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Sayyid Mahmud Taleqani

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Article

Authors(s):

[Sayyid Mahmud Taleqani](#) [1]

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By Ayatullah Sayyid Mahmud Taleqani

Jihad (struggle in the way of God) in Islam, its importance, role, limitations and necessity. And the concept of shahadat (martyrdom) in Islam.

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

Praise be to God, the cherisher and sustainer of the worlds, creator of the heavens and the earth. May divine peace and greetings be bestowed upon all the righteous apostles, particularly upon the seal of the prophets, the one who raised the flags of truth and the true religion, and divine greetings upon his noble family and companions and upon the infallible imams, martyrs, and truthful ones. I seek refuge in God, from the cursed Satan.

Those who believe do battle for the cause of God and those who disbelieve do battle for the cause of taghut. So fight the minions of the devil. Lo! the devil's strategy is always weak. (4:76)

Perhaps we can discuss this issue for a few minutes and reach a conclusion. Jihad is among the most important and widely discussed Islamic issues. By meditating upon the Qur'an, one discovers that after every few ayat related to issues of belief, society, ethics, and jurisprudence, in various manners, there is the command to wage war and carry out jihad.

[On the other hand, the propaganda that has been perpetrated in the past few centuries against Islam has been primarily aimed at the issue of war, conquests, and the advances made by Muslims. The scope of such evil propaganda has been sufficiently broad as to more or less have engraved its mark upon our youth and the educated. Fair and unbiased scholars, Muslim and non-Muslim, have written in defense of Islam and the principles of its just struggles. [They have investigated the following questions.]

What is the meaning of jihad in Islam? How has Islam progressed? How many human casualties were caused by this great intellectual, social, and moral revolution which appeared in the Arabian peninsula? Were the wars of the beginning of the Islamic era defensive or offensive? These questions in themselves are so extensive that if we decided to discuss them all in detail we would not have enough time to focus on the central issue itself.

Before being subsumed under religious or social concerns, defense falls among the intrinsic and natural characteristics of living beings. God has created a power in man's instinct which is called 'anger'. Anger

also exists, more or less and in varying forms, in animals. Its function is to safeguard the right to live. Any living being, one way or the other, possesses a defensive power, which, at the proper time, moves from the instinct into the organs of defense.

This power is bestowed by the Almighty. This defensive power even exists, more or less, in plants. Perhaps there are plants, the fruit and flower of which is to be used by others. There are yet other plants, the fruit of which is only for their own reproduction. People can only enjoy these visually. For this reason, some plants have big sharp thorns to warn the intruder, saying, "Since I am such a fragrant, beautiful being, this weapon must protect me from the harm of potential invaders." Yesterday a young man read some poetry, from which I recall a few lines. I don't know who the poet is, but it is an excellent piece:

How long will you remain depressed as ice,
Or drifting like a dead mouse in water?
Contempt causes inner discord;
Acceptance of repression invites humiliation;
So like a rosebush, bear your weapon on your shoulder
So you can also display your beautiful blossoms.

The poem is miraculously eloquent and realistic. It is a fact that servility and lowliness ruin the harmony of man's faculties. [Those who live in such conditions may well perceive some facts, but they cannot express them with their tongues and hands. This is the meaning of discord: dissonance between a person's perceptive and practical mechanisms. If the rosebush wishes to preserve the freshness and beauty of its own roses, if it wishes to stand proudly, it must cut the hands of the intruders.]

This is the same as what appears in the constitution of the animals, according to the law of evolution and instinct, exemplified by the development of the horn, talons, and teeth, and in man, is manifested in the emotion of anger. Since reason in man is the director of his other faculties, he utilizes anger as a weapon to defend his rights, territory, dignity, nationality, and what have you.

Thus if a prophet or a law-giver decrees that war and defense is to be nullified in a nation, it is the same as decreeing that because lustful passion causes unfavorable social conditions, men and women have to cut off their procreative organs. Nay! Natural powers have their appropriate function; only they require proper guidance. By the same token that God has bestowed this same power upon man, he too must guide it toward its proper function, the procreation and preservation of mankind.

As God has created the appetite for food, man must eat enough to protect his health and being. But the same appetite, overflowing its natural boundaries, can be a destructive urge. Instead of living eighty or a hundred years, a gluttonous person may only live thirty or forty, suicide by over-satiation.

Likewise, the sexual urge in man, if, instead of being used for procreation, is used in illegal, lustful ways, can cause social decay, due to factors including venereal diseases, such as syphilis and gonorrhoea.

Accordingly, when anger manifests itself in man, he takes up arms; and so he must, when his rights, honor, and dignity are [endangered].

If anger is not directed and utilized in the cause which God has determined, according to the law of creation, it becomes deviant. Then it results in wars of conquest waged for material expansion and the destruction of humanity. First, anger is a natural fact. Second, it must be guided by divine legislation.

If there were no religions, how else would the wise men and reformers of the world find a solution? Can we say that war should vanish from the face of the earth? This has indeed been an argument. Today this claim is still widespread. The institutions of peace and arms-limitation work day and night. They do in halls and rooms above the ground.

Underground there are factories which are in a frenzy to create destructive, murderous weapons. Just below the people who brag about peace and disarmament, nuclear weapons are made. Then what is to be done? The real solution is that the natural instinct of anger is to be guided onto the straight path. This is what Islam says. Instead of war and killing, Islam has offered the concept of jihad.

The term jihad is always attached to the locution *fi sabil Allah* (in the way of God). What is the way of God? Which direction is it? Is it toward the heavens, toward Mecca, or toward Jerusalem? No. The way of God is the very path of the well-being and betterment of human society. It is the way of justice, truth, and human liberty. (It is the building of a world in which) a specific group or class does not dominate over the destiny of the people, in order to stop human intellectual movement or to stop people from utilizing the natural resources that God Almighty has created for the common use of humanity.

