

Chapter Seven: Jihad

In the Iranian textbooks Jihad is referred to in both military and non-military contexts. Following are examples of both usages.

A. Military Jihad

As news spread of the Byzantine army's movements on the northern borders, the Prophet... issued the order of Jihad... [On that occasion there were among the Muslims] Jihad fighters who were ready to do battle in God's cause with their money and their soul, and idle ones, who were so attached to this world's life that they forgot god's punishment and left the prophet and his companions alone in a difficult battle...

Although this expedition did not end in a military confrontation with the Byzantines, it stabilized the idea of Jihad against the Byzantines and the spread of Islam beyond the borders...

History of Iran and the World, Grade 10 (2004) p. 112

In the books of previous years the students learned many subjects concerning the Muslim nation, the way the Islamic government is administered, and the need to defend it and [to have] Jihad against invaders and infidels. Continuing those subjects, [students] will learn in this book... the need of Jihad and defense in the cause of safeguarding and spreading Islam.

Islamic Culture and Religious Instruction, Grade 8 (2004) p. 57

Lesson Eleven: Jihad and Defense in Islam

Linguistically, Jihad means effort. In addition to this general meaning, it is used in Islamic culture to mean battle and armed war against the enemies of Islam and the Muslims.

...Islam is a religion of peace and tranquility, and, as long as armed action is not necessary, it does not give the order for Jihad. But, when the need arises, not only does it not refuse war and Jihad, it orders that and considers it a legal [religious] duty, and [one] of the best [kinds of] worship.

...The Jihad fighter in the cause of God sells God his own soul. He returns to God the soul He granted him and sacrifices himself in His cause. He abandons at once everything he has and unites with the Great Worshipped One who has no match...

What is the price of this transaction? The price is God's Paradise...

The document of this transaction is the Heavenly books. This transaction has been recorded in the Torah, the Gospels and the Koran. Omnipotent and compassionate God has undertaken to carry out this transaction and pay this price...

On the battlefield, the Believer and Jihad fighter in the cause of God sees himself facing two tasks which are good and important: He battles bravely in order to please God, defend the shining laws of Islam, defend [the cause of] liberty and justice, of establishing fairness and helping the deprived and the oppressed. [He also] defends

his territory and homeland. Either he kills the enemies of Islam... or he sacrifices his blood in the cause of God, and in His presence. Either way, he attains happiness and victory.

Islamic Culture and Religious Instruction, Grade 8 (2004) pp. 67-69

Following is an explanation of the various kinds of military Jihad. Note the reference to the 'Arrogant Ones' – a code name for the United States in our time.

Initiative Jihad

Islam never gives the order for Jihad and battle with the aim of conquering countries, taking lands, exploiting people and imposing faiths and cultures. But, if the situation is that people are ignorant, live in poverty and deprivation, and the oppressors and the Arrogant Ones plunder the product of their labor, the army of Islam knows its duty, which is to help the deprived and save them from the claws of the Arrogant...

If the Arrogant Ones close the way of preaching and reason and prevent guidance and preaching, the order of Jihad is issued according to the discretion of the Prophet, or the Imam, or the Muslim leader, so that the army of Islam should make the Arrogant Ones fall in a holy Jihad and heavy attack, and pave the way for free preaching and for the people's awakening and their redemption.

Initiative Jihad, then, is a kind of defense as well, defense of the deprived people's rights, defense of the people's honor, and defense of the rights of the oppressed.

Islamic Culture and Religious Instruction, Grade 8 (2004) pp. 69-70

Defensive Jihad

When the country of Islam becomes the target of foreign aggression and encroachment, defense is the duty of all. The Muslims should mobilize to drive the aggressor away and crash him... and to defend their existence, their honor and their Islamic country...

Defensive Jihad is the duty of all, old and young, men and women. Everyone should participate in this holy battle... In this matter it is not necessary to wait for the order of the Prophet, or the Imam, or the Muslim leader, and [thus] give the enemy the opportunity for further attack...

If the Colonialists interfere in Muslim countries from afar through their internal agents, the religion of Islam does not allow the Muslims to sit idly and watch the foreigners plundering. Rather, it orders them to rise with all [their] might, make an effort, cut off the foreigners' filthy hands, and liberate their country. This deed is also defensive Jihad and it is the duty of all.

