

JIHAD

Introduction

If we were to make a list of all the Islamic terms and concepts that have been inadvertently misconstrued or deliberately distorted, by the apologetic Muslims or Western orient lists, then Jihad can easily be placed at the top of that list. Jihad is the Arabic for what can be variously translated as "struggle" or "effort," or "to strive," "to exert," "to fight," depending on the context. The word jihad comes from the word JUHD which means to strive, to struggle.

The word Jihad is not synonymous with "Holy War" which is what the Western media wants everyone to believe. In fact Holy War does not mean Jihad. This word 'holy war' was first used by the Christian crusaders who spread the religion at the point of a sword. And now it's used for the Muslims unfortunately. Because 'holy war', in Arabic if you translate means *المقدسة الحرب* Harbun mukaddasa. The word Harbun mukaddasa doesn't appear anywhere in the Quran neither in the sayings of the Prophet

Jihad is exerting our best and greatest effort to achieve something. It is not the equivalent of war, for which the Arabic word is qital. Jihad has a much wider connotation and embraces every kind of striving in God's cause. A mujahid is one who is sincerely devoted to his or her cause; who uses all physical, intellectual, and spiritual resources to serve it; who confront any power that stands in its way; and, when necessary, dies for this cause. Jihad in the way of God is our struggle to win God's good pleasure, to establish His religion's supremacy, and to make His Word prevail.

Importance of Jihad

In the Holy Qur'an many verses clearly show the importance of Jihad (struggling for the sake of Allah) in the life of a Muslim and urges the believers to take part in this noble duty. Allah mentions jihad in conjunction with imaan or belief, paradise and His pleasure. Any person who claims to be a sincere believer in Allah should understand the obligation of jihad.

*"O you who believe! Shall I show you a commerce that will save you from a painful doom? You should believe in Allah and His Messenger, and should strive for the cause of Allah with your wealth and your lives. That is better for you, if you did but know."
(Al-Saff 10-11)*

Although the significance of Jihad in the Qur'an and Sunnah cannot be overstated, its exact place in the overall framework of Islamic values and imperatives has been a matter of some debate. Some writers have described Jihad as the 6th pillar of Islam, while others have relegated it to a mere Fard Kafayah (a collective, rather than personal, duty). A highly misleading but popular idea in this respect is that any war in which the Muslims are engaged, even if the motives are other than purely Islamic, is Jihad fi Sabeel lillah. In view of the confusions and misunderstandings that surround this most fundamental of Islamic concepts.

The Quran does call for "jihad" as a military struggle on behalf of Islam. But the Quran also refers to jihad as an internal, individual, spiritual struggle toward self-improvement, moral cleansing and intellectual effort. It is said that Prophet Muhammad considered the armed-struggle version of Jihad "the little jihad," but considered the spiritual, individual version of Jihad--the Jihad within oneself--as "the great jihad."

From Surah Hujrat we can draw the significant panel of Jihad.

*They alone are the mo'min who come to believe in Allah and His messenger and afterwards never doubted, and who strive in the way of Allah with their wealth and their lives. Only they are truthful and sincere.
(Al-Hujurat 49:15)*

What does this ayah really mean? It means that there is absolutely no way, for a person who claims to be a believer, to avoid Jihad fi Sabeel lillah and still remain a believer in the sight of Almighty Allah (SWT). Indeed, the very

definition of a mo'min, as given in Surah Al-Hujurat, necessitates that a strong faith and state of inner certitude be coupled with an active struggle in the path of Allah (SWT). The word Jihad and the verb that goes with it mean to struggle against some opposition. Thus, each and every human being is engaged in Jihad, in the sense that everyone has to struggle for his existence.

“And do not say to those who have laid their lives in the cause of Allah that they are dead,
but in fact, they are living, although you do not understand.”

(Al-Baqara: 2:154)

Allah (swt) has raised the status of Mujahid, the person who sacrifice his life in the way of Allah (swt) to the that extent to be consider alive till the Day of Judgment. The great sacrifice in the cause of Allah is made in Jihad, because a loss of few lives, some thousands, some lacs, or even more does not count anything as compared with the dreadful calamity that may befall mankind as a result of the victory of evil over good, and of aggressive atheism over the religion of Allah.

The sincere believers are anxious to sacrifice their wealth and lives for the sake of Allah and do their best to fight with their fellow Muslims who are oppressed by the enemies of Islam.

When jihad becomes obligatory on the Muslim and he does not concern himself with it, then he is similar to those bedouins who claim to have faith yet the true and complete faith had not actually entered into their hearts. They say that they believe but they do not meet Allah's description of the believers.

“The true believers are only those who believe in Allah and His Messenger and afterward doubt not, but strive with their wealth and their lives for the cause of Allah. Such are the sincere”

(Al-Hujurat 49:14-15)

Types of Jihad

One could make Jihad by using good words, using one's wealth for the sake of Allah, or by using their physical strength to do good. We can use these three different types of jihad depending on the time, the place, the situation, or the individual. We may apply these different types of jihad all together or individually.

Imam Ibn Al-Qayyim has said in his Book Zaadul Ma'aad : “Jihad can be classified into four categories:

- The first type of jihad is to struggle against one's own self and desires.
- The second type of jihad is to struggle against the temptation of Satan.
- The third type of jihad is to struggle against the disbelievers.
- The fourth type of jihad is to struggle against the hypocrites.

Struggling against one's self desires means forcing yourself to follow the orders of Allah and to stay away from what Allah has ordered us to stay away from; This Jihad is called Jihad-e-Akbar (The Greatest Jihad). This includes performing the obligatory and the voluntary, and to abandon all acts that are Haram (unlawful) or Makrooh (disliked). This type of jihad also includes forcing oneself to behave with the best manners, the best morals, and to stay away from bad behavior at a time when our desires tell us the opposite.

Struggling against Satan means to defend yourself from his evil whisperings, his doubtful matters, his temptations, and his lustfulness. This type of jihad is an obligation for all individuals and no one can do it on another ones behalf. We should understand that Satan's whisperings will never go away, and therefore, we must keep struggling throughout our lives.

The struggle against the disbelievers and the hypocrites has four levels, which are: In the heart, the tongue, one's wealth and one's soul. When struggling with the disbelievers, more than likely, we will use our hands or physical strength. On the other hand, when struggling against the hypocrites, we will make jihad by using our tongue to preach to them. These two types of Jihad are called Fard Kifayah , which basically means if some Muslims successfully perform these two types of jihad, then it will no longer be obligatory for other Muslims to perform it. Otherwise, it remains obligatory upon all Muslims until the goal of Jihad is achieved.”

Conclusion

From this whole discussion we can conclude that there is no perfect Iman without the concept of Jihad. Jihad is as compulsory as other fundamentals of Islam's are on their priority. We all are doing jihad as we are striving and struggling hard for our existence and making our life on the on track prescribed by Allah and His Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).