As God has given natural powers and intellectual capacities to man, as God has created this atmosphere, light, and land for everybody, *sabil Allah* refers to the world in which all the people can develop their human capacities in order to obtain freedom. "*Jahidu fi sabil Allah*" ("strive in the way of God") is the divine command. In Islamic jurisprudence, one volume is devoted to jihad. Interestingly enough, the volume appears in the portion known as "*ibadat*" ("worship"). Our jurisprudence is divided into two parts: *'ibadat* and *mu'amilat*, the latter meaning "interpersonal relations."

The difference between the two is that in *'ibadat*, the intention of intimacy with God is a prerequisite. Hajj, prayer, fasting, almsgiving, exhortation to good deeds, prevention of evil deeds, and finally, jihad are all considered *'ibadat*. For example, if someone grabbed a sword and set off to fight the unbelievers without the intention of doing so for the pleasure of God, he would not be rewarded. If he were killed, he would not be considered a martyr. His act would be wasted as if he had committed suicide.

Only one who has such a divine intention can take up arms for jihad and be rewarded by God. The duty of jihad has as a prerequisite the intention of *qurbat*. What does *qurbat* mean? It means intimacy, closeness. It is the same as *fi sabil Allah*. What is God, so that we can get near to him? God is the universal good, and it is God's will and attributes which have manifested themselves in the universe and in human society. God is wise, just and merciful.

The realization of divine wisdom, justice, and mercy, and consequently the opening up of the doors of goodness to the people is fi sabil Allah. Jihad is 'ibadat. In examining the Qur'an and its ayat one notices that wherever there is the command "qatilu" ("wage war") and "jahidu" ("struggle"), there is also the locution, fi sabil Allah. In the ayah that I recited at the outset, the Almighty says:

Those who believe do battle for the cause of God and those who disbelieve do battle for the cause of taghut. So fight the minions of the devil. Lo! the devil's strategy is always weak.

The premise of this ayah seems obvious, that there is always war in the world. Such a state is consistent with the nature of man. The main point in the corollary is that the people of the world are of two types: the ones who believe and therefore strive in the way of God, and the ones who disbelieve and strive in the way of taghut. Whether we like it or not, life is a struggle, it is warfare. But those who believe in a supreme goal struggle in the way of God. Is there another way besides the way of God? Yes. The way of taghut.

What is taghut? What kind of world is this? Do the ones who recite the Qur'an pay the attention to this word which it deserves? Taghut is a hyperbole from tughyan (deluge, rebellion, outburst). The sentence "tagha al-ma" means "Water has overflowed; it left its natural bed. It is destroying the neighboring houses and farms and uprooting the nearby trees" This is the meaning of tughyan. Taghut is the one who commits tughyan. Taghut is the selfish person.

This word is a much more meaningful term than that which the Greek philosophers have coined, and following them, the social scientists have brought into use: "despot, tyrant." A tyrant can very well be only a tyrant over himself. More clearly, his passions may dictate over and control him. But taghut is the one who overflows from his rightful social limits.

He tramples social limits under his feet. It is as though a hurricane of lusts has burst out, recognizing no limits. Some have mistakenly thought that taghut means "idol." Of course, idols represent a kind of taghut, but the two are not synonymous. The word taghut does not necessarily mean and is not normally used to mean this.

Another ayah of the Qur'an reads:

"... how they would go for judgement (in their disputes) to taghut when they have been ordered to reject them" (4:60)

If we take taghut to mean "idol," how can it make judgements? It is Obvious then that the meaning of taghut is not idol. The word "taghut" is repeated eight or nine times in the Qur'an. In surah two, in Ayat al-Kursi, which is much recommended for recitation after the required prayers, the term is repeated twice:

There is no compulsion in religion. The right direction is henceforth distinct from error. And he

who rejects taghut and believes in God has grasped a firm handhold which will never break. God is Hearer, Knower. God is the Protecting Friend of those who believe. He brings them out of darkness into light. And for those who disbelieve, their patrons are taghut. They bring them out of light into darkness...(2:256-257)

There are only two possibilities, either man's existence and will come under God's control, the effect of which is that gradually the individual will come out of the darkness of selfishness and wrong-doing, and therefore, with the aid of knowledge and wisdom, his foresight will broaden; or taghut will possess him. It is either this or that. If the former is rejected as an alternative, the latter will occur automatically.

Man cannot live without a wali (guardian); such a guardian is either God or taghut. [We say that] the Prophet and the imams are also guardians. If we say this, it is because they implement divine will. It is for this reason that they are wali-Allah (divine guardians). Such guardians know the good of the people better than the people themselves do. The noble Prophet says, "Alastu awla bikum min anfusikum? (Haven't I been closer to you than you to yourselves?)" "

You were inclined to remain idol-worshippers, to be ignorant, weak, and down-trodden. But you witnessed that when I conquered you, you gained everything." This is how the divine Prophet delivered his ultimatum on the day of Ghadir, when such a transformation had become obvious, and had reached a practical level. [Thus he asks] "Am I not closer to you than you to yourselves?" Thus if God and the divine guardians are not in charge, people will be possessed by taghut. What is the sign and the result of such possession.

People will be taken out of light into darkness. That is, from the light of nature, the light of reason, and the light of perception, they will be dragged into the dark sphere of ignorance, lust, suspicion, and pessimism. As the ayah says, "Those who believe do battle for the cause of God and those who disbelieve do battle for the cause of taghut ..." Accordingly, the occurrence of war in the world is inevitable. Whenever there is no war, it will either be the end of the world, or there has to be another world, or human instinct must be completely transformed.

If it is transformed, there will be a new form of life. But in the world as it is, our instincts necessitate war in one form or another. The main difference, however, is between the ones who believe, and therefore wage warfare in the way of God, and the ones who disbelieve and wage war in the way of taghut, in the way of the despots and tyrants, in the way of the ones who overflow their rightful limits.

This is a second issue. Let me not forget the first: war is natural and instinctive and man cannot do without it. The second issue is that a religion, a perfect religion, unlike Christianity, recognizes the necessity of warfare. Christendom superficially claims that there must be no war. This is what the adherents of Christianity profess. They relate what they think are the words of Christ, "If someone slaps you on the cheek, offer the other cheek. "" Has it been so in practice? Where have all these wars come from in this world? Did we Muslims create them? Who has been behind all these wars and massacres in

this century?

