

Handout #3

ISLAM AND MODERNISM

اسلام اور جدت پسندی

Mufti M. Taqi Usmani

Handout #3

ISLAM AND MODERNISM

اسلام اور جدت پسندی

Mufti M. Taqi Usmani

Translated By
Dr. Mohammed Swaleh Siddiqui

Revised & Edited by
Mohammad Wali Raazi

Adam Publishers & Distributors
New Delhi -2 (India)

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

This book is copyright under the Berne Convention. Apart from any fair dealing for the purposes of private study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the copyright law, no portion may be reproduced without written permission. Enquiries should be made to the publishers.

© Author

ADAM PUBLISHERS & DISTRIBUTORS

Exporters & Importers

1542, Pataudi House, Darya Ganj,

New Delhi-110002

Phone (O) : 3271690, 3282550

Fax : 3267510

e-mail: apd@bol.net.in

www.adampublishers.com

Edition 2006

Printed & Bound in India

Published by :

S. Sajid Ali for

ADAM PUBLISHERS & DISTRIBUTORS

1542, Pataudi House, Darya Ganj,

New Delhi-110002

CONTENTS

| | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|-----|
| | FOREWORD | 5 |
| 1. | ISLAM AND MODERNITY | 7 |
| 2. | ISLAM AND INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION | 23 |
| 3. | THE DEMANDS OF TIME | 31 |
| 4. | RESEARCH OR DISTORTION | 49 |
| 5. | NEW INTERPRETATION OF ISLAM | 61 |
| 6. | SCHOLARS OF ISLAM AND PAPACY | 73 |
| 7. | SCIENCE AND ISLAM | 85 |
| 8. | THE CONQUEROR OF SPACE | 91 |
| 9. | ISLAM AND CONQUER OF THE UNIVERSE | 105 |
| 10. | JIHAD | 113 |
| 11. | AGGRESSIVE AND DEFENSIVE JIHAD | 123 |

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

FOREWORD

For the last twenty seven years I have been writing on different aspects of the practical implementation of Islam and Islamic solution of ever new problems arising in the different spheres of life. Most of those articles were being published in the monthly Journal "ALBALAGH". A collection of such articles had been published in Urdu about seventeen years ago under the caption "Asr-e-Hazir Mein Islam Kaiysay Nafiz Ho" (How to Implement Islam in the present time) comprising of about 750 pages.

Even after the publication of this book I had the opportunity of writing on other aspects of the same subject, and friends expressed a desire that these later articles may also be included in the same book. But when I found that an addition of these articles in that book would make it a voluminous book, making it difficult for the readers to get full benefit from it. Further, these articles pertained to different topics like politics, law, economy, education, social life and individual reforms, etc , and a book of that size would have a disadvantage for those who would be interested in a single topic for which they would have to buy the whole book many of whose articles may not be of their interest.

For this reason I thought it proper that it would be more appropriate to compile articles on different subjects separately, rather than collecting them in one book. I, therefore, rearranged my articles under the following titles and published them in the form of booklets in Urdu.

1. Implementation of Islamic Law and its problems.
2. Islam and present day politics.
3. Islam and Modernity.
4. Our Education System.
5. Reforming the Conduct of an Individual.
6. The life and message of the Holy Prophet (Sallal la ho Alay hi wassallam).
7. Reforms in the Social Life.
8. Our Economic System.
9. Muslims and Qadiyanism.

Of these nine collections the one "Islam aur Jiddat Pasandi" was published about two years ago and its English version is now being presented under the name of "Islam and Modernism". May Almighty Allah make it beneficial for the Muslims and may be a source of Allah's reward in the Hereafter.

Muhammad Taqi Usmani.

CHAPTER 11

AGGRESSIVE AND DEFENSIVE JEHAD

An Answer To A Letter:

Respected Moulana Muhammad Taqi Usmani Sahib,
Assalam-o-Alaikum wa Rahmatullah-wa Barakatuhu.

