

JIHAD: HOLY WAR OR INNER STRUGGLE?

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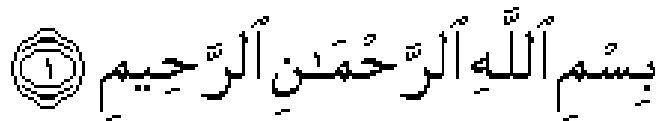
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In The Name Of God, The All-Merciful, The All-Compassionate



‘In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful. Praise be to Him and may peace and blessings be upon Muhammad and upon his companions.’ This phrase is the opening phrase to all verses in the *Holy Qur’an*, most notably that of the *Al-Fatihah* (the opening chapter of the Holy Qur’an). This verse, believed to be revealed to the Prophet Muhammad Peace Be Upon Him (hereafter abbreviated as PBUH), during the period known as *Mecca*, establishes four main themes of the Qur’an: 1.) the existence and the unity of God; 2.) prophethood; 3.) resurrection and afterlife and 4.) worship and justice.

The opening phrase is translated to mean: In The Name Of God, The All-Knowing, The All-Compassionate, is one of the many symbols of Islam. Every Muslim begins every good deed by uttering it first. The word ‘name’ translates to the Arabic word meaning ‘*ism*’, therefore ‘in the name of God’ is a reminder that God is exalted as a Divine Being. Allah, translated as God, is the Name of the Divine Being who creates and

administers His creatures and creations. The expression ‘the All-Merciful’ translates to the Arabic *Al-Rahman* (this is one of the many attributes of God). The other attribute of God is the All-compassionate, translated to the Arabic word *Al-Rahim*.

The word ‘*Islam*’ derives from the Arabic word *Asalama* (to submit) and it is therefore understood to signify the religion of peace (one that results from submission to the will of God). A Muslim is one who therefore submits to God and accepts the teachings of Islam. Islam gives permission to any individual or group of people to rise to arms against any group, nation or individual who wish to take their lawful rights away by means of attack or aggression of any sort, in this case this permission to for them to defend themselves becomes a justifiable claim so as to save and protect their rights.

Islam is the youngest of the three great monotheistic faiths and the fastest-growing with now more than a billion adherents worldwide; though different in culture and language are united under one credo: “*La ilaha illa Alla*” (meaning, there is no god but God and Muhammad is His messenger). Islam had first emerged as a religious movement in the city of Mecca, Arabia, in the early part of the seventh century and was preached by Muhammad (PBUH), the Prophet of Islam. Muslims thus believe that it was Muhammad (PBUH) who had received a series of revelations from God, through the angel Gabriel. Arabia is thus considered the heartland of Islam and has occupied a special place in the hearts of many Muslims; for it is in the holy city of Mecca, where the most sacred shrine known as the *Ka’baa* that billions of Muslims from all over the world turn towards while in prayer five times a day.

God has sent Muhammad (PBUH) as a caller, a bringer of good word and as one who was to warn all of the evils that might inflict agony, pain or trouble towards God's creations. God has thus revealed in His book, the *Holy Qur'an* a series of principles for the happiness for the *Ummah* (Islamic community) as well as for the individual. It's message reveals that of science and knowledge, specifies crimes, proclaims mercy, urges individuals to strive to do good works. It preaches peace and deals with politics within societies and most importantly, it deals with the rules of warfare, with regards to fighting injustice and corruption in bringing about justice.

The *Holy Qur'an* is thus considered to be the unaltered word of God as was sent by the angel Gabriel and revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in the Arabic language. It is thus, the final revelation and Mohammed is considered in the Holy Qur'an as 'the seal of the prophets'. Thus, it is the *Sunnah* (the ways and works of the Prophet), the *Hadiths* (the sayings of the Prophet) that provide the framework for how individuals are to act towards one another. The *Shari'ah* (the Islamic Law) is also a strict law in which all Muslims abide by, most importantly because it is considered a sacred law of Islam, one that governs all aspects of a Muslims life, the private and public, the social and economic.

Moreover, the foremost principle of Islam is the unity of the Creator of the heavens and the earth: "The Creator of the heavens and the earth.... He created all things, and He has knowledge of everything. That then is God your Lord; there is no God but He, the Creator of everything, so serve Him for He is Guardian over everything. The eyes

attain Him not, but He attains the eyes; He is the All-subtle, the All-Aware” (Holy Qur’an: 6:101-03).

Islam is not just a religion, but a total way of life. It prescribes order for individuals, societies and governments; codifying laws, family relationships, matters in the business world, etiquette, dress, food, hygiene and much more. The Ummah is thus unified across national boundaries by the acceptance of the oneness of God and its dedication of Shari’ah as well as the Sunnah which has been preserved by his companions in the Hadiths.

In spite of Islam’s glorious past, it remains generally misunderstood in the West, if not unknown. Five basic tenants structure Islam. The *Sha’hadah*, the first pillar of Islam is a profession of faith, where a Muslim bears witness to the Oneness of God by reciting the creed “there is not god but God and Mohammed is His messenger”. The second pillar, *Salah* (prayer) is based on the belief that individuals have a direct relationship with God, and hence, they must offer five daily prayers in remembrance of their being by their Creator. The third pillar, *Zakat* (almsgiving) is a very important aspect in Islam since Muslims recognize that there are social responsibilities that are considered a part of one’s service to God; and hence it is therefore this act of almsgiving that sets this duty in place.

The fourth pillar, *Sawm* (fasting) is performed during the Holy Month of Ramadan, and may be preformed at any time an individual wishes to do so. It is ordained

on every Muslim since this act allows the believer to seek a richer perception of life. The last but, not final pillar is the famous *Hajj* (pilgrimage). Muslims who are physically and financially fit are required in Islam to fulfill such a duty. By making a trip to the holy city of Mecca at least once in their lifetime, it is a remembrance of the time when the prophet Ibrahim's wife, Hagar went back and forth looking for a water well for her son Ishmael to drink. Although these five basic pillars of Islam are performed and deemed as a duty ordained upon every Muslim to perform, one final pillar acknowledged by many Muslims is *Jihad*.

A lot of things come to mind when one hears the term jihad; first it is thought of as a phenomenon that belongs to the past, i.e. the crusade or holy war. We apply words like, religious fanatics, extremists, Islamists, and jihadists; hostilities towards the West and those pro-Western countries are pictured. Terrorism, car bombings, kidnapping and assassinations all come to mind. Americans then begin to ask themselves, why even bother understanding anything about Islam? To them, jihad is a terrorist doctrine. But, the truth of the matter is jihad means literally to strive or exert oneself in doing good works and deeds.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to investigate as well as analyze those aspects of Islam that deal with jihad, and in doing so, we will take a look at how that ties in with international law as understood in Islamic Law. This topic is of great importance because especially in our time wars are being fought, engaging everyone's attention. Moreover,

many adherents of other religions inaccurately describe jihad with great discredit to Islam. Therefore, this review of jihad will hopefully enable the reader to learn of the Islamic religion, its holy book, the *Holy Qur'an*; its believers, Muslims; and Islam's desire for *Salam* or world peace. The reader will also be able to understand purposes, rules and regulations for engaging in warfare against the oppressors when and if needed.

The Muslim world today is faced with tyranny and injustice and Muslims have allowed jihad into their lives as a means of resistance. But perhaps even they sometimes forget the true meaning of jihad. Therefore this paper is not only intended for non-Muslims, but for Muslims alike in that it will instill knowledge and help both reflect on the true meaning of jihad and how it is intended to be used.

After the terrorist attacks of September 11th 2001, the term jihad received greater attention than ever before. According to Islam, every person should prepare himself/herself for jihad and every person should wait for the day when God will call them to see what they have done. For anyone who reads these statements they would probably think that Muslims use jihad to attack non-believers or for suicide bombings. That is not what it means. What it means is this simply that every individual is to strive for good deeds and efforts to attain God's love and mercy upon him in the hereafter. Their good deeds and efforts have nothing to do with attacks on other people or suicide bombings. Such attacks are nothing more than attacks on one's self. Rather jihad properly leads one to engage in good deeds not only for them in the hereafter, but for society as a whole.

Recent attacks contribute to the Western perception that all Muslims are anti-American, and simply terrorists. Islam, Muslims, and Arabs have received enormous media attention: and Americans have thus based their views and opinions on what they see on the mainstream news i.e.: CNN. To those whose knowledge is thus limited to what they see and hear on television, I will say that not all Muslims are fundamentalists and not all fundamentalists are terrorists; however, we do know that extremists in any religion carry the threat of violence.

The purpose of this research will be to educate those individuals who have any sort of hatred or fear of Islam and Muslims, to help them understand what the religion of Islam is truly about, and what its aim is, what it teaches, and how a true Muslim should truly be like. It is then and only then will they be able to overcome any feeling or sense of uncertainty, insecurity, and resulting hatred.

Finally, it should be noted that Muslims do not look a certain way, do not dress a certain way, and most certainly do not think the same way. This topic is important for two main reasons, for one it deals with an important issue that we are currently dealing with and two, it deals with an issue that Muslims seem to have misunderstood or just forgotten themselves. As will be explained in the second half of the paper, Hassan al-Banna has proved that time will be a witness, where problems will arise and there are steps that need be taken.

Significance of the Study

This research is significant in that it is intended for anyone who is interested in understanding the truth about Islam, Muslims and Arabs most of whom have received the short end of the stick. It is hoped that the reader will gain a better understanding of Islam's position on peace, and therefore improve relations between the Islamic world and the West for a more peaceful coexistence. More importantly, it is intended to make the reader understand the true concepts of jihad as described in the *Holy Qur'an* rather than secondary interpretations of the concept. Finally, it allows for the reader to ask questions and pose comments that will contribute to a more meaningful learning environment.

Research question

This research will pose the question, 'what is jihad: is it a holy war or an inner struggle?' To help answer the question, I will rely on an extensive literature review by various writers, both contemporary and past. I will place a huge emphasize on the *Holy Qur'an*, its verses, interpretations and meanings. In doing this, this study will answer the question posed above. Furthermore, it will allow the reader to gain knowledge of the true meaning of jihad.

Organization of the Study

The research will begin with an introduction to formally state the problem of jihad, along with a clear-cut definition, and an example of the concept. Then we will see an explanation of what is meant by "inner struggle" exactly. The purpose of the study will be introduced to allow the reader to become fully aware of why this research is being

conducted. Definitions will be furnished, as well as laid out throughout the text (along with interpretations) of the term to allow the reader to become aware of the terms. The study will start with a brief introduction of the birthplace of Islam, its Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and the rise of the religion of Islam. Next, an examination of the main characters that have shaped Islam, as well as organizations formed will be addressed to finally address the question: What is jihad: Is it a holy war or an inner struggle? Finally and again several interpretations and their meanings will be given to the terms and verses will be used from the *Holy Qur'an*.

Constant struggles confront all people daily. Whether people strive to be good teachers, students, doctors, lawyers, judges, mothers or fathers, these struggles are explained by jihad, the Arabic word meaning to strive or exert oneself. Varying meanings as we have seen floating in the mainstream media of the term, however point to the fundamental difference in how religion is viewed in the West and other parts of the world, and of course by Muslims themselves.

The truth of the matter is that holy war has nothing to do with jihad. Nor can any war can be justifiable just because the word 'holy' is used. As we will explore in the following paper, terrorist actions are the actions of a few. Violent extremists of any religion are always ill-informed, and thus become radicals, hindering the image of their religion they claim to defend, protect and represent. It is because of this, that the United States view Islam as an enemy, with its followers condemning many Americans to hell. In turn, there are those Muslims who share the same view towards the United States and

Americans; seeing them as the 'Great Satan'; individuals whose beliefs are based on godless and materialistic values. As a direct result of this, both fear the other, and see the worst of each others' culture, values and religion.

In the West, politics and religion are two separate entities, rarely being integrated. Each has its own distinct institution, politics and principals. To Muslims such spheres do not exist, rather both institutional forms are shaped by local culture, with its main focus being the spiritual as well as ethical parts of an individual's life. Therefore, when we hear 'holy war', we can infer that there has been a collision of both entities. This is one main reason why Islam and the West are divided.

In addition to this, many Muslims imagine that the whole Western world is engrossed in materialism. What is not fully understood is that the West too, like Islam strives at a just and humane society; containing values which are based on 'Judeo-Christian ethics. What can be taken out of this is that each perspective has been shaped by the different historical experiences which have thus been influenced by both tradition and religion. Therefore when Muslims see it as obligatory of them to join in the fight of jihad to 'cleanse' the Western world so to speak from its evils and wrongdoings, it is based on this misconstrued way of thinking that the West has no ethic whatsoever.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

BACKGROUND: PREISLAMIC ARABIA

Saudi Arabia: Islam's Heartland

Saudi Arabia is the heartland of Islam: its birthplace is the site of its two great holy *mosques* (Islamic place of worship), and the focus of Islamic devotion and prayer. Saudi Arabia is committed to the preservation of the Islamic tradition in all the areas of government and the society. Islam serves as a guide not only in the lives of the people, but, in the policies and the functions of the government. Thus, the *Holy Qur'an* is the constitution of the country where shar'iah is the basis of the Saudi legal system.

Today, Saudi Arabia is a leader of worldwide Islamic solidarity, hosting the Muslim World League and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. In many respects, Saudi Arabia has been responsive to the needs of the Islamic world; it has contributed to the Islamic Development Fund, providing assistance to communities and their infrastructure. The Islamic Development Bank, headquartered in Jeddah is of great importance along with the Islamic Organization for Science, Technology and Development.

“It is He who sent amongst the Unlettered a messenger from among themselves, to rehearse to them His Signs, to sanctify them, and to instruct them in Scripture and Wisdom,- although they had been, before, in manifest error.”

- (Holy Qur’an: 62:2)

The coming of the Prophet (PBUH)

Around the year 570 A.D., Muhammad (PBUH) was born into a family of the ruling tribe of Mecca. Mecca, then a caravan city, is in the western region of Arabia; hosting the Ka’baa, a shrine of ancient origins that was built by the prophet Ibrahim and his son Ishmael. It is one of the two holy cities in Arabia known to have housed idols. Muhammad (PBUH) was orphaned as a child and had spent several years amongst the Bedouins of the desert. As a young man, he traveled widely with his trade caravans before dedicating his life to Islam after having received revelations from God.

When he was in his forties, he would go on periodic retreats to a cave in the hills near Mecca to engage in solitary confinement. It was during one of these retreats that he became aware of a presence, telling him of his prophethood and of a divine revelation which he would be the bearer of. In 610 A.D., God revealed His word to Muhammad (PBUH) through the Angel Gabriel; it came down on the night of Ramadan (the ninth month of the Islamic calendar) the month of fast, and the month in which the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) received the first revelation from God.

He was to proclaim to the people of Arabia that there is One God. The name of this new religion was to become known as Islam, meaning “submission to God”; its followers were to be known as Muslims, meaning “those who submit”.

In 613 A.D., Muhammad (PBUH) began to preach the word of God to a small body of relatives and friends. The message was clear and to the point. He told the Ummah to abandon all forms of idolatrous worship and surrender themselves completely to the One God and that there would one day come about the Day of Judgment in which each individual would be held responsible for his/her actions. Muhammad's (PBUH) monotheistic teachings completely contradicted the polytheist's beliefs of idol worshipping among the existing tribes and it was because of this that Pagan worshippers began threatening Mohammed (PBUH) and his new monotheistic religion, along with those who followed him.

By 619 A.D. Muhammad (PBUH) and his followers were attacked and it was not long before they immigrated to *Yathrib* (today known as the holy city of Medina). This movement from Mecca to Medina became known as the *Hijrah* (emigration). In 628 A.D. the Meccan tribe of *Qurayish* led by its leader Abu Sufyan and the Muslim community in Medina signed a truce called the Treaty of Hudaibiyya. Despite this ten-year peace treaty, it was broken by the Qurayish and Bakr tribes, who attacked the Muslims. In turn, ten-thousand Muslims marched towards Mecca which surrendered. Mohammed (PBUH) only demanded one thing, that the idols around the Ka'baa be destroyed.

The Rise of Islam

The Muslims spread across the Arabian Peninsula. Within a century, Islam had swept across the Middle East and North Africa. Islam even spread through Spain in the west and India and China in the east, introducing a new comprehensive faith and a new

political-legal system along with it, thus establishing order and justice. Islam fostered civilizations and developed great centers for learning. It was a dynamic period, the 'Golden Ages' for Islam. The Muslim world acted as the bridge between the East and the West. Contributions were made by Muslim scholars, establishing cultural achievements of human history, setting the stage for the European Renaissance.

In the 20th century, Islam has now reemerged as a major political and economic presence. Saudi Arabia's dedication to Islam is demonstrated by its wonderful maintenance and expansion of its holy site, enabling greater numbers of Muslim pilgrims to perform the hajj (pilgrimage). Every year, funds from Saudi Arabia's budget are allocated exclusively for this purpose.

CHAPTER III

NASSER'S EGYPT AND THE RISE OF THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD

Nasser's Egypt

Gamal Abdel Nasser was born on January 15th 1918 in a poor Alexandrian suburb of Bacos and joined a military college in 1936. He graduated in 1938, and then joined the Egyptian Army. Dissatisfied with the corruption of the King Farouk regime and with the British occupation he and a group of colleagues formed an organization known as “*El-Dhobatt El-Ahrar*” (The Free Officers).

The Free Officers gradually engaged in politics during the following years. In 1953, the Free Officers deposed of Ahmad Fouad, the last King, and declared Egypt a Republic. It was only when Nasser became president that the 1952 military coup started turning into a real social and political revolution, today known as the 1952 Revolution. Nasser was highly praised for his Nationalization of the Suez Canal, his Agrarian reform, and his socialist policies that brought the vast majority of Egyptians out of poverty.

