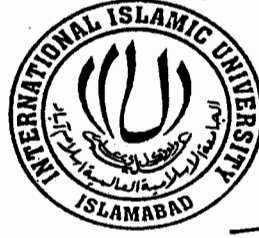


International Islamic University Islamabad
Department of Comparative Religion
Faculty of Islamic Studies (Usuluddin)



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Different Approaches to Self-Immolation

(A comparative study of Martyrdom & Suicidal Attacks in Judaism,
Christianity & Islam)

A Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Islamic Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of M Phil. Department of Comparative Religion

Submitted By:

Ahmad Raza UI Habib

764-FIS/M.Phil/04

Supervised by:

Mr. Muhammad Modassir Ali

Assistant Professor &

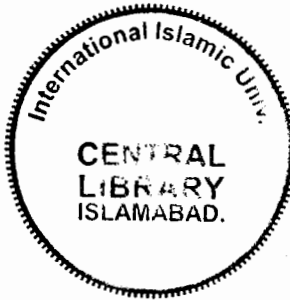
Head, Department of Comparative Religion

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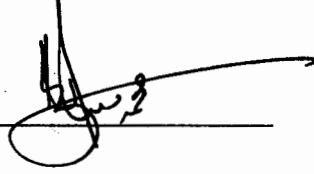
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- Suicide - Judaism
- Suicide - Christianity
- Suicide - Islam
- Suicide - Religious aspects.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Viva-Voce Examination Committee

External Evaluator: _____

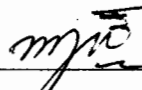


Dr. Muhammad Zia ul Haq

Chairman, Faculty of Shari'ah & Law

International Islamic University, Islamabad

Internal Evaluator: _____



Dr. Muhammad Junaid Nadvi

Assistant Professor, Department of Hadith

Faculty of Islamic studies (Usuluddin), IIUI

Supervisor: _____



Mr. Muhammad Modassir Ali

Assistant Professor & H.O.D.

(Head of the department of comparative religion)

Faculty of Islamic Studies (Usuluddin), IIUI

Dedication

“To the magical prayer of my mother, the financial assistance of father and the sincere guidance of my spiritual leaders the combination of which added to my thirst for knowledge and encourage me to reach the goal.”

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- C.S.C. (Christian Study Centre), Rawalpindi
- Z.B.I (Zarepeth Bible Institute), Murree road, Rawalpindi
- St. Mary's Library, Rawalpindi
- Bishop's Library Rawalpindi

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Although this paper is presented by me but, I am sure, without Allah's blessings and my teachers' and friends support I would never have accomplished it.

TRANSLITERATION TABLE

ا	a	د	d	غ	gh	بھ	bh	Long Vowels	ا	a	
ب	b	ذ	dh	ف	f	پھ	ph		آ	ā	
پ	p	ر	r	ق	q	تھ	th		ی	ī	
ت	t	ز	z	ک	k	جھ	jh		و	ū	
ث	ṭ	س	s	ل	l	چھ	ch		و (URDU)	ō	
ج	j	ش	sh	م	m	دھ	dh		ے (URDU)	ē	
چ	ch	ص	ṣ	ن	n	ڈھ	ḍh		Short Vowels	ا	a
ح	ḥ	ط	ṭ	ه	h	رھ	rh			ی	i
خ	kh	ظ	ẓ	ی	y	کھ	kh			و	u
د	d					گھ	gh				

Diphthongs

و	—	(ARABIC) (PERSIAN/URDU) (TURKISH)	aw au ev
ی	—	(ARABIC) (PERSIAN/URDU) (TURKISH)	ay ai cy

Doubled

و	—	uww/uvv
ی	—	iyy

Letter ؤ is transliterated as elevated comma (') and is not expressed when at the beginning.

Letter ع is transliterated as elevated inverted comma (').

ض as Arabic letter is transliterated as ḍ, and as Persian/Turkish/Urdu letter as ž.

و as Arabic letter is transliterated as w, and as Persian/Turkish/Urdu letter is transliterated as v.

ته is transliterated as ah in pause form and as at in construct form.

Article ال is transliterated as al- (l- in construct form) whether followed by a moon or a sun letter.

و as a Persian/Urdu conjunction is transliterated as -o.

Short vowel َ in Persian/Urdu possessive or adjectival form is transliterated as -i.

Introduction

Self-immolation is the act of self-sacrifice by suicide. Literally, "immolation" implies suicide by fire, but the term also includes other forms of self-sacrifice; martyrdom, suicide and self killing.

The concept of self-immolation is as old as religion itself. Its universality and importance can hardly be underestimated among the human races. It is equally important in revealed and non-revealed religions even cultures. Among different people the ceremonial of immolation offers indeed a much multicolored picture. If we emphasize only that which was general and common to all, the simplest martyrdom rite consists of mere exposition in the holy wars.

Self-immolation has played a long role in Jewish and Christian traditions too. For Jews Massada has been a pilgrimage site since the first Zionist settled in Palestine. This was the fort where, after the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD, a group of Jewish men, women and children resisted 1500 Roman soldiers before committing mass suicide. Briefly self-immolation has been as essential part of the history of many religions.¹

As for the suicidal attacks' phenomenon, it is complex one because of the motives involved and it is constituted according to different logical criteria. But I want to move away from the question of what motivates the bombers to kill innocent civilians by dying, of why people choose death rather than life. I just have interest in its religious aspect that what kind of feed back is provided by revealed religions. So under the umbrella of self-immolation, two concepts are to be discussed; *Martyrdom and Religious motivated suicide*.

Statement of research problem:

Here are some of the reasons which inspired me to take this topic:

¹ Marilyn J. Harran, "Suicide" in *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (London: Macmillan Publishers), vol: 14, p: 126.

1. In the modern age when human behaviour is changing, self-immolation is still a religious ritual which is in full swing in Semitic, non-Semitic religions and cultures with different interpretations.
2. In the contemporary world, there is a tussle between Muslims and Non Muslims on the issue of suicide attacks. Thousands of Muslims and Non Muslims have been killed in the name of "Attaining Paradise" or "Revenge".
3. The claim of West that Muslims are terrorists and fundamentalists.
4. The conflict among the Semitic religions on the issue of suicide attacks.

Literature review

There is no comparative work on the topic of self-immolation, as far as my knowledge goes. Almost all the writers of Judaism, Christianity and Islam discussed sacrifice, al-shahādah, Jihad, and Holy War as a religious ritual in any way. But no compiled research has been carried out in this field. We can say that there are partial works on the topic which may be helpful in the study of my topic.

