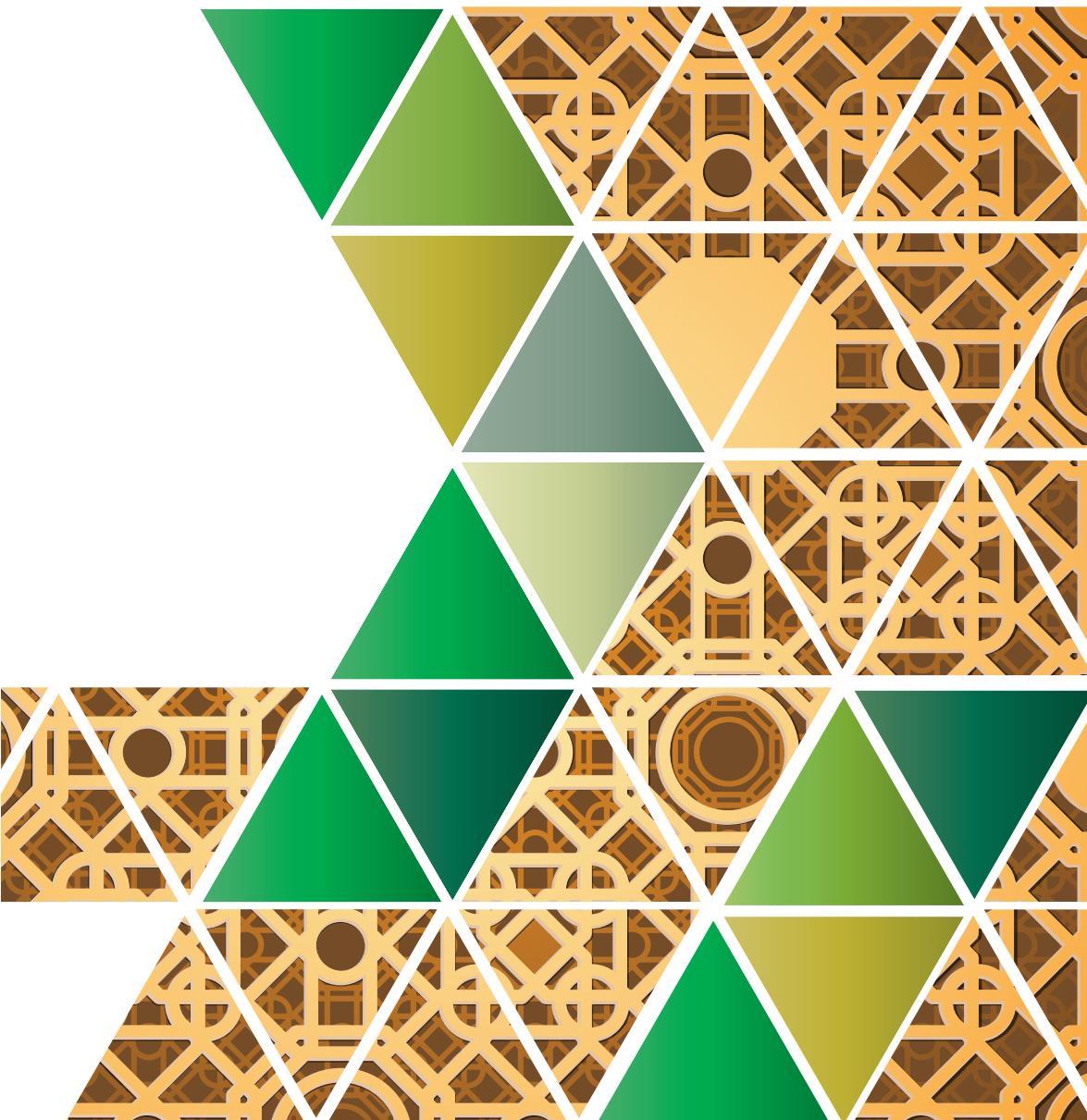


Modern Day

Terrorism

An Examination of Islam's Values & Texts



Dr. Hamid Slimi, PhD

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PART ONE

ISLAM & THE UNIVERSAL VALUES

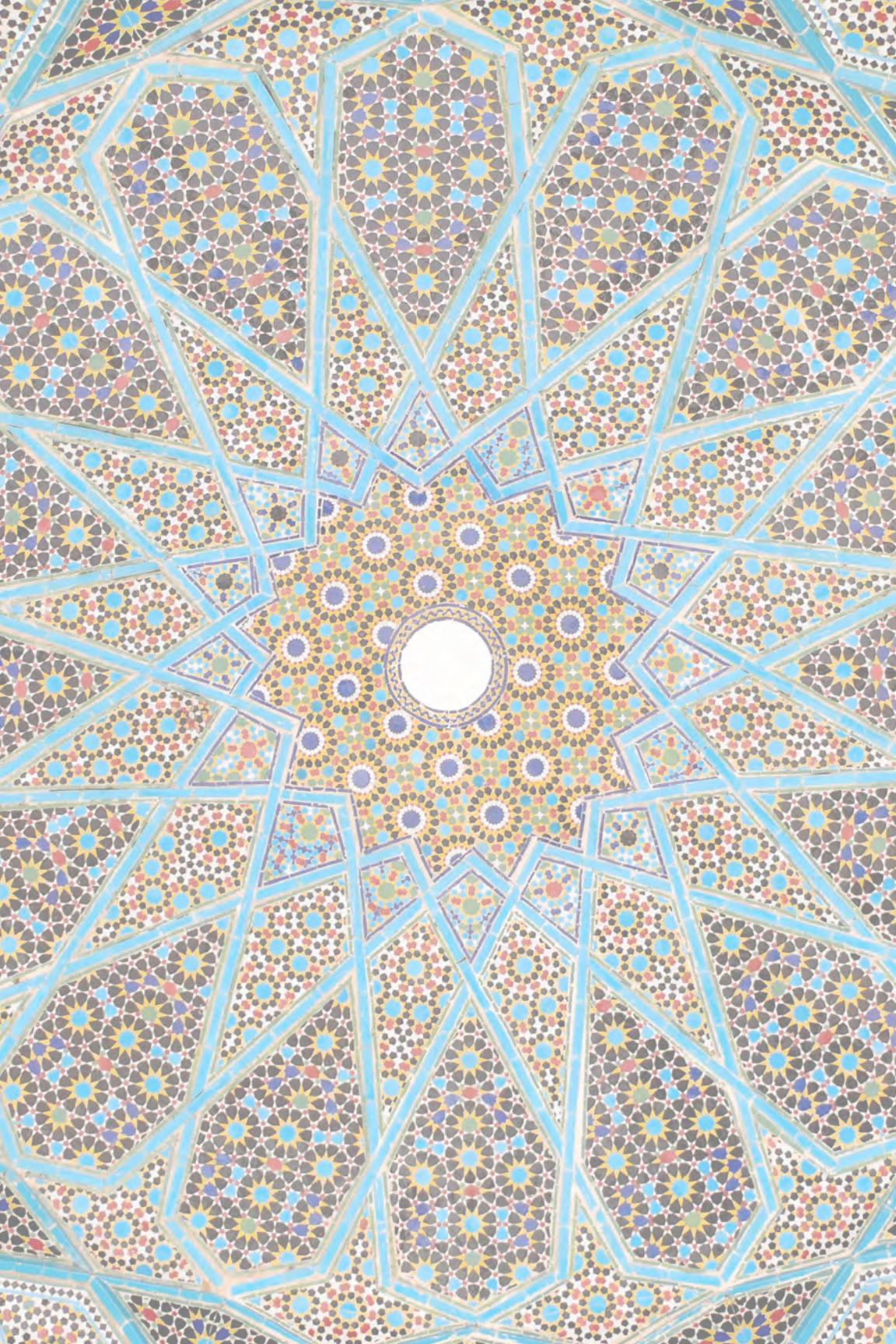
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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Preface

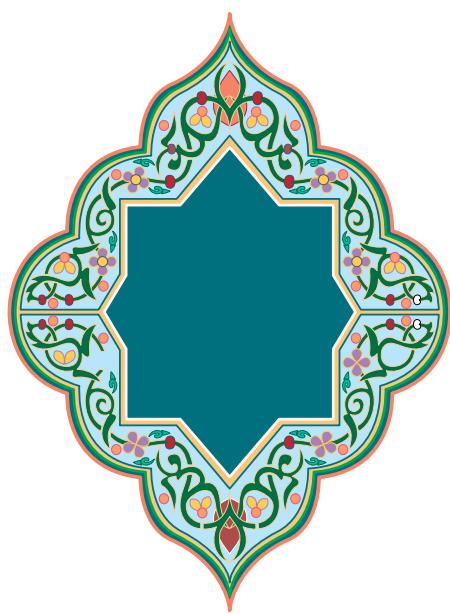
The idea of this book originates from my original book on terrorism called: *Terrorism: An Islamic Perspective* which came out back in February 2000 then a second edition of the same book came out in 2002. When the attacks of September 11, 2001, occurred in the United States of America, I wished at that time that I had millions of copies of the book printed. Almost everybody wanted to know what the stance of Islam and Muslims was regarding the issue of killing innocent people through acts of terror. In the second edition of the book, I mentioned that whatever I said before 9/11 was still relevant after those tragic events because we stand on the same principles that are timeless and universal. The only difference was that any reader I addressed before September 11, 2001, would have different concerns, interests or emotions towards this issue than the one who reads it in the post 9/11 era.

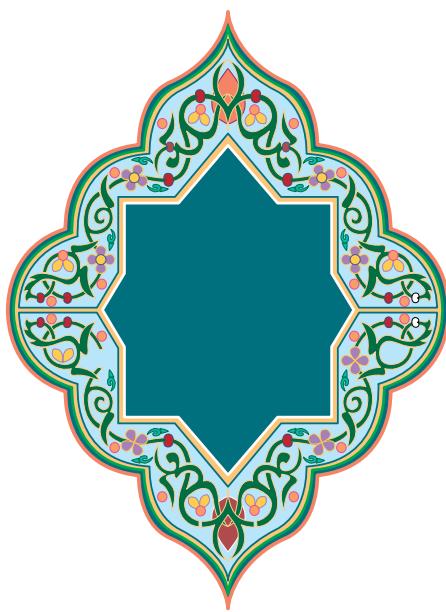
As I was teaching and working on an academic project at UIN University in Jakarta, Indonesia, I revisited the old book and decided to rewrite a new book on the same topic keeping some of the main ideas of the former one but with a more elucidated fashion and a new organization of ideas. Thanks to the university's department of research, this new

book has already been translated into the Indonesian language and I hope and pray it will be translated into other languages in the near future once this English and original version is well publicized. It was a great opportunity to update the content of the original book by taking into consideration some useful suggestions from different readers and good friends, while adding some updates in terms of events and answers to new questions during the post 9/11 era. The topic of terrorism and violent religious extremism is very relevant and should be addressed from a Muslim perspective in the light of Muslim sources and values. Sadly, this view of Terrorism and its connection to religion does not seem like it will go away any time soon especially given the increase of violent religious extremist incidents throughout the globe.

This book aims at informing the reader based on an objective analysis of the phenomenon of terrorism and based on facts and evidences rather than personal opinion.

The Author
March 09, 2018





Original Foreword

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful.

Praise be to Allah the Lord of the universe and may His blessings be showered upon His Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), his family and his companions.

May Allah bless my dear brother Ustadh Hamid Slimi for his effort in presenting the religion of Islam in its highest principles of justice, beneficence, peace and mercy. These were the very principles that opened many arms and hearts for Islam because of the sincerity of the early Muslims, their strong will, their care for humanity and their pure and pious hearts. They introduced a new and fresh perspective of life that was previously unknown to many people before.

This new life was distinguished by its constant connection with the life of the hereafter. The individual became in a constant state of peace in every aspect of the life of this world. In Islam, Peace is expressed in the salutation, the prayers, the *tashahhud*, and in all the different dealings with others and in all the various transactions. The life of a sincere Muslim is a life on which peace reigns. It is a life where a person is conscious of the hereafter and its eternal existence, where the message of peace will be repeated all the time whether in the salutation of Our Lord Allah, or of His angels, or of other dwellers of Paradise. Allah (SWT) orders us to

salute each other with peace. He says, “**When a courteous greeting of peace is offered to you, meet it with a greeting still more courteous, or at least of equal courtesy. Allah takes careful account of all things.**” (Qur'an 4:86)

Moreover, one of the names of Allah, the One the Muslims should worship sincerely, is al-Salaam. Allah (swt) says, “**Allah is He, beside Whom there is no other god; the Sovereign, the Holy One, the Source of Peace (and Perfection), the Guardian of Faith, the Preserver of Safety, the Exalted in Might, the Irresistible, the Supreme: Glory to Allah! (High is He) above the partners they attribute to Him.**” (Qur'an 59:23)

The Muslim must always end Salat prayer, which keeps him/her, in connection with Allah, by saying “as-Salaamu alaikum!” meaning, “Peace be upon you!” to the right and to the left. Moreover, when meeting other people, the conventional symbol for that is the salutation with the same message of peace. Allah (swt) says, “**Salute each other – a greeting of blessing and purity as from Allah. Thus, does Allah make clear the Signs to you: that you may understand.**” (Qur'an 24:61)

Since this life is connected to the other life, justice was required and ordered in all aspects and with all the creation of Allah. God Almighty says, “**Allah commands justice, beneficence, and giving to kith and kin, and He forbids**

all indecent deeds, injustice, evil, and rebellion: He instructs you that you may receive admonition.” (16:90)

Moreover, by establishing justice amongst people, more mercy, happiness and love could spread throughout humanity. The Prophet (S) said, “**An unhappy person is a person who is not merciful to others.**”¹

These principles, which were absorbed by the hearts of those before us and were mingled with their souls, are well presented and elucidated in the work of the author. With sincere and suitable expression, this work has shown clearly that Islam has nothing to do with that of which it is being accused. The incessant allegations against our religion because of the acts of the few are indeed contradicting the teachings of Islam and its high universal principles.

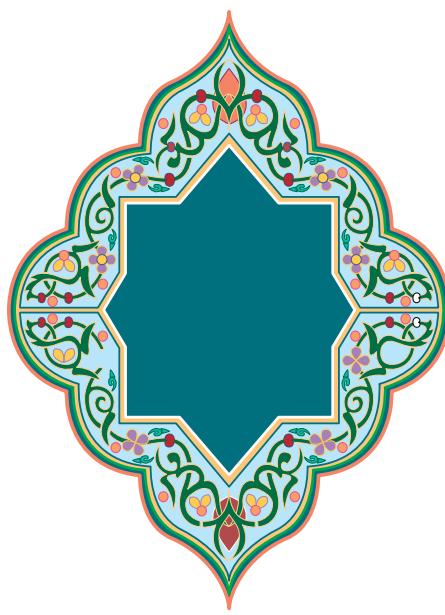
We ask Allah, the Most High, to accept this effort from the author and to benefit people with it and to realize our hopes and wishes for all. He is the All-Hearing and the All-Responsive.

Prof. Dr. Yahia Ismael

Al-Azhar al-Sharif University
Cairo, Egypt.

Shawal 1421/January 2001

¹ Related by at-Tirmidhi, Abu Dāwûd, and Ahmad



Introduction

All Praise Be to Allah, the Most Glorious, the Most Exalted, and the Most Merciful! And may His blessings be showered on His beloved Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him)*, all the prophets before him (Peace be upon them) as well as his blessed family, his virtuous companions and those who follow them until the Day of Judgement. Amen!

Undoubtedly, the issues of terrorism and violent extremism continue to make the biggest headlines. They are the most common themes we hear and read about every day. While dealing with this subject at this time and age of fast dissemination of information and rushed judgements, many traditional and social media sources and writers have spread willingly – or unwillingly – countless misconceptions about Islam and Muslims. This fact has led many of our fellow human beings to a negative perception of our religion and its adherents based on what is being presented to them. They are constantly fed images of violent incidents perpetrated in the name of Islam by violent religious extremists. The demonization of Muslims and Islam is a fact and it is happening subliminally and openly. People are bombarded on a daily basis

* (Peace be upon him) is mentioned by Muslims after mentioning the name of a prophet or an angel. In the following next pages, I may put (S) for “Salla Allahu alayhi wa Sallam!” in Arabic which means (Blessings & Peace be upon him) and (A) for “Alayhi-Salaam!” which means (Peace be upon him).

by images and videos of horrific scenes of massive deaths and colossal destruction, mixed with Hellish fires and smothering smoke. They hear the echoing sounds of fellow human beings crying out in pain and grieving for their losses. In the midst of all of this, they simultaneously see and hear a discussion of the religion of Islam being a potential threat to global peace and Muslim individuals being potential suspects for acts of terror. Regular people in the street are questioning, “Who could have done this?”, “Why would someone do this?” and “What kind of religion would allow this to happen?” This has contributed tremendously to the increase of Islamophobia, prejudices, discrimination and political manipulations, and has resulted in violence against Muslims as well as vandalism of mosques, places of worship, Muslim institutions and private homes.

In this modern age of information overflow, people have neither the time nor the resources to follow up on incidents, backgrounds or causes of such malice. Not everyone has the interest or the necessary tools to conduct fact-finding and truth-seeking investigations because people are struggling to make a living and to survive in this world of economic uncertainties. Due to competition among the various media sources, success is judged mainly by fulfilling the sponsor’s goals, by the rapidity of transmitting the news to the masses and by displaying the oddest, most controversial, sensual and exciting stories to people. Furthermore, since many of the media agencies have become business-oriented institutions and moneymaking venues, that becomes the priority

compared to ascertaining the truth and examining the facts. I am not suggesting that there is not a good amount of objective reporting as well as professional and independent journalism with integrity and ethics. However, apparently and desolately, the most dominant models of media seem to play the same notes as some politicians or special interests groups. In addition to the above, due to the internet revolution and ease of access, there is more and more of a ‘do it yourself’ model of news casting and ‘expertise,’ especially through social media.

Thus, today it has become very challenging for Muslims to explain the complexity of many global issues related more to historical, social and political matters than simply to religion. There is a significant number of Muslim countries that are still dealing with conflicts that were inherited from the Colonial age, in addition to all sorts of social and economic challenges. Islam is misused by fanatics and violent extremists, but the fact remains that it has nothing to do with terrorism. In the absence of a united Muslim leadership, a vacuum allowed such unconventional interpretations and applications of the Muslim tenets to speak for Muslims.

For the sake of giving the reader an in-depth report concerning the position of Islam regarding violence and terrorism, I have written this work to clarify the ambiguities and to clear the confusion. I have used as a main reference the Islamic teachings and values as recorded in its primary sources, namely the Qur'an, the word of Allah, and the Sunnah, which is the compilation of the recorded sayings, actions, approved actions, and descriptions of the Prophet Muhammad (Blessings

& Peace be upon him). In this work, I am emphasizing these two sources because they are the most authoritative in the Islamic jurisprudence. The other references I have included are mainly conventional commentaries of the Qur'an and the Hadith. Rather than focusing too much on the sayings of different Muslim scholars, it would be much simpler and more of an examination of the texts if we focus on those two sources, which are perceived by our non-Muslim friends as the equal counterpart to the scriptures in other religions.

Therefore, the main purpose of this work is to provide correct information based mainly on the examination of the above-mentioned textual sources and the consensus of the scholars of Islam, and not just on personal speculations. My intent is to tell my fellow Muslims and fellow human beings about the beauty of our religion and its rejection of any extremism in views and practices, as well as any false allegations pointing to Islam as the source of terrorism, violence, hatred, and malice. I am convinced that while human beings may differ in their opinions, there must be respect and cooperation among them. This is necessary for a just, peaceful and prosperous world.

I have written this work for every person who is interested in knowing Islam's position regarding terrorism. I have demonstrated that such evil phenomenon is contradictory to the principles of this religion, which considers Peace, Justice, and Mercy as its main fundaments. I also want to remind my fellow Muslims of our task as peace-lovers, peacemakers and justice-seekers by showing the reader what

Islam stands for and to clarify the misconceptions surrounding the portrayal of Muslims and Islam by many media sources.

This book is an examination and analysis of modern day terrorism through the lenses of the Islamic values and Islamic religious texts. It is divided into two major parts; the first part discusses the stance of Islam vis-à-vis the universal values shared by all people, religions and cultures of the world specifically the values of peace, justice and mercy. In the first chapter, I discuss the concept of peace by emphasizing its different dimensions: psychological, spiritual, social and political. Then I talk about the critical issue of war and peace in Islam elaborating on the wars that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) and his companions had to fight. Thereafter, I discuss the concept of Jihad in Islam, how it was conducted and the reasons behind it. In the second chapter I discuss the concept of justice in Islam firstly, for being a fundamental moral and religious duty and secondly for the importance of fulfilling duties, being fair and equitable in life and in different relationships. The last chapter in this first part focuses on the concept of mercy and how Islam itself is a message of mercy and the Messenger (Peace be upon him) was a model of mercy and compassion.

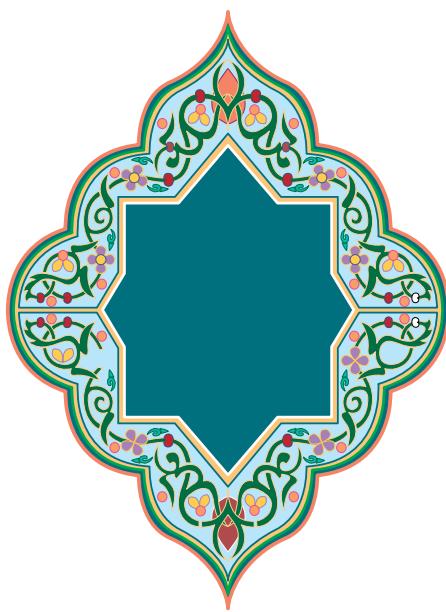
In the second part of the book, I discuss the problem of terrorism and violence that have become related to Islam in people's minds due to many reasons, including the negative media and the many terrorist and violent acts in the name of the religion. In the first chapter, I make a comparison between terrorism and Jihad and how they are two different things in

spite of the fact that terrorists claim doing Jihad. Because of the analysis and the critical point that I present, demonstrating that Jihad aims at preserving life and honors its sanctity whereas terrorism does the total opposite, the logical follow up in the second chapter is an explanation of the sanctity of life in Islam. Thereafter, I discuss the contemporary violent religious extremism with some of its special features like suicide bombing, killing of abducted innocents and the rebirth of the historical Khawārij movement. Finally, in the seventh and last chapter, I conclude by discussing how to deal with the reality of terrorism and ways to counter it. Then I address the issue of Islam being perceived as a global threat to peace, security and human rights.

The content here is presented in a very simple and concise manner to be an easy reading resource and a reference for those who are interested in learning about Islam's stance on terrorism. The main goal of this work is to clear misconceptions and confusion around our faith that teaches its adherents to seek, learn, love and promote peace, justice and mercy. Many people today have a wrong view about Islam and Muslims and I hope and pray that this work will be effective in contributing into the many and ceaseless efforts that aim at removing the unsavory image that spoils the beauty of our religion.

This work is not meant to be exhaustive, neither is it designed to solve all the problems of the world and answer all the questions in full. It is simply an attempt to focus attention on the position of Islam vis-à-vis the issue of Terrorism and

violent religious extremism by showing firstly, that Islam stands for the universal values of peace, justice and mercy, and secondly, by discussing different topics around the issue of terrorism.





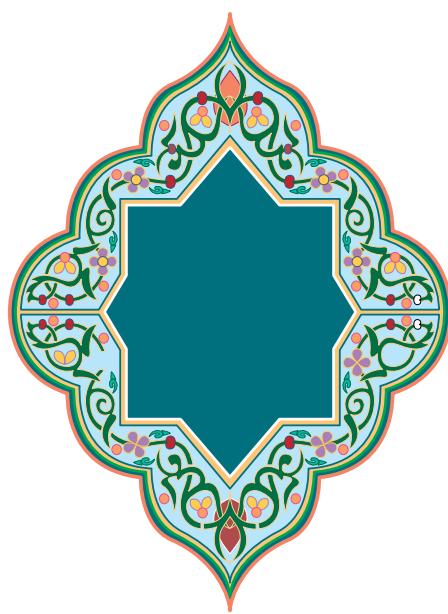
PART ONE

ISLAM & THE UNIVERSAL VALUES

Introduction

Islam stands for many universal values and principles out of which I chose to discuss three of them in this part. In my view, before we address the timely and critical topic of the Islamic perspective on modern day terrorism, and what the Islamic contribution to the solution could be in combatting this growing problem, we should examine these critical values and principles in the context of Islam. This way the reader will be able to see what Islam and Muslims stand for and recognize the commonality and bonds all humans have. This will also help remove all walls and barriers of miscommunication that only increase us in mistrust of each other and take away any chance of peace and harmony in this world of ours.

There are many universal values that we could talk about, but I am focusing in this work on some major ones, which somehow already encompass other values or are actually the results of upholding to those values. For instance, peace is the fruit of trust, which grows out of communication and cooperation that grow out of respect. Similarly, justice comes out of integrity and social responsibility, which stem from understanding and believing in human dignity. Equally, the same thing can be said about mercy and compassion. They are all interconnected with the golden rule, which is about loving for others what one loves for himself/herself.