When Nasser met Al-Banna in 1948, he convinced Al-Banna that he would have the support from the Free Officers military. In 1952, with the help of the Muslim

Brotherhood Egypt had steered to an Islamic government but, it offered the Brotherhood only a small part to play in Egyptian politics. This was the beginning of the deterioration in the relationship between the Brotherhood and Nasser's regime. Nasser's Free Officers did not entertain Al-Banna's vision of an Islamic country based entirely on the shar'iah.

Hassan Al-Banna

Hassan al-Banna was born in 1906 in Mahmudiyya, Egypt (north-west of Cairo). At an early age, he found that Islamic learning and piety were no longer highly valued as they once were, he saw that it was still impossible for Islam to stand firm without the basic fundamentals of religion. Banna participated in demonstrations during the revolution of 1919 against British rule. In 1923, Banna moved to Cairo and entered Dar al-'Ulum College. It was there that he had only begun to notice just how disturbed society had been as a result of Westernization; he saw that with the rise of secularism came the breakdown of religion and tradition.

It was then that Banna attached himself with the Brotherhood; the idea of seeing younger generations drifting away from Islam was a horror and thus there had to be a battle against such corrupt youths for their sake. This he not only saw as critical for them, but for the survival of Islam; that religion which was free from all accretions bringing it back to its original message. What made his anger grow worse was the fact that Al-Azhar (Egypt's largest religiously-based University) took no action in conserving Islam, nor did he see the Nasser regime to do anything more, but follow in the footsteps of the Westernized law instead of that of Shar'iah.

Upon his graduation in 1927 from Dar al-'Ulum, he dedicated himself to becoming the teacher of both adults and children, teaching them the main objectives of religion and the sources of true happiness. He gave night classes and preached at the mosque and even in coffee houses. In 1928, a year after he had graduated launched the *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn* (Society of the Muslim Brothers) in March of that year. The Muslim Brotherhood was the first mass-based political movement to oppose the secular and Western ideas that have plagued the Islamic community with ideals that were not compatible with that of the Shar'iah. They saw that the ideas of the West were the root of their country's problem and that which had begun to plague the entire Middle East. Banna advocated during his leadership, solutions to such ills; tackling issues of colonialism, public health, education, natural resources and how to manage them and social inequalities that followed.

Rise of the Muslim Brotherhood

Created in 1928, The Brotherhood proved to be more than a small social gathering, where members can reflect on ways to overcome society's problems, it became a mass movement and by the early 1950's, had branches established in Syria and Jordan and even in non-Arab countries such as Iran, Indonesia and Pakistan.

Hassan al-Banna is known today as having a tremendous impact in modern Islamic thought, by managing to reintroduce Islam as an all-inclusive way of life. He sought to bring changes through institution-building, activism and mass communication. The

weaving of his traditional ties into a modern structure was the root of his success. The Brotherhood quickly changed from a movement for spiritual and moral reform into a political one. It was this change that radical tensions followed, where conflicts arose between the government and the society as a whole, thus hindering the Brotherhood's image.

Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun was a multi-national Sunni-Islamist movement and the world's largest most influential Islamist group. The Brotherhood still remains to be the largest political organization in many Arab nations. It began as a social movement encompassing moral reforms rooted in Islam; its credo: 'Allah is our objective. The Prophet is our leader. The Qur'an is our law. Jihad is our way. Dying in the way of Allah is our highest hope.' Its charter described its goal as the re-establishment of the Islamic *Caliphate* (religious leader). The Brotherhood with its start as a youth organization, aimed its social reform through education and information. According to al-Banna, because Islam had lost its social dominance, Muslims had been corrupted by the Western influences. Thus, in establishing this newly formed organization it would re-create the way of life that was followed at the time of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). Moreover, it would be a call for a protection and cultivation of culture and religion.

The group's belief was based on the Holy Qur'an and the sunnah, which were supposed to constitute a perfect way of life. Hassan al-Banna's goal was to reclaim Islam's manifest destiny; an empire stretching from Spain to Indonesia. Banna preached that Islam enjoins man to strive for social justice, the eradication of corruption and

poverty, thus enabling political freedom. Assessing the Brotherhood as a single entity is difficult because its functions vary from country to country throughout the Middle East in countries like Bahrain, Syria, Palestine, Israel, Jordan, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, who all established the Brotherhood for different reasons; although they attempt to carry on the path started by the original Brotherhood in Egypt.

In Syria, the Brotherhood was founded in the 1930's by Syrian students who had participated in the Egyptian Brotherhood. The Syrian Brotherhood played a major role in the Sunni-based resistance movement that opposed the secularist, Baath Party. In Palestine, the Brotherhood was formed in Jerusalem in 1936. The members fought alongside the Arab side in the 1948 Arab-Israeli war and the creation of Israel, the Brotherhood encouraged more Palestinian Muslims to join the movement.

In Israel, the Muslim Brotherhood, known plainly as the Islamic Movement is divided between the southern and northern branches, the southern branch is represented in the Israeli parliament; while the northern are the boycotts against Israeli elections. In Iran, although the country is predominantly *Shi'a* (a religious sect of Islam), and the Brotherhood is Sunni, it still has a presence there. The Brotherhood in Iran is known to be the Iranian Islamic organization, active since the 1940's and 1950's.

In Iraq, the branch to the Brotherhood; the Iraqi Islamic Party was formed in 1960, but had gone underway due to the Baath Party. In 2003 though, with the fall of

Saddam Hussein's regime, the Islamic Party has reemerged. In Saudi Arabia, the Muslim Brotherhood is tolerated by the Saudi government and therefore maintains a presence in the country. In Kuwait, the Muslim Brotherhood is present, and very conservative, with no toleration to women's rights, ascribing codes for dress for women and even restricting pastimes.

Even in the United States, there is a presence of the Muslim Brotherhood that has existed since the 1960's, with goals of creating havens for Muslims outside their countries. Branch organizations such as The Muslim Students Association in 1963 were formed; The North American Islamic Trust in 1971; and The Islamic Society of North America in 1981.

Currently, Egypt has released Essam el-Erin, the spokesperson for the Brotherhood in Egypt, along with nine members after a court order to do so. The Brotherhood still seeks Islamic to establish an Islamic state through democratic elections and thus operates openly. Despite the Brotherhood being a non-violent one in Egypt today, the Egyptian government still considers it to be an illegal organization and on occasions detains members without charges.

Hamas

A wing of the Brotherhood founded in 1987 is the Islamic Resistance Movement, otherwise known today as *Hamas*. Hamas formed out Brotherhood charities growing to be one of the most violent Palestinian militant groups. Because of Hamas' refusal to

accept the 1993 Oslo Accords, and instead launching a series of attacks on Israel, governments such as that of the United States have labeled Hamas a terrorist movement, rather than one set out to carry the true laws of the Shar'iah. In the elections of 2006, Hamas claimed seventy-four seats out of the one-hundred thirty-two in the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLO) and while Palestine still remains under occupation, it has become the only present-day Arab nation where the Muslim Brotherhood has gained power through democratic elections.

The Intifada

In 1987 an *Intifada* (Palestinian uprising) broke out in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This was a function of a combination of causes that were embedded in twenty years of Israeli occupation and policies aimed at undermining the existence of the Palestinian people in their own land. Israel has confiscated Arab land and launched aggressive policies leaving the West Bank and the Gaza Strip fragmented. Israeli measures and policies continue to result in loss of life, imprisonment, detention, house arrests, demolition of dwellings, deportation, fines, interrogations, travel restrictions, curfews, closures of educational institutions, taxes, and many more, that have made it almost impossible for Palestinian people to live humbly.

These attempts, thus undermining the existence of the Palestinian people have caused the Palestinians today, we see throwing rocks at Israeli soldiers, rising up to defend themselves in which ever way possible. The Palestinian national movement and the process of the Palestinian nation-building have contributed to the evolution of groups like Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood in Gaza.

Ahmed Yasin

The Brotherhood in Gaza began its plans with a man by the name of Sheik Ahmad Yasin in 1987. Yasin is considered the founder and leader of the Islamic Resistance Movement and founder of the Islamic Center in Gaza. Yasin was born in 1936 in the village of jora (in the northern part of the Gaza district) in Mandate Palestine. Although from a prosperous middle-class family, Yasin's family was forced to leave Palestine in 1948, settling in a refugee camp in Gaza. His fundamentalist views that we see today are the impacts of the Israeli occupations and policies that he has witnessed as a young man.

Yasin has become the most prominent Islamic figure in Gaza for his political movements and ways of thinking. The emergence of his Brotherhood and his decision to participate in the intifada has brought him great media attention. Ziad Abu-Amr, author of the book entitled, "Islamic fundamentalism in the West Bank and Gaza" says that Yasin "should not be related to Khomeini or Shar'ati and should definably not be considered a Qutb or a Banna, rather, Yasin should be seen in the political context of the of the Palestinian issue, and not in any regional or global context" (Abu-Amr, pg. 65).

Reasons for the Brotherhood's movement to becoming today's Hamas, is consistent with the message of the movement; stating that its establishment is a basic and natural right, since the Palestinian people have been suffering under the oppression and occupation of the Israeli forces. Hamas, the newly-formed political movement along with its goal of securing the legitimate and natural rights of Palestinians, ensures them safety and peace on their land.

CHAPTER IV

SADAT'S EGYPT AND THE RISE OF ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHERS AND THINKERS

Sadat's Egypt

Although Nasser had imprisoned several members of the Brotherhood, it was not until after his death and Anwar al-Sadat's rise to presidency that the Brotherhood was released under supervision of the government. With Sadat now as president, he promised that Shar'iah would be implemented throughout the country as Egyptian Law. In 1984 the Brotherhood was accepted but only as a religious group, operating under strict control by the government. Sadat's accession to presidency raised the spirits of the Brotherhood as he met and maintained contacts with the group.

Over the next years however, Sadat would prove his leadership abilities, his first trial on the international scene involved the aftermath of the Six Days War. The 1973 Arab-Israeli war improved his standing even more when the Arabs claimed victory, but little did he know that this was the beginning of an even greater flow of radical groups.

In 1976 with the new and fast growing radical tendencies of the Brotherhood, it was not allowed to participate in general elections, but still that did not stop the

brotherhood from running as independent candidates. Then, when in 1979, President Sadat signed the peace agreement between their country and Israel- that caused frustration. Angered students created anti-government demonstrations. The result was an infuriated Brotherhood. With this, the Brotherhood mounted a successful attempt at the President's life. In 1987, the Brotherhood was now a working Socialist Labour Party as well as a Liberal Socialist Party, forming the Labour Islamic Alliance.

The Brotherhood won gaining thirty-seven seats out of the sixty. In 2005, the Muslim Brotherhood was prevented from running for parliamentary elections as a political party. But still, with members running as independents, the Brotherhood manages to win seats, making them the largest opposing group.

“Mankind today is on the brink of a precipice, not because of the danger of complete annihilation which is hanging over its head....but because humanity is devoid of those vital values which are necessary not only for its healthy development but also for its real progress”.

***- Sayyid Qutb in
Signposts on the
Road.***

Sayyid Qutb

Among the Brotherhood's most influential members was Sayyid Qutb. Qutb called for the restoration of Islam by re-establishing the Shar'iah and by using physical power and jihad for abolishing the organizations and authorities of the *jahiliyya* system which he called a state of ignorance. Qutb argued that Muslim societies were no longer

“Islamic” and that they needed to be transformed by a *tali’ah* (Islamic vanguard) through a violent revolution. This he insisted would restore Islam and move it away from jahiliyya.

Sayyid Qutb, Egyptian author, Islamist and a leading member of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, best known for his work and ideas on the social and political role of Islamic fundamentalism, particularly in his book titled, *Milestones* reflected heavily on concepts of jihad and jahilyyah as well as the ummah. In *Milestones*, Qutb called for the establishment of a true and just Islamic society which could not be done without the overthrowing of the jahiliyya state through jihad. His work extends to issues of Westernization, modernization and political reform and most importantly the conflict between Islam and the West.

In *Milestones*, Qutb sought to answer some of the fundamental questions such as to why Islam needed to be revived and why there was no other way but Islam as the measure for true happiness. Qutb takes us from the very beginning explaining the establishment of Islam by the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) and what the true essence of Islam was. For Qutb, it was necessary that a revival of the Muslim community, which is buried under the debris of the man-made traditions of several generations, to come back.

Qutb stressed that Islamic values and the manner in which they should be realized constituted the faith of Islam. Qutb relied heavily on the *Holy Qur’an* to express his ideas regarding the true significance of the testimony, “there is no god but God.” The most notable opinion of his was the need for implementing Islamic law until every member of the community had submitted to the sovereignty of Allah.

Qutb argued that the Muslim community was no longer required to perform any materialistic inventions for it to be accepted by the whole of mankind; he explains that there already existed countries which were far advanced, such as the West and Europe, and that Islam was not in any position to compete, rather, he stresses that despite the unnecessary, it should not be fully ignored; stating that it was essential for its very existence altogether.

In his *Signposts on the Road*, Qutb divides social systems into two categories: order of Islam and order of jahiliyya. He argued that the Nasserite regime was that of a modern version of the jahiliyya system, seen in Arabia before the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) received the divine revelations. He described himself as someone who lived in the jahiliyya for many years who devoted himself to the quest for knowledge. He used jahiliyya therefore as a conceptual framework to indicate condemnation for those whose life styles did not conform to divine guidance; one being the already established Islamic state, who had turned away from the Islamic Law, and other being, the West who has not even established nor adopted that state in the first place.

Moreover, Qutb radicalized Islamic thought by laying out the foundations for a revolutionary Islamic government recognizing the exclusive sovereignty of God, which to him meant accepting that one is a creature of Allah who was to pray, worship and submit to no one but Him. Therefore, those who do not recognize the Omnipotence of Allah were persons living in that state of ignorance. They would be subject to great torment in the hereafter. What this means is that recognizing the reign of God in every domain meant that there was no separation of religion from politics, which for Qutb were

closely associated.

Qutb viewed jihad as defensive in nature, seeing it as a personal matter and duty bestowed on all Muslims by their Creator. For Farhad Khosrokhavar, the author of the book entitled, *Suicide Bombers: Allah's New Martyrs*, Khosrokhavar explains that such radicals like Qutb himself have stirred up ill-feelings in communities, and in doing so undermine its unity because of their cowardly attitude or refusal to follow the path of God (Khosrokhavar, pg. 30).

He goes on to call them hypocrites who refuse to fight the forces of evil and often come to terms with them for fear of losing their privileges. He states that thinkers like Qutb having lost their self-confidence is thus, trying to give other Muslims a new self-confidence, since they have lost theirs as a result of assaults of imperialism and false prestige of a West that is depriving them of their own self-respect and devotion to their faith. Khosrokhavar says that the only reason for individuals to heed his words have an impact on young men, who upon hearing of the glories that they will attain after jihad- when they are promised that when they will have all that is denied of them in this life, are thus susceptible to joining jihad (Khosrokhavar, pgs. 30-31).

Khosrokhavar explains that there are two kinds of martyrdom which he calls “individuation through death”, with the first being that the individual risks death, but has a positive self-image whatever the outcome is; he sees death as a possibility, but he does not have the intention of dying and if possible, tries to escape it and the second being that here, the individual is no longer concerned with life on earth; they prefer and hope to die in the action and if possible take as many enemies as he can with him (Khosrokhavar,

pgs.49-50). Only those who are able to overcome the fear of dying can become martyrs- Khosrokhavar explains that martyrdom therefore seems to encompass a “ritual dimension”. They help others overcome their fear of dying through prayer and recitation of the *Holy Qur’an* (Khosrokhavar, pg. 62).

Qutb argued that the Muslim world has ceased to be, that it was in a state of backwardness, going back to the pre-Islamic period. “The Muslim community has been extinct for a few centuries” and as a result reverted back to jahiliyah (Qutb, p.11-19). Moreover, he put a claim that therefore any state not following the shar’iah law was deemed illegitimate. Qutb asserted that rule, law and order should not be led by man, where “servitude to other men” is considered un-Islamic and in direct violation with God’s authority. Qutb sees Shar’iah as much more than a code of religious or public laws.

To him it is a complete “way of life...based on submission to God alone,” (Qutb, p.82). For Qutb, man was sent by God to establish his authority on earth, and hence, man was established as the master of the earth and everything created in it was for his benefit. Therefore, man had control over the material world; he is the master and not the slave. He saw a true Islamic state as one that would have neither judges nor police, just Divine Law that would instruct man because according to the Shari'ah, to obey is to worship and Muslims were to worship no one but God. Moreover he insisted that they not obey anything other than God: "anyone who serves someone other than God" he states, be that someone (or something) a priest, president, a parliament, or a secular legal statute, "is outside God's religion, even if he claims to profess the religion of Islam”.

For Qutb, the way to bring this about was through that vanguard; that which would fight the jahiliyyah system through preaching and/or physical power when and if needed (Qutb, p.60). This vanguard movement would be set in place until an Islamic community is formed and spread then throughout the world. He asserted that it was necessary that there should be that vanguard that would encompass the entire world. It will be this vanguard that would lead the Muslim community into a jihad that would eventually transform the jahiliyyah societies into Islamic ones. He stresses that upon the removal all belligerent communities, Muslims could then be able to live peacefully, giving full submission to their creator, this he asserts will revive the nation back to its original form, where mankind can once again become one true nation.

If we look at the Holy Qur'an it states, "Among those who we have created, there is a community who guide others by means of the truth and with it establish justice. As for those who deny our revelations, we will lead them on, step, by step..." (Holy Qur'an: 7:182). What this means is that one should do everything in his power to persuade others to the truth of God; in this case truth is that there is a God, and that he has sent prophets as living examples of how we should act to ourselves and one another, the last part of the verse which states, "we will lead them on, step by step.." means that Muslims should continue to strive (to perform jihad) in trying to make them acknowledge, this thus has nothing to do with fighting them until they do as Qutb asserts.

God knew that with the varying opinions of people, communities would form and evolve differently and that is why he sent prophets to establish the real truth that people have differed in opinion about to help them distinguish between what is right and what is

wrong. Qutb says that despite God's prophets, there were communities that still rejected God, His Books, revelations, and prophets and continued in jahilyya. Therefore, jihad was the only way to restore the true original state of God.