Further, Christendom recommends that those who want God's kingdom should not marry. Has this been practical? Isn't "the Christian Europe" a center of lust as the result of reaction against such prohibitions? In the name of Christianity, groups of monks and nuns have locked themselves up in monasteries and convents; they imprison their vital faculties. If we were to suppose that there is a grain of truth in such legislation, we would have to hold that original Christianity was a temporary phenomenon or a false creed.

But the Qur'an has confirmed Jesus, and we must believe that original Christianity was a true religion, and that such nonsensical regulations were attached to it later. [Regarding this, the Qur'an says]:

"... But monasticism they invented we did not ordain it for them .."(57:27)

Monasticism cannot be deemed merely as remaining single. Huddling defenselessly in a corner and not defending one's existence and rights is indeed monasticism. It cannot be a universal law. Only a religion which recognizes the geometry of human instincts and makes a plan according to it can govern the world. Such religion tells man, "This instinct is within you; but do not use it for murdering, theft, lustful purposes, or military expansionism. Use it in its proper way. Defend your rights. Defend your dignity. Defend your country. Defend your religion. Defend human rights. By and by you have to channel this instinct into this proper path."

Let us return to the Qur'an.

"And fight them until persecution is no more, and religion is for God. But if they desist, then let there be no hostility except against wrong-doers."(2: 193)

Or likewise,

"And fight them until persecution is no more, and religion is all for God. But if they cease, then lo! God is seer of what they do."(8:39)

This is fi sabi Allah, which has both a positive and a negative side. First it says, "Wage warfare"; then it says for what one should wage warfare. Does it say one should do so for expansionism or to obtain spoils? No. Do so in order to bring the voice of truth unto the ears of the people of the world.

This is the meaning off sabil Allah: free the people! In other words, remove the obstacles to a truthful human life. Remove those 'powers' and 'classes' which are obstacles to the rights of the masses and which suppress public opinion. Abolish them. Liberate people from this suffocating environment, and familiarize them with God and the fountainhead of the universe. Do so "until there is no more persecution on. "

Those centralized powers that deceive the weak masses set one group against the other, drive the

masses away from divine truth into materialism, mislead the masses from the unity of God and drive them toward polytheism, idolatry, and the worship of humans. Fight them until these mischiefs are removed from the way of human evolution toward perfection. Do so until those particular classes which utilize public wealth for their own lust and violate the rights of millions of people, as did the Persian and Roman empires, are annihilated.

When that bare-footed Arab confronted the commander of the Persian army, he was asked, "Did you come to conquer and to loot? Or did you perhaps come because of starvation or nakedness? If so, we will feed you; we will give you money; we will satisfy all of you, commanders and soldiers alike. Return to your land." [Rustam]] thought his words had persuaded the man!

Make note of what the man answered and how his words have been recorded in history. He said only one sentence, but a very meaningful one: "We have been given the mission of liberating the nations of the world from slavery to human laws and false religions which are for a particular class, and to lead them to the glory of Islam." This is the Islamic jihad. This is the meaning of "jihad." "Jihad" means "striving for truth"; it is not similar to war and murder. "Jihad" means "striving for truth," and that is why it is discussed in the volumes on 'ibadat (worship). It is conditioned by fi sabil Allah.

A man asked the noble Prophet, "Messenger of God! [What is the reward of] a poor person who goes to the battlefield for the sake of booty?" The Prophet repeated three times, "He has no divine reward." [Another person] asked the noble Prophet, "Is the one who goes to the battlefield in order to test his own courage or to see fame properly called mujahid fi sabil Allah (striver in the way of God)?" "No!" he replied. "Then who can properly be called mujahid fi sabil Allah?" The Prophet answered, "[The one who strives so] that God's word becomes the uppermost," meaning that God's will manifests itself and rules their wills. This is the meaning of "the way of God." This is the meaning of "jihad of Islam." There is not sufficient time available to discuss all the ayat relevant to this topic.

A short while after the first generation of Islam, Muslims deviated. During the Umayyid caliphate, when every aspect of Islam was metamorphosized, the jihad of Islam remained no exception to the rule. It was metamorphosized as well. Let us recall the Englishman, Thomas Carlyle. I am unable to quote him directly. When defending Islam from the accusation that it has advanced thanks to warfare and the sword, he suggests that one should look beyond these superficial matters.

The real question is whether or not Islam is a true religion. If it is a true religion, if it is a religion teaching the unity of God and obedience to the one God, if it has laws and regulations useful to the world and it can make the people fortunate, such a religion has to advance. If there is no sword, it should advance with teeth and claws.

One cannot ask why Islam has advanced with the sword. The real question is whether it is the truth or fallacy which has advanced. It is wrong to argue, as some do, that since it has advanced by the sword, it is false. If you are not prejudiced, if you do not wish to remain under illusion, and if you do not wish to

paint a false caricature of Islam for the already prejudiced masses of Europe, why do you argue as such? Do you mean that since the Muslims have fought, Islam is a false religion? Isn't it more reasonable to say, that because Islam is a true religion, it has not disregarded the necessity of warfare, and on the contrary has given a commandment to that effect?

If a plant has no flower, there is no reason for it to have thorns. If man does not have a right to live and defend himself, if he does not have such a personal right, then what is the function of anger? If he has anger, it follows that he has rights. And if he has rights, he has to channel the power of his anger in the way of his rights, rather than channeling it in a false way. Man must defend his rights, to defend his dignity.

This is the truth of jihad, and it is a necessary part of a true religion, which has laws. One cannot believe a religion which argues on the one hand that it is a true religion and has come to reform the world, but on the other hand does not have any dimension of defense, propagation, and advancement. Such a religion is not credible. If a religion is like this, we shouldn't accept its claim that it has come from God for the salvation of humanity and to lead people toward truth and salvation until the day of judgement.

Islam is a religion aimed at reforming humanity. It aims to save humanity from falling into the valley of animalistic passion. Islam has come to straighten man's stature, to direct his attention to God, and to establish justice and equity in the world. It has come to end war for the purpose of looting, murder, and expansionism, to end these wars instigated by world leaders, who use others as their tools in the name of nationalism and such in order to devastate them.

