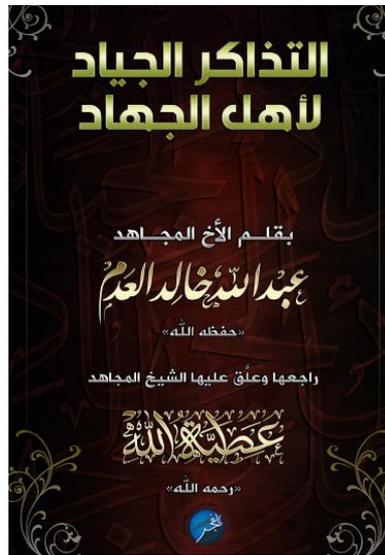


An Overview of “Generous Memorial to the People of Jihad”, by Abdullah Al-Adam

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The cover of "Generous Memorial to the People of Jihad"

Introduction

December 2011 saw the publication on multiple jihadist Web sites of a book by Abdullah Khalid Al-Adam (also known as Abu Ubaydah), who is believed to be close to Al-Qaeda's top leadership.¹ Al-Adam, who apparently lives in Pakistan,² initially issued the 196-page book, titled "Generous Memorial to the People of Jihad", on March 31, 2008. He also issued a series of articles or chapters titled, "The Terrorism Industry",³ which provides mujahideen with the information on security and intelligence accumulated during years of jihad.

As noted, the book was published on prominent jihadist Web forums during December 2011. Several days after the initial dissemination, a more comprehensive edition numbering 44 chapters and 272 pages was again published, accompanied by an index and table of contents, as well as supporting documentation from Islamic sources.

In the foreword to the book, Al-Adam states that he amassed everything a mujahed would need to know before going on Jihad, given the attendant difficulties and the "enemies" lying in wait. He maintains that he had hoped to write the book before 2008, but was delayed by his many activities and his need to move from place to place. He explains that, since every mujahed needs to

¹ <http://www.daralhayat.com/portalarticlendam/279340>.

² <http://nokbah.com/sn14.htm>.

³ <http://www.tawhed.ws/c?i=406>.

know what awaits him, he presents his advice – the fruit of years of experience in the various arenas of jihad – in no particular order. He indicates that he had ties to Sheikh Atiyyah Allah, a senior leader of Al-Qaeda who was killed in Afghanistan in late August 2011, adding that Atiyyah Allah had read the book and offered helpful comments, which Al-Adam incorporated into this final edition.

The book is organized in the Islamic fashion: that is, the writer presents his advice, justifies it, and then anchors it in Qur'anic verses and in the Sunna and words of the Prophet [hadith], and in the rulings of important religious scholars. Throughout the book, Al-Adam stresses the need for the mujahed to be psychological prepared for jihad, along with his being imbued with a tolerant and flexible attitude toward those around him. As noted, although the book was written in 2008, it was only published at the end of 2011 – perhaps due to the events of the "Arab Spring".

Selected Advice for the Mujahed, According to Abdullah Al-Adam

The obligation to be dedicated to acting in the cause of God

Al-Adam begins his book by emphasizing the mujahed's obligation to dedicate himself to serving Allah. Every mujahed must examine his level of devotion and dedication. He must shun hypocrisy, vanity, grandiosity and arrogance, and a desire for praise. He must not seek confrontation among groups or organizations. He must see the Prophet Muhammad as a role model, have complete faith, strive for religious knowledge, and follow the path of Islam's founders rather than that of those who stray.

The obligation to know the shari'a [Islamic law] pertaining to jihad

Other advice concerns the need to acquire religious knowledge and avoid unnecessary bloodshed and unfounded judgments. Al-Adam stresses the obligation to know perfectly the shari'a concerning bloodshed and finances – key issues encountered by the mujahed on the path of jihad. He warns against accusing others of heresy, "on the basis of having read a book or two", as he writes, without anchoring the accusation firmly in shari'a. In this context, he quotes Sheikh Atiyyah Allah, who banned reliance on insufficiently well-considered intellectual effort [ijtihad] to determine whether or not someone is an infidel.