At a young age, Qutb was educated in the Holy Qur'an. He received a Western education upon his travel at the University of Northern Colorado. Later, he started a career as a teacher in the Ministry of Public Instruction devoting himself to the literature of Egyptian novelist Naguib Mahfouz. During his time in the United States, "*Al-'adala al-Ijtima'iyya fi- l-Islam*" (Social justice in Islam) was published. He dedicated that book to those who struggle for and dedicated their lives to God. It dealt with religion and society in both Christianity and Islam where he traces the history of the separation between religion and politics; considering it un-Islamic since the idea first originated in Christianity.

Upon his arrival back to his country, Qutb noticed that the Egyptian society he has known was becoming more like the Western society he had seen during his stay in the United States. He was extremely critical of the things that he saw and encountered in there; its materialistic view on things, individual freedom, economic systems, racism, restrictions on divorce, enthusiasm for sports, and most appalling to him, the "animal-like" mixing of the sexes, and the lack of support for the Palestinian struggle, all of which he combined and laid out in his book entitled "*Amrika allati Ra'aytu*" (America that I saw).

It was in this book that Qutb expressed his deepest rejection to the Western lifestyles and explains that the America went hand-in-hand with three features:

materialism, racism and sexual permissiveness; although Qutb did not proclaim that Americans were people without virtues, instead he said their virtues were those of production, organization, reason and work and that they were did not associated themselves with the social human leadership of manners and emotion. Although Qutb was negative in most of his views on Americans, he had some positive things to say in regards to its scientific achievements which he expressed his admiration and interests for. Even so, he still rejected the way in which individuals could exist in a society that remained in Jahiliyya.

He concluded based on these aspects that the American life was primitive and shocking, thus what he witnessed and encountered led him towards a path of radicalism and hate. These experiences formed a push towards the rejection of Western values and to a move towards radicalism. He joined the Muslim Brotherhood in the 1950's, becoming editor-in-chief of the Brotherhood's weekly and later head of the propaganda section of the weekly.

Later, because of his outstanding passion, Qutb became a member of the Working Committee and of the Guidance Council of the Brotherhood. Qutb along with members of the Brotherhood were happy to see that the Western government was overthrown by the nationalist Free Officers Movement which was headed by Gamal Abdel Nasser. They formed a close relationship with the new movement, and expected Nasser's next move to encompass an establishment of an Islamic government based entirely on shar'iah, but to their dismay that did not happen.

As a result, Qutb proclaimed that it was the materialistic outlook of the West that had destroyed the country and its ability to reap any benefits of its material progress. Qutb viewed the West as a sterile civilization, despite its progress and technological and scientific achievements. This is not to say that Qutb condemns material progress, on the contrary he believes that man can benefit from it as long as it is in accordance with the will of God. He tells us that the physical and spiritual are divided, and thus that is why societies were suffering; for the West this suffering was displayed with a slowing down of their progress causing destruction from within.

He goes on to further elaborate on his outlook of the West that it was in a state of animalism. Qutb argues that Western values are animal like values because they fail to elevate man above the materialist level. He says that just as animals govern themselves by material impulses, so does the West; he gives examples of this in the sexuality, capitalism, freedom and natural law of Western civilization. Qutb claims that Western relationships revolve around lust, passion and impulse; he argues that women have disregarded their duties of child caring and have become objects of secular pleasure. The issue of capitalism as animal like, is based on his view that materialist values are regarded as far more important than the development of human character.

He criticized capitalism due to the very fact that capitalism leads to the sacrifice of moral values in the name of material gain. Furthermore, the West's understanding of freedom is further evidence of animalism. He tells us that although men exercise self-government in a liberal democracy, they are in essence slaves and not free, because they

are enslaved by their fellow men. For Qutb, if man were to follow shar'iah, he would live in perfect harmony and not in despair as they do.

Nasser's secular nationalist movement proved incompatible with the Islamist views of the Brotherhood; when they saw such things like refusal to ban alcohol or implement aspects of the Islamic Law to work. The whole system as Qutb and the members of the Brotherhood saw it was corrupt since it was based on the legitimacy based on human made law rather than divine law.

The question that one asks then, is what allowed Qutb to turn away from the secular reformist view he had first introduced in the 30's to radical Islamism in the latter 50's and early 60's? The answer lay in several reasons, the main one being during his stay in the United States as a student, seeing the country as one demonstrating a system of unbelief that of jahiliyya was a threat to the spiritual mind. Finally, Qutb had believed that anything non-Islamic was evil and essentially corrupt and that the only way to fix it would be by implementing the Shar'iah law (Qutb, pg.130).

Qutb believed jihad would remove by physical power, while abolishing organizations of there jahili ideals. He argued that jihad was mandatory in order to establish the sovereignty of Allah on earth; yet he makes sure to remind us that there is no compulsion in Islam, jihad for Qutb is defensive of the right to believe and live by Islam and at the same time it is the struggle to in the establishment of the sovereignty of Allah. God does not intend for us to wage jihad whenever we feel like it, and hence we must remember that the prophet did not begin hostilities; it was only when he began facing hostilities from the Meccan tribes, that he waged jihad in self defense.

Although many see Qutb and the Muslim Brotherhood as major influences on Islamic terrorist groups; one must understand what both Qutb and al-Banna first strove for; peaceful means and enlightenment through preaching to others their ideas for a just society. It was not until their ideas were overlooked that they began taking a more radical stance. Thus, putting labels on individuals or groups often lead to obstacles in understanding the actual people and tendencies involved, because they tend to lump together different phenomena, and this is particularly true of the label “fundamentalist”.

“Do not believe that this corpse you see is myself, I am spirit and this is naught but flesh. I am pearl which has left its shell deserted. It was my prison where I spent my time in grief. I am a bird and it was my cage. Whence I have not flown forth and it is left as a token. Praise be to god, who hath now set me free.”

Al-Ghazzali

Abu Hamed Al-Ghazzali

In the History of the development of Muslim theology, the name Abu Hamed al-Ghazzali comes to mind. Theology first took its form in the writings of al-Ghazzali; he saved Islam from loosing value, and opened the doors of possibility to Muslims in a life hid in God. Al-Gahazzali was a theologian and lawyer as well as a philosopher of Islam. Al-Ghazzali was born in the Khorasan (province of modern day Iran).

Al-Ghazzali lived at a time when the Caliph was controlled by the Turks. He argued that the Caliph's, although a shari'ah requirement, was weak and thus needed a more spiritual leader- and *Imam* (religious leader). He was a theologian and a philosopher and remains one of the most renowned scholars in the history of Islamic thought and a scholar of orthodox Islam, belonging to the *Shafi'i* (Shi'a) school of Islamic jurisprudence. Al-Ghazzali is viewed as the key member of the influential Asharite

School (school of early Muslim philosophy). Despite his Islamic religious sect, he explained how the common practice of Sunnite Islam was the ground of an inner life of strong devotion.

In 1070, Ghazzali went to Gurgan to get enrolled in a *Madrasah* (a school of Islamic jurisprudence) where he studied for seven years. But, it was not until 1080 that his trip to Nishaur at the age of 23 was the highlight of his studies. He became a student there at the famous Abu'l Ma'ali Juwayni School (known as Imam al-Haramayn) where upon his completion became professor, lecturing to hundreds of students as well as participating in Islamic debates and discussions all over the Islamic territories.

Ghazzali wrote more than seventy books on the Islamic sciences, philosophy and Sufism. In his book titled, *The incoherence of the philosophers*, signifies a major turn in the theory of Islam. In this book, Ghazzali embraces the belief that all casual events and interactions are not the product of material conjunctions, but rather the immediate and present will of God. He talked of the purity of the soul and love and said that only in doing good things and praying that one comes close to God. The book marked a turning point in Islamic philosophy in that it rejected the thoughts of Aristotle and Plato and took aim at the ancient Greeks, denouncing Aristotle and Socrates as non-believers, labeling them and their ideas as corrupters of the Islamic faith. He was greatly criticized for his idea that law should not be mingled with religion despite the fact that law is binding.

Ghazzali not only had an influence on Muslim philosophers but, on Christian medieval philosophers including Thomas Aquinas and Rene Descartes'. In al-Gazzali's writings, Christianity and Islam appear to be very close in character and practice; this

came from the exchange of thoughts and ideas which took place between theologian and religious writers and philosophers of the two religions. He took some thoughts from the Christian Greeks and added his own experiences and his thoughts- and in turn Christian European scholars acquire thoughts from Arab writers such as Ghazzali himself. This learning and exchange between the peoples enhanced knowledge of the two peoples living on the Mediterranean.

Ghazzali played a very important role in Islam in that he integrated Sufism with shar'iah, by combining the concepts of Sufism and Shar'iah law he was able to present a formal description of Sufism- this also strengthened the status of Sunnite Islam. He maintained that a multitude of expressions tends to mislead people and prevents them from grasping the truth, while plain and lucid language facilitates understanding. With this, we can infer that by choosing non-technical language he had hoped to avoid misunderstanding- opening up his writings to include readers from all walks of life.

“I am a Servant of God, and God needs no service, but serving His creation is serving Him, I promise to serve humanity in the name of God. I promise to refrain from violence and from taking revenge. I promise to forgive those who oppress me or treat me with cruelty. I promise to refrain from taking part in feuds and quarrels and from creating enmity...”

***- Oath of the “non-violent soldiers”
headed by Badshah Guffar Khan;
the ‘peaceful-mujahideen’.***

Badshah Guffar Khan

Many people view Islam as a religion that lacks pacifism. The view illustrates Muslims as individuals whose only motive is fueled by violence. In all actuality, violence is the route of last not first resort for true Muslims. There are many people, the first being

the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) who practiced pacifism to achieve social change- who did not have to advocate violence as a means to attain this social change.

A man by the name of Badshah Guffar Khan comes to my mind. Known as the “peaceful-mujhed”, Khan was a devout Muslim and advocate of non-violence; he was a social reformer who embraced the same non-violence as his contemporary Mahatma Gandhi. Khan argued that there was no tension between Islam and non-violence, stating that there was nothing surprising about a Muslim or a Pathan subscribing to the creed of non-violence; because it was not a new creed. It was followed 1400 years ago by the prophet (PBUH) all the time he was in Mecca. He practiced non-violence in resisting the social injustice and the rule of the British in India. His very own followers became known as “non-violent soldiers” who strove to stand against injustice without having to resort to violence.

The result of his peaceful protest was a warm welcome by the British soldiers who opened fire against their unarmed numbers. Hundreds were killed, and the shooters refused to continue to fire on the unarmed protests. Badshah Khan asserted that the fundamental principles of Islam were governed and ruled by peaceful and non-violent frameworks. He opposed ethnic division which made him enemy of the political elite of Pakistan.

And of course, in the beginning, Islam built on non-violent methods. Of the many years of Mohammad’s prophet hood, the first thirteen were spent by him in Mecca, adopting pacifism. And, although there were many issues in Mecca that may have called

for confrontation, and argument, the Prophet limited his sphere solely to peaceful propagation and the word of his God. Even when the Meccans, (the leaders of the Qurayshi tribe) waged war against the prophet, instead of fighting them back, the prophet chose to migrate to Yahthrib.

The Prophet's migration was a clear-cut example of non-violent activism. And most ironically this migration would come to produce one of the world's largest centers of Islam. But of course, people of violence do not rest until destruction, damage and killing to fulfill their ambitions have occurred, during this, bloody battles of *Badr* and *Uhud* had taken place, where the prophet was forced to fight, to defend himself and the community.

What the Prophet here has done is directly followed what he has preached, and what he had preached was in the *Holy Quran*; such acts and words of love, peace, pacifism and tolerance. There are only special circumstances so to speak, that justify battle or war of any type. First, one has to understand that the first point to be made here is that aggression of the launching of war is totally forbidden. It becomes only permissible to fight a war of aggression. The *Holy Quran* states: "fight those who fight you, but do not transgress."(Holy Quran: 2:190) Only defensive war is permitted in Islam- such where aggression is committed by another party, pushing the other to fight in self defense. "Permission is given to those who have been wronged" (Holy Quran: 9:13).

Today's individuals who resort to violence instead of pacifism need to draw on the rich tradition a non-violent framework that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and Badshah Khan once did.

CHAPTER V

JIHAD

“And do not kill the soul which god has forbidden except by right. And whoever is killed unjustly, we have given his heir authority but let him not exceed limits in taking life. Indeed, he has been supported (by the law).”

- (Holy Qur’an: 17:33)

Jihad

Islamic tradition holds that if a Muslim is attacked then and only then does it become obligatory for him to defend against the attacker; hence participating in jihad. The Qur'an states: ‘fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress, for Allah loves not the transgressor. Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you, but begin not hostilities. Lo! Allah loveth not aggressors...’ This verse is taken from *Surat Al-Baqarah*, translated as (the verse of the cow) (Qur’an: 190-93). Moreover, Jihad can go about without any leadership; for example, if Muslims come under attack, no formal declaration of war is required- they are to defend themselves against such attackers.

On the other hand, offensive jihad, is a concept in Islamic law which states that the waging of wars of aggression and conquest against the unbelievers (*kufar*) in order to

bring them and their territories under Islamic rule as Dr. Abdullah Yusuf Azzam, an Islamic theologian, who is considered to be the father of the modern Islamist movement, declared in a *Fatwa*, (an Arabic word meaning opinion), which is one made by a *Mufti* (another Arabic word meaning scholar); one who is capable of issuing judgments on the sharia.

Usually a fatwa is issued at the request of an individual or a judge to settle a question or issue. Azzam stated: "Jihad against the *Kuffar* (the unbelievers) is of two Types: Defensive Jihad (where the enemy is attacked in his own territory) ... and Offensive Jihad. This is expelling the Kuffar from our land, and it is *Fard Ayn* (a personal religious obligation on every Muslim individual), a compulsory duty upon all..." (Encyclopedia of the Orient). In view of the concept, only supreme leaders such as the caliph, is the one who can declare this kind of jihad.

Benjamin Barber, in his book entitled: *Jihad vs. McWorld*, speaks of jihad as a generic form of fundamentalist opposition to modernity. Barber says that there are religious fundamentalists in every religion, and that in Islam especially, has been there for a long time. This he adds is what has created problems for democracy and human rights in Muslim countries throughout. Barber uses a metaphor for jihad as an anti-universalist struggle. Since there exists much confusion over the term "fundamentalism", we must turn to its true meaning. Islamic fundamentalism is an ideology that is not in any way related to religion.

Bassam Tibi's book entitled, *The Challenge of Fundamentalism*, addresses the nature of *fatwa* which the fundamentalists use as their main avenue for interpretations and answers to social, political and religious purposes. Moreover, he defines fundamentalism as: "not a spiritual faith, but as a political ideology based on politicizing of religion for sociopolitical and economic goals in the pursuit of establishing a divine order" (Tibi, 20).

The issue of democracy comes into play next, which the use of shar'iah has come into conflict concerning issues of secularism and the democratic state. The rejection is based on the notion that Islam rejects the idea that there should be a separation of church and state. Although the separation of church and state is a widely accepted concept in the West, it is not in Islamic societies or culture. In the Islamic faith, the Qur'an is considered by all Muslims to be one hundred percent the word of Allah and the *sunnha* which was sent by Allah to the prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as guidance to the entire *ummah* to follow. Therefore, Islam cannot be separated from the state because it guides Muslims through every detail of running the state and the lives of individuals. That is why Muslims have no choice but to reject secularism for that very reason.

Islam, is a very tolerant religion; and cannot ever see it as being a threat, the reason being that it is a very "open-minded" religion, the Qur'an states: 'There is no compulsion in religion' (Qur'an: 2:256) I do agree with Tibi, when he says that Islam is not a threat, rather Islamic fundamentalism is. For those who argue that Islam is in

complete opposition to the west, that is not true, Islam is similar to the West in many respects, as Tibi puts it: “it resembles the western civilizations in the sense that it is universal in both its claims and its outlook- hence this is his argument that he makes that gives reason for a “clash of civilizations” to exist (Tibi, 15-19). It may be difficult for the West not to view jihad as a peaceful undertaking for the sake of humanity, but as a war of violence and aggression, because they see one side and as a result, fail to see the whole picture- the entire structure of the Holy Qur’an.

God has laid down laws to protect the sanctity of the home; the reason is that the home is seen to be a true foundation for the society as a whole, meaning that if there is no peace within the home, there can be no peace outside the home. Islam provides detailed guidance for the manner in which members of a society should interact with one another, where emphasis on mutual respect with each member, feeds into the society, the larger part of the community. This produces a society that is filled with peace, where each individual looks after the welfare and needs of the other members of society.

Thus, when Islam is enacted, individuals will find peace all around them; from within themselves and throughout the entire society. For a Muslim, it is in the hereafter, where it is only through belief in God and following His guidance that one will achieve eternal peace. “God calls to the home of peace (Paradise) and guides whom He wills to a Straight Path” (Quran: 10:25). Next, Islam brings about a sense of security, because of the simple fact that peace automatically brings about security, and security brings about laws. Islam is a religion that provides such detailed laws and God is the only one who has

the knowledge of this creation to be able to determine laws that can bring about peace and security.

So in answer to the question: is jihad an inner struggle or holy war, we must first look at jihad as a duty that may be fulfilled in four ways: by the heart, the tongue, the hand, or the sword. Jihad of the heart and soul: this means that it is an inner struggle of good against evil. Jihad by the tongue is a struggle of good against evil waged by writing and speech. Jihad by the pen and knowledge is a struggle for good against evil through scholarly study of Islam. Jihad by the hand refers to a struggle of good against evil waged by actions or with one's wealth, such as going on the Haaj, taking care of the elderly or political activity for furthering the cause of Islam. Jihad by the sword refers to armed fighting in the way of God. These concepts mentioned above within jihad, are all in support of my view which sees jihad as both a struggle and a holy war for defense of Allah or in the way of God.

