

Terrorism and its Elimination*(An Islamic perspective)*

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ABSTRACT

Islām is a religion of peace and it gives great importance to peace. Islamic teachings and laws are meant to create and maintain peace in the human society. But, unfortunately, Islām has been targeted as a source of terrorism, today. In this article, the author tries to defend Islām and differentiate between Jihād and terrorism. The word terrorism needs to be seen in its historical perspective. Different definitions of terrorism have been presented, but still it is an ambiguous term. In this paper, the author tries to define terrorism in the Islamic perspective. This paper discusses the points given below:

- The concept of terrorism, its manifestations and types.
- Encountering and prevention of terrorism from Islamic perspective.
- Islām and the global brotherhood.
- The punishment of terrorism.
- The religious viewpoint against a cruel government.
- The peaceful struggle against cruelty and injustice.

Also, the difference between terrorism and jihad has been clarified. The rules and regulations of Jihād make it clear that it has nothing to do with terrorism, which is an unruly activity. A Muslim is supposed to be a peaceful citizen, who can never indulge in any act of terrorism. The rebellion against the rulers has also been discussed to draw the conclusion that it is not allowed except against the blatant kufr. The objectives of the Islamic punishments indicate the Islamic approach to minimize terrorism in the human society.

Keywords: Peace; Terrorism; Islām; Jihād; Mischief.

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The definition of terrorism needs to be observed in view of the following aspects:

- 1-Terrorism is a political problem, not merely a military one.
- 2-Terrorism is an answer of the weaker to the stronger.
- 3- How to encounter terrorism?

Literal Meaning of Terrorism:

The root of the word terrorism is taken from a Latin term that literally means “to frighten”, it became a part of the phrase “terror cimbricus”, which was used by the ancient Romans in 105 BC to describe the panic that ensued when they prepared themselves for an attack by a fierce warrior tribe. ⁽¹⁾

According to the dictionary of Merriam-Webster: “Something that causes very strong feelings of fear: something that is terrifying ⁽²⁾ or violence that is committed by a person, group, or government in order to frighten people and achieve a political goal.”⁽³⁾

Technical meaning of Terrorism (non-Islamic):

Some famous definitions of terrorism are below:

- 1- A policy or method aimed at terrifying opponents of a certain government. The term terrorist refers to a person trying to back his views by threats and intimidations ⁽⁴⁾
- 2- An appalling act committed in the territory of another state, by a foreigner against a person of a nationality other than of the perpetrator, with a view to exercising pressure in a dispute that has no domestic nature ⁽⁵⁾
- 3- Criminal acts directed against any nation, that by their nature or objective are likely to terrify persons or groups of persons or the public ⁽⁶⁾
- 4- A term used to describe a method or an approach or a theory or an idea behind that method by means of which an organized violence. Act of terror is directed against persons who in their capacity as individuals, agents or representatives of the authority interface with realization of this group’s objectives ⁽⁷⁾
- 5- Any unjustified, criminal act wherever it occurs and whoever its perpetrator may be, should be condemned ⁽⁸⁾

- 6- Threats and use of violence, mostly against a civilian population to realize political objectives. Terrorism involves such activities as assassinations, explosions, random killings and hostage taking and plane hijacking ⁽⁹⁾
- 7- Any organized act of violence or threat of violence that causes terror or fear, including killings or assassinations or hostage taking or hijacking of planes or ships or the detonation of explosives or any other politically motivated act leading to anarchy and disturbance.

In the light of the above definitions, a whole range of observations come to the fore:

- 1) The concept is ambiguous and undefined.
- 2) There is a discrepancy in the definitions of the term.
- 3) The definitions are relative and liable to different explanations.
- 4) There is a need for a yardstick to define terrorism.
- 5) The term doesn't cover all the intended meanings.

After viewing these shortcomings, in the light of the Qur'ānic verses, we can define terrorism through its following elements:

- Intimidation and violation of security of any kind.
- Presence of inhuman intention and motive.
- Unacceptability of the end and purpose of the act and the act itself by the humanity.

Accordingly, this definition may be stated as follows:

Terrorism is an act carried out to achieve an inhuman and corrupt (Mufsid) objective, involving threat to security of any kind, and violation of rights, acknowledged by the religion and the mankind.