The need to close ranks and obey the emir

Al-Adam exhorts the mujahedeen to unite, as jihad is a collective endeavor that cannot bear fruit if [the mujahideen] are divided and isolated – a situation that will delay victory and deplete resources. Al-Adam warns that argument, conflict, and disagreement among the mujahedeen really serves the enemies of Islam. Using many examples from Islamic history that epitomize the religious-legal obligation to obey the supreme leader of the Muslims, Al-Adam instructs the mujahideen to strive for implementation of Allah's laws on earth by following the dictates of his emir. In this context, he again cites Sheikh Atiyyah Allah, who determined that this Islamic tradition is valid for each and every emir in his time – that is, (including) the emirs of today's jihadist groups. Al-Adam clarifies that one should obey an emir only if he follows the path of Allah and His Prophet. The emir is the one who decides matters for which there is no shari'a ruling. He is the one who decides how a war should be conducted, what is acceptable and what is not, when to attack and when to retreat. If the emir does not have this authority, there will be conflict and confrontation, which will lead to the Muslims' downfall. Al-Adam states, the "...emir is Allah's shadow on earth. Respect, honor, praise, and prayers for his well-being are his due". Al-Adam further counsels patience and endurance, whether [the mujaheed be] in prison or waiting to fight jihad in a "no-man's land" [thughur] – that is, a buffer zone between Muslim lands and those of the infidel.

The need for physical and psychological preparation for jihad

To meet the infidel on the battlefield, physical and religious-spiritual preparation is required. The better his preparation, the more the mujaheed will benefit Islam and the Muslims. But if he is not properly prepared, the individual mujaheed will become a burden to the mujahedeen and easy prey for the infidels. Preparation is both obligatory, and a testament to the desire to fight jihad for Allah. Those who have acquired military knowledge are obligated to neither neglect nor forget it; rather, they should refresh their knowledge from time to time, in order to frighten the enemy. This is particularly so with regard to knowledge of explosives, which are the most frightening and devastating for the enemy. The mujahedeen must intensively seek to improve their operational readiness, and use all necessary resources and funds to improve their military prowess. In this context, Al-Adam cites Sheikh Atiyyah Allah, who emphasized the importance of the mujaheed's physical strength. The mujaheed must feel that he is of little

worth, and he must be flexible and willing to obey authority; he is but one among many, all of whom have different characters, habits, mannerisms and behavior.

The need to increase support of jihad and promote da'wa

Al-Adam reminds the mujahed that jihad is founded on faith in Allah, and only then on the adherents of jihad, who are his true support and the fuel that propels him. They must be treated well – an injunction that borders on being a religious-legal obligation. Adherents of jihad are in effect the current generation of Muhammad's apostles and companions, who went with him to Medina. Al-Adam warns the mujahed not to decide what is permitted and what forbidden before acquainting himself with all schools of thought. He must act wisely and flexibly when practicing da'wa [proselytizing, missionary work], and not take a rigid approach, which might provoke antagonism. He must remember that he can only negate or reject that which is forbidden in the Islamic canon, not what has been deemed an acceptable topic of disagreement. If a certain matter is deemed "forbidden", this must be conveyed gently, patiently, wisely. In summary, one must speak to people in a language they understand, and guide them as to what is permitted and what is forbidden in a way they can comprehend and internalize. One must therefore use simple, and not lofty, language, and respect differences among the various schools of thought.

The importance of faith to the success of jihad

As might be expected, Al-Adam stresses the obligation to obey Allah and his commandments, avoid wickedness, and strive to do good and be merciful. Prayer is "one of the keys to victory, a sure cause of victory, the believers' weapon against...jaihiliya [ignorance] – and therefore every mujahed must be steadfast in it....".

The need for consultation [shura]

Al-Adam stresses the merits of consultation [shura] before deciding a matter for which there is no one religious-legal ruling, such as matters of war. He explains that the person who initiates the consultation (e.g., the emir) is not obligated to accept the conclusions arising from it, but rather may accept or reject them.