My humble self had recently had a chance to read some older editions of your esteemed journal "Al-Balagh". In the issue of March 1971, I found the following suggestions under clauses 17, 18 on page 10.

(17) Compromising relations and amicable treatment could be established with such non-Muslim states as may not be hostile to Islam and Muslims.

(18) Agreements made with other countries shall be honoured if they are permissible under Islamic Law, otherwise such agreements will be declared dissolved.

From these clauses it is apparent that non-Muslim states can retain their non-Muslim status in the presence of an Islamic state if they are non-hostile or hold a treaty or agreement.

In other words, the Islamic State will not wage Jihad

for propagation of Islam against them, even though, I think, peaceful preaching of Islam would continue in them also, and any interference therein by a non-Muslim state shall be an open proof of hostility. Anyway, my humble self is in full agreement with both these clauses, because my view is that the real job of Muslims is preaching of Islam throughout the world rather than attaining a power for total elimination of unbelievers from the earth and establishing an Islamic State everywhere (which is the view of Moulana Moududi). However attempts (through Aggressive Jihad) must be made against hostile and non-compromising non-Muslim states to subdue them in order to be safe from their mischiefs.

But in the issue of June 1981 in the critique of the book "Mukhtasar Seerat-e-Nabawiyah" by Moulana Abdul Shakoor Lakhnawi, after quoting the following excerpt from the book:

"The religious obligation of Jihad is only for the oppressed and for eradicating crueltiesin other words Jihad is the name of protection of self determination....hence considering the battles of the Prophetic era as devoid of defensive and protective measures is not only irreligious but is illogical also."

You have commented, "From these sentences it appears that only Defensive Jihad is permissible while the real purpose of Jihad is propagation of Islam" which means "To establish the supremacy of Islam and damage the authority of the infidels". For this purpose taking initiative for Jihad is not only permissible but at times obligatory and a means for reward from Allah. Apart from the Qur'an and traditions the entire history of Islam is full of such

Jehads. We need not make excuses and adopt apologetic attitude simply for the objections coming from non-Muslims. No single person has ever been forced to accept Islam nor is it permitted, otherwise the Islamic institution of "Jizyah" would have been meaningless. Muslims' sword has, however, been raised to establish the grandeur of Islam. If anybody wants to stay in the darkness of disbelief, he may do so, but the rule of Allah must prevail in the world created by Him. Muslims wage Jihad to raise the name of Allah and to subdue His rebels. Why should we feel shy in expressing this fact before people whose entire history is full of blood-shed for colonialism, and who have massacred millions of people simply to satisfy their lust and greed."

I wish to make two submissions to you about this critique. Firstly in my opinion it is wrong to deduce from the extracted sentences of Moulana Abdul Shakoor that in his opinion only defensive Jihad is permissible, while he has also written that "Jihad is the name of protection of self determination" which can include every offensive Jihad. Moulana Thanavi has stated:

"Jihad is meant to defend Islam and protect self determinationwith this it should not be thought that initiative for Jihad should not be taken. The purpose of an initiative itself is this defense and protection because there is great chance of resistance. It is for checking this resistance that Jihad is obligated. In short the defense that provides a motive for Jihad is general against defense for existing situation and defense for

anticipated resistance in future." (Al-Afadat-al-Youmiya, Letter No: 497 vol. 6).

Moulana Abdul Shakoor must have been aware of many Aggressive Jehads of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), and hence he cannot call such Jehads as unlawful. He, however, considers all the Jehads of the Prophet as Defensive and Protective because the purpose of all of them had been to break the force of Pagans of Arabia for the defense and protection of the integrity of Islam and Muslims so that the Religion of Truth may gain power in the region. When this purpose was achieved Allah revealed verse 3 of Surah Ma'idah on the occasion of the Last Hajj:

"This day have those who disbelieve despaired of your religion, so fear them not, but fear you Me. This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My blessing on you, and have approved Al-Islam as Din (Code of life) for you".