I used the term 'human' instead of 'international' and have introduced the epithet 'corrupt' (Mufsid) in the land. Also, I referred to some types of terrorism with the phrase “security of any kind”. And, lastly, I mentioned two criteria, i.e., religious and human, the first to be consistent with our beliefs and, then, to generalize the criteria. And all these points will be discussed in light of Sūrah al-Mā'idah verse 33.

So, it includes all the forms of unjust terrifying, harming, threatening and killing of people and banditry. It also includes a criminal plan aimed at terrifying or harming people or endangering their lives, freedom or security. It also includes other forms, including the damaging environment or public or private facilities and endangering natural resources. All these are the forms of spreading mischief in the land. Allāh says:

﴿ وَلَا تَبِعِ الْفَسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴾⁽¹⁰⁾

And seek not mischief in the land. Verily, Allāh likes not the Mufsidūn (those who commit great crimes and sins, oppressors, tyrants, mischief-makers, corrupt.

The term Jihād is derived from the Arabic word Jahadah, means endurance.⁽¹¹⁾ And al-Jihād means “what you can afford”.⁽¹²⁾

The concept of Jihād in Islamic law is more comprehensive than mere fighting, it means exerting your efforts in good deeds. Ibn Taymiyyah said: “Jihād means to contribute what you can to please Allāh or repel what Allāh dislikes.”⁽¹³⁾

Jihād in Islām

Islām, being a practical way of life, realizes that humans fight and engage in war. So, it had laid down certain conditions and rules, which are to be followed by the Muslims, if they go to war. These conditions are:

- no killing of innocent people.
- no killing of women, children and aged person.
- no burning of crops or trees.
- only fight those who fight you.
- no wanton destruction.
- no breaking of monasteries.
- no killing of animals.
- fight in the cause of Allāh against those who attack you, but do not transgress.
- do not fight the enemies in a sacred place, unless they attack you from therein.

The provisions from the Qur'ān and Sunnah Rejecting Terrorism and Aggression:

The Islamic law is based on non-aggression and non-encroachment of inviolable things, especially the blood of men. We present the Qur'ān and Sunnah in this regard:

From the Qur'ān:

- 1) Islām strongly stresses the prohibition of taking away the lives of men, due to the high place of the human soul in Islām. Hence, it provides for preserving it and prohibits aggression against it. The unjust killing is prohibited, and aggression is not allowed as stated in the following verse:

﴿وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ أَنْ يَقْتُلَ مُؤْمِنًا إِلَّا خَطَأً وَمَنْ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا خَطَأً فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ وَدِيَةٌ مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ يَصَدَّقُوا فَإِنْ كَانَتْ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَدُوٍّ لَكُمْ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ وَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ فَدِيَةٌ مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ وَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ تَوْبَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا﴾⁽¹⁴⁾

It is not for a believer to kill a believer except (that it be) by mistake, and whosoever kills a believer by mistake, (it is ordained that) he must set free a believing slave and a compensation be given to the deceased's family, unless they remit it. If the deceased belonged to a people at war with you and he was a believer; the freeing of a believing slave (is prescribed), and if he belonged to a people with whom you have a treaty of mutual alliance, compensation must be paid to his family, and a believing slave must be freed. And whoso finds this (the penance of freeing a slave) beyond his means,

he must fast for two consecutive months In order to seek repentance from Allāh. And Allāh is ever All-knowing, all Wise.

- 2) Killing is punished severely in the world and in the hereafter, Allāh says:

﴿ وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا

وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا ﴿⁽¹⁵⁾

And whoever kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Hell to abide therein, and the wrath and the curse of Allāh are upon him, and a great punishment is prepared for Him.

- 3) That the prohibition of taking a single life is the same as taking the life of all the mankind. It tells that the safety of human life is much valued. Allāh says:

﴿ مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنَّهُ مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ

نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَمَنْ

أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَلَقَدْ جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُنَا

بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ثُمَّ إِنَّا كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فِي الْأَرْضِ

لَمُسْرِفُونَ ﴿⁽¹⁶⁾

Because of that we ordained for the Children of Israel that if anyone killed a person not in retaliation of murder, or (and) to spread mischief in the land - it would be as if he killed all mankind, and if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of all mankind. And indeed, there came to them Our messengers with clear proofs, evidences, and signs, even then after that many of them continued to exceed the limits in the land!