Chapter 1

Islam and the value of Peace

Undoubtedly, today more than ever, the most common news we hear and see is mostly about the increasing global conflicts, violent religious extremism, terrorism, political scandals, frauds, crimes, ethnic and religious cleansing, unprecedented refugees' crisis and the list goes on. We are increasingly losing our peace of mind especially when we see unending incoming images and videos through different social media. Essentially, what all of these things reveal is the lack of peace in people's lives whether due to greed and power hunger or due to a major growing moral and spiritual crisis. When there is no peace, there is no life. This shows the critical importance and the urgent need to work for global peace, so life can not only be preserved, but also enjoyed to its fullest extent. Many of us have been hearing, since our childhood, of different conflicts that have not been resolved yet due to the failure of finding "Peaceful Resolutions" for non-ending differences. For many, their lives are just wasted more in conflicts than in living. One must wonder if peace is so vital and essential, why is it that people cannot just prioritize and see the greater good instead of focusing on differences. Everyone sees things differently depending on where they come from and what their priorities are but there must be a meeting point and a common ground to stand on; a point where not everyone will get everything

and a ground that will be enough to hold everyone indiscriminately. The essence of the golden rule in every religion emphasizes these very principles, but if one party demonizes the other and sees it as less human or less deserving, then it becomes an unsolvable conflict and an endless vicious cycle. Hence, peace becomes a dream far from reality and mere words on a paper far from implementation.

Since we are discussing peace as being a universal value, what does Islam say about it and how does it contribute to building it? How can Islam contribute to humanity's peace and prosperity? What is really the state of peacefulness and how can one achieve it? Can peace be one-sided or is it a shared value? Is peace a possibility where everybody enjoys equal rights and everybody is willing to respect and share the common ground? Can peace exist when some claim superiority over others? We should reflect on these critical questions every time we speak about peace. Peace cannot be a privilege or a special treatment, but rather a universal value shared by all human beings. In order to attain peace, we have to reach the understanding that we live in this temporary life, like travelers on a journey, who happen to share the same transportation in a small and restricted environment where everyone is patiently waiting to get to their own final destination. This life can never give us perfection, and we cannot have it all as we exactly want it, because the nature of it is imperfection. Therefore, we need to learn that this world of ours has to be shared by all of us and everyone in it is rewarded according to their effort, hard work, dedication and

intention. We cannot be perfect, but we can attain excellence if we know how to attain and establish peace. Islam promotes peace in its core teachings and helps build for peace because it is a religion of common sense and nature and it does not allow partiality and injustice. Islam focuses on working at different levels of life to attain genuine peace at the spiritual, psychological, social and political levels.

The issue is not about the religion of Islam but it is more about the followers of Islam who need to rise to the level to which the religion aspires. Whenever Muslims explain to the public what Islam stands for they would say, “Islam is peace” or “Islam is a religion of Peace.” Unfortunately, the world judges by what is seen and sensed and not by what is said in theory. No matter how much we say about our beautiful religion and that it is a religion of peace and justice, unless we live peace, display it in our actions and our communities and become known for peacemaking, it will be a very difficult task to convince the world that peace is our priority. Most of the wars and world conflicts today happen to be in Muslim countries and most of the terrorist attacks and killings are blamed on Muslims and Islam. Most of the people who are victims of terrorism and wars these days happen to be Muslims killed by fellow Muslims or, to be more exact, people who claim to be Muslims. Although the vast majority of Muslims have nothing to do with the various wars and terrorist incidents, they cannot just be bystanders and watch. We need to step up to the level of peacekeeping following the legacy of our Prophet (Blessings & Peace be upon him). Muslims cannot

isolate themselves in their Muslim world while not paying attention to what is happening globally, or not contributing the many great things our religion teaches. If we are peaceful and sincere about peace for all people of the world, it will reach the heart of every human being. However, if we are only concerned about peace within certain specific geographical areas of the Muslim world while the rest of the world does not matter to us, we cannot speak of universal peace. Peacemaking needs to be promoted more by word and action because it is the legacy of Prophet Muhammad (S) and the only way to bring sanity to the world. Muslims must go beyond that verbal statement and work more towards promoting the culture of peace. The latter should be featured in children's and adults' education, social activities and religious sermons and lectures. This way, Muslims will become known for standing for global peace and the religion of Islam will be viewed as a religion of peacemaking. Moreover, unless Muslims become universal in their approaches to global issues and their attitudes towards non-Muslims, they will always be viewed as alien and non-relating to their human brethren.

Due to factors that were in many cases beyond control, it is true that Muslims have somehow neglected this legacy of spreading global peace and resolving. What needs to be highlighted to the reader at this point is that the Muslim world did undergo a lot of turmoil in the last hundred years or more. During the colonial period and even after the independence, it faced many challenges and is still facing countless challenges. However, we must pay attention to the growing insanity of

violence in the name of religion and the demonization of each other because Allah (swt) wants us to be witnesses for the world – a middle nation as He says,

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتُكُونُوا شَهَادَةً عَلَى النَّاسِ
وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا (البقرة: 143)

“Thus, have We made of you an Ummah justly balanced that you might be witnesses over the nations and the Messenger a witness over yourselves...” (2:143)

Many movements within the Muslim world are still influenced by contemporary religious writings and interpretations of the tradition from the twentieth century. In many cases these were reactive to an environment of tension and resentment of the European colonizers and their Western culture and way of life. More importantly, due to the colonizers' treatment and abuse of the indigenous people and their natural resources, which they usurped, and their absolute domination of many vital institutions and economies, everything was seen through a scope of relationship between the conqueror and the conquered. Even after the independence, the imposed ruling regimes were run, in most cases, by individuals who were more like pawns than true leaders for their people. Thus, the Islamic thought's literature was more focused on the intellectual counterattacks within those contexts than on the universal and timeless Islamic tradition and legacy of peacemaking along with universal invitation to Islam and its universal values. Writers resorted to

religious texts, which directly or indirectly led to this “West versus East” ongoing intellectual battle. The work of many orientalists before and during the colonial era has left suspicion and mistrust among Muslim intellectuals. The latter invested a lot of energy and time in responding to orientalists’ claims about Islam and Muslims, which they respectively named Mohammedanism and Mohammedans. In addition to that, with the advent of Darwinism, materialism and communism in the twentieth century, thousands of works were dedicated to deal with those new developing and challenging ideas. Thus, the focus on peacebuilding was more of a local nature rather than global. Everyone was consumed in the local and national affairs and in many cases survival matters.

Islam’s emphasis on peace and peacemaking can be demonstrated at different levels and aspects of life. Peace takes different forms and manifests itself in theory and practice.

A. Psychological and Spiritual Peace

Islam teaches that when we build a strong connection with God and come to an understanding that He is in charge of everything, including our lives, and feel His divine assurance that He is with us and cares about every one of us, then we should feel a sense of peace and stop worrying about things in life. Our view of the world with its challenges and changes, becomes deeper and clearer. A few eastern religious and philosophical ideas and practices, such as the disciplines of Yoga and meditation in Buddhism or Hinduism, have been perceived by some psychoanalysts as being very useful for studies in psychotherapy. However, very few of these modern scholars have dealt with Islam's therapy which is based on verbal, mental and physical exercises and techniques that are part of the mandatory and supererogatory acts of worship. Qur'anic recitation and listening as well as dhikr (remembrance of God), daily Salat prayers, Sawm (fasting) and Khidmah (service to humanity) are all acts of worship. These acts of worship are meant to purify, discipline and enhance us as human beings both in terms of Dīn (religion/spirituality) and Duniā (the life of this world) at the physical and spiritual levels so that we can be in a state of peace and bliss. Undoubtedly, an objective study of the Islamic psychotherapy, which stems from the principle of attaining a state of peace spiritually, mentally and physically will prove the efficacy of this peacebuilding system. One can find in *Tasawwuf* (Sufism) a great emphasis on attaining inner peace through meditation, mannerism, service, self-effacement, self-discipline and

asceticism.

For a Muslim, sincere submission to God ends all the struggles he/she might have either within or when dealing with others. I should state here, in this context, that it is true that the word ‘submission’ has a negative connotation in Western culture. This is due to many historical injustices such as slavery and evil things that were executed in the name of religion and God against the weak and the helpless. However, in Islam, it is very different; submission to God is at the same time freedom from submission to man. This is due to the concept of ‘Islam’, which also means entering in peace with God and with His creation under His mercy and reign. The word ‘Islam’ is an adverb in Arabic (*maṣdar*) which means establishing peace with God, with His creation and within. Submission, or Islam, is in fact a psychological and spiritual peace. Souls find peace within people who submit to their Creator once they reach a state of certainty and firm belief that God Almighty hears, sees and cares about them. That consciousness of God is critical, and it brings a spirit of uniformity in purpose for all people despite diversity. It connects all souls to their source – God Almighty. That, in essence, is the whole idea of Islam. Submission to God overcomes the submission to one’s desires and weaknesses and makes a person very peaceful, just, respectful, tolerant and accepting of others. The more a person is sincere and faithful in his/her submission to God, the more the feeling of peacefulness is increased and reflected in the character. The genuine Muslim person gains certitude (*yaqīn*) that Allah is

watching over him/her, and therefore, it is implausible that this person would cause any harm or injustice to society or individuals. The true Muslim establishes first, peace with His Lord, Allah, and then, on this base, builds the determination to be peaceful with the creation of Allah. It is that love by default for all humans and all the creation of God that becomes the power that thrusts the individual to constantly seek peace and end conflicts.

Peace is a reality and not a dream or an illusion; it can happen anywhere and anytime. Islam believes in this reality and urges Muslims to strive in establishing peace and praying for it on a daily basis. Peace in Islam is considered as one of the great blessings; Allah (swt) mentions that one of the blessings He grants the faithful servants is peace and security. He says that He has promised those who believe and work righteous deeds that He will, of a surety, change their state, after the fear in which they lived, to one of security and peace, as we read in the Qur'an (24:55).

In the beginning of Prophet Muhammad (S) mission, he reminded his people in Makkah of the blessing of peace, security, food and water that God Almighty bestowed on them. Allah says,

(إِلَّا فِي قُرْبَةِ إِلَيْهِمْ رِحْلَةُ الشَّتَاءِ وَالصِّيفِ فَلَيَعْبُدُوا رَبَّ هَذَا الْبَيْتِ
الَّذِي أَطْعَمَهُم مِّنْ جُوعٍ وَأَمْنَهُم مِّنْ خَوْفٍ) (قُرْبَةٌ 4-1)

**"For the covenants (of security and safeguard enjoyed)
by the Quraish, their covenants (covering) journeys by
winter and summer— Let them adore the Lord of this**

**House, who provides them with food against hunger,
and with security against fear (of danger).” (106:4)**

Life itself is the embodiment of peace and this is the reason that by nature humans love to live and be surrounded by living beings and feel the manifestations of different elements of nature. In Islam, life is a great blessing in this world and an eternal reward in the Hereafter when it is directed towards pleasing the Creator and life Giver, God Almighty. Pleasing the Creator is actually attained by being good to oneself and to others. Life is manifested at two levels: the physical and, more importantly, the spiritual. Allah (swt) says,

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَجِبُوا لِلَّهِ وَلِرَسُولِهِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحِبِّيكُمْ
وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيْنَ الْمُرِئَةِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَأَنَّهُ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ) (الأنفال: 24)

“O you who believe! Give your response to Allah and His Messenger, when He calls you to that which gives you life; and know that Allah comes in between a man and his heart,² and that it is He to whom you shall (all) be gathered.” (8:24)

Clearly, the life mentioned here is the life of the heart and the soul. If the heart is empty from the love of, and the dedication to God, it becomes dead even if there is physical life. The soul,

² It means as explained in many hadiths that the guidance to belief is the affair of God and the hearts of people are in His hands as mentioned in the hadith (because we believe with our hearts).

or heart, becomes dead because of the death caused by ignorance and rejection as the commentators of Qur'an said. Our Prophet (S) explained that by saying,

عَنْ أَبِي مُوسَى رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: "مَثَلُ الَّذِي يَذْكُرُ رَبَّهُ وَالَّذِي لَا يَذْكُرُ رَبَّهُ مَثَلُ الْحَيٌّ وَالْمَيِّتِ" مُتَقَوِّلُ عَلَيْهِ

"The parable of a person who remembers his Lord and a person who does not; is like the one of the living and the dead." (Related by al-Bukhari & Muslim)³

According to the language of the Qur'an, humans need to balance between the life of the soul and the life of the body to avoid going to the extremes. When one of these two lives is neglected at the expense of the other, the actions of the person start leading him/her astray from what is known in Islam as the "Straight path" or the path of those who seek the pleasure of God, the path of righteousness. Allah says,

(وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا أَتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تُنْسِ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَأَحْسِنْ كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفُسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ)
(القصص: 77)

"But seek, with that which Allah has bestowed on you, the Home of the Hereafter, but do not forget your portion in this World. Be good to others, as Allah

³ Reported by al-Bukhari in the Book of Supplications: Chapter of "Virtues of remembering Allah", Hadith # 5928. And Muslim in the Book of Prayers: Chapter of "Prayers of Travelers and its shortening", Hadith # 1299.

**has been good to you, and seek not (occasions for
mischief in the land: for Allah loves not
those who do mischief."(28:77)**

A balanced life in Islam is a life where the individual lives a very normal life but remembers his/her Lord constantly, or as often as possible. Success is for this world and the Hereafter.

Remembering God also means remembering the covenants we made with Him. One of those covenants is to make peace with God and His creation. Peacemaking is not a sign of weakness, but rather a sign of strength and determination. We believe that the commitment to peace requires a great strength, power, courage, and tremendous effort. Working for peace through one's commitment to the will of God proves how a person is capable to silence his/her own personal desires and to overcome any self-interest. Peace also empowers humans against Satan who tries to control them through lust, greed, desire, and other physical and psychological weaknesses. If a person is trapped in the vicious cycle of self-seeking lust and pleasure, it is difficult for the truth to reach his/her heart. The false desires and the absence of contentment do indeed blind, seal the hearts, and cover them from receiving the light of God. Lust and desire for pleasures and material things are never satisfied because of the endless greed of human beings. They never provide real, long lasting happiness or satisfaction, but ultimately result in suffering and dissatisfaction in their life and in the Hereafter.

Self-centeredness and concern only about personal lusts, desires and interests could become fire, which cannot be extinguished by adding fuel to it, but rather by applying moderation and moral values which gives life and peace; something like water.

The word Islam (إِسْلَام) means ‘submission to, and acceptance of, the will of God’ and has at the same time the meaning of Peace. It is derived from the Arabic word “*salām* سَلَام”. Islam, terminologically speaking, is a religion that carries the word “Peace” and is not named after a certain prophet, a god, or a philosopher. In order to classify Islam as a founded religion rather than a revealed one, some *Orientalist* writers attempted in the past to substitute, in their literature, the word “Mohammedanism” for Islam, which is definitely a misnomer that even Muslims are not familiar with. Prophet Muhammad (S) did not propagate, during his mission, the focus on him as a person and a human messenger, but rather propagated the focus on the message of God to humanity. In the word “Islam”, many shades of meaning are implied. The word “*salām*” translated as “peace” has a much wider significance. It includes a sense of security, soundness, freedom from defects like in “*salīm*”, preservation like in “*sālem*”, deliverance and safety like in “*salāma*”, salutation with those around us as in “*salām*”, resignation with satisfaction and no discontent, and the ordinary meaning of peace, which is freedom from any jarring element.

In fact, for Muslims, the relation between submission and peace is a causal one because submission to Allah in Islam brings peace at different levels, beginning with the individual, to the whole community, and then to all the creation of God. Allah says in the Qur'an,

(وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُ إِلَىٰ دَارِ السَّلَامِ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ) (يونس: 25)

**"But Allah does call to the Home of Peace:
He does guide whom He pleases to
a Way that is straight" (10:25)**

The Qur'an's message calls to peace and to the elements that guarantee it by laying a foundation of four cornerstones that are respectively: Justice, Tolerance, Respect and Dialogue. Without these four elements, peace would be only ink on paper or a shallow concept instead of a reality.

Muslims' mission in this world is to call to peace, as God Almighty does, its abovementioned cornerstones and to be peacemakers beginning with every individual to all of society. God is the source of peace and one of His names is al-Salam. We read in the Qur'an.

"هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمَهِيمُ الْغَرِيزُ
الْجَبَارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ سَبَحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ." (الحشر: 23)

"Allah is He, than whom there is no other god; the Sovereign, the Holy One, the Source of Peace (and perfection), the Guardian of Faith, the Preserver of Safety, the Exalted in Might, the Irresistible, and the Supreme. Glory to Allah! He is High

above the partners they attribute to Him.”

(59:23)

This is the reason why we must always seek peace, first, from Allah. Every time we finish one of our five daily Salat prayers, we turn to the right and to the left saying a greeting of peace, then we pray for peace saying,

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ السَّلَامُ وَمِنْكَ السَّلَامُ تَبَارَكْتَ يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ .

“O Allah, You are Peace and Peace comes from You.

Blessed are You O Possessor of Glory and Honor!”

B. Social and Political Peace

Islam promotes social and political peace because submission to Allah means, for a society, a total rejection of corruption, wrong-doing, and deviant and harmful behaviors. Commitment to peace with God and His creation leads to unity, love, harmony, dialogue and respect for others. Human beings have been dreaming of an ideal society even before Plato's 'Republic' or Augustine's 'Eternal City of God'. With Muhammad (Blessings & Peace be upon him), the ideal society was constituted of faithful followers called "Companions", who submitted to the Message in obedience to God and His Prophet & Messenger (S). The organization of that society started from basic requirements such as the fellowship and brotherhood (*Ummah & Ukhudwah*) between all Muslims and citizens of Madinah. Peace was declared verbally in every daily encounter of two individuals or more. The salutation of *As-Salaamu Alaikum!* (السلام عليكم!) in its verbal form, means "Peace be upon you!" Allah says in the Qur'an:

(فَإِذَا دَخَلْتُم بُيُوتًا فَسَلِّمُوا عَلَى أَنفُسْكُمْ تَحْيَةً مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُبَارَكَةً طَيِّبَةً
كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ) (النور: 61)

**"Salute each other a greeting of blessing and purity
as from Allah..." (24:61)**

And He says:

(وَإِذَا حِشِّتُمْ بَثْجِيَّةً فَحَيُوا بِأَحْسَنِ مِنْهَا أَوْ رَدُّوهَا
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَسِيبًا) (النساء: 86)

“When a courteous greeting is offered to you, meet it with a greeting still more courteous, or at least of equal courtesy. Allah takes careful account of all things.” (4:86)

The Prophet (P.b.u.h) was once asked:

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرِيٍّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا أَنَّ رَجُلًا سَأَلَ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: أَيُّ الْإِسْلَامِ خَيْرٌ؟ قَالَ: "تُطْعِمُ الطَّعَامَ وَتَقُرَأُ السَّلَامَ عَلَى مَنْ عَرَفْتَ وَمَنْ لَمْ تَعْرِفْ" متفق عليه

“Which is the best Islam?” He (S) replied: **“You feed the hungry and you say Salaam to those you know and those you don’t know.”** (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim)⁴

He (P.b.u.h) also said:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: "لَا تَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ حَتَّى تَؤْمِنُوا وَلَا تَؤْمِنُوا حَتَّى تَحَابُّو أَوْلَاءِ أَدْلُوكُمْ عَلَى شَيْءٍ إِذَا فَعَلْتُمُوهُ تَحَابِبُمْ أَفْشُوا السَّلَامَ بَيْنَكُمْ". رواه مسلم

“You won’t enter Paradise unless you believe, and you won’t believe unless you love each other. Do you want me to show you something that if you do it you will love

⁴ Reported by al-Bukhari in the Book of Iman, Chapter “Feeding the hungry is from Islam” Hadith # 11. Muslim in the Book of Iman, Hadith # 56. At-Tirmidhi in “Feeding the hungry by the Messenger of Allah”, Hadith # 1778. An-Nassa’i in the book of Iman, Hadith # 4914. Abu Dāwûd in the book of ethics, Hadith #4560. Ibn Mâjah in the book of foods, Hadith # 32440 and the book of ethics, hadith # 3684. Ahmad in “Musnad of al-Mukthirîn” among the Companions of the Prophet (S), Hadith # 6293–6552.

each other? Say Salām to each other– Send messages of peace to each other–” (Related by Muslim)⁵

Abdullah bin Salam (May Allah be pleased with him) said: “When the Prophet (S) came to Madinah people gathered around him... and I amongst them as I wanted to see him. When I looked at him, I knew he did not look like someone who would tell lies. The first thing that I heard him say was **“O People! Spread peace (with the greeting of peace), feed the hungry, keep good relations of the kith and kin and pray at night while people are sleeping you will enter Paradise in Peace.”**⁶

عن أبي يوسف عبد الله بن سلام رضي الله عنه قال: لما قدم النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم المدينة انحفل الناس قبله، وقيل: قد قدم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم -ثلاثة-، فجئت في الناس لأنظر، فلما تبنت وجهه عرفت أن وجهه ليس بوجه كذاب، فكان أول شيء سمعته تكلم به أن قال: **”يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ: أَفْشُوا السَّلَامَ، وَأَطْعُمُوا الظَّعَامَ، وَصِلُوا الْأَرْحَامَ، وَصِلُوا بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّاسُ نِيَامٌ، تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ بِسَلَامٍ.”**
رواه أحمد والترمذى والحاكم، وصححه الترمذى والحاكم ووفاقه الذهبي.

⁵ Reported by Muslim in the book of Iman, Hadith # 81. At-Tirmidhi in the book of asking permission to enter into someone's place and courtesy, Hadith # 2612. Abu Dāwûd in the book of ethics, Hadith # 4019. Ibn Mâjah in the introduction, Hadith # 67. And Ahmad in “Bâqî Musnad al-Mukthirîn”, Hadith # 8723- 9332- 9788- 10027- 10238.

⁶ Reported by Imam Ahmad, Imam al-Tirmidhi and al-Hakim

Even Prophet Ibrahim (P.b.u.h), who declared himself as a Muslim by surrendering himself to God and bowing down to Him, used to say “*Salām*”. Allah says about Ibrahim:

وَلَقَدْ جَاءَتْ رُسُلًا إِبْرَاهِيمَ بِالْبُشْرَىٰ قَالُوا سَلَامًا قَالَ سَلَامٌ

فَمَا لَبِثَ أَنْ جَاءَ بِعَجْلٍ حَنِيدٍ (هود: 69)

**“When they entered his place they said “Peace”
and he said “Peace.” (11:69)**

Thus, expressing peace verbally is very important in Islam because it unifies people and makes them feel totally secure among themselves. This enactment of salutation in Islam, on a daily basis and in every encounter of two people or more, is indeed a renewal of commitment to peacefulness and a reminder of one another of the rights and duties implied by the statement: “*As-Salaamu alaikum!* السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ” meaning “Peace be upon you!” This is a statement that builds a culture of peace and peacemaking. Whether they know one another or they do not, when two persons meet and greet each other with the greeting of peace, one of them starts and says “*As-Salaamu alaikum!*” which basically means: “You are safe and I will not harm you and I don’t expect you to do so...” Then the other person replies: “*wa alaikumu Salam!*” or even better “*wa alaikumu Salam wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu!* وَعَلَيْكُمْ السَّلَامُ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ” which means “And Peace be upon you as well, you are safe from me and I pray for you to be showered by Allah’s Mercy and Blessings.” They reassure each other to maintain peace. They reaffirm that the only way to live with one another is through peace and they pray for each

other to be covered by the divine Mercy and to be blessed with peace. It is a greeting, a reassurance, a supplication and a renewal of commitment to maintain peace, and more importantly, a collective connection to God Almighty.

That is why peace is translated into physical actions, which cannot be achieved unless there is sincere submission and commitment – Islamic faith is belief and conviction in the heart, verbal declaration with the tongue, and implementation with action. A true Muslim, or submitter, is the one who promotes peace rather than enmity, violence, disrespect and hatred. Prophet Muhammad (P.b.u.h.) said:

الْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلَّمَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدِهِ "متفق عليه"
وفي لفظ زيادة: "وَالْمُؤْمِنُ مَنْ أَمْنَهُ النَّاسُ عَلَى دِمَائِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ"
قال أبو عيسى هذا حديث حسن صحيح

"The Muslim is the one who avoids harming others with his hand and his tongue." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)⁷.

In another narration⁸, he added, **"and the believer is the**

⁷ Reported by al-Bukhari in the book of Iman, Hadith # 9 and in the book of Riqāq, Hadith # 6003. Muslim in the book of Iman, Hadith # 57. An-Nassā'i in the book of Iman, Hadith # 4910. Abu Dāwūd in the book of Jihad, Hadith # 2122. Ahmad in "Musnad al-Mukthirīn among the Companions of the Prophet (S), Hadith # 6199– 6220– 6464... Al-Dārimī in Hadith # 2600.