The purpose of warfare, Islam says, is "so religion, all of it, is for Allah." Such religion, indeed, has come. Is it then appropriate to assert that our religion merely says, "There is a God and there is an Apostle?" And if anyone asks you how the world can be reformed, can you tell them that the masses of the world should not fight the tyrants of the world, and push away the hands of those who rape the dignity, life, and rights of humanity? Can you call this a true religion?

Nay! If it is a true religion, it must take up the sword and advance. To what point should it advance? To the point that they either submit and say, "We are Muslims," in which case they become your brothers, or they say, "We will retain our own religion and will carry on our own way of worship; but we will follow the public law of Islam." In this case they become dhimmi, the protected minority. In such case, they again have equal rights with Muslims.

An Arab cannot say, "Because the religion has come from my country, I am superior to the non-Arab." Once Muslim, there is no difference between Arab and non-Arab. The criterion for superiority is piety.¹ The more pious, the more superior. The law is universal. Whether the person in question is Chinese, Roman, black or white, as soon as he accepts Islam, he is a Muslim. Muslims have equal rights.

One cannot say, "Because I am Arab and I accepted Islam before you did, I am superior to you, a non-Arab whom Islam reached later." The deviations which originated from the beginning of the Islamic era

stemmed from this misperception. The Arab prided himself by claiming his priority and thus superiority in Islam. "Islam has come from our country, and thus we have right over others. " This caused them to violate the rights of Iranians and to push them aside. Thus the reaction manifested itself in a sort of nationalism.

The suspicions that contemporary representatives of foreigners are utilizing to divide the Muslims and to establish walls among them have been derived from that period. If only we had maintained that we are all brothers, all equals, all waging warfare to liberate the people of the world, as our forefathers did at the beginning of Islam!

Can there be a religion in the world which is a Godly faith and yet lacks principles of advancement and defense? We cannot even properly hypothesize such a religion. Now, whom shall one fight with? Against whom should we wage war? Jihad with whom? The first issue of jihad is that Islam has to declare its invitation.

Since Islam is a natural religion, the people of the world, the natural people, the ones who love freedom, the masses of people, will welcome it. The ruling classes and those whose profits lie in turning the masses away from the truth and from joining any truth will cause trouble. Consequently war will flare up. In this war the parasite social layer, which had hampered man's aptitude, will wither away.

Was this not the case in Iran? If we read two pages of history, we see that the masses of people welcomed the invitation of Islam. Only the military men, who were dependent on the treasures of the ruling class resisted the Muslims. The lower layers of society helped them, and showed them the way. There is plenty of evidence in history that the masses of Rome and Iran cooperated with the Muslims, saying,

Come, if your slogan is 'Allah u Akbar'(God is the Greatest), if you believe that all people are equal in God's sight, we are ready to help.

Thus the masses began fighting until this corrupt and rotten layer, which had been obliterating the talents, was removed. Suddenly the Iranian talent blossomed. Read two pages of history, one page before Islam and one page after! Suddenly there are many poets, writers, scholars, and orators! What a transformation took place in this country! These were the consequences of Islam which washed away that corrupt layer.

So, as long as there is an obstacle, Islam says it has to be removed. Truth must be declared to the people. If the other side attacks, war will take a defensive form. Otherwise, since it is a divine religion, it will be for the purpose of announcing risalat to the masses of the people. If the other side caused trouble and created obstacles, defense becomes necessary. If they attack a country under Islamic rule, all the Muslims must rise for defense. There are then two types of wars thus far, [wars of advancement and wars of defense].

There is, however, another jihad, which we can call internal. If a religious minority, which is under the protection of Islam, breaks the rules of protection [what is to be done?] In a country where the law is derived from Islam, its government is Islamic, the laws and regulations of Islam are implemented, and its taxpayers are Muslims, how does Islam deal with the Jewish and Christian minorities who live there?

Islam commands, "If they practice according to the regulations of the protected minority, they are, just like Muslims, free to worship according to their practice. They have to pay their jizya (poll-tax). In such case, their lives, belongings, and rights are to be protected. No one can intrude upon their property and their dignity, just as with Muslims.

But if they break the conditions of their protection, they are considered muharib (hostile). [War against them] is another type of jihad. Muslims have to fight with them, because they have rebelled against the law. One has to fight them within the boundaries of Islamic society, until they submit to truth and law, until they bow their heads down, until they properly come under Islamic government and law.

Now let us see what Islamic jurisprudence instructs concerning the limits of a protected minority. Please pay attention. We want to see to what limit Muslims have a duty to deal with them as protected minorities. This portion is in all our books on jurisprudence, and I have extracted it from Al-Mukhtasar al-Nafi' of Allamah Hilli. He lists five conditions of dhimmah (protection):

- (1) One has to pay the jizyah. In order for this rights to be protected and in order to be immune from the harm of Muslims, one has to pay a kind of poll-tax to the Muslim bayt al-mal (public treasury).
- (2) One must not harm the Muslims, must not have any sexual engagement with Muslim women, must not steal the property of Muslims, and must not cooperate with the enemies of Islam.
- (3) One must not be flagrant with prohibited things, such as intoxication, adultery, and incest.
- (4) One must not build new churches or temples and must not sound church bells. If they build a new church, it must be destroyed .
- (5) One must not build a building taller than the buildings of the Muslims. This would be disgraceful to the Muslims.

Who owns the fifteen story building at the corner of Lalehzar and Islambul? Who are the ones in this country cooperating with the enemies of Muslims? This is the law of Islam. This is the jurisprudence of Islam. I demand a confession from you yourselves. Who are the ones who steal the property of Muslims and help the Israelis and international Zionists? Who are the ones who take Muslim women out of the boundaries of chastity? Are they protected minorities? Or hostile ones?

