

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

IS<sub>HALL</sub> LOVE ALL M<sub>ANKIND</sub>.



*The Light*

June  
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### **Contents**

<a href="#">THE CALL OF THE MESSIAH</a>	2
<a href="#">Eid ul Fitr Khutba by Dr Zahid Aziz</a>	3
<a href="#">Islam's Holy Relics in Istanbul</a>	7
<a href="#">Jihad - Islam and Judaism by Amjed Jaaved</a>	9

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We welcome all scholarly contributions.

## The Call of the Messiah

by **Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad**



**The Promised Messiah and Mahdi**

(Editor's note: Any quotations from the Quran are translated from the author's explanations and are not literal translations of the verse quoted. This extract is from the English translation of a lecture he delivered in 1904 in Lahore, now in Pakistan, taken from the Lahore Ahmad-iyya publication 'Essence of Islam', p. 103 – 106 where the Promised Messiah puts forward arguments and signs about his claim.)

When Allah Almighty shows us new miracles, it helps to restore our belief in the previous miracles, and it is as if the miracles of our blessed Prophet are being revived for us, as if they are rising from the grave. The stories of the past are being proven as facts. Almighty God is reviving the practice of miracles, so that those who are mired in doubts may see the face of certainty. He who accepts me, accepts anew the prophets and their miracles, and he who rejects me, loses even the tottering faith he had before, which was only a shadow of the reality. I am like a looking glass of the Divine image. He who comes to me and accepts me shall see afresh the God who to others, is only imperfectly known through their lifeless traditional beliefs. I believe in the True God, who is not known to those who reject me. I declare in truth and sincerity that what they believe in, is not God, but an idol created from their own imagination. This is the reason why their idols cannot assist them or strengthen them, or bring about any pure transformation in their lives, or effect any miracle, or show a heavenly sign in their support.

It should also be borne in mind that any doubt and incredulity which is shown regarding the revelation of God which is granted to me is absurd. It is nonsensical to say that instead of revelation, this may simply be a delusion. Almighty God is not weak in the manifestation of His powers. He adopts supernatural methods to make the matter certain that people recognize

the word of God as clearly as they see the sun. Do the modern skeptics think that God had the power to take seekers after truth to the fountain of certainty through revelation, from Adam all the way to our own Holy Prophet, by the manifestations of His mighty hand, but that now he is destitute of His power? It cannot be possible that while having that power, God has intentionally withheld His gracious gift from this unfortunate generation and forgotten the prayers that He himself taught in the Fatihah:

“O God, guide us on the right path, the path of those on whom have been Thy favors and blessings, thus making us their heirs.”

To answer the question often put forward by skeptics: How are you certain that the words put in your mouth are really and actually the word of God, and how do you know that they are not delusions or Satanic suggestions? I give the following answer: The word which is revealed to me comes with a majesty, affords a bliss, and makes an impression upon my soul. It enters into my heart with the firmness of an iron stake and dispels every darkness. With its entrance I feel an unalloyed bliss. Ah! That I had the power to describe it!

But every enjoyment, whether spiritual or physical, cannot be adequately described in words and represented exactly as one feels it. A person sees a beloved object and is enchanted with its beauty, but he cannot describe the pleasure which he describes from its sight. In the same way, there is an indescribable bliss which one enjoys in the sight as well as in the Word of God, who is the Author of all existence and the Cause of all causes. His word transports a person into a paradise of bliss in exactly the same manner as His sight does. But if a person hears a voice, or certain words are put into his mouth, and he has doubts as to their Divine origin, the voice and the words are certainly a delusion or a satanic suggestion. For the power and majesty with which the word of God enters the heart, the blessings that accompany it, the light which is shed, the impression that it makes, the bliss it affords, the Divine glory and splendour it imparts to the receptacle of the revelation, determine it to a certainty that it is from God.

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*I Shall Love All Mankind.*

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God's revelation has not a single point of resemblance with the lifeless voices which proceed from Satanic suggestions or delusions. It has an animation, a power, a magnetism; it has the characteristic of producing certainty, it has a light, it has a supernatural glory, it has with it angels that exercise control over every particle of the body, and besides, it is accompanied with numerous extraordinary signs manifesting the power of God. It is impossible that the receptacle of such revelation should ever have any misgivings as to its Divine origin. To him a doubt is as fatal as unbelief. Such a revelation with all its characteristics is the greatest of miracles a person could show, even if he could work no other miracles. (Return to contents)