- 4) The adjudication against the spreaders of mischief and killing is weighed to suit the seriousness of their crimes. Given the serious damage and effects of spreading mischief, the punishment deems to

be harsh and severe to deter anyone who thinks of terrorizing or assailing peaceful populations. Allāh says:

﴿ إِنَّمَا جَزَاءُ الَّذِينَ يُحَارِبُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا أَنْ يُقَتَّلُوا أَوْ يُصَلَّبُوا أَوْ تُقَطَّعَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ مِنْ خِلَافٍ أَوْ يُنْفَوْا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ ذَلِكَ لَهُمْ خِزْيٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴾ (17)

The recompense of those who wage war against Allāh and His Messenger and do mischief in the land is only that they shall be killed or crucified or their hands and their feet be cut off on the opposite sides, or be exiled from the land. That is their disgrace in this world, and a great torment is theirs in the Hereafter.

From Sunnah:

The Sunnah also confirms the principle of non-aggression against others, as we can see from the following citations, which warn us against terrorism.

- 1) ‘Ā’ishah relates that the prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) said:

﴿إِنَّ الرِّفْقَ لَا يَكُونُ فِي شَيْءٍ إِلَّا زَانَهُ وَلَا يُنَزَعُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا شَانَهُ﴾ (18)

“Where there is softness it beautifies that thing, and from which it is taken away, it snatches its glamour.”

- 2) It was narrated by Uthmān bin ‘Affān, he said: "I heard the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) say:

﴿لَا يَحِلُّ دَمُ امْرِئٍ مُسْلِمٍ إِلَّا بِإِحْدَى ثَلَاثِ النَّفْسِ بِالنَّفْسِ وَالثَّيْبِ الزَّانِي وَالتَّارِكِ دِينَهُ الْمُفَارِقِ لِلْجَمَاعَةِ﴾ (19)

“It is not permissible to shed the blood of a Muslim, who bears the witness that there is no god but Allāh and that I am the prophet of Allāh, except in three cases: A man who commits adultery after having

married, or one who kills another person, or who reverts to Kufr after having accepted Islām.”

The important points that are taken from Sunnah are below:

- a) Islām is based on leniency and avoiding harshness, so, there is nothing taught by Islām that calls for killing or assailing the souls prohibited by Allāh.
- b) Emphasis should be laid on the sacredness of the Muslim blood that it is secured against aggression.
- c) Assaulting a Muslim is prohibited, both morally and physically.
- d) The safety of a Muslim: it is prohibited to point an iron tool or the likes of it towards a Muslim for fear of harming him by mistake.
- e) Emphasizing the protection of the lives of the non-Muslim covenants, holders of the vow of safety and the likes, and that if they get the vow of safety from any Muslim wherever he is and whoever he is, the vow becomes binding to all the other Muslims.
- f) Urging people to abstain from supporting those who spread mischief and ill –willed innovations and cautioning them.
- g) Emphasizing the compliance with the Islamic provisions on protecting human life, even at the battlefield and during wartime.

How does Islām Tackle Terrorism?

Islām Condemns Terrorism

The word Islām has the same meaning as "peace" in Arabic. Islām is a religion that came down to offer humanity a life filled with peace and well-being:

﴿يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السَّلَامِ كَآفَّةً وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا

خُطَوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٠﴾

You who believe! Enter absolutely into peace (Islām). Do not follow in the footsteps of Satan. He is an outright enemy to you.

Allāh Condemns Mischief

Allāh has commanded the humanity to avoid evil; he has forbidden immorality, rebellion, cruelty, aggressiveness, murder and bloodshed. Those who do not obey this command of Allāh are walking in the steps of Satan:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ يَنْقُضُونَ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مِيثَاقِهِ وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ

يُوصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ اللَّعْنَةُ وَهُمْ سُوءُ الدَّارِ ﴿(21)

But as for those who break Allāh's contract after it has been agreed and sever what Allāh has commanded to be joined and caused corruption in the earth, the curse will be upon them. They will have the Evil Abode.

Islām Defends Tolerance and Freedom Of Speech

Islām is a religion which fosters freedom of life, ideas and thought. It has forbidden tension and conflict among people; it forbids calumny, suspicion and even having negative thoughts about another individual. Islām has not only forbidden terror and violence, but also the slightest imposition of any belief or idea on another human being.