⁸ There is also another authentic hadith where the Prophet (S) denied Iman for the one who harms his neighbors by saying, "**I swear by Allah he does not believe**" The companions said: who does not believe O Messenger of Allah? He replied, **"The one whose neighbor is not safe from his**

one that people are safe from him in regards to their lives and properties.” (Al-Tirmidhi, al-Nassa’i, and Ahmad)⁹

This means that any verbal or physical action, which results in harm, offense, and violence against innocent people, is contradictory to true submission, unless it is a matter of a necessary self-defense in reaction to an outside aggression.

The Prophet (S) always taught his disciples that peace and justice are the best principles of what humanity is all about. Every Muslim should live by these principles and stand for them because one cannot be a good Muslim unless, and until, he/she becomes a good human being. He stressed that principles should, at all times, take precedence over one’s personal interests, whether in dealing with Muslims or non-Muslims. During his life, – both before and after Islam was established – he constantly praised the “Alliance of Virtue” known as *hilf ul-fudūl* حلف الفُضول . During Pre-Islamic times, it was the decision of all the leaders of the ruling tribe of Quraysh, in Makkah, to assemble in one house and to make a covenant binding themselves by a solemn agreement. This agreement stated that if they found anyone, whether a Makkan or an outsider, to whom an injustice was being done, they would join with him against the aggressor and make sure that

harm.” Agreed upon it. And there are many other authentic hadiths in the same context.

⁹ It’s the continuation of the previous hadith reported in the version of An-Nassā’i, Hadith # 4909, at-Tirmidhi in Hadith # 2551.

any stolen property was restored to him/her. Prophet Muhammad (S) once said, “I witnessed in the house of Abdullah ibn Judān a covenant, which I would not exchange for any number of fine camels: If I were invited to take part in it during Islam I should do so.”¹⁰ He said this during the conflict between Muslims in Madinah and the Quraysh tribe of Makkah, which was mostly polytheist.

When Prophet Muhammad (S) peacefully migrated with his followers to Madinah and left Makkah, where many were persecuted, forced to leave their belongings behind, or even killed, he did three major things:

(1) He changed the tribal system with a new concept called *Ummah* أُمّة (nation or community made of brothers and sisters in faith: الْأَخْوَةُ) regardless of any racial or tribal backgrounds. Everyone was welcome, and the people of Madinah did an unprecedented thing in human history by opening their arms and homes and sharing everything they had with the newcomers. Every family took care of another family and every person took care of another person. It ended all kinds of ethnocentrism, tribal superiority or racial supremacy. Ten years later, with the spread of Islam, and after centuries of wars and anarchy, all forms of dissention and wars between the tribes ended. Peace and rule of law and order were finally established in the Arabian Peninsula.

¹⁰ See Sīrat ibn Ishāq under “ḥilf al-Fuḍūl”.

(2) He drafted and declared the Charter, or Constitution, of Madinah (صحيفۃ المدینۃ) where different items stated how the new established nation would operate, whether between the Muslims al-Ansār (The supporters) and al-Muhajirūn (the migrants) or between the Muslims and other faith groups, including Jewish tribes. It secured the freedom of religion, freedom of movement and freedom of trade. Muslims and non-Muslims were granted similar political and cultural rights and had the same civic responsibilities. This constitution was the basis of a pluralistic society where respect and tolerance were fundamental. A military alliance was made by different parties to defend Madinah against any outside attacks as well as to defend and support each other if any party was assailed. This charter ended an old conflict and a very long series of wars between the two major tribes of Madinah namely al-Aws and al-Khazraj.

(3) He declared Madinah as a sacred place (*haram*) after Makkah and Jerusalem and built the sacred mosque of Madinah, which is known as *al-Masjid al-Nabawi al-Sharif* and which became a center point for the Muslims. This meant that no violence was allowed in the city. All people were expected to follow a code of conduct and respect which was mandatory for all forms of life whether for humans, animals or vegetation. By being a holy sanctuary, it deterred people from committing crimes or shedding blood. Madinah was initially a dirty city, but the prophet (S) led a cleaning campaign of its

streets and markets until it became known as the cleanest city in Arabia.

The above shows some of the genius and greatness of Prophet Muhammad (S). He was indeed the first leader and ruler to declare these principles of (1) brotherhood and sisterhood among believers, (2) freedom of religion for those who did not believe in his message but believed in peace, cooperation and the bonds of humanity and (3) A non-violent and sacred land for all to live in and prosper.

Later, on the sixth year after Hijrah (migration to Madinah), the Prophet signed *al-Hudaybiyyah* reconciliation (*Sulh al-Hudaybiyyah* صلح الحديبية) treaty with the Makkans, which was another testimony to the willingness of Muslims to avoid confrontation and bloodshed. The Prophet refused to engage in any battle especially in the sacred land of Makkah. Many of his companions were initially disappointed about the fact they were not able to perform ‘Umrah (minor pilgrimage) in that year and were not willing to go along with it. However, later on they realized how that treaty for peace and reconciliation was the right choice and yielded far more positive results.

Many historians and writers have highlighted the successful achievements of Prophet Muhammad (S) not only in spreading Islam but also on starting a new civilization that changed the world and connected the East to the West by sharing the best of what civilizations had accomplished since the dawn of humanity. An example of this can be found in

Michael Hart's famous book, *The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History*. He chose Prophet Muhammad (S) as the most influential human being that ever lived on this planet. Michael Hart writes,¹¹

My choice of Muhammad to lead the list of the world's most influential persons may surprise some readers and may be questioned by others, but he was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular levels. Of humble origins, Muhammad founded and promulgated one of the world's great religions and became an immensely effective political leader. Today, thirteen centuries after his death, his influence is still powerful and pervasive. The majority of the persons in this book had the advantage of being born and raised in centers of civilization, highly cultured or politically pivotal nations. Muhammad, however, was born in the year 570, in the city of Mecca, in southern Arabia, at that time a backward area of the world, far from the centers of trade, art, and learning.

To spread the message of peace is the role and mission of every Muslim. Even when Muslims won wars and battles, they did not execute and torture the captives, nor rape their women and molest their children, as it happened and continues to happen today in the case of many warring parties. Muslims were required to be peaceful towards their prisoners of war and treat them in a humanitarian manner, granting them rights ordained in the Islamic guidelines. History witnesses that Muslims under genuine and just Islamic

¹¹ Hart, Michael H, *The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History*, A Citadel Press Book Published by Carol Publishing Group, pp. 3–4

leadership always treated their prisoners and captive kindly even before the famous Geneva Convention declaration. Allah says in the Qur'an,

(يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِمَنْ فِي أَيْدِيكُمْ مِنَ الْأَسْرَى إِنْ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ خَيْرًا يُؤْتِكُمْ خَيْرًا مِمَّا أَخْدَى مِنْكُمْ وَيَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ) (الأنفال: 70)

"O Prophet! Say to those who are captives in your hands: "If Allah finds any good in your hearts, He will give you something better than what has been taken from you, and He will forgive you, for Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful." (8:70)

In another ayah, Allah praises those who feed the poor, the orphan and the captive of war. He says,

(وَيُطْعِمُونَ الْطَّعَامَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ مَسْكِينًا وَآسِيرًا إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ اللَّهِ لَا تُرِيدُنَا مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكُورًا) (الإنسان: 8-9)

"And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan and the captive – (Saying) "We feed you for the sake of Allah alone: no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks." (76:8-9)

A captive of war is an enemy, yet in Islam Muslims are not allowed to starve their enemies and deny them basic dignity even if the enemy combatant's goal was to kill them at war. It is for this reason that this chapter is called 'Humanity,' because it is about a bigger circle where there are fundamental things related to human dignity that have to be observed and

honored. God Almighty Himself honored human beings. He says,

(وَلَقَدْ كَرِمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَهَمَنَّا لَهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِنَ الطَّيَّابَاتِ
وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا) (الإسراء: 70)

“We have honored the children of Adam; provided them with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance things good and pure; and conferred on them special favors, above a great part of Our Creation.” (17:70)

Thus, the purpose of Muslims, or true submitters, is to invite their fellow human beings within that big circle of peace, humanity and dignity to God’s Grace and Mercy and not to exterminate them for the sake of revenge. Any creation of God is not worthless in Islamic teachings, let alone human life. Every human being deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. Everyone has the right to live in God’s world and no one deserves to be killed unjustly. All humans are equal in terms of their rights and obligations that are related to their necessities of life. We will discuss more about the sanctity of life at length in the second part of this book.

C. War and Peace in Islam

During the thirteen years of persecution, harassment, assassinations and torture of the followers of Islam in Makkah, Prophet Muhammad (S) took a stance of passive resistance and sent a significant number of people, who were under no tribal protection, to live in Ethiopia and wait there until things got better. The Qur'an directed him and his followers to be patient and to maintain peace. After the major damages caused by the imposed embargo on the Prophet (S), his family and tribe, Muslims reached to a level where it became impossible for them to live with their persecutors and murderers. The Makkans began plotting to assassinate the Prophet (S) immediately after the death of his uncle Abu Talib. They also increased their assaults against Muslims and became more physical than just verbal in their attacks. Prophet Muhammad (S) refused to fight back or to allow his followers to do so and led a pacifist resistance. Fortunately, God's permission to migrate to Madinah was granted to the Prophet (S) and all the Muslims. They left Makkah and everything they owned and went empty handed, but optimistic and free, to practice their religion in a new land beginning a new era of freedom and peace. Later, the decision to take up arms and fight back was only because the Prophet (S) was now a ruler and protector of his people. He was running a new country and had to ensure the safety of the citizens and safeguard the vital foundations of the nation. The decision to fight against the aggressors in a defensive manner and for the sake of keeping peace and order was commonsensical and it was the right way that every

country would take as a response. All the battles that were fought by Muslims were defensive in nature rather than offensive.

Therefore, peace is the general principle in Islam even at war. Allah (swt) says in the Qur'an:

(وَإِنْ جَنَحُوا لِلسلْمِ فَاجْتَحْ لَهَا وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ)
(الأنفال: 61)

"But, if the enemy inclines towards peace, you have to incline towards peace and trust in Allah, for Allah is the One who hears and knows." (8:61)

The Qur'an teaches that while human beings must always be ready to fight intellectually or even physically for a just cause if it is forced upon them, even in the midst of the fight, Muslims must always be ready for peace if there is any inclination towards peace by the other side. There is no merit merely in a fight by itself. The ultimate goal should be to establish the reign of peace, justice, and righteousness.

Thus, the idea of war in Islam is an act of last resort; it is only with the intention to defend Islam, its people and humanity, maintain peace, help to establish justice and protect the necessities of life. Peace is the norm and the natural state of affairs, and it must be maintained and honored by everyone at all times. When the Prophet (S) went to fight, he went as a head of state and a ruler of the newly established nation in Madinah. He went to maintain peace, to defend his nation and to end injustice. However, he would first invite the enemy to peaceful ways and if the latter refused, he would send to them

an official warning and a message not to transgress the limits and to ensure that children, women and noncombatants were kept out of the battle.

There is no clear evidence to support the anti-Muslim claim that the Prophet (S), his companions, as well as those who came after them spread Islam by the sword and violence. **Firstly**, Islam does not allow the use of the Machiavellian rule “Goals justify the means.” This, as we will see later, contradicts the very spirit of Islam and its call to morality, honesty, consideration and legitimacy in all means and goals. **Secondly**, Islam believes in every person’s free will and free choice, especially when it comes to faith (Iman); it is solely a person’s decision and he/she is the only one responsible for that decision. No one can force someone else to believe in Allah or to become a Muslim. We can teach, preach, persuade, motivate and use argumentation with wisdom and different methods, but we cannot force someone to accept Islam, to pray, to give charity or to fast. Guidance (*hidāya*) is something between a person’s soul/heart and God Almighty and it cannot be oversimplified or explained in simple words. It is something beyond our grasp and imagination. Islam would be the biggest lie ever if faith were to be forced on people rather than them believing and connecting with God in their own spiritual quest upon seeing the truth with their eyes and hearts. Allah (swt) says,

(إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهَتَّدِينَ)
(القصص: 56)

“It is true you will not be able to guide every one, whom you love, but Allah guides those whom He wills and He knows best those who receive guidance.” (28:56)

In addition, He says,

(لَا إِكْرَاهٌ فِي الدِّينِ) (البقرة: 256)

“There is no compulsion in religion.” (2:256)

And,

(وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ شَاءْ فَلِيؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءْ فَلِيَكْفُرْ...) (الكهف: 29)

(Say: The truth is from your Lord: let him who will believe and let him who will reject...) (18:29)

And,

(قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ وَلَا أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَا عَبَدْتُمْ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ). (الكافرون: 1-6)

(Say: O you that reject faith in Allah. I worship not that which you worship nor will you worship that which I worship. And I will not worship that which you have been worshipping nor will you worship that which I have been worshipping. You have your way/religion and I have mine.) (109: 1-6)

As in the above verses and many others in the Qur'an, there is no coercion in the religion of Islam. The idea suggesting that Prophet Muhammad (S) and his followers forced people to accept Islam is a fallacy. The rapid expansion of Islam was due mainly to the disposition of the people to accept the simple message of Islam, which was more of a restoration of the Abrahamic faith than being a new religion.

Monotheism (*tawhīd*), which is the belief in only one God, the Creator, is innate in every human being. It is easier, simpler and much more in tune with our nature, than a belief in different deities, especially when we pray to Him and seek His mercy, guidance and help. In addition, the call of Islam to peace through justice and to the brotherhood and equality among all human beings, as well as the strong condemnation of racism and ethnocentrism by Islam, appealed to many to accept Islam. The established justice system during the time of the Prophet (S) and the successors (Caliphs/Khulafa) attracted many people to be part of the growing Ummah.

There are many historical evidences as well as scriptural ones, which refute the claim that Islam was spread by the sword and by the use of force. In this context, it is worth mentioning the following statement from a Christian missionary, Sir Thomas W. Arnold who said,¹²

“...Of any organized attempt to force the acceptance of Islam on the non-Muslim population, or of any systematic persecution intended to stamp out the Christian religion, we hear nothing. Had the Caliphs chosen to adopt either course of action, they might have swept away Christianity as easily as Ferdinand and Isabella drove Islam out of Spain, or Louis XIV made Protestantism penal in France, or the Jews were kept out of England for 350 years. The Eastern Churches in Asia were entirely cut off from communion with the rest of Christendom throughout which no one would have been found to lift a finger on their behalf, as heretical communions. So that the very survival of these churches to the present day is a

¹² The Preaching of Islam: A History of the Propagation of the Muslim Faith, Westminster A. Constable & Co, London, 1896, p.80.

strong proof of the generally tolerant attitude of the [Mohammedan] governments towards them”*

The special and fair treatment of the people of the Book – Jews and Christians – and religious minorities, is very well known in the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet (S). Moreover, history witnesses that Muslim land has always been a safe haven for Christians and Jews. There is not a single recorded incident of persecution of the people of the Book under Muslim rule unless it was a persecution led indiscriminately by an unjust ruler against all people, Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

D. The Concept of Jihad in Islam

As for the Islamic concept of *Jihad* or *al-Jihadu fi-Sabilillah* which translates as striving for the sake of Allah, it should be clearly noted that according to the understanding of the majority of Muslims, it is not only restricted to fighting and war. The Qur'an and the Sunnah speak of the virtue of *Jihad* in many places and it would be dishonest and deceptive of me to deny the fact that *Jihad* has been part of Islam. On one hand, there are those who deny it categorically and deny any historical and textual fact that it even existed or was widely practiced by Muslims when necessary. On the other hand, there are others who justify terrorism and their blind ideology, using *Jihad* as a proof for terrorism, without taking into consideration the goals, rules and strict regulations of *Jihad*. The challenge and the big problem is how the concept of *Jihad* is interpreted and how the Qur'anic verses and Hadith texts are used.

The word *Jihād* جهاد is derived from the three-root letters word “ja-ha-da”, which stems from the word *Juhd* that means effort and strife. The verb for *Jihad* is *Jāhada*, which means to strive, to put forth an effort, and to do the best in one's capacity to reach a certain noble goal. *Juhd* is the noun and *Jihad* is the adverb.

Jihad is the endeavor to obtain and reach the pleasure of God either by consecrating one's life and time to work righteousness and virtuosity, or by fighting for the rights that are related to the necessities of life, or to establish justice. On

the other hand, killing innocent people, breaking laws and regulations, breaking promises, agreements, covenants or contracts, or fighting for corruption is not a Jihad but rather a *bagh'y*, which means transgression and injustice. It is also called '*Udwān*', which means antagonism, animosity and aggression.

Some of the definitions of Jihad are:

- Striving to defend oneself, one's family, one's faith, one's property, and one's honor when attacked by a transgressor or an enemy.
- A defensive reaction, or measure, against an outside aggression that directly attacks the main necessities of life in Islam: one's faith, one's life/health, one's mind, one's progeny, and one's property/ country/ land.
- Exerting one's endeavor/effort/strife (*juhd* [noun]) to obtain the pleasure of God by changing what is bad into what is good, including fighting to maintain peace and to defend and preserve life and its necessities.

The greater Jihad¹³ has more to do with one's own struggle to overcome the temptation around him/her and controlling one's desires and lusts. The Jihad of everyday is the

¹³ There is a hadith, which is a weak one reported by al-Bayhaqī in his Sunan and al-Khatīb in his "Tārīkh" related by Jābir (R) who said that the Prophet (S) explained the great Jihad as resisting the temptation around and facing the challenges of everyday life. The meaning could be correct to a certain extent, but we cannot confirm that the Messenger (S) said it. However, many Ayahs in the Qur'an stress that life is all strife and sacrifices.

strife to stick to the straight path, which is the path of righteousness and piety. In every person's journey in this life, there are good times and bad times. To make *Juhd*, or effort, to the utmost level while dealing with all the ups and downs of life, is a great *Jihad*. Any hurdles and obstacles in life need sacrifices, which require a great amount of energy to overcome them. They can be in different forms and tastes, but the believer recognizes what is beneficial or harmful in this life and in the hereafter.

Allah has called sticking to the Qur'an's principles, to its values and teachings, and using it for intellectual argumentation against those who do not believe in it, a great *Jihad* in itself. Allah (swt) says,

فَلَا تُطِعُ الْكَافِرِينَ وَجَاهِدُهُمْ بِهِ جِهَادًا كَبِيرًا (الفرقان: 52)

**“Therefore, obey not to the Unbelievers♦, but strive
against them with the utmost endeavor, with the**

(Qur'an)” (25:52)

♦ The obedience means to obey them by following their faith and what they innovated and changed in the religion of Prophet Ibrahim (A). The Makkans wanted some concession and compromise from Prophet Muhammad (S) in terms of religious beliefs and practices. This does not mean that a person can break laws and regulations and say that “it is an order from God not to obey because although these laws may be good or just, they are laws that were put by somebody who does not believe in what he, or she, believes.” This is simply called anarchy! Muslims should not be anarchist, but rather law-abiding.

Actually, in the Qur'an, the great Jihad is to work righteousness by living the divine word and translating it into practice and reality. Allah (swt) says,

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لِنَهْدِيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ (العنكبوت:69)

“And those who strive in Our (Cause), We will certainly guide them to Our Paths: for verily Allah is with those who do right.” (29:69)

The world today is very familiar with the term *Jihad*, but not with its real meaning and significance in Islam and its history. For many, this word means terrorism, bloodshed and killing innocent people and civilians. It is presented as being the “Holy War” of the Muslims against the West in the same way that the Christian Crusaders had their holy war during the Middle Ages in the Holy land. Very often, some anti-Muslim writers or speakers blame Islam and the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (S), for fighting and calling people to Jihad during his time. In their view, if Muhammad (S) was the Prophet and Messenger of Allah, he should not have carried the sword or fought against his enemies because Jesus (Peace be upon him) did not do it. Unfortunately, the story is presented in an incomplete fashion with hardly any accuracy in terms of the accounts and backgrounds of the battles that the Prophet and his companions witnessed in addition to the context of where they lived. Arabia was a chaotic society with no recognized governments, no military or policing system, no rule of law and order and, in most cases, it was more of a “might is right”

kind of sociopolitical environment. Unlike in the neighboring areas to Arabia which were under the rule of Rome and Byzantine governments, Arabian society was simply run by a tribal system made of hundreds of tribes which were continuously in conflicts and wars. Very often, those warring tribes fought for years and even for decades, either for honor, land and pasture, water or for vengeance. The Prophet (S) did not go to fight just for the sake of fighting, but he and his followers fought only to defend themselves and their newly established nation and government in Madinah. They fought to establish justice and to protect the weak, the women and the children, the former slaves who had no tribal protection and new immigrants who came to start a new life in a new land, as well as other religious minorities.

The Prophet (S), when faced with the need to go to war and use force as a last resort, used to pre-warn the opponents; he didn't surprise them, he faced them, didn't stab his enemy from the back and he never started a war until the enemy started it. If solutions could not be reached, he used to tell them to pay *Jizyah*. The latter is a kind of tax to be paid by people living in the land controlled by the Muslim state so that they become eligible for protection and citizenship. Muslim citizens had to pay another form of tax called “*Zakat*” – alms, which is the third pillar of Islam,¹⁴ in addition to other forms

¹⁴ There is another kind of Taxes called –*al-Kharāj*– that is paid beside *Zakat*. History has shown that in many cases Muslims paid more in *Zakat* than the *Dhimmis* – protected non–Muslims –paid for *Jizya*

of land taxes. Otherwise, if the opponents refused and insisted on fighting, then war was the last resort and solution. Allah (swt) says,

(وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ)
(البقرة: 190)

“And fight in the way of Allah those who fight you, but transgress not the limits. Truly, Allah does not like the transgressors.” (2:190)

Ibn ‘Abbās, who is considered the highest authority in the exegesis of the Qur’ān among the scholars of the companions of the Prophet (S), said that God ordered them to defend themselves and counterattack any aggression without involving children, women, monks, and the like.¹⁵ This verse was revealed to the Muslims¹⁶ to allow them to defend themselves against any aggressors, but at the same time they were not to go to the extreme in fighting and killing or be excessive to a point of inflicting extreme damages, exterminating people or seeking blind vengeance. Rather,

¹⁵ See Tafsīr (commentary) of al-Qurṭubī on this Ayah: 2:190.

¹⁶ This ayah was revealed one year after the agreement for peace in *al-Hudaybiyyah* on the 6th year after migration to Madinah, which was signed by Prophet Muhammad (S) and the leaders of Makkah. Muslims wanted to perform ‘Umrah as agreed with the Makkans, but they were worried about a possible plot in Makkah. They did not want to get involved in a war in the holy place and during the holy month of Dhul Qi’dah (see Asbāb al-Nuzūl by al-Wāhidi on this ayah 2:196 – See the commentary of al-Ṭabarī and the commentary of al-Qurṭubī).

they were instructed to fight back with well-defined rules of engagement. Although it may sound non-commonsenseical to state the obvious and the natural and legitimate reaction of self-defense, the purpose of fighting back was to push the enemies away, to deter any future assailants and criminals and to teach them a lesson. In addition to that, Madinah was the first established government in Arabia with a dedicated and organized military system shifting, thereby, the Arabian Peninsula from a tribal system to a state governed with a constitution (the Qur'an and the Sunnah principles as well as Consultation) and a leadership that was dual: religious and political. Muhammad (S) was not only the Prophet and Messenger of Allah, but also the religious leader, the spiritual guide and teacher, the ruler, the judge and the peacekeeper. Securing peace for the citizens and the country, protecting lives, dignity, honor and properties, as well as maintaining the rule of law, order and justice were some of his priorities. Therefore, this critical task became a great focus and concern in Islam and Islamic law. Based on the definition of Jihad, we have elucidated here that all nations do *Jihad* when they are attacked. What makes it a little difficult to understand in the Islamic context is the historical fact that it was obligatory and a religious duty on ordinary people to defend themselves against their enemy since there was no established army or military system in Arabia. Volunteers were summoned and motivated to do the military duty. Of course, any sane-minded person would fight when there is no one to defend

him/her, or when the legitimate and lawful government calls for volunteers. Allah (swt) says,

(أَذْنَ اللَّهُنَّ يُقَاتِلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظُلْمُوا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى نَصْرِهِ لَقَدِيرٌ الَّذِينَ أَخْرَجُوا
مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَقُولُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ وَلَوْلَا دَفَعَ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بِعِظَمِهِمْ
بَعْضُهُمْ لَهُدَمَتْ صَوَامِعٌ وَبَيْعَ وَصَلَوَاتٌ وَمَسَاجِدٌ يُذَكَّرُ فِيهَا اسْمُ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا
وَلَيُنَصِّرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ) (الحج: 39-40)

"To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight), because they are wronged; and verily, Allah is Most Powerful for their aid; they are those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right, (for no cause) except that they say, "Our Lord is Allah." Did not Allah check one set of people by means of another there would surely have been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, in which the name of Allah is commemorated, in abundant measure. Allah will certainly aid those who aid His (cause); for verily Allah is Full of Strength, Exalted in Might" (22:39-40)

One simply wonders what Prophet Muhammad (Blessings & peace be upon him) would say about those who are using weapons of mass destruction such as bombs¹⁷,

¹⁷ This is based on my personal judgment and understanding where I refer to: 1 - *'Uloom an-Nuṣūṣ*, the texts of hadith, which forbid mutilation.