Obviously the Moulana has meant to include both Aggressive and Defensive Jehads under "Protection of integrity of Islam." However, it would have been better if he had further classified it to avoid misunderstanding by the reader. The second thing, which had specially been the prime cause of writing this letter, is to express my views about your critique so that you may either endorse or contradict it. (In case of contradiction, arguments of the Qur'an and Sunnah will be needed). My views will become clear to you from the following:

You have given the real purpose of Aggressive Jihad as Propagation of Message of Allah which, according to

you, is to be manifested with supremacy of Islam and establish its grandeur and breaking that of disbelief and Paganism so that the rule of Allah may prevail in a world created by Him. For this to understand we must first determine the meaning of the Kalimah of Allah (Message of Allah). In view of my humble self every reasonable, true, correct and just word is the Kalimah of Allah or the Kalimah of the Truth. To make it dominating over every unreasonable, false, incorrect and unjust thing or to make people believe the meanness and evils of the latter and elegance and grace of the former is the Kalimah of the Truth or the Kalimah of Allah. Supremacy of a thing signifies that it exists in dominantly trait. For example, domination of ignorance means the illiteracy of majority of people, dominance of 'world' means that most of the people are involved in worldly pursuits and do not discriminate between the lawful and forbidden things. The domination of the West means that majority of people have adopted Western civilization and style of life, domination of Hanafiyat means majority of people belonging to Hanafi school of thought, etc. etc. Thus, supremacy or domination of Islam would mean that most people are its true followers, and this (religious) domination of Islam is that is required. If "Kalimah of Allah" is taken to mean Islam, then the propagation of Allah's Kalimah would mean similar type of domination of it. The method of acquiring such a domination cannot be anything but convincingly preaching and producing exemplary character of the preachers and their people. This is what can cause a revolution in the hearts and minds of non-Muslims. This cannot be achieved by making them the subjects of an Islamic State, because in a situation like this the inferiority complex and the

subjective feelings would to some extent prohibit them to listen to the Kalimah. Hence, Aggressive Jihad does not result in domination of the religion of Islam but in that of a political domination of Muslims, and it is their own domination that is established and not that of Islam. The grandeur of Islam means that Muslims practise the teachings of the Qur'an and Prophetic Traditions in toto. For a political domination and grandeur their being even good Muslims is not essential, and it does not even result in the establishment of Rule of Allah on the world created by Him. Because the non-Muslims would continue to abide by their entire life style after paying "Jizyah". Intoxicants and pork would not be prohibited for them nor would they be stoned to death for rape. Their family laws would remain enforce and adulatory would continue unrestricted. If for some reasons the majority of non-Muslim citizens did not embrace Islam this political domination will continue only as long as the Islamic state is powerful. In case it gets weakened the non-Muslim citizens will rebel against the state and take even undue revenge of their previous subjugation as happened in Spain or is happening in India which has been more intensified after the division of the sub-continent.

I certainly do not mean that Aggressive Jihad should never be done. Rather, I believe that Jihad is obligatory against hostile, non-compromising, non-Muslim states if Muslims have enough power to carry it out, so that their force is broken and they do not obstruct the preaching of Islam. Aggressive Jihad is not advisable against those non-hostile and compromising non-Muslim states who allow preaching of Islam in their territories particularly these

days when territorial subjugation is generally condemned in the world, contrary to the times when capture of land was common, it was a credit to the attribute of the kings and rulers. The Aggressive Jehads of the major part of Islamic history all belong to the same period. However, Muslims must attain their martial superiority and keep expanding it so that non-Muslim states remain subdued "for fear of Jihad", to say nothing of actual Jihad. The Qur'an also commands to acquire and maintain the military strength. In the past despite the common practise of fighting for victory, earlier victories of Muslims were distinguished from those of other nations. Victories of other nations were meant only to show their strength and grandeur, and, in your terminology, to fulfil their lust and greed. But Muslims did not have colonialistic intentions (except for Arabia, Iran and Rome where expansionism was somewhat required). But their main intention was Propagation of the Message of Allah through preaching and inviting to this message. The safest way of doing it at that time was expansion of state. Hence Qari Tayyab has said, "The companions (of the Prophet) apparently waged wars but their aim used to be propagation of the Message of Allah. If their aim had been territorial expansion they would not have made treaties allowing the opponents to continue their rule and only permit the Muslims to preach Islam unobstructed. They were assured that no one will be forced to accept Islam. People will be free to accept or reject it. Those who accepted such a treaty no concern was shown to them. If territorial expansion was aimed at such a treaty would not have been needed and their country would have been captured.... Any way when non-Muslims became