﴿لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ

وَيُؤْمِرْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ

عَلِيمٌ ﴿(22)

There is no compulsion in religion. Right guidance has become clearly distinct from error. Anyone who rejects Ṭāghūt and believes in Allāh has grasped the firmest handhold, which will never give way. Allāh is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

﴿وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ

اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا ﴿(23)

Those who do not call on any other deity together with Allāh and do not kill anyone Allāh has made inviolate, except with the right to do so, and do not

fornicate; anyone who does that will receive an evil punishment.

A Muslim, educated in the fine moral teaching of the Qur’ān, approaches everyone with love that Islām expects.

Some Islamic Human Rights, which can Save the Humanity from Terrorism

Some specific human rights, identified by Islām have shown Islām in view of terrorism very briefly. The basic universal human rights, given by the Qur’ān and the Sunnah include the following:

- Equality of all humans: “And of His signs is this: He created you of dust and you are now human beings dispersed everywhere...”

﴿ وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ إِذَا أَنْتُمْ بَشَرٌ تَنْتَشِرُونَ ﴾ (24)

- Right to Life: “And that you slay not the life which Allāh has made sacred, save in the course of justice. Thus He has commanded you in order that you may discern...”

﴿ قُلْ تَعَالَوْا أَتْلُ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ عَلَيْكُمْ أَلَّا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا ۚ

وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ مِنْ إِمْلَاقٍ مَحْنُ نَزْقِكُمْ

وَأَيْهَاتُمْ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ وَلَا

تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَّيْتُكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ

تَعْقِلُونَ ﴾ (25)

Some Islamic Human Rights, which can Save the Humanity from Terrorism

- Religious freedom: “There is no compulsion in religion...”

﴿ لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ ﴾ (26)

- Also: “For you your religion, for me my way of life...” (41).

﴿لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ﴾⁽²⁷⁾

- Sanity and intellectual freedom: “O you who believe, liquor and gambling and idols and divining arrows are only an infamy of Satan’s handiwork, so keep away from them in order that you may succeed...”

﴿يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ

الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾⁽²⁸⁾

- Justice: “And if you judge between mankind, that you judge justly...”

﴿وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ﴾⁽²⁹⁾

- Property: “And eat not up your property among yourselves in vanity...”

﴿وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ﴾⁽³⁰⁾

- Privacy: “O you who believe enter not houses other than you own without first announcing your presence and invoking peace (Salam) upon the folk thereof. That is better for you that you may be heedful...”

﴿يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَدْخُلُوا بُيُوتًا غَيْرَ بُيُوتِكُمْ حَتَّى تَسْتَأْذِنُوا

وَسَلِّمُوا عَلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ﴾⁽³¹⁾

- Peacemaking: “And if two parties of believers fall to fighting, then make peace between them and if one party of them does wrong to the other, you fought which does wrong till it returns unto the ordinance of Allāh; then, if it returns, make peace between them justly, and act equitably for Allāh loves the equitable...”

﴿ وَإِنْ طَافَيْنَا مِنْ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَقْتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا فَإِنْ بَغَت إِحَدُهُمَا عَلَى الْآخَرَى فَقْتَلُوا الَّتِي تَبَغَى حَتَّى تَفِيءَ إِلَى أَمْرِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ فَاءَتْ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴾⁽³²⁾

- Social and legal equality: “There is no superiority for an ‘Arab over a non-‘Arab and far a non-‘Arab over an ‘Arab or for a white over a black or for a black over the white, except in piety. All mankind is the progeny of Adam, and Adam was fashioned out of clay...”

«لَا فَضْلَ لِعَرَبِيٍّ عَلَى عَجَمِيٍّ وَلَا لِعَجَمِيٍّ عَلَى عَرَبِيٍّ وَلَا لِأَبْيَضٍ عَلَى أَسْوَدٍ، وَلَا لِأَسْوَدٍ عَلَى أَبْيَضٍ إِلَّا بِالتَّقْوَى النَّاسُ مِنْ آدَمَ وَآدَمُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ»⁽³³⁾

Going against a Ruler with an act of Terror is not allowed

Islām has described in detail the criteria to revolt against a Muslim ruler, according to the Holy Qur’ān, the sayings of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and various Islamic scholars. In the light of their opinions, we may discuss their views as follows:

