

Jihad in Quran: A peaceful ideology

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Those who are introduced to the Quran only through the media generally have the impression that the Quran is a book of jihad, and jihad to them is an attempt to achieve one's goal by means of violence.

But this idea is based on a misunderstanding. Anyone who reads the Quran for himself will easily appreciate that its message has nothing to do with violence.

The Quran is, from beginning to end, a book that promulgates peace and in no way countenances violence. It is true that jihad is one of the teachings of the Quran. But jihad, taken in its correct sense, is the name of peaceful struggle rather than of any kind of violent action. The Quranic concept of jihad is expressed in the following verse: "Do greater jihad (i.e. strive more strenuously) with the help of this (i.e. the Quran)." (25:52).

The Quran gives us an introduction to the divine ideol-

ogy of peaceful struggle. The method of such a struggle, according to the Quran, is "to speak to them a word to reach their very soul." (4:63)

So, the desired approach, according to the Quran, is one that moves man's heart and mind. This is the mission of the Quran. And this mission can be performed only by means of rational argument. This target can never be achieved by means of violence or armed action.

It is true that there are certain verses in the Quran that give permission to wage war. But these verses are only relevant when a state of war already prevails. Physical combat is meant only for defence at the time of an attack. Indeed, no war is lawful in Islam except for defence. Moreover, such defensive warfare can be engaged in only by an established state.

No individual or organisation may on its own wage armed jihad.

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