The first requirement that is needed in order to begin is some knowledge of the nature of the Islamic mission, and of course definitions. God has sent the prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to be a caller, a Warner to mankind, of performing good deeds. He revealed to him principles of happiness for the community as well as for each and every individual; commanding people to judge on another by reason- with great emphasis in doing so on evidence. It propagates science and knowledge, delivers, clear rules' in specific to crimes. It urges individuals to do good, it preaches peace, puts and end to

distress, and principles of politics within a society are addressed. It talks about fighting injustice and corruption.

The root of the word “*Islam*” in Arabic is *Salama* which is the origin of the words peace and submission. Submission to God, and peace to all humanity, hence, in salutation, Muslims say “*Al Salamu Alaikum*” or peace be on you. This salutation in Islam states the fact that peace comes before speech. The Qur’an states: ‘let there be no compulsion in religion’ (Qur’an: 2:256). In regards to justice, Muslims are governed by laws that guide in the relationship between them and non-Muslims. The Qur’an states: “Allah forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for Allah loveth those who are just” (Qur’an: 60:08).

The root word of “*Jihad*” means “spent energy” the following are clarifications concerning the term jihad: Acts of jihad are limitless in Islam, for example, going to work, school, acts of devotion, or even little things following and respecting familial values; the highest stage of jihad is fighting an oppressor; defending your family, money, land or country; those are all examples of jihad- or struggles that individuals face may daily.

When non-Muslims misrepresent Islam and its values, they are misunderstanding the concept of what it is they are reading. Here is an example, “slay the infidels wherever

you find them....” This verse taken directly out of the Quran may to many see it as a calling for the slaying of all non believers of Islam, in reality what it means is Muslims have the right to attack the infidels if they attack them first. Let’s look at some verses from the Quran that explain things clearer: in Quran 2:190-193 here are a few: “ fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress limits, Gods loves not those who transgress”: this tells the Muslim to fight those who fight them, but it tells them to remember not to get carried away, it is only a means of defense and a last resort, “and slay them wherever ye catch them, and turn them out from where they have turned you out, for oppression is far worse than killing”, this means Muslims have the right to inflict the same injury that is inflicted upon them in the course of oppression, for as God says, starting trouble is far worse than killing.

“Fight them until there is no oppression and there exists justice, for if they cease, let there be no hostility”: this says that a Muslim, in the way of self-defense must fight his attacker until these cease their hostilities. Muslims believe that Islam is the true religion which God has improved on from the earlier ones, (what this means is that Judaism and Christianity are variants of Islam, which were perfected) that was revealed by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in Arabia in the seventh century. Muslims adhere to the five pillars of Islam- along with a sixth article of faith, that of jihad.

Therefore, they believe in the six articles of faith, and adhere to the five pillars of Islam. While the pillars are what make Muslims adhere to the same beliefs and practices, the differences come about in their interpretations of how they understand concepts of the

Holy Qur'an and the shari'ah law. This is exemplified in those Muslims who condemn terrorist attacks and advocate individual relationships with God instead and those who favor a literal and misconstrued interpretation of the Holy Qur'an in hopes of returning to the old traditional Islamic ideals. It is not that they are bad in nature, or that what they are doing that is, praying, regularly attending mosques are wrong, but what they wish for, promoting a theocratic government and enforcing the shari'ah Law will not work one-hundred percent.

These individuals are what lead to the definition of Islamic fundamentalists. The term fundamentalism was derived from a series of essays published in the US from 1910 to 1915 by Christian evangelists, with the intention of promoting the literal interpretation of the Bible. Religious fundamentalists believe that their sacred texts and religious leaders are truly infallible. Although their beliefs do not always end in terrorism, there is however some kind of violence as a result of their passion and conviction, i.e. violent protests.

The main problem of such Islamic fundamentalists in their efforts to practice their religion in an extreme manner stems from a sense of loss in strength and influence ever since the end of the Crusades around 1500- which before that, Islam had flourished during Europe's Dark Ages, recording cultural, political, literary, educational and artistic achievements. Their wish is to bring this "Golden Age" so to speak back in place.

Many Muslims whether radical or not feel that the Western presence in the Middle East has planted the seeds of evil so to speak for Islamic fundamentalism- ever since Europe's colonial period around the eighteenth century when all of North Africa and the Middle Eastern countries were pursued militarily and economically until the end of the second World War. Today they see the Western government's silence as one of complete acceptance to what is going on.

According to Osama Bin Laden, the call to wage war against America was made because America has "spear-headed the crusade against the Islamic nation" sending tens of thousands of troops to the Holy Lands, meddling in its affairs and its politics, and support oppressive, corrupt and tyrannical regimes. Also, you have Muslims who resent the American culture, arguing that their culture has been subsumed by the American culture, which as a result, spread rapidly through the world like a disease, the same feeling Banna and Qutb once felt.

According to radical Muslims, their communities have strayed away from basic principles and practices of their religion and that is why they see a need to expel Westerners from Muslim homelands and return to a literal interpretation of the Holy Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) teachings. According to Bassam Tibi, the goal of Islamic fundamentalists is to abolish the Western secular world order and replace it with a new Islamist order. Yes radical Islamists and their views of the world and how it should be seen and ordered is scary, but we must keep in mind that this is not how all Muslims are, nor how they perceive their religion to teach. There is a huge majority of

Muslims, who reside in the US, who are moderate and are accepting of the laws and values of its society and are still able to continue in the practice of their faith freely without any hatred or violence. They are the examples that represent the tolerance that Islam has for the entire Ummah.

The mission of the prophet was the unity of the creator and the worship only of him, and belief in him, (6:101-103) “the creator of the heavens and the earth- how should He have a son, seeing that He has no consort, and he created all things, and He has Knowledge of everything? That then is God your Lord; there is no God but He, the creator of everything, so serve Him, for He is guardian over everything. The eyes attain Him not, but He attains the eyes; He is the All-Subtle, the All-Aware.”

To understand that verse one will understand Islam’s position that in honor of man, it wants him to worship not something he cannot see, nor hear. By doing so, the Quran confirms the principles (that had been sent by previous messengers before) that the belief and worship in one God, and good deeds by straying away from evil is the true message sent by God to his creation. “Say you: ‘we believe in god and in that which has been sent down on us and down on Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, and Jacob and the tribes, and that which was given to Moses and Jesus; we make no distinction, no division between any of them, and to Him we surrender.’ In another verse, exemplifying man’s relationship with one another, “dispute not with the people of the book save in the fairer manner, except for those of them that do wrong; and say ‘we believe in what has been

sent down on us and what has been sent down to you; our God and your God is one, and to Him we have surrendered” (29:46).

These verses display what the Islamic mission is all about; they are all clear-cut and evident, not complicated or obscure. They are messages from previous messengers one that exemplifies not coercion, which means if there was some kind of force into making one believe in this religion then it would not be a part of Islam. As Mahmud Shaltut, a teacher as well as sheikh on Islamic Law in Egypt once wrote, “employing force as an instrument for conversion, means wrapping this mission in complexity, absurdity and obscurity and withholding it from the grasp of the human mind and heart,” a “terrible injustice” as he called it, as well as “a terrible injustice” and “at the same time an obstacle in the way of the mission” (Peters, 64).

As a matter of fact, the Quran has made it very clear that God does not wish people to become believers by force or compulsion of any kind. God wishes people to believe by ways of study, reflection, and most importantly contemplation. “Had they Lord willed, He would have made mankind one nation; but they continue in their differences, excepting those on whom thy Lord had mercy (11:118). “If thy Lord had willed, He would have made you one nation; but that he may try you in what has come to you” (Holy Qur’an: 6:35).

Free choice demonstration and investigation are all a part of the foundations of the principles of Divine Revelations- there is no power of coercion except that of the

power of argument, going back to free choice, if we have that then of course, everyone, individual can argue of their differences. We could look at the issue of repentance in the same light, then, one cannot be coerced into repenting, the Quran tells us that God will not turn towards those who do evil; they will turn away from evil themselves when they are visited by death and declare repentance. This simply means to say that in the Quran repentance is accepted if it has been aroused only by the self understanding.

‘Permission to fight is given to those upon whom war is made because they are oppressed, and most surely Allah is well able to assist them.’

- Holy Qur’an: 22:039)

We will now move to the verses that deal with fighting. The prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as we have explained had emigrated from Mecca to Medina for reasons of oppression in his religious freedom, punishment and terrorism for the sake of the creed in which he found reassurance, left everything behind and headed towards Medina. Of course those emigrating felt a need to resist oppression and asking him why we should leave our homes would feel the need to revenge themselves on the oppressors.

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) responded to them by saying “I have not been ordered to fight.” Later, the first verse was revealed to the prophet (22:39-41) “leave is given to those who are fought because they were wronged, surely God is able to help them-who were expelled from their habitations without right, except that say’ Our Lord is God.”” Clearly this verse deals with fighting, that is permission to fight from God if and only if injustice is the case. God only helps those who help him- of course when help

does not literally mean God- the divine creator of all things would need help from us- what this means is that the type of help that God is asking of us is to be caring, understanding and considerate of one another, to become peace loving individuals so that we may live in a state of peace and happiness.

Along with these things, He asks us not to overlook avoiding corruption and destruction. All this mentioned are clear cut and evident that fighting is not tied in anyway with the issue of compulsion-on the contrary, they are clear cut and evident signs that Islam is a religion concerned with righteousness and a world of civilized individuals, who live not in a state of hatred and fighting.

If we take a look at the verses “and fight in the way of God, those who fight you but aggress not: God loves not the aggressors”, and “slay them wherever you come upon them, and expel them from where they expelled you; persecution is more grievous than slaying”. “But fight them not by the holy mosque until they should fight you there; then, if they fight you, slay them- but if they give over, surely God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate”. All of those are verses given for reason to fight against persecution and aggression. (2:190-194).

This verse is taken right out of Surat al Baqara. The verse clearly states to fight the enemy just as they fight you. One has to keep in mind that the verse prohibits the provocation of hostility which is reinforced by God’s dislike against those who provoke hostility (the aggressors). Expelling people from their homes, instilling fear in their hearts

is “persecution” and persecution is worse than murder or any type of bloodshed. Therefore, those who provoke war, or instill fear in the hearts of those who live in peace, shall be fought just as those who are actually fighting in war. The verse also talks about the prohibition of fighting people in holy places (such a churches, mosques, synagogues) or even during the holy month of Ramadan. Unless, of course they have no choice and they are attacked there.

What this means is that their sacred protection (holy places of worships) have been violated, then and only then does fighting become lawful. The verse concludes by stating that the aim will be accomplished until there is no more persecution and the religion is God’s, so that people obtain religious freedom, with no oppression, torture, murder, because of they believe in The Judge that will hold them accountable for their actions. Fighting ends when this aim has been attained, and fighting has ceased. Therefore, in conclusion, is not to force conversion, it is plainly for reasons of expulsion from homes, violating God’s scared institutions and attempts of persecution of a peoples simple because of what they believe in. “Allah forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for (your) faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for Allah loveth those who area just” (Holy Qur’an: 60:08).

‘Fight with them.....whoever then acts aggressively against you, inflict injury on him according to the injury he has inflicted on you...’

- (Holy Qur’an:2:193-194)

The Quran mentions fighting and Jihad against the unbelievers, and many people believe fighting to be solely fighting those who do not believe, on the contrary, fighting is

only implied to those who are fighting in defense of the aggression of an oppressor. In support of this, the *Holy Qur'an* mentions, "If they break their oaths after their covenant and thrust at your religion, then fight the leaders of unbelievers" (9:12). This verse signifies that fighting is only allowed as a means of self defense. In 22:39 of the *Holy Quran*, "leave is given to those who fight because they were wronged-surely God is able to help them who were expelled from their habitations without right, except who say ' Our Lord is God'" is another.

Muslims regard the word and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad as authoritative sources of religious law and order (doctrine) the words and deeds, then later transmitted into many doctrines, known today to be called, *Al- Hadith*. Such were short accounts that were passed down from generation to generation, therefore allowing each person to learn to become accustomed to the customary practices that the Prophet lived by.

When God sent the prophet Muhammad and ordered him to summon the people to his religion, he did not permit him to kill or fight anyone, until after the emigration of the prophet to Medina. It was then that God sent the verse (22:39-41) to the prophet Muhammad (PBUH), "leave is given to those who are fought because they were wronged-surely God is able to help them-who were expelled from their habitations without right, except that say Our Lord is God". After that, verse (2:216) was sent, prescribing fighting in the following words "prescribed for you are fighting, though it be hateful for you. Yet, it may happen that you will hate a thing which is better for you; and

it may happen that you will love a thing which is worse for you. God knows and you know not.”

Justice is defined as nothing more than equality over disputed matters. The holy Quran lays down the true meanings of justice, and this can be seen in the following verse which is taken directly out of the Quran: “the Lord has commanded you to do justice...” (Holy Quran: 7:29). Islam places great emphasis on economical, political, and social issues of everyday life, calling on those who have the authority to promote or expand justice in whatever their field of work is. The Holy Quran reveals the term justice to be all that is good, healthy and desirable to life.

The Holy Quran and the *Sunnah* (literally translated to mean, the ways of prophet) tell us exactly how to promote and carry out justice. They aim for what is good for the individual; providing clear and practical ways for attaining justice. It then can be inferred that Islam places a huge burden of Muslims to uphold the cause of justice, the Quran says: “Surely, we have sent down the Book to you with the truth, so that you may do justice between men in the light of that which Allah has enlightened you. And do not be an advocate for the dishonest” and “Oh, you who believe stand firmly for justice, against yourself or your parents or your near relations- whether he be rich or poor-Allah has better right over them both” (Holy Quran: 4:35).

Thus, the whole concept of justice in Islam is to guide mankind in the right path that of peace and prosperity will then emit from such. Islam reminds us constantly that

there is no distinction made between the rich and the poor. Moreover, justice is the foundation, the cornerstone, so to speak of the structure of the Islamic state, which is based on the concept of justice along with its fundamentals embodied in the Holy Quran. We need to then talk about the effect that the media had played in hindering the image of Muslims and their belief; stereotyping all Muslims as being fundamentalists, terrorists, suicide bombers or “Haters of the West” is indeed a misnomer.

Let us look at one example that the media has portrayed. In an October issue of *Time*, Muslims were shown praying with guns in their hands, and under it read, “guns and prayer go together” What was not written was an explanation of what the picture was actually displaying; it was that of Muslims who yes, were praying with guns, but the reason was because they were praying on a battlefield in Afghanistan- obviously they were armed with guns even in prayer, for means of self defense.

“Fundamentalist beliefs” is the idea that the West has about Muslims, the belief in one God, and His prophet, the required prayers, fast, charity, and pilgrimage. I guess if anyone is to believe that any of the aforementioned pillars of faith are “Fundamentalist beliefs” then we can infer that their opinion is valid; implying that Muslims are indeed fundamental. When the media reports such fundamentalist beliefs as extremist ones, I can only say that this shows how many people are living in complete ignorance. The prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has even spoke of any persons who go to extremes in practicing their religions will be cursed by God.

One very important aspect of Islam is *wasat* (the way between two extremes) otherwise known as moderation. Islam teaches people to be moderate in their lives, not falling into one extreme or another. Furthermore, Islam discourages extremism in either direction. “Religion” the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) once asserted, “is very easy, whoever burdens himself in religion will not be able to continue in that way, they should therefore avoid being extremists, rather, try to be near to perfection” (Hadith).

Now, we will talk about the misconception in Islam, that which involves jihad. Jihad literally means to struggle, basically exerting one’s all for the sake of God. As mentioned earlier, they range from the struggle to getting an education to simply obeying one’s parents. So, right off the bat we see the whole concept of holy war, is nowhere mentioned in the definition. Let us recap the five fundamental pillars of Islam: belief that there is one God, Allah and that Muhammad (PBUH) is his prophet; performing the daily prayers; fasting during the Holy month of Ramadan; charity giving; and performing the holy pilgrimage and exerting oneself to do good works. Where is holy war come to play?

Now, after looking at the aforementioned pillars of Islam one needs to ask the question, what threat does Islam pose? We all understand, that in every religion there are zealots, one’s who destroy the image of a faith because of their wrong doings, so why judge the entire group based on the actions of a few? Such stereotypes perpetuate a bad image for Islam and any other religion with religious fundamentalists.

The Holy Quran teaches us that each and every individual was created to worship God. Then, it becomes clear that all human beings’ acts are acts of worship, if and only if

they are done so for God alone and of course in accordance with divine law. Islam also teaches that faith along with action go hand in hand; this is measured by the whole idea that human beings are given free will.

Recently there have been a number of questions about what Islam has to say about terrorism, and what jihad really means, why Islam teaches hatred towards other faiths and especially about Christianity and why Muslims hate America. What needs to be understood first of all, is that there are many Muslims condemn the attacks that have been made on the United States. Individuals who were the cause of suffering and the taking of innocent lives are considered criminals. Life is God's most precious gift to man, and anyone who takes the life of another is considered an evil doer. The *Holy Quran* states in chapter 5, verse 32, "whosoever killeth a human being for other than manslaughter or corruption in the earth, it shall be as if he had killed all mankind, and whoso saveth the life of one, it shall be as if he had saved the life of all mankind."

'I swear by God who has power over my life, you shall have to enforce good and curb evil and arrest the hand of the evil-doer and turn it by force to do right...'

- (Hadith: saying of the prophet Mohammed (PBUH))

For a true Muslim, there is no place or tolerance for any acts of terrorism, especially for ones in the name of God. The word jihad in the West connotes violence, and terror. It is most always translated to mean "holy war". The idea is that most people believe that Muslims are expected to take up arms for the sake of their God, by force, killing anyone in their way, or who do not believe. Jihad in Islam is the waging of peace and justice, not of war. The only war is war against the unjust, oppression, exploitation,

tyranny, corruption and not abiding by the human rights rules. The only weapons that Muslims use when waging this “war” is knowledge, effort, devotion, awareness, and prayer. Once again, jihad in Islam is not meant for domination or use of trying to attain personal, whether territorial or economical gains, it is far from that- it is to stand for those who are oppressed.

