

## Islamic studies: 3. Misconceptions about Islam



Prof. Awadh A. Binhazim

## What is your understanding of Jihad?

Is it war or holy war?  
Or  
Is it something else?



## Jihad – the word

- In the linguistic sense, the Arabic word **“JIHAD”** means struggling or striving and applies to any effort exerted by anyone.

## Is it holy war?

- Islamic teachings- it is **unholy** to instigate or start war

## What is Holy War in Arabic?

- Translate the words “holy war” back into Arabic we find **“*harbun muqaddasatun*”**, or for “the holy war”, **“*al-harbu al-muqaddasatu*”**.
- Arabic words for “war” are **“*harb*”** or **“*qital*”**

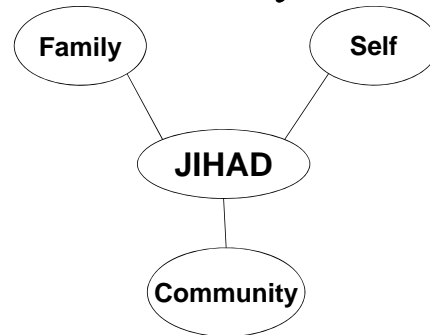
## The struggle:



## Recognizing and love of God

- It is a struggle to put Allah ahead of our
  - loved ones,
  - our wealth,
  - our worldly ambitions and
  - our own lives.
- Tough struggle for reverts due to the opposition of his family, peers and society.
- Here - the Holy Quran uses the word Jihad

## Levels of Jihad



# What about Pluralism?

Is Islam tolerant to  
other religions?

## Religiously pluralistic society

- Muslim government must acknowledge & protect the divinely ordained right of **each person to determine his or her spiritual destiny without coercion.**
- The recognition of freedom of conscious in matters of faith is the cornerstone of the Quranic notion of religious pluralism

## Quranic Principles of Diversity

- In assuring and confirming this affirmative principle of diversity – the Quran reminds us that
  - “Surely this community of yours is **ONE** community and I am your Lord; so serve Me” 21:92.
  - “O mankind, We have created you male and female, and appointed you races and tribes, that you may know one another. Surely the noblest among you in the sight of God is the most God-fearing of you. God is All knowing. All aware.” 49:14

## So what does this all mean?

- The **“People are ONE community”** is the foundation of a **theological pluralism** that presupposes (take for a fact!) the divinely ordained equivalence and equal rights of all human beings. Hence the people are **ONE** Nation on the basis of the humanness that they continue to share
- The **Adamic bond** binds us all



# Fundamentalist

What is your understanding?  
Are you a fundamentalist?

## Fundamentalist the term

- The term itself is borrowed from the "Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy" which appeared early in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century within the Protestant Churches of the US.
- The term "Fundamentalist" derives from a 1909 publication "*The Fundamentals: A testimony to the truth*" which proposed five required Christian beliefs for those opposed to the Modernist movement.

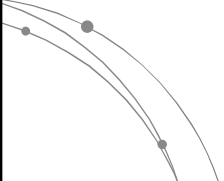
## Every Muslim is a fundamentalist ?

- Muslim fundamentalists are:
  - Individuals who strictly follow the fundamentals of Islam and teachings of Mohammed (PBUH)
  - Promote regular attendance at mosques, and promote living by the standards of the Qur'an.
  - Promote the concept of theocratic government, in which Islamic law becomes their way of life.
  - View the West as secular, ungodly, decadent and obsessed with sex

## In Islam – the fundamentalist is....

- **One who returns to what is considered the defining or founding principles, i.e. "the fundamentals" of the religion**

## Extremism

- The Prophet (PBUH) said:
    - **"Be ware of extremism in the religion"**
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## Rights of Women

- The Quran provides clear-cut evidence that women are **completely equal to the men in the sight of God** in terms of her rights and responsibilities. The Qur'an states:
  - "Whoever works righteousness, man or woman, and has faith, verily to him will We give a new life that is good and pure, and We will bestow on such their reward according to the their actions. (Qur'an 16:97, see also 4:124).

## 2. The Social Aspect

- **The right to education:**
  - Prophet Muhammad said: "Seeking knowledge is mandatory for every Muslim". (AlBayhaqi). Muslim as used here includes both males and females.
- **The right to be supported:**
  - "Whosoever supports two daughters till they mature, he and I will come in the day of judgment as this" (and he pointed with his two fingers held together).
- **The right to kind treatment:**
  - The Qur'an supports her basic rights as a wife as well as kind treatment and companionship. The Qur'an states:
    - "...But consort with them in kindness, for if you hate them it may happen that you hate a thing wherein God has placed much good." (Qur'an 4: 19).
    - "The most perfect believers are the best in conduct and best of you are those who are best to their wives". (Ibn-Hanbal, No. 7396)
    - "And we have enjoined upon man (to be good) to his parents: His mother bears him in weakness upon weakness..." (Qur'an 31:14) (See also Qur'an 46:15, 29:8).

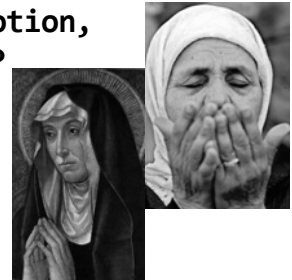
## 3. The Economic Aspect

- **The right of independent ownership:**
  - According to Islamic Law, she has rights to her money, real estate, or other properties.
  - This right undergoes no change whether she is single or married. She retains her full rights to buy, sell, or lease any or all her properties.
- **The right to motherhood:**
  - With regard to the woman's right to seek employment it should be stated 1<sup>st</sup> that Islam regards her role in society as a mother and a wife as the most sacred and essential one.

**The Question of modesty: Do these women cover for the same reason?**



**Covering: Is it purity, chastity, cultural, oppression, modesty, religious, devotion, righteousness ?**



## HUMAN RIGHTS IN ISLAM

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- The protection of human fundamental rights is an inherent principle of Islamic teaching
- The rights sanctioned by Allah are an integral part of the Islamic faith, and all Muslims have to accept, recognize and enforce them

## The 5 things Islam protects

- Faith
- Life
- Mind
- Family
- Property

## Freedom of faith, conscience & conviction

- ❑ Islam has laid down the injunction: *"There should be no coercion in the matter of faith."* (2:256)
- ❑ Everyone is free to worship who they want to worship
- ❑ Entering into Islam is a free choice and a willing submission

## Equality Before Law

- Islam gives its citizens the right to absolute and complete equality in the eyes of the law.
- Everyone is to be dealt with justly



## The Right To Participate In The Affairs Of State

- As the Qur'an says: *"And their business is (conducted) through consultation among themselves."* (42:38)
- The **"Shura"** or the legislative assembly means that the executive head of the government and the members of the assembly should be elected by free and independent choice of the people.

## What are the raging debates?

## Contemporary Issues and the raging debates

- Role of Women
- Diversity and Co-existence
- Theocracy Vs. Separation of Mosque and State
- Aristocracy (and autocracy) in the Muslim world
- US Foreign Policy
  - Imperialism and Western hegemony
  - Anti-Islam
- Guise of anti-terrorism → anti-Islam campaign
- Civil rights/civil liberties
- Challenges of modernity
- Evangelism

## Islam Vs Christianity



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09-13-05



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