

19) Piety And Jihad

Jihad comes from the root ‘Jahd’ meaning endurance and hard work. The word ‘Ijtihad’ too is from the same root meaning what is hard to obtain. Therefore, ‘Jihad’ means to do what is in your capability to fend off the enemy. Although the word ‘Jihad’ means campaign against the outward enemy, it is used in relation to other enemies like Satan and passions, for human beings are continuously faced with three enemies; the outward enemy, Satan, and the inducive soul (towards sin).

Therefore, man is always in fight. He either defeats or is defeated. In both cases, he has to do his best to observe piety (Taqwa) whether he fights an outward enemy, defends his life and property, or fights against his passions for the sake of God. He should know that, as Imam Ali (AS) has said, “Jihad is one of the doors of Paradise, which Allah has opened for His choice friends. ...It is the dress of piety and the protective armor of Allah and His trustworthy shield. Whoever abandons it, Allah covers him with the dress of disgrace.”¹

Jihad has been mentioned in the holy Quran more than fifty times. Jihad against enemies, which is an obligatory duty, has its own rules in a way that religious authorities have devoted a special chapter on it in their books of jurisprudence. Jihad has special rules; for example, the permission of one’s parents, its necessity on men and not on women, the ruling of the use of chemicals in water and air, night attacks, the rule of prisoners of war, tricks, fighting in the inviolable months, the rule of booties, and etc. God Almighty has repeatedly used the word ‘Taqwa’ in relation to Jihad.

In one place, God says: ***“Eat then of the lawful and good (things) which you have acquired in war, and be careful of (your duty to) Allah...”***²

Of course, the rules of booties have been discussed in the books of jurisprudence answering the questions as to who can benefit from them, whether the permission of the Imam or the deputy of the Imam is needed or a fighter can benefit from it.

Elsewhere, on the invisible and divine assistance, God says: ***“And Allah did certainly assist you at Badr when you were weak; be careful of (your duty to) Allah then, that you may give thanks. When you said to the believers: Does it not suffice you that your Lord should assist you with***

three thousand of the angels sent down?"³

From these verses, it is inferred that if the fighters of Islam follow piety in carrying out the instructions of the commander, they will have invisible assistance.

This was a brief discussion of piety and Jihad in the holy Quran, though God has recommended piety with a different interpretation: ***“O you who believe! When you meet a party, then be firm and remember Allah much, that you may be successful. And obey Allah and His apostle and do not quarrel for then you will be weak in hearts and your power will depart, and be patient; surely Allah is with the patient.”***⁴

The Virtue Of Jihad

The holy prophet (SAW) has been reported as having said: “Whoever goes out in the way of Jihad, for every step he takes, seven hundred thousand rewards are written for him, seven hundred thousand sins of him are written off, and seven hundred thousand ranks are given to him. In whatever way he dies, he is considered as a martyr, and if he returns safely, his sins are forgiven and his supplication will be answered.”⁵

Mansoor ibn Hazem has been reported as saying: “I asked Imam Sadiq (AS): ‘What is the best act?’ The Imam (AS) said: ‘Prayer in its proper time, kindness to parents, and Jihad in the way of God.’”⁶

There are many traditions showing the virtue of Jihad against the enemy of God. The virtue of Jihad is such that in letters to some of the Umayyad caliphs, Imam Baqir (AS) writes: “Why should Jihad be ignored while God Almighty and Majestic has made it excel other deeds and has increased the mercy and forgiveness for one who does it, for religion becomes manifest therewith and the evil of enemy is removed from religion thereby and God purchases the believers their lives and properties therewith? It is a trade of salvation and victory.”⁷

Imam Reza (AS) narrated from his fathers that Imam Sajjad (AS) said: “In a gathering, Imam Ali (AS) delivered a sermon persuading people to Jihad when a young man got up and said: ‘O Ameerol Mo’minin! Tell me, what is the reward of those who fight in the way of Allah?’ Imam Ali (AS) said: ‘I was in the same line with the messenger of Allah (SAW) on the camel al-Adhba’, returning from the battle of *That as-Salasil* when I asked the messenger of Allah (SAW) the same question. The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: ‘Whenever strugglers decide to fight, immunity from fire is written (by Allah) for them. When a martyr falls from on his horse at the strike of a sword, before reaching the ground, God Almighty, will prepare for him a Houri as his mate to give him the good tidings of what God has prepared for him of honor.

When he reaches the earth, he shall be said: ‘Welcome to the pure soul that has gone out of the pure body! I give you good news for what no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and it has occurred to no

human heart.’ On the Day of Resurrection, he will be raised from his grave while his sword is in his hand and blood will gush out of his veins, with the scent of musk while walking in the yard of (the day of) Resurrection. By Him in Whose hand my soul is, if the prophets happen to be in their (martyrs) way, they will dismount their mounts and walk with them for the worth they see in them so as to share the martyrs’ provision and sit with them at their table.”[8](#)

The holy prophet (SAW) has been reported by Imam Sadiq (AS) as saying: “All the good lies in the sword and the shadow of the sword. People cannot be rectified save by the sword, for swords are keys to paradise and hell.”[9](#)

There are many traditions on this topic, but here we would draw your attention to one historic anecdote.

Truly, Jihad is an important religious duty in which the prophets and their successors have preceded and been ordered with. In this relation God says: ***“And how many a prophet has fought with whom were many worshipers of the Lord; so they did not become weak-hearted on account of what befell them in Allah’s way, nor did they weaken, nor did they abase themselves; and Allah loves the patient. And their saying was no other than that they said: Our Lord! Forgive us our faults and our extravagant in our affair, and make firm our feet and help us against the unbelieving people. So Allah gave them the reward of this world and the better reward of the hereafter and Allah loves those who do good (to others).”***[10](#)

Secondly, there are the followers of the prophets and the friends of Allah who are not few at each time. We have seen it with our own eyes as to how young and old people offered their lives for the defense of Islam, their homeland, the Ahl al-Bayt, and Shiism, and welcomed the bullets of the enemy with their chests and considered it as the meeting place of God.

[1.](#) Wasa’il al-Shiah, vol. 11, p. 8.

[2.](#) Qur’an, 8:69.

[3.](#) Qur’an, 3:123–124.

[4.](#) Qur’an, 8:45–46.

[5.](#) Wasa’il al-Shiah, vol. 11, p. 12.

[6.](#) Ibid.

[7.](#) Wasa’il al-Shiah, vol. 11, p. 6.

[8.](#) Safeenat al-Bihar, vol. 1, p. 195.

[9.](#) Wasa’il al-Shiah, vol. 11, p. 5

[10.](#) Qur’an, 3:146–148.

Source URL:

<https://www.al-islam.org/taqwa-piety-advice-ahl-al-bayt-sayyed-hussain-sheikh-al-islami-tooyserkan/i/19-piety-and-jihad#comment-0>