This is the true jihad, the internal and spiritual as well as moral struggle which leads a true believer to victory. This actually, is when the individual struggles in effort to overcome anything considered being wrong or hated by God- this then is the individual “inner struggle” or “greater jihad”. Therefore, jihad is an unselfish act and effort for the good of the self and the community.

Both the term ‘terrorism’ and ‘jihad’ are used today almost inseparably and interchangeably- what one side sees as a terrorist activity is seen by the other as a *jihadi* activity and what one sees as a jihadi activity, can be seen by the other as an act of terrorism. It must be understood though, that those minority of Muslims who partake in terrorist activities in the name of Islam, are not recognized by the majority of Muslims that they claim to represent- take for example, Al-Qaeda, they claim to represent the Muslim community, but in many countries, they are shunned and regularly proclaimed as wrongdoers. For them, a martyr is seen only as one who dies in the cause of God, fighting the oppressor and not killing himself for God.

We can thus define the term martyr in different ways. In Islam, a martyr is one who dies in the way of God, while taking part in jihad against the aggressors. By defining martyrdom as self-sacrifice for a sacred cause, we can easily see that it can be found not

only in the Islamic religion, but also in Christianity. The Christian martyrs rejected violent action, and refused to obey orders of the Roman emperor who wanted them to follow the official religion. We can infer that there are two types of martyrdom; the first being defensive, its goal is not that of violence, but to bear witness-even if it leads to death against the heretics and oppressors. The other is offensive, which implies an active, and if required violent struggle against those who the believer believes to be oppressors and heretics. The offensive martyr is inspired by the desire to destroy the enemy by resorting to violence that is sanctioned by religion- his struggle therefore, implies the killing of the infidel.

The term ‘martyrdom’ (*shahadat*) in the Holy Qur’an meaning bearing witness and not dying a holy death, in the process of fighting a holy war. The term *shahid* refers then to Muslim martyrs who die on the fields of battle while fighting the infidel. Therefore, the ‘bearing witness’ makes the martyr both the protagonist of a holy death and a witness to the truth of his faith. In Islam, martyrdom is a death which results from fighting the oppressor. So far we can understand:

- 1.) Martyrdom is the non-intentional result of death on the field of battle against those who have transgressed their boundaries, by oppressing a group based on their religious preference.
- 2.) The ideal type of martyrdom involves an active commitment on the part of the Muslim; fighting in the way or cause of God; means he will slay or be slain, he will use violence against the aggressor who pose a threat to them and the community in which they live in.

In Islamic teachings, it is not up to man to decide who is to live or die, nor is it up to them to judge or punish, this rests solely in the hands of God. Non-Muslims often take verses from the Quran and use it as a justification for adding to the stereotypes in Islam- the whole notion that the religion of Islam is one of violence and intolerance, spread and only growing by the sword. Let us take a look at some verses:

“Remember thy Lord has inspired the angels with the message. Give firmness to the believers and instill terror into the hearts of the unbelievers” (Quran: 8:12)

“When the sacred months have passed, kill the idolaters wherever you find them.” (Quran: 9:5)

“When you encounter the unbelievers, strike off their heads, until you have made a wide slaughter among them tie up the remaining captives” (Quran: 47:4)

Now, let us look at each one individually, the first verse, from chapter 12, verse 8, deals with the Battle of *Badr*- looking at this now, tells us that was delivered for Muslims in a time of battle and does not coincide with what Muslims are going through today. The next verse, chapter 5, verse 9, what tends to be left out of this verse is one that most always goes hand in hand with it, verses 4 and 6; read “but the treaties are not dissolved with those Pagans with whom you have entered into alliance and who have you subsequently failed you in aught, nor aided anyone against you. So fulfill your engagements with them to the end of their term: for God loves the righteous.” In others words, if anyone from amongst such Pagans ask for any sort of asylum one must grant it to him, and deliver them to safety.

The last verse, chapter 4, verse 47 was revealed during the first year of the *Higrah*, when Muslims were under threat of extinction by the invasions of the Meccans. What we then can infer from such, is that it has been proven how some non-Muslims who wish to attack the Islamic faith, leave out the most important verses, whether they be before or after of both, of a quoted verse; elaborating it in their own style and opinion of what they think or make it look to be.

Muslims who use verses from the Quran as a scapegoat to relieve themselves of the question, “is what I am doing right” are in direct misinterpretation. For a long time the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) show that Islam. From its very beginning, till this very day, represents a religion of peaceful coexistence. Terrorists who persecute innocent people “in the name of God” are not the devout Muslims they even view themselves to be. From this we can infer; there is no compulsion in the religion of Islam: “There is no compulsion in religion, for the right way is clearly from the wrong way” (Holy Quran: 2:256 and 24:54) and forgiveness and repentance are most certainly accepted and abided by in Islam: “But if they turn away from you and so it is your duty to accept and do the same” (Holy Quran: 16:82).

Also, no killing is justified in Islam, only that in battle which is only in self defense: “Whatever good betides you is from God and whatever evil betides you is from your own self” (Holy Quran: 4:79-80) and Islam is a religion of acceptance and tolerance. “And tell my servants that they should speak in a most kindly manner unto those who do not share their beliefs. Verily, Satan is always ready to stir up discord between men; for verily; Satan is mans foe...” (Holy Quran: 17:53-54 and 60:9)

Islam is a religion of peace. “We have not sent you except to be a mercy to all mankind...” (Holy Quran: 21:107-109) and Islam is a religion in which its followers worship and pray in the name of their God, *Allah*. “To every people have we appointed ceremonial rites of prayer, which they observe...?” (Holy Quran: 22:67) Every individual, whatever faith they are born into (even a Muslim) has the right to decide for themselves, what they want to believe in. “We have sent down the Book to you in right form for the good man. Whoso guided himself by it does so to his own advantage, and whose turns away from it does so at his own loss. You certainly are not their keeper.” (Holy Quran: 39:41).

‘O you who believe! Be careful of your duty to Allah and seek means of nearness to Him and strive hard at jihad in His way that you may be successful.’

- (Holy Qur’an: 5:035)

There are also teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) on how an individual should treat non-Muslims and neighbors on a daily bases, as well as how to the government of an Islamic State should treat non-Muslims. Those who believe in God and the Last Day should honor his guest, bring no harm to their neighbor, and speak only kind words to them. Those who hurt anyone, (whether or not a non-Muslim) hurt God, and will be dealt with in the Last Day.

Non-violence in its full sense is a powerful term, more effective and a lot stronger than actual outcomes of violence. It should be known that whether individuals, groups or communities are faced with severe problems, the best way to solve them is through non-violence. Solving a problem by peaceful means, avoiding any sort of conflict or war is

most always the best solution to solving any conflict. Islam, therefore, is a religion in which non-violence is taught. According to the Holy Quran, it shows that God does not love violence; any sort of disruption of any system, causing loss of lives and property is most hated by God.

God most certainly loves non-violence and those who practice and preach non-violence. A great example is that of God's ninety-nine names, with one being peace (Quran: 59:23). Therefore, the entire body of the Quran is in direct relationship with the concept of peace. Another word tied to non-violence, that is also as important is patience. Patience is set above any virtue; it implies peace response, whereas impatience implies of course, violent responses. *Sabr*, (patience), most definitely implies non-violence. We all know that violent actions only breed one thing, hatred within a society.

The end result of violence is destruction, whereby enmity flourishes, and negative values serve as problems for individuals. Now, moving on, both the Holy Quran and the Hadith have attached a great deal of importance to the issue of jihad. The *Holy Quran* is not only a book of ideology, but a weapon of jihad. Tying the two, both the *Holy Quran* and jihad, we can infer that reading the *Holy Quran* means to struggle to learn and understand its true meanings. Now to tie both the issue of non-violence as explained above, it is to say that jihad is another name for that peaceful activism which is essentially non-violence.

The Quran begins with the first verse revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) who was illiterate, read: "*Iqra*" translated to mean, "read" (Holy Quran: 96:1) We can infer from this that the Quran tells us to read, to learn and understand anything

before judging blindly, it is through reading that we can understand one another. According to the Holy Quran, after the treaty of Hudubiya (a no-war pact that the Prophet Muhammad- PBUH came up with as a means for peaceful coexistence between the different tribes), the energies spent, or jihad of the believers was to be utilized only in the peaceful construction of activities that remained humble to the community.

Even though permission is given if one is attacked, one is not supposed to retaliate immediately, rather try and do everything in their power to avoid any short comings. There were only three times that the Muslims, were really in war, during the many battles fought in pre-Islamic Arabia, we see that war then was inevitable; with the aggressors compelling the prophet and his followers to fight in self-defense.

With the Holy Quran as a tool based on the principle of non-violence, it is indeed unlawful for Muslims to initiate hostilities; no matter what with the exception and cases of self defense has become inevitable, no permission is given for violence. Now, if you wonder why all this that I talk about seems contradictory to what is known about Islam, today is because most Muslims do not abide by the Sunnah, it is as if they have forgotten it, or are misunderstanding it rather.

Now, if we look at the choices the Prophet had during the time, it was either: 1.) wage a war against the aggressors in the name of self-defense, in order to secure their right to believe in whatever they wished; and the other 2.) remain patient in the name of non-violence. We see that the Prophet (PBUH) had decided to choose the second course of action. The result being history as we know it, a revolution that left a great mark in on history, with alliance being made between those Meccans who followed the Prophet and

most of the Jews in the city of Medina. The Holy Quran even describes the treaty of Hudabiyah as a “clear victory”, in the sense that it had established peace between two groups (the believers and the non believers), thus making possible communication and understanding of the two. If modern day Muslims look back to the early period of Islam where “victory” was established because of understanding, then they can allow themselves the opportunity to revive the path of acceptance.

An example of what happened centuries ago is being shown to us even today; whether it be in Palestine- the torment and torture that Palestinians are facing or be it in Iraq, innocent lives that have been taken in the name of ousting one; or be it in France, second and third generation Muslims who are being discriminated upon just for being Arabs and Muslims. Muslims are suffering losses, at the hands of other nations but this is a test from God of their patience, a test which they seem to not be passing just yet.

Another player in the field of violence and one that is often overlooked is freedom. Mankind today is facing the growing problem of knowing how much freedom they have and how free they actually are. Man has known that the highest good in life is that of freedom- and after attaining this good, man was unable to set his/her limits in the process of attaining such. The consequence is outbursts of confusion, and lawlessness. We see this in every society. The goal is to find an ideology that will draw the limit line so to speak; between what is one’s right of freedom and what is not. Islam can provide man with such an ideology and that ideology is one that will be based on peace, providing answers and solutions to questions. There are already some who have

acknowledged them in theory while others have gone to even greater lengths by accepting Islam in practice.

Another important aspect taken into consideration is that of an imbalance between the concepts peace and justice. Most Muslims do not agree with the idea that having peace means necessarily means justice has been established. They want to see peace come hand in hand with justice; it is because they feel that this will never be achieved that they become distressed and think violent actions is the only way. We all know that peace does not always entail justice and it does not always come together in one package. Again, during the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) time, he had not found justice right away, he had achieved it later on through peaceful means and not only ensured justice but, set Islam on solid ground.

Once again, Islam means peace, if one is to assert that Islam means violence, and then it is necessary to look at the definition of violence first. We all know that there are several definitions for the word violence some are as follows: 'the use of physical force against persons that potentially causes fear, injury or death', 'that force which is employed against the common right', 'against the laws and against public liberty', 'the quality or state of being violent'; that is not Islam, it may be acts of some Muslims, but it has nothing to do with Islam.

Now if we look at each one, we can see that Islam does not in any way employ any of these terms in any of their practices, on the contrary, the goal of Islam is to establish *ta'adul* (equilibrium) amidst tension of such forces. We can tie this to the concept of justice in that *al-'adl* (justice) is related to this equilibrium. Only force used

under the specified guidance of the shar'iah is accepted in that it aims to re-establish that equilibrium that was destroyed because of violence therefore attempting to establish justice.

Therefore, Islam only uses force in the instance and aim of establishing equilibrium and harmony, and not for personal, or religious matters, or hatred, because it knows of no such thing. So, with that said it is quite obvious that use of "unjust" force against the rights of others, is totally unacceptable in Islam. The rights of each and every individual is defined by Islamic Law and therefore protected by this Law. The violators of any one's rights are not due to the teachings of Islam, but the actions and imperfections of individuals in understanding the Divine Law. The goal of Islam is therefore the attainment of peace, that peace which can only be brought out by jihad (exertion, in this manner). Islam only seeks to enable man to live with nature, not violating it; it is only condoned when man turns against such.

According to the Qur'an, an Islamic State has been given permission to fight against persecution. This is the only reason for which a Muslim state can take an aggressive stand against another people. The taking of any human life is not allowed and this is stated in the *Holy Qur'an*, in the verses relating to jihad and those relating to taking another's life. The taking of one life is the same as the killing of the whole of mankind. "Whosoever killed a single soul, except being a punishment of murder- is as if he killed the whole of mankind" (Holy Qur'an: 5:32).

The Quran and what was ascribed to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) point to the ethical issues that relate to jihad. Some of these issues are: jihad does not cover the

actions of terrorist activities; it is actually considered in an Islamic State, as persecution; a Muslim state cannot perform jihad against a rival state, in violation of any agreements made; and even in a state of war against other nations, Muslims cannot make non-combatant people (men, women and children) a target of their attacks.

God asks Muslims to strive only for him, “As for those who strive in the cause of Allah, we surely guide them to our paths and lo! Allah is with the good doers” (Holy Quran: 29:69). When faced with competing interests, it is therefore jihad to choose which one is the right path. Hadith also explain this: “Aisha, the wife of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) asked, ‘o messenger of Allah, we see jihad as the best of deeds, so shouldn’t we join it?’” The Prophet’s reply: “the best of jihad is the Hajj” and another is when a man asked the Prophet (PBUH): “Should I join the jihad?” The Prophet (PBUH) asked “do you have parents?” The man replied, ‘yes’; then the Prophet said, ‘then strive by serving them’”

The Qur’an is a Holy Book revealed to people as a guide to the true path, in it, God commands man to adopt good morals; such morality is based upon concepts such as love, compassion, tolerance and mercy. The Qur’an states, “O, you who believe! Enter absolute into peace (Islam). Do not follow in the footsteps of Satan. He is the enemy to you.” Therefore, the Qur’an holds all Muslims responsible for treating all people, (Muslims and non-Muslims alike), kindly and justly, protecting the needy and preventing mischief.

For those who have a bad view towards Islam and its jihad; one must first understand the full context of the term. Muslims who misconstrue jihad and non-Muslims

who may not understand it at all need to understand that jihad is a tool for Muslims as a guide toward peace. It is Islam's objective to save humanity from evil doing or bad deeds; it does so through jihad. Islam, right from the very beginning sought out a peaceful methodology toward its propagation. Islam is a system, providing guidance at all times and situations until the Day of Judgment.

For Muslims who destroy the image of Islam, they need to understand this; the Prophet (PBUH) was faced with aggression in his time, but he had rejected it in peaceful manner- they need to understand that they too must reject it in the same light. The Prophet and his followers did not engage in any physical struggle with the unbelievers until the Islamic state was established in Medina and they were able to defend their religion.

Therefore, the term jihad is governed by strict laws and rules that are derived from the *Holy Qur'an* and the teaching that were ascribed to the Prophet (PBUH). For example, jihad, in the *Holy Qur'an* is declared warfare against injustice and oppression; which can only be carried out by an organized Muslim state. Keeping this idea in mind, we can infer that no terrorist activities can fall in this context, even if such activity is sponsored or even backed by an organized state. In addition to jihad's strict laws and rules; there are moral and ethical teachings regarding the term as well. These teachings are based on fundamental teachings of the *Holy Qur'an*, for example, if a Muslim nation has entered into a no-war pact with another nation-jihad cannot be carried out against that nation.

The term ‘fanaticism’ is too most often used. First off, it are definitely not terms used in the shar’iah; If one is to call Islam, a religion of fanaticism, then they must first analyze the Holy Qur’an to understand on what basis and grounds it is, that lead them to make such an interpretation. The whole idea between the varying religious beliefs of each individual Muslim is based on the notion of the interpretation of the Qur’an and the laws of jihad. It is only out of ignorance and intolerance of Muslims and non-Muslims alike, that they try and make justifications as to what is “correct”, based on reason and opinion.

For example, let’s look at the verse from *Surat Al-Baqarah*, chapter 193, and verse 2: “and fight then until there is no more tumult or oppression, and there prevails justice and faith in God.” Now, here we can see how one could easily interpret this verse as directing all Muslims to fight non-Muslims- which is not what it is stating. What it is really saying is, “and fight in the way of God, against those who fight you, but do not transgress; God does not like those who transgress,” furthermore, an omitted part of the verse continues to say, “... but if they desist from fighting, then God is All Forgiving, Most Merciful, then there shall be no war except against those who are bent upon injustice.”

It must be kept in mind that the fighting that is ordained in the above mentions verse was addressed to the Muslims of Medina at the time of the Prophet Mohammed, against the oppressors of the *Qurayshi* tribe; where it was declared war against

oppression, persecution and rejection of God's messenger. It is safe to conclude from this, the following: "Fighting" is addressed to an established Muslim state, under the direct threat of another; "Fighting" should only be against those who fight you first- those who "fight" without reason, simply for not accepting another group to believe freely, is guilty of persecution; If Muslims "fight" it is for two reasons; to defend themselves and their religion and put an end to persecution and finally, if those who "fight" you, desist from "fighting"- so are you, for permission to fight is only given to those who are bent upon injustice.

Mecca, since the past until even today, is known as "*Um al-Qur'a*" (mother of the world). It was there that the cultural and religious centers of the Arab world emerged. The language dialect and the cultural and religious traditions of Mecca have greatly influence the entire Arabia. It was through the Prophet's migration to Medina that the Islamic state was formed- and emerged the rise of the Muslim empire.

