

The Legacy of Jihad

Islamic Holy War and the Fate of Non-Muslims

Edited by Andrew G. Bostom, MD

Foreword by Ibn Warraq



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59 John Glenn Drive
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[UNTITLED]

Yusuf al-Qaradawi (1926–)

THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD AS A *JIHAD* MODEL

. . . Allah has also made the prophet Muhammad into an epitome for religious warriors [*Mujahideen*] since he ordered Muhammed to fight for religion.¹ . . . The youth who wish to hurry to establish an Islamic state with an Islamic rule seek clashes with the existing regimes in the Arab states despite the fact that they don't have sufficient strength; they don't have military strength and not even the mental strength to establish an Islamic rule. . . . There are various ways to prepare for Jihad: there is mental preparation, there is physical preparation, and there is material preparation, meaning the preparation of the weapons. The messenger [Muhammad] prepared all his friends first mentally since equipment and weapons cannot fight by themselves, but rather need hands to operate them, and those hands must also have a purpose. . . .

Why were we defeated in 1967? Officers stated that we had vast amounts of weapons but we did not provide the warrior with mental preparation. We did not prepare him to fight for religious belief and for defending religious sanctuaries. . . . He who got killed is a [Shahid] in heaven . . . the first assignment is to prepare the hero who is willing to put his life in his own hands for Allah's sake, and he who does not care whether he encounters death or death encounters him. . . . He [i.e., a self-immolating bomber] kills the enemy while taking self-risk, similarly to what Muslims did in the pas. . . . He wants to scare his enemies, and the religious authorities have permitted this. They said that if he causes the enemy both sorrow and fear of Muslims . . . he is permitted to risk himself and even get killed.

From Yusuf al-Qaradawi, "The Prophet Muhammad as a *Jihad* Model," Middle East Media Research Institute, Special dispatch no. 246, July 24, 2001, <http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=archives&Area=sd&ID=SP24601>; and "Al-Qaradawi Speaks in Favor of Suicide Operations at an Islamic Conference in Sweden," Middle East Media Research Institute, Special dispatch no. 542, July 24, 2003, <http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=archives&Area=sd&ID=SP54203>.

THOSE WHO OPPOSE MARTYRDOM OPERATIONS AND CLAIM THAT THEY ARE SUICIDE ARE MAKING A GREAT MISTAKE

It has been determined by Islamic law that the blood and property of people of *Dar Al-Harb* [the Domain of Disbelief where the battle for the domination of Islam should be waged] is not protected. Because they fight against and are hostile towards the Muslims, they annulled the protection of his blood and his property . . . in modern war, all of society, with all its classes and ethnic groups, is mobilized to participate in the war, to aid its continuation, and to provide it with the material and human fuel required for it to assure the victory of the state fighting its enemies. Every citizen in society must take upon himself a role in the effort to provide for the battle. The entire domestic front, including professionals, laborers, and industrialists, stands behind the fighting army, even if it does not bear arms. Therefore the experts say that the Zionist entity, in truth, is one army. . . . What weapon can harm their enemy, can prevent him from sleeping, and can strip him of a sense of security and stability, except for these human bombs—a young man or woman who blows himself or herself up amongst their enemy. This is a weapon the likes of which the enemy cannot obtain, even if the U.S. provides it with billions [of dollars] and the most powerful weapons, because it is a unique weapon that Allah has placed only in the hands of the men of belief. It is a type of divine justice on the face of the earth. . . . Those who oppose martyrdom operations and claim that they are suicide are making a great mistake. The goals of the one who carries out a martyrdom operation and of the one who commits suicide are completely different. Anyone who analyzes the soul of [these two] will discover the huge difference between them. The [person who commits] suicide kills himself for himself, because he failed in business, love, an examination, or the like. He was too weak to cope with the situation and chose to flee life for death. . . . In contrast, the one who carries out a martyrdom operation does not think of himself. He sacrifices himself for the sake of a higher goal, for which all sacrifices become meaningless. He sells himself to Allah in order to buy Paradise in exchange. Allah said: “Allah has bought from the believers their souls and their properties for they shall inherit Paradise. . . . While the [person who commits] suicide dies in escape and retreat, the one who carries out a martyrdom operation dies in advance and attack. Unlike the [person who commits] suicide, who has no goal except escape from confrontation, the one who carries out a martyrdom operation has a clear goal, and that is to please Allah.”²

NOTES

1. For example, see D. S. Margoliouth, *Mohammed and the Rise of Islam* (London, 1905; repr., New Delhi, 1985), pp. 362–63. Professor Margoliouth explains the lasting

implications of the aggressive jihad campaign Muhammad launched against the Jewish farmers of the Khaybar oasis:

The taking of Khaibar marks the stage at which Islam became a menace to the whole world. True, Mohammad had now for six years lived by robbery and brigandage: but in plundering Meccans he could plead that he had been driven from his home and possessions: and with the Jewish tribes of Medina he had in each case some outrage, real or pretended, to avenge. But the people of Khaibar, all that distance from Medina, had certainly done him and his followers no wrong: for their leaving unavenged the murder of one of their number by his emissary was no act of aggression. Ali, when told to lead the forces against them, had to enquire for what he was fighting: and was told that he must compel them to adopt the formulae of Islam. Khaibar was attacked because there was booty to be acquired there, and the plea for attacking it was that its inhabitants were *not Moslems*. That plea would cover attacks on the whole world outside Medina and its neighborhood: and on leaving Khaibar the Prophet seemed to see the world already in his grasp. . . . Now the fact that a community was idolatrous, or Jewish, or anything but Mohammedan, warranted a murderous attack upon it: the passion for fresh conquests dominated the Prophet.

2. Al-Qaradawi's views are supported by the research of Professor Franz Rosenthal. In his seminal essay "On Suicide in Islam," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 66 (1946): 243, 256, Rosenthal observed:

While the Qur'anic attitude toward suicide remains *uncertain*, the great authorities of the hadith leave no doubt as to the official attitude of Islam. In their opinion suicide is an unlawful act. . . . *On the other hand, death as the result of "suicidal" missions and of the desire of martyrdom occurs not infrequently, since death is considered highly commendable according to Muslim religious concepts. However, such cases are no[t] suicides in the proper sense of the term.* (Emphasis added.)

John Paul Jones, in a letter to Prince Potemkin dated June 20, 1788, while Jones commanded Russian naval ships, wrote about a naval engagement with the Turkish fleet (outside Kimbourn) involving an unsuccessful martyrdom operation planned by the Muslim sailors [from John H. Sherburne, *Life and Character of John Paul Jones—A Captain in the Navy of the United States*. (New York: Adriance, Sherman, 1825), p. 308]:

[F]or it was the intention of the Turks to attack us and board us, and if we had been only three versts further the attempt would have been made on the 16th [June 1788] (before the vessel of the Captain Pacha ran aground in advancing before the wind with all his forces to attack us,). God only knows what would have been the result. . . . The Turks had a very large force, and we have been informed by our prisoners that they were resolved to destroy us, even by burning themselves, (in setting fire to their own vessels after having grappled with ours.) [Note added by Jones: Before their departure from Constantinople, they swore by the beard of the Sultan to execute this horrible plan . . . if Providence had not caused its failure from two circumstances which no man could foresee.]