In some respects the present study is an attempt to establish with greater clarity the relationship between the suicidal-operations and religion at a wide range. But before coming to that it is important to adopt a broader perspective and consider the various attempts which have been made up till now to differentiate suicide and religious motivated suicide that can also be narrated as self-immolation, as a recurrent phenomenon in history.

The subject has attracted quite a lot of scholarly attention in recent years, partly because of the role played by religion in the various wars.

Fidā'ī Ḥamlay [Urdu], Abd Ul Karim, M.Phil thesis, Bahā Ud Dīn Zakariyya University, Multan.

It is good effort about suicide attacks in Islamic perspective. It narrates martyrdom, lawful murder, jihad and its forms and suicide without comparing

these issues in others religions. This research paper will help us only when we discuss the Islamic view point about self-immolation.

Violence, terrorism and teachings of Islam, Dr. M. Imtiaz Zafar, publication of HEC, 2006.

This book discusses the concept of violence in different religions and cultures and touches upon suicidal attacks in an historical way with comparative perspective not dealing with detailed features of other religions. So we can have some basic information about self-immolation in Semitic religions. Detailed discussion is missing here.

God of Battles: Holy Wars of Christianity and Islam, P. Partner, Harper Collins, London, 1997.

Partner's book is fruitful. He concentrates on comparison of the Christian and Muslim practice of religious war; indeed, since he included chapters dealing with the Ancient Israelites, the Maccabean revolt, and the Zealots. All three of the great monotheistic religions are covered. This book is a direct study on war and do not have any focus on suicide phenomenon. It will provide us the references about religious wars and violence.

M. Walzer, 'Exodus 32 and the Theory of Holy War: The History of a Citation', *Harvard Theological Review*, number 61, 1968.

Exodus 32: 26 describes how Moses recruits the sons of Levi to carry out a programme of execution in the name of God. Walzer linked the Holy War theory to this biblical verse and then proceeded to set out the three main citations of the text by St Augustine, Aquinas and Calvin. He presented the said verse as a proof for the Holy War theory.

Memory and Reconciliation: The Church and the Faults of the Past, Catholic Truth Society, London, 2000.

The Vatican issued an extraordinary document on its celebration of the Jubilee Year 2000, 'Memory and Reconciliation: The Church and the Faults of the Past',

which acknowledged guilt and sought forgiveness for the Catholic Church's sponsorship and use of violence in the past. Naturally the Crusades and the Wars of Religion loomed large in the Vatican's view of how Christ's message of peace had been drastically traduced.

Methodology:

My methodology in this thesis is textual, historical and comparative. I have emphasized on the collection of data from the original texts on the concept of self-immolation in Semitic religions; Judaism, Christianity and Islam. I have tried to narrate and explain these texts in the light of the tradition of the concerned religion. My thesis comprises of the concept of martyrdom, suicide and suicide attacks in Semitic religions, its historical development and how it was influenced by later cultural, political and environmental situations right from the beginning till the 20th century. This thesis has also dealt with that concept as mentioned in the Qur'ān, the *Sunnah*, and the *Bible* and what were the external influences on the concept of martyrdom that gave rise to the contemporary phenomenon of 'suicidal attacks'?

Synopsis of Thesis:

My research work contains an introduction, four chapters and a conclusion. The reason to divide it in four chapters is very simple that my subject of study are the three religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The discussed topics in three religions are same which are as follow: sanctity of life, concept of peace and war, historical study of martyrdom and suicidal attacks, its legitimacy and illegitimacy, contemporary religious institutional views on it.

In fourth chapter I have compared the three religions to find out the similarities and dissimilarities to present a possible solution of the crucial situation of today's problem. This chapter tries to analyse the issue of self-immolation. The results are deduced at the end of the thesis under conclusion. (God has the best Knowledge).

All the merits in this research are because of Almighty Allah and the deficiencies because of me.

INTRODUCTION OF DEFINITION

Concept of Self-immolation

For the intentional termination of one's own life, there are a number of synonymous expressions in English; martyrdom, suicide, self destruction, free death, suicidal act, suicide bombing, sacrificial death and self immolation.

"Self-Immolation" is simple to see but there is no debate on the fact that *immolation* as a term has not yet been discussed by the scholars of the world. In the following lines after the discussion on its complexity some of the definitions have been recorded as back ground before entering the subject.

Etymological meaning:

(a) *Self-immolation*: Is a noun from a transitive verb *Self-immolate*.

Immolate: to kill somebody by burning them.²

(b) *Immolate*: to give up.³

(c) *Immolate*: Latin *immolatus*, past participle of *immolare*, from the custom of sprinkling victims with sacrificial meal; akin to Latin *molere* to grind more at meal It was used for the first time in 1548. It has two meanings;

1: to offer in sacrifice; especially: to kill as a sacrificial victim

2: to kill or destroy often by fire

Immolation: - noun

1: The act of immolating; the state of being immolated

2: Something that is immolated

(d) *Self-immolation*:

A deliberate and willing sacrifice of oneself often by fire⁴

² *The oxford English dictionary*, J.A.Simpson & E.S.C Weiner (ed.) (Oxford: University Press, 1970), vol 4, *Immolate*..

³ *Pentagon's reference Dictionary* (New Delhi: Pentagon press, 2004), *Immolate*.

⁴ *Dictionary and Thesaurus, Britannica Encyclopedia of World Religions*, Jacob E.Safra & Jorge Aguilar Gauz (ed.) (Singapore: 2006), *self-immolation*.

(e) *Self immolation*—noun

“Voluntary sacrifice or denial of oneself, as for an ideal or another person”⁵

The definitions cited above establish the complexity of the issue. The scholars have a calculated opinion that it is difficult to find any agreed-upon definition of the term because comparatively it is easier to identify that which is immolation than attempt to label exactly that, which is not immolation.

Literally, “Self-immolation” implies suicide by fire, but the term also includes other forms of self-sacrifice, for example martyrdom, suicide, self destruction, free death, suicidal act, suicide bombing, self immolation, sacrificial death...etc. Some of these expressions have been coined by religion, philosophy and law.

Human blood and organized religious belief have been features of almost every human society. But religions provided invaluable terms of reference. The same situation is with self-immolation. Its religious interpretation lies in martyrdom and religiously motivated suicide. Martyrdom gets its place in religion’s circle but suicide is a complicated one. So we start from martyrdom first that directly relates to war circumstances.

Concept of Martyr

Martyrdom is a demonstrative, voluntary and desired act of *self-immolation* at the hands of inimical forces. The victim becomes a model and an ideal for his respective religious community and can encourage others. The martyr’s society promises the martyr a special reward after death, such as immediate entry into the presence of God or paradise, sinlessness, and the status of mediator between God and faithful.