- 1- Rebelling against oppressive rulers is prohibited
2. Rebelling against oppressive rulers is permissible

Opinion against Revolt

Basis of this opinion

There are some texts, which mention the order to obey and not to violate one’s pledge with his ruler. In fact, they explicitly state that one must be patient in the face of the injustice of the rulers. These texts include the following:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ ﴾⁽³⁴⁾

Allāh says: "O you, who believe, obey Allāh and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you"

‘Ubādah Ibn al-Ṣāmit (رضي الله عنه) said:

«دَعَانَا النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَبَايَعَنَا فَقَالَ فِيمَا أَحَدَ عَلَيْنَا أَنْ
بَايَعَنَا عَلَى السَّمْعِ وَالطَّاعَةِ فِي مَنْشَطِنَا وَمَكْرَهِنَا وَعُسْرِنَا وَيُسْرِنَا وَأَثَرَةٍ
عَلَيْنَا وَأَنْ لَا نُنَازِعَ الْأَمْرَ أَهْلَهُ إِلَّا أَنْ تَرَوْا كُفْرًا بَوَاحًا عِنْدَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ فِيهِ
بُرْهَانٌ» (35)

"We made the oath of allegiance to the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) to listen and obey when we are either energetic or exhausted, in our difficult times and in our easy times, and even if others are given preference over us. And we would not fight against the ruler unless we you a clear disbelief for which you have a proof from Allāh."

About this Ḥadīth, Sheikh Ibn Taymiyyah said:

"He has ordered them to obey and forbade them from removing the people from their positions and he has ordered them to stand for the truth." (36)

This is the case if the matter has not reached the state of a clear, unambiguous Kufr for which there is evidence and proof against the ruler.

There are numerous other Aḥādīth which give the same meaning. Those Aḥādīth, which indicate that it is forbidden for the Muslims to fight each other and warn them against civil wars and tribulations that usually occur when a group of Muslims rebels against the impious or oppressive rulers, who are still Muslims. These Aḥādīth include the following:

‘Abdu’llāh Ibn Mas‘ūd (RA) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«فَقَاتِلِ الْمُسْلِمَ كُفْرًا وَسِبَابُهُ فُسُوقٌ» (37)

"Fighting a believer is Kufr and defaming him is evildoing."

These Aḥādīth and others with similar meaning prove that it is forbidden for the Muslims to fight among themselves. The armed rebellion against impious rulers is a form of fighting between the Muslims.

Opinions for a Revolt and their Refutation

Basis for this opinion

Allāh says:

﴿ وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا فَإِنْ بَغَت إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الْأُخْرَى فَقَاتِلُوا الَّتِي تَبْغِي حَتَّى تَفِيءَ إِلَى أَمْرِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ فَاءَتْ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴾ (38)

“If two parties among the believers fall into a quarrel, make peace between them. But if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then fight (all) against the one that transgresses until it complies with the command of Allāh”.

The wording of this verse requires going out and fighting against the group that has transgressed the bounds while the tyrannical ruler and whoever is with him have transgressed the bounds vis-a-vis the other parties.

This verse does not indicate that whenever transgression exists, it is obligatory to counter it by fighting. Accepting this principle, Allāh also says:

﴿ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ ﴾ (39)

My Promise does not extend to the wrongdoers.

The argument here is that the position of the ruler is a part of the pact or promise of Allāh. It is not permissible for a wrongdoer to attain it. In fact, it is obligatory to rebel against him and make him leave his wrongdoing.

This verse contains no proof that it is permissible to revolt against the rulers. Its indication is that there will be none from the descendants of Abraham who will be Imām and guides while they are in fact wrongdoers.

The texts indicate that there is no obedience concerning a sinful matter, but there is no relevant evidence on this point. They just indicate that obedience is forbidden concerning a sin, such that when one is ordered to commit a sin, he should not obey. However, removing him from his position is not allowed. Obedience to the ruler is not just with respect to the just ruler; it is also true for the unjust ruler.