Islam is not merely jihad; it is the spiritual connection between an individual and God, one in which the individual commits to the teachings that God had ascribed to the Prophet Mohammed. Muslims today wonders what to do in order to strive to do good deeds; learning about their religion correctly, and applying that which is learned into their life. The passion one has toward their religion should be directed correctly. There exists no Islamic country in a state of war that meets the requirements for jihad. Those who claim to fight in the name of God are doing so against the principles of Islam- their use of the Holy Qur'an to justify their illegal actions are totally un-Islamic. Furthermore, they only use Islam as a political weapon, an excuse- and one that misguides the entire world.

“When we look at the scripture, the sunnah, and Muslim history in the days of the Rightly-guided Caliphs, we find that Islam is definite and conclusive on all general principles suitable for all times, places and peoples.”

- Abd al-Rahman ‘Azzam

The Islamic state’s existence in early Arabia was one that was tied with the true ideological structure of the makeup of a state. The features of a state as described by Fred Donner in his article over *The formations of the Islamic State* includes: the law of autonomy, law or legitimacy, and the state authority over domains and state it’s responsibility for such domains. Donner illustrates to us in order starting with autonomy that, the autonomy of a state in the early Islamic period is one with an ideological feature. Although few documents survive on its documentation, those that do explicitly declare the state’s independence and status as an equal of others, such as that of the Byzantine of the Umayyad state- which is displayed by the architectural monuments of caliphs, and the Dome of the rock in Jerusalem are clear examples of such (Donner, pg.289).

The concepts of Law and Authority; following the state’s autonomy, is considered the most important ideological concept in relation to that of Law. Donner describes this feature as one whose authority rests on the claim that it is the agency of the application of the concept of Law. Such claims he asserts can be seen in the early caliphs as well as their adoption on the carious monuments of Byzantine symbolism; such as winged horses, and the decorations of the Dome of the Rock (Donner, pg.290). However, going to an even greater extent in proving such, early Islamic society espoused such a broad concept of Law, and the state’s authority rested on the executer of such a Law; the Divine Law- otherwise known as the shari’ah. The notion taken here of that Law as the

legitimizing feature behind the government's actions are of course dated back from the second half of the first century after the Hijra.

Moving now on to the third feature, the state responsibility for domains we can infer that indeed it has been evidenced that the state has shown support and responsibility for the welfare of its population. *Jizya* (tax imposed on non-Muslims) as we had mentioned in the first half of the paper, in Pre-Islamic Arabia existed for that particular reason and purpose.

Islam plays a great political role in the domestic affairs of most of the Muslim countries. Islam must be understood as a religion that is a belief system based on matters of man's relationship to God- as well as his relationship to his community. This can only be understood to mean one thing, that Islam shows no sign of dichotomy between religious and civil matters. In Islamic government, any good Muslim believer can rule, if and only if he follows the shari'ah. The reason for this is that the shari'ah covers all matters, whether social, economic or political. Now, having established that Islam places a huge amount of importance on the relationship of religion and politics, we will consider its basis on the role in contemporary times with that of the issue of jihad.

Modernity is another big issue; we define the term as a culture that places a high value on worldly materials, modern technology and techniques. Generally speaking however, Muslims, because they are considered fundamentalists, are considered as not entertaining the idea of modernity and are completely opposed to its values. On the contrary, Islam, the sunnah and the entire Muslim history is definite and conclusive on all principles suitable for all times, places, and peoples. Islam does not contend itself on just

the fact that it establishes acts of worship, it heeds to the needs of the entire society; establishing ways of conduct, relationships as well as obligations for members of its community.

The reoccurrence of revivalist movements in Islam can be explained by the inability of the Muslim community. They feel that there has been a failure to preserve the Islamic religion and community, and to realize what the true ambitions of the Prophet were in creating a unified world on the basis of Islamic principles. This “revivalism” takes on the idea of going back to the beginning, the way Islam was practiced by Muhammad (PBUH) and the later Caliphate and the application of the shari’ah, the weapon they use for this revival is jihad.

Jihad not seen as a violent instrument is thus defined as an effort. The Holy Qur’an tell us that if one were to come across evil they should try to stop it with his tongue and when it cannot, it must stop it with his hand. People argue that the actions of Muslims are un-Islamic, yet as we all know the actions of individuals in other religions seldom consistent with their doctrines too. Islam is a belief system based upon *Haqq* (truth, justice, and duty). As with other religions, Islam is concerned with the rights of humans, the dignity of individuals, and their identity. Islam establishes a social order designed to promote freedom, justice and opportunity.

Yet, there exists a global system that which is based on attitudes that are not consistent with hat of Islam; one that teaches- despite differences, and as an appreciation of the diversity of cultures, conduct, law and order still remains one. Islam defines behavior as a social order based upon sincerity and good deeds, Abdul Aziz Said, in his

work on *Concept and practice in Islam*, defines a community of individuals working to perform such good deeds as: “a group of people cooperating together for the sake of the common good” (Said, pg. 64).

This community he talks about works to achieve the political system by which it utilizes its resources to achieve. This political system is designed to create just laws to all persons in the community. Said goes on to say that in order for there to be a creation of just laws in the first place there has to be power (In Islam, power is the ability to make peace) (Said, pg. 64). Said goes on to say that the political system must be self-sufficient, meaning it must satisfy the needs of the community. He defines self-sufficiency as “an achievement based on the fact that demands equal supplies; when members of the community increase their demand, the system should increase its supply” (Said, pg. 65). Self-sufficiency is not just a problem solver so to speak for unrest, it is also, one in that erases and deals with other internal problems such as hunger, and oppression.

The purpose of the state Islam is to enforce the principles of the shar’iah, and all encompassing law derived from the *Holy Qur’an*, the sunnah, and the hadith. They consist of the opinion of the *Ulama* (judges) and *Ijtihad* (counsel of judges). The shar’iah states that there has to be a community that is ruled under the jurisdiction which again, satisfies the material as well as spiritual needs of the people. The rulers, as well as the ruled are working together to fulfill the commands of God, the achievement of happiness for all. Since it is the Islamic state that derives justification from the shar’iah, it is the state’s duty to enhance human dignity and alleviate conditions that hinder individuals in their efforts to achieve that happiness in accordance with the Holy Qur’an.

The developmental process is a process with a goal, the way of realizing the potential for a particular society and its members within. Modernization is the adoption of modern technology for the uses of society in an attempt to make that society more rational and efficient, though the use of comprehensive planning, rational administration and scientific evolution (Said, pg. 70-71). Islam places a huge emphasis on modernization and its relationship between the individual and material possessions.

The Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) stated, “Natural resources have been created by God to make them useful to individuals- no one own the right of private ownership, all is owned by God alone” (Hadith). Islam views materialism as detrimental to the human dignity, one that undermines the nobility of the individual. The economic doctrine of the shar’iah consists of traditionalists, secularist and socialists. Present day Islamic states do not pattern their economic practice after the concepts of the shar’iah and instead deny that it has any strategic usefulness in modern materialism.

In an article written by *Matthias Kuntzel* a Hamburg-based political scientist, *Jew-Hatred and jihad*, Kuntzel talks about the true reason behind the September 11th 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center. He explained how Hitler’s “plan of action” foreshadowed September 11th: “He envisioned having kamikaze pilots fly light aircraft packed with explosives and with no landing gear into Manhattan skyscrapers” (Kuntzel, pg.31). Kuntzel adds, “not only to fight a military adversary, but to kill Jews everywhere.” Mohammed Atta, the Egyptian who piloted the plane that struck the North Tower of the World Trade Center said reasons for such attacks were based on “National Socialist ways

of thinking;” Atta was convinced that the Jews were striving for world domination, and since New York City is considered the center for Jews, it was a good target place.

While Kuntzel may believe that the beginning of Islamism was the Muslim Brotherhood, which may be the case, Kuntzel believes that the Brotherhood’s goal was a campaign directed against the Jews. In reality, as I have explained, its initial aim was to eliminate the threat of colonialism and social reform in Egypt, but that it was later stretched to play a major political role in the Egyptian nationalist movement; promoting the beginnings of Islam, with the goal of restoring broken tradition. Kuntzel argues that the Brotherhood remains till this day the “ideological reference point and organization core for all later Islamist groups, which include al-Qaeda and Hamas” (Kuntzel, pg.31).

On the contrary, today, one can argue that although the Brotherhood is considered illegal in many countries such as Egypt, it practices non-violence; seeking to correct its mistakes and follow up on its original ideas. The Egyptian government has never convincingly justified its continued ban of the Muslim Brotherhood, which has renounced violence for more than 30 years. The fact that the Egyptian government has shut the door in the face of the Muslim Brotherhood, has contributed to the rise of violent groups that in seeing this have vowed to use their hand to push open the door that was shut.

The Brotherhood’s campaign against the Jews, using Nazi-like tactics is not at all true; on the contrary, the tactics used by the Jews themselves against Palestinians is what Kuntzel himself explains as such tactics. For Kuntzel to further go on to propagate attacks by the Ku Klux Klan or Oklahoma City’s bomber, Timothy McVeigh as the

dream of Islamists to carry on against the Zionists shows how Kuntzel thinks Jews are the main concern for extermination by Islamists.

“We decreed upon the Children of Israel that whoever kills a soul-unless for a soul or for corruption in the land-it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And, whoever saves one, it is as if he had saved mankind entirely.”

- *(Holy Qur'an: 5:32)*

It is funny how we now arrive at the word extermination. Extermination is defined as: the act of killing or murdering with the intention of eradicating demographics within a population. When applied to humans, the term genocide comes to play; however, extermination is categorized in international criminal law as a crime against humanity. Israel is doing just that succeeding in there campaign to portray Palestinians as terrorists. The question we should ask is who really is the terrorist? How can a group of people come into a country, exterminate and terrorize its people and claim it theirs?

Avi Shlaim, an Iraqi-Jew born in Baghdad, Iraq is a historian who is considered a key Israeli scholar formally known as the New Historian who put forth an interpretation of the true history of Zionism and Israel from its very beginning. His deep interest in the history of Israel began in 187 when he took the position of a Professor at St. Antony's College in Oxford. In his book entitled, *War and Peace in the Middle East*, Shlaim lays out the several promises that the British made against the Ottoman Empire. Of them the most famous was the Balfour Declaration; this was a pledge made in November of 1917 in a letter from British foreign secretary Arthur Balfour to Lord Rothschild, a British Zionist Jew.

Balfour pledged Britain's support for a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine, thus Britain issued the Balfour Declaration in order to gain wartime support from the Jews in Europe and the United States. The question one can now ask is "what are the people of Palestine going to think about their guests" and how can the British even assume that both races could live peacefully in a single state?" Nonetheless it happened and hostility broke out. What happened instead of siding with the Palestinians? In 1920 Britain set up an administration to govern the country incorporating its mandate, the Balfour promise to support the "Jewish National Home."

To the Arabs all over the Middle East, this was unacceptable. Neighboring Arab states became directly involved in the Palestinian conflict, seeing it as an attack on their people. Palestine became a pan-Arab question and thus, its neighbors were now involved directly with the issues.

Israel, formerly known as Palestine, had been chosen on the religious belief that Abraham had promised the area to his children in biblical times. They claimed their home of Israel, given by Abraham, was taken away from them during the imperialistic era of Rome. However, this argument can go both ways; the birth of the Palestinian nation occurred when Abraham fathered a child by a slave, who was later sent away by his wife making Abraham the father to the nation of Palestinians as well- meaning that they too were promised Israel. We can see that the so-called "State of Israel" made its way into history through war, hostility and aggression against the Arabs. As Shlaim puts it, "to the Israelis it was a war of survival" (Shlaim, pg. 23).

It is this history of bloodshed that has pushed Palestinians and Muslims all over to a point of desperation; taking desperate measures in terrorism since the United States is surely aware of what is going on in the country yet ceases to do anything to aid the numbers of Palestinians that continue to die. What does Kuntzel have to say about this? In an article written by Sanna Abed-Kotb on *The goals and strategies of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt*, quotes John Esposito of Georgetown University who writes on the “Islamist threat”: “the most significant aspects of Islamism are not “bombs and hostages” but, clinics and schools; the “battle” is often one of the Pen, tongue, and heart rather than of the sword.” So in the midst of what appears to be Islamist militancy to completely wipe out non believers, advocating violence and hatred, the Brotherhood proves to be nothing compared to Hamas, al-Qaeda, or the Israeli occupation and genocide.

The issue of why the West rejects the whole idea of holy war is dealt with in Johnson’s, book entitled, *Holy War Idea in Western and Islamic Traditions* which states, “the rejection of the West over the idea of holy war was a result of three historical experiences, both emotional and political.” Johnson states that the only three reasons as follows: only defense of religion, not its propagation, could justify use of military force; a sense of revulsion at the brutality of war for religion and the inversion and redefinition of the relation between Church and State (Johnson, 10-12).

Differences in both cultures is what triggers difficulty in understanding one another, the West sees jihad and its war for theological, psychological and political as well as philosophical reasons, Muslims see the West as an institution which makes jihad unthinkable, a reason to fight without one, but the truth of the matter is, they fight to

defend religion against enemies; verses 22:39-41 and 2:193-94 stating: “Leave is given to those who fought because they were wronged...” and ‘Fight with them.....whoever then acts aggressively against you...’ are both two examples and reasons that are given as legitimate for fighting.

In helping address such reasons in a more understandable manner Rudolph Peters’ book entitled, *Classical and Modern Islam*, states that there are three main reasons defending the justification of jihad are to stop aggression; to protect the Mission of Islam and to defend religious freedom.

In reference to the second and third reasons given by Peters as a justification of jihad is *jizya*. *Jizya* is a poll tax imposed on all non-Muslims residing in Muslim territories ascribed during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). That sum of money from such a tax is allocated and used for military purposes, i.e.: weapons. Moreover, it is a non-Muslim pays as a waiver, since they are not partaking in war which only occurs in self defense, and since the Muslims of the territory are, they need to compensate for such, so essentially it is as if they have partaken in the fight for defense of the country since they too live in it (Peters, 77).

Moving on to the defense of religion in the Qur’an, there are two categories we need to consider in armed religious warfare: “*offensive*” and “*defensive*”. The offensive aspect is that all states as well as governments will be fought as long as they follow principles conflicting to those of Islam. The defensive aspects is the fact that the present territory of Islam must be protected as a basis for expansion, the other part of the

defensive aspect, is the fact that the Islamic movement protects man against factors that hold back the freedom of an individual.

“The terrorist attacks on September 11th 2001, have given rise to questions about whether the nature of Islam breeds terrorism or if rogue Muslims misinterpret the Qur’an. Some people argue that poverty and lack of democracy in Muslim nations- not Islam- contributes to acts of terrorism. In fact, many contend that the Qur’an advocates tolerance and peace. Terrorists who claim to act in accordance with Islam manipulate the Qur’an’s message to achieve domination and power”.

-Margot Patterson (senior writer for the National Catholic Reporter; a weekly Catholic journal.

Mark Gabriel, former professor of Islamic history at Egypt’s Cairo University- Al-Azhar, states that Islam does not guarantee Paradise even if one does good deeds all his/her life and that it all depends on what Allah decides. Furthermore, he states that the “sad” part is that Muslims will never have assurance of salvation. First off, to respond to that is to say that whether it is the intention to do good works or deeds in order to gain entrance into paradise or not, one still should strive to continue to do good works and deeds- even if it is up to Allah to decide if the deeds and works that they have performed are up to Him to decide if they are legitimate enough to reward him (the believer) with paradise.

Gabriel makes it seem as though, since there is no guarantee that we will be rewarded for our deeds then we must give up, we are wasting our time essentially. There is no time being wasted when we make use of it serving mankind and helping others and at the same time ourselves to become better individuals. Muslims do not do good just to enter paradise; they do good to earn Allah’s mercy on the in the end- where everyone

will be held accountable for his/her actions and behaviors and because they strive to maintain the peaceful environment that Allah has created for us all (Gabriel, pgs. 28-30).

Guarantee into Paradise by becoming a suicide bomber, like Gabriel says is not true at all. The only way to guarantee entrance into Paradise for what Gabriel understands is to die in jihad- that to him means to die fighting the enemy of Islam. Again, his understanding of jihad altogether is completely wrong. As already mentioned, entrance into Paradise is based on the one and only jihad, which means the day-to-day struggle in striving to do good works and deeds, and nothing about killing oneself or others; the holy Qur'an maintains: "whoso fights in the Cause of Allah, and is killed...We shall bestow on him a great reward" (4:74). What this means is that those who are killed in the fight for defense only, are the individuals who will automatically gain entrance into Paradise, and not those who kill themselves on purpose for the purpose of gaining Allah's reward.

It is in the duration of the fight, if one is killed that upon them Allah will bestow His reward. This means plainly, we cannot throw ourselves at war, or try to kill ourselves or others around us (suicide bombings) in order to have this reward. We cannot go on assuming that the actions of a group of individuals and what they perceive to be true and justified is right, for these individuals do not understand the true message that Allah has sent forth through his messenger Muhammad (PBUH), they have misconstrued it and elaborated a whole new meaning for it. Therefore, it is not through fighting and bloodshed that allows a person a ticket so to speak to Paradise, but it is through good works, actions and deeds altogether that allows a person entrance to Paradise.

Gabriel tells the reader in his book, *Islam and Terrorism*, that Muslims believe dying in jihad is the only way they can be assured entering Paradise at all. He goes on to support his argument by telling us that that is why we see Muslims from around the world leaving their own countries to fight jihad in other ones. Muslims feel an obligation to help defend those who are oppressed by another. The Holy Qur'an states: "What has happened to you? Why do you not fight in the way of God in support of men, women and children, whom finding helpless, they have repressed; and who pray, "O God! Liberate us from this habitation which is ruled by tyrants."(Holy Quran 4:75) We can easily see that Allah has prescribed fighting to those who are oppressed, and those who are not, but in seeing those who are should help them, for it is a duty bestowed on all Muslims, but if they can avoid it, then by all means they should. The Holy Qur'an states: "...but if they desist from fighting, then God is All Forgiving, Most Merciful, then there shall be no war except against those who are bent upon injustice" (Gabriel, pgs. 28-30).