The role of religious scholars [ulama'a] in jihad

Al-Adam reminds his readers that jihad is meant to bring people back to their faith, to implement Islam, to destroy heretical laws, and reinstate the rights

stolen by those who profess to be God. If disagreement or rivalry erupts among the mujahedeen, each mujaheed is obligated to strive to impose the law of Allah, while asking religious scholars [ulama'a] to resolve the conflict. It is a greater obligation to abide by the decisions of religious scholars than it is to obey one's father and mother. Disagreement may arise concerning matters for which there is no one Islamic-legal ruling, with each mujaheed understanding the matter in light of the environment in which he was raised and the school of thought in which he was educated. Resolution of such disagreements must first and foremost be based on the Qur'an, then on the Sunna of the Prophet, and lastly on upstanding religious scholars. When conflict arises one must submit entirely to Allah, avoid extreme ideas, be gentle, think positively, and not raise one's voice.

Promoting jihad

Al-Adam reinforces those mujahedeen who are considered unusual for having left their family and emigrated from their country for Allah and his law. A mujaheed must not fear that many are his detractors and few his supporters; he must continue on his path with head held high, and must not stray.

Tactics for speaking with friends and foes

Al-Adam urges the mujaheed to be polite to others, to speak pleasantly and show flexibility, and not to lie or speak hypocritically. One may be insincere with the enemy, and when necessary, use manners to protect oneself from their evils.

A warning against the enemies of jihad who dwell among the Muslims, and ways of defending against them

Al-Adam warns the mujahedeen to beware of people who wish to divide the Muslims and the mujahedeen. According to Al-Adam, such people may also be found in arenas of jihad, where they spread poison. By spreading rumors and propounding nationalism, they also pit leaders against their followers and distance the mujahedeen from jihad. The mujaheed must also be wary of those who accuse the ummah [Muslim nation], who are a tool in the hands of its enemies, either deliberately or inadvertently. These people are even more dangerous, as they use their media outlets to dissuade from jihad those who would strengthen Islam. Rumors are meant to harm the mujahedeen and, especially, to discredit them and their leaders and provoke divisiveness among

the ranks. The mujaheed who is exposed to such rumors and lies must bring them to the attention of leaders and religious scholars, who can assess them.

The need to stand the tests of jihad

Addressing a different matter, Al-Adam stresses the importance of the mujaheed's ability to adapt to and stand firm in the face of the hardships, trials and tribulations of jihad. The mujaheed may lose some of his comrades, suffer hunger, thirst and cold, lose his way and become desperate, and face a stubborn enemy who may at times appear to be winning.

How to behave when jihadist leaders are assassinated

Al-Adam discusses how to behave when a jihadist leader is killed. He explains that Islam is not dependent on any one individual or institution, but rather is a victorious religion that is unimpeded by the death of a religious scholar or the assassination of a leader. When a leader is killed, Al-Adam writes, the mujaheed must be patient, calm and respectful, as Allah will bestow goodness on him in exchange for those who have been killed. The mujaheed must not show anxiety or anger, especially if he holds a senior position. He must reassure his comrades and exhort them to put their faith in Allah. He warns his readers to exercise caution in dealing with the enemy and his ruses.

On the need for good relations among the mujahedeen

Al-Adam is also concerned that there be a good atmosphere among the mujahideen, and explains that Islamic law forbids slander. Mujahideen must not remain silent when they hear slander, lest they become party to the sin; rather they must put an end to the offense, as defamation can sabotage the mujaheedeens' goals and generate conflict and gratuitous hatred. The mujahideen should avoid idle gossip, and would do well to favor silence.

On the need to cooperate

Given the multiple types of people engaged in jihad, mujahedeen should avoid hurting their brethren, and should strive for the greater good. They should cooperate and avoid promoting narrow interests. Al-Adam instructs the mujahedeen to avoid traveling, communicating, or perpetrating attacks in places where these are forbidden, as this could be harmful to all of the mujahedeen.

On the need for restraint

The mujahedeen must overcome their anger and be forgiving, because they will meet all sorts of people on their long road, people of different origins, who have varied and diverse customs and habits. The mujaheeden must supplant the bad with the good.