***Eid-ul-Fitr Khutbah***  
**at Lahore Ahmadiyya**  
**Centre, Darus Salaam,**  
**London,**

**Wednesday, 5 June 2019**

**by Dr Zahid Aziz**



After reciting the preliminaries, I now read the following verse of the Holy Quran:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْإِبِلَةِ قُلْ بِيَ مَوَاقِيتُ لِلنَّاسِ وَالْحَجِّ وَالْبَيْتِ  
 الْبَرِّ بَانَ تَأْتُوا النَّبُوتَ مِنْ ظُهُورِيَا وَ لِكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ انْفَى وَ  
 آتُوا النَّبُوتَ مِنْ أَوْبَاهَا وَ انْفُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

“They ask you about the new moons. Say: They are times appointed for people, and (for) the pilgrimage. And it is not righteousness that you enter houses by their backs, but he is righteous who keeps his duty. And go into houses by their doors; and keep your duty to Allah, that you may be successful.” (2:189)

This verse of the Quran occurs immediately after the verses relating to fasting in Ramadan. And before the beginning of Ramadan and before its end, Muslims do indeed widely ask “about the new moons”. Here we are told that these new moons are a way of determining time for people, and determining also the time of the Pilgrimage.

The words which follow are: “And it is not righteousness that you enter houses by their backs, but he is righteous who keeps his duty. And go into houses by their doors”. An explanation of these given is that there was a superstitious custom among pre-Islamic Arabs that if one of them went out of his house for some important purpose and failed to achieve it, then when he returned home he would not enter it through the door, but by going around the back, jumping over the back wall or through a window at the back, and kept on doing it for some time. There were other occasions as well when a person would not enter his house by its door.

Commentators of the Quran have always realised that this statement must have some general meaning for Muslims as well, rather than being only directed against a pre-Islamic Arab superstition which has no meaning for Muslims. So they say that entering your house stands for how you undertake some task or duty, especially a religious duty which you undertake to attain righteousness. This verse teaches that whatever aim you are trying to achieve, you should use the proper way that is provided for achieving it, and not try to go around the proper way.

But the question remains: what is the connection of this with new moons? Modern circumstances, of the past twenty or thirty years, provide a connection. There are Muslim countries, and religious authorities, who believe that righteousness, or adhering to Islam, requires that to start and end the month of Ramadan the new moon must be sighted by some person with his eyes. There is nothing wrong or objectionable in this. But what is being done, again and again, is that these authorities determine and decide *many days before* when the new month should begin. But they pretend to wait till the evening before and then announce that as the new moon has been sighted, the new month will begin on the next day. They make that announcement regardless of whether anyone sighted the moon or not and even when it was impossible to any person to have sighted it.

In this case, the meaning of entering the

house by its door means that if you have declared a standard or method as the one to use then you should apply the very same! Entering it by the back means that you circumvent your own established standard, your own door. The alternative is to explain to people the standard you are *really* applying, why you are adopting this method, and its benefits and convenience. In other words, you educate people. Entering by the back is when circumstances force you to use a new method, but you pretend before people that you are still following what they believe to be the Islamic method. This pretence is out of fear of antagonising people or because you think that reforming people is too hard.

The next point I wish to deal with is that while fasting in Ramadan is covered in detail in the Quran, there is no mention whatsoever in the Quran of Eid-ul-Fitr or celebrating after the end of Ramadan. The Quran in verses 2:183 to 188 explains the purpose of fasting, which month to fast in, that the fast is a daily fast from dawn to sunset, who is allowed to not fast in Ramadan and what they should do instead of fasting, the close connection of fasting with prayer, the practice of *i'tikaf*, and how violating the rights of other people is against the spirit of fasting. But the Quran never at all mentions any aspect of Eid whatsoever, or even its existence!

Muslims learnt about Eid-ul-Fitr; and what to do on it, from the practice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. He established this festival and its main features, and Muslims acted accordingly in his lifetime and afterwards. Then, a couple of centuries later, when Muslim scholars compiled books of his sayings and practices, they included in them details of Eid-ul-Fitr as taught by the Holy Prophet. This shows that the religion of Islam is based not only on the Quran but also on the practice of the Holy Prophet. Some Muslims say that they believe only in the Quran and that nothing outside it can be an obligatory part of the teachings of Islam. Just think that this means that they have to undergo all the rigours of fasting for a month, but they cannot celebrate after it! Whether there are any such Muslims who *actually* refuse to celebrate Eid because it is not in the Quran, I don't know, but

if there are any, they must be quite miserable today. But there are many who glibly say: "We only believe in the Quran", without thinking of its consequences.

Could it be that Allah did not mention Eid in the Quran, but established it through the Holy Prophet, because He wanted to point out, in a way that could not be denied by anyone, that the practice of the Holy Prophet is an essential constituent of the religion of Islam.

It is clearly stated in the Quran that the religion of Islam is not only derived from the Quran but also from the practice, sayings, work and example of the Holy Prophet. His mission for his followers is described as follows:

بِوَالَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ  
وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ

That is to say, he "recites to them (his people) His messages and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom" (62:2).