The author, Mark Gabriel again goes on to point out his ignorance over the subject of jihad by stating that jihad is waged by Muslims against those who do not convert to Islam. Once again, there is no coercion in Islam, jihad is only waged in self defense- if and only if one attacks you (and even then you strive to make peace so that there shall not be a reason to resort to violence) and the other is against those who believe not in Allah and the final day. The author and former professor at the renowned University of Al-Azhar continues to tell us that the first messages that were presented to the people by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) from Allah were peaceful and kind, he says that they were sugar coated in order to "attract people"(Gabriel, pg.30).

First of all, there is no religion on the face of this planet that would want to sugar coat anything about their faith in order to attract anyone into it; in the case of Islam, the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) was not selling a car, and definitely not a religion, he was simply sending the message to all the people, the very message that Allah had revealed to him, which was to believe that in that there is only One God (this message was the same that was sent down to earlier messengers, such as Moses and Jesus- a message to the pagans, to do away with their worshipping of inanimate objects, idols in which they themselves have hand crafted and called their gods). The Holy Qur'an states: "And fight them until there is no more disbelief and polytheism, and the religion will be that for Allah alone, but if they cease worshipping others besides Allah, then certainly, Allah is All-Aware of what they do" (Holy Qur'an: 8:39). Basically, this verse says to fight those who reject God's existence, and nothing about fighting those who reject Islam.

For Gabriel to tell us that the *Holy Qur'an* tells Muslims to not be friends with the Christians or Jews he backs this up from a verse in the *Holy Qur'an* which states: "Take not the Jews and the Christians as friends, they are but friends of one another. And if any amongst you takes them as friends, then surely he is one of the" (Holy Qur'an: 5:51) (Gabriel, pg.35). This statement is completely misinterpreted and the verse is often quoted by individuals like Mark Gabriel who wish to show that Islam is a religion of intolerance.

The Truth, as I have already made very clear, is that the *Holy Qur'an* is a complete Book of guidance, and while it is read, one should keep in mind that issues that are covered and discussed in a chapter, is often readdressed again and again in various

other chapters throughout the Book-therefore, taking one part of the Holy Qur'an on any one particular issue one should keep this in mind. In order to fully understand the *Holy Qur'an*, one has to understand fully the issues as they are presented throughout it.

The *Holy Qur'an* even tells us that, it tells us that we must not uphold a part of the Holy Qur'an or even parts of the *Holy Qur'an*, but the whole in its entirety without disregarding anything. "Then is it only parts of the Book that ye believe in, and do you reject the rest? But what is the reward for those among you who behave like this but disgrace in this life? And on the Day of Judgment they shall be consigned to the most grievous penalty. For God is not unmindful of what ye do (Holy Qur'an: 2:85).

Now to go back and address the issue of befriending Jews and Christians, we have to study all those verses from the *Holy Qur'an* collectively to be able to address this topic. Let us look for example at two particular verses that relate to relations with any people, regardless of faith. "As for the unbelievers who do not fight against you on the account of your faith, and neither drive you forth from your homelands, God does not forbid you to show them kindness and to behave towards them with full equity; for verily, God loves those who act equitably" (Holy Qur'an: 60:08).

And verse, 60:09 of the *Holy Quran* which states: "God only forbids you to turn in friendship towards such as fight against you because of your faith, and drive you forth from your homelands, or aid others in driving you forth; and as for those from among you who turn toward them in friendship, it is they, they who are truly wrongdoers".

As we can see from the above verses, Muslims are only discouraged from befriending those who fight Muslims because of their religion. Let us take a look back to the time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), when the Jews and Christians were in open conflict with the Muslims; but, let us bear in mind that despite they were in a constant state of war with them, there were some Muslims who were more concerned about maintaining their alliances with the Jews and Christians at the expense of the Muslim community.

The above verse is referring to such situations where Muslims will ally themselves with the enemy. Now we can go back to chapter 5 Verse 51 of the Holy Qur'an, which maintains and makes clear who not to be friends with and look at the later verse in the same Chapter, "O you who believe! Take not for friends and protectors those who take your religion for a mockery or sport, whether among those who received the Scripture before you, or among those who reject Faith; but remain conscious of God, if you are truly believers" (Holy Qur'an: 5:57).

This therefore shows that Allah teaches Muslims throughout the Holy Qur'an that there are righteous Jews and Christians as there is not, and there is no prohibition for Muslims to befriend the Jews or Christians, let alone any other people of any faith who are good in character and morale. Furthermore, the Holy Qur'an states: "Of the people of Moses there is a section who guide and do justice in the light of truth" (Holy Qur'an: 7:159) and, "We caused Jesus, the son of Mary, to follow in the footsteps of those earlier prophets, confirming the truth of whatever there still remained of the Torah; and We sent him the Gospel, wherein there was guidance and light, confirming the truth of whatever

there still remained of the Torah, and as a guidance and admonition unto the God-conscious” (Holy Qur’an: 5:46).

Also, “Verily, those who have attained to faith, as well as those who follow the Jewish faith, and the Christians and all who believe in God and the Last Day and do righteous deeds, shall have their reward with their Sustainer; and no fear need they have, and neither shall they grieve” (Holy Qur’an: 2:62).

Chapter 49, Verse 13 of the Holy Qur’an further encompasses the above mentioned verses; “O mankind! We have created you from a single pair of male and female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other, not that you may despise each other. Verily the most honored of you in the sight of God is he who is the most righteous of you. And God has full knowledge and is well acquainted with all things”.

Gabriel tells the reader that the Prophet Muhammad, (PBUH) went to Medina where he build up military strength and a number of followers where he then was able to go back to Mecca to fight the citizens of that city he calls this move (a change from spiritual Islam to a political revolution) Muslims call it a change from the state of oppression to a state of Islam. What this means is that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) did not intend on leaving Mecca, despite the harassment he faced from the Meccans, it was not until they would curse at him and spit at him while he was praying to Allah in the streets, that he could no more endure such acts of aggression. During his time in Medina, it was then, that permission was given to him from Allah to go back and fight those who

had committed acts of aggression against the Prophet and his companions and forced them to flee elsewhere.

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) only preached of this new revelation from God, it was not yet a religion until his emigration to Medina, where the number of his companions rose, and he was in full military strength to face the Meccan tribes. Therefore, when Gabriel tells us that the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) life in Mecca was all about prayers and meditation and as a result the Qur'an verses revealed in Mecca talk of peace and cooperation; and the Qur'an's verses in Medina talk about military power and invasion, to an extent that is true.

It is true in the sense that at first, yes the verses talked of peace and cooperation and that was because of the fact that there was no such acts of aggression taking place, there was no need for Allah to reveal verses of military nature to His messenger until, there were individuals, who wished not to leave in peace and cooperation, and it just so happened that those verses were revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) at his time in Medina, since Allah was witness to why His messenger and his companions had emigrated to Medina. Therefore, when Gabriel tells us that jihad is the motivation that is behind every act of terrorism done in the name of Islam, it is ignorance that is behind every act of terrorism, those who are ignorant and know not what is truly ascribed for them in the Holy Qur'an.

Mark Gabriel says that Muslims tend to separate the religious side of Islam from its political side; always stating that Islam is a religion of peace and it is not. He goes on to say that on behalf of their point of view which is considered either "wishful thinking"

which he says that peace is not what is taught in the Holy Qur'an and it is what Muslims wish and sincerely want to be the truth when it is not.; and deceit with intent of attraction for converts, which he maintains is the jihad practiced in a different way-“instead of killing the enemy, you convert them with lies” (Gabriel, pg.41).

The word love (*Al-Mahaba*) is mentioned eighty-three times in the Holy Qur'an; and the word peace (*Al-Salam*) is mentioned fifty times in the Holy Qur'an. Gabriel himself asserts that one cannot interpret the Holy Qur'an to suit their own preferences, that is something he needs to really understand himself first. Islam has two meanings: peace and submission to Allah.

The author argues that All Muslims everywhere are declaring jihad worldwide, but they are not all using the same tools; “one is using guns and bombs, and the other is using words and lies to increase the number of Muslims worldwide” (Gabriel, pg.46). Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world and is second only to Christianity in its number of adherents and that the United States for example, boasts almost a million converts to Islam itself. It is really not that hard to believe that the religion of Islam is attractive all by itself, without anyone sugar coating it.

Moving on to an even more serious issue that the Mark mentions, is that of human rights. Mark Gabriel says that in Islam, human rights are unnecessary because they are man-made ideas which are therefore, not founding the Holy Qur'an. Further, he goes on to tell the reader that Islam does not acknowledge or respect human rights, women's rights or democracy; claiming that Muslims believe those to be Western ideas from infidels, and hence that is why Muslims do not acknowledge them. Gabriel makes an

even bigger mistake when he defends his argument with a book by Sayyid Qutb. First of all, how can one justify an argument like that with the words of a radical himself?

The term “human rights” has become an integral part of both political and popular discourse, particularly amongst the West. It was not until very recently that most of this discourse has been in largely secular terms. In fact, it is frequently assumed, by many Westerners that human rights can exist only within a secular context and not within the framework of religion. The alleged incompatibility between the concept of human rights and religion in general, or particular religions such as Islam, needs to be examined in an unbiased way. Before addressing the issue of human rights in Islam, it is useful to clarify that the Islamic tradition - like other major religious traditions - does not consist of, or derive from, a single source.

To many Muslims, the Holy Qur’an is the Magna Carta of human rights-its main concern being to free human beings from any bondage of racism, sexism, slavery or anything else that prohibits human beings from being free. From the Qur’anic perspective, human rights came into existence the very moment humans came into existence; they were created by God so that our humanly potential could be actualized. Let us look at a few of the rights mentioned in the Holy Qur’an. Right to life: The Holy Qur’an upholds the sanctity and values of human individual life and points out that the life of each and every individual is comparable to that of an entire community. Right to respect: The Holy Qur’an deems all human beings worthy of respect because of all the creations of Allah; they alone chose to accept the trust of freedom of the will. Exercising freedom of will, is what distinguishes them from all other creations.

Right to justice: The Holy Qur'an puts a huge amount of emphasis on the right to seek justice and duty to do just that. The Holy Qur'an uses the concept of adl which enjoins idea of balance. Right to freedom: As already mentioned, the Holy Qur'an is concerned with liberating human beings from any type of bondage; whether dictatorship or slavery. Right to religious freedom: The right to exercise free choice in matters of belief is unambiguously endorsed in the Holy Qur'an which states clearly that God will judge human beings not on the basis of what they profess, but on the basis of their belief and righteous conduct. Right to acquire knowledge: The Holy Qur'an puts a high emphasis on the importance of acquiring knowledge- that which has been the core of the Islamic world view from the very beginning.

Right to work: According to the Holy Qur'an, every man and women has the right to work- whether it is for payment, or voluntary service. The fruits of labor belong to one who has worked for them, once again, regardless if they are male or female. *"To me is allotted what they earn, and to women what they earn"* (Holy Qur'an: 4:32). Right to privacy: The Holy Qur'an recognizes the need for privacy- laying down rules for protecting individuals' life in their homes from disturbance or invasion from within or without. Right to protection: The Holy Qur'an recognizes the rights of human beings to be protected from any type of ridicule. It states that no one is to be harmed or criticized on assumption of guilt.

Right to a good life: The Holy Qur'an uphold the right that all human beings' right to good life. This is possible if they are living in a just environment. According to Holy Qur'an, justice is a prerequisite for peace, and peace is a prerequisite for human

development. In a just society, all the earlier-mentioned human rights may be exercised without difficulty. In the case of the rights of Muslim women, let us look at the Prophet's wives whose actions had a huge influence on the community-reflecting Allah's compassion for women. Let us start by taking a look at the word *ummah*, as I have already mentioned *ummah* means community. Now, let us examine the word a little more.

The word *ummah* comes from the root "*umm*" or in English, "mother". The symbol of mother and motherliness are linked with the two characteristics of Allah; "*Rahim*" and "*Rahman*", both of which are derived from the root "*Rahm*", which means "womb". Therefore, the ideal *ummah* cares about all its members just as a mother cares about all of her children- therefore exemplifying *adl*, a balance of her care to all her children.

As indicated in Chapter 2, Verse 62 of the Cow, "those who believe in the Holy Qur'an, and those who follow the Jewish and Christian scriptures, and who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and work righteousness, shall have their reward with Allah: on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve." Furthermore, the Holy Qur'an recognizes the right to religious freedom not only on those who believe in Allah, but in the case of those who do not, if they are not aggressing upon Muslims. In addition, to further stress freedom of religion, the Holy Qur'an maintains, "There shall be no compulsion in religion".

According to the Holy Qur'an, knowledge is a prerequisite for the creation of a just society and it is the only way in which any type of peace can prevail; thus learning is emphasized in the Holy Qur'an as one of great importance.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Jihad is a struggle to practice one's faith in the face of obstacles. It is described in the Holy Qur'an as an effort of resistance from any form of pressure whether it is from those who go astray, or those who transgress and aggress. In one instance described in the *Holy Qur'an*, which states "therefore listen not to the unbelievers, but strive against them with it (the Holy Qur'an) with the utmost strenuousness" (Holy Qur'an: 25:52) here, Muslims are encouraged to strive against falsehood with the only weapon being the Holy Qur'an.

Jihad is also the struggle within one's self to keep one's heart, tongue and mind from thinking, saying or doing any wrong. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) chose to strive against the evils and intolerance of the Meccan people by migrating to Medina, where he formed peace treaties and alliances. There were times though, when war was forced on them, where then verses from the Holy Qur'an were revealed urging them to fight hard and strong; only to defend themselves against attacks or betrayals of alliances and treaties. Even in the event of a betrayal, the *Holy Qur'an* repeatedly stresses the value of forgiveness towards the enemy. The Holy Qur'an states, "Indeed, if any defend himself, after a wrong done to him, against such there is no cause or blame, the blame is

only against those who oppress man without wrong doing and insolently transgress beyond bounds, defying right and justice...but indeed if any show patience and forgiveness, that would truly be an affair of great resolution” (Holy Qur’an: 42:41-44).

People need to be aware of the fact that Muslims recognize that the struggle within one’s self-making to overcome difficulties and temptations of arrogance, jealousy or selfishness is often more rigorous than physical battle. According to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) “the greatest jihad is to speak the truth in the face of a tyrannical ruler” (Hadith). Another misconception is that jihad is associated with the idea that Islam offers non-Muslims the choice of ‘Islam or the sword.’ Despite the fact that jihad in Islam refers to the spiritual struggle of a believer rather than the physical, violent struggle of war, jihad still continues to be associated with the latter. For the concept of ‘Islam or the sword’, in Islamic doctrines, if faith does not emerge from deep personal conviction, it is neither truthful nor acceptable to God. Basically, a person cannot be forced into Islam or any religion in that matter. Their conversion is between them and God. “Let there be no compulsion in religion” the *Holy Qur’an* commands. (Holy Qur’an: 2:256).

Moreover, “say, ‘the truth is from your Lord.’ “Let him who will, believe, and let him who will reject it” (Holy Qur’an: 109:6). Another aspect of jihad is that it is considered a system of checks and balances, to check one set of people by means of another. When one person or group transgresses their limits and violates the rights of others, it becomes the right and duty to “check” them and bring them back in line. With this in mind, the aim of Islam is to remove persecution and aggression so that freedom and justice are restored and are able to flourish. Physical battle therefore, is always the

last resort; to be used only in the most extraordinary circumstances when all other attempts fail. If non-Muslims are living peacefully or even indifferently with Muslims there are no grounds or justification to declare war on them. Moreover, they are commanded to avoid initiating hostilities, embarking on any act of aggression, or even violating the rights of others.

As we all know, and as Islam recognizes, kind treatment towards one's enemies is a way to bring lasting peace. The *Holy Qur'an* says the following, "it may be that Allah will establish friendship between you and those whom you now hold as enemies, for Allah has power over all things, and Allah is Oft-forgiving, most Merciful. Allah therefore, forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you for your faith, nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them. For Allah loves those who are just" (Holy Qur'an: 60:7-8).

For suicide bombers and those who claim martyrdom; in Islam, it is a grave sin to kill someone unjustly, "nor take life, which Allah has made sacred, except for just cause" (Holy Qur'an: 17:33). The phrase "just cause" refers to criminal justice, the death penalty for extreme crimes such as murder. Even then punishments for such a crime are to be assigned by a court of law, and not by individuals. Any life taken must be in accordance with the law, and carried out by the proper authorities. Therefore, we can infer that suicide is a sin. Because in the same light as taking away the life of any one person, taking the life of an individual self is one in the same. Individuals, who use suicide as a last resort to eradicating any problems therefore acting out of desperation, see their life and value no more. Allah, advises such people to be patient, hopeful and confident of the

mercy of Allah, and not to lose hope. A clear-cut message from the Holy Qur'an states: "Do not kill yourselves, for surely Allah is most merciful to you" (Holy Qur'an: 4:29).

The concept of martyrdom in Islam teaches sacrifice, bravery and sincere effort in the midst of defending oneself, peoples, a family or a country against an oppressing group, person or leader. A Martyr is translated in Arabic as *Shaheed*, which is to 'bear witness.' A martyr therefore witnesses the truth and gives up his/her life for it, whether it be dying under brave circumstances; such as being killed while legitimately defending the Muslim community or fighting against oppression of a tyrannical leader.

The *Holy Qur'an* clearly condemns actions that transgress beyond what is considered lawful and just. "Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress, for Allah loves not those who transgress" (Holy Qur'an: 2:190). Certainly, we can see that any act of terrorism, including the murder of innocent civilians as a result of bombings or kidnapping are considered transgressions. Muslims therefore, are commanded to be just, even if it means turning against their closest friends who do wrong. "Oh you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witness to Allah, even against yourselves or your parents, or your kin, whether it be against rich or poor- for Allah can best protect both..." (Holy Qur'an: 4:135).

