alliance is destined to collapse, triggering a cataclysmic final confrontation

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129 *Ibid.*

130 *Op. cit.* Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*The True Meaning Of Jihad*"

between Muslims and Western powers. Though Jibril cloaks his statements in complex religious language, the underlying message is unmistakably contemporary: American power is transient and destined to fall, and Muslims must ready themselves—spiritually and, by implication, militarily—for what he portrays as an inevitable and divinely ordained clash.[131]

This worldview leaves no room for Muslim integration into American institutions, particularly those Jibril sees as its coercive machinery. One particularly revealing example of this can be found in an extended lecture condemning Muslim enlistment in the U.S. military. For Jibril, joining the army of a non-Muslim state constitutes outright treason against God. He describes the American military as "*at war with Islam and Muslims*," and as "*the most powerful, colonizing, conceited, arrogant, defiant terrorist organization on the face of the Earth today, and possibly of all times.*" Muslim soldiers are depicted as collaborators who side with "*the enemies of Islam*," thereby forfeiting their religious integrity and becoming complicit in the global oppression of the ummah.[132]

His rejection of American civic life is no less severe and extends to the political sphere as well. Jibril denounces voting in U.S. elections as an act of *kufr*, arguing that Muslim support for any political candidate amounts to complicity in the bloodshed of fellow Muslims: "*I advised against voting for Biden while the deviant ones were calling to support him. The result of their call to support him claiming it's maslaha*[133] *was Gaza being levelled and its people being massacred. Similarly we advise against voting for Trump or Kamala in the current campaign while the deviants were in the podium supporting him. In just a few weeks in office the results speak for themselves.*"[134] Rather than pray for reform or lesser harm, Jibril openly calls for collapse from within: "*May Allah grant the U.S. the president that will best serve the destruction of its economy from within, due to its explicit funding of the massacre of our children in Gaza, and elsewhere.*"[135]

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131 Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*A Treaty Between The Muslims And The Romans.*" Global Message YouTube channel, October 2024. https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=ahmad+musa+jibril+treaty+romans

132 Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*The Ruling on Enlisting in a Kāfir Military.*" Ahmad Musa Jibril's official website, November 2024. https://ahmadjibril.org/the-ruling-on-enlisting-in-a-kafir-military/

133 An Arabic term referring to the concept of general interest, public benefit, or social good.

134 Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*Gaza is for the Muslims.*" Ahmad Musa Jibril's official website, February 2025. https://ahmadjibril.org/gaza-is-for-the-muslims/

135 Jibril, Ahmad Musa. Telegram post from Ahmad Musa Jibril's official Telegram Channel, October 30, 2024. https://t.me/ahmad_musa_jibril/620

What makes Jibril's anti-American rhetoric particularly dangerous is that it is not merely oppositional—it is absolutist, revelatory, and providential. In his framework, the U.S. must hate Islam by definition, because "*the mere existence of pure tawḥīd is a nuisance the oppressive kufr feel they need to extinguish.*" Unless Muslims "*cater their Islam*" to liberal norms or "*delude your tawḥīd to their* [American] *tendency,*" he warns, "*they will never be pleased.*"[136] This logic collapses the space for civic pluralism or peaceful coexistence and constructs a binary moral universe: either one submits to divine authority or collaborates with a hostile, illegitimate power. In doing so, Jibril not only promotes religious isolationism but implicitly sanctions spiritual and ideological resistance to the American state—resistance that could, in his framework, take on violent expression.

Israel-Palestine

Jibril's discourse on Palestine is deeply embedded within his broader ideological framework of militant opposition to the State of Israel, rejection of Western political structures, and a rigid theology of *al-walāʾ wa-l-barāʾ*. For Jibril, the Palestinian cause is not merely a political issue or a nationalist struggle—it is an explicit religious obligation tied to the unity of the Ummah and the confrontation with disbelief. "*Gaza along with all of Filasteen belongs not just to the Muslims of Filasteen but to the entire Muslim Ummah,*"[137] he affirms, framing the defense of Palestine as a global Islamic imperative rather than a local concern.