"Recites to them His messages" is to deliver the revelation of the Quran to people. "Purifies them" refers to the purity attained by his Companions merely by keeping company with him. This continues even after him by Muslims keeping the company of the righteous of their community in all ages. A prophet or a holy man or saint in Islam radiates a purifying influence around him by his spiritual power, and this influence penetrates the hearts of those around him. Then the Holy Prophet's function is also said to be to teach his followers "the Book and the Wisdom". This means that he explains to them the teachings of the Quran, shows them how to act on it in practice and makes them understand the wisdom underlying it. And that knowledge too, which he imparted to his followers, was intimated to the Holy Prophet by Allah through a form of Divine inspiration. For example, the words of the call to prayer, the *Azan*, and the *Iqamah*, are not in the Quran, but were revealed to the Holy Prophet in a dream, and a similar dream was seen by two of his Companions, and all of them saw it independently of one another.

The Quran tells Muslims to obey Allah *and* the Messenger in more than twenty verses in words such as *أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَ أَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ* . It also says: “Whoever obeys the Messenger, he indeed obeys Allah” (4:80), and “obey the Messenger, so that mercy may be shown to you” (24:56). We all know the famous verse, 33:21, that the Messenger of Allah is an excellent exemplar for all Muslims. The Holy Prophet was also told by Allah to declare to people: “If you love Allah, follow me: Allah will love you, and grant you protection from your sins” (3:31).

So, in matters of worship especially, the Holy Prophet’s example and illustration, apart from his words, are all a part and parcel of Islam and incumbent on Muslims to follow. And Muslims from the beginning of Islam have been following his example in practice for all to see, and passing them down to the next generation. Of course, there are other matters in which the Holy Prophet, when he did something, he acted according to his personal inclination or because of the circumstances of his time and country. Those are not binding on us, but still have lessons for us.

Our Eid is not mentioned in the Quran. But an Eid is mentioned in the Quran which was called for by Jesus. The Quran relates its story as follows:

“When the disciples said: Jesus, son of Mary, is your Lord able to send down food to us from heaven? He said: Keep your duty to Allah if you are believers. They said: We desire to eat of it, and that our hearts should be satisfied, and that we may know that you have indeed spoken truth to us, and that we may be witnesses of it.” (5:112–113)

They wanted Jesus to get God to supply them miraculously with food from heaven. Then they would be satisfied that he was indeed a true one sent by God.

It seems to me that this request for food from heaven has a parallel with the Muslims sitting expecting a Messiah and a Mahdi sent by God to come to them, who, as they believe, will

make them rulers of the earth and bring them great wealth of the world. Muslims who rejected Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad have always argued that if he was the true Messiah and Mahdi he would have restored their worldly rule. If he brought to them the fruits of political power, they would eat those fruits and their hearts would be satisfied that he was the true Messiah and Mahdi. But his message to them was also as Jesus here told them: “Keep your duty to Allah if you are believers.” That is the only way to success.

The problem here is that if God were to send them food in a miraculous way, they would be satisfied for a while that Jesus is true, but then after some time they would ask for the same miracle again! They would say, if God could do it once, He can do it again, and again. Also, if God gave those people this sign through Jesus, what happens after Jesus is gone? It won’t serve as a sign to any future generation who didn’t see that sign. That is why Jesus told them: “Keep your duty to Allah if you are believers.” That’s the only way to become closer to God, by acting on His commandments. The story in the Quran continues:

“Jesus, son of Mary, said: O Allah, our Lord, send down to us food from heaven which should be to us an ever-recurring happiness (an Eid) to the first of us and the last of us, and a sign from You, and give us sustenance and You are the Best of the sustainers.” (5:114)

Although Jesus was praying on his followers’ insistence, for what food was he praying? According to the Gospels, once some people pursued Jesus in the hope that he would show the miracle of bringing them food miraculously, but he told them: “Do not labour for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life” (John, 6:27). When Jesus was once offered food to eat, he replied: “My food is to do the will of Him Who sent me, and to accomplish His work” (John, 4:34). Then there is his famous saying: “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.” (Matthew, 4:4)

In view of this, Jesus could *not* have been praying for physical food for his followers, especially as according to the Quran, he had replied to his followers' request by saying: "Keep your duty to Allah if you are believers." Also he prays that the food becomes a permanent festival, or Eid, for his followers of all times. So it can't be for physical food appearing by miracle till the end of the world. The reply of God as given in the Quran was as follows:

"Surely I will send it down to you, but whoever disbelieves (or is ungrateful) afterwards from among you, I will punish him with a punishment with which I will not punish anyone among the nations." (5:115)

Although Jesus had only spiritual food in mind in his prayer, actual history shows that God granted his followers material prosperity as well. But the condition imposed by God is that if they now don't live up to their claim that if they saw this sign they would believe in God, then a great punishment would befall them.

