

the way of Islam which have been brought forward by the enemies of Islam. Anyone can realize that these hurdles could be of different varieties, therefore, the armed struggle which is waged against these different situations certainly would be different in nature. These hurdles could be of two different kinds:

1. The hurdles or impediments which are brought in the way of Muslims. Those people who have accepted Islam and they want to worship the One Allah and submit to His will and they are living in a society of non-Muslims, will be persecuted for accepting Islam. This has happened in the past and is happening in the present day world. The Islamic state and society has the obligation to stop such aggression against Muslims wherever they may be if the Islamic state or society has the power and ability to eradicate such aggression.

2. The second type of hurdles are those which are related to non-Muslim circles. This means that the true message of Islam cannot be presented before non-Muslims in a society or country because those in power do not allow this to happen.

To undo the first type of hurdles, in the way of Muslims, one would have to wage an armed struggle against the aggressors (if peaceful efforts fail). The Qur'an says:
These people have been permitted to fight because they have been persecuted and certainly Allah is capable of helping them. They have been persecuted only because they said Allah is their Lord and they were expelled from their houses for that reason 22:39.

This verse was revealed in the early part of the life of Muslims in Madina and it is evident that the Muslims are expelled from Makkah or were the first to leave because of aggressive and unjust activities of the disbelievers of Makkah.

The second type of Jihad which is mentioned here, is the removal of hurdles in the way of non-Muslims, so that they could have access to the Islamic message without any danger. This Jihad is again an obligation upon Muslims. Moreover, the Ummah must strive in the best possible way so that all the servants of Allah on this earth can see the truth of Islam and be successful in the life

hereafter. This demands that Muslims should not be isolated from the rest of the world, rather they should make efforts to take this Deen to every corner of the world and not to allow anyone or any power to desist them from this struggle. A Muslim cannot force individuals to accept Islam, but he cannot allow other people or governments to become policemen upon the large populations of the world and create such circumstances that they cannot listen to the true message of Islam. When a system of disbelief (kufr) is governing the society, then the minds of the people will be closed to the message of Islam and this is considered to be a hurdle in the way of the Islamic message. The Qur'an has mentioned this important obligation of the Prophet (pbuh) and the Muslims in the following verse:

This is Allah who sent His messenger with the guidance and the true Deen: so that it is established as a dominant way of life over other ways of life, no matter how much the disbelievers dislike it.

This dominance is both intellectual and political. Therefore, the Qur'an has made this clear announcement to Muslims:

You should all fight together with the polytheists as they fight you together. 9:36

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) during the last part of his mission and after him the caliphs, in their times, presented the Islamic message peacefully to the leaders of various nations of Arabia and then faced them in armed struggle to transfer the power from the hands of disbelief into the hands of Islam.

The purpose of this armed struggle is not to force people to accept Islam, because belief in Islam is related to one's heart and no one's heart can be changed through force.

Islam is presented to the individuals to choose with their free will between Islam and non-Islam. In the Islamic state this right is fully guaranteed. The non-Muslims in their places of worship are protected in the Islamic society. The other important thing is that armed struggle is not waged to establish Islamic imperialism. Its purpose is to bring the truth of Islam into political power so that all human beings can realize this truth of Islam and accept it with their free will and could be successful in the life

hereafter.

Conditions for Armed Struggle

There are certain necessary conditions which are to be fulfilled before Muslims can engage in an armed struggle. If these conditions are not fulfilled then an armed struggle cannot be acceptable before Allah. The conditions are as follows:

1. Those who are engaged in armed struggle are free Muslims, citizens of independent states, being governed by an Amir. Without this free and autonomous state no armed struggle can be carried out. This is why the Prophet (pbuh) while he was in Makkah, did not engage in any armed struggle, even though he and his companions were being persecuted. He established an Islamic state in Madina, before he started this armed struggle. As long as this condition is not fulfilled, a Muslim should bear the difficulties and persecutions faced in the way of Islam.

2. Muslims must gather adequate strength and power to face the hostile forces.

3. This armed struggle must be purely in the way of Allah. Those who are engaged in fighting, should have only one purpose - to make Allah's Deen as supreme and to remove the fitna and aggression and to enjoin goodness and forbid evil and ultimately seek the pleasure of Allah.

The Significance of Jihad

Allah declares in the Qur'an:
Allah loves those people who fight in His way making lines strong like walls of lead. 61:4

The Prophet (pbuh) stated that any one who fights in the way of Allah then travels for one morning or evening is better than everything in the world. The Prophet (pbuh) is reported to have said that one who fights in the way of Allah - his reward is equal to one who continuously fasts or prays and continuously recites the Qur'an. He is quoted as saying: "Whose soul will enter into paradise would not like to come back to this world, except the soul of the one who is martyred in the way of Allah. He will request Allah that he may go back to the world for ten times and he is martyred ten times in the way of Allah." (Bukhari, Muslim) ***