bound by a treaty or agreement or became subjects they were let free because the real purpose was propagation of the Kalimah of Allah to the extent of preaching”

“(Qari Tayyab and his lectures.” Part I, pp 237, 238.)

I have underlined my thoughts and those that were in agreement with mine to make it easy for you to reply. “I hope you are feeling well”.

Yours humbly,

Syed Badrus Salam, Jeddah.

Reply from Moulana Muhammad Taqi Usmani.

Respected Sir,

Asslam-o-Alaikum wa Rahmatullah-wa- Barakatuhu.

I am in receipt of your esteemed letter. Whatever you have written about Jihad can be summarized as this “If a non-Muslim state allows for preaching Islam in its country, Jihad against it does not remain lawful.” If this is what you mean, my humble self does not agree with it. Obstruction in the way of preaching Islam does not mean only a legal obstacle, but greater power or domination of a non-Muslim state against Muslims is by itself a great obstacle in the propagation of Islam. There are no legal restrictions in most of the countries today on preaching

Islam, but since their grandeur and authority is established in the world, it has led to developing a universal feeling which forms a greater obstacle than the greatest legal binding in the way of free propagation of Islam.

For this reason the most important purpose of Jihad is to break this grandeur so that the resulting psychological subordination should come to an end and the way of accepting the Truth becomes smooth. As long as this grandeur and domination persists the hearts of people will remain subdued and will not be fully inclined to accept the Religion of Truth. Hence Jihad will continue. The Qur'an said:

قَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَلَا يُحَرِّمُونَ مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَلَا يَدِينُونَ دِينَ الْحَقِّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حَتَّى يُطِيعُوا الْجِزْيَةَ عَنْ يَدٍ وَهُمْ صَاغِرُونَ
(سورة التوبة: ٢٩)

Here, killing is to continue until the unbelievers pay Jizyah after they are humbled or overpowered. If the purpose of killing was only to acquire permission and freedom of preaching Islam, it would have been said "until they allow for preaching Islam." But the obligation of Jizyah and alongwith it the mention of their subordination is a clear proof that the purpose is to smash their grandeur, so that the veils of their domination should be raised and people get a free chance to think over the blessings of Islam. Imam Razi has written the following commentary on this verse:

"The purpose of "Jizyah" is not to let the unbelievers stay in their contumacy against Islam but sparing their lives to give them a chance for a time during which they may hopefully get convinced of the truth of Islam and embrace it. So when an

unbeliever is given time wherein he would be observing the respect and honour of Islam, and hearing the arguments of its validity, and also observing the baselessness of disbelief, these things would convince him to turn towards Islam. This, in fact, is the real purpose of legalising Jizyah.

The other question worthy of notice is: Do we find an example that the Prophet (PBUH) and his companions ever sent any missionary groups in other countries before Jihad and waited for their reaction to allow or disallow the missionary work? Did they go for Jihad only when they were refused to carry out the missionary work for Islam? Was any mission sent to Rome before attacking them? Was any attempt made to avoid Jihad against Iran and did they contend on seeking a permission for preaching Islam for that purpose? Obviously it was not so. Thus there can be no other conclusion that only a permit for missionary activities was not the aim. If that would have been the only aim many of the bloody combats could be stopped only on one condition that no obstacle would be placed in the way of the mission of Islam.. But at least in my humble knowledge there has not been a single incident in the entire history of Islam where Muslims had shown their willingness to stop Jihad just for one condition that they will be allowed to preach Islam freely. On the contrary the aim of Muslims as declared by them in the battle of Qadsia was, "To take out people from the rule of people and put them under the rule of Allah". Similarly, the Qur'an said:

وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ بِدِينِهِ.