The concept is familiar to Jews, Christians, and Muslims, and to other

⁵ Dictionary.com Unabridged Based on the Random House Dictionary, © Random House, Inc. 2009, Self-immolation. retrieved on February 09, 2009, from <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/self-immolation>

religions. During the study of history it is interesting to find that almost every religious, even social and political movement has created martyrs.

Martyrdom is a free voluntary act. Martyrdom unites the martyr's people, strengthens people's courage to bear worldly alms, politicizes the relationship between the groups and directs their anger to the cruel.

Definitions of Martyr

Martyr A person who suffers very much or is killed because of their religious belief or political beliefs. A person who tries to get sympathy from other people by telling them how much he or she is suffering.⁶

Martyr is a Greek word which means witness.

"A person who consciously accepts death for his or her religious position and religious community, and after death becoming also a role model for those who remain behind."⁷

Martyrdom: "it is an attempt to break through the ideological and social boundaries between the conflicting groups with hierocratic, religiously based power."⁸

"*Martyr* is a person who defends a principle, even though it means he must sacrifice many things, even his life."⁹

Martyrdom in a broader sense

I have sorted out some important aspects of martyrs by studying the 'martyrdom' in the coming books; *The Encyclopedia of religion*, *The Brill Dictionary*

⁶ *The oxford English dictionary*, J.A.Simpson & E.S.C Weiner (ed.) (Oxford: University Press, 1970), vol: 6, Martyr.

⁷ Kocku von Stuckrad and others (ed.), *The Brill Dictionary of Religion* (Boston : BRILL Leiden, 2006), vol:3, p: 1824.

⁸ Samuel Z. Klausner, "Martyrdom" in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, Mircea Eliade, (ed.) (London: Macmillan Publishers), vol: 9, p: 230.

⁹ John W. Wade, "Martyr" in *The world Book encyclopedia* (Chicago: field enterprises educational corporation), vol: 13, p: 436.

darkness - the stars and the moon. Every evening he dies and they return. For the next day's fight he needs strength. His diet is human blood.¹¹

Concept of Suicide

Suicide: the act of killing yourself deliberately. A course of action that is likely to ruin your career, position in society, etc.¹²

According to the *World Book Encyclopedia*:

“A person who deliberately kills himself commits suicide.”¹³

There are no two opinions regarding suicide's definition. Everything is clear and our research subject of study is not mere suicide but the religious motivated suicide because the other one is strictly prohibited in three religions.

Religious perspective

From the religious perspective, it can be said that religiously motivated suicide is a complex one. Most theistic religions take an expressly negative attitude toward suicide.

“Several of the major religious traditions reject suicide as a religiously justifiable act but commend martyrdom; among them are Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. These religions distinguish between actively willing to end one's life in suicide and passively accepting one's death as the divine will by means of martyrdom at the hands of another.”¹⁴

¹¹ History of Aztecs, Retrieved on august 27, 2009 from

<http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?historyid=aa12>

¹²*The oxford English dictionary*, J.A.Simpson & E.S.C Weiner (ed.) (Oxford: University Press, 1970) , vol: 8, Suicide,

¹³ John W.Wade, “Suicide”, *The world Book encyclopedia* (Chicago: field enterprises educational corporation) vol: 13, p: 603.

¹⁴ Marilyn J.Harran, “Suicide” in *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (London: Macmillan Publishers), vol: 9, p:126.

Human Immolation through Civilizations

The occurrence of human sacrifice can usually be related to the recognition of human blood as the sacred life force. The killing of a human being, or the substitution of an animal for a person, has been a part to commune with a god.

New age encyclopedia describes the existence of human sacrifice in some cultures. It says that in some cases human beings themselves have been sacrificed. Burning or killing are the usual procedures of sacrifice.¹⁵

I consulted *Encyclopedia Britannica* for detailed description. It narrates the history of all human cultures which have the strong examples of human sacrifice. It says:

“The offering of a human being to a god or slaughter of servants or slaves was more common in **Africa, Egypt and the ancient Middle East** where human sacrifice was connected with ancestor worship, some of the slaves of the deceased were buried alive with him, or they were killed and laid beneath him in his grave. For example, the **Chinese** practice of burying the emperor's retinue with him continued intermittently until the 17th century. The sacrificial offering of humans to a god has been well attested only in a few cultures. In what is now **Mexico** the belief that the sun needed human nourishment led to the sacrifice of thousands of victims annually in the *Aztec and Nahua* calendrical maize (corn) ritual. The burning of children seems to have occurred in **Assyrian and Canaanite** religions and at various times among the Israelites. Among the **African Asante**, the victims sacrificed as first-fruit offerings during the Festival of New Yams were usually criminals, though slaves also were killed. Some early *Christians* were falsely accused of cannibalism, consuming sacrificial victims at nocturnal feasts, a misunderstanding probably due to the secrecy surrounding the Eucharistic rite and the use of the words body and blood. From the Middle Ages until quite

¹⁵ D.S.Girling, *New age encyclopedia* (Sydney: Bay books, 1983), vol: 25, p: 123.

recently, *Jews* were often maliciously accused of having sacrificed Christian children at Passover, an accusation which has been termed the blood libel.”¹⁶

Briefly we can say that Africa, Egypt, the ancient Middle East, Chinese, *Aztecs*, *Nahua*, Assyrian, Canaanite religions, African Asante and Jews are accused of human sacrifice in different forms. Unfortunately the nation’s history do not provide strong references regarding any sensitive issue like war, violence, sacrifice...etc. As J T. Johnson says that religious values did not simply provide terms of reference in the interaction between warfare and religion, but a specific world-view which profoundly shaped the way contemporaries approached the practice of organized violence.¹⁷

He means to say that at least there is ‘something’ which led the researchers towards the sensitive corners of all the religions and cultures. What are those corners? Let’s explore them in the coming chapters in detail. Judaism comes first then the other Semitic religions will be discussed.

¹⁶ Robert P.Gwinn, “Human Sacrifice” in *The Encyclopedia Britannica*, vol: 5, p: 594.

¹⁷ J T. Johnson, *Ideology, Reason and the Limitation of War: Religious and Secular Concepts 1200-1740* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), Ch. I.

CHAPTER NO. 1

JEWISH APPROACH TO SELF-IMMOLATION

1.1. Sanctity of life in Judaism

1.1.1. Humans are Godlike

Jewish law requires its followers to violate almost all prohibitions in order to preserve human life. Saving lives is required in almost all circumstances because Judaism places a fundamental value on human life.

We find many verses in the Old Testament that humans are Godlike. For example, according to the Book of Genesis. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them".¹

Its conception of man's creation on the image of GOD leads to the argument that man's life means existence of GOD and his death defaces the image of GOD.

1.1.2. Human blood

When man is considered God's reflection in the light of above mentioned verses then its life would be honourable. Among his honourable things, human body and blood carry a high position as the Bible narrates.

"Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for God made man in his own image."²

Man must not take away his own life according to the first book of the Old Testament, "For your lifeblood I will surely require a reckoning."³

It shows that our lives are not our own as we may quit them at our own pleasure, but God is the master of our lives and we must resign them at his pleasure. If we hasten our own deaths in any way, we are accountable to God for

¹ Genesis, 1:27, *New Revised Slandered version*, retrieved on June 12, 2008 from <http://church-of-christ.org/bibles.html>

² Genesis, 9:6.

³ Genesis, 9:5.

it. The beasts must not be suffered to hurt the life of man: "of every beast I will require it."⁴

1.2. Concept of peace and war in Judaism

1.2.1. Peace: Jewish view point

The Old Testament emphasises the concept of peace at different places. A very clear concept in Judaism that means peace is *Shalom*. With shalom goes social justice. Justice is something like the twin sister of shalom. The connection between justice and peace is rooted in the pre-Israelite religion. We find its roots in all Hebrew Scriptures. Let's try to trace the roots of peace in Judaism. In this I will leave the Hebrew expression *Shalom* (peace) mostly untranslated.

What's shalom?

"The meaning of 'Shalom' is richly significant. It means peace, and is used about 300 times in the Hebrew Scriptures. It means wholeness. It is the cure for fragmentation, inner division, and imbalance in lives. It means completeness. We could call it a vision of oneness. Shalom has been written to stimulate awareness and to encourage the movement of thinking about shalom to living shalom."⁵

Peace prevails over all Judaic aspects, even before attacking. The Jews are ordered to offer terms of peace, as the Torah states, "When you draw near to a city to fight against it, offer terms of peace to it."⁶

The book of Isaiah stresses the need to be peaceful "They shall beat their swords in to ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore."⁷

They are here directed what method to take in dealing with the cities of war. "They must not make a crash upon any of their neighbours till they had first given them fair notice, by a public manifesto stating the ground of their quarrel

⁴ Genesis, 9:5.

⁵ Lester Reid, *Shalom*, retrieved on February 5, 2009 from http://nzbookshop.co.nz/christianity/shalom/prod_219.html

⁶ Deuteronomy, 20:10.

⁷ Isaiah, 2:4.

to the present days of scientific age. It represents one of the first results of primitive human practices.

Loss of blood entailed weakness and loss of too much blood meant loss of life. We are familiar with the phrase "Bleeding to death." It is common today that blood transfusion, or administration of blood plasma, will renew life and its powers, when all other hope is gone. The same rationale prompted many primitive men to wound themselves and let the blood drop or flow over the body of a departed one, or over his grave after burial, even repeating the acts on weekly or monthly or annual memorial days, in hope of continuing and strengthening the life of the soul which had escaped from the body and might return to its old abode.¹²

It is not surprising that blood should be involved in affecting ties of union. To share the same blood was to create the strongest kind of bond. Two members of different families in the same tribe became brothers by the blood rite. A stranger was admitted to membership in the tribe by the blood rite. So Blood to all ancient men was symbolic, never of death, always of life. In Islam there is a significance example of blood brotherhood, as Muslim women wear *Hijāb* from non blood relatives, mean other than brothers.

1.2.3. Blood rites in the Old Testament

Before embarking upon 'The OT on blood rites', Jewish history has to be searched out to get the primary elements for blood rite. Royden Keith Yerkes' book *Sacrifice in Greek and Roman religions and early Judaism* and Abdul Wahhāb al-Masīrī's book *Mawsū'at al-Yahūd wal-Yahūdiyyah wal-Sabryūniyyah* are presenting some historical pictures age wise.

1.2.3.1. The Temple age

The Temple was a sign of unity for the whole Jewish world scattered around the inhabited areas. All the sons of Israelites rushed to that place every

¹² F. B. Jevons, *Introduction to the History of Religion* (London: Methuen & co, 1902), p: 191.

year because of its central importance in their practical lives for its religious and business importance.

At starting of their worshipping age, the Hebrew people-members of Israelites used to present the sacrifices and offerings to the gods. Animal sacrifice was a central *Sacrificial Cult*. Whenever they presented sacrifice they used to put the "Coffin of the agreement"¹³ in front of them to show their tribal unity. So it became a sign of Temple Rites. Even Prophet Dāwūd (A.S) used to put it in front of Him while worshipping. After the Jerusalem's destruction, there were also animal blood cults.¹⁴

The previous text tells us that the Temple remained a centre of the offerings and amongst them the central offering was blood sacrifice of the animals which got sanctity. As its blood was not fit for food, it was wasted. Taboo is very suitable term to show its social and religious status. In reference to animal blood rites Royden Keith Yerkes says, "The blood of the animal had been used for distasteful prophylactic and apotropaic rites and purposes. The body was not fit for food; it might be burned on an altar or pitched into the sea; it was taboo."¹⁵

1.2.3.2. Hebrew-Jewish age

The Hebrew-Jewish tradition contained a number of instances in which practices and rites known to other Semitic peoples were specifically forbidden.

There is a story of a victory over the Philistines, after which "the people flew upon the spoil, and took sheep and oxen and calves, and slew them on the ground; and the people ate them with the blood."¹⁶ This was so horrifying to some that they reported the affair to Saul who lectured them against the practice.

¹³ A box full of oral teachings of prophets, written law and Israelite religious agreements.

¹⁴ al-Masīrī, Abdul Wahhāb, *Mawsū'at al-Yahūd wal-Yahūdiyyah wal-Sahyūniyyah* (Egypt: 1999), vol:4. P: 554.

¹⁵ Royden Keith Yerkes, *Sacrifice in Greek and Roman religions and early Judaism* (New York: Charles Scribner's Son, 1952), p: 203.

¹⁶ I Samuel, 14:31-35.

Ezekiel lists eating blood among the sins for which Jerusalem had been destroyed. "You eat flesh with the blood, and lift up your eyes to your idols, and shed blood; shall you then possess the land?"¹⁷

The verse of Deuteronomy, "Only be sure that you do not eat the blood; for the blood is the life, and you shall not eat the life with the flesh"¹⁸ contains a flat prohibition against the practice. These instances seem to indicate the prohibition that was not always observed but was often repeated.