Safeguarding and using financial resources

Al-Adam stresses the importance of safeguarding the collective financial resources of the mujahideen, adding that this is incumbent upon every mujaheed. This money is as inviolable as someone's private funds; it is meant to be used in time of need, by and for the mujahedeen. No one may use these funds for his own needs, but rather only for the common good.

Advice to the emir in leading his men

Al-Adam also addresses emirs, the leaders of the mujahideen, and urges them to treat their men in the best possible manner. An emir must not discriminate or show favoritism on the basis of family ties or personal interests. The mujahedeen look up to the emirs, who are their role model.

Qualities needed in the role of emir

Al-Adam enumerates the desirable qualities of an emir: dynamism and integrity, experience on the battlefield and military expertise, generosity, gentleness and flexibility, kindness, restraint, the ability to compromise, decisiveness, courage, wisdom, good judgment, considerateness, and an awareness of the differences among his men.

General Guidelines for Jihad**Instructions for bearing and transporting weapons**

Al-Adam explains that, when carrying firearms, the bearer must ensure that the firearm is not loaded before he transfers it to someone else. Firearms must not be passed from hand to hand if their cartridge has not been emptied; standard safety procedures must be followed to ensure this. Firearms must be transferred with the muzzle pointing downwards and the mujaheed's finger far from the trigger. A mujaheed may only leave bullets in the cartridge if he is in certain danger. Otherwise, and especially in places where mujahideen gather and when they are moving about in a secured area, it would be better not to leave bullets

in the cartridge. Failure to act thus has nearly resulted in the deaths of mujahideen; Al-Adam states that he himself was almost wounded in this way. One must also never point one's gun at another person in jest or as a game.

The importance of faith to the success of jihad

Al-Adam urges the mujahideen to maintain a religious lifestyle and particularly to be strict in adherence to the rules for prayer, its correct times and form, as its merits are many. Al-Adam reminds his readers that victory is not only military, based on winning one battle or another, but that true victory is a victory of the faith on whose behalf they wage jihad and for which blood is shed.

The need for da'wa to recruit the masses to jihad

Based on previous experience, Al-Adam determines that the reason jihadist movements have not yet reached their goal of imposing the laws of Allah and vanquishing the enemy is that they have neglected popular participation in jihad and relied only on certain means of fighting the "cruel war machine of the infidels". In this context, Al-Adam quotes Sheikh Abdullah Azzam: "The Islamic movement is the fuse which ignites tons of explosives. The people are the explosive and the Islamic movement is the fuse...No Islamic movement can long persist in fighting even a small a state – so much the more so a superpower – if it alienates itself from the people. In so doing it effectively sentences itself to death, like a branch which, even if large and mature, will wither and die if severed from the tree".

On the importance of establishing the Islamic caliphate

Al-Adam emphasizes that the mujaheed must make every effort to harm the enemy; he must know that establishing the caliphate of Allah on earth is commanded by Islamic law, and is a matter of consensus for the Muslim nation.

The need to understand reality in order to change it

Al-Adam makes another recommendation to the mujaheed, which is in effect a commandment: to adjust to reality, to become absorbed in reality, and to adapt to it, so as to obtain the best possible results. Why? Because jihad is no one thing; rather, it is a variable composed of multiple elements. There is a gap between reality and what a mujaheed thinks and imagines; to realize some of his dreams, he must therefore give up others.

Summary and Conclusions

Al-Adam's book gives advice on a variety of aspects of jihad, and relevant to the mujaheed, the emir, and the religious scholars who support jihad. Al-Adam's advice is both practical and strategic.

Al-Adam's advice is anchored in the Qur'an and the Sunna, which he employs to lend the advice validity, and induce the mujahideen to follow it. To bolster his advice further, Al-Adam solicited, and then integrated into the book, comments from the late Sheikh Atiyyah Allah, a prominent authority on operational aspects of Global Jihad.

Like many other books and articles by jihadist writers – whether they be ideologues, scholars or strategists – this book deals entirely with issues related to fighting, jihad and the mujaheed. Topics concerning the caliphate or the emirates and their functioning are not reflected in this essay.