"And (you O Believers) fight them until persecution is no more and the Din is all for Allah."

In the exegesis of this verse my reverend father Mufti Muhammad Shafi has written:

"The meaning of religion is "Authority and domination". Thus the meaning of this verse would be that Muslims should continue until the Muslims are safeguarded against their contumacy, and the religion of Islam becomes a dominating power so that it offers protection to Muslims from the atrocities and mischiefs of others."

He further said:

"The nutshell of this explanation is that Jihad against the enemies of Islam is obligatory on Muslims until the danger of their mischief or evil-doings is over, and the domination of Islam is established over all other religions. Since this will occur only near the end of the world, the command of Jihad remains till the last day." (Ma'arif-ul-Qur'an vol 4, p.233)

In short, my humble self is of the view that the purpose of Jihad is not just to get the right of missionary activities in any country, but it aims at breaking the grandeur of unbelievers and establish that of Muslims. As a result no one will dare to show any evil designs against Muslims on one side and on the other side, people subdued from the grandeur of Islam will have an open mind to think over the blessings of Islam. Factually, this aims at safeguarding Islam. It is for this reason that the scholars who have called

Jihad "A Protection" must be looked in the above context. But the basic element of this "protection" is to break the grandeur of unbelievers and establish the authority of Islam. Hence this basic element cannot be excluded from it. I think that all Ulema (Religious scholars) have established the same concept about the purpose of Jihad. Moulana Idrees Kandhalvi stated:

"By commanding Jihad Allah does not mean that all the unbelievers be killed outright, but the aim is that the religion of Allah should dominate the world, and Muslims live with honour and dignity, and obey and worship Allah in peace and tranquillity and there be no danger from unbelievers to interfere in the religion of Islam. Islam is not in enmity with the personal existence of its enemies. It resists such a grandeur and power that may become a threat for Islam and Muslims." (Seerat-ul-Mustafa vol. 2, p. 388)

At another place he writes:

"The implication of this verse is an obligation imposed on Muslims to fight against the unbelievers till the disorder and mischief cease to exist and the religion of Allah become supreme. By 'mischief' in this verse is meant the mischief anticipated from the grandeur and power of disbelief. And "The religion is all for Allah" means the exhibition and domination of religion, while in another verse it is stated,

وَقَاتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ إِن كَانُوا فِيَنَافَاةٍ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ لِلَّهِ

that is, the religion of Islam should gain so much domination and power that it may not be subdued by the power of infidelity and the religion of Islam becomes fully secure from the mischief and danger of disbelief" (Ibid vol. 2, p.386)

If the need for Jihad was abandoned just on getting the permission of Tableegh (Missionary activities), then we see that Muslims already have this permission in most of the non-Muslim countries of the world (It is a pity that this permission is not given in some Muslim countries) which implies that Muslims should never have to lift the sword. As a result disbelievers may establish and hoist flags of grandeur all over the world and their awfulness and supremacy on the people would stay dominating. The policies will be theirs, the commandments will be theirs, ideologies will be theirs, views will be theirs and the strategies will be theirs, yet the Muslims would have to be contended with the permission for their missionaries to enter those countries. The question arises how many people would be prepared to listen to the Muslims or give a serious thought to their speeches and writings in an atmosphere where disbelief had established its grandeur and awe throughout. How can the efforts of Muslim missionaries be effective in an atmosphere where anti-Islamic doctrines being spread on the strength of political power with full vigour, and their propagation carried out with means not possessed by Muslims?