The ongoing normalization of ties between Arab governments and Israel is presented by Jibril as a theological abomination—nothing less than apostasy. In his words, "*The reality of normalization is similar to that of interfaith. Simply put, it's the utmost, deepest Wala' to the Kuffar.*"[138] These normalization agreements are portrayed not as political strategies but as deliberate attempts to "*dismantle the layers of لا إلـــه إلا الله in the hearts of the Ummah.*"[139] Jibril rejects any discourse of coexistence or peace, likening normalization to spiritual submission.

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[136] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. Telegram post from Shaykh Ahmad Gems. September 16, 2024. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xle_LnKtCuo

[137] *Op. cit.* Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*Gaza is for the Muslims.*"

[138] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*Ramadān 1445 Q&A - Day 01: The Ruling on Normalization Treaties*". Ahmad Musa Jibril official website, March 2024. https://ahmadjibril.org/ramadan-1445-qa/

[139] *Ibid.*

In the current context, Jibril addresses military asymmetry and what he calls the "*defeated mentality*" of Muslims who delay resistance due to material weakness. Instead, he calls for unwavering faith and active confrontation, no matter the odds: "*Muslims don't take pure materialistic matters into account alone especially, especially when it's jihad al-difa'.*[140] *They rely on Allah SWT, gather what they have and set up towards the enemy as the Messenger sallallahu alaihi wasallam did. It should not be understood that Muslims fully ignore materialistic preparation but it's not everything*".[141]

Quoting [Qur'an 8:60], he urges Muslims to "*gather against them what you can of what you can of power,*" rejecting the notion that victory depends on conventional superiority: "*Material preparation does not have to be ignored but what's requested is just what you have, you don't say let's wait another 60 years until we have nuclear weapons while they're raping our sisters and killing our children.*"[142] For Jibril, defeat begins not on the battlefield, but when Muslims abandon the divine obligation of jihad and allow fear and pragmatism to erode their belief.

In addition to military confrontation, Jibril also presents economic boycott as a religious obligation and a prophetic method of resistance against Zionist aggression. Drawing from historical episodes and prophetic traditions, he frames boycotting Israeli-linked companies and institutions as a contemporary form of economic *jihad*. "*Boycotting,*" he argues, "*is inflicting pressure on a targeted entity.*" "*When* [the Prophet] *burned down and cut* [the Jews'][143] *palm trees, it was a form of economic pressure.*" According to Jibril, modern-day rulers who oppose these actions are "rejects" (*murji'ah*), collaborating with Zionists and betraying the Ummah: "*They* [Arab governments] *are the ones protecting the Zionist borders and entertaining prostitute singers while our children are being killed.*"[144]

In sum, for Jibril, Palestine is test of faith, obedience, and commitment to the global Islamic struggle. His call is for total alignment: theological, military, and

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[140] Defensive Jihad.

[141] *Op. cit.* Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*Ramadān 1445 Q&A - Day 01: The Ruling on Normalization Treaties*".

[142] *Ibid.*

[143] Referring to the Jewish tribe of Banu Nadir. For further context see: Sahih Bukhari, Hadith: 2326.

[144] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*Everything You Need to Know about Boycotting*". Ahmad Musa Jibril official website, November 2023. https://ahmadjibril.org/everything-you-need-to-know-about-boycotting/

economic. Any hesitation, neutrality, or prioritization of political calculations over divine duty is, in his view, a betrayal. Resistance, including active confrontation, is both a religious obligation and the only acceptable response.

Dehumanization of Shia Muslims

Jibril's discourse on the Shia is shaped by a narrative of dehumanization, theological delegitimization, historical accusation, and rejection of coexistence. One of the clearest signs of his animosity is his consistent refusal to use the term "Shia." Instead, Jibril adopts the derogatory epithets *Rāfiḍah*[145] and *Majūs*[146] —lexicological choices rooted in intra-Muslim theological conflicts, repurposed across centuries to dehumanize the Shia. These labels are also widely used in Salafi-jihadist literature and propaganda to delegitimize and demonize Shia communities, portraying them as heretics and internal enemies of Islam.