The Lord's prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread", the most important prayer of the Christian religion, is a permanent reminder of this incident from the Quran. His followers are repeating this prayer of Jesus as taught to them in the Gospels. In the above verse of the Quran, God is replying to this prayer, saying: I will give you your daily bread in unimaginable, abundant measure; but now you have to take my spiritual bread as well, otherwise, you are ungrateful, and if you are happy only with the physical bread, this will lead to your destruction like no one else faced destruction in history before.

So it is the duty of Muslims, especially in the stage in history when Christian nations, or nations of Christian origin, have more than the bread they need, to present to them the spiritual bread that is in the Quran. Today we ourselves are celebrating an Eid to commemorate that during Ramadan we have been spiritually nourished by the Quran which is the true food from heaven that God has sent us.

Finally, during the month of Ramadan, we learn how to avoid wrongdoing and to do good

by fasting, that is, by *not* eating and drinking. But according to the Quran we can also learn the same lessons by eating and drinking. A verse in the Quran says:

يَأْتِيَا النَّاسَ كُلًّا مِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا ۗ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا  
خَطْوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ ۗ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ ﴿١٦٨﴾

"O people, eat the lawful and good things from what is in the earth, and do not follow the footsteps of the devil." (2:168)

Can we avoid following the footsteps of the devil by carrying out this command in the *physical and literal sense* of eating lawful and good things? If someone only consumed vegetarian or vegan food brought from an organic farm, they can be sure that it was both "lawful", that is *halal*, and of course "good" (*tayyib*) in the sense of being good for you. But will that guard them against following the footsteps of the devil? This clearly shows that by eating "the lawful and good things" here is really meant lawful and good *behaviour*. Only then can we resist the devil. The word *tayyib* used here for "good", although applied mostly to good things of various kinds in the Quran, is also applied to good humans. For example, it says in 24:26:

وَ الطَّيِّبَاتُ لِلطَّيِّبِينَ وَ الطَّيِّبُونَ لِلطَّيِّبَاتِ

Some translate this as meaning "good women are for good men, and good men are for good women", and could also mean "good deeds are for good people, and good people are for good deeds". The Quran also speaks of a *tayyib* life:

"Whoever does good, whether male or female, and is a believer, We shall certainly make him live a good life *طَيِّبَةً حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً* and We shall certainly give them their reward for the best of what they did." (16:97)

And it speaks of those who keep their duty as dying in a *tayyib* state *طَيِّبِينَ* *طَيِّبِينَ* *طَيِّبِينَ* (16:32).

Therefore, after resuming eating, if our behaviour corresponds to how we should be eating, that is to say, we lead lives of *lawful and good, halal and tayyib*, behaviour, then we will continue to resist the devil and our eating will be as spiritually beneficial as refraining from

eating during Ramadan. ([Return to contents](#))

## Why did Ottoman sultans safeguard Islam's holy relics in Istanbul?

From: <https://tinyurl.com/Source-TRTWORLD>

ISTANBUL — On a recent Ramadan day, as the hot sun rays fell over Istanbul's Topkapi Palace, a large number of local and foreign tourists flocked to the historic building where the Ottoman sultans resided from the conquest of Istanbul in 1453 until the mid-19th Century.

After visiting the different columns of the palace, where the antique series of watches, cutlery and dinner sets are exhibited, many tourists moved further to stand in a long queue outside what is called the Chamber of the Holy Relics. The space houses some of the most precious relics of Islam, from the Holy Mantle of Prophet Muhammad, whom Muslims consider the last messenger of God and honour him by adding the term 'peace be upon him', to swords that are believed to be used by him and his four companions: Abu Bakr, Umar ibn al Khattab, Uthman ibn Affan, Ali ibn Abi Talib.

The museum also features other materials believed to be used by prophets such as Moses, Abraham, Joseph and David.

Although many tourists look at the relics with awe and admiration, they probably miss another important historic fact — that the white-washed building where they stood has served as both the house and the office of the Ottoman sultans. They called this intimate space Has Oda, which means private room, where they discussed the most sensitive policies and issues.

"[Ottoman sultans] wanted to keep the Holy Relics close to themselves because they thought that the location of the relics [in the Topkapi Palace] would have qualified Istanbul as the centre of the Islamic world," said Mustafa Sabri Kucukasci, President of the Topkapi Palace Mu-

seum, who is also a professor of History of Middle Ages at the Marmara University.

"The Prophet's cloak, which is called the Holy Mantle, has been used as a sign of [Muslim] caliphate since the Umayyads," Kucukasci told TRT World.