An expert of jurisprudence must rule. I grant that such things, God willing, should not happen in our country. Taking into consideration that Muslims, and particularly Shi'ite scholars, have clarified these issues, if a government, we hypothesize that, God willing, such is the not the case in our country had

certain cooperative links with these, what is the duty of the Muslim people toward such government? I don't want to appear prejudiced. [But look,] on the one side they push Muslim masses into the deserts and rape the boundaries of Islam; and on the other hand, they take Muslim properties by different means in order to promote evil-doing, rather than employing them in productive spheres.

If a government opens an embassy for them without naming it as such, and then the authorities go there and have a great deal of fun, what is the duty of the people toward such a government? You determine the duty of the people. Should a government which does not submit to the laws of Islam rule over the Muslim masses? You tell me, your excellence! If everything I say is false, they should deny it. If it is true, it is not in accordance with Islamic ordinances.

Let me tell you, today Zionism is the second hide of colonialism. Colonialism is the hide of Zionism. Zionism has crept into the hide of Israel. Israel has taken a new form in our country, and has appeared as Baha'ism. In all the ministries and key of offices of the Shi'ite Islamic government, to which a great deal of hail and praise is due, and all of its authorities are protectors of Islam, [the Baha'is] have infiltrated everywhere.

Oh you overt and covert governmental agents who are present here. this is what Islam says. This is what religion says. I don't care if the reference is to the prime minister or someone above him, or someone under him. You ask why I say these things? You are bitter about it? Then stop me. If you do so, I will no longer have duties. But as long as I am here, I am obliged to preach the laws and regulations of Islam. I am nobody's employee. I am nobody's hireling. I don't want the governmental apparatus to inflate me with air or to give me a position. I am what I am, whether you like it or not.

Yesterday they made me angry. A group of Muslim youths assembled in Dezashib yesterday afternoon. Behold the buffoonery of the governmental agents. Tell me clearly and all at once, "Do not go on the pulpit and speak." This is why my nervous system is exhausted. Whatever I say, I myself am totally responsible for it.

Tomorrow you should not come and arrest the sponsor of this assembly, put him on trial, and take his life away. It has nothing to do with him. [Whatever you wish to say,] tell me. Tell me that I am a liar, that I speak against religion, that I am an agitator, that I have connections with foreign embassies. Tell me all you want. Open a file on me. The masses of people know what I am. Is this what you call an Islamic country? Are these the protectors of Islam?

In al-Mu'tamar al-Islami (the Islamic Conference), we could not raise our heads when they showed us the document of relations. Dear Minister of Agriculture, isn't there a Muslim advisor in this country? Don't we have engineers? If not, bring some from Switzerland or India or Germany. Why does the chief advisor of land distribution have to be a Zionist Jew?

From where shall I begin my criticism? I say these things and I have documents. You tell me I am a liar. I know about the party of a month ago. I know where it was held, and I know who were in charge of the

celebration. I even know their names. I know the advisors as well. They told me about it, and I said, "It doesn't concern us."

Then you see that if a certain fellow travels, there is so much noise in the newspapers about him. About Al-Mu'tamar al-Islami, they wrote not a single word. They mentioned nothing about what was said at the Islamic conference in Jerusalem. They said nothing about who was there and what was discussed. Whose fault is it except that of the agents of Israel, who are uprooting the tree of chastity of this country, who are destroying the economy and life of this country, who scatter the harvest of this country to the wind?

As Mr. Mutahari mentioned, the danger of these is greater than any other danger. Tonight I warn you, my Muslim brothers, scholars, and dignitaries, about this danger. You know your duty. The government has to deny all this and say that they are all lies and propaganda, so that we shall not be ashamed in front of the Muslims of the world.

Here is another phase of jihad. Thus far [we have mentioned] three kinds of war commanded by Islam: jihad with foreigners for the advancement of Islam, jihad for the defense of Islam and Islamic countries, and jihad so that a protected minority does not become hostile. Another type of jihad is waging war against the despots, so that no one can reign as a tyrant, as a taghut in a Muslim country. [...] It is the duty of every Muslim to invite the despots onto the straight path. In a benevolent manner, one must tell him,

Dictatorship and despotism is not good for you, for the country, or for the society. No dictator has gone to his grave with a whole head.

Yes, one has to advise him. If he does not accept, then one must arrange a militant stand against him.

Perhaps you Muslims will question why the scholars of Islam do not say these things concerning jihad. Why is the information we receive such as it is? We look at the beginning of Islam. We see that the commander of the believers, Ali, would personally participate in jihad. Not only did he approve of jihad, but he would personally help.

In some wars, he even sent his own sons. What happened later? Mu'awiyah took charge. Then Yazid. According to our sources concerning jihad, one condition is that the imam or sultan must be just. This is clearly indicated in our sources. Jihad cannot be for the sake of strengthening the government of a tyrant, sultan or imam. But is recommended for us to fight alongside a just sultan and to defend him.

How was the situation at the time of our Imams? True, that if the Muslims would go to fight, the Muslim empire would expand; but for what purpose? What good would it have been for Muslims to conquer China and the revenue to go to Abdul Malik ibn Marwan, Sulayman ibn Abdul Malik, or to an Abbasid Caliph? Has Islam desired such things? No! It is for this reason that the locution "Sultan adilun" ("a just sultan") has been repeated in our Islamic sources.

Such is the fact of the matter. Consider, for example, the narrations concerning Friday prayer. If Shi'ites had been instructed to say the prayer with others it would have meant the government was approved. It would have meant approval of the government of the usurping caliphs, such as Walid ibn Abdul Malik. It would have meant approval of the government of Mutawakkil.

It would have meant approval of the government of such and such an Umayyad child. Why? Because the Imam of Friday prayer was the representative of such governments. Friday prayer is not like other prayers. It is for this reason that (our imams) would decree that if one finds a just imam, one should say the prayer. Otherwise one should not.

This means that one should not approve of such governments. But if the Muslims themselves would assemble without any connection to the government, there is no reason that Friday prayer should not be considered wajib (obligatory). If we investigate the jurisprudential sources of Friday prayer, we see its similarity to the issue of jihad. Our Imams would question for what purpose one should wage jihad. For the purpose of having more booty? For the purpose of giving Harun al-Rashid more means of indulgence? So that instead of one thousand female singers, one might have five thousand? Such "Islam" is not desired.