There is a unique example of drinking blood and eating meat of the offering which is mentioned by Dr. Yūsuf Hinā Nasrullah, referring to Talmud, that on Passover Day Jews are commanded to slaughter a person of non-Israelites to present his blood to their gods. He says that the Jews used to waste the blood in different ways; one of these was "needle-shaped barrel". It means a hot barrel that was poked into the living body even it started bleeding and his soul departed, meanwhile the Jews enjoyed such bloody scenes.¹⁹

A Jewish historian Josephus (95 A.D.) has narrated that Jews were not only sufficed drinking blood but also ate meat of that dead body (offering) on Passover Day. "The Passover festival known as *Pesach* is the festival of the Exodus par excellence, although it is also an agricultural festival associated with barely harvest. *Pesach* lasts for seven days in Israel and for eight days in the Diaspora. The most outstanding feature of *Pesach* is the prohibition on eating or even possessing any form of leavened bread."²⁰

He wrote that when the Greek emperor Antonius IV (174B.C) became ruler, he entered the Jerusalem after conquering it. There he found a Greek person arrested, to whom were offered rich foods by the Jews, to make him healthy.

¹⁷ Ezekiel, 33:25.

¹⁸ Deuteronomy, 12:16, 23.

¹⁹ Muhammad Zia ur Rahmān, *Dirāsāt fil-Yahūdiyyah wal-Nasrāniyyah wa-adyānil Hind* (Riyādh, Saudiyyah,; Maktabatur Rushd, 2003), 2th edition, p:242.

²⁰ Alan Unterman, *Jews, their religious beliefs and practices* (London and New York: Rout ledge, university of Manchester, 1989), p: 188.

Why? So that they carry him out to the forest for sacrifice on Passover day for drinking his blood and eating meat. But the emperor took pity on him and released.²¹

1.2.3.3. Old Testament age

It is not surprising that the Old Testament, which is so definitely against eating blood, makes elaborate requirements for the disposal of the blood of animals used for sacrifice. The familiar phrase "blood of the covenant" occurs twice, once in the tradition of the establishment of the covenant between Yahweh and the people.

"And Moses took the blood and threw it upon the people, and said, 'Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words.'²² And once to recall the fact that such a covenant was established by blood.²³

The blood used at the sanctification of a priest is called the *blood of consecration* as book of Exodus says:

"You shall take the other ram; and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands upon the head of the ram, and you shall kill the ram, and take part of its blood and put it upon the tip of the right ear of Aaron and upon the tips of the right ears of his sons, and upon the thumbs of their right hands, and upon the great toes of their right feet, and throw the rest of the blood against the altar round about. Then you shall take part of the blood that is on the altar, and of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it upon Aaron and his garments, and upon his sons

²¹ Yūsuf Hinā Nasrūllāh, *Al-kanz al-marṣūd fi qawā'id al-Talmūd* (Beirut, Lebanon: 1968), p: IX.

²² Exodus, 24:8.

²³ Zech, 9:11.

and his sons' garments with him; and he and his garments shall be holy, and his sons and his sons' garments with him."²⁴

Only a blood rite can cleanse a place in which a murder has been committed.

"You shall not thus pollute the land in which you live; for blood pollutes the land, and no expiation can be made for the land, for the blood that is shed in it, except by the blood of him who shed it."²⁵

The coming verses narrates that OT puts a lot of importance on the sacredness of blood because it is the blood that cleanse an altar, house from leprosy and produces new preachers. Here are mentioned its some uses:

"Thus he shall cleanse the house with the blood of the bird, and with the running water, and with the living bird, and with the cedar wood and hyssop and scarlet stuff."²⁶

The elaborate use of blood for pre-sacrificial purification is more specifically codified by the Hebrews and Jews than by any other people. The blood of the animal to be sacrificed is "sprinkled" on the worshipper²⁷ and on the new priest at the time of his consecration.²⁸ It is "sprinkled" before the sanctuary,²⁹ around the altar,³⁰ on the altar,³¹ at the base of the altar,³² on the side of the altar,³³ on the horns of the altar,³⁴ before and on the "mercy-seat,"³⁵ and sprinkled or poured on a burning sacrifice.³⁶

1.3. Old Testament on war

²⁴ Exodus, 29:19-21.

²⁵ Numbers, 35:33.

²⁶ Leviticus, 14:52.

²⁷ Exodus, 24:8.

²⁸ Leviticus, 8:36.

²⁹ Numbers, 19:4.

³⁰ Exodus, 29:16.

³¹ Ezekiel, 43:18.

³² Leviticus, 4:7.

³³ Ibid, 5:9.

³⁴ Exodus, 29:12.

³⁵ Leviticus, 16:14-15.

³⁶ 2 Kings, 16:15.

The bible includes only a few formal laws associated with war; these laws are developed considerably later in rabbinic interpretation. God was understood to have some kind of presence within the war camp to protect the people. Biblical war often refers to “Yahweh war” meaning the war of God of Israel, because the deity appears so prominently. In the Hebrew Bible, God may be referred to as the “man of war” (*ish milhamah*).³⁷ God is consulted before engaging in war³⁸ and certain burnt offerings are made before engaging in battle to entreat the assistance of God.³⁹ God himself fights for Israel.⁴⁰ The Bible even records a battle cry in Judges 7:18: “For God and for Gideon.”⁴¹

Kinds of war and war ideologies

Basically, there are two kinds of war in Judaism but the deep study of Jewish history leads us to the view that there are a lot of war theories that open a new horizon of violence discussion in Judaism. First we deal with its forms then the other war ideologies:

I- Obligatory war (*Milhemet Mitzvah*)

Judaism permits a war to be fought in self defense. Self defense can include making a pre-emptive attack, anticipating the upcoming attack by an enemy. Some Biblical commentaries state that any capture of the land of Israel is reason to wage an obligatory war.⁴²

II- Discretionary war (*Milhemet Reshut*)

It is a war fought to enlarge the borders of Israel beyond those designated in the Bible. According to the rabbis, the Sanhedrin—the High Court of seventy one judges must debate and approve this type of war. Thus, some wars are legitimate

³⁷ Exodus, 15; 3.

³⁸ Judges, 20:18, 23.

³⁹ Jeremiah, 6:4; Micah, 3:5.

⁴⁰ Exodus, 14:14.

⁴¹ Susan Niditch, “Ideologies of war”, *Encyclopedia of Religion and War*, Gabriel Palmer-Fernandez (ed.) (New York London: Routledge, 2004), p: 181.

⁴² Dr. Muhammad Imtiaz Zafar, *Violence, Terrorism and Teachings of Islam* (Islamabad: Higher education commission, 2006), p: 36.

and even obligatory and Jews should be able to know when it is the appropriate time to wage a war and when it is time for peace.⁴³

Ideologies of war

Susan Niditch has described Jewish Ideologies of war in *Encyclopedia of Religion and War*. She says that The Hebrew Bible preserves a number of views of war as follow:

The Ban: perhaps the most troubling war ideology in the Hebrew Bible is that of the ban, or *herem* “devote to destruction”. The Ban in war is imagined to be commanded by God and requires that all human is enemy and sometimes also their animals be slaughtered and often burned entirely, “a whole burnt offering to God.”⁴⁴

The Bardic Tradition: the Bardic tradition reflects courage, daring and skill of warriors. War is described as men’s sport⁴⁵ in which operates a code of fair play. Men should fight their equals in skill.⁴⁶

Tricksterism: Tricksterism is a war ethic of the oppressed, who must use deception to improve their lot. No guilt is attached to the enemy’s death. Tales of Samson,⁴⁷ Ehud⁴⁸ and Jael⁴⁹ exemplify this ideology.