Internal Jihad

Internal jihad is a kind of defensive Jihad. If a group inside a Muslim country starts a conspiracy and upheaval – they disturb the peace in that society, weaken the government of Islam, and are determined to overthrow the government of Islam by terror and sabotage. They revolt against the leader of the Muslims... They refuse to accept the laws of Muslim society, and [they] disobey the leader... The ruling clergyman, who defends the existence of the government of Islam, has no choice but to declare a defensive Jihad in order to crash them with all [his] power. In such a case,

it is incumbent on the Muslims to obey, strive to eradicate and suppress them, neutralize their plots by every means, and scatter them...

Islamic Culture and Religious Instruction, Grade 8 (2004) p. 71

The philosophy of Jihad is discussed in the following quotations.

A question may come to mind: why should there be war and bloodshed in the world in the first place? Why should there be a need for a command called 'Jihad' among the prophets' teachings? God answers this question in this verse and says that it is the nature of Creation and society that God wards off the evil and sedition of one group, which spreads corruption upon the earth, by means of another group.

Lessons from the Koran, Grade 11 (2004) p. 62

Some of the enemies of Islam, who wanted to portray this religion as ugly and violent, have called Islam the religion of the sword and pointed to these wars [of early Islam]. Ignoring the logical and moral power of this religion in the spread of Islam, they considered war to be the reason for the spread and development of this religion.

Lessons from the Koran, Grade 11 (2004) p. 64

In the first years of the Prophet's mission and the emergence of Islam, when the Muslims were in Mecca, they were severely persecuted by the polytheists... Whenever the Muslims approached the Prophet and asked his permission to fight and reciprocate, the Prophet would say "I have not yet been given permission to [perform] Jihad." Eventually, these verses were revealed and gave the Muslims permission to defend [themselves].

...The reason for this permission was that they were oppressed, and it is the natural and logical right of every oppressed [person] to defend himself, stand against the oppressor, and put him in his place.

Lessons from the Koran, Grade 11 (2004) p. 65

Yes, idol worshipers, gold worshipers and power worshipers want that no one should worship God. But God wants something else. He wants the worshipers of God to carry on. His custom is to suppress some of the aggressive people through [the agency of] some others. This is the philosophy of Jihad. If the Muslims have been given permission to [perform] Jihad, this is because Jihad is the natural way and the social law of suppressing the group of people who rebelled [against God] and who expelled the Believers from [their] homes for the crime of worshipping God. Had this social law – defending truth and fighting the enemies of piety – not existed, then throughout history, not a [single] monastery would be left where a monk worships God, nor a [single] church where a Christian mentions God's name, nor a [single] synagogue where a Jew praises [God]...

Lessons from the Koran, Grade 11 (2004) pp. 66-67

It is for the establishment and defense of such a society that God has granted the Believers permission to [perform] Jihad. This [kind of] war and Jihad is not bloodshed and blood-drinking for the purpose of conquering countries, acquiring nations' natural resources and dominating masses of people and their economy and culture. Rather, it is... in fact, the defense of peace and real freedom, and, in one word, defense of God worship.

Lessons from the Koran, Grade 11 (2004) p. 69

In many verses in the Holy Koran, Exalted God orders the Believers to fight the Jihad in the cause of God and kill the oppressors. He gives the glad tidings of forgiveness and eternal Paradise to anyone who becomes a martyr in the cause of God. He considers martyrdom a great victory.

Islamic Culture and Religious Instruction, Grade 8 (2004) p. 72

[Questions:]

1. What is the meaning of Jihad? What is its meaning in the Islamic culture?
2. Who is the buyer, who is the seller, what is the commodity, what is the price of the deal – in the transaction the Believers do with God?
3. What is initiative Jihad? What is the goal of this Jihad?
4. What is defensive Jihad? What is the goal of this Jihad?
5. What is internal Jihad? ...

Islamic Culture and Religious Instruction, Grade 8 (2004) p. 73

From the verses of the Holy Koran, especially the verses for which we have provided the translation in this lesson, we understand that:

1. Revolt, uprising and Jihad with the purpose to execute God's laws and commands, [to] cut the oppressors' hand from the people's soul and property and [to] banish any kind of oppression, corruption, polytheism and injustice – are among the most fundamental religious directives and duties.
2. ...