When 'Umar ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz became caliph and wanted to conduct some reforms and to cut off the hands of thieves and looters, opposition arose. From somewhere in Turkistan, the governor wrote to him, "

People are converting to Islam, group by group, so they will not have to pay the jizyah. Please permit us to refuse their conversion, so that we can collect this tax from them." Umar ibn Abdul Aziz sent his agent there with the instruction to hit the head of the governor with a whip. He sent a letter saying, "God Almighty has appointed Muhammad, peace be upon him, as a guide to the people. He did not appoint him as a tax-collector."

It was written from Egypt, "The Coptics have been converting to Islam in order to avoid paying the poll-tax. Please let us circumcise them. The ones who refuse the circumcision should pay the poll-tax." The caliph sent his agent with a letter saying, "God Almighty appointed Muhammad as khatam (seal of the prophets); he did not appoint him as khatin (circumcisor)! You blankety-blank fellow! " This is the character that Muslim conquests had taken.

Because of this characteristic, Muslims were not even spared. One Muslim nation would be taken, stolen, and consumed. This is why our Imams emphasized imamun 'adilun or sultanun 'adilun. Some experts of jurisprudence have mistaken the term "imamun adilun" for "imamun masumin" (infallible imams). There is a difference between 'adalat (justice) and 'ismat (infallibility).

To be more precise, every ma'sum is adil. Every adil is not necessarily ma'sum. Thus if we see a just individual ruling Muslims, jihad is required on all of us. This is a topic in itself. I demand that great scholars and orators investigate this matter. In a true religion in which there are systematic laws and

regulations, one cannot do everything one chooses. They have drained our religion of its vitality.

Let me tell you an historical account I have just recalled. The fourth Imam, al-Sajjad, is going to Hajj pilgrimage. A fastidious fellow, Abbad Basri, after greeting him, states, "You left behind the difficult task of jihad and have undertaken the easy task of hajj, while the Almighty says,

Lo! Allah has brought from the believers their lives and their wealth because the Garden will be theirs: they shall fight in the way of God and will slay and be slain. It is a promise which is binding on Him in the Torah and the Gospel and the Qur'an. Who fulfills His covenant better than God? Rejoice then in your bargain that you have made, for that is the supreme triumph. (9: 111).

Our Imam politely asked him to complete the ayah, because indeed it does not end right there. Thus he recited:

(Triumphant) are those who turn repentant (to God), those who serve (Him), those who praise (Him), those who fast, those who bow down, those who fall prostrate (in worship), those who enjoin the right and forbid the wrong and those who keep the limits (ordained) by God And give glad tidings to the believers. (9: 112).

Thus the condition of jihad is that the mujahid (participant in jihad) must first be repentant for his sins. He must worship God and leave behind his material possessions. He must genuflect and prostrate himself unto God. He must enjoin good deeds and proscribe evil deeds. He must be a man who guards divine ordinances. The fourth Imam, peace be upon him, told Abbad, "If you see people with these characteristics, then jihad alongside them is superior to hajj."

Jihad with whom and for whom? Such was the question at the time of our Imams. One has to properly understand the logic of the language of these Imams concerning the issue of jihad. Did they really mean that Muslims must be cut off from their defensive power? Should they become lowly and helpless? Or did they mean that one should not get oneself killed without sufficient reason? When truth was distinguished from fallacy, when the person in charge of jihad was known and the inevitable result of jihad became clear, when intentions became pure and channeled fi sabil Allah, people had to rise for jihad.

As much as Islam has emphasized jihad and warfare, it has also valued human life. One is not to get himself killed in emotionalism due to someone's agitation or to those "ism's" that they make today: "Sir, come and defend your country on the basis of your national feeling." For what? So that a bunch of thieves and looters can ransack the land? Am I crazy? But if it is said, "Do it for God, do it for truth," I am ready. I will make my chest the shield. But for such and such materialism"? This is sheer madness. The wise men of the world, the most superior of whom are under the command of Islam, have to do such things for truth and for the way of God. These are the ways which have been established, and they will be with us forever.

The following are the final words of Husayn in his last days upon entering Karbala: (Abu Mikhnaf al-Tabari has narrated this from Uqbat ibn Abi al-Ayzarat, and Majlisi narrates it from al-Manaqib). 1 apologize for the length of my speech; I myself am tired, too. (I am not sure whether or not what I am about to narrate will be digestible for some people.) In one of the caravan stations, apparently that of Baydah, in which the army of Hurr [ibn Yazid al-Riyahi] was present, the Imam paused and spoke these words, "Oh you people, the Apostle of God, peace and greetings be upon him, said ..."

The Imam narrated from the Apostle of God, and such was the manner of the Imams when they spoke to an audience composed of non-Shi'ite elements as well as Shi'ites. If the audience were only composed of Shi'ites, they would speak on their own authority, without necessarily quoting the Apostle. Husayn continues:

Oh people! This is from the Apostle of God, who said, 'If anyone notices a ruthless sultan encroaching upon God's boundary, breaking His covenants, opposing the traditions of the Prophet, and behaving indecently among the people, one must stand in opposition to him, by action and word. Otherwise it is God's right to take him to his proper place.

One must first advise him, and if this fails, must use force. Whoever endorses such sultan's actions through silence, God will take him to hell as an accomplice. O people! Watch and beware that they (this government and its followers) have chosen obedience to Satan, have forsaken God's obedience, have manifested corruption, have abrogated God's ordinances, have appropriated public funds, have permitted what God has prohibited and have prohibited what God has permitted.

If all Muslims have chosen silence, I am the first responsible to alter this situation. You wrote to me and I received your letter and your message. Your representatives came to me. You made a covenant to help me and not to leave me alone. If you remain steadfast in your commitment and pact, you will have become mature. I am Husayn, son of Ali and Fatimah, the daughter of the Prophet. My life is with your lives and my family is with your families.

[By the last portion of this speech, Husayn means to say: "We do not see ourselves separate from you and expect no special treatment. We are with the people, and whatever is for the people is for us. Whatever is for us is for the people. We are all one. We do not desire to be exalted as rulers. We are one, like any other individual. Our family is like any other family." Wasn't this attitude shown in practice in the few years of Ali's government? If someone would see Ali on the street or in the market-place, they would not recognize him as being different from a common man. Was his house different from any typical house? Was his wife or daughter treated as special? This is the pattern we have to follow. This is the pattern of Islamic government and of the Islamic governor. This is not the rule of one person. This is the rule of God.

Radically speaking, there is no hukumat (government) in Islam. In al-hukmu illa li-Allah. (The rule belongs to no one except God.) Government belongs to God. the Apostle. and the Imam. After the

Imam, it is the mujtahid and then the masses of Muslims who are all the executive power of divine law. It is for this reason that Husayn says, "My life is with your lives, and my family is with your families." [He means to say:] "Do not think that I want to sacrifice others in order to save myself and my family."

The difference between Ali and Muawiyah was this indeed, that Muawiyah would sit behind the battle-fronts, leaning on pillows and sitting on soft cushions. In front of him were all sorts of edible delicacies. He would eat and laugh. The poor people had to go and confront the swords. He would tell them, "Go and get killed." Ali, on the other hand, would command for jihad, and he himself would be in the front row of the battle.

Let us imagine the battlefield of Siffin. We see Muawiyah sitting in his special place, heartily laughing at the people, thinking to himself, "How wonderfully am I playing with these folks. Using lies, emotionalism, and false propaganda, I am decimating them in order to rule over them." In contrast, Ali, when he commands in battle, is the first to step ahead. This is the meaning of "My life is with your life and my family is with your families."

Husayn continues,

If you have broken your covenant, if you feel regret for having made such a covenant with me, such is not unexpected from you. You did so with my father, my brother, and the son of my paternal uncle, Muslim. Poor is the one who relies on your covenant. If you do not fulfill your promise, you have denied yourself intellectual growth, but you have not harmed us.

'... So whoever breaks his oath, breaks it only to his own harm ...' (48: 10).

Soon God will make me needless of you, and he will place me in the vicinity of his mercy. In Bihar al-Anwar, it is narrated from Manaqib: "When Hurr ibn Yazid, by the command of Ubayd Allah, halted Husayn in the desert of Karbala, confronting him with one thousand horsemen, Husayn picked up pen and paper and wrote a message to the Shi'ite nobles and leaders of Kufah, (which I paraphrase): " This is a letter from Husayn ibn Ali to Sulayman ibn Surad, Musayyib ibn Najabah, Rifa'ah ibn Shaddad, Abdullah ibn Walin, and the other believers. He wrote to the Shi'ite leaders who were either in prison or in exile and were unable to be present to help him. Notice the locution "you know" in this letter, indicating the unquestionability of the issue. The important part of the] letter begins as follows:

You know the Apostle of God said, "If anyone notices a ruthless sultan encroaching upon God's boundary breaking his covenants, opposing the traditions of the Prophet, and behaving indecently among the people, one must stand in opposition to him, by action and word. Otherwise it is God's right to take him to his proper place.

Beware that they (this government and its followers) have chosen obedience to Satan, have forsaken obedience to God, have manifested corruption, have abrogated God's ordinances, have expropriated public funds, have permitted what God has prohibited and have prohibited what God has permitted. I am

primarily responsible to alter this situation. You wrote to me and I received your letter and your message. Your representatives came to me.

You made a covenant to help me and promised not to abandon me. If you remain steadfast in your commitment and pact, you will be shown to have become mature. I am Husayn, son of Ali and Fatimah, the daughter of the Prophet. My life is with your lives and my family is with your families. For you there is a pattern in me. If you do not[remain steadfast], and you break your covenant, and annul your acceptance of my leadership, by my soul, this would come as no surprise. You did the same to my father, to my brother, and to the son of my paternal uncle, Muslim ibn 'Aqil. The loser is the one who relies on you. You have ruined your own fortune.

"So whoever breaks his oath, breaks it only against his own self ..." (48: 10).

Perhaps Husayn quoted the entire sermon for the people of Kufah in this letter.

A discussion of jihad cannot be complete without an elaboration of the meaning of shahid, which is in itself a great topic. There is not much time left. In short, anyone who has understood this truth and divine goal and has stood for it, sacrificing his life, is called "shahid" in the terminology of the Qur'an and jurisprudence. The shahid is the one who has experienced the shuhud (vision) of truth.

The sacrifice of his own life is not based on illusion or agitation of his emotions. He has seen the truth and the goal. That is why he has chosen to wallow in the blood and the dust. Such a person does so with the intention of intimacy with God, not on the basis of fantasies and personal desires. He is above these worldly matters. He has understood the value of truth in a deserved way. This is why he annihilates himself, like a drop in the ocean of truth. This is the true meaning of the esoteric term "fana fi Allah" (self-annihilation in God). Fana is not what the Sufi does in the khanaqah, shouting "Hu! Hu!" and then imagining that he has reached God. The real meaning of "fana" is exhibited in the following poem:

From head to toe, God's light you'll radiate,
If in His cause, you self-annihilate!

If a person has reached the stage of readiness for self-annihilation through the vision of truth, for the sake of establishing truth, his title is shahid. Thus one cannot call everyone "shahid." If someone mistakenly or for a worldly and illusive cause gets killed, he has lost both worlds, this and the hereafter. A shahid is the one who understands religion, knows his God, and believes in the hereafter as well as in eternal life. He must realize the goal.

Then because he has seen the truth, he has no fear of death. Death is easy for him. Some Sufis argue that in prayer, one has to consider one's qutb, because the qutb is the manifestation (of God); and because man is a physical material being, he cannot perceive the absolute except via manifestations. This is a wrong notion.