Expediency: this ideology suggests that any degree of cruelty is acceptable in order to achieve victory in battle.⁵⁰

Nonparticipation: Rooted in the Biblical tradition that describes God’s capacity to save Israel through miracles. Human beings need not fight, but of course

⁴³ Ibid, p: 36.

⁴⁴ Deuteronomy, 13:16.

⁴⁵ 2 Samuel, 2:14.

⁴⁶ 1 Samuel, 17:43.

⁴⁷ Judges, 14:15.

⁴⁸ Judges, 3:12-30.

⁴⁹ Judges, 4-5.

⁵⁰ 2 Samuel, 8:2.

Yahweh himself is often expected or pictured to kill the enemy with the utmost violence and blood shed.⁵¹

If we study the OT we will find a lot of battle scenes. There are specific teachings about fighting with enemy. If we say that war verses are more than peace verses, it will be true. For example:

Exodus describes how Moses' people, the sons of Levi, carry out a, killing programme of execution in the name of God.

"Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, "Who is on the Lord's side? Come to me." And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him. And he said to them, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'Put every man his sword on his side, and go to and fro from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor. And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses; and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men."⁵²

This establishes the significance of the text for anyone interested in sacred violence.

P. Partner suitably described the **Book of Daniel** as 'a kind of meditation upon Holy War that was supposed to show secret things and to predict the execution of divine judgment.'⁵³ We also find other books on war ethics but the most famous ones are **Judges** and **Deuteronomy**.

Deuteronomy: The book of war

Deuteronomy contains a lot of war proclamations that help us in understanding the Jewish way to fight a war. Judaism demands its followers to abide by Jewish values even while fighting a war. When the time for war has arrived, Jewish soldiers are expected to abide by specific laws and values. Only in

⁵¹ Susan Niditch, "Ideologies of war", *Encyclopedia of Religion and War*, p: 240.

⁵² Exodus, 32: 26-28.

⁵³ P. Partner, *God of Battles: Holy Wars of Christianity and Islam* (London: Harper Collins, 1997), p: 16.

Deuteronomy, that is considered the *book of war*, several commands have been observed regarding war. Here is the summary of some rules:

1. Only courageous people should fight a war having faith in God, and who do not have such belief should not show intention.⁵⁴
2. Peace offer should be made to the infidels of the city.⁵⁵
3. If the city refuses the offer of peace, the males are put to the sword, the females and small children are to be taken captive.⁵⁶
4. Food trees may be cut down in prosecution of the blockade.
5. But in the cities of these peoples that the LORD your God gives you for an inheritance, you shall save alive nothing that breathes.⁵⁷

War poetry in the OT

A great collection of poetry is found in Hebrew scripture and much of it consists of hymns of praise and thanks for God's protection of Israel and victory over Israel's enemies. Perhaps the most famous is the "Song of the Sea" of Exodus 15. God throws Pharaoh and his chariots into the sea. The "Song of Deborah" in Judges 5 is a victory poem recounting the destruction of "the kings of Canaan." Psalm 68 contains fragments of a series of war songs or pieces of war poetry.

1.4. Historical study of martyrdom and suicidal attacks in Jewish history

Martyrdom: its definition

According to Rabbinic Tradition, "martyr is someone who dies willingly for the faith and thereby achieves the sanctification of the divine name."⁵⁸

This standard derives from a reading of the phrase in Leviticus, "And you shall not profane my holy name."⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Deuteronomy, 20:1-9.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 20:10.

⁵⁶ Ibid, 20:13-15.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 20:16.

⁵⁸ Geoffrey Parrinder, *A concise Encyclopedia of Judaism*, p: 127.

⁵⁹ Leviticus, 22:32.

Thus any action by a Jew that brings honour, respect, and glory to God is considered to be a *Kiddush Hashem*, whereas any behaviour or action that disgraces, harms or shames God is avoided.

It is a martyrdom definition according to the Hebrew Scriptures that makes sense very clear that the only person, who is died for the sanctification of divine name; Yahweh would be called *martyr*.

1.4.1. Kiddush Ha-shem

If we study Jewish literature, we find a specific Hebrew term; *Kiddush Ha-shem*, to express martyrdom activities as the *Brill Dictionary* says:

Martyrdom in Jewish history is conceptualized as *Kiddush Ha-shem*, Heb. Means 'sanctification of the (divine) Name.'⁶⁰

Death for Kiddush Hashem, sanctifying of the name or the reputation of God is projected to impress the gentiles. The entire Jewish world celebrates a *martyr day* to regard them which is called *Yom Kippur*. It is the most sacred day according to the Jewish calendar.

Yom Kippur: the most sacred day

Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) end of ten days of penitence that begin with Rosh Hashanah;⁶¹ the most holy of Jewish days.⁶²

The central themes of Yom Kippur are atonement and repentance. Jews traditionally observe this holy day with a 25-hour period of fasting and spending most of the day in synagogue services. The Yom Kippur prayer service includes several unique aspects. It recalls ten great rabbis who were tortured to death by the Roman Empire during its occupation of the Land of Israel because they refused to abandon the teaching and practicing of Torah. These ten became a

⁶⁰ Holger Preibler, "Martyr", *The Brill Dictionary of Religion* (ed.), Kocku von Stuckrad (trns. German), Robert R. Barr (Leiden, Boston: BRILL, 2006), vol.3, p: 1611.

⁶¹ This is the beginning of a New Jewish Year. In Arabic it is called *Ra'sus sanah*.

⁶² Thomas Riggs, *World mark Encyclopedia of religious practices* (USA: Thomas Gale, 2006), vol:1, p:430.

model for Jewish martyrdom, traditionally viewed as dying for the sake of “Kiddush Ha-shem” acting to make holy the Name of God.⁶³

1.4.2. Martyrdom through Hebrew-Jewish tradition

Martyrdom in Judaism has an explicit idea. It begins with Abraham, who was cast into a lime kiln and saved from the fire by divine grace. As a reward for this act of faith in one God, he was promised many offspring “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.”⁶⁴

The tradition was continued by Isaac in, who was headed to be sacrificed by his father.⁶⁵ This is the Jewish perspective while according to Muslims it was Ishmael (A.S).⁶⁶ Monotheistic teachings continued by Jacob, Moses and his brother Aaron (1313 BCE) facing the resistance by the rulers. As a result Hazrat Abraham’s methodology of preaching continued individually by the Israelite people. So we find a lot of individual martyrdom acts in Jewish history.