Islamic Culture and Religious Instruction, Grade 7 (2004) p. 28

"God has exalted the men who fight [*al-mujahidin*] with their goods and their persons above those who stay at home." Al-Nisa', 95 [Arabic, followed by Persian translation:]

God has given the *Mojaheds*, who fight the Jihad with their property and soul, preference over those who forsake the Jihad.

Koran Studies, Grade 7 (2004) p. 73

Following is a collection of Koran verses appearing in the Iranian textbooks and advocating Jihad.

"They go to Jihad in the cause of God and do not fear criticism from anyone"
[Al-Ma'idah, 54]

Koran Studies, Grade 8 (2004) p. 65

"Believers, have fear of God and seek the right path to Him. Fight valiantly for His cause, so that you may triumph." (Al-Ma'idah, 35 [Arabic])

"Believers, fear God and turn to God and fight the Jihad in His cause so that you may be delivered." [Persian translation]

In this verse, three fundamental issues are raised which are necessary for society's success and righteousness:

...

3. Jihad in God's cause.

Defense Readiness 1 – Teacher's Guide, High School Grades (2002) p. 2; Defense Readiness 2 – Teacher's Guide, High School Grades (2002) p. 2

"He that fights for God's cause fights for himself..." [Al-Ankabut, 6 (Arabic)]
[Persian translation:] "Whoever strives and performs Jihad certainly strives for himself."

In these... verses, the Koran speaks again to the Believers who persevere and perform the Jihad in the cause of [their] faith and belief...

... Those who strive, fight and perform the Jihad, should know that they perform the Jihad for themselves, and that God is not in need of their effort... The reward given by God to the hard-working Believers is the highest one. God pardons their lesser sins and grants them [the honor of] meeting Him.

Lessons from the Koran [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) pp. 31-32

"The closest people to the degree of prophecy are the scholars and the Jihad fighters." Prophetic *Hadith*, **Logic [Humanities & Islamic Sciences], Grade 11 (2004) Back Cover**

The conditions for Acceptance of [Divine] Guidance

...

A. Piety:

...

B. Jihad:

"Those who fight [*jahadu*] for Our cause We will surely guide to Our own paths."
(Al-Ankabut, 69)

For the realization of one step of guidance it is necessary to perform one step of Jihad for God.

Religion and Life – Teacher's Guide, Grade 9 (2004) p. 10

... Any event can lead to a religious motive and to an important decision: Hearing a fine reading of the Holy Koran... the self sacrifice of a believing Jihad fighter...
Religion and Life – Teacher's Guide, Grade 10, Part 1 (2004) p. 39

The self-sacrificing [people] of Islam have suffered pain and torture from the time of the Prophet to this day, and by so doing they have preserved the religion of Islam and passed it on to us.

Now, it is our turn to fight the Jihad and make a sacrifice in the cause of religion. How are we to cope with the commitment to fulfill this great responsibility?

Persian, Grade 5 (2004) p. 134

Jihad and defense is an indispensable religious duty in Muslim society, and all should defend their country, dignity and belief with all [their] might. Therefore, we should always be ready to face the enemies.

Islamic Culture and Religious Instruction, Grade 7 (2004) p. 58

The content in the works of the poets and writers of this period [of the Islamic Revolution] are as follows:

- A call to struggle and Jihad against the enemies and the oppressors.
- Glorification of the martyr and of martyrdom.

Persian Literature [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) p. 134

The contents of the poems, writings and stories influenced by the Revolution culture... are as follows:

1. Praise of freedom and liberation, Jihad... martyrdom...

Persian Literature [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) p. 105

The Friday Imam delivers sermon while standing and leaning against a weapon. Do you know why? In order to signify that Muslim society maintains its combat readiness under all circumstances, even while delivering sermons. He holds his weapon ready and leans against it in order to signify that he is always ready to perform Jihad in the cause of realizing 'the Divine wishes' against deviationists, infidels, and hypocrites, who do not accept the word of truth, rebel, and oppress.

Islamic Culture and Religious Instruction, Grade 7 (2004) p. 93 [Quotation marks are in the original text]

Why does the Friday Imam deliver the sermon while leaning against a weapon? Explain.

Islamic Culture and Religious Instruction, Grade 7 (2004) p. 96

Whoever takes as a model one of the Jihad fighters in the cause of God, such as Hamzah, Lord of the Martyrs, and strives to have characteristics like his, nurtures in himself qualities such as courage, ambition, physical capability, warlike abilities and helping the oppressed...