2- *Qiyās al-Awlā*, analogy of the worthier, where the 'illah – effective cause- is present and obvious in a worse way when bombs are used compared to mutilation, which is not allowed in Islam.

chemical and biological weapons. Based on the legal maxims we know and the strict forbiddance of transgression of the boundaries of Allah, these inhumane means should not be permissible, no matter what the causes are. A Muslim soldier fighting in a war could not kill unless with consideration of human dignity¹⁸. Mutilation and burning are not allowed in Islam; cutting off noses, heads, limbs...etc., is not permissible, let alone using bombs and chemical and biological weapons. Based on the principles of the Islamic law of justice and human stewardship on earth, all bombs should neither be allowed nor tolerated. Bombs cause unnecessary damage for the targeted person and great damage to unintended victims, in addition to the great corruption on earth (*fasād*) that extends beyond any control. This is the meaning of the forbidden '*Udwān*' mentioned in the Qur'an (2:190). These modern means of destruction are indeed far worse than mutilation, which is unanimously forbidden in Islam.

When teaching his companions how to take the life of an animal for food to eat, the Prophet (S) instructed them to do it in a manner that is humane and one which reduces the pain and suffering at the time of the slaughter. He said:

¹⁸ It might sound weird to use both the words killing and dignity in the same context, but it simply means the soldier kills not for the sake of killing but for the sake of stopping aggression. Once the soul is out then why would a person try to disfigure and mutilate the dead corpse? The soul goes back to its Lord and He does what He wants with it.

عَنْ شَدَّادِ بْنِ أُوْسٍ قَالَ: يُتَبَّانُ حَفْظُهُمَا عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَبَّ الْإِحْسَانَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَإِذَا قَتَلْتُمْ فَأَحْسِنُوا الْقُتْلَةَ وَإِذَا ذَبَحْتُمْ فَأَحْسِنُوا الذَّبْحَ وَلِيُحِدَّ أَحَدُكُمْ شَفَرَتَهُ وَلِيُرِحَّ ذَبِيْحَتَهُ". رواه مسلم وغيره

"Allah has prescribed beneficence in all things. Thus, when you have no choice but to kill (your enemy at war) do it in the least painful way possible, and when you slaughter an animal (to eat) do it in the least painful way possible. Let each one of you sharpen his blade and let him spare suffering to the animal he slaughters."

(Muslim and others)¹⁹

If this was said about the animals used only for food, what would we expect to be said about human beings? Bombs mutilate and destroy human beings and other living beings, structures, and properties; hence, based on the previously mentioned principle, bombs should not be an option for people. Consequently, again, based on the Islamic law and its principles, these kinds of weapons of mass destruction should be banned internationally. Therefore, in my humble opinion, all Muslims should universally, not selectively, stand with their human brethren who are leading movements around the

¹⁹ Reported by Muslim in the book of hunting, Hadith # 3615. At-Tirmidhi in the book of Sacrifices, Hadith # 1329. Al-Nassā'ī in the book of Sacrifices, Hadith # 4329– 4338. Abu Dāwûd in the book of Sacrifices, Hadith # 2432. Ibn Mājah in the book of Slaughtered animals, Hadith # 3161. Ahmad in the Musnad of the people of Shām, Hadith # 16490 – 16506 – 16516. Ad-Dārimī in Hadith # 1888.

globe, and are calling on governments to stop the proliferation of land mines, chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons. Superpowers and countries friendly to them should also be prohibited from possessing weapons of mass destruction. Unfortunately, this might sound odd and crazy but it is the right thing to do. If God forbid there is another world war it will look nothing like the second world war. It will simply be a total annihilation of everyone and everything.

If war takes place, Islam teaches not to kill children, women, old people, priests and monks who are praying, or on a retreat, not to destroy places of worship and crops, not to ruin water sources and not to cut trees. Animals should not be killed unless it is for subsistence. When the Prophet (S) saw a woman killed in a battle, he became angry and said to those who were with him "**“not to kill women and children.”**" ("Reported by al- Jamā'ah –all the compilers of Hadith- except an-Nassa'i)²⁰

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ " أَنَّ امْرَأَةً وُجِدَتْ فِي بَعْضِ مَغَازِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَقْتُولَةً فَانْكَرَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَتْلَ النِّسَاءِ وَالصَّبَيِّنَ " رواه الجماعة إلا النساء

²⁰ Reported by al-Bukhari in the book of Jihad and the Biographies, Hadith # 2792. Muslim in the book of Jihad and the Biographies, Hadith # 3279– 3280. At-Tirmidhi in the book of Biographies, Hadith # 1494. Abu Dāwūd in the book of Jihad, Hadith # 2294. Ibn Mājah in the book of Jihad, Hadith # 2831. Ahmad in Musnad al-Mukthirīn among the Companions of the Prophet (S), Hadith # 4507– 4516. Mālik in the book of Jihad, Hadith # 857. In addition, ad-Dārimī in the book of Biographies, Hadith # 2353.

Even if the non-combatants happened to be in the battlefield, they should be pushed aside and not killed. Abu Dāwûd relates that the Prophet (S) said to some Muslims who were going for Jihad, in a self-defense reaction against an attack by the people of Makkah,

عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: "اَنْطَلِقُوا بِاسْمِ اللَّهِ وَبِاللَّهِ وَعَلَى مَلَةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تَقْتُلُو شَيْخًا فَانِيَا وَلَا طَفْلًا وَلَا صَغِيرًا وَلَا اُمْرَأَةً وَلَا تَغْلُو وَضُمِّنُوا غَنَائِمَكُمْ وَأَصْلِحُو وَاحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ"

رواه أبو داود

"Go in the name of Allah, with the help of Allah and according to the *Millah* (way) of the Messenger of Allah. Do not kill an old person, a little child, or a woman..."²¹

In another narration related by Imam Ahmad, the Prophet (S) said,

عَنْ أَبْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ: كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا بَعَثَ جِيُوشَهُ قَالَ: "لَا تَغْدِرُو وَلَا تَغْلُو وَلَا تُمْثِلُو وَلَا تَقْتُلُو الْوُلْدَانَ وَلَا أَصْحَابَ الصَّوَامِعِ" رواه أحمد

"Do not betray, do not deceive to take the booty, do not mutilate, and do not kill children and the monks who are worshipping in the monasteries"²².

²¹ Authentic reported by Abu Dāwûd in the book of Jihad, Hadith # 2247

²² Reported by Imam Ahmad in the Musnad of Banī Hāshim, Hadith # 2592. Muslim also reports the first half in the book of Jihad and the Biographies, Hadith # 3261.

The companions of the Prophet (S) said,

فَالْقَاتِلُونَ قَالَ قَتَادَةُ: بَلَغْنَا أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ كَانَ يَحْثُثُ عَلَى الصَّدَقَةِ وَيَنْهَا عَنِ الْمُثْلَةِ" متفق عليه بالفاظ متباعدة

"The Prophet (S) used to encourage us to give charity and to forbid us from mutilation"²³.

In another narration it says,

"نَهَى النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَنِ الْهُبْيَ وَالْمُثْلَةِ" رواه البخاري وأحمد

"The Prophet (S) forbade us from taking properties by force and mutilating".²⁴

There are many other Hadiths that are similar to the ones mentioned²⁵. When the Prophet (S) entered Makkah with a large army and conquered it, the former Makkan enemies felt embarrassed for what they did and regretted what they had done against the Prophet (S). They expected a severe retaliation from the Prophet (S). When he (S) asked the people of Makkah what they thought he was going to do with them, they said, "You are a noble person and a generous person in forgiveness and a son of a noble and a generous person". He said, "**Go, you are free!**" Then he read what Allah mentioned

²³ Related by al-Bukhari in "al-Maghāzi" hadith # 3871 and Muslim in hadith # 3162 –3163 – At-Tirmidhi # 1695 – An-Nassā'ī # 303–304 – Abu Dāwūd # 3798 – Ibn Mājah # 2568 – Ahmad # 11600.

²⁴ Related by al-Bukhari # 2294 –5092 and Ahmad # 17991.

²⁵ See "Bidāyat al-Mujtahid wa Bidāyat al-Muqtaṣid" by Imam Ibnu Rushd in section 3 of the Book of Jihad.

in the story of Prophet Yusuf (Joseph) (P.b.u.h.) when his brothers admitted their sin and apologized for what they had done to him,

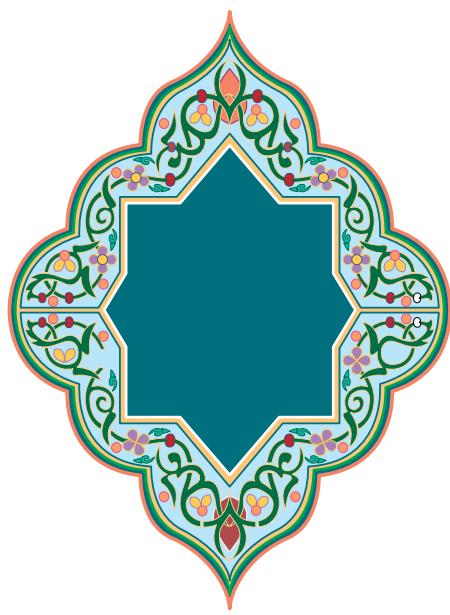
(فَالَّتَّهُمَّ لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِلَيْكُم بِمَا كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ وَأَرْحَمْنَا رَبَّ الْأَرْضَمِينَ) (يوسف: ٩٢)

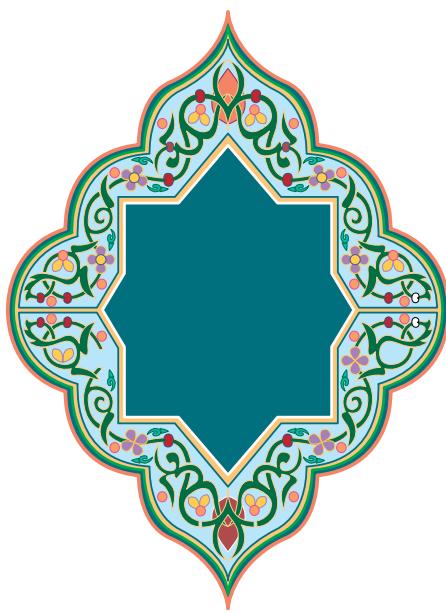
"This day let no reproach be (cast) on you: Allah will forgive you, and He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy!" (Yusuf: 92)²⁶

The Prophet (S) was in a position of power and could have punished them or killed them if he wanted, but instead he (S) wanted peace, grace and forgiveness. He told his companions that no one was allowed to touch them or their property. This is what he (S) did when he was in a position of power. Years before that, when they mutilated his uncle Hamzah at the battle of Uhud and they had his nose, ears and intestines cut off and his liver was bitten savagely by Hind, the wife of Abu Sufyan, the Prophet (S) did not avenge this cruelty on the person who had done it when he met him later. This is how Muslims are taught to behave. We can read hundreds of similar examples in history, recording the noble treatment by Muslim rulers of the Crusaders in Palestine after the latter's defeat. Muslims do not enjoy taking revenge, but they enjoy establishing justice and peace. Even if their enemies opt to use the rule "Goals justify the means", Muslims cannot use it.

²⁶ Zād al Ma'ād by Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah: 2/162 & al-Rahīq al-Makhtūm (The sealed Nectar) by Safi-ur-Rahman al-Mubarakpuri: p.455.

Human life is given honor, protection and full dignity in Islamic teachings. It should not be made cheap by ‘Goals justify the means’, whether by Muslims or non-Muslims. In Islam, human life is so valuable that it cannot have a price.





Chapter 2

Islam and the value of Justice

Peace cannot be maintained without justice. The latter is the cornerstone of peace and prosperity along with respect, dialogue and tolerance. Without justice, rights are denied, victims are created, anger gives way to anarchy, and extremism in its different faces gains more ground. Justice is a moral and absolute right. It is the upholding of what is just and fair. These last two definitions can summarize for us the reasons behind many conflicts, problems, and sometimes insanity and disorder in today's world.

Justice is the quality of being right, fair and being able to conduct all affairs in an impartial manner. In the name of justice, all human beings should be equal. Justice encompasses righteousness, goodness, probity, rightness, fairness, justness, uprightness, equity, honor, truthfulness, honesty, and virtue. In Islam, justice (*al-'adl* العدل or *al-qist* القسط) is to give rights and what is deserved to those who deserve it. It is also to fulfill one's duties towards others and to create an atmosphere of peace, prosperity, respect and harmony for everyone.

A. Justice: A moral and religious duty in Islam

We read in the Qur'an,

(وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ أَلَا تَطْغُوا فِي الْمِيزَانِ وَأَقِيمُوا الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ) (الرَّحْمَن: 7-9)

“And the Firmament (sky) has He raised high, and He has set up the Balance of Justice in order that you may not transgress due balance. So, establish weight with justice and fall not short in the balance.” (55:7-9)

Allah speaks here of a “Balance”, which means the Equilibrium that He has set on this earth. Once there is a transgression in this system, whether in nature, the environment, or between people, then things go wrong and begin the dysfunction of everything from nature and climate change, diseases and pollution to the behavior of humans and all the creatures.

Allah has commanded us in His book to stick to justice and to be on its side in all cases with no exception. It is because of justice that peace, harmony, and the welfare and wellbeing of everyone can be maintained. In Islam justice is not a mere civil matter, but it is a religious obligation, an act of worship, and a great proof of sincere submission and commitment to peace. Allah (swt) says:

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَا عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ) (النَّحْل: 90)

“Allah commands justice, beneficence, and giving to kith and kin, and He forbids all indecent deeds,

**injustice, evil, and rebellion: He instructs you
that you may receive admonition.” (16:90)**

Allah (swt) commands us here to be just, beneficent, and kind to our families and relatives. These characteristics are necessary for every individual so that we create a strong society. He also forbids us from being indecent, unfair, disobedient, selfish, and arrogant. A society where there is no justice, no family values, no respect for elders and children, no beneficence and volunteerism, no mercy for the needy and the hungry, and no care for the neighbor, cannot last for a long time. This type of society lacks the vital foundations that ensure people could live together as they were meant to.

Justice was one of the first things that Prophet Muhammad (S) preached and taught to people. It includes justice among people, justice between people and their Creator, justice towards other creatures, and even justice of individuals towards themselves. Teaching His Messenger (S), Allah (swt) says:

(فَلَذِكَ فَادْعُ وَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أهْوَاءِهِمْ وَقُلْ عَامِنْتُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ كِتَابٍ وَأُمِرْتُ لَأَعْدِلَ بَيْنَكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ لَا حَجَةَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمُ اللَّهُ يَجْمِعُ بَيْنَنَا وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ) (الشورى: 15)

“Now then, for that reason, call them to the Faith, stand steadfast as you are commanded, nor follow your vain desires; but say: “I believe in the Book which Allah has sent down; and I am commanded to judge justly between you. God is our Lord and your Lord: For us is

the responsibility for our deeds and for you your deeds. There is no contention between you and us. Allah will bring us together, and to Him is our final goal.” (42:15)

Islam honors and recognizes those who are justice lovers and makers whether they are Muslims or not. Therefore, Muslims must appreciate and value any human effort to establish and maintain justice. There has always been a group of people who follow the straight path, the teachings and the ways of the Messengers and Prophets of Allah (swt). These people were mentioned and praised because of the quality of justice they had. Allah says:

(وَمِنْ قَوْمٍ مُّوسَىٰ أُمَّةٌ يَهُدُونَ بِالْحَقِّ وَبِهِ يَعْدِلُونَ) (الأعراف: 159)

“Of the people of Moses there is a section who guides and does justice in the light of truth.” (7:159)

In addition:

(وَمِنْ خَلْقِنَا أُمَّةٌ يَهُدُونَ بِالْحَقِّ وَبِهِ يَعْدِلُونَ) (الأعراف: 181)

“Of those we have created are people who direct others with truth, and dispense justice therewith.” (7:181)

God mentions this in the Qur'an to encourage and urge the Muslims to follow the pattern of those who stick to justice.

B. Justice is fulfilling duties by being fair and equitable

Allah commands us to fulfill our duties by being trustworthy and just. He says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤْدُوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَى أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعُدْلِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمًا يَعْظُمُكُمْ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا (النساء:58)

“God commands you to render back your trusts to those whom they are due; and when you judge between people, that you judge with justice: verily how excellent is the teaching, which He gives you! For God is He who hears and sees all things.” (4:58)

Muslims must adopt a just attitude while settling disputes and avoid being partial or taking sides, except the side of truth and justice. This is the only way to maintain equality, peace, and contentment. Islam even forbids the judge to settle disputes while being angry or in a highly emotional state. The Prophet (S) said:

عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ أَبِي بَكْرٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: لَا يَقْضِي الْقَاضِي بَيْنَ الثَّيْنِ وَهُوَ غَضِبَانٌ. ” رواه البخاري وغيره

“A judge should not conduct a case while being angry.”

Reported by Bukhari and Muslim²⁷

²⁷ Related by al-Bukhari in the book of Ahkām: Rulings, Hadith # 6625 – Muslim in the book of Judicial Rulings, Hadith # 3241 – At-Tirmidhi in the book of Rulings of the Messenger of Allah (S), Hadith # 1254 – An-Nassā'i in the book of Ethics of Judges, Hadith # 5311– 5326 – Abu

Islam aims to maintain and ensure justice among people and to eradicate antagonism and the cause of quarrels between them. Allah (swt) says:

وَلَا تَسْتُوِي الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ عَدَاوَةٌ كَانَهُ وَلِيٌ حَبِيبٌ (فصل: 34)

“Nor can Goodness and Evil be equal. Repel Evil with what is better: then notice how someone who is separated from you because of enmity will become as though he was a bosom friend.” (41:34)

As mentioned earlier, to treat others in a just and fair manner is compulsory because it is a religious and moral duty. A believer knows with certainty that while ruling in a case and giving a verdict he is being watched by Allah (swt). Allah says:

مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدِيهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ (ق: 18)
“Not a word does he utter but there is a vigilant guardian.” (50:18)

Therefore, the verdict should be given with justice because the judge is a witness to Allah. This is not about what a person desires, but rather what Allah wants, which is the truth and the right thing to do or say. What we want can very often be driven by our desires and whims of our weak selves or corrupt hearts and minds, while God wants peace, justice

Dāwūd in the book of Judicial Rulings, Hadith #3116 – Ahmad in the Musnad, Hadith # 19485...

and goodness for all. It is quite common for people to cover up for themselves, their relatives and their friends, and this results in being unfair to others. Likewise, it is true and quite common that people easily indict their enemies or the enemies of their relatives and friends. Those kinds of relations should never allow compassion or spitefulness to interfere with the ruler. Yusuf Ali says,

Rather, one's love or enmity should make him/her, more justice loving and restraining from selfish motives. Justice searches out the innermost motives, because we are to act as in the presence of Allah, to whom all things, acts, and motives are known. Some people may be inclined to favor the rich, because they expect something from them. Some people may be inclined to favor the poor because they are generally helpless. Partiality in either case is wrong. Be just, without fear or favor.²⁸

Allah (swt) says:

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِكُمْ
أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا
فَلَا تَتَنَعَّمُوا الْهُوَى أَنْ تَعْدُلُوا وَإِنْ تَلُوْوا أَوْ تُعْرِضُوا
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا) (النساء:135)

"O you who believe, stand out firmly for justice as witnesses to God, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be against rich or poor: for God can best protect both. Follow not the lusts of your hearts, lest you swerve and if you distort

²⁸ See his comments under his English translation of the meaning of Qur'an on Ayah 4:135.

justice or decline to do justice, verily God is well-acquainted with all that you do.” (4:135)

And He also says:

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُوْنُوا قَوَامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَآنُ قَوْمٍ
عَلَى أَلَا تَعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ)
(المائدة: 8)

“Oh you who believe! Stand out firmly for God, witnesses to fair dealing and let not the hatred of others makes you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety, and fear God. For God is well-acquainted with all that you do.” (5:8)

In another context, He says:

(وَلَا تَقْرِبُوا مَالَ الْيَتَيمِ إِلَّا بِالْتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ أَشْدُهُ وَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ
وَالْمِيزَانَ بِالْقِسْطِ لَا تُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسِّعَهَا إِذَا فَاقْتُلُوا وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا
قُرْبَىٰ وَبِعِهْدِ اللَّهِ أَوْفُوا ذَلِكُمْ وَصَاصِمْ بِهِ لَعْلَكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ) (الأعراف: 152)

“And come not nigh to the orphan’s property, except to improve it, until he, or she, attains the age of full strength. Give measure and weight with full justice; – no burden do We place on any soul, but that which it can bear; – whenever you speak, speak justly even if a near relative is concerned; and fulfill the Covenant of God: thus, does He command you that you may remember.” (6:152)

Being just means being fair and impartial and sticking to justice even if the outcome might be against one's interest or the interest of one's parents, family members and friends. Allah is urging the rulers, and Muslims in general, to be just in everything and every matter, whether a personal, a familial, a social, a political, a financial, or a spiritual one. Justice should be established everywhere and at all times. Muslims must be fair, pious and God-conscious. Muslims will never be able to convince the world about the practicality and validity of Islamic teachings and regulations, as long as they are not just in their rulings and in the management of their affairs, or the affairs of their countries and citizens, even though some of them claim to apply Islamic law known as the *Shari'ah*.²⁹

We have seen that the cornerstones for Peace are Justice, Respect, Dialogue, and Tolerance. The Qur'an talks about these major themes and emphasizes strongly on their application and manifestation, as well as all the values of Islam that are universally known to every common human being. The religion of Islam is not a religion of darkness and deception as we sometimes hear it being described by some anti-Muslim individuals in public or in the media. It is simply a religion that transforms people into better human beings by enlightening their life with the message of mercy, compassion and balance in everything. Islam calls humanity to balance in

²⁹ The principles of *Shari'ah* are 1- Justice 2- Gradual legislation 3- Reduction of obligations 4- Elimination and removal of any hardship or difficulty 5- Acquiring benefit and removing harm and detriment.

everything. Balance is stability, justice and fairness. All the problems that we see in the world today, from conflicts, abuses, diseases and viruses to hate, wars and crimes, are the results of an imbalance in many lives. We must study and read the many important verses in the Qur'an that focus our attention on the concept of justice and balance in life. An example of this is the verse we saw earlier that reads, "**And the Firmament (sky) has He raised high, and He has set up the balance (equilibrium), in order that you may not transgress (due) balance. So establish weight with justice and fall not short in the balance.**" (55:7-9)

Because of injustices, grievances, pains, greed and avarice, jealousy and vengeance, people resort to all kinds of acts that are not condoned by religion nor by our instinct and human nature. Justice, love, respect, contentment and faith are the bedrocks of welfare and peace for humanity and all the creation. Justice is what keeps things balanced. Thus, we must create a balance between all aspects of our lives and all the components of these aspects: our souls, our bodies, our minds, our brains, our loved ones and relatives, our properties and our rights. Every one of these components needs our attention because when we focus only on one thing we tend to neglect the others and that pushes us consciously or unconsciously to extremes. It is good to work hard, but not at the expense of the family and health. It is beneficial to read and write about good things, but it should not be done at the expense of doing

good deeds. It is good to exercise and play sports, but not at the expense of getting enough sleep or rest.

Once Salman (a companion of the Prophet (S) paid a visit to Abu al-Darda – with whom the Prophet (S) established a bond of brotherhood, as he did with all his companions – and found his wife (Um al-Darda') dressed in untidy clothes. He asked her why she was in that state. She replied, “Your brother, Abu al-Darda is not interested in the luxuries of this world.” In the meantime, Abu al-Darda came and prepared a meal for him (Salman), and said to him, “(Please) eat for I am fasting.” Salman said, “I am not going to eat, unless you eat.” Abu al-Darda' then ate. During the night, Abu al-Darda' got up (for the night prayer). Salman said to him, “Sleep,” and he slept. Once again Abu al-Darda' got up (for the prayer), and Salman said to him, “Sleep.” During the latter part of the night, Salman said to him, “Get up now (for the prayer).” Both of them offered their prayers and Salman said to Abu al-Darda', **“Your Lord has a right on you; and your soul has a right on you; and your family has a right on you; so you should give the rights of all those who have a right on you.”** Later, Abu Al-Darda' visited the Prophet (S) and mentioned to him what had happened. The Prophet (S), said, **“Salman has spoken the truth.”**

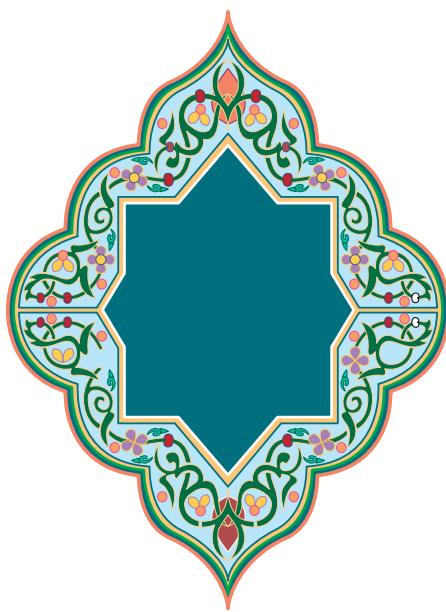
All the commands and teachings of Islam evolve around this concept of justice in everything. The commands and prohibitions of Islam are about keeping things balanced in life. This abovementioned story of Salman (May Allah be

pleased with him) is a good example of how even religious practices can lead to an imbalance in life, and that is why the Prophet (S) himself warned his followers not to go to the extremes in religious matters. If religious practices take people away from their duties and responsibilities towards their loved ones, from their other duties, benefits, or God-given pleasures, then they become out of balance, even though they may think they are doing good things for God or humanity.