1.4.3. Individual and collective suicidal acts

Judaism draws a clear distinction between suicide, which it defines as self-murder, and martyrdom, death on behalf of one’s faith and religious convictions. Although the Hebrew Scriptures contain few references to die by one’s own hand but do describe several instances of heroic suicide.⁶⁷ What are those instances of heroic suicide according to Mircea Eliade? Its details are as under. The first example is Abimelech.

1.4.3.1. Abimelech

The king Abimelech, badly wounded by a woman, called upon his armour-bearer to kill him. Although he did not literally kill himself, his command to his helper may be regarded as self-immolation.

⁶³ al-Masīrī, Abdul Wahhāb, *Mawsū‘at al-Yahūd wal-Yahūdiyyah wal-Sabyūniyyah*, vol:5, p:218.

⁶⁴ Genesis, 15:5.

⁶⁵ Genesis, 22:2.

⁶⁶ al-Sāffāt, 102.

⁶⁷ Marilyn J. Harran, “Suicide”, *Encyclopedia of Religion*, Mircea Eliade (ed.), vol: 14, p: 126.

“And Abimelech came unto the tower, and fought against it, and went hard unto the door of the tower to burn it with fire. And a certain woman cast a piece of a millstone upon Abimelech's head, and all to break his skull. Then he called hastily unto the young man his armour-bearer, and said unto him, Draw thy sword, and slay me, that men say not of me, a woman slew him. And his young man thrust him through, and he died.”⁶⁸

1.4.3.2. Samson

The death of Samson may certainly be judged a heroic suicide for he brought about the death of a large number of the Philistines. Regarding this, here are the Biblical words:

“Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines *were* there; and *there were* upon the roof about three thousand men and women that beheld while *Samson* made sport. And *Samson* called unto the LORD, and said, O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes. And *Samson* took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left. And Samson said; Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.”⁶⁹

Let's stop here for thinking about the heroic suicide. One can define it as self-murder, self-sacrifice, death on behalf of one's faith, religious conviction martyrdom or suicidal attack in the modern sight. Can we find here some similarities between the contemporary suicidal attack and Jewish heroic suicide? If

⁶⁸ Judges, 9:52-54.

⁶⁹ Judges, 16:27-31.

not then come to repeat an important sentence from above mentioned verses of the Holy Bible to understand the psyche of suicide attackers.

I-O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once.

Judaism has a long history of such suicidal activities; from Hebrew times to the modern age. It was the individual act of self-immolation. Now have a detailed documental history of collective acts.

1.4.3.3. Saul

He was fighting a defensive war against his enemies. During the war he was badly injured and fell upon his own sword to avoid a disgraceful death at the hands of his enemies. Before committing this holy act he ordered his armour-bearer to kill him but he had failed his master's request to kill him and then Saul fell upon his own sword. What does the Bible say about it?

"Then said Saul unto his armour-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me. But his armour-bearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it. And when his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him."⁷⁰

Readiness for martyrdom became a collective Jewish ideal during the Antiochus persecution and the Maccabean rebellion⁷¹ of the 2nd century BC. So In the 2nd century, the Jewish assembly of scholars at Lod determined that, for Jews, martyrdom as the offering of one's life is obligatory.⁷² The best known episode was that of the mother and her seven sons.⁷³ Martyrdom was preferred to the desecration of the Sabbath by the early Judaism. In Hadrian's time, pious Jews

⁷⁰ 1, Samuel, 31:4.

⁷¹ We will be discussing Maccabees in detail in the coming paragraphs.

⁷² Robert P.Gwinn, "Martyrdom", *Britannica Encyclopedia of World Religions* (Singapore: 2006), P: 695.

⁷³ II Maccabees, 7:1.

risked death to circumcise their children, and Rabbi Akiva embraced martyrdom to assert the right to teach the Law publicly.⁷⁴

1.4.3.4. Maccabees 170 B.C

This is the name given to a family of patriotic Jews who revolted against Antioch Epiphanies, king of Syria, about 170 B.C. The title of Maccabees was applied to Judas, one of the sons of Mattathias, a priest who first raised the standard of resistance; it is supposed to be derived from a Hebrew root meaning "Hammer". Mattathias was required by the royal officer to offer sacrifice on a pagan altar. He refused and slew both the officer and a renegade Jew who was prepared to comply. Crowds of loyal Jews joined him and when he died about 166 B.C. the guerilla war in the Palestinian hill country continued under the leadership of his four sons, especially Judas until he was killed in battle in 160 B.C. The story is written in 1 Maccabees, one of the books of Apocrypha; it was written in 100 B.C.⁷⁵

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1.4.3.5. Zealots or Sicarii

The term, Zealots, is derived from the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word *Qanna*. The terms both in Hebrew and in Greek have a general and a specific usage. In its specific meaning the term is used as a designation of the fanatic Jewish nationalist.⁷⁶

Sicarii literally means a person who is expert in killing people with dagger and zealot is an extremist in religious terms according to Bernard Lewis.⁷⁷

David M. Rhoads says that zealots were Jewish revolutionaries in first century Judea whose zeal led them to fight to death against Romans.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Robert P. Gwinn, "Martyr", *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*, (Chicago, USA: 2004), vol: 7, p: 894.

⁷⁵ E. Royston Pike, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Religions* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1951), p: 238.

⁷⁶ Smith Morton, "Zealots and Sicarii; Their Origins and Relation" in *Harvard Theological Review*, January 1971.

⁷⁷ Lewis, Bernard, *The Assassins: A Radical Sect in Islam* (London: Phoenix, 1967), p: 126.

Dr. 'Abd al-Wāhhāb is of the view that there were two groups in Zealots; peaceful people and Extremist. The second one is called Sicarii.⁷⁹

Historically this term is related to the people who struggled for the continuation of the State of Judea in Jerusalem. These people tried their best for the prolongation of the State till 70 A.D and battled against the victory of Romans in Judea. In 6 CE, Judah (Yehudah) the Galilean showed for God's law and land when he led a revolt against the Roman census in Judea. He and his followers fought to cleanse the land by taking vengeance against Jews who cooperated with Romans. Judah considered such cooperation to be idolatrous recognition of a lord (Caesar) other than God. By such vengeance, he and his followers sought to appease God, who would thereby honour their cause against Romans, The revolt failed, but Judah had originated the so-called Fourth Philosophy "No Lord but God" based on the First Commandment. Judah's followers emerged again after all Judea became Roman province in 44 C.E. Their subsequent revolutionary actions against the corrupt and incompetent authorities contributed to the outbreak of war in 66 C.E. Josephus usually refers to Judah's group as Sicarii, after sikkah "dagger" used in assassinations.⁸⁰

These people were in small number but they adopted violent and terrorist ways of insurgence. They used dagger to kill their opponents. They did not forgive their own religious fellows who accepted the hegemony of new Roman rulers and disagreed to their way of struggle.