The Umayyads were a Muslim Arab dynasty in the 7th Century, emerging from the civil war between the fourth Islamic caliph and Prophet Muhammad's son-in-law Ali ibn Abi Talib and Muawiya ibn Abi Sufyan, the founder of Umayyad dynasty. The Umayyad dynasty ruled for 89 years until it was toppled by Abbasids, another Muslim-majority Arab dynasty.

The Ottoman sultans inherited the treasured relics in different times and eras. It was when Sultan Selim I conquered much of the Middle East in 1517 from the Mamluks, that many Islamic relics were brought to Istanbul from the Arab world.

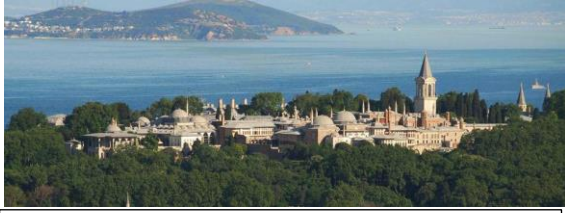
As the Ottoman Empire spread across what is modern day Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan and the Arabian Peninsula, Sultan Selim I not only defeated the Mamluks but also claimed the caliphate from them, bringing most of the Holy Relics from Cairo to Istanbul.

"Since Selim I, the Ottomans had given a great deal of importance to collect the goods of the Prophet in Istanbul as a result of their commitment and loyalty to him. This collection effort had continued even after Selim I, bringing more [holy relics to the city]," said Kucukasci, who has extensively researched the subject, writing several comprehensive articles.

The Privy Room becomes the House of Caliph

The decision to safeguard the relics in Has Oda, or private room, — arguably the most secure compound in the palace — carries a symbolic weight.

In the Has Oda Ottoman sultans ascended to the throne taking the oath of allegiance (*biat*). In the Has Oda they also slept and were ritually



Ottoman sultans had collected the most precious items of Islamic heritage, placing them inside Topkapi Palace, the headquarters of the empire, in Istanbul. (Credit: Topkapi Palace Museum / TRTWorld)

bathed after they passed away. The space was first built by Mehmed II, the conqueror of Istanbul.

Since Mehmed II, the building has been restored several times. By the time Selim I brought the holy relics, the imperial house unexpectedly turned into a Muslim shrine of sorts, where sultans and their officialdom held ceremonies to kiss the Prophet's cloak, while paying their respect to other relics to exhibit their faith in Islam.

"As a result, the Ottoman capital earned a reputation of being the political and religious centre of the Islamic world," Kucukasci wrote in one of his articles.

In the 17th Century, the palace's head architect, Mustafa Safi, called Has Oda Beytu'l-hilafe, which means the House of Caliphate, as he was listing the holy relics located in the chamber, defining "the space as visualisation of the Ottoman caliphate claim," according to Kucukasci.

Ahmet Cevdet Pasha, one of the most prominent Ottoman statesmen and jurists in the late 19th Century, argued that the Abbasid caliphate had lost grip of much of the Islamic world as the Mamluks used them as an instrument to gain legitimacy in the Islamic world.

According to Pasha, it was the Ottoman leadership that restored the Islamic order after Selim I defeated the Mamluks and took the Caliphate from the Abbasids.

"Joining the sultanate with the caliphate, the Ottoman state reached a higher level, which

it deserved. With this union a strengthened Nation of Islam found its direction," Cevdet Pasha said in his writings.

The Ottoman leadership had a special interest for the holy relics and their fascination toward them went beyond Prophet Muhammad's belongings. "There is a culture of trust [about these relics]. There have also been goods believed to belong to other past prophets," Kucukasci said.

Among 600 sacred items, the chamber also has relics that are believed to be Prophet Abraham's pan, Moses's staff and Joseph's turban.

In the early 19th century, Sultan Mahmud II decided to leave Has Oda and dedicate the space exclusively to the holy relics. His son Abdulmecid I, who staunchly pursued policies of modernising the Ottoman state, left the Topkapi Palace in 1856 and moved into the newly built Dolmabahce Palace, a French neo-baroque style architecture along the Bosphorus strait.

By 1918, when the Ottoman Empire was on the brink of falling apart, one of its generals Fahrettin Pasha exhibited remarkable defiance.

As the commander of the Ottoman forces in the holy city of Medina, Pasha refused to surrender before the allied forces, brushing aside the orders of his superiors.



The lock and key of Kaaba, which is the most sacred site according to Islam, regarded as the House of Allah by Muslims. (Credit: Topkapi Palace Museum / TRTWorld)



"Soldiers! I appeal to you in the name of the Prophet, my witness. I command you to defend him and his city to the last cartridge and the last breath, irrespective of the strength of the enemy. May Allah help us, and may the prayers of Muhammad be with us," he famously said to his soldiers during the siege of Medina.