The other category of verses in the Qur'an that we also need to focus on and study are the ones that come in the form of commandments. For instance, Allah says, **"Say: "Come I will rehearse what Allah has (really) prohibited you from": join not anything with Him; Be good to your parents: kill not your children on a plea of want;— provide sustenance for you and for them;— come not nigh to shameful deeds, whether open or secret; take not life, which Allah has made sacred, except by way of justice and law: thus does He commands you, that you may learn wisdom. And come not nigh to the orphan's property, except to improve it, until he attains the age of full strength; give measure and weight with (full) justice; — no burden do We place on any soul, but that which it can bear; — whenever you speak, speak justly, even if a near relative is concerned; and fulfill the Covenant of Allah: thus does He command you, that you may remember. Verily, this is My Way leading straight: follow it: follow not (other) paths: they will**

scatter you about from His path: thus does He command you, that you may be righteous.” (6: 151-3)

These verses and similar ones, such as Chapter 17, verses 23-40, sum up many of the principles that are needed to rectify things in our lives and help us build and establish justice, love, respect, contentment and eventually a stronger faith and a balanced life.



Chapter 3

Islam and the value of Mercy

Mercy is a beautiful and a comforting word for every sane-minded human being, regardless of ethnicity, culture, education, religion or experience in life. The appearance of children triggers the parents' natural disposition to respond mercifully towards their loved ones. The state or appearance of a hungry or needy person generates mercy in our hearts and calls us to action to relieve his/her suffering and pain. The helpless animals and plants thrust our minds and hearts to act mercifully towards them. Mercy is an innate emotion, spirit and human disposition. The more we connect spiritually to our fellow human beings the more we display mercy and compassion towards them. Islam recognizes that in every human being there is something good and that human beings are good by nature. Therefore, in its teachings, it makes a point of showing all humanity the mercy inherent in the message and in the Messenger. The message is the Qur'an and the Messenger is Prophet Muhammad (Blessings & Peace be upon him).

A. A Message of Mercy

Islam is described in the Qur'an and the Sunnah as a message of Mercy to the world. Anyone who studies Islam through its texts, history, cultures and expressions, as well as gains first-hand experience from sitting and mingling with Muslims from around the world, can easily come to the conclusion that the essence of the message of Islam is about mercy, generosity, peace, respect, love, justice, responsibility and happiness for all humanity. Islam aims at bringing out of us the best of our humanity. All that a person needs to understand Islam is humility, an open-mind, attention, and genuine effort to learn about Islam from reliable sources, not from the internet, the media or extremist religious literature or periodicals.

The Qur'an teaches that Allah sealed the revelation to humankind through His final Prophet and Messenger Muhammad (P.b.u.h). In His last revelation, or message to the world, Allah set a system and a way of life that leads to a life of righteousness, justice, and peace for every living being. He called people to Islam, which is an acceptance of a constant state of peace with God, and He called them to abide with His divine laws and guidelines to organize their lives. In this message, the call to mercy is at different levels. That is why Allah summed up everything about His last Messenger by describing him as a Mercy to the entire world. We read in the Qur'an,

(وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ) (الأنبياء: 107)

“We sent you not, but as a mercy for all creatures.”

(21:107)

In addition, He says,

(قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يَحْيِي وَيَمْتَدِ فَامْتُنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ النَّبِيِّ الْأَمِيِّ الَّذِي يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَكَلِمَاتِهِ وَاتَّبِعُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ) (الأعراف: 158)

“Say: “O people! I am sent unto you all, as the Messenger of Allah, to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth: there is no god but He: it is He that gives both life and death. So, believe in Allah and His Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, who believes in Allah and His Words: follow him that (so) you may be guided.” (7:158)

In many chapters of the Qur'an, Allah reminds people of the blessings and possessions they have because He is the one who gives and takes away things such as health, wealth, intellect and life. In all these cases, He uses the word *Rahmah*, Mercy, and wants people to be merciful to one another as well as to all His creatures. The Prophet (S), who was the example and practical model of God's teachings, as we will see, urged people to be merciful and compassionate. He said,

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرُو بْنِ العاصِ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنَّهُ قَالَ وَفُورَ عَلَى الْجِنْبَرِ:
”اِرْحُمُوا تُرْحَمُوا وَاغْفِرُوا يَغْفِرُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ.” رواه أحمد

“Be merciful to others, Allah will be Merciful to you, and forgive, Allah will forgive you.” Ahmad³⁰

Once al-Aqra' ibn Hābiss, a Bedouin man, made a remark when he saw the Prophet (S) kissing his grandson al-Hassan and said that he had ten children and he never kissed anyone of them, the Prophet replied to him by saying,

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: فَبَلَّ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الْحَسَنَ بْنَ عَلَيٍّ وَعِنْدَهُ الْأَقْرَعُ بْنُ حَابِسٍ التَّمِيمِيُّ جَالِسًا فَقَالَ الْأَقْرَعُ إِنِّي لِي عَشَرَةً مِنَ الْوَلَدِ مَا فَبَلَّتْ مِنْهُمْ أَحَدًا فَنَظَرَ إِلَيْهِ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ثُمَّ قَالَ: "مَنْ لَا يَرْحَمُ لَا يُرْحَمُ" متفق عليه وزاد أَحْمَدَ: "وَمَنْ لَا يَغْفِرُ لَا يُغْفَرُ لَهُ".

“Whoever does not show mercy to others, Mercy won’t cover him” Agreed upon it.

Ahmad added, **“And whoever does not forgive, Allah won’t forgive him”**³¹

He also said,

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرِيْ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: "الرَّاحِمُونَ يَرْحَمُهُمُ الرَّحْمَنُ ارْحَمُوا مَنِ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَرْحَمُكُمْ مَنِ فِي السَّمَاوَاءِ".

رواه أبو داود وأحمد والترمذى وقال هذا حديث حسن صحيح

³⁰ Reported by Imam Ahmad in Musnad al-Mukthirīn mina as-Sahāba: Hadiths: 6255 – 6744.

³¹ Reported by al-Bukhari in the book of Good Manners: Hadiths # 5538 – 5554 – Muslim in the book of Virtues: Hadith # 4282 – At-Tirmidhi in the book of Piety and Filial piety: Hadith # 1834 – Abu Dāwūd in the book of Good Manners: Hadith 4541 – Ahmad in the Musnad: Hadiths # 6824 – 6988 – 7329 – 10257 – 18447.

“The merciful ones deserve the Mercy of the Most Merciful. Be merciful to those on earth so that the One in Heaven – Allah – will cover you with His Mercy.”

Reported by Ahmad, Abu Dāwūd and at-Tirmidhi. The latter said it is

good authentic³²

The Messenger of Allah (S) taught his followers that Islam is about mercy and being merciful. He explained and demonstrated that virtue in practice. Once he gave to his companions a parable about the mercy of God. He drew their attention to a woman who was breastfeeding her baby while carrying him. He asked his companions, “**Would you think this woman would throw her baby in the fire?**” They replied, “Certainly not! She would not allow herself to do that. No mother would do that.” He then said, “**Know that Allah is more Merciful to you than this woman to her baby.**”³³

عَنْ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَدِيمٌ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ سَيِّئَتْ فَإِذَا امْرَأَةٌ مِنَ السَّيِّئِ قَدْ تَحْلِبُ لَدُنْهَا تَسْقِي إِذَا وَجَدَتْ صَبِيًّا فِي السَّيِّئِ أَخْدَثُهُ فَالصَّفَعَةُ يُطْعِنُهَا وَأَرْضَاعَةُ فَعَالَ لَهَا النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

“أَتُرَوْنَ هَذِهِ طَارِحَةً وَلَدَهَا فِي النَّارِ؟ قُلْنَا لَا وَهِيَ تَقْدِرُ عَلَى أَنْ لَا تَنْطِحَهُ فَقَالَ: لَلَّهُ أَرْحَمُ بَعِيَادَهِ مِنْ هَذِهِ يُولَدَهَا” متفق عليه

³² Reported by Abu Dāwūd in the book of Good Manners: Hadith 4290 – At-Tirmidhi in the book of Piety and Filial piety: Hadith # 1847 – Ahmad in the Musnad: Hadith #6206.

³³ Reported by al-Bukhari in the book of Etiquette: Hadith # 5540 – Muslim in the book of Repentance: Hadith # 4947

B. A Model of Mercy

There are numerous incidents, sayings and statements of the Prophet (Blessings & Peace be upon him) that we can mention here in this context.³⁴ All his teachings were focused on how to be a good human being with consciousness for others. The quality of mercy, in my view, is the highest form of showing or expressing one's religiosity or understanding of what religion is all about. In almost every religion, people tend to look up to spiritual leaders or people who teach about God with the expectation that they are more merciful and more forgiving and understanding than the rest of the people. Mercy and spirituality are qualities that cannot be separated. A religious leader who does not show mercy to his followers or disciples cannot maintain his leadership. Only mercy can lead to that love and respect that exist between the leader and the followers.

Being merciful in Islam is the greatest quality one could have. There are many stories mentioned in the biographies of the Messenger of Allah (S) of people who embraced Islam not because they studied it in classes or heard about it in lectures and talks, but rather, it was because of what they experienced. They also witnessed the behavior of the teacher with his disciples and followers. That behavior was one of the main reasons tens of thousands of people embraced Islam and

³⁴ For more quotes refer to the sources in the reference page at the end of this book or see the glossary of hadith under the term “Rahmah” and the Biography of the Prophet (S).

committed themselves to working for peace, justice and equality of human beings. Prophet Muhammad (S) proved to us that he was the embodiment of the teachings of the Qur'an. His wife 'Aisha (May Allah be pleased with her) described him when she was asked by some people about his character. She said:

عَنْ سَعْدِ بْنِ هِشَامٍ بْنِ عَامِرٍ قَالَ: أَتَيْتُ عَائِشَةَ فَقُلْتُ: يَا أُمَّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَخْبِرْنِي بِخُلُقِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَتْ: "كَانَ خُلُقُهُ الْقُرْآنُ. أَمَا تَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ قُولَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: (وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَى حُلُقِ عَظِيمٍ)." رواه الجماعة

"His character was the Qur'an. Do you not read Allah saying in the Qur'an, "And you indeed stand on an exalted standard of character." (68:4). Related in all the six books of Hadith and by Ahmad and others.³⁵

³⁵ Related by al-Bukhari in: Kitāb as-Salat – in the Book of Prayer– Hadith (# 369) – Mawāqīt al-Salāt (#555-556-558) – Kitāb al-Adhān (# 584-596) – Kitāb al-Jumu'ah (# 939-941-1051-52-1055) – Kitāb bad'ul khalq (# 3023) – al-Manāqib (# 3304) – ad-Da'awāt (# 5835). Muslim in: Kitāb al-Tahāra – Book of Cleanliness – (# 371) – Kitāb al-Hayd (# 465) – Salat al-Musāfirīn wa qaṣruhā (# 1187-1188- 1193- 1201-1286). At-Tirmidhi in the Book of Prayer Hadith (#341-342-381) – An-Nassa'i Hadith # 1666- 570 – 574. Abu Dāwūd in the Book of Cleanliness Hadith # 52...Ibn Mājah in the Book of establishing Prayers and its Sunnah Hadith # 1140. Malik in the Book of Cleanliness Hadith #98 and ad-Dārimī in the Book of Cleanliness Hadith # 1403 and Ahmad in “Bāqī Musnad al-Mukthirīn” Hadith # 23460– 24139– 24629.

With his unique pattern, character, and personality the Prophet (S) was, and still is, considered by the faithful as a gift from God. That gift is a precious one because it is a manifested Mercy. He (S) used to say to his companions,

عَنْ أَبِي صَالِحٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُنَادِيهِمْ: يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَحْمَةٌ مُهَدَّدَةٌ." رواه الدارمي

**"O people I am indeed a gift of mercy
from Allah to you."**³⁶

Once, some of his followers, who were suffering from the persecution and the injustices of the Polytheists of Makkah, asked him to curse the latter, but he replied:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: قِيلَ لَهُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَدْعُ عَلَى الْمُشْرِكِينَ قَالَ: إِنِّي لَمْ أُبَعِثْ لَعَنَّا وَإِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ رَحْمَةً." رواه مسلم

**"I was not sent by God to curse people, but rather
as a Mercy to them."** Reported by Muslim³⁷

God Almighty describes Prophet Muhammad (S) in the Qur'an by mentioning some of his qualities. He says,

(لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنْتُمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ
بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ) (التوبه 128)

**"Now a Messenger has come to you from amongst
yourselves: it grieves him that you should perish:**

³⁶ Reported by ad-Dārimī in the introduction of his Sunan: Hadith # 15.

³⁷ Reported by Imam Muslim in the book of Piety and Filial piety: Hadith # 4704

**ardently anxious is he over you: to the Believers
is he most kind and merciful.” (9:128)**

Allah the Most Merciful highlights mercy and kindness as two of the main reasons why people followed the Prophet (S). He says,

(فَبِمَا رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ لَنْتَ لَهُم مَّلِئْتَ فَطَأَ غَلِيلَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ
فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَارِرُهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَّمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ) (آل عمران 159)

“It is part of the Mercy of Allah that you deal gently with them. Had you been severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you: so, pass over (their faults), and ask for (Allah's) forgiveness for them; and consult them in affairs (of moment). Then, when you take a decision, put your trust in Allah. For Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him).” (3:159)

Once a companion named Malik ibn al-Huwayrith came with a group of youths from a different part of Arabia to learn about Islam. They stayed as guests and students at the Prophet’s place for many days. On the twentieth day, the Messenger of Allah (S) felt that they were homesick, so he asked them if they wanted to go back to see their families. He (S) understood their situation, gave them permission to leave, instructed them briefly on what they needed to teach their people, and how to perform the daily Salat prayers. Malik said, “**He (Blessings & Peace be upon him) felt like if we were missing our families and asked us about them and who**

was looking after them. He was very considerate of our situation, and indeed very kind, very compassionate, and very merciful...³⁸

عَنْ أَبِي سُلَيْمَانَ مَالِكَ بْنِ الْعُوَيْرِثِ رضيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: أَتَيْنَا النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَخَنَّ شَبَّيْهَ مُتَقَارِبُونَ فَأَقْمَنَا عِنْدَهُ عِشْرِينَ لَيْلَةً فَظَنَّ أَنَّا اسْتَهْنَاهُ وَسَأَلْنَا عَمَّنْ تَرَكْنَا فِي أَهْلِنَا فَأَخْبَرَنَا
وَكَانَ رَفِيقًا رَحِيمًا فَقَالَ:

اِرْجُعوا إِلَى أَهْلِكُمْ فَعَلَمُوهُمْ وَمَرُوهُمْ وَصَلُوا كَمَا رَأَيْتُمُونِي أَصْلِي وَإِذَا حَضَرَتِ الصَّلَاةَ فَلِيُؤْذِنُ لَكُمْ أَحَدُكُمْ ثُمَّ لِيُؤْمِكُمْ أَكْبَرُكُمْ" رواه البخاري

I am mentioning this to show that if we, Muslims, are ordered by God to follow our Prophet (Blessings & Peace be upon him) and to behave like him as much as we can, then we should also be kind and merciful as he was. This, by itself, would be the best implementation of his Sunnah. Those who truly love to follow the Prophet's way and emulate his character can never be a threat to anyone, but rather a mercy. Islam is clear and does not allow its adherents to have double standards. Muslims have one Book, one God, and one pattern to follow, and that is the pattern of the Prophets (Peace be upon all of them). Regarding following the last Messenger (S), Allah says:

(لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا) (الأحزاب 21)

"You have indeed in the Messenger of Allah a beautiful pattern (of conduct) for any one whose hope is in Allah

³⁸ Reported by al-Bukhari in the book of Etiquette: Hadith # 5549.

and the Final Day, and who engages much in the praise of Allah.” (33:21)

In addition, He says:

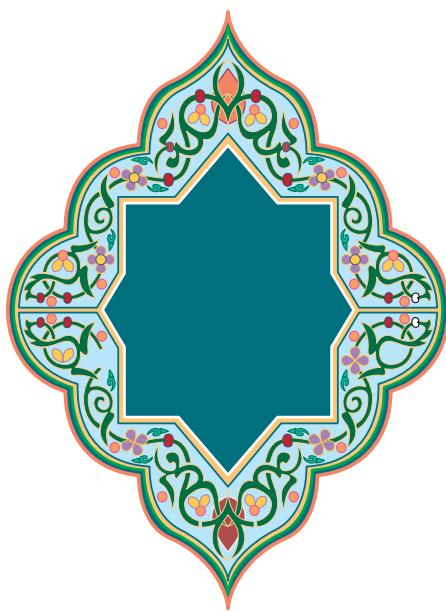
(قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَى بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي
وَسَبِيلَهُ حَسَنَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ) (يوسف 108)

“Say: “This is my Way: I do invite unto Allah – on evidence clear as the seeing with one's eyes – I and whoever follows me. Glory to Allah! And never will I join gods with Allah!” (12:108)

And He says, regarding following all the Messengers (Peace be upon them),

(لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيهِمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرِ
وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ) (المتحنة 6)

“There was indeed in them an excellent example for you to follow, for those whose hope is in Allah and in the Last Day. But if any turn away, truly Allah is Free of all Wants, Worthy of all Praise.” (60:6)





PART TWO
**ISLAM & THE GLOBAL PROBLEM OF
TERRORISM**

Introduction

It has almost become the norm to hear the words Islam, Islamic and Muslims mentioned in the media along with the words extremism, terrorism, bombs, killing, kidnapping, hijacking...etc. The religion of almost 1.8 billion people has been hijacked by individuals and groups who have absolutely nothing to do with its principles and values to which we have alluded in the first part of this book. The media and film industry have intentionally and unintentionally helped routinize, for the public, this unwanted association between Islam and Terrorism. The very sophisticated subliminal daily messaging and the direct and indirect ongoing conditioning process make the masses who hear, watch and read such things gradually, and sometimes rapidly, believe that there is a definite correlation between Islam and terrorism. The media never uses the same terms and analysis for incidents of terror and massacre, assassinations, organized crimes and murders when perpetrators happen to be from a different faith or from no faith group.

For the sake of keeping this book as timeless as possible, I am not citing many examples from recent times lest I go into unnecessary details of events and incidents. That is definitely

not the intent of this book. When crimes are committed by non-Muslims, such as mass murders, bombings, or public and school shootings, the media always presents the story as being driven by mental health reasons or social issues. However, when it comes to Muslims – and all human beings are not perfect- the outcome of the analysis is that the incidents are motivated by religion or have something to do with the increase of religiosity of the perpetrator(s). In most cases, as we have seen in Europe and North America, the terrorist/criminal acts were perpetrated by individuals who have already had existing conditions before becoming ‘religious’ or converting to Islam. They usually suffer from serious mental illnesses or may have social and relationship problems, in addition to unstable lives due to family or their environment. There are numerous reasons, including failure or loss of hope in one’s personal life, whether in terms of education, career or a love relationship, where depression can overtake and overpower people. Instead of keeping one’s faith strong and trying to have a positive outlook in life, everything becomes dark, and consequently, a person can become an easy target to any indoctrination, especially through the internet in closed rooms and basements. Thoughts of suicide may already exist in these cases, especially when there is excessive pessimism, unhealed wounds of past traumas and anger against people and the system. This gives way to a total dissociation and isolation from the world, but at the same time thrusts them towards a keen search for likeminded individuals. Sadly, due to the internet revolution, many unconventional interpretations of Qur’anic

verses and Hadith literature have come out and spread all over the world, especially among the vulnerable minds of some youth and new Muslims. Some very extremist groups claim to represent Islam and are very well experienced on how to quickly and easily sell the idea of the best and shortest way to Jannah (Paradise), as though they are selling a cruise to the sunny and beautiful tropical islands. They manipulate such vulnerable minds by using the existing texts of Islamic literature that praise those who sacrifice themselves for the greater good and die as martyrs. It is true that dying as a martyr (*shahīd*) is highly regarded by the Qur'an and the Sunnah because a martyr is a person who defends his people, his country and dies for a just cause. However, these extremists present their aspirations as being legitimate to their targets and manage to convince them that they are serving a noble cause through which they are seeking the greater good. Very often, such a process is led by charismatic personalities who have gained the expertise, the suitable language and the skills of debate and persuasion.

In recent times, with more political manipulation of these terrorist attacks, as well as the growing immigration issues in Europe and North America, the media and the so-called experts are seeing and presenting things to the public only in a black and white fashion. After the cold war and the fall of the Soviet Union in the late eighties of the last century, Islam and the Muslim world have become the new enemy of the West. The news that is being fed to the public is about a “holy war” conducted by individuals and groups who are

religiously motivated to destroy the Western world and its way of life. The terms ‘holy’ and ‘war’ are contradictory. This oxymoron is an unfamiliar expression in the Muslim dictionary and Islamic literature.³⁹ For that matter, there is nothing holy about any war. Any innocent life that is wasted, or peace that is disrupted or broken, is a great loss for all humanity, regardless of faith.

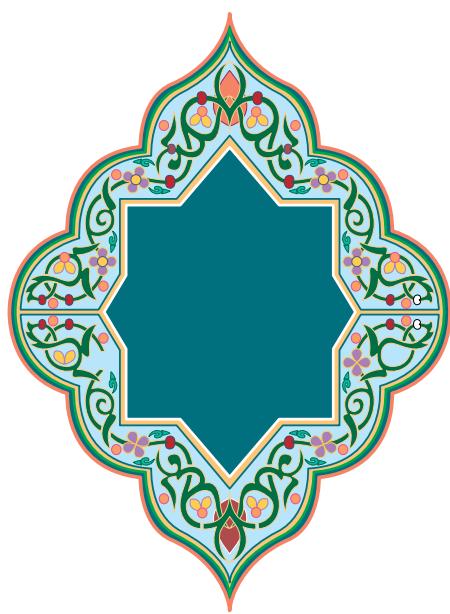
Muslims suffer this psychological onslaught by defamation in the streets, television, radio, internet, social media and newspapers. They suffer collectively through endless bitter nightmares, for example, in 1995, after the Oklahoma bombing took place and in the aftermath of the horrific attacks of September 11, 2001. In recent times, when there is a terrorist attack somewhere in the world, all Muslims around the world become potential suspects. It is even worse for the Muslim minorities that live in the West with the rise of Islamophobia, political manipulation and the politics of divisiveness and fear mongering. Profiling of visible Muslim and ethnic individuals at the borders and airports, job losses, school bullying, discrimination, hate messages, graffiti and vandalism at mosques and Islamic centers, defamation of Imams and community leaders and many other issues have become ongoing problems.

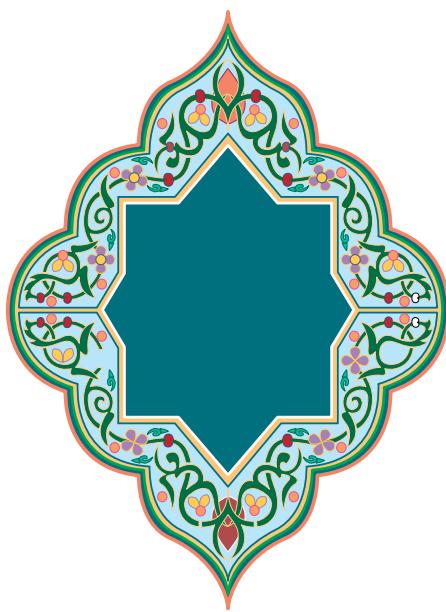
³⁹ Amazingly, there is not in the Islamic literature something that is called “Holy War” which translates as *al-ḥarbu al-Muqaddasah* (الحرب المقدسة). I would like by this occasion to stress that this expression should not be used because it is an imported idiom from the Crusades and it is totally alien to the Qur'an and Sunnah literature.

As Muslims, we have the obligation to show to the world that Islam honors human life. Islam categorically says “no” to terrorism, guns in the hands of children, uncontrolled access to guns, nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons. Islam says “no” to sanctions where innocent people, especially children, pay the price. We cannot claim to defend or respect human rights in one part of the world while we watch, with cold blood, children dying in another part of the world. We cannot turn a blind eye on human rights abuses in certain parts of the world, while we condemn it in other parts. There is also state sponsored terrorism conducted against people and nations in many places in the world. The media is silent about this kind of state terrorism and only acts selectively based on interests and desires of the sponsors. Many politicians have lost their credibility either because of their silence or their double standards and hypocrisy. If a country in one part of the world struggles for freedom, justice, democracy and independence then it is branded as a terrorist state, however, if a country in another part of the world, with a similar situation does the same thing, then its people are called freedom fighters and liberators. In the past, there have been many revolutions in the west against tyranny and injustice, but history does not record them as acts of terrorism.