The *takfīr* dimension of Jibril's discourse regarding Shia is unmistakable. He cites, affirms, and amplifies the idea that Shia beliefs are rooted in *shirk*, and that genuine *tawḥīd* is considered a crime in Shia-majority contexts: "*Pure and real tawheed is a crime, because it goes against the core belief of the Raafidhah (which is Shirk). The belief of the Raafidhah is founded on Shirk, just like our belief is founded on Tawheed.*"[147]

Building on this foundation, Jibril describes what he sees as a historical constant: the Shia are not only doctrinally deviant, but among the principal—if not the greatest—threats to Muslims. His rhetoric is filled with references to massacres, betrayal, and persecution allegedly perpetrated by Shia across centuries and geographies. "*Show me a country or a town, now and in history, where they took leadership and became the strongholds of it where they did not massacre and commit genocide against Ahlus-Sunnah*"[148] Even more concerning is how he routinely distorts selective historical interpretations to frame present-day events as part of the same existential threat:

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[145] Literally "rejectors", refers to Shia Muslims, those who "reject" the legitimacy of the first caliphs.

[146] Originally a neutral term for Zoroastrians, this term is used derogatorily against Shia Muslims to imply they are not true Muslims but instead covertly adhere to pre-Islamic Persian beliefs.

[147] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*Our Brothers in Iran*". Ahmad Musa Jibril official website, November 2024. https://ahmadjibril.org/our-brothers-in-iran/

[148] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*We Will Never Unite With The Shia Rāfidah.*" Islamic Lecture Collection YouTube channel, December 18, 2024. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q5YcBj50DGE

> "*Rawafidh don't ever bring victory to Muslims. If there's any treacherous traitor worse than the Yahud, it would be the Rawafidh. And if I have time, I will give you a glimpse of the many statements that are in Minhaj al-Sunnah by Ibn Taymiyyah and how the Rawafidh consistently betray Muslims and how they side always with the enemy. And how they help the Crusaders take over Bayt al-Maqdis. Statements that will make you seem to be talking about the current day's events.*"[149]

Jibril also staunchly rejects any form of intra-Muslim coexistence, denouncing attempts at rapprochement between Sunnis and Shia while mocking those who advocate for unity as either ignorant or deceitful. In one of his most provocative analogies, he imagines a scenario in which someone invites another to unite despite having insulted their parents—calling their mother promiscuous and their father a homosexual. The analogy is meant to underscore, in vulgar terms, the perceived impossibility of unity with a sect he sees as inherently treacherous. He uses this to ridicule Sunni leaders who engage in inter-Muslim dialogue, describing them as naïve collaborators who ignore what he presents as a long history of Shia betrayal and aggression. For Jibril, unity is not only misguided, it is a degrading capitulation.[150]

This uncompromising stance is particularly alarming given Jibril's base in Dearborn, Michigan, a suburb of Detroit with one of the largest Muslim populations in the U.S. per capita, including a community of approximately 1,000 families of Iranian origin.[151] His rhetoric thus directly undermines the very possibility of peaceful religious pluralism in a diverse democratic society. While he stops short of directly inciting violence, his messaging constructs a moral universe in which Shia are the irredeemably deviant historical enemies of Islam. Statements such as, "*Our Lord is not their lord, our messenger is not their messenger,*"[152] encapsulate his theological disavowal and radical exclusivism.

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[149] *Op. cit.* Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*The True Meaning Of Jihad*".

[150] Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*The Kufr Of The Raafidha.*" Global Message YouTube Channel, June 6, 2024. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BB287t0SAiA

[151] Anderson, Brooke. "No surprise to residents, US census finds Michigan's Dearborn majority is Arab." *The New Arab*, October 6, 2023. https://www.newarab.com/news/us-census-finds-michigans-dearborn-majority-arab

[152] *Op. cit.* Jibril, Ahmad Musa. "*We Will Never Unite With The Shia Rāfidah.*"

Jibril's Ideological Profile

With all the previous analytical elements, Ahmed Musa Jibril's ideological profile can be described as a rigorously literalist *atharī* Salafi hermeneutic that informs a distinctly contemporary, extremist political stance. His core doctrinal commitments—an uncompromising *tawḥīd*, an insistence on textual primacy, and rejection of *bidʿa*—are continuously translated into social and political prescriptions that privilege exclusion, doctrinal policing, and militant readiness.

Educated within the Salafi institutional milieu of Medina, Jibril's methodology privileges the apparent (*ẓāhir*) meaning of scripture, trusting that clarity emerges when one submits wholly to the letter of revelation. This appears to have been inherited from some of his principal teachers, notably Abdulaziz bin Baz and al-Albani, who both championed a purification of Islamic doctrine from centuries of accumulated innovations (*bidʿa*) and professed an epistemology rooted in the consensus of the first three generations of Muslims (*ijmāʿ al-salaf*).