Their evidence also includes the fact that the scholars agree that any group which refuses the laws of Islām is to be fought. Ibn Taymiyyah wrote:

“Every group that refuses to abide by any law of the definitely established, manifest Islamic Sharī‘ah a must be fought until the religion is completely for Allāh. This is by the agreement of the scholars.”⁽⁴⁰⁾

Taking into consideration the goals of the Islamic law, more evidences show that it is impermissible to rebel against impious or oppressing rulers. Allāh sent the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) to achieve and complete welfare, while eliminating and reducing harm. And one should repel two evils by adhering to the lesser of two evils. Even though ordering good and eradicating evil is one of the greatest obligations and recommended deeds, but it must be kept in consideration that the good must outweigh any resulting evil. Any time the evil of any matter and its removal is greater than its benefit, the act is not something that Allāh has ordered.

Ibn Taymiyyah writes:

“Perhaps, no group is known to have revolted against a ruler except that in the rebellion more evil was the result than the evil they sought to remove.”⁽⁴¹⁾

It should be known that Islām calls for justice and abhors oppression and injustice, particularly if done against the people for whom one is responsible. Therefore, the ruler is enjoined to fulfill his duties and establish justice among people. The first among the seven categories to whom Allāh will give the shade on the Day of Judgment, where, there will be no shade but His, is a just ruler. As

per Ḥadīth narrated by Abū Hurayrah (May Allāh be pleased with him):

«سَبْعَةٌ يُظِلُّهُمْ اللَّهُ فِي ظِلِّهِ يَوْمَ لَا ظِلَّ إِلَّا ظِلُّهُ إِمَامٌ عَادِلٌ وَشَابٌّ نَشَأَ
بِعِبَادَةِ اللَّهِ وَرَجُلٌ كَانَ قَلْبُهُ مُعَلَّقًا بِالْمَسْجِدِ إِذَا خَرَجَ مِنْهُ حَتَّى يَعُودَ
إِلَيْهِ وَرَجُلَانِ تَحَابَّا فِي اللَّهِ فَاجْتَمَعَا عَلَى ذَلِكَ وَتَفَرَّقَا وَرَجُلٌ ذَكَرَ اللَّهُ
خَالِيًا فَفَاضَتْ عَيْنَاهُ وَرَجُلٌ دَعَتْهُ امْرَأَةٌ ذَاتُ حَسَبٍ وَجَمَالٍ فَقَالَ إِنِّي
أَخَافُ اللَّهَ وَرَجُلٌ تَصَدَّقَ بِصَدَقَةٍ فَأَخْفَاهَا حَتَّى لَا تَعْلَمَ شِمَالُهُ مَا تُنْفِقُ
بِيَمِينِهِ» (42)

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "Seven people Allāh will give them His shade on the day when there would be no shade but the shade of His Throne (i.e., on the Day of Resurrection): And they are: a just ruler; a youth who grew up with the worship of Allāh; a person whose heart is attached to the mosques, two men who love and meet each other and depart from each other for the sake of Allāh; a man whom an extremely beautiful woman seduces (for illicit relation), but he (rejects this offer and) says: 'I fear Allāh'; a man who gives charity and conceals it (to such an extent) that the left hand does not know what the right has given; and a man who remembers Allāh in solitude and his eyes become tearful"

However, in removing the oppression and the evil of an unjust ruler, the Muslims should be keen not to give way to any greater evil and corruption.

The Prophet stayed in Makkah for thirteen years and the government there was a disbelieving one. Despite this, whoever accepted Islām, they did not fight against the disbelievers. Rather, they were prohibited from fighting the disbelievers for that long period of time, except, after the Prophet migrated and a state was established and a community arose, which made them capable of fighting the disbelievers, this is the methodology of Islām.

Islamic Approaches to Peace:

Peace through coercive power is based on the pessimistic reading of the human nature. Islām is used as a tool for the legitimating of the power and the authority and for the preservation of social order; the threats to a given political order are often framed as a threat to Islām. The power-political approach view peace as an absence of war, and underscores political necessities, created by the restlessness of political subjects and the threatening posture of external enemies.

Peace through the Power of Communication:

Traditional Islamic approaches are explored: reconciliation, methods of mediation and arbitration. These methods affirm a restorative conception of peace and justice, encompassing notions of compensations for losses, attention to issues of “face” or social esteem, renunciation for the sake of the whole and forgiveness.

Peace through Will Power:

Adherence to Islām requires non-violent solidarity against oppression, the promotion of renewal through broad-based social movements and training for programs of direct non-violent action. Only a linkage of just ends with just means can secure authentic justice, peace and human dignity.