Religion and Life, Grade 9 (2004) p. 23

The term Jihad is used in reference to the soldiers of Iran in the war with Iraq.

There are also families living around us who are deprived of the blessing of having a father. The fathers of some of these families fought the Jihad bravely during the Imposed War [with Iraq, 1980-88] and attained martyrdom.

Social Studies [Civics], Grade 6 (2004) p. 50

The boys of the engineers unit of the Jihad are arranging the last remaining tasks...

Under that heavy fire, the Jihad bulldozer driver pours out the soil.

They are the Jihad fighters in the cause of God...

Persian Literature, Grade 9 (2004) pp. 70, 73, 74

In the following quotations, the term Jihad is not mentioned, but the religious connotation of fighting is there.

Thank you, O free teacher

O fighting person, O free person, we thank you... In the course of this year, which is about to end, we have learned the lesson of affection and fraternity from your compassionate behavior, and from your shining speech we have learned the lesson of self sacrifice and struggle.

We have learned to make self-sacrifice in the cause of our country, and rise to battle and fight the enemies of our religion, faith and Islam...

Persian, Grade 5 (2004) p. 188



...Guarding the Koran and defending the country of Islam is incumbent upon [both] women and men. When an enemy attacks, we should all prepare for self sacrifice and defend [our] religion, lives, property, country and other rights. It is also good for Muslim women and girls to learn the military arts and guard duty, learn First Aid and methods of nursing the wounded, and always be wakeful guardians of the larger country of Islam.

Religious Instruction, Grade 5 (2004) pp. 36-38

Questions

3. Who has the obligation to guard the country of Islam and defend the Koran?
Religious Instruction, Grade 5 (2004) p. 38

The Palestinian Intifadhah against Israel is also seen as a form of Jihad.

"God loves those who fight for His cause in ranks as firm as a mighty edifice."
([Koran] Al-Saff [the Battle Array], 4 [Arabic])

"God absolutely loves those who perform the Jihad and fight in His cause like a firm barrier." [The same verse in Persian translation]

It would be good for you to write a few lines about the [Palestinian] *Intifadhah*.



Koran Instruction, Grade 6 (2004) p. 13

The high esteem in which Jihad is held sometimes serves to emphasize the importance of other activities.

From Islam's viewpoint... whoever endeavors to raise his family's standard of living is worthy of appreciation like the one who performs Jihad in the cause of God.

[Footnote:]

2 – Whoever works hard for his dependents is like the Jihad fighter in the cause of God [Arabic, a Prophetic Saying (*Hadith*)].

Economics [Humanities], Grade 10 (2004) p. 8

Over the ages, the term 'Jihad fighter' (mujahid in Arabic, mojahed in Persian) came to denote in Persian 'fighter' in general. There is even a case in which this term is used in reference to the Crusaders.

Frederic II, the Excommunicated Crusader *Mojahed*

... Given the Pope's power and influence in Europe, Frederic [II of the Holy Roman Empire, 1194-1250] was forced in the beginning of [his] reign to make [some] concessions to the Pope. Among other things he undertook upon himself... to fight the Muslims as one of the Crusader Jihad fighters [*Mojahedan* in Persian].

History of Iran and the World, Grade 10 (2004) p. 209

The following example, in the form of a sentence in a language textbook, can be classified either as military or as non-military Jihad.

Life is belief and Jihad.

Persian Language [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) p. 56

B. Non-Military Jihad

Non-military Jihad is referred to in two contexts: spiritual Jihad, i.e., man's effort to purify his own soul, and the development projects in rural Iran. The first kind is called "the Greater Jihad". The other type is known by its specific names: Construction Jihad and Agricultural Jihad. Following are examples of both.

I. Spiritual Jihad

God's Messenger said after the returning from Jihad:

"You should perform the Greater Jihad which is your Jihad with your own soul that is within you." [Arabic]

Religion and Life – Teacher' Guide, Grade 10, Part 1 (2004) p. 155

Imam Kazem, peace upon him, said:

"Perform the Jihad against your own soul

So that you drive it away from its desire

For it is your duty, like performing Jihad against your enemy."

Lessons from the Koran, Grade 11 (2004) p. 7- additional section

Imam Khomeini has said:

"You, youngsters, should start the Greater Jihad now... As long as a person has his power of youth... he can improve himself."