At the heart of Jibril's *ʿaqīda* lies a politicized affirmation of *tawḥīd*—the absolute oneness and uniqueness of God—and an equally stringent negation of any form of *shirk* in a way that formal affirmation of God's lordship without concomitant rejection of non-divine legal and political authority is presented as doctrinally hollow. The effect is to collapse theological correctness into political allegiance: adherence to secular law, participation in pluralist systems, or uncritical support for established Muslim rulers is framed as spiritual compromise—often described as an act of apostasy.

This theological framework produces two mutually reinforcing rhetorical moves. First, it creates a tightly bounded in-group (the *muwahhidīn*) whose legitimacy is measured by doctrinal purity and oppositional stance. Second, it legitimizes systematic social rupture—ostracism, delegitimization of scholars and institutions, and a sustained campaign of ideological insulation within family and educational settings—as necessary defenses of the faith.

While doctrinally grounded in classical Salafi and Hanbali reference points, Jibril's discourse exhibits a persistent ambivalence between quietist and confrontational strands. Elements of al-Albani-style *hadithism* and apoliticism coexist with the influence of more confrontational contemporary jihadi

ideologues (e.g., al-Shuaybi and Ali al-Khudair). That tension manifests as consistent moral exhortation to resist perceived corruption and, at times, as a rhetoric that approaches explicit operational encouragement—most notably in his treatment of jihad, the duty to free Muslim prisoners, and the valorization of martyrdom. Though the documents analyzed show he often stops short of issuing formal operational instructions, his framing normalizes militant categories and renders them morally obligatory for receptive audiences.

In fact, Jibril's discourse clearly elevates militant *jihad*—equating its obligation with core religious duties, urging its normalization in discourse and social practice, and valorizing martyrdom as both ideal and pedagogical goal. He also endorses severe punitive stances toward perceived insults to Islam and legitimizes social sanctions as religiously warranted responses. These positions markedly lower the threshold between exclusionary rhetoric and potential mobilization.

Politically, Jibril's *minhāj* combines a rejection of Western secular democratic norms with a clear disavowal of Islamist parliamentary engagement. Two target-frames recur across Jibril's corpus: the West (above all the United States) as an existential adversary, and intra-Muslim enemies—particularly Shia communities, state-aligned scholars and Muslim rulers—depicted as traitorous or polytheistic collaborators. He scorns pluralism as a façade that undermines sharia's exclusivity, and he warns that Muslim participation in nonIslamic legal systems entails a betrayal of divine sovereignty. Yet, unlike some of his more strident Sahwa colleagues (e.g., Salman alAwda or Safar alHawali), Jibril does not explicitly endorse the machinery of the Muslim Brotherhood; instead, he situates himself in what he believes to be a doctrinally pure enclave, admonishing both secular autocrats and Islamist politicos alike for compromising unconditionally on doctrinal principles.

In sum, Jibril navigates a salafi compass whose north is defined by textual fidelity, doctrinal austerity, and an ethos of uncompromising monotheism. His interpretative framework draws its shape from *tābiʿūn*era literalism; his *aqīda* insists on *tawḥīd* and repudiation of any form of innovation; and his *minhāj* rejects both worldly democracy and pluralism. Jibril's ideological stance is thus a paradox: he upholds the Salafi claim of returning to an unadulterated past, yet his synthesis of influences reveals a distinctly modern polemical toolkit. His rhetoric, while couched in classical scholarship,

serves a contemporary agenda: the delegitimization of both secular governance and Islamist reformism in favor of an uncompromising, destabilizing and radicalizing vision of Islamic revival.

While his training under mainstream Salafi authorities lends him institutional credibility, his amplification of far more radical voices suggests an attempt to reconcile scholarly legitimacy with ideological militancy. That duality broadens his appeal—he reaches orthodox Salafi audiences through learned exegesis, while simultaneously providing disaffected listeners with theological argents for rebellion.

The Paradox of Jibril's Influence and Endurance

Jibril is not the first American ideologue to propagate a radical Islamist worldview to a wide English-speaking audience, and he is unlikely to be the last. Samir Khan[153] and Anwar al-Awlaki,[154] two now deceased U.S.-born al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) operatives, likewise disseminated anti-American, anti-Western, and antisemitic propaganda to global audiences while living in the U.S. and later abroad.