1.4.3.6. Masada

Stronghold on a rock near the Dead Sea. It served as a refuge of Herod the great in 40 BCE. In the Jewish war against Rome In 66-70CE and afterwards, it

⁷⁸ David M.Rhoads, "Zealots", *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol: 15, p: 559.

⁷⁹ al-Masīrī, dr. Abdul Wahhāb, *Maosū'atul Yahūdi wal Yahūdiyyah was Sahyūniyyah*, vol:5, p:267.

⁸⁰ Zealots in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol: 15, p: 559.

served as a Zealot fortress. In 73CE a garrison of nearly 1000 Jews committed suicide there rather than be captured by the Roman.⁸¹

1.4.3.7. Later Middle Ages

During the European persecutions of the later Middle Ages, Christians have persecuted Jews till their death⁸² and chronological registers of martyrs were drawn up for use in synagogue commemorative services. In 1296 Isaac ben Samuel of Meiningen began to collect these in the *Memorbuch* published in 1898, covering the years 1096–1349. In a sense, Jewish life was a nearly continuous training in martyrdom. Martyrs are honoured as kedoshim “the holy ones”. Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Lyady, founder of Habad Hasidism, considered the spirit of martyrdom (*mesirut nefesh*) to be the distinguishing quality of the Jewish people. The deliberate execution of an estimated 5,700,000 Jews by the Nazis during World War II dwarfed all previous ordeals of martyrdom. In current Jewish literature, the victims are regarded as martyrs since they died for the sole reason of being Jews. In contrast to previous occasions, they were not given the alternative of saving their lives by abjuring their faith. In Israel the library of Yad Veshem contains most of the extant records often holocaust.”⁸³

A lot of Jewish suicide attacks have made against Palestinians. Priming synagogue attendance (but not prayer to God) increased the likelihood of Jewish Israeli settlers believing that a specific suicide attack carried out against Palestinians was “extremely heroic.”⁸⁴

Previous historical documents are enough to show the Jewish picture of suicidal activities. No one can deny such historical instances. So it forced the well known scholars to accept that suicidal activities are not a modern phenomenon.

⁸¹ Geoffrey Parrinder, *A concise Encyclopedia of Judaism*, p: 127.

⁸² Karl Rahner, “Martyrdom”, *Encyclopedia of Theology, A concise Sacramentum Mundi* (London: Burns & Oaths, 1977), p: 938.

⁸³ Robert P.Gwinn, “Martyr”, *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*, vol: 7, p: 894.

⁸⁴ Jeremy Ginges, Ian Hansen, and Ara Norenzayan (eds.), Religion and support for suicide attacks, in *Psychological Science*, vol: 20, No:2 (07, 2008, p:45)

Its origin goes back for centuries. Presenting the scholars view on the topic, we would like to quote a view point of an American psychologist Naomi Janowitz.

Janowitz is chairperson of religious studies at the University of California at Davis and a candidate at the San Francisco Psychoanalytic Institute. She is also the winner of the American Psychoanalytic Association's 2004 competition for the best essay on psychoanalysis and culture. Her essay is titled "Lusting for Death: Some Unconscious Meanings of Martyrdom Traditions". Discussing martyrdom and suicidal attacks in Jewish history, she says, "More than 2,000 years ago in the Judaic world, animal sacrifice was a way of atoning for one's sins, of becoming reconciled with God. Then someone or some group came up with the idea of replacing animal sacrifice with human sacrifice. The notion was that "you had to go one up from an animal" that animal sacrifice was not enough to make amends for the sins that Jewish people committed. Exactly when human sacrifice started to replace animal sacrifice was not known. However, the first chronicle of Jewish martyrdom can be found in the Book of Second Maccabees in the Bible, in which a mother and her seven sons die rather than agreeing to the demand of a king that they eat pork. These instances of martyrdom probably occurred between 175 B.C. and 165 B.C., although the text was probably written 50 to 100 years later. Moreover, such cases of martyrdom would not have occurred if those committing them had not believed in an afterlife. The mother in the Maccabees story, upon urging her sons to accept martyrdom, cries that "The Creator of the world will in his mercy give life and breath back to you again since you now forget yourselves for the sake of his laws." In addition, martyrdom was based not only on the expectation of an afterlife, but on the anticipation of being united with one's mother. The mother in the Maccabees story, upon urging the last of her seven sons to accept martyrdom, exclaimed, "Accept death, so that in God's mercy I may get you back again along with your brothers. And in a deeper sense, martyrdom represents hope of being united not only with one's mother, but with

a divine father. In the Maccabees story, no mention is made of a father, suggesting that the biological father was replaced by a divine one.⁸⁵

At the end of her discussion she concludes that in contemporary Jewish tradition if we find female suicide attackers it will not be an unexpectedly phenomenon because it has a root in Jewish tradition. She concludes, "Finally, animal sacrifice had been an exclusively male preserve, a patriarchal system, where women were not allowed to participate. But when some Jews moved from animal sacrifice to human sacrifice, women got involved as well. Also, a number of Christian martyrs throughout the ages have been women, as are some of today's Islamic extremist suicide bombers."⁸⁶ The history is silent about when the Jews converted from animal sacrifice to human sacrifice but we have strong evidences about its existence.

All in all, Janowitz concluded, martyrdom is crucial to the Jewish tradition which emerged more than 2,000 years ago.⁸⁷

What about the previous Jewish history Ustādh Al-Masīrī says;

The Zionist glorifies collective idea of the suicide. Most of national legends, identically the legend of Masada and Samson and Bar Kokhba too, are suicidal legends. So indeed one of the Israeli thinker (Yhoshfāt Harkbī) said that the suicidal tendency in Israel is the reflection of the "Offers of Bar Kokhba".⁸⁸

1.5. Legitimacy and illegitimacy of Martyrdom and Suicide

No doubt, blood got a high veneration among the primitive people as well as the modern one, as we studied in the beginning of this chapter; that it was a

⁸⁵ Naomi Janowitz, "Lusting for death: Some unconscious meanings of martyrdom traditions" in *Psychiatric News*, March 18, 2005, p:9, retrieved on September 17, 2008 from <http://pn.psychiatryonline.org/cgi/search?sortspec=relevance&journalcode=psychnