

ISLAMIC *Ethics* of WARFARE

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Jihad and Related Matters

Fighting in the Way of Allah (SWT)

What is the ruling of fighting in the way of Allah (SWT)?

The ruling, concerning the special Jihad, which is fighting the disbelievers and hostile enemies, is a collective responsibility. If it is done by some Muslims, the other Muslims are excused. That is due to Allah's statement:

﴿وَمَا كَانُوا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لِيَنْفِرُوا كَافَّةً فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِنْ كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ لِّيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ وَلِيُنذِرُوا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ﴾

And it is not (proper) for the believers to go out to fight (Jihad) all together. Of every troop of them, a party only should go forth, that they (who are left behind) may get instructions in (Islamic) religion, and that they may warn their people when they return to them, so that they may beware (of evil).” (At – Tawbah 9:122)

However, it becomes an individual obligation for whoever the Muslim chooses to participate in it. This is due to the injunction of the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) “When you are called to take part in a battle, then go forth.” (Recorded by Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Ibn `Abbas - may Allah be pleased with him and his father)

Equally, if a country is invaded by the enemy, it becomes an individual obligation of each of its inhabitants - including women - to take up arms to defend and to fight off the enemy.

What are the kinds of Jihad?

1. Fighting against the disbelievers and the enemy fighters; and this could be done with hand, money, tongue and heart. The Prophet said, “Fight the polytheists with your wealth, lives and tongues.” (Recorded by Abu Dawood)

2. Fighting the mischief makers. This also can be done with hand, tongue and heart. The Prophet said, “He who amongst you sees something abominable should modify it with the help of his hand; and if he cannot, then he should do it with his tongue, and if he cannot, (even) then he should (abhor it) from his heart, and that is the least of faith.” (Recorded by Muslim on the authority of Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri - may Allah be pleased with him).

3. Fighting against Satan, and repelling all the misconceptions and lusts that he insinuates. Allah (SWT) says:

﴿إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَاتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا﴾

Surely, Shaitan (Satan) is an enemy to you, so take (treat) him as an enemy.” (Fatir 35:6)

4. Struggling against one's own soul. That is by forcing it to learn matters of the religion and to act upon them, and by keeping it away from desires and resisting its frivolities.

Making Jihad against one's soul is, undoubtedly, one of the great acts of Jihad. That is why it is called, Al- Jihad Al-Akbar (The Greatest Jihad).

What is the logical reason behind Jihad?

It is so that Allah alone may be worshipped, that hostilities and evils may be repelled, that lives and property may be preserved, that truth and justice may be protected and that righteousness and virtue may be spread. Allah (SWT) says:

﴿وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ لِلَّهِ﴾

And fight them until there is no more Fitnah (disbelief and polytheism, i.e. worshipping others besides Allah) and the religion (worship) will all be for Allah Alone (in the whole of the world).” (Al-Anfal 8:39)

Some Texts from the Qur'an and the Sunnah on the Virtues of Jihad

There are many texts from the Qur'an and the Sunnah on the merits of fighting in the way of Allah and being martyred in His Cause. These texts indicate that Jihad is one of the greatest acts of worship. The following are some of these texts: Allah says,

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ اشْتَرَى مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ بِأَنْ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةُ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيُقْتَلُونَ وَعَدًا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ وَالْفُرْآنِ وَمَنْ أَوْفَى بِعَهْدِهِ مِنَ اللَّهِ فَاسْتَبْشِرُوا بِبَيْعِكُمُ الَّذِي بَايَعْتُمْ بِهِ وَذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ﴾

Verily, Allah (SWT) has purchased of the believers their lives and their properties for (the price) that theirs shall be the Paradise. They fight in Allah's Cause, so they kill (others) and are killed. It is a promise in truth which is binding on Him in the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel) and the Qur'an. And who is truer to his covenant than Allah? Then rejoice in the bargain which you have concluded. That is the supreme success.” (At-Tawbah 9:111)

Allah (SWT) also says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِهِ صَفًّا كَانَهُمْ
بُنِينَ مَرْصُوصٍ ۝٤﴾

*Verily, Allah (SWT) loves those who fight in His Cause in rows (ranks) as if they were a solid structure.”
(As-Saf 61:4)*

He says further, in the same Surah,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا هَلْ أَذُكُمُ عَلَىٰ بَحْرَةٍ مِّنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ
⑩ تُوْمِنُونَ بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللّٰهِ بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ
ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ⑪ يَغْفِرَ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَيُدْخِلَكُمْ
جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرَىٰ مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ وَمَسْكِنٌ طَيِّبَةٌ فِي جَنَّاتٍ عَدْنٍ ذَٰلِكَ
الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ﴾

O You who believe! Shall I guide you to a trade that will save you from a painful torment? That you believe in Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) (Muhammad) and that you strive hard and fight in the Cause of Allah with your wealth and your lives that will be better for you, if you but know! (If you do so) He will forgive you your sins, and admit you into Gardens under which rivers flow, and pleasant dwelling in Gardens of `Adn (Eden) Paradise; that is indeed the great success.” (As-Saf 61:10-12)

In another Surah, He says,

﴿وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللّٰهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ
رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ ①٦٩ فَرِحِينَ بِمَا ءَاتَاهُمُ اللّٰهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ﴾

Think not of those who are killed in the Way of Allah as dead. Nay, they are alive, with their Lord, and they have provision. They rejoice in what Allah has bestowed upon them of His Bounty.” (Aal Imran 3: 169 - 170)

From the Sunnah, the following Hadiths highlight the virtues of fighting in the way of Allah:

It has been narrated on the authority of Abu Sa`eed Al-Khudri - may Allah be pleased with him - that a man came to the Prophet and said: “Who is the best of men?” The Prophet replied, “A man who fights in the way of Allah spending his wealth and staking his life.” The man then asked, “Who is next to him (in excellence)?” He said, “Next to him is a believer who lives in a mountain gorge worshipping his Lord and sparing men from his mischief.” (Recorded by Muslim)

Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah - may Allah be pleased with him - that the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said, “The example of a Mujahid in Allah's Cause - and Allah knows better who really strives in His Cause - is like a person who fasts and prays continuously. Allah guarantees that He will admit the Mujahid in His Cause into Paradise if he is killed, otherwise He will return him to his home safely with rewards and war booty.”

Abu Hurayrah - may Allah be pleased with him - narrated that a man came to Allah's Messenger and said, "Instruct me to a deed that is equal to Jihad (in reward)." He replied, "I do not find such a deed." Then he added, "Can you, while the Muslim fighter is in the battle-field, enter your mosque to perform prayers without cease and fast, never breaking your fast?" The man said, "But who can do that?" Abu- Hurayrah added, "The Mujahid (i.e. Muslim fighter) is rewarded even for the footsteps of his horse while it wanders about (for grazing) tied in a long rope." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

He also narrated that the Prophet said, "By Him in Whose Hands my soul is! Whoever is wounded in Allah's Cause - and Allah knows well who gets wounded in His Cause - will come on the Day of Resurrection with his wound having the color of blood but the scent of musk." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

The Prophet also said, "The person who participates in (Holy battles) in Allah's Cause and nothing compels him to do so except belief in Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him), will be recompensed by Allah with either a reward, or booty (if he survives) or will be admitted to Paradise (if he is killed in the battle as a martyr). Had I not found it difficult for my followers, then I would not remain behind any troop going for Jihad and I would have loved to be martyred in Allah's Cause, and then made alive, and then martyred, and then made alive and then again martyred in His Cause." (Recorded by Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Muslim also recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah - may Allah be pleased with him - that Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "One who died but did not fight in the way of Allah nor did he express any desire (or determination) for Jihad died the death of a hypocrite."

Al-Bukhari reported on the authority of Abdur-Rahman ibn Jabr - may Allah be pleased with him - that the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "Anyone whose both feet get covered with dust in Allah's Cause will not be touched by the (Hell) fire."

Anas bin Malik - may Allah be pleased with him - narrated that the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "Nobody who enters Paradise likes to go back to the world even if he got everything on the earth, except a Mujahid who wishes to return to the world so that he may be martyred ten times because of the honor he receives (from Allah)." (Recorded by Al-Bukhari)

Ribat

What is Ribat?

Ribat is to remain armed and take up positions at places through which the enemy could launch attack on the Muslims and their lands.

What is the ruling concerning Ribat?

It is a collective responsibility like Jihad. Allah enjoins Ribat in His saying:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾

O you who believe! Endure and be more patient (than your enemy), and guard your territory by stationing army units permanently at the places from where the enemy can attack you, and fear Allah, so that you may be successful.” (Aal Imran 3:200)

What are the virtues of Ribat?

Ribat is one of the most meritorious deeds and greatest acts of worship. The Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said, “To guard Muslims from infidels in Allah's Cause for one day is better than the world and whatever is on its surface.” (Recorded by Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Sahl bin Sa'd As-Sa'idi - may Allah be pleased with him)

He also said, “Each person will have the record of his good deeds closed after his death with exception of the one who stood in guard in Allah's Cause. For, his deeds will be augmented for him till the Day of Resurrection; and he will be given security against the trial of the grave.” (Recorded by Abu Dawood and An-Nasa'i on the authority of `Uqbah bin `Amir - may Allah be pleased with him)

The trial in the grave means: Munkar and Nakir who will be responsible to give punishment in the grave (by the Command of Allah). The Prophet said: Standing guard one night in the Cause of Allah is better than a thousand nights performing prayer its night and observing fast its day. (Recorded by Al-Hakim and he said: the chain is Sahih.

Abu Rayhanah - may Allah be pleased with him - narrated that the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said, “Hell-Fire is forbidden from burning an eye that kept vigil in Allah's cause.” (Recorded by Ahmad)

The Prophet said to Anas bin Abu Marthad Al-Gharawi and commanded him to guard the army at night. When he got up in the morning he came and said to him, “Did you dismount during the night” he said: No, except to pray or relieve myself; the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said: You have earned (Paradise); if you do not do anything after today, you will not be blamed for it (Recorded by An-Nasa'i)