Peace through the Power of Love

This approach defines peace as a condition of all embracing harmony, perceived through the inward renewal and transformation of human consciousness. The cultural community is the context and the receptacle of human realization; renewal takes place within each person through inward cleansing and willing surrender to the divinity.

In Sunnah:

In Islām, an amazingly powerful emphasis is laid on developing love for mankind and on the vital importance of showing mercy and sympathy towards every creature of Allāh, the Almighty,

including human beings and animals. For, indeed, love and true sympathy are the very antidote of terrorism.

Abū Hurayrah reported that al-Aqra‘ Ibn Ḥābis saw Allāh's Apostle (ﷺ) kissing Ḥasan. He said: I have ten children, but I have never kissed any one of them, whereupon Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: He who does not show mercy (towards his children), no mercy would be shown to him.

«إِنَّهُ مَنْ لَا يَرْحَمُ لَا يُرْحَمُ»⁽⁴³⁾

Allāh, the Almighty has no mercy for him who has no mercy for his fellow beings.

The Qur‘ān repeatedly tells us to seek help from Allāh, the Almighty with patience and prayer. But if reasoning with those people bends on wickedness and praying for them fails to bring about a change in their ways, then, Allāh The Almighty says:

﴿وَأِنْ عَاقَبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبْتُمْ بِهِ ۗ وَلَئِنْ صَبَرْتُمْ لَهُوَ خَيْرٌ

لِلصَّابِرِينَ﴾⁽⁴⁴⁾

Then if you desire to punish the oppressors, punish them to the extent you have been wronged.'

Allāh, the Almighty commands the Muslims that when things get out of hand, they should join forces to restore peace by the use of reasonable force. They have been enjoined by the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, (ﷺ), to join forces, if there is need, with the followers of other faiths. Thus, in the famous document known as the Treaty of Medina, The Messenger of Allāh declared:

Article-1: This is the treaty of Muḥammad, the Prophet (the Messenger of Allāh) between the Believers and Muslims of the Quraysh and the people of Yathrib, and between those who follow them and join them in fighting (the common enemy).

Article 2: And it is that they constitute an Ummah Wāḥidah (One Nation) separate from other people.

Article 25: And also, that the Jews of the tribe of ‘Awf constitute an Ummah Wāḥidah with the Believers - even though the Jews will follow their own religion and the Muslims will follow their own - and this will include both their friends and themselves. ⁽⁴⁵⁾

In Islām, every effort is thus made to protect the peace of not only the Muslims, but, also, of the followers of other faiths. Allāh, the Almighty says:

﴿وَلَوْلَا دَفَعُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بَعْضُهُمْ بَعْضًا هَدَمَتْ صَوَامِعُ وَبِيَعٌ وَصَلَوَاتٌ
وَمَسَاجِدُ يُذَكَّرُ فِيهَا اسْمُ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا وَلَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ﴾ ⁽⁴⁶⁾

“And if Allāh did not defend some men by means of others, there would surely have been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques wherein the name of Allāh is oft remembered.

Objectives of Punishment in Islām:

Also, the objectives of the Islamic Penal System are showing views against terrorism.

This purpose has been articulated by the following verse that discusses retribution and its effects on a society:

﴿وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقِصَاصِ حَيَوةٌ يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ﴾ ⁽⁴⁷⁾
“There is (preservation of) life for you in retribution, O people of understanding, that you may become pious.”

To realize a general effect of the punishments, Islām has established the principle of announcing publicly, when they are carried out. Allāh says:

﴿وَلْيَشْهَدْ عَذَابَهُمَا طَائِفَةٌ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ ⁽⁴⁸⁾
“...A group of the believers should witness the punishment.

CONCLUSION:

All this shows that the moral teachings offered to the humanity by Islām can bring peace, happiness and justice into the world. The barbarism that is happening in the world today under the name of "The Islamic Terrorism" is completely alien to the moral teachings of the Qur'ān. It is the work of the ignorant, the bigot people, and the criminals, who have nothing to do with religion. The solution, which can be applied against these individuals and groups, who are trying to commit their deeds of savagery under the guise of Islām, is to educate such people in the true moral teaching of Islām.

In other words, the religion of Islām and the moral teachings of the Qur'ān are not the supporters of terrorism and the terrorists, but they are the remedy by which the world can be saved from the scourge of terrorism.

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