In January 1919, Pasha was arrested by his own officers on the grounds of disobeying the orders from Istanbul, 72 days after the Ottoman Empire's armistice agreement with the Allied forces.

But during the standoff, Pasha rescued many significant holy relics and transported them to Topkapi Palace in Istanbul. ([Return to contents](#))

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## Holy Wars Under Islam and Judaism

*By Amjed Jaaved*

(Note: Mr. Amjed Jaaved has been contributing free-lance for over five decades. His contributions stand published in the leading dailies at home and abroad. He is author of seven e-books. He has experience of serving Pakistan government for 39 years. He holds degrees in economics, business administration, and law. And specialises on India, Kashmir, and peripheral states. [Link to article.](#))

The media has, by and large, ignored the Koota Yuddha undercurrent in India's history. But, it has given too much of negative publicity to Islamic Jihad. For one thing, Jihad (vide al-Quran 25: 52) does not mean 'Holy War'. jihad fi sabil l'illah, as described in the Qur'an. It can mean argumentation, writings, or financial help and may include actual fighting. But, proper term for 'fighting' is Qital.

The non-Muslim writers not only mis-translate the word Jihad for Qital, but also distort the true meaning of Quranic texts by quoting them out of context with Ahadith or peculiar situations to which they relate. [Note: See comment on this by *The Light* at the end of this article.]

They present a jaundiced microscopic view of Islam, equating Jihad with terrorism. They meticulously avoid discussion of conduct of an Islamic state under the Shariah. Unfortunately, the books distorting Islamic teachings are the best sellers. For instance, the preacher on internationally-syndicated radio broadcast 'Grace to You', Dr John MacArthur in his *Terrorism, Jihad, and the Bible* says, [Page 32] 'Muslim regard war as a legitimate means of turning people to their religion. A war whose purpose is to bring infidels into submission under Islam is considered jihad, a holy war. Mohammed himself justified and participated in killing and robbery against infidels in the name of Allah. "Convert or die" has always been the most persuasive tool in the Islamic "missionary's" arsenal. Islam has always conquered by the sword. And in medieval times, converted virtually all of the Middle East by force'. [Pages 38-43] 'Islamic fundamentalists regard all non-Muslims, including Christians, to be infidels. A verse in the Koran (9:5) authorizes the faithful to "slay the idolaters wherever you find them'. [Page 46...] 'The Koran itself is filled with teachings that promote violence and advocate the spread of Islam by force. ... Islam is the main persecutor of Christians all over the world. Thousands of Christians are dying under Islamic persecution, especially in the Middle East, Africa, Indonesia, and other parts of Asia'.

Contrary to what the non-Muslim writers in their prurient writings suggest, Islam does not support unbridled *Jihad* or *Qital*. Quran, Ahadith and conduct of the Pious Caliphs explains types of wars, reasons for waging them, treatment of POW, civilians, women and children, treaties, etc. Examples:

**(a) Tolerance of Other Religions.** The Quran gives a clear instruction that there is no compulsion in religion (2: 256). It states that people will remain different (11: 118), they will always have different religions and ways and this is an unalterable fact (5:48). God tells the Prophet that most people will not believe 'even if you are eager that they should' (12: 103). Marriages with Ahl al Kitab are valid.

**(b) War to be avoided.** Muslims think of

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*I Shall Love All Mankind.*

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war not as something to be desired or sought after. The Quran (8: 61) says: "And if they incline to peace, incline thou also to it, and trust in God. And again: "So do not falter and invite to peace when ye are the uppermost (Qur'an 47:35). A Hadith of the Prophet goes: "Do not be eager to meet the enemy but ask God for safety. Yet if you meet them, persevere and have patience; and know that Paradise is under the shadows of swords (Bukhari 56:112, 156:94: 8 Sahih of Muslim, V 143 Abu Dawood). On another occasion, the Prophet. Said: "Do not be eager to meet the enemy, perhaps you may be put to test by them, but rather say: O God! Suffice for us, and keep their might away from us! (Ibn-Qutaibah, Uyunul Akhbar, 1, 107, Chapter. Kitab al-Harb) `Wars are accidents among the happenings of the time, just like sicknesses, in contrast to peace and security, which resemble health for bodies. So it is necessary to preserve health by means of political action, and to shun sickness by means of warlike action, and to busy one's self in preserving health' (Hasan-ibn-Abdallah, Athar ul Awwal fi Tarteebud Dawwal, compiled in 708 Hijri).