Therefore, I find it imperative to speak about terrorism as a problem that needs to be solved, or at least one that I believe genuine and pristine Islam, through its values, can help solve. In this second part of the book, I refute the idea that Terrorism is a form of Jihad and I compare the two with proofs

and analysis. I discuss the sanctity of life in Islam and how terrorism manifests the total opposite. Thereafter, I examine modern day violent religious extremism and focus on a few of its characteristics. Finally, in the last chapter, I speak about the counter-narrative to terrorism based on my experience in the field. Then, I address the reality of terrorism and the claim and idea that the religion of Islam is a global threat to world's peace and security.





Chapter 4

Terrorism & Jihad

The key question we should ask at this point is: is Terrorism a form of Jihad or not?

We have demonstrated and established earlier that Jihad, in all cases, was always a defensive measure and not an offensive one. Its purpose was to defend all the necessities of life. If lacking, life cannot continue to exist. As for terrorism, it can be defined as a systematic use of violence and intimidation to achieve some goal regardless of the means. It is also defined as, “the systematic use of terror especially as a means of coercion.”⁴⁰ Terror is something violent that causes a feeling of fear. It is committed by a person, a group, or a political party to frighten people and achieve a political goal.

Hence, we cannot compare the examples of Jihad in history, whether it was in the time of Prophet Muhammad (S) and his companions or after. The acts of terror we see these days are carried out in the most vicious ways, like suicide bombings and massive shootings that are usually committed by individuals (lone wolves) or organized groups. Jihad that we read about in the Islamic literature and history was purely a defensive response to aggression and plots against the state or

⁴⁰ Merriam-Webster Dictionary, Terrorism entry. www.merriam-webster.com

its citizens. On the other side, terrorism is usually committed to take revenge against a government and to put pressure on it by scaring the country's citizens and causing panic and unrest at the expense of innocent lives. Attacks on public and private places are meant to maximize the number of deaths and damages to infrastructure so the government surrenders to the demands of the terrorist group. Terrorism has also been used to intimidate a contender, to terrify enemies, to scare people away, to displace them from their lands and properties, or to silence an ethnic minority or a faith group. The Islamic laws and principles, which are deduced from the Qur'an and the Sunnah (way of the prophet (S), are clear when it comes to Jihad and the act of killing, as we will soon see in our discussion of the sanctity of life. There are no instructions to the Muslims whether in the text or in the recorded opinions of the grand jurists of Islam that allow, instruct, or encourage them to attack innocent people and conduct acts of terrorism, as defined above. What we may see or hear these days of *fatwas* (edicts) that contradict the consensus of the Muslim scholarship cannot be the representative voice of the Muslims. It has been agreed upon since the time of the Prophet (S) that matters and issues related to life and death, war and peace, general rights and duties of citizens and rulers cannot be handled by individuals, but rather by a judicial system and a legitimate governance that relies on a consultative body, which represents the people.

To further simplify the difference between Jihad and terrorism, the most equivalent system today to the former is any military national defense operation which comprises of the

government, the army, the intelligence and security in a sovereign country. As for terrorism, although many may think of it as a new phenomenon, it has actually been around for centuries, though it has become far more vicious and destructive recently. Scholars have described many violent extremist groups as terrorists, such as the zealots from the first century who were Jews who tried to overthrow Roman rule through a series of murders and assassinations. The *Hashāshīn* from the eleventh to the thirteen centuries – from which the word assassins derive – were a sect that broke away from the mainstream Shi'a Muslims. They used to assassinate Sunni leaders after the practice of smoking hashish. Also, the anarchists in the beginning of the twentieth century in the U.S. conducted a series of bomb attacks against government establishments and targeted law enforcement officers.

One can see clearly that there are absolute differences between Jihad and terrorism in terms of definitions, motives, reasons and the methods that are used. In addition to the above, I would like to add the following important points:

First, Islam is anti-terrorist and anti-extremist by nature. In fact, Islam is a religion that calls for common sense and the natural way (*fitrah*) and by its teachings focuses on justice and peace making, as we have seen before. A simple look at the Qur'an or the Hadith literature would be enough to draw this conclusion if the context of the words is taken into consideration. We quote, for instance, this following Ayah from the Qur'an where Allah is instructing Muslims to be kind to those who are not Muslim and not to fight or

oppress them.

(لَا يَنْهَاكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرُجُوكُمْ مِّن دِيَارِكُمْ أَن تَبُوُهُمْ وَتَقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ) (المتحنة:8)

“Allah forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for (your) Faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them:

for Allah loves those who are just.” (60:8)

Second, Islam does not condone or tolerate any terrorist acts including the killing of innocent people despite their religious beliefs. I cannot find a single documented incident or case where Prophet Muhammad (S) or his followers killed innocent people. It simply does not make sense to imagine such a thing because he was a merciful, kind, compassionate and just person as was previously demonstrated in the first part of this book. The Prophet (S) taught his followers not to violate the laws of Islam and the laws of the countries where they live. They must be law-abiding, honest and brave, not cowards and back stabbers. Muslims are also human beings and they are instructed to value human life even at war, as stated previously.

Third, Allah (swt) showed explicitly, in the Qur'an and Muhammad (S) explained clearly in the authentic Hadiths, that one cannot kill children, women, the elderly, innocent people, and civilians, who are non-combatants. It is also forbidden to use fire to kill or punish: to destroy crops, to cut down trees, or kill animals, except for subsistence. As far as

Islam is concerned, it calls for Muslims to be righteous even in times of war. This is a cornerstone of the faith.

Fourth, Allah has set the limits for Jihad, or self-defense, and Muslims have no other choices but to adhere to them. The Messenger of Allah (S) practiced Jihad within clear and defined limits that are well known in the Islamic law. If some people use the *Machiavellian rule*, which says: “*Goals justify the means*” i.e., “الغاية تبرر الوسيلة” in order to interpret Jihad in the Qur'an, they are indeed wrong and misguided because they cannot relate this to the teachings of Islam. This rule has been considered in Islam as a satanic rule. The fact that the terrorists call their acts of malice and barbarism a Jihad – to gain legitimacy among Muslim masses – does not make their statement legitimate. For them, the Divine commandments, the consequences of their acts and the wasted innocent lives is not a concern because life has no sanctity in their view. Such individuals do not represent the Muslim Ummah* and they do not derive any authority from it. In fact, as mentioned earlier, in Islamic law, *Jihad* – or going to war for defense – is declared only by the highest authority of the Muslim governance in a sovereign country. After exhausting every possible effort for a peaceful solution with the enemy and in consultation with the council of scholars and representatives of the people, a decision is made and the commands are to be obeyed accordingly.

* Ummah means the Muslim community at large.

Fifth, those who compare terrorist acts to *Jihad al-talab* are definitely erroneous. First, *Jihad al-talab wal ibtidā'* (pre-emptive Jihad) was never agreed upon by Muslim scholars and there is no explicit mention of this in the Qur'an and the Sunnah. There is no agreement on the division of Jihad into the two kinds: (1) Defensive *Jihad al-daf'* جهاد الدفع and (2) Pre-emptive *Jihad al-talab* . . جهاد الطلب Although in my opinion and the opinion of many scholars that I know, we do not agree that there is such a thing, we still see the examples that are referred to for those who speak of *Jihad al-talab* as something very different from terrorism. In that context of seventh century anarchy, political unrest and absence of international treaties and borderlines, there was no United Nations and no international conventions. Every country had to secure its ambiguous borders and do its own policing and security patrolling around them. In other words, unlike in the defensive Jihad (*Jihad al-daf'*) which is basically what we spoke about earlier – to counter an outside attack and aggression – any expedition that went out of Madinah in the time of the Prophet (S) was not an act of aggression. The military activities were rather to patrol, monitor the areas outside the borders, and make sure to send a message about its own sovereignty to the neighboring areas. Some scholars called it pre-emptive or anticipatory *Jihad* to deter criminal activities or any attempts by enemies of the new Muslim state in Madinah. In essence, it was a defensive measure similar to today's modern national defense systems and border control police. There were specific

guidelines and conditions that were defensive in nature, except that sometimes there was no definite potential aggression or immediate threat against the Muslims. We should acknowledge the fact that there is confusion for Western and modern readers who read these historical accounts. At that time, Islam was not only a religion with a set of beliefs and practices like how all religions are perceived today, but it was also a state, a nation and a civilization in the making. When Islam started spreading in the Arabian Peninsula and its outskirts, some of the Muslims were attacked or stopped from preaching the new religion like the way in which the Christians were attacked after Jesus (Peace be upon him) left this world. Muslims then decided to send letters to the kings and rulers of different places to let them know of the Muslim activities of propagation and to ask their permission to peacefully propagate Islam in these new lands. As people started entering into Islam in large numbers, their areas started adding to the expansion of the Muslim lands. This necessitated management of those areas and appropriate governance in the same way other kingdoms and empires spread. Allegiances were made to the new governance in Madinah, whether to the Prophet (S) or to his successors after him. They never smuggled people and weapons into foreign lands and committed assassinations or murdered innocent people. They never demanded that people become Muslim or otherwise they would be killed.

The military activities that Muslims conducted around their territory were a systematic defense mechanism that could

be translated today into National border security, military drills around the borders, and buffer zones around international waters. The same thing can be said for Muslims going to Makkah and dealing with their enemies who already assailed them more than once. Allah clearly says in the Qur'an,

وَقَاتَلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقْتَلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ
الْمُعَدِّيْنَ وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حِيثُ تَفْقَهُوهُمْ وَأَخْرِجُوهُمْ مِّنْ حِيثُ أَخْرَجُوكُمْ
وَالْفَتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ وَلَا تُقْتَلُوهُمْ عَنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ
حَتَّىٰ يُقْتَلُوكُمْ فِيهِ فَإِنْ قَاتَلُوكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوهُمْ كَذَلِكَ
جَزَاءُ الْكُفَّارِ إِنَّ أَنْتُمْ بِهَا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ
وَقَاتَلُوهُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فَتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونُ الَّذِينَ لَهُ
فَإِنِّي أَنْهَاوْهُمْ فَلَا عُدُوانَ إِلَّا عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ
(البقرة: 190-193)

"Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you
but do not transgress limits; for Allah does not like
transgressors. And kill them wherever you catch them,
and turn them out from where they have turned you
out; for tumult and oppression are worse than
slaughter; but fight them not at the Sacred Mosque,
unless they (first) fight you there; but if they fight you
slay them. Such is the reward of those who suppress
faith. But if they cease, Allah is Oft-Forgiving Most
Merciful. And fight them on until there is no more
tumult or oppression and there prevail justice and faith
in Allah; but if they cease let there be no hostility except
to those who practice oppression." (2:193)

Moreover, as we mentioned earlier, the Prophet and those who followed him would never take up arms and fight without first inviting the other party to Islam and peace. If the other party refused and stopped Muslims or their own people from becoming Muslim, the Prophet (S) would impose a special tax on them (*jizya*). If they rejected the proposal, then a warning was given for a decisive battle that would take place to decide who was going to rule those lands. That was the way things between all nations in conflict at that time, including the Romans and the Persians. Once defeated and conquered, no oppression would take place. In all the cases as recorded in the Seerah (biography of the Prophet), no one was ever forced into Islam, but taxes had to be paid for citizenship, protection and services. The *Jizya* tax was given to the new ruler, but it was much less than the *Zakat* (alms) that Muslims paid, and far less than what was paid to other rulers. Any taxes that were due to other empires, such as to the Romans, the Persians or the Ethiopians ceased to exist. There were similar or far worse treatments in other parts of the world, including in the Roman and Persian empires, but some writers like to decontextualize those events and show a different truth about Islam. This organized system of spreading Islam and expanding the Muslim lands was called by some – and not the majority – a form of *Jihad* or *Jihad al-talab*. This form of *Jihad* was not like today's terrorism which is more about betrayal, malice, backstabbing, barbarism and coward attacks on innocent people.

Another proof that Muslims should never start a fight or seek to provoke war and fighting is what the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said before he died,⁴¹

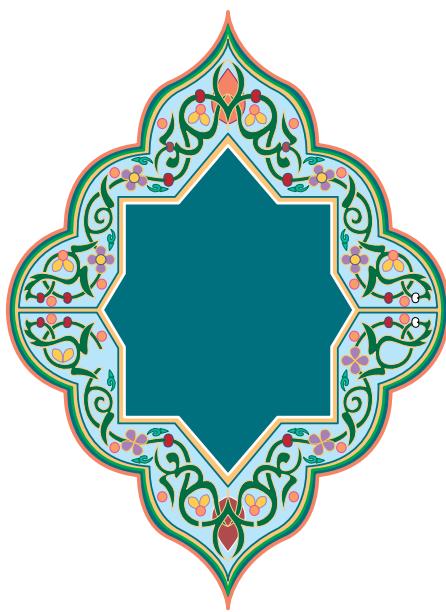
دَعُوا الْجِبَشَةَ مَا وَدَعُوكُمْ وَاتَّرَكُوا التُّرْكَ مَا تَرَكُوكُمْ.

“Leave the Ethiopians alone (do not go to fight) so long as they leave you alone and leave others alone so long as they leave you alone.”

Finally, I should mention the very critical point that is fundamental in the study and understanding of the historical events around many texts in the Qur'an and the Sunnah literature. I do acknowledge that it is a divisive issue these days among Muslim thinkers and a subject of hot discussion. However, Islam is a religion of *Fitrah* (human nature) and common sense, and since we have established the fact that it is a universal religion with universal values, we have to read and look at many verses (Ayahs) and Hadiths through their historical contexts. Failing to do so will only lead to a state of confusion and contradictions between what we claim Islam to be (a message of peace, justice and mercy) and the different historical facts and interpretations that varied from place to place and time to time. Not everything can be generalized and not every text can be applied in every reality. Contexts must be read before texts. This is where the sciences of *Maqāsid* and *Uṣūl-ul-Fiqh* can play a big role in the modern Islamic

⁴¹ Reported by Abu Dāwûd (4302), al-Nassā'ī (3176) and al-Bayhaqī (19068)

thought. Without them, more literalists' interpretations of Islam will gain ground, ignoring the spirit of the laws and teachings and focusing more on the word without deep understanding. There are many Quranic verses and hadith texts that are specific and should not be taken out of their contexts. They were meant to address specific events at the time of the Prophet (Peace be upon him), including things related to him personally, or his family, or his environment. However, most of the Qur'an and the Sunnah are general and timeless because they are based on general principles and values, not on specific events. This is a major point of contention between those who believe in contextualization of the texts and the literalists.



Chapter 5

Sanctity of Life in Islam

Once a person loses the sense of value for life for himself/herself or sees the lives of others as valueless and not deserving of existence on this earth, he/she develops a dangerous attitude with no regard for sanctity of life. Before reaching this very dangerous stage, there is, usually an incremental growth of a sense of hate and despise especially for those who are not on the same page as the extremist group to which he/she belongs or identifies with. Anyone who does not believe or see things the same way, whether religious or political views, does not belong to the same ethnic/racial group, or is simply different in a certain way becomes unworthy of respect, dignity and even life. Hence, the demonization process takes place by the leaders who usually have charisma and skills to influence their followers. They brainwash them directly or subliminally. This process is gradual as it builds on ideas, speeches, literature, upbringing, indoctrination that increasingly sow the seeds of disregard and hate. It builds on a culture of supremacy and disregard of human values, which is much worse than the jungle rules and animal behavior. It is that claim found in different religions, that no one represents God

and His divine will, except the group to which the radicalized person belongs.

Islam stresses continuously that human life – and life in general – is sacred. The laws of Islam seek to incorporate reverence for this sacredness in every aspect of life and in all its teachings and injunctions.⁴² This sacredness is not based on accepting Islam as a way of life or a religion, but it is based on the cardinal principle that every human life is sacred and of inestimable value for it comes from God, the Giver of Life. Thus, only God has the right to take it back. Islam forbids crime, suicide, self-destruction, infanticide, and abortion out of fear for poverty.⁴³ As Hammudah Abdalati says, ‘When Allah gives life to man, it is not in vain and that He endows him with unique qualities and great abilities. Nor is it in vain that He charges him with certain obligations.’⁴⁴

⁴² Refer to my book: *The Concept of Life in Islam and its Impact on Legislation and Ijtihad*

⁴³ The Qur'an forbids suicide as in, “**Do not kill (or destroy) yourselves: for verily Allah has been to you Most Merciful.**” (Chap. 4, V. 29) It also forbids self-destruction as in “**And make not your own hands contribute to (your) destruction; but do good; for Allah loves those who do good...**” (Chap. 2, V.195)

It forbids infanticide and abortion as we read, “**Kill not your children for fear of want: We shall provide, sustenance for them as well as for you: verily the killing of them is a great sin.**” (Chap. 17, V. 31)

⁴⁴ *Islam in Focus*, p. 28

When we examine thoroughly the major principles of Islamic law, we realize that life is the most precious gift, and so the Qur'an's entire message can be summed up in an open invitation to mankind to come to that which gives life.

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَجِبُوْلِهِ وَلِرَسُولِهِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحِيِّكُمْ)
(الأناشيد: 24)

**“O you who believe! Answer the call of Allah
and His Messenger when He calls you to
that which will give you life...”** (8:24)

As mentioned earlier, the minimum level of honoring the sanctity and sacredness of human life is by preserving dignity. Human dignity is innate, given to us by God, and thus it is not based on the ability to care for ourselves or the competence to complete a task. Our dependency on others does not cancel our dignity. The simple fact that we are humans should guarantee the minimum requirement of respect and dignity. The latter, although being very basic, is a fundamental characteristic that we cannot forfeit, for it is an inseparable attribute woven in the fiber of our being. The Qur'an stresses this fact by saying,

(وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمَنَا بْنَى عَادَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِّنَ الْطَّيَّابَاتِ
وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا) (الإسراء: 70)

**“We have honored and given full dignity to the sons and
daughters of Adam; provided them with transport on**

land and sea; given them for sustenance things good
and pure; and conferred on them special favors
above a great part of Our Creation.” (17:70)

Islamic jurisprudence has devoted great efforts to preserving human life (*hifżu al-dimā'* حفظ الدماء) by legislating laws that seek to preserve it and to punish those who violate its sanctity. The Qur'an takes human actions and their consequences seriously. And so, it addresses the issues of transgression, injustice, crime and bloodshed. We read for instance,

(مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَانَمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعاً
وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَانَمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعاً...) (المائدة: 32)

“If any one slew a person – unless it be for committing murder or for spreading mischief in the land – it would be as if he slew the whole people: and if any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people.” (Qur'an, 5:32)

And

(وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَمَنْ قُتِلَ مَطْلُوماً فَقَدْ جَعَلَنَا لَوْلَيْهِ سُلْطَانَا فَلَا يُسْرِفُ فِي الْقَتْلِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مَنْصُوراً) (الإسراء: 33)

“Nor take life –which Allah has made sacred– except for just cause. And if anyone is slain wrongfully, we have

**given his heir authority (to demand *qisāṣ* or to forgive);
but let him not exceed bounds in the matter of taking
life; for he is helped (by the Law)." (17:33)**

The late Muhammad al-Ghazālī quoted these verses and concluded that ‘in respect of the sanctity of life and the prohibition of aggression against it, Muslims and non-Muslims are equal. Attack on the personal safety of non-Muslims invokes the same punishment in this world and the Hereafter.’⁴⁵

In our earlier discussion of Jihad in Islam and the strict rules that the law has put in times of war and military engagement, soldiers are not allowed to destroy civilian life, animal life, ecological life or any forms of life. We have examined some of the texts where the Prophet (S) made it clear to his companions that is absolutely unacceptable and unlawful to attack non-combatants; women, children, the elderly and the insane, the ill and the unsound, as well as the blind, the lame, the crippled and the unconscious. The exempted categories also include: priests, monks, those engaged in worship, and farmers working in their fields, provided they are not involved in the conflict. The ḥadīth literature contains detailed instructions on all of these matters, and the Prophet generally advised military commanders and soldiers in the battlefield to be fair, avoid

⁴⁵ Al-Ghazālī, Muhammad, *Huquq al-Insan*, 3rd ed., Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Islamiyyah, 1984, p. 54

excessive violence, and incline toward peace.⁴⁶

The protection of human life at all levels is one of the major priorities in Islamic Law. Dr. Izzi Dien explains,⁴⁷

To protect human life, relation, *qisāṣ*, has been established as a legal method of punishment for the unwarranted taking of human life. The unwarranted taking of life does not merely extend to others but also applies to individuals themselves who are prohibited from taking their own life. Life, in Islam, is precious and belongs to God, who has given it and who alone can take it. The protection of human life extends to include the protection of all circumstances that would cause all forms of life to continue in a healthy and stable manner. This, undoubtedly includes protection against the negative effects that human beings could cause to their environment such as pollution, or any harm to the land, air, earth or water, which are habitats for many creatures.⁴⁸ The protection of all major environmental interests can be the grounds upon which the destructive actions of human beings are curtailed. An example of this would be the restriction of the production and release of any product harmful to the environment. Also, relevant here is the issue of human cloning which undoubtedly represents a form of tampering with the Divine cosmic order. Animal cloning too, could lead to mutilation and abuse.

⁴⁶ Al-Zuhailī, Wahbah, *al-Fiqh al-Islāmī wa Adillatuh*, Damascus: Dar al-Fikr, 1985, Vol. 1, p. 421

⁴⁷ Izzi Dien, Mawil, *The Environmental Dimensions of Islam*, p.141.

⁴⁸ See Qur'an V, 32, cited on p. 38.

In addition, it is noteworthy to mention that in Islamic law, preserving life and its sanctity takes precedence over religious duties and regulations. Anything that causes harm or endangers all aspects of life must be removed. There are many Qur'anic and Prophetic teachings, that are summed up in many legal maxims, which instruct the faithful to always aim at protecting the sanctity of life by preserving all aspects of it whether the spiritual, the intellectual, the social or the material. These maxims are also a reference for jurists to base their rulings and edicts on the principles and values they capture. For instance, one of the well-known legal maxims is '**Harm is to be removed**' (الضرر يزال). It derives from the famous ḥadīth of the Prophet (S) where he says, "**No harm should be inflicted on others, and no harm should be caused in retaliation**" (لا ضرر ولا ضرار).⁴⁹ This indicates that there are times when it is allowed to pursue the prohibited under the principle of the necessity to preserve life. Therefore, if a person is faced by starvation and does not find food to eat except something prohibited such as carrion or pig meat, he/she may eat it. This of course, should be restricted by another rule which states that '**necessity should be judged**

⁴⁹ Al-Zarqā, *Shaiḥ al-Qawā'id al-Fiqhiyya*, p. 165 (Rule 18)

according to its amplitude تقدر بقدرها **الضرورة** to avoid abuse of the situation to commit forbidden acts.

Commenting on this same rule, Imam al-Suyūtī says, “you should know that this rule is the basis of many chapters of Islamic jurisprudence such as the permissibility of returning goods because of defects... and all kinds of *hajr* (interdiction), *shuf'a* (pre-emption), *fāskh* of *nikāh* (divorce by Judicial Authority) because of defects, harm or hardship...”⁵⁰

Linguistically, *darar* ضرر, which is the opposite of *naf'* نفع (benefit), means harm, injury, damage, and mischief. This very broad term also includes anything detrimental to one's life. ‘*Idtirār*’ (constraint) and ‘*darūra*’ (dire necessity) derive from *darar*⁵¹ and are the states of the highest levels of harm about which the Qur'an speaks: the level of *darūra* (necessity, indispensability), which indicates that removal is imminent and should be instant, even if it involves breaking an established injunction. As the late Shaykh Zarqā says, ‘Harm must be removed, and it becomes an obligatory duty’.⁵² Prioritization takes place because observing the law becomes irrelevant when life becomes endangered, for ‘preserving the body takes precedence over preserving the

⁵⁰ Al-Suyūtī, *al-Ashbāh wa al-Naṣā'ir*, Page 113.

⁵¹ Al-Rāzī, *Mukhtār al-Ṣḥāḥ*, p. 379

⁵² Al-Zarqā, *Sharḥ al-Qawā'id al-Fiqhiyya*, p. 179.

religion.' In other words, once life is harmed, removing what is harming it becomes the first priority. Thus, based on this rule, another rule declares, 'Necessity justifies that which is prohibited' (الضرورات تبيح المحظورات). Zarqā explains that this rule branches out from the two legal maxims 'No harm should be inflicted on others, and no harm should be caused in retaliation' and 'an opening must be found when a matter becomes very difficult'.⁵³

The Qur'an mentions *darar* and its derivatives, in many places such as,

This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favor unto you and have chosen for you Islam as religion. Whoso is forced by hunger, not by will, to sin: (for him/her) lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. (Qur'an, 5:3)

How should you not eat of that over which the name of Allah has been mentioned, when He has explained unto you that which is forbidden unto you unless you are compelled thereto...