If, however, Islam and Muslims attain such a power and grandeur against which the power and grandeur of disbelievers be subdued or at least it may be unable to

create sedition and mischief mentioned above, then, of course, mutual compromise through peace treaties with non-Muslim countries is not against injunctions of Jihad. Like wise as long as the required capabilities for breaking the grandeur of disbelief are not possessed by Muslims, peace agreements with other countries, alongwith all efforts to accumulate the sources of power are indeed lawful. In other words, there can be two types of agreement with non-Muslims.

1) Mutual compromise and peace agreements can be made with countries that have no power which could threaten the grandeur and domination of Muslims. This will be enforced as long as they do not become a threat to the Muslims again.

2) If Muslims do not possess the capability of "Jihad with power" agreement may be made till the power is attained.

My article published in March, 1971 as referred to by you pertains to these particular types of agreements. The excerpts of article published in June, 1981 pertain to the state where the grandeur of unbelievers dominates over the Muslims. Hence your expression that, "Aggressive Jihad is obligatory against hostile, and non-compromising non-Muslim states subject to capability, so that their power breaks and they do not form obstacles in the way of Muslim Missionary works Jihad is not advisable against non-hostile and compromising non-Muslim states who allow freedom of missionary activities" It is correct if it means what I explained above.

But if it means that just by permitting missionary activities a non-Muslim state becomes 'non-hostile and compromising' and Jihad against them does not remain lawful or desirable, then in my view this is not correct. Arguments in favour of my view have already been advanced.

As for your deliberation that "... Particularly these days when territorial expansion is generally condemned contrary to the times when conquering the land was common which was regarded as a credit to the attribute of the kings and rulers. The Aggressive Jehads forming the major parts of Islamic history all belong to the same era." With all the respects for you I strongly condemn it, because, if this is taken to be correct it would mean that Islam does not have a measure to determine a thing as good or bad. If a bad thing is counted as an "essential attribute" at the particular time Islam would begin to march on the footsteps of this practice and when people begin to condemn it at an other time Islam would also follow the suit. The question is whether Aggressive battle is by itself a commendable or not? If it is, why the Muslims should stop simply because territorial expansion in these days is regarded as bad? And if it is not commendable but deplorable why Islam did not stop it in the past. Did it continue to practise because this was regarded as a creditable attribute of the kings"?

In my humble opinion this interpretation of the Aggressive Jihad of Islamic history is extremely incorrect and far away from the facts. Even in those days when this thing was considered to be a creditable "Attribute of the

kings" Aggressive Jehads were waged not because it was customary for that period of time but because it was truly commendable for establishing the grandeur of religion of Allah. There were other "Attributes of the kings" that in the excitement of victory they never made any distinction between women, children and old people when persecuting them. But Islam did not encourage it just because it was customary. On the contrary Islam not only framed such military rules and regulations but also practically enforced them as could not even be imagined by the "kings". These were a matter of great surprise and rather unbelievable for the people who had not only become used to the barbarism of those kings but also became their admirers.

Aggressive Jihad is lawful even today for the purpose it was lawful in those days. Its justification cannot be veiled only because the peace-loving inventors of Atom Bombs and Hydrogen Bombs label it as "Expansionism" and resent those who have put the chains of slavery around the necks of the people of Asia and Africa. They are still bleeding under these heavy chains.

With due apologies, I may point out that it seems to me the result of the grandeur of the paganism that people have fixed their standard of good and bad on the basis of the propaganda which produces a lie as truth and truth as lie and then causes it to work into the minds of people to the extent that, to say nothing of non-Muslims, the Muslims themselves are overawed and inclined to adopt an apologetic attitude. If breaking such a grandeur of falsehood and evil comes under the definition of "Expansionism" we should venerate the blame of this expansionism with

Handout #3

complete self-confidence, rather than stand humble before them as though saying, "when you thought that Aggressive Jihad was good we practised it, but since you have started condemning it in your books..... and only in books.....we have also forbidden it on ourselves."

My humble self can never agree with this way of thinking.

Humbly yours.,

Muhammad Taqi Usmani.