**Jihad, not an Individual, but a General Duty.** The Jihad is not considered as a personal duty (*Farz Ayn*) to be observed by each and every individual (Qur'an, 9: 122), but only a general duty (*Farz Kafaya*) which, if accomplished by a sufficient number, the rest will no more be charged with the neglect of that duty, – this fact renders the administration of Jihad entirely in the hands of the government. The practice of the Prophet also shows that either he himself organized the expeditions or delegated his authority to responsible governors or tribal chieftains. (Ibn-Hisham, p. 954.)

Who can call for Jihad? The word jihad means struggle, and in this sense it is an obligation on every Muslim at all times, inwardly and outwardly to struggle against evil.

Who should be Fought? When fighting takes place the object of the fighting is clearly defined: Fight in the way of God those who fight against you, but do not transgress. God does not love the transgressor. Although the Prophet did attempt to use catapults against the town of Ta'if,

it was only to break down the fortifications, not to bombard the inhabitants.

**Cessation of Hostilities and Making Treaties.** Once the hostility of the enemy ceases, the Muslims must stop fighting. (2: 191-93, 8: 39): Are the Muslims allowed to Co-operate with Non-Muslims? Co-operate in what is good and pious and do not co-operate in what is sinful and aggression (5:2). God does not forbid you from being kind and equitable to those who have neither made war on you on account of your religion nor driven you from your homes. God loves those who are equitable (60:8). Other relevant texts: (49: 9), (4:114).

Status of Non-Muslims under Islamic Rule. Islam provides for safety for life property and religion to whosoever wishes to stay in the conquered land, subject to payment of *Jizya*, an exemption tax. Those paying *Jizya* enjoy state's protection and are exempt from military service or payment of Zakat.

Safe conduct is ensured for anyone wishing to leave the conquered land. The subjugated people have the right to become full-ledged members of Muslim community.

*Jizyah* was not akin to poll tax, and it was not payable by the old, poor, women, or children. It was initially applied to Christians and Jews who were recognized as 'People of the Book' in the Quran. But, later, it was extended to other religions which had books, like the Zoroastrians (under Caliph Umer), and the Hindu, under the Moghul rule. The non-Muslim were not forced to convert to Islam.

Prisoners of War. Islamic history is full of examples of the POW being released in exchange or even gratuitously.

"O Prophet! Tell the captives you have, 'if Allah knows goodness in your heart, He will give you better rewards than have been taken from you and forgive you. He is forgiving, merciful.' And if they intend to be treacherous to you, they have been treacherous to Allah in the past and He has put them into your hands." (8: 70-1).

**Acts Forbidden as regards Enemy Person or Property.** Islamic teachings expound such acts in detail (Sahih of Muslim VI, 72, Mabsut of Sarakhsy X, 64, 6, 69, 131, Sharah as Siyar al-Kabeer IV, 78, 79-80, I, 33, I, 78, 27-34, 36, Kharaj of Yahya, p. 34, Ibn-Hisham pp. 818-19, so on).

Examples: (a) Unnecessarily-cruel and tortuous ways of killing. "Fairness is prescribed by God in every matter; so if you kill, kill in fair way." (b) Killing non-combatants. Combatants are only those who are physically capable of fighting. Women, minors, servants and slaves who accompany their masters yet do not take part in actual fighting, the blind, monks, hermits, the very old, those physically incapable of fighting, the insane or delirious these are authoritative examples thereof. (c) Prisoners of war are not to be decapitated. According to Muslim law, a prisoner qua prisoner cannot be killed; Ibn Rushd even records a consensus of the companions of the Prophet to the same effect. This does not preclude the trial and punishment of prisoners of crime beyond rights of belligerency, e.g., beheading of two prisoners of the battle of Badr. During captivity, prisoners are to be treated compassionately. Muslim soldiers contented themselves with dates and fed the prisoners in their charge with bread. Mutilation of men as well as beasts. (d) Treachery and perfidy. (e) Devastation, destruction of harvest, putting trees unnecessarily. (f) Slaughtering animals more than what is necessary for food. (g) Excess and wickedness. (h) Killing enemy hostages, even if those of the Muslim state have been murdered by the enemy, and even if there is express agreement that hostages may be beheaded in retaliation. (j) Severing the head of some fallen enemy and sending it to higher Muslim authorities. (k) No massacre after vanquishing the enemy or otherwise occupying a place. When the Prophet conquered Mecca, he declared a general amnesty excluding expressly about half a dozen named persons, who were declared outlaws to be killed where ever found. They were state criminals having committed murder and apostasy or similar offences. Later, these also were pardoned, except three who were killed by Muslim soldiers without refer-

ring again to the Prophet. (l) Killing parents, except in absolute self-defence, even if they are non-Muslims and in the enemy ranks. (m) Peasant's non-plot. (n) Traders, merchants, contractors and the like. (o) Burning a captured man or animal to death. (p) To take shelter behind enemy prisoners. (q) Using poisonous arrows. (r) Breach of acts forbidden under treaties.

The preceding paragraphs inter alia provide a perspective on concept of holy war under Islam. Isolated acts of terrorism committed by fanatic individuals cannot be quoted to condemn Islam in toto.

### **Jihad under Judaism**

According to Jewish beliefs, conquest and possession of land required ruthless elimination of possible sources of pagan influence. It was considered a sin worthy of punishment, not to extend the Kingdom of God of Israel by allowing alien elements to persist within the borders of the promised land (1 Samuel 28: 18, related Judges 7, Deuteronomy 20: 5-8; 24:5). Hebrew Scriptures (Judaism) appear to approve of massacre or enslavement of prisoners and civilians. Normal procedure is to execute the prisoners (1 Kings 20:34, 2 Kings 6:23). A thread of martial tradition conspicuously runs through the Hebrew Scriptures. So, there should be little surprise at Israelite atrocities on the Palestinians.

Now, a few words about Crusades. The concept of crusades is given in the Book of Joshua. The Christian teachings revolve around inculcating total pacifism. The conservative opinion among the Christians, however, is that use of force will always be necessary to some extent to maintain order within and between civilized nations.

Aquinas expounded the concept of just war for a just cause. He clarified that it was not always a sin to wage a war provided certain conditions were fulfilled. He picked up and codified points made by Augustine, in the theological, and by what Descartes lists in the legal tradition. Jesus's Teachings are: Do not resist evil (Matthew 5:39). Love your enemies (Matthew 5:44). Thou shalt not kill (Exodus 20:13). ■

**Comments by Zahid Aziz on the above article:**

While we are in full agreement with the broad standpoint of the above article, we cannot help make the following comments.

In the first two paras, the author writes: "For one thing, Jihad (vide al-Quran 25: 52) does not mean 'Holy War'. ... The non-Muslim writers not only mis-translate the word Jihad for Qital, but also distort the true meaning of Quranic texts by quoting them out of context with Ahadith or peculiar situations to which they relate."

Unfortunately, Muslims themselves quite commonly do exactly the same. Take the English translation of the Quran published by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, entitled *The Noble Quran*, translated by Dr Al-Hilai and Dr Muhsin Khan. In this translation the meaning of Jihad is given as follows:

"*Al-Jihad* (holy fighting) in Allah's Cause (with full force of numbers and weaponry) is given the utmost importance in Islam and is one of its pillars" (footnote under 2:190)

Commenting on the same verse, the translators make the following remark: "This Verse is the first one that was revealed in connection with *Jihad*." Now this verse is about fighting. So, according to these translators *the first verse* revealed in the Quran about Jihad is in relation to fighting a battle. The author of the above article has, quite rightly, cited verse 25:52, which mentions Jihad, as showing that Jihad does not mean war. But 25:52 was revealed **before** 2:190. This means that, according to the view of *The Noble Quran* translators, the verse 25:52 does not deal with Jihad because it came before 2:190!

Under 2:193, *The Noble Quran* translators have quoted a hadith that the Holy Prophet Muhammad said: "I have been ordered (by Allah) to fight against people till they testify that *La*

*ilaha illallah wa anna Muhammad-ur-Rasul Allah*, and perform *As-Salat* and give *Zakat*, so if they perform all that then they save their lives and properties from me..." Thus according to these translators, when the Quran says in 2:193 "fight them until there is no more *Fitnah*", it means that Muslims must fight other people till they accept Islam.

Under verse 8:39, the translators inform us that Jesus will descend on the earth and under his rule "all mankind will be required to embrace Islam with no other alternative" and that he will not allow people to hold "any other religion except Islam".

The difference between the approach of the author of this article and the Ahmadiyya approach is that our scholars are not in denial of the fact that the misinterpretation of Jihad as a violent, holy war of conversion, and intolerance towards other religions, is to be found in Muslim literature. The Lahore Ahmadiyya writers seek to explain how these misinterpretations of the Quran and the teachings of the Holy Prophet arose in later Islamic law (Fiqh) and to clarify the misunderstood verses. They do not consider it sufficient to quote other verses of an opposite meaning because that raises the objection that the Quran gave opposite teachings at different times out of expediency.

The author has also misunderstood a verse which he quotes as follows: "So do not falter, and invite to peace when ye are the uppermost" (47:35). He thinks it is telling Muslims to invite the enemy to peace when the Muslims become uppermost. But as every knowledgeable reader of the Quran can see, the "not" in this verse also applies to "invite to peace"! The verse says that Muslims should not falter, waver, or lose heart, because of feeling weak, and they should **not** due to that weakness call out for peace with the enemy, because in reality their cause is uppermost and they will win. ■ ([Return to contents](#))

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