(Qur'an, 6:119)

He has only forbidden you dead meat, and blood, and the flesh of swine, and any (food) over which the name of other than Allah has been invoked. However, if one is forced by necessity, without willful disobedience, nor transgressing due limits – then Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Qur'an, 16:115)

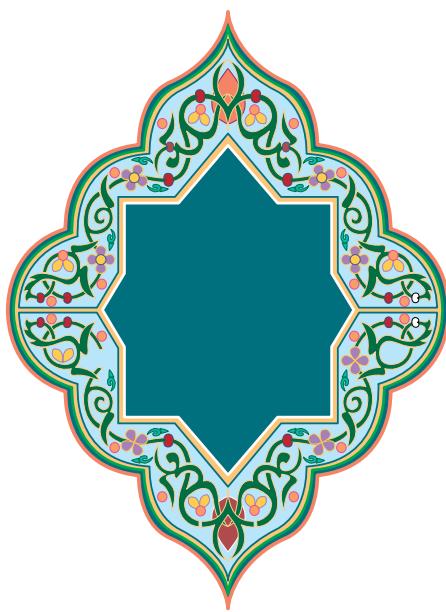
⁵³ Ibid, p. 185.

The Legislator seeks to remove harm directly, either as in the case of these above-mentioned rules, or indirectly, by preventing an expected harm through removing a difficulty. This is actually the subject of the Islamic law's objectives, which are about establishing interests and warding off detriments. For instance, the Legislator declares an alleviation to prevent an anticipated harm caused by fasting while sick, pregnant, or travelling.

Terrorism and terrorists (whether individuals, groups or systems) are the biggest harm to humanity and to the religion of Islam. The sanctity of life and terrorism are two opposites and cannot be mixed together like water and fire. Parents and teachers must do more to instill this principle of Sanctity of life in the children from an early age. Education ministries and school boards should design an appropriate curriculum that focuses on this critical and vital element in our religion and our values. Religious leaders should place more emphasis on this subject in their sermons and lectures. Unless we make this issue a priority, many other issues will overshadow it and it will not stand out as one of the most urgent matters that we face today more than ever before.

Terrorist acts are absolutely breaking every single injunction and direction of Islamic law and prophetic tradition. As mentioned earlier, no goals can justify the means in Islam.

No innocent lives should be taken away because of some goals that are deemed, in the eyes and minds of the perpetrators, to be good or noble. Goodness and nobility in Islam can only be attained by legitimate and honest means and ways. Sanctity and preservation of life is one of the highest priorities of Islam and even wars that were fought by the Prophet (Blessings & Peace be upon him) and his companions were only fought to stop injustice, preserve life and maintain peace. Modern day terrorism is anything but justice, peace and sanctity of life.



Chapter 6

Features of Modern Day Terrorism

Among the few distinctive features of modern day terrorism committed by violent religious extremists – who use religion as a disguise for their hidden motives – are three specific ones: (a) Suicide bombing which is historically an unprecedented phenomenon (b) Kidnapping and execution of captives (c) the rebirth and rise of the Khawārij doctrine and philosophy. Muslims around the world, both scholars and masses, have emphatically denounced terrorism, but even more so for these three abovementioned things because without a shadow of doubt, they all contradict the fundamental teachings of Islam.

A. Suicide bombing

Every Muslim knows that suicide, in general, is not permissible in Islam and it is considered one of the major sins, since the Islamic tradition, through the Qur'an and the Sunnah, has clearly forbidden it. How about those who commit suicide-bombing with the intention of sacrificing themselves for the “greater good”? Why would someone do that knowing that Islam does not allow suicide? Are the suicide bombers who attack innocent civilians considered martyrs?

First, let us examine a few texts on the issue of suicide. In the Qur'an, Allah (swt) says;

(وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا . وَمَنْ يَفْعُلْ ذَلِكَ عُدُوانًا وَظُلْمًا
فَسُوفَ نُصْلِيهِ نَارًا وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يُسِيرًا) (النساء: 33)

“Do not kill (or destroy) yourselves: for verily Allah has been to you Most Merciful. If any (one) does that in rancor and injustice, soon shall We cast him into the Fire: and easy it is for Allah.” (Qur'an, 4:29-30)

He also says,

(وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ.) (البقرة: 195)
“And make not your own hands contribute to (your) destruction; but do good; for Allah loves those who do good.” (Qur'an 2:195)

Moreover, the Prophet (S) said, **“Whoever kills himself with something will be punished with it on the Day of Resurrection.”** (Bukhari & Muslim) He also said, **“Whoever throws himself down from a mountain and kills himself will be throwing himself down in the Fire of Hell for ever and ever. Whoever drinks poison and kills himself will be sipping it in the Fire of Hell forever and ever. Whoever kills himself with a piece of iron will have that iron in his hand, thrusting it into his belly in the Fire of Hell for ever and ever.”** (Bukhari & Muslim) In another tradition, the Prophet (S) said, **“A man among those who came before you, was wounded. He panicked and took a knife and cut his hand, and the bleeding did not stop until he died. Allah, may He be**

glorified and exalted, said: ‘my servant hastened his death; I have forbidden Paradise to him.’ (Bukhari & Muslim)

No matter what the reasons are, a Muslim should endure all the challenges and struggles of life with patience and remember that everything that happens to him/her is, at the end, good for him/her. The Prophet (S) said, **“How wonderful is the affair of the believer, for his/her affairs are all good, and this applies to no one but the believer. If something good happens to him/her, he/she is thankful for it and that is good for him/her. If something bad happens to him/her, he/she bears it with patience and that is good for him/her.”** (Muslim). He also says, **“No pain, hardship, sickness or grief befalls a believer, not even worry that befalls him/her, but some of his bad deeds will be expiated.”** (Bukhari & Muslim)

The Islamic tradition has many of these beautiful teachings of patience and positive thinking. It directs the faithful to be able to think positively even in the worse times, in all places and situations. Life is filled with tests and trials and only those who act patiently will be the successful ones in this world and in the Hereafter. Allah says,

وَالْعَصْرِ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ عَامَلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّيْرِ. (العصر)

“By (the Token of) time (through the Ages), Verily Man is in loss, except such as have Faith, and do righteous

deeds, and join together) in the mutual teaching of Truth, and of Patience and Constancy.” (Chap. 103)

This is exactly what Islam is all about. Imam Shafī‘ī stated, “If Muslims apply only the principles of this chapter/surah it will be enough for them.” It includes all that is needed to ensure success in the Hereafter and in this life at the material, social, intellectual and spiritual levels. As for suicide bombing, I personally add my voice to the majority of Muslims, and to the reasonable voices of many students and scholars of Islam, who believe that it is not permissible for many reasons including the following:

- (a) It is a suicide and, as mentioned above, all kinds of suicide are not allowed in Islam.
- (b) Killing innocent people is unconditionally unacceptable and was never the practice of Prophet Muhammad (S) nor his successors. All the four Imams of Ahlu-Sunnah do not allow it and consider it a grave injustice and transgression of the boundaries of Allah.
- (c) The human body belongs solely to the Creator. It is the responsibility of every individual to take care of it, seek cure for it when it is sick and constantly protect it from all harm.

- (d) Life is given by God Almighty and cannot be taken away, except by God alone.
- (e) Those who justify suicide attacks use analogy with some stories, such as the story of the young boy (in the story of Aṣḥāb al-Ukhdūd رَأْصَحَّابُ الْأَخْدُودُ who asked the king to shoot him using the name of Allah to prove the point that nothing happens except by His leave. He did not kill himself, but the king was the one who killed him. As for the story of al-Barā' and others who went in the battle, as individuals facing large numbers of soldiers, their intention was not to kill themselves, but despite their small numbers, they were brave to face the large number of assailants in their hope for victory. Their intention was not to die but rather to seek victory. If a brave soldier pushes himself at a battle to fight many enemies, he should still not hope to die, but rather do his best to live and be victorious. If death comes, then he is considered a martyr so long as he is fighting for a good and just cause, such as defending his country, his people or any of the other necessities of life that were mentioned earlier.
- (f) Martyrdom الشهادة في سبيل الله according to the Qur'an and the Sunnah is for those who fight for a good and just cause – defending themselves. They should not kill innocent people and terrorize

civilians. They only use legitimate means. Allah (swt) says, **“To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight) because they are wronged? And verily, Allah is Most powerful for their aid. (They are) those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right? (for no cause) except that they say “Our Lord is Allah.” Did not Allah check one set of people by means of another there would surely have been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, in which the name of Allah is commemorated in abundant measure. Allah will certainly aid those who aid His (cause); for verily Allah is Full of Strength, Exalted in Might, (Able to enforce His Will).”**

(Qur'an 22:39-40)

- (g) As discussed earlier, mutilation is not allowed in Islam, and bombs or any other forms of high impact explosions do worse than that. They not only bring death at its vilest forms, they destroy properties, disfigure the survivors, traumatize people, including children and cause all kinds of damage and destruction to all forms of life. It is very sad to see or hear that young children are strapped with hidden bombs under their clothes and sent to markets and crowded public places where they are exploded by remote controls. They may not even know what is

happening or they may be told that they are doing something good and that they are going straight to heaven. Just take a moment! Would anyone with a sane mind do this to his/her own children? Would anyone who believes in the Mercy of Allah and believes that Prophet Muhammad (S) was sent as a Mercy to the world accept such ideology? Where is Mercy? Where is love for Humanity? In addition, where is common sense? Are we not born to live - not die? Unfortunately, there is a lot of pain, injustice and despair in this world that cause people to do all kinds of crazy things. They lose their passion, and love for life when they see the latter worse than death. All the people from all faiths and nations should work together for Peace, Justice, human dignity, freedom and welfare of all the human family, without discrimination or favoritism. They should be sitting down and discussing all the root causes behind this insanity. The only way to defeat terrorism and crime is to unite our efforts in enjoining what is good, forbidding what is evil, and upholding justice for the latter is the bedrock of Peace.

B. Kidnapping & Execution of Captives

We see video images of kidnapped journalists being slayed in Iraq, captives of war burnt alive in Syria, chopped off heads of kidnapped foreign workers in Libya, blood of besieged tourists on a museum wall in Tunisia, abducted frightened young schoolgirls in Nigeria, imprisoned diplomats for ransom in Philippines, 142 trapped school children who were mercilessly killed in Peshawar, Pakistan while their teachers were burnt alive...and the list goes on. These crimes are done to people in the name of Islam. These images will stick in our minds and remain engraved in people's memories for decades. These coldblooded savage individuals and groups are devoid of mercy and compassion because they are willing to do anything for power and money to justify their goals. Some of them engage in these crimes to get the world's attention, but they forget that while they get it, they tarnish the image of the religion of Islam. Some of them are weak-minded and low-intelligence individuals, who were brainwashed with the idea that they are serving 'Allah's Will'. They have to obey the leaders and cannot question things that are hard to understand. They are taught the erroneous claim that reason and common sense could be the trick of the devil and one does not have to understand everything – just believe. It is true that we cannot understand everything, but God Almighty has given us the intellect and the basic understanding of what is right and what is wrong. We have a human nature and a common sense that guides us well to do the right things,

and a religion that reminds us of that we already have an innate disposition to do good and to stay away from evil (*fitrah*).

We have spoken earlier about the treatment of the captives of war in Islamic history and Islamic legislation. Muslims are not allowed to torture their prisoners or even starve them. Islam requires Muslims to be just towards the captives and treat them in a humane manner, granting them rights ordained in the Islamic law and for human dignity. For instance, we read Allah saying in the Qur'an,

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِمَنْ فِي أَيْدِيهِكُمْ مِنَ الْأَسْرَى إِنْ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ خَيْرًا
يُؤْتِكُمْ خَيْرًا مِمَّا أَخْذَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (الأنفال: 70)

“O Prophet! Say to those who are captives in your hands: “If Allah finds any good in your hearts, He will give you something better than what has been taken from you, and He will forgive you, for Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.” (8:70)

In another ayah, Allah praises those who feed the poor, the orphan and the captive of war. He says,

وَيُطْعِمُونَ الظَّعَامَ عَلَى حُجَّةٍ مُسْكِنًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ اللَّهِ
لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزاءً وَلَا شَكُورًا (الإنسان: 8-9)

“And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan and the captive – (Saying) "We feed you for the sake of Allah alone: no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks." (76:8-9)

A captive of war is an enemy. Yet in Islam, Muslims are not allowed to starve their enemies and deny them the basic dignity and necessities of life, even if the enemy combatant's goal was to kill them at war. Therefore, this chapter is called humanity. It is about a bigger circle, where there are fundamental things related to human dignity that must be observed and honored.

Briefly, these unprecedented executions of captives, prisoners and kidnapped people are the lowest level to where humanity could go. While I am writing these words, I cannot erase from my mind the images of that Jordanian pilot who was burnt to death in 2015, by Daesh Khawārij and terrorist group. They had the audacity to film it and post it on social media. It was the first time ever that hundreds of millions of people from around the world saw someone dying in that manner. Those barbaric Khawārij even quoted some *fatwah* (religious legal edict), from the middle ages, to justify their inhumane act. They are well aware that there is a consensus among all the Muslim scholars that burning is not allowed in Islam, even when you want to kill your enemy at war. Islam forbids cremation of a dead body, let alone burning someone alive. Even if it is a human being, an insect or an animal, one cannot punish or kill with fire.

C. Modern day Khawārij

Many of us Muslims are frustrated and continuously concerned by the growing number of barbaric killing of innocent civilians in the name of our religion. The entire world is hearing and watching all kinds of perpetrated evil done by people who claim to be of the same faith as us. This growing phenomenon is distracting the entire world from the real issues and the many serious matters that need to be resolved, whether locally or internationally. It is indeed a *Fitnah* (tribulation) as Muslims like to call it! All Muslims, scholars, students, rulers, citizens, professors and professionals, farmers and laborers, parents and children have no choice but to disassociate themselves completely, in a loud and clear voice, from ideologies of hate, division and terrorism, and to denounce the people who use them in the name of Islam.

Why should we believe these modern groups, that appeared out of nowhere, in a very short period, to be the modern day Khawārij? Khawārij/Kharijites (Secessionists), were those who chose to break away from the Ummah and rebel against the Caliph Imam Ali b. Abī Tālib (May God Honor his face and shower his blessings on him) in the year 657 CE, opposed his decision to accept arbitration with his opponent Mu'āwiya b. Abī Sufyān over the Caliphate. They repeated their famous statement that was wrongfully used: “*Lā hukma illa lillah!* لا حكم إلا لله” which means, “there is no rule but for God!” to which Imam Ali responded saying: “*kalimatu haqqin urīda bihā Bātil!* ” كَلْمَةُ حَقٍّ أَرِيدُ بَهَا بَاطِلٌ” which means,

“A word of truth through which falsehood is intended.” Rather, they believed that God is the only one who can judge and decide who would be the Caliph, by giving him victory in the war and not by arbitration, which is based on human decision. They made *Takfir* تكفیر (excommunicating people out of Islam) even for someone who commits a sin. For them, sinning was equivalent to disbelief, which was a strange innovation after the Prophet (S) and his companions. They considered Imam Ali a sinner and they assassinated him, as well as many other Muslim leaders. They also believed that citizens have the right to revolt against any ruler or government who does not agree with their interpretation of Islam and the concept of *Bay'ah* بيعة (pledge of allegiance to the ruler). By using the Qur'an and the counter narrative arguments, Imam Ali's cousin, Abdullah b. 'Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him), brought many of them back to the fold of Islam through his knowledge and ability to debate with them and convince them.

Essentially, they were the first group who made *Takfir*, the first to break away from the Ummah, through rebellion and assassination of rulers, and also the first to justify killing Muslims and innocent people. They had no regard for the sanctity of life. Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) prophesized about their advent and warned his companions about such dangerous perversion of Islam and its teachings. A follower once asked Sahl bin Hunain (a companion of the Prophet); “Did you hear the Prophet saying anything about

al-Khawārij?" He said, "I heard him saying this while pointing his hand towards Iraq: "**There will appear in it (i.e. Iraq) some people who will recite the Quran but it will not go beyond their throats, and they will leave Islam as an arrow darts through the game's body.**" (Bukhari)

In another narration the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said, "**There will come a time when a group of people will leave our ranks. They will recite the Quran with eagerness and passion, but its spirit will not go beyond their throats. They will leave our ranks in the manner of an arrow when it shoots from its bow.**" (Bukhari)

He described them in some other narrations saying, "**In the last days, there will be young people with irrational/unrealistic dreams. They will say the best of words in creation, but they will pass through Islam just as an arrow passes through its game. Their faith will not go beyond their throats.**" Agreed upon by Bukhari & Muslim

He also said, "**They are the worst of the creation.**"

Modern day Khawārij are doing the same things that their predecessors did:

- (1) They break the laws of the countries where they live or visit, and they rebel and fight against legitimate governments, which are chosen by the people.
- (2) They kill innocent Muslims as well as non-Muslims, and according to them, "goals justify the means". The latter is a

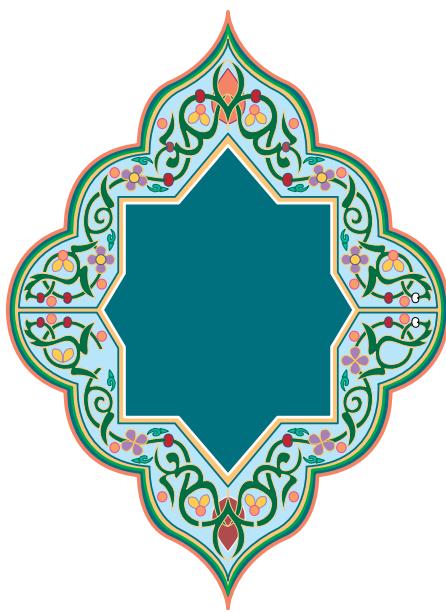
Satanic Machiavellian rule which was discussed earlier in this book, showing how Islam can never accept it or condone it.

(3) They consider many Muslims disbelievers if they are sinners and they call people who have faith in God disbelievers or *Kuffār*. They ignore the fact that they, themselves, are committing the worse sins on earth. They have no regard for the sanctity of life; places of worship, graves, homes, hospitals and schools. They betray their own countries and obtain visas to enter other countries, but break the conditions of those visas, which are, in the eyes of God and Islam, covenants of peace. Entering another country with a visa or a document is a treaty where a person is committed to abide with the laws of that country, otherwise, it is considered an infringement and breach of trust. In fact, Our Prophet (S) said, “**Whosoever kills those with whom we have a treaty will never smell the fragrance of Jannah.**”⁵⁴ Conflicts and wars must not involve other countries and people who are not related to them.

These are three main features that I have identified in modern day terrorism, although there are other particularities, given the modern means and ways of killing and destruction. These include chemicals, bombs, vehicles, planes, boats, heavy machinery and deadly weapons that cause far more damage

⁵⁴ Related by al-Bukhari in al-Jizya # 2930 –An-Nassā’ī in al-Qisāma # 4669 – Ibn Mājah in al-Diyāt # 2676 – Ahmad #6457. Also, see “al-Mu‘āhadā” entry in the major books of Fiqh – Islamic jurisprudence- for more information.

than the weapons used in the past. I have already expressed my opinion, earlier in this book, on the ruling of using bombs and weapons that not only disfigure and mutilate people but they can transform them into ashes or nothing at all, as if they never existed or walked on this earth. Terrorists are using what is available to them in technology and weaponry. Very often, they are the product of a system, and suddenly, they snap and become the enemy against it. Other new kinds of terrorism include cyberterrorism, state terrorism, food safety terrorism, water safety terrorism, air terrorism, street gangs' terrorism and anything that terrorizes people in their homes, communities and countries.



Chapter 7

Muslim Response to Terrorism

A. The Counter-Narrative

Having worked in the last seventeen years in different rehabilitation and de-radicalization programs in Canada, as a Muslim counselor for youth at risk and as an adviser on national security matters, as well as a resource person for academic research bodies, I have had the opportunity to study different cases related to violent extremism, especially in the post 9/11 era. My involvement has always been motivated by my conviction that Islam is part of the solution – not the problem. Although our religion is blamed for the rise of violent extremism, I strongly believe that the solution to modern day terrorism and violence in the name of Islam can only be addressed with a counter narrative arising from our Islamic values and tradition. By the grace of the Almighty God, I have had considerable success in persuading some youth, who were on the brink of embracing the ideology of violence, to think differently and to see the world through different lenses. Many of these individuals rely heavily on either the internet or radical literature that they receive from their peers. I have also counseled some youths who were misled, mainly due to misinformation and ignorance, especially in the absence of a united religious leadership and authority regarding how to respond to different issues of

concern to Muslims. Since 9/11, I have conducted many workshops and seminars, where, with law enforcement and intelligence officers in Canada and abroad, I analyzed violent religious extremism from an Islamic perspective. As a Muslim leader and community developer, I believe that community leaders and citizens should be concerned about keeping peace and security in the countries in which we live. We should do our utmost in condemning wrong actions in all forms, especially when it comes to causing harm to innocent people and disrupting peace and security. This is the least we can do to contribute to the general good. It is our duty to defend our religion from individuals and groups that tarnish its image and defame its name.

Therefore, I believe in dialogue and open discussion with those who have questions, especially among the youth. Unless we reach them, listen to them and engage with them in dialogue, we will indirectly contribute to their marginalization. The counter-narrative is done, not only by words and texts, but also by shaking hands and approaching those who are confused, as Ibn ‘Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) did to bring back to Islam many misguided secessionists (Khawarij). The discussion of ideas, with patience and proper arguments, does work in most cases if it is done with wisdom.

In parallel to the above, Muslim leaders should totally, and not selectively, continue to condemn acts of violence against innocent lives. Whether it be in terrorist acts that occur in Muslim or non-Muslim countries, all lives are priceless and

sacred. Thus, scholars must educate the masses on this critical issue. I am very thankful to God Almighty that, when I was the chairman of the Canadian Council of Imams, we issued a declaration in 2010, on different relevant issues such as extremism and violence, to educate Canadian Muslims and make them understand what their religious leadership stance was. That historical declaration was unprecedented, and it was summarized in seven items. Concerning Terrorism, it says in item 2,

We believe in peaceful coexistence, dialogue, bridge building, and cooperation among all faiths and people for the common good of humanity. Islam does not permit the killing of innocent people, regardless of their creed, ethnicity, race, or nationality. The sanctity of human life overrides the sanctity of religious laws. Islamic rulings do not – and should not – contradict natural laws. Islam is a religion that promotes peace, justice, equality, dignity, and freedom for all human beings.

And in Item 4,

We believe that the well-being of our fellow citizens is the well-being of Muslims, and that the well-being of Muslims is the well-being of our fellow citizens. Being law-abiding people is part of the Islamic practice and following the pristine teachings of Islam leads to good citizenship.

The religious leadership in every country and every community must improve internal communication among its people, be organized and united and must stand together on interpretations of Islamic values and laws.

In my assessment, and without delving into details, sketchy self-taught Islam, in addition to other social and mental health factors, are the main culprits that contribute to the rise of radical beliefs and wrong approaches on how to bring about change in society, as well as how to address the various ills of today's global conflicts affecting Muslims and justice issues.

Modern day Muslims should take back their religion, refute and reject all claims of insanities which are done in the name of Islam. They should educate themselves on their Dīn and be careful about extremism and rigidity that have become like a cancer that is spreading fast, especially through the internet and social media. Genuine Muslims do not believe in killing, injuring or harming innocent people. They are law-abiding citizens following the laws of their legitimate governments and contributing to the societies in which they live. Muslims should be vigilant, patient and calm. They do not lose faith and do not act hastily. The Prophet (S) said:⁵⁵

سَتَكُونُ فَتْنَةٌ، الْقَاعِدُ فِيهَا خَيْرٌ مِّنَ الْقَائِمِ، وَالْقَائِمُ فِيهَا خَيْرٌ مِّنَ الْمَاشِي،
وَالْمَاشِي فِيهَا خَيْرٌ مِّنَ السَّاعِي، وَمَن يُشَرِّفْ لَهَا تَسْتَشِرُّهُ، وَمَن وَجَدْ مَلْجَأً
أَوْ مَعَادًا فَلَيَعْذِذْ بِهِ". رواه البخاري ومسلم

"There will be tribulations during which a sitting person will be better than the one standing. The one standing will be better than the one walking. The one

⁵⁵ Bukhari (3601) and Muslim (2886)

walking will be better than the one running. Whoever exposes himself to these tribulations will be destroyed, so whoever finds a place of protection or refuge should take shelter in it.” Agreed upon

Religious leaders and followers, government and citizens, teachers and students must work together to protect their citizens, especially the youth and the most vulnerable. They must denounce and counter the narrative and the work of terrorist groups. The Qur'an denounced and condemned such acts and vehemently condemned killing of innocent people, corruption on earth, looting and committing crimes and destabilizing peace and the lives of people.⁵⁶ This is known in Islam as *Hirabah* حِرَابَة, which is also a kind of terrorism like plundering, piracy, highway robbery and unlawful warfare initiated by bandits or criminals. They cause fear, chaos, disorder and panic as well as provoke and weaken the state and the citizens. The punishment was severe to deter such acts and magnify the sin of causing turmoil and disturbing peace.

