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International Institute
for Counter-Terrorism
With the Support of Keren Daniel

The Islamic Legitimacy of The "Martyrdom Operations"

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January 1, 1997

ABSTRACT

Before presenting the Islamic evidences that such operations are Islamically legitimate, we need to emphasise that it is wrong to call such operations a "suicide". Killing one's self aggressively or casting one's self into destruction, all of which are forbidden in the Qur'an "and do not cast yourself into destruction" [S2, V195].

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MARTYRDOM NOT SUICIDE

Before presenting the Islamic evidences that such operations are Islamically legitimate, we need to emphasise that it is wrong to call such operations a "suicide". Killing one's self aggressively or casting one's self into destruction, all of which are forbidden in the Qur'an "and do not cast yourself into destruction" [S2, V195].

The word "destruction" here, according to the majority of Muslim scholars, means "investing money and giving up Al-Jihad (Holy War)". It is narrated by al-Tirmidhee through Aslam Abi Umran, that during the Battle of Kastantinia, a Muslim undertook to fight many of the enemies himself; he penetrated the Roman army killing some of them and was killed. As a reaction, some Muslims said: "he has cast himself into destruction". Abu Aiyub Al-ansari replied: "you are misinterpreting this verse, it is about us "al-Ansar"; when Islam was dignified by Allah and Islam had received many other supporters, some of us said secretly away from the prophet "our money is lost, Islam is dignified and its supporters are numerous, it is better to stay at home and invest our money". At that time, Allah revealed to His prophet in reply "Give generously for the cause of Allah and do not with your own hands cast yourselves into destruction." [S2, V195]. So, destruction here means investing money and avoiding Al-Jihad.

It is out of discussion that suicide is Islamically forbidden. It is considered as one of the greatest wrong-doings after Al-Shirk "polytheism", for Allah says: "Do not kill yourselves. Allah is merciful to you, but he that does that through wickedness and injustice shall be burnt in fire. That is easy enough for Allah."

The prophet (s.a.w.) stated that the one who commits suicide is eternally in Hell. According to Abu Huraira, the prophet (s.a.w.) says: "The one who throws himself from a mountain and kills himself will be eternally in Hell".

It is important to know that suicide is forbidden because of its evil objectives; such as impatience, desperation or any other bad and evil objects. In Jundob Bin Junada's Hadith, the Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "In the past, there was a wounded man who impatiently cut his hand bleeding to death, Allah said: 'my slave took the first step to death, he is forbidden to enter Paradise.'" So, killing one's self this way is "suicide" as it is Islamically pointless, meaningless and intentionally suicidal.

On the other hand, the one who contributes his life to the cause of Allah, Islam and Muslims his doing is sacrificial; he gives his life away for Islam and Muslims, which is the highest sacrifice.

The history of Islam is full of heroic and sacrificial events. It is narrated by Abu Dawood through one of the Prophet's companions, he said: "we mounted an attacked on a part of Hunain, one of us followed an unbeliever to kill him, by a mistake killed himself. The prophet (s.a.w.) said: 'O, Muslims... your brother'. We rushed to check him, but found him dead. The Prophet (s.a.w.)

wrapped him with his own clothes and his blood on him, then performed the prayer of the dead, the Prophet's companions asked: is he a martyr? He said: "he is, and I am a witness". Therefore, the one who blows up the enemies of Allah by blowing up himself as well cannot be considered a suicide, and he is, Allah willing, a martyr.

The Qur'anic evidences that such assaults are Islamically legitimate

Allah says: "and some people would give away their lives to gain Allah's contentment. Allah is compassionate to his servants". It is said that this verse of the Qur'an is about Suhaib the Roman as he believed in Islam, in his way to Madinah to meet the prophet (s.a.w.), some Kuraishes followed him, he got off his horse carrying his quiver and shield and said: "you know that I am the best archer among you, by Allah, you cannot reach me till I throw all my arrows, and then hit with my sword as much as I could and then you can do whatever you wish." They said: "we shall not allow you to go away as a rich. You came to our tribe a pauper. Tell us where you put your money and we let you go", they gave him their word, so he did. When Suhaib met the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.), this verse was revealed, so the Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "O Abu Yahya the trade goods the highest profit, then recited the verse."

When Hisham Bin Ammer al-Ansari was killed in a battle, some denied his doing. But Umar Bin al-Khattab, Abu Huraira and others replied by reciting this Verse too. Ibn 'Abbas said: "They sold their lives to Allah by fighting for Him to death."

Allah says: "Therefore fight for the cause of Allah. You are accountable for none but yourself." This verse is directed to the Prophet (s.a.w.), urging him to fight for the cause of Allah even if he was alone in this cause. It is said that, Abu Isaac once asked al-Bara'a Bin Azeb "A man fights a thousand of enemies, then he is killed. Is he one of those whom Allah says about: "and do not cast yourselves into destruction", al-Bara'a said: "No, let him fight to death, Allah says to his Prophet (s.a.w.): "Therefore fight for the cause of Allah. You are accountable for none but yourself".'