It might be tempting to cast Jibril as a potential successor to al-Awlaki but there is one big difference between them. Unlike al-Awlaki and Khan, Jibril has not transitioned from advocacy to operational involvement. In addition, while al-Awlaki and Khan eventually left the United States—partly in response to law-enforcement—Jibril has remained in the U.S. despite also facing scrutiny.

At first glance this appears paradoxical: Jibril is openly anti-American, yet continues to reside in the country he denounces. This might be a deliberate strategy: Jibril likely recognizes that the constitutional protections of free speech that allow him to propagate his radical views of Islam are what allow him to remain an active voice, not only in the U.S., but in the online global arena.

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[153] See for context: Ingram, Haroro J. & Lewis, Jon (2021). *The Founding Fathers of American Jihad: The Impacts and Legacies of Anwar al-Awlaki, Samir Khan, and Ahmad Abousamra*. Program on Extremism, The George Washington University. June 2021, pp. 19-28. https://extremism.gwu.edu/founding-fathers-american-jihad

[154] See for context: Meleagrou-Hitchens, Alexander. *Incitement: Anwar al-Awlaki's Western Jihad*. Harvard University Press, 2020.

A U.S.-trained lawyer, Jibril demonstrates detailed knowledge of American law, particularly First Amendment jurisprudence. Jibril has effectively leveraged that knowledge to push his online rhetoric to the very legal boundary without crossing the threshold of unlawful incitement. His mastery of this ability allows him to remain a radical online voice without fear of legal repercussions. He uses his constitutional protections as both shield and sword—probing doctrinal limits while continuing to disseminate his radical propaganda that attempts to erode confidence in the American system of values and the democratic institutions that safeguard those very protections.

Democracies are designed to tolerate dissent, even when it is hostile to democracy itself. In that sense, Jibril's continued activism highlights a structural dilemma: the rights that protect democratic discourse are the very same rights that Jibril exploits to entrench his extremist and anti-democratic influence. The aim, difficult though it may be, should not be to curtail legitimate dissent but to prevent or limit violent discourse that fosters mobilization, while remaining consistent with First Amendment protections.

Conclusion

Jibril's life and work demonstrate how extremist ecosystems are sustained not solely by direct calls to violence, but by figures who provide theological scaffolding and moral legitimacy for jihadist causes. His biography—rooted in Salafi scholarship and marked by criminal convictions and repercussions—provides important insight into how his authority is constructed and contested. His discourse and ideology, characterized by doctrinal austerity, militant valorization of jihad, delegitimization of Muslim rulers and Shia communities, and uncompromising hostility toward the U.S. and Israel, reveal a paradoxical figure who claims fidelity to classical Salafi theology while serving as a conduit for contemporary jihadist propaganda.

Jibril's influence has undergone a transformation. Although his personal online presence diminished – but did not disappear – after the imposition of court-ordered restrictions, his sermons, lectures, and writings continue to circulate through networks of followers and students who curate, translate, and repackage his message across platforms, multiplying its reach. This decentralized diffusion not only extends his reach but insulates him from direct liability, demonstrating how jihadist discourse adapts to regulatory

pressures and platform moderation. His case highlights how charismatic figures can remain influential long after their formal output declines, shaping the ideological environment in which violent movements operate.

From a policy perspective, the challenge posed by Jibril is emblematic of the wider difficulties facing governments and digital platforms in balancing civil liberties with counter-extremism obligations. Jibril's post-incarceration return to digital prominence illustrates the limits of government intervention. Ultimately, his case underscores the need for nuanced strategies that account not only for explicit incitement but also for the subtler ideological frameworks that create pathways to radicalization.

By analyzing Jibril's biography, digital presence, and discourse, this study has sought to provide a comprehensive account of his ideology as well as his role within the jihadist ecosystem. His trajectory illustrates the paradox of a preacher who never openly instructs violence yet constructs the theological and moral architecture that sustains it. Finally, the combination of classical-sounding scholarship, challenging and emotionally appealing messages, and multi-platform-optimized formats produces a persuasive hybrid—scholarly legitimation on the one hand and contemporary mobilization on the other—with clear implications for transnational radicalization dynamics.

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