Today, due to the advancement of technology and communication, corruption and terrorism come in different forms. The internet has given access to the good and the bad of this world, but evil outweighs the good. It has also created an imaginary world for many and this has been successful in secluding millions of people from society, hidden in their basements and private rooms. In the name of freedom and

⁵⁶ See chapter 5 (The Table), Verses 33–34.

acquiring knowledge, the internet has opened doors that should not be open. This has put authorities and law enforcement agencies in a state where they do not have much control because the wild world web has no jurisdiction and it is out of their reach. Sadly, to say, we live in a reality of many extreme behaviors that we witness, not only in religion and politics, but in all other aspects of life, including the ways we eat, drink, sleep...etc.,

B. Reality of Terrorism

Terrorism is what brings terror to innocent people. This is a violation of the laws and principles of Islam. It includes any illegitimate action or violence meant to cause disorder and to threaten the necessities of life. It is a fatal virus caused by either (1) greed, (2) power hunger, (3) love of anarchy, (4) despair and hopelessness (5) dissatisfaction and thirst for change. For the first three motives, the only cure is deterrence and application of the rule of law and order. As for the last two motives, the wisest course of action is to examine the root causes and to find out why a person would risk his/her life to do these things. In most cases, we find that it is not the religious motives that are behind a terrorist act, although it is claimed in the name of the religion. Rather, there are always hidden motives, which could be emotional reactions to injustice and aggression in some places in the world. There are many old and unsolved conflicts around the world where injustices are committed by rulers against their people. There are cases where majorities are fighting against minorities in the same country, or powerful countries against weaker ones. Many of these conflicts, unfortunately, are met with inattention; passivity and neglect by those who can help bring about change and put pressure to resolve these issues. Sometimes, prosperity, peace and justice in those places are not in the economic interest of some nations.

Unless the international community comes together and addresses these issues seriously, there will regrettably, always be people who will take up arms and do whatever is needed to

reach their goals. Violence and terror could be a manifestation of despair caused by a feeling of deception. Once despair overcomes an individual, his/her emotions prevail over his/her reason, blindness acts. Terrorist groups often look – especially through the internet – for people who are frustrated, depressed, or want to bring change to a situation as in the case of Syria. Not all of those who went to Syria were bad people, but they were people who made a bad judgement after they were lured by the terrorists, who use the religious platform and the apocalyptic message in addition to the promise of *Khilafah* (Caliphate) as prophesized in some hadith literature.

Therefore, prevention at a very early stage, is the cure for this second kind of motive for terrorism. Otherwise, once the virus spreads, the cancer aggravates and the situation exacerbates. It then becomes almost impossible to control like in the cases of many contemporary organizations that have chosen terrorism to be their *raison d'être*. Terrorism today is a global phenomenon. It acts like a virus, or a disease, and it has already affected many countries and nations, and continues to spread.

Hence, since the world has become a small village, as it is often referred to, it really needs a dedicated doctor and a competent staff. All nations should come together for the sake of this global village and hire the best and most practical – not theoretical – people who believe in the universal values and humanity. The task is to diagnose the situation, identify the causes, address the real issues, write the prescription and enforce the medication, if needed. Syrian people were left

alone to fight a powerful, oppressive and merciless regime and their army while the world watched. Therefore, what could one expect to happen other than madness, chaos and one of the worse humanitarian crises since the Second World War? Unless a consensus is built by all nations to address, seriously and swiftly, all the ills of the world, we cannot expect any solution to these ongoing problems. Moreover, powerful states should stop supporting oppressive regimes around the world and demand the establishment of an independent judiciary system. Justice and dignity come first, before any talk about democracy is initiated. Unless pressure is exerted on leaders who commit injustices and oppress their people, or discriminate against the minorities, one cannot just talk about democracy.

We must also be careful not to fall in the traps and deception of some powerful media and oppressive regimes who want to define for us what terrorism is or is not. They are selective on whom they call terrorist and whom they call freedom fighter. Instead of educating the world on the oppression that millions around the world experience every day – those who may be rightfully uprising and struggling – their self-defense is blatantly termed “violence” and “terrorism”.

Terrorism is indeed a disease whose medicine is sometimes close to the hands of those who are watching with their arms crossed. Terrorism is also what we see in the streets of the modern world today. Children in schools are terrorized by their own classmates, women are raped and attacked in

parks, streets and workplaces even in daylight hours, and gunmen are bursting into hospitals, restaurants, banks, post offices, churches, mosques, synagogues and other places, which should normally be considered safe. Shooting at random and killing and maiming innocent people are no more the front-page news. Fires are ignited to engulf thousands of acres of property, homesteads, wild life and the flora and fauna which are lost in the flames. Most of these crimes are taking place every second. Why do we close our eyes to these; shootings, bombings, rapes, modern slavery and arsons which are taking place daily, by the hour, by the minute and by the second – overwhelming crimes influenced by violent movies, video games and other means of commercialization of violence?⁵⁷ These are also acts of terrorism because they do terrorize people.

Human life cannot be normal without peace and justice. How could we have peace while we are competing in inventing weapons of mass-destruction, harmful drugs and poisons, and polluting and destroying nature?

⁵⁷ There have been many university studies, which suggested that these things make children very aggressive such as the study conducted by Stanford University at the end of the year 2000, which was reported by the American media. In fact, many parents admit that their children become very excited and aggressive in their behavior immediately after watching televised violence.

C. Is Islam a global threat?

Terrorism is branded by many – including some media – as a Muslim problem. Islam is perceived as a threat to Western civilization and a menace to global peace. Those who see Islam as a threat to modern civilization have expressed that Islam is incompatible with Western values of freedom and human rights. Muslims are perceived as diametrically opposed to the West. The reason for this perception is because Islam seems to be very apparent and visible as a way of life, culture, with daily religious observances, diet, dress code, ideas, and behavior. Many may think or assume that the Western way of life is threatened by such manifestation of religious and cultural practices. Although diversity and accommodation of different religious and ethnic groups have come a long way in the Western world, there is still an underling prejudice that surges from time to time. Others start categorizing people based on their visible differences and dissimilarity to others. The latter “others” are viewed as “Civilized people” and symbols of Western civilization, even if they may not act in what would be considered “civility”. Therefore, those who claim to believe in diversity and say that it is a source of strength should not contradict themselves by dividing the world into two worlds or two kinds of people; one that is civilized and the other that is not.

In addition, there are other factors that are related to the large number of the world’s Muslim population in general, which is around 1.8 Billion (24%) and the large migrations of people to Western countries, especially by refugees. These

factors make many people very uncomfortable and may give them a sense of overwhelming cultural and religious invasion.

The question we should ask here is, “What indeed is civilization?” Islam, from the statement of Western scholars who studied it, is not only a religion, but also a way of life and a civilization. I do not need to give, in this context, all the proofs and arguments for that, but I confine by referring the reader to read the history of the Muslim world from the times of ignorance, darkness and chaos of the seventh century Arabia to the best-civilized world of the Middle Ages. The abundance of universities, laboratories, research and educational centers led thousands of scholars to excel in their inventions and achievements in all fields of science, medicine, engineering, architecture, art and education. It was a world that contributed in every field of life, with principles that stem from the Qur'an and directed the individual to focus on development and progress on different levels, including the spiritual, the intellectual, the economical, and the social aspects of life. It was a civilization that outrivaled the other contemporary ones, not by proliferation of weapons, but rather by sharing knowledge and appreciating wisdom. It was a civilization that continued in its economical and intellectual elements through its torch that it handed to Europe.

Therefore, if Islam is a civilization and for civilization, with all its comprehensive elements, it is inconceivable to consider it a threat to today's civilization and global peace. As Muslims, we should appreciate what the human intellect has achieved in terms of the valuable inventions and discoveries.

The Human intellect is a divine gift that could be a blessing if used in a constructive way and a curse if used in a destructive way.

As I mentioned before, because of that diametrical approach that can be taken vis-à-vis Muslims, it becomes a matter of religion and religious motives when a perpetrator of a crime happens to be a Muslim by name or appearance. Muslims, specifically, have become 'easy pickings' in the media and movie industry. The media, for instance, except in some cases of objective journalism, in its almost totally blinkered view of Arabs and Muslims, has a different set of rules when writing about issues related to them. Fairness and balance are absent whenever the discussion is about Muslims or Arabs. The impression that the public might get is that almost every Muslim, or Arab, is a terrorist, or has a sympathizing attitude for acts of terror. This is constantly repeated daily through the news, talk shows, TV shows, comedy shows, movies, and even the "educational books". It appears as if it is done on purpose to make the public undergo a gradual process of growing hatred and mistrust. The great danger we face today is the over-generalization, as well as misinformation, and its continuous rehearsal. Islamophobia is real and dangerous, and it will only serve the extremists on both sides to justify either their hatred of the West or their hatred of Islam.

Islam stands for the universal values we saw earlier in this book and promotes the very values that are fundamental to bring global peace. Islam promotes seeking knowledge and wisdom and appreciating people's good values and respecting

differences. Islam is about building, learning and sharing. Islam can be practiced anywhere in the world where there is respect for humanity and dignity. What is being presented as Islam in the form of acts of terror and barbarism represents neither the religion nor those who sincerely adhere to it. Terrorists have no religion, even if they claim one, because God is just, God invites to peace and God is light upon light.

Conclusion

We have seen in this humble work how Islam is a religion that stands for the very universal values that all human beings believe in, love and aspire to see in their lives. In the light of those values, we discussed what Islam's view is regarding the concepts of war, Jihad and fighting. Through a detailed comparison between Jihad and terrorism, we found that the two are totally different from each other. We have also seen how important the sanctity of life in Islamic teachings is and that it is unimaginable that the religion would support or teach its adherents to kill innocent people and commit terrorist acts in its name, while the sacredness and preservation of life is one of its fundaments. We have also examined modern day terrorism, its practices and doctrines, and we have proposed ways to counter it by using the original and balanced understanding of Islam itself, common sense and human nature. Therefore, we have concluded that genuine Muslims would never allow themselves to transgress the limits and boundaries drawn by God in His teachings and Prophet Muhammad (S) in his example. Islam is a religion that spreads peace, respect, tolerance, justice, mercy and compassion. Doing, promoting and spreading anything contradictory to these important cornerstones of peace is definitely rejected and alien to Islamic teachings.

Muslims may differ in their beliefs from other fellow human beings, but this does not mean that they would

disrespect them and treat them with injustice. Muslims must speak up against injustices including the ones done by fellow Muslims, including terrorism and the killing of innocent people, regardless of their religion, ethnicity or race. Muslims should be among the first people who promote and stand for peacemaking, global peace, justice, tolerance, and the honor and dignity of human life. Muslims are encouraged to interact with other people from different faiths and exchange with them many positive things and get to know them. Allah (swt) says,

(يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَى وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعْلَمُوْا فَوْرًا
إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْفَاقَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَيْرٌ) (الحجـات: 13)

"O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may despise each other). Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full Knowledge and is well-acquainted (with all things)." (49:13)

There are many misconceptions being spread, whether intentionally or unintentionally, to sow the seeds of hatred and enmity to Islam and Muslims. Islamophobia is on a continuous rise, but we must keep doing what we can and leave the rest to Allah Almighty. If we have faith in Him, then we should only worry about our part. We cannot answer all of the allegations against Islam and Muslims, but we can always state

what we stand for and condemn all acts of wrong, as our religion commands us. The closest way to our fellow human beings is through the universal values we share with them, such as peace, justice, mercy, respect and service to humanity. The best Muslims are those who are the best human beings. One cannot become a good Muslim unless and until he/she becomes a good human being.

In addition, global peace requires partnership and commitment. Therefore, the international community starting with the United Nations (UN), the organization of Islamic countries (OIC), the European Union (EU) and all the economically and militarily powerful nations must work much harder, and together, in trying to solve major global conflicts one by one, especially those inherited from the colonial age, as in the Middle east, Africa and Asia. With frankness, impartiality, integrity and no favoritism, everything can be solved, including the global problem of terrorism and violence. Peace is achievable only by peacemakers.

Finally, we should never lose faith and hope because history has taught us that truth always prevails over falsehood.

(وَقُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ إِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا) (الإِسْرَاءَ: 81)

“And say: Truth has now arrived, and falsehood perished: For Falsehood is by its nature

bound to perish.” (17:81)

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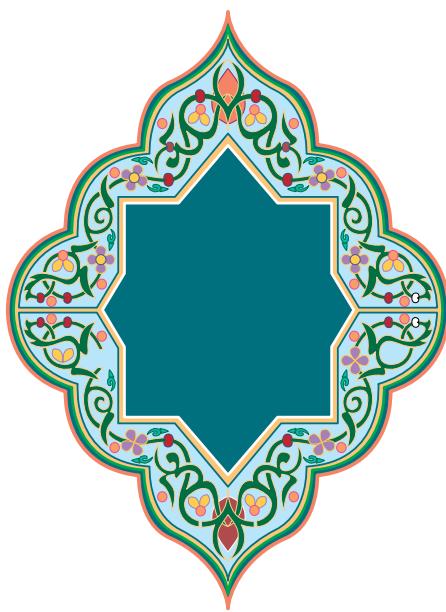
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Summary & Foreword

in Arabic



الرهائن وإعدامهم ونشر صورهم أو أفلامهم المقززة ثم اتباع منهج الخوارج وطريقتهم. ويأتي الفصل السابع بعد ذلك كله ليحلل واقع الإرهاب وما قد يؤدي إليه ويقترح حلولاً عملية وفورية تقاوم هذا الفكر الخطير والمرض العossal مع الأخذ بعين الاعتبار ما يعانيه الكثير في عالمنا هذا من ظلم وفقر وهضم للحقوق الأساسية للعيش بكرامة ويؤدي ذلك ببعض منهم إلى الوقوع في فخ المتطرفين في الدين أو السياسة.

وما هذا العمل كله إلا قطرات ماء في نهر جار نسأل الله عز وجل أن يبارك فيها أساهم بها في دعوتنا العالمية إلى الإسلام السمح والحنيف حيث حاولت قدر الإمكان تصحيح المفاهيم وإزالة اللبس حتى تنفذ الدعوة الإسلامية إلى الأفاق بإذن العزيز الخلاق. (ومَا أَرِيدُ أَنْ أُخَالِفُكُمْ إِلَىٰ مَا أَهْبَأْكُمْ عَنْهُ إِنْ أَرِيدُ إِلَّا إِصْلَاحًا مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ وَمَا تَوْفِيقِي إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكِّلُتُ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ.) (هود: 88)

المؤلف: الدكتور حميد السليمي
أستاذ محاضر ورئيس المركز الكندي للدراسات الدينية
أستاذ الفقه وأصوله والدراسات الإسلامية بجامعات ومؤسسات دولية
تروonto، كندا، 21 جمادى الثانية 1439 الموافق ل 09 مارس 2018

أقوالهم إلا بالحجج والبراهين الواردة في مصادر التشريع الأساسية وإبطال الأباطيل والافتراءات التي تسعى من خلالها الحملات الإعلامية المغرضة إلى تشويه الإسلام والمسلمين وبث الرعب والحمد في قلوب الناس. كما ذكرت موقف الإسلام من القاعدة المكيافيلية التي تقول بأن "الغاية تبرر الوسيلة" حيث بينت مخالفتها لأصول الشرع الحنيف. وبعد ذلك مباشرة قارنت بين الجهاد وبين الإرهاب وشرح ضوابط الجهاد ودعائيه وبينت اعتدال وخلق النبي (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) فيه وقارنته للقراء مع ما يسمى بالإرهاب حيث يتبيّن بوضوح أن الإسلام بتعاليمه بعيد كل البعد عما نراه ونسمع عنه وأن الإسلام بريء من يقتل الأبرياء كبراءة الذئب من دم يوسف عليه السلام. بذلك أعطيت مقارنة واضحة بين الجهاد النبيل والمشروع للدفاع عن ضروريات الحياة كما هو معروف ومقرر في الشعّ وبين الإرهاب الشنيع الذي قد يتستر باسم الجهاد بغرض إشعال نار الفتنة وزعزعة الأمن والاستقرار وتشتيت المسلمين وتخريش بعضهم ضد بعض.

أما في الفصل الخامس تحدثت عن مفهوم الحرمة في الإسلام وخصوصا حرمة الدماء والحفاظ على الأنفس وأن الخوارج الإرهابيين لا يعيرون اهتماما إلى ذلك بخلاف الإسلام وتشريعاته التي تهدف إلى مقاصد عظيمة للحفاظ على النفس وصون الدماء والأعراض. وفي الفصل السادس وفي ضوء ما بيته في الفصل الذي قبله حللت ثلاثة مظاهر غير مسبوقة تتميز بما الجماعات الإرهابية المعاصرة وهي: العمليات الانتحارية، عمليات خطف

الإسلام واجباً للحفظ والدفاع عن ضروريات الحياة لا لتدمير وتعطيل أمرها كما يفعله الإرهاب. وفي الفصل الثاني ركزت على خطورة وأهمية العدل أو القسط في الإسلام مبيناً أنه من أوجب الواجبات الدينية في شريعتنا الغراء. وتطرقت بعد ذلك إلى معنى العدل وعلاقته بجميع الأحكام الشرعية لأنه يقرر قاعدة معروفة عند كل مسلم وهي إعطاء كل ذي حق حقه. ولا يمكن أن يكون ذلك متحققاً إلا بالإنصاف والنزاهة وعدم التحيز. ولم أغفل في كل فقرة عن التركيز على العلاقة الوثيقة بين العدل والسلام وأنه لا يمكن وجود أحدهما بدون الآخر وأعطيت لذلك أمثلة واقعية وبديهية الإدراك.

أما في الفصل الثالث فقد ركزت على الكلام عن رحمة الإسلام بتبيين فحوى الرسالة الحمدية وخلق حامل الرسالة وترجمته لمعاني الرحمة عملياً وواقعاً. وذكرت أنه لا يمكن الوصول إلى ما وصل المسلمين إليه في زمنه وزمن القرون الأولى المفضلة إلا بالتأسي والإتباع والإقتداء. فهذا بإيجاز ما هو عليه مدار الفصول الثلاثة الأولى من هذا الكتاب.

أما في الباب الثاني فيبيت في الفصل الرابع موقف الإسلام من الإرهاب وقتل الأبرياء وذلك بتصحيح المفاهيم الخاطئة عن الإسلام والمسلمين والقرآن وتعاليمه. فانتقيت ما ألمعني الله عز وجل من الآيات والأحاديث الصحيحة والحسنة لرد مزاعم الوشاة ودعوى المغرضين وما تروجه وسائل الإعلام الخطيرة وموقع الإنترنت الكثيرة. فلا يمكن تفنيد

محتوى الكتاب

الحمد لله الذي يدعو عباده إلى دار السلام، ويأمرهم بالعدل والإحسان، وإقامة الوزن بالقسط وينهاهم عن التطفيف في الميزان، والذي بين لهم أن دينه الذي ارتضى لعباده هو دين الرحمة وهو سبحانه الحنان المنان. والصلوة والسلام على إمام المتقين وسيد المرسلين، المبعوث رحمة للعالمين، والمشهود له بالخلق العظيم في كتاب الله العزيز الحكيم، والذي يَبَيِّنُ ما في القرآن قولاً وعملاً، فكان للناس بذلك أسوة ومثلاً.

وبعد: فإنه من المعلوم بالضرورة في شرعنا الحكيم أن الإسلام دين السلام والعدل والرحمة. وهذه العناصر الثلاثة واضحة في أصول الدين وأحكام الشريعة بأوامرها ونواهيها ولا ينكر ذلك إلا من خُرم الفهم وحسن الإطلاع وإدراك مقاصد الشارع الحكيم التي ثبتت بعد الاستقراء أنها جلاب المصالح للخلق ودرء المفاسد عنهم دنيوياً وأخروياً. فالإرهاب مفسدة عظيمة واضراره خطيرة ليس فقط على الدماء والأرواح بل على الإسلام والدعوة إليه وعلى سمعة المسلمين وسلامتهم.

لذلك ركزت في الفصل الأول من الباب الأول من هذا الكتاب المتواضع وأنا أبين دلائل تعظيم الإسلام لقيم السلام على أربعة محاور أساسية: السلام على المستوى النفسي والروحي ثم السلام على المستوى الفردي والاجتماعي والسياسي الحكمي ثم ناقشت مفهومي الحرب والسلم في الإسلام. بعد ذلك تحدثت عن مفهوم الجهاد في الإسلام وكيف جعله



والعبد المسلم يختتم صلاته التي تصله بالله سبحانه بالسلام على من باليمن ومن بالشمال. وإذا ما صادف قوما كان شعار اللقاء هو السلام (فإِذَا دَخَلْتُمْ بُيُوتًا فَسَلِّمُوا عَلَى أَنفُسِكُمْ تَحْيَةً مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُبَارَكَةً طَيِّبَةً) (النور: 61). هذه الحياة موصولة بسلام الآخرة ولذلك كان العدل مأمورا في جميع شؤون الحياة ومع جميع الخلائق (إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَإِلَيْهِ الْخُسْنَاءِ وَإِنَّمَا ذِي الْفُرْقَةِ وَيَنْهَا عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ) (التحريم: 90). ومع العدل تأتي الرحمة التي قال فيها المصطفى عليه الصلاة والسلام: "لا تنزع الرحمة إلا من شقي" رواه الترمذى وأبو داود وأحمد. وإن الرحمة قد تمثلت في بعثة الرسول الكريم لأن بها قد أقيم العدل والقسط وعلى ذلك الأساس تربع السلام على تعاليم الإسلام السمحنة. هذه المعلم التي امتنجت بدماء السابقين وبمهمتهم جاء الشیخ حمید مشکورا ليحلیها بلھجة صادقة وعبارة لائقة لیبین أن دین الإسلام براء مما ینسب إلیه من الأباطيل التي تناقض مبادئه السامية الواضحة.

نَسَأَلُ اللَّهَ الْعَلِيَّ الْقَدِيرَ أَنْ يَتَقَبَّلْ جَهَدَهُ وَأَنْ يَنْفَعَ بِهِ وَأَنْ يَحْقِّقَ لَنَا
وَلَهُ فِيمَا يَرْضِيهِ آمَانًا إِنَّهُ سَمِيعٌ مَحِيبٌ.

الدكتور يحيى إسماعيل

أستاذ الحديث وعلومه بجامعة الأزهر الشريف
القاهرة، شوال 1421 الموافق ليناير 2001

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

تقديم الطبعة الأولى لكتاب الإرهاب و موقف الإسلام منه

لسماحة الدكتور الشيخ يحيى إسماعيل

الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلوة والسلام على نبينا محمد وعلى آله
وصحبه أجمعين.

شكراً لله لأنبياء العزيز الأستاذ حميد السليمي هذا الجهد المبارك
الذي بذله لتجليه معلم ديننا الحنيف
في العدل والإحسان والسلام والرحمة. تلك المعلم التي فتح الله رب
العالمين بها أفقده وأقطار الدنيا يوم أن وجدت من المسلمين هما صادقة
وعزائم فتية وقلوبها تقية تفاعلت معها واختلطت بها فقدم الإسلام للناس
بها مع حياة جديدة لم يألفها الناس من قبل. حياة تجعل الدنيا موصولة
بالآخرة فتجد المسلم في سلام في هذه الدنيا في جميع أموره: في تحيته وفي
صلاته وتشهده وفي معاملاته. ثم تجد هذه الحياة هي الحياة التي يرفرف
عليها السلام ويلفها السلام. تجدها موصولة بالآخرة حيث تكون تحيتهم
يوم يلقون رحمة السلام كما هي تحيتهم في الدنيا السلام. قال الله عز
وجل: (وَإِذَا حَيَّتُمْ بِتَحْسِيْنِي فَحَيُّوْا بِأَحْسَنِ مِنْهَا أَوْ رُدُّوهَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَىٰ
كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَسِيبًا) (النساء: 86).

إن رب المسلم وإلهه الذي يدعو إليه والذي يعمل ويخلص له من
أسمائه الحسنى السلام (هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ
السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَمِّمُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ)

(الحضر: 23).

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته،

أيها القارئ العربي، يسهل عليك بعد قراءة الخلاصة الآتية تتبع الكتاب من أوله إلى آخره بسهولة وذلك باستعمال الفهرس رغم الاتجاه الرقمي المعakis للصفحات حيث إن كل الآيات والأحاديث قد نقلت باللغة الأصلية - أي العربية - وتم ترجمتها إلى الإنجليزية بعد تحريرها.



الإرهاب المعاصر

تحليل ومناقشة في ضوء النصوص والمبادئ والقيم الإسلامية

د. حميد السليمي

About the Book

After more than 18 years since the second edition of the book **Terrorism: An Islamic perspective**, this new book is a revisit and an update of the former in consideration of many significant changes that have occurred during all this time. The book examines this growing phenomenon through the lenses of Islam's core values and authoritative texts namely the Qur'an and the tradition of the Prophet (*Blessings & Peace be upon him*). This work is divided into two parts; the first part demonstrates the strong universal values on which Islamic teachings stand, such as peace, justice and mercy and the second part deals with modern day terrorism and violent religious extremism. The author gives an in-depth analysis from a different perspective including a comparison with Jihad, sanctity of life and the new unconventional methods of terrorism that embody all elements of savagery and barbarism. The book proposes solutions and brings awareness to the reader about key issues rarely discussed in the mainstream media. It is a good reference for those who want to learn about the Islamic perspective on this subject as well as those who want to use it as an educational material.

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Author: Dr. Hamid Slimi

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