Of course one can perceive the absolute. [He can do so gradually and by breaking the boundaries.] In our prayer, we recite: "You alone we worship; you alone we ask for help. Show us the straight path, the path of those whom you have given property? Power? [No.] Here is another ayah: to whom you have given blessings of such-and-such. The ones to whom you have given property? Power? (No.) Here is another ayah:

Whoever obeys God and the Messenger, they are among those whom God has favored, of the prophets, the saints, the martyrs, and the righteous. They are the best of company!" (4:69)

Al-shuhada (pl. of shahid), that is to say, the ones who die in the cause of God, have a great status. Salihun (the righteous) are those who follow them. There are altogether four groups upon whom God has completed his blessing. Those who obey God are one of these. Because they have experienced an internal revolution and have envisioned the truth, the shuhada, once martyred, have been guaranteed the sure gift of eternity by God.

Aren't you surprised? A group of people in one corner of the world assembled. The enemy did not allow their voices to be heard. They were besieged, killed, and then mutilated. No one remained from them to bring their news to the town. But the system of creation has recorded their names and their deeds. Isn't this a miracle?

Isn't this a vision of truth? Isn't it for us to ponder upon? [We even know] the names of their fathers, mothers, wives, and horses; [and we even know] their utterances. Everything has remained. From where has all this reached us and why have these men remained in history?

It is because through self-annihilation, they traveled to eternity. The supreme movement toward perfection is based upon this principle: vegetation is eaten by the lamb; it changes into flesh and bone. Man eats the flesh of the lamb; the flesh turns into thought, energy, and faith, a chain of sacrifice toward evolution. [As Rumi has put it]:

From the inanimate I died and I became vegetation,
From vegetation I died and I became an animal.
From an animal I died and I became human.
I am not afraid of death; death has never made me lesser.
Once more I shall die as a human being,
And I shall fly as an angel;
Then once again I shall fly from the angelic,
And I will become something unimaginable.
I will become nothing, nothing, because the harp
Tells me: "Unto Him we shall return."

[As if the companions of Husayn] had grown wings on the day of Ashura, as if their bodies had become too small for their spirits, one of them would beg Husayn to permit him to go to the battle field earlier

than the others. Another would beg for a similar honor, saying, "My chest has contracted due to worldly life." What kind of people were they?

They had wives, children, kin, and businesses as well. Zuhayr ibn Qayn al-Bijili was a man who, until a few days before, having been effected by the propaganda of the government of Muawiyah, was seeking blood-revenge for Uthman and had contempt for Ali and his family. Suddenly, on the way (to Karbala) he made a decision to join the camp of Husayn. What wonderful words were exchanged between them! What did he say and what did he hear? It was as if lightning destroyed all his worldly attachments. One hour ago Zuhayr had cows, lambs, and cattle. He was attached to his tribe and to his property. Now he has realized himself. He has experienced transfiguration.

Why are we all so depressed? Because we don't have any goal in life; because we have no goal in our life, we think that what counts is money and power obtained by any means. Because we don't get what we want, we are bitter. We are depressed. The businessman or bueaurocrat goes home in the afternoon so shattered and depressed that he does not wish to talk to his family. Why? Because he has not achieved what he had planned to do. What did he want?

If he is a military man, he is depressed because he did not receive the promotion that his colleagues did. If he is a businessman, he is depressed because his income is not as great as he had expected. The economy is bad and everyone is depressed ! We are depressed because we are confined to this base world. The shahid is the one who operates above this lowly world. The believer is the same. Zuhayr was depressed because he was a skeptic. He did not know the meaning of life. He didn't know who right, Ali or Muawiyah. He was under an illusion.

Worldly wishes and attachments had surrounded him. With a sudden flash of lightning, the illusion went away. The worldly attachments were cut off and he became a shahid even before he became a martyr. Life became easy for him. Once he had envisioned the truth, nothing else was important. Life and death were the same to him. He told his wife, Bint Amrw, "Farewell. I am finished. You go and take care of the camels, cattle, and lambs. I give everything to you. I have found what I wanted."

When Truth revealed itself, nothing else had any value. It was the night before Ashura. Then there came the morning of Ashura, and then the afternoon. Blood was dripping from his body, and he was very thirsty. He came to say 'farewell' to Husayn by tapping on his shoulder and saying, "May my life be sacrificed for you, you guided one, you guide. You are my savior. You are my liberator. You freed me from this deceptive world." While blood was pouring out of his wounds, he said, "I am no longer worried." His wife is becoming a widow, his children orphans, and he says, "I am no longer worried." This is power! Then he chants:

Today I shall meet your grandfather, And the wonderful Ali, with whom God was pleased.

[He is saying,] "The distance between me and them will vanish as soon as my soul leaves my body." He is so certain about the eternity of truth and the secret of humanity. [He says], "I am going to meet your

brother and your father." Then he falls in front of Husayn and dies. It is famous that his wife went to Kufah, waiting for her husband to return.

The news reached her that they had all been killed with Husayn. She gave a shroud to her slave and ordered him to go and bury her husband. The slave came back without having done so. When he was asked, he replied that he had been unable to do it because he saw the bodies of the children of the Prophet mutilated in the middle of the sand and the blood of the warm desert of Karbala.

There is no change nor power except by God, the Sublime, the Great. "God is sufficient for us! Most excellent is He in whom we trust!" (3: 173).

God Almighty, we ask You by your Great and Sublime Name, ALLAH.

God Almighty, lighten our hearts with the light of faith and truth. Strengthen our steps in the way of the good of the Muslim nations. Uproot the wicked tree of suspicion from among the Muslims. God Almighty, guide us to the straight path. Lord, guide our power to the path of happiness and prosperity. God Almighty, forgive our deceased ones.

Grant assistance and success to anyone who defends the dignity of the Muslims by any means and supports the Muslims. Those who by any means commit treason against the Muslims and the Muslim world, may the Almighty cleanse the world of their existence.

Oh Lord, grant triumph to our Algerian Muslim brothers and save them from the claws of oppression of these blood-thirsty and criminal pseudo-civilized ones. Lord, awaken the Muslim world, particularly this Islamic country. Fortify our ranks. God Almighty, Lord, grant us death as pure Muslims. Make assemblies such as this one a means for good in this world and in the hereafter.

May the peace, mercy, and blessings of Allah be upon you all.

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