Religion and Life, Grade 9 (2004) pp. 59-60; and see also Islamic Viewpoint, Grade 11 (2004) p. 40

The following text – a Koranic verse – uses a variation of the Arabic term Jihad, but it is translated into Persian in the meaning of "endeavor", which is the original Arabic meaning of this word.

"Those who fight [*jahadu*] for Our cause We will surely guide to Our own paths..."
Al-Ankabut, 69 [Arabic]

Those who endeavor in Our cause We will surely guide to Our own paths...
Koran Studies, Grade 7 (2004) p. 20 and see also Religion and Life, Grade 9 (2004) the first page of the Introduction (not numbered)

The same verse is given here with a somewhat different interpretation, which does not exclude military Jihad completely.

"Those who fight for Our cause We will surely guide to Our own paths." [Arabic]

The struggle and endeavor [*Mojahadeh in Persian*] in the cause of God is not restricted to Jihad against the enemies but includes all actions which are accomplished in the framework of the plan of [living a] religious life for the sake of God.

Religion and Life – Teacher's Guide, Grade 10, Part 2 (2004) p. 13

II. Construction and Agricultural Jihad

In the first months after the victory of the Islamic Revolution, two other important institutions, namely, the army of the [Revolutionary] Guards and the Construction Jihad [*Jehad-e Sazandegi*] were established.

History of Iran and the World [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) p. 282

The Construction Jihad came into existence for building the country and serving the deprived farmers and villagers.

History, Grade 8 (2004) p. 92

The Construction Jihad [*Jehad-e Sazandegi*] came into being after the [Islamic] revolution. Those who worked in the [Construction] Jihad served the people greatly by building schools, public baths, bridges and clinics, and by helping the farmers.

Social Studies, Grade 3 (2004) p. 48

Questions

2. What works has the Construction Jihad accomplished in the villages?

Social Studies, Grade 3 (2004) p. 50

Following the Islamic Revolution, the Construction Jihad has taken worthy actions for the development of the villages in our country, by offering services and facilities to the villagers.

Geography [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) p. 119

After the victory of the Islamic Revolution, the Construction Jihad built schools, public baths, mosques and clinics in most villages, and made healthy drinking water available.

Social Studies, Grade 4 (2004) p. 121

Questions

3. What possibilities have become available in most villages through the effort of the Construction Jihad?

Social Studies, Grade 4 (2004) p. 122

From 1358 [1979 CE] until the [Iranian] month of Mehr 1362 [September-October 1983] the Construction Jihad built 3302 schools, 2967 public baths, 1245 mosques and 214 clinics. How many schools, public baths, mosques and clinics did the Construction Jihad build [altogether]?

Mathematics, Grade 4 (2004) p. 142

With the religious alms [*zakat*]... it is also possible help the Construction Jihad to lay pipes in the cities and in the small villages...

Islamic Culture and Religious Instruction, Grade 7 (2004) p. 105

The popular forces and the *Basij* undertook to rebuild the destroyed cities and villages of the southern fronts... They were absorbed and organized by the Construction Jihad and the Red Crescent [organization] of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Defense Readiness, Grade 10 (2004) p. 10

In order to fight farm pests in one village, the Agricultural Jihad has prepared two kinds of poison which should be blended in a ratio of 3 to 5. One of the farmers needs a 240 kg [mixture]. How many kilograms of each kind should be prepared?

Mathematics, Grade 5 (2004) p. 51

In 3 years the Agricultural Jihad built 24,288 km of rural highways. Determine how many kilometers per month on average were built by the Agricultural Jihad?

Mathematics, Grade 5 (2004) p. 109

The number of individuals who were vaccinated or cured by the Agricultural Jihad between the years 1359 AH [1980] and 1362 AH [1983] is 1,958,763, 1,867,210, 1,832,151 and 1,631,788, respectively. Compute the average number of individuals who were vaccinated or cured by the Agricultural Jihad per year.

Mathematics, Grade 5 (2004) p. 133

The Agricultural Jihad built in one of the villages a tank for drinking water, of which the length, width and height were 15, 8 and 3 meters, respectively.

A. What is the volume of this tank for drinking water?

B. What is the capacity of this tank in liters?

Mathematics, Grade 5 (2004) p. 153