Other evidences from Hadith

It is narrated by Ibn Mas'ud that the Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "Allah is amazed by two men... he mentioned.. And a man fights for the cause of Allah, his companions run away, but he knew what the runaway fighter gets and what the one who stands firm and fights gets. So he went back and kept fighting to death. Allah says to his Angels: "O, behold my slave, he went back to fight to death hoping to get what I have 'Paradise' and fearing what I have 'Hell'." [Ahmad, Ibn Haiyan & Abu Da'wood]

It is narrated by Anas Bin Malik that, the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.) and seven of the Ansar faced a large number of Quraishes on the Battle of Uhud. He said: "the one who can fight them will be rewarded with Paradise or will be my friend in Paradise". One of the Ansar began to fight to death and so on till the seven were dead. The prophet (s.a.w.) said: "Our companions were not just with us - meaning that they have got paradise and left them alive". [Muslim]

It is narrated by Abu Baker Bin Abi Musa, he said: I heard Abu Huraira saying while facing the enemies: "the prophet (s.a.w.) said: 'The doors of Heaven are opened through Jihad'. A poor man asked: 'you heard the prophet (s.a.w.) saying that?' Abu Huraira said: 'yes'. The man went to his companions, said: peace be upon you, broke the sheath of his sword and fought to death". [Muslim]

The prophet (s.a.w.) in the Battle of Badr said: "fight to get a Heavens-Earth-width Paradise". Umair Bin al-Hamam said: 'Is it a Heavens-Earth-width Paradise?' The prophet said: "yes". Umair said: 'Oh... Oh...', "why you say Oh... Oh...?" The prophet (s.a.w.) asked. Umair replied: 'by Allah, it is only the wish to be of its inhabitants'. The prophet (s.a.w.) said: 'you are'. Umair took some dates to eat, but he thought if he is going to eat the dates it will be a long time between him and Paradise, so he threw them away and fought to death". [Muslim]

In Yamama's Day, when Hanifa tribe made their castle inaccessible to the Muslims, Al-Bara'a Bin Malek asked Muslims to put him in the leather shield and throw him to the enemy. He fought them alone and opened the gate for his brothers.

The Ijtehad of Muslim Scholars

AL-HANAFIYA: It is Islamically right (Ja'eiz). Al-jassas said: "Mohammed Bin al-Hasan Al-Shaibani said: 'If a Muslim fought a thousand of the unbelievers with the intention to gain Allah's contentment (hurting the enemy or encouraging the other Muslims) it is right and he will be rewarded, Allah willing. Otherwise, it will be Islamically void, useless and pointless".

AL-MALEKIYA: In Khalil's and al-Dardir's "It is Islamic for a Muslim to fight many of the unbeliever alone, if he does this for the cause of Allah". al-Dasuki said: "We can say that is Islamic for a Muslim to fight many unbelievers alone with two conditions;

a- He does it for the cause of Allah.

b- He is sure that he will hurt them (if not there is unpreferability- Karahiya").(

Al-Qurtubi said in his interpretation: Al-Kasem Bin Mukhaimara said: 'It is allowed to fight the enemy alone if you seek Al-Shahada (Martyrdom) and you are strong enough to do it. This is obvious in the Qur'an 'Some people would give away their lives to gain Allah's contentment".'

Ibn Khuwaiz Mindad said: there are two situations in which a Muslim can fight the enemy alone:

- a. If he is sure that he will hurt the enemy and survive.
- b. If he is sure that he will hurt the enemy but he will be killed.

Ibn Taimiyyah said in his Fatawa 540/28 "Muslim narrated in his Sahih, the story of Al-ukhdud (the furrow, which the Prophet (s.a.w.) told to his companions) in which "a young Muslim contributed himself for the cause of Allah". That is why the four Scholars said that, it is right for a Muslim to fight many unbelievers alone even if he thinks he will be killed.

In Nayl Al Awtar, Al-Shawkani comments "when ten Muslims under the leadership of Asem Bin Thabet were sent by the prophet (s.a.w.) to a tribe to invite them to Islam, in the road they were surrounded by a hundred of the unbelievers. They fought strongly, seven of them killed, one of the three captive survivors feeling their deception, said: "by Allah I will not guide you to Muslims and I have a wonderful examples in front of me (meaning his killed brothers), they tried to force him guiding them, when they failed they killed him." This Hadith proves that, it is Islamically legitimate for a Muslim to fight the many enemy to death. On the other hand, it is permissible to accept to be a captive.

Ibn Al-Arabi said about that, that it is right for four reasons:

- a. Seeking for Martyrdom.
- b. Hurting the enemy.
- c. Encouraging Muslims.
- d. Weakening the spirit of the enemy.

In his Sunnan, Al-Baihaqi said: Al-Shafie said: there was a fight in front of the prophet (s.a.w.), one of the Ansar fought until he was killed by a group of the unbelievers after being told by the prophet (s.a.w.) about the rewards of his doing.

Al-Nawawi said about the story of Umair Bin Hammam "it is Islamically right to fight the many unbelievers alone seeking Martyrdom, and there is no unpreferability about that according to the majority of Muslim Scholars."

Al-Hafez Bin Hajr said: "It is Islamically right, if there are Islamic and good objective behind his doing such as; frightening and hurting the enemy, encouraging the Muslims."

Conclusion

Through the above evidences from the Qur'an and the Sunnah, it is clearly demonstrated that the "Islamic-bombing-assault" or the "martyrdom attack" is Islamically legitimate as far as it is within the framework of Islam.