It becomes clear that terrorism is never justified in Islamic teachings. Many people invoke religion as justification for their actions as principles of their faith. An individual who transgress their limit and justifies his acts as ones of their faith is considered as speaking ill of it. They are those who are lead astray because of their distorted view and misunderstanding of their faith.

Qutb believed that the upcoming war was that of Islam and the West, the battle of jihad. However, as I have shown, jihad encompasses a call for peaceful coexistence. Qutb merges both perspectives, he views jihad as primarily political in nature. He argues that oppression against the jahiliyyah system of governance is spiritual. In other words, jihad is not only political, but spiritual. In order to understand this definition of jihad (struggling in the way or cause of God) we must ask two questions: What does it mean to struggle? What does it mean to struggle in the way or cause of God? Qutb answers both by claiming that secular society has strayed far from its original purpose. It has begun to oppress mankind, so there must be some action taken to change. Hence, he argues that the cause of God is to “establish His order and way of life in the world.” Fighting for the will of God is the ultimate struggle.

Jihad according to Qutb creates an environment that allows Islam to prosper abolishing that of the jahili systems which prevent people from reforming the ideas and beliefs, forcing them to follow wrong ways. Qutb makes it clear that in waging jihad, means attacking organizations and institutions, but individuals too if it were the case. In other words, by stating that jihad is the removal of institutions that act as a hindrance or obstacle to the establishment of the Divine Law; we must raise the issue of compulsion. If the *Holy Qur'an* stresses that there should be no compulsion in religion, then what is Qutb referring to? He affirms that the destruction of the un-Islamic society does not violate this commandment, I think the contrary, because a disturbance is created, intolerance is displayed, and no peaceful coexistence can incur if such occurs.- its destruction by no means is tied to the forced conversion of those who lived within the system.

Today's Muslims share the same views as Sayyid Qutb once did, in that the West is not just a physical enemy, but a psychological one. The West controls the Muslim world, resulting in the fact that Muslims desire liberation from such values. I believe that the writings of Qutb formed the cornerstone of recent terrorist attacks on the US. I think that the people of the East and the West need to understand one another and each side's views. Understanding first begins with acceptance. Muslims have to learn to live in a Western system of values and be tolerant of Western ways of life, just as the West must be tolerant of all religions and not discriminate against Muslims by lumping them all together as terrorists.

Therefore, I must disagree with Qutb's argument that living under non-Islamic government is a type of slavery; how is that the case if individuals are free to worship as they please? We see thousands of mosques all over the United States, and the same can be said about churches all over the Middle East. Qutb blames the West for their practice of separation of the church and state, and claims that it is because of this that societies all over the world have too divorced faith from practical life. I will answer to this and say, just because Muslims live in a country that practices separation of church and state, does not mean that Islamic states do the same. The only thing that does matter is tolerance. Muslims must be tolerant of the practices of the state in which they live, so that peaceful coexistence is able to flourish.

Hassan Al-Banna and most members of the Muslim Brotherhood grew up during times of turmoil, following the First World War when Egyptians revolted on a massive scale for independence from the colonial powers. Banna asserted the need for Egyptians

to overcome the corrupt influence that plagued their country, its people, and most importantly their religion. He described his movement as the catalyst of the most active elements in Sunni Islamic thinking. His role in Sadat's assassination to them, helped to transform Egypt, but it did not- all it did do was hinder the image of the Brotherhood.

According to Banna, the cause of God is to end oppression by creating a social order that is purely Islamic in nature. He argues that jihad is inherent in the nature of Islam because Islamic faith demands total submission. He views that the oppression that jihad is being waged against are the non-Islamic societies- making it clear that this jihad must be waged universally.

Qutb, unlike Banna was neither a leader nor an organizer, but a writer and a man of words. Qutb lived in a very critical phase of Egyptian history, witnessing and working against the royal regime till its collapse. He entered into a vicious circle of nightmares as a result, and that was after his joining the Brotherhood. Despite all this he has made a great impact on Egypt and the world by his ideological and political discourse. It should be understood that Qutb was not writing for a profession, rather he was leaving a message to his country behind, and such essays were the basis of many reform movements that followed.

Qutb's experiences as an Egyptian Muslim in the US, an active member of the brotherhood and an intellect of the evolution of thought according to the shar'iah had great impact and left an unforgettable mark on his works and his readers. Whether his ideas contained first were defensive in nature and later offensive, Sayyid Qutb's political views centered on Islam as a complete system of morality, justice and governance. Those

views centered on shar'iah which should be the sole basis of governance in life. We can definitely infer that for Qutb, his writings regarding the jahili system were his jihad.

The Muslim Brotherhood has usually been viewed in varying degrees as an aggressive group who wished to revive Islam and did so by creating Islamic fundamentalism, while this may have been the case as was proven, we must understand that in actuality, the Muslim Brotherhood's mission indicated quite the opposite at least in their beginning. Their rise in the latter twenties was an essential aspect in the rise of modern mass politics in Egypt. They represented the middle and lower classes in Egypt; addressing their demands for political participation in socio-economic reforms. Thus, the Brotherhood was their voice, of those young men and women who were controlled by the ruling elite and the "Westernized" government. It was only when they drifted from Islamic welfare and began reinterpreting Islam and its values; that their failure started.

What they did not know was that fundamentalism lacks what is needed for a true intellectual Islamic revival. Islamic revivalism cannot come into being if the philosophies and theologies of writers are un-Islamic. What is needed is a true interpretation of the *Holy Qur'an* and the Sunnah that have been overshadowed by radicalism's interpretations. Moreover, fundamentalism has little to offer Muslims in leading them to being understood, it is the *Holy Qur'an* and its true meaning that can deliver that.

When we call people to Islam, it is our duty to make them understand that Islam guarantees for mankind a blessing; hence Islam is noble, pure, just and beautiful, it springs from all that is good in life. When we understand this essence of Islam, it is only then that a confidence will become instilled in our hearts rather than fear. Just as the

Prophet (PBUH) first created a community built upon faith, and love, respect and trust, so should we. Moreover, just as Muslims give their confession of “La ilaha illa Allah”, they should make the confession to live in peace and understand that true freedom starts from within.

As for Western Civilizations, they must do more than read bits and pieces of Qur’anic verses, or watch media footage of Osama Bin Laden’s latest message. They must ignore all these heavily overrated presentations of Islam and Muslims and begin reading on their own the *Holy Qur’an* as a whole, if they really want to know the truth about Islam. The first revelation from God which was sent directly to the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) was “*Iqaaa bisme Rabbika alladhee khalika...*” (Read, in the name of your Sustainer who created you...). We must do exactly that read; it as the key to true knowledge.

I would like to conclude that anyone who understands this true message of Islam will understand the place of jihad. He or she will understand that Islam is not an offensive movement, or war against anyone or anything. Those who continue to defend the concept of Islamic jihad as a fight against any other race, ethnicity or religion are misconstruing what the term jihad means and should strive to understand its true meaning. Islam is a religion, a culture and a society and most definitely, it is not an enemy to the West. Those who argue the opposite, slander the religion.

Judaism, Christianity and Islam all trace their origins back to the Old Testament of prophet Abraham; each of these religions venerate him, and each of these religions have similar ties historically. What happened on September 11th 2001 was not just an

attack on the West, but an attack on Islam, because such criminal acts attack the values of compassion, mercy and privacy which are instilled in the *Holy Qur'an*. Islam as I have mentioned only endorses war that is defensive in nature, designed to protect the Islamic community. September 11th 2001 was in no way a defensive act, but an act of aggression, where individuals had transgressed their boundaries. Muslims who use Islam to justify their actions are ignorant of its true meaning, and they need to realize that their excuses are not acceptable ways to justify such ill actions. All that we know is that their acts are crimes against humanity and crimes against humanity are crimes against God and his creations.

We have to understand that what the world is going through today is a war of the heart, mind and soul. The weapons we have to use are academics and education. Peace brings us together in perfect harmony and love makes us grow stronger. *Madrasas* (schools, in this case a religious one) that teach young Muslim minds the theory of radicalism, have to teach them the true tenants of their faith instead of those of hate, such madrasas are but an evil cult that take away from the purity of an individual. President George W. Bush has insisted that the terrorist attacks of September 11th 2001 and the US response to them were not about Islam but about terrorism. If he indeed is sincere in what he has preached, then I will say he does indeed understand that the majority of Muslims are not responsible for the actions of the minority who have committed such acts of aggression.

The charge against Islam's jihad has been its attachment to violence and death, but that is not true. Jihad is a struggle against that which is wrong, or evil, in exerting that

which is good and just. So to conclude, if fighting is not in self-defense, or in response to injustice and oppression, or to secure religious freedom for the oppressed Muslims- then the fight is not considered an act of jihad. The intention should be solely for the sake of God (not for fame, wealth of goods). Initiatives for peace are to be heeded first, and if the enemy desists from hostility so should you. The requests for protection and safe passage should to be granted as well as honored; where non-combatants such as women and children should not be targets of war. A very important aspect is if killing becomes necessary, it should be done in the most humane way possible.

Fighting and risking one's life for a just cause, for the greater good of people, is considered a noble effort. One who does this sincerely and purely for the sake of God, with true and correct faith, is indeed to be much admired. "Do not think those who were killed in the Path of God to be dead. Nay, they are alive, receiving sustenance from their creator" (Holy Qur'an: 3:169-170). And remember that "God does not prohibit you from being kind and just to those who have not fought you on account of religion, nor expelled you from your homes. God loves those who are just" (Holy Qur'an: 60:08).

Those who allow themselves to die in the duration of the cause of God, without trying to escape or protect themselves are not considered martyrs. "And expend in the way of God; and cast not yourselves by your own hands into destruction, but be good-doers; God loves the good-doers" (Holy Qur'an: 2:190). Suicide as an act of intentionally ending one's life is greatly shunned in the Islamic religion; it is considered to be a transgression of religious law in all religions.

Life is considered and is to be regarded as sacred. No one has the right to take his/her life or the life of others in the name of religion, it is up to God to decide which life to take and when. He has created us. If He wants to He will take us back when. The suicide bomber is not experiencing a mental breakdown or crisis in his life where he feels the need to end it; rather it is in contradiction to that, he feels that killing the enemy is the only way to foster a healthy world, where there is no more evil and sin. They seek others to understand that their suicidal actions are to be regarded by others as an act of ultimate sacrifice for the entire world.

This state of learning, communication and information exchanging that went on during the time of Al-Ghazzali must go on today. If we too could exchange ideas of religious thought, we could experience a new culture, one that encompasses understanding of one another which hopefully will lead to a new beginning.

CHAPTER VII

GLOSSARY

Jihad: A central and broad Islamic concept that includes the struggle to improve the quality of life in society, struggle in the battlefield for self-defense . . . or fighting against tyranny or oppression.

- (The Council on American-Islamic Relation)

Abu Hamid al-Ghazzali: A Muslim theologian, jurist, philosopher and mystic. One of the most celebrated scholars in the history of Islamic thought.

Anwar al-Sadat: Nasser's successor, and Egypt's second president.

'adl: Arabic word for justice.

Al-Azhar: Egypt's largest, religiously-based University- named after the Prophet's (PBUH) daughter, Fatima Zahra' .

Al-Fathiha: The opening chapter in the Holy Qur'an.

Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn: The first largest political organization started in Egypt which aimed at establishing the Shar'iah Law as the Law of the country. Known as the Muslim Brotherhood and remains present in almost all Arab countries.

Allah: Arabic word for God. Literally meaning the All-knowing.

Al-Mahaba: Love.

Al-Qaeda: Arabic, literally meaning, The Base. It is an international alliance of Islamic terrorist organization founded in 1988 by Osama bin Laden as well as other veteran Afghan Arabs after the Soviet war in Afghanistan.

Al-Salam: Peace.

Al Salamu Alaikum: Peace be upon you; Muslims utter these words upon meeting.

Caliph: Supreme Muslim leader.

Defensive jihad: The concept of when a Muslim(s) is attacked, it becomes obligatory for all Muslims to defend against the attack; hence to defend oneself and their peoples.

Fard Ayn: A personal and religious obligation.

Fatwa: An opinion made by a scholar in Islam based on the Shar'iah Law.

Gamal Abdl-Nasser: Egypt's first president.

Hadiths: Words, works, and ways of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH)

Hajj: Arabic word for pilgrimage.

Hamas: Islamic Resistance Movement; a Palestinian Sunni Muslim Organization created in 1987 by Sheikh Ahmed Yassin of the Gaza wing of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Haqq: Arabic word meaning truth, justice, and duty.

Hassan al-Banna: Leader and Founder of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.

Hijrah: Arabic word for migration.

Ijtihad: Counsel of judges.

Imam: An Islamic leader often considered the leader in the mosque.

Iqr'a: Arabic word meaning 'read'.

Islam: submission or surrender of one's self to God.

I'sm: Arabic word for name.

Jahiliyya: Arabic word for ‘state of ignorance’. A pre-Islamic state characterized by idolatry replacing the worship of Allah. Ignorance of the One True God. (Sayyid Qutb was influential in reinterpreting and modernizing *jahiliyya*.)

Jihad: To strive, to exert oneself, to struggle.

Jizya: Poll tax, imposed on the People of the Book for shelter and protection in time of war.

Ka’baa: Holy site for pilgrimage located in Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

Kafir or Kufar: nonbeliever(s); pagans.

La ilaha illa Alla: Testament, meaning, there is no god but God.

Ma’alim Fi-I-Tariq: Book written by Sayid Qutb, meaning, Milestones.

Mecca: Holy City in present day Saudi Arabia where the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) was born.

Mohammed (PBUH): The Prophet of the Islamic Faith.

Mufti: A religious scholar, one who is considered capable of issuing judgments on Islamic law.

Mujahedeen: Arabic word meaning a person who strives for his/her best.

Mujahid: Arabic word meaning effort.

Muslim: A follower of the Islamic faith.

Offensive jihad: The waging of wars of aggression and conquest against non-Muslims in order to bring them and their territories under Islamic rule.

PBUH: Phrase, meaning peace be upon him; said every time the name of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is mentioned.

People of The Book: Term referring to the Jews and the Christians with regards to them following *The Book* or scriptures.

Qur'an: The Islamic holy book.

Quraysh: Pagan tribe of Mecca- family in which the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) belonged to.

Rahim and/or Rahman: One of the ninety-nine names of in Islam.

Ramadan: Ninth month of the Islamic calendar; the holy month in which the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) received the first Divine revelations.

Sabr: Arabic word meaning patience.

Salat: Arabic word for prayer.

Sawm: Arabic word for fasting.

Sayid Qutb: An Egyptian author, Islamist and leading intellectual of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood in the 1950's and 60's- best know for his work on the social and political role of Islamic fundamentalism (best exemplified in his book *Milestones*).

Sha'hadah: Testimony of faith by Muslims, ie: there is no God but Allah, and Mohammed (PBUH) is his prophet.

Shahadat: Martyrdom.

Shahid: Martyr.

Sheikh: Literally meaning elder. The elder of a tribe; also can mean a wise man or Islamic scholar.

Sh'ia: The largest minority denomination-based on the Islamic faith after Sunni Islam.

Shi'as claim to adhere to the teachings of Mohammed (PBUH) and the religious guidance of his family.

Sunnah: The way of the prophet. Followers therefore are Sunni.

Sunni: A version of Islam adhered to by an overwhelming majority who follow the teaching of the prophet. Note: the teachings of the prophet are essentially those which were delivered to the prophet by Allah.

Surah: Islamic verse in the Holy Qur'an.

Surat al-Baqara: The largest chapter in the Holy Qur'an literally translated verse of the cow.

Ta'adul: Arabic word for equilibrium.

Treaty of Hudaibiyya: A no-war pact between the Muslims of Yathrib (Medina) and the Jews.

Ulama: Judges.

Ummah: Islamic community.

Umm: Mother.

Yathrib: Ancient name for today's holy city, Medina.

Zakat: Arabic word for charity.

CHAPTER VIII

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Findings and Conclusions: 'The highest form of jihad is to speak the truth in the face of a tyrannical ruler' that is what the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) once asserted when asked how to interpret jihad. There exists a distinction between the spiritual and physical realms of struggle. Spiritually, it means engaging in a battle of the self against sin and any satanic lifestyle- this is the greater jihad. In the Physical realm, the exertion means righteous warfare against the oppressors; this is the lesser jihad. The Muslim world today is faced with tyranny and injustice and Muslims have allowed jihad into their lives as a means to prevent such, yet in the midst of this, Muslims have forgotten the true meaning of jihad.

This research is not only intended for non-Muslims but, for Muslims as well in that it will hopefully instill knowledge and help both understand the meaning of jihad and how it is intended to be used. The Muslim Brotherhood has usually been viewed in varying degrees as an aggressive reassertion of religious fundamentalism, while this may have been the case as was proven, we must understand that in actuality, the Muslim Brotherhood's mission indicated quite the opposite at least in their beginning. Their rise in the latter twenties was an essential aspect in the rise of modern mass politics in Egypt. They represented a growing Muslim middle and lower class; addressing their demands for political participation in socio-economic reforms. Thus, the Brotherhood was the voice of those young men and women who were controlled by the ruling elite. It was only when they drifted from Islamic welfare and began reinterpreting Islam and its values; that it became the roots of their failure.

The purpose of this research therefore, is to investigate as well as analyze those aspects of Islam that deal with jihad, international law and human rights. This topic is of great importance because especially in our time, today, wars are being fought, engaging everyone's attention. Moreover, this topic is of a great deal of importance in that many adherents of other religions take up this subject, with great discredit to Islam. Therefore, this subject matter will hopefully enable the reader to learn of the Islamic religion, its holy book, its believers, and Islam's desire for world peace. The reader will also be able to understand purposes, rules and regulations for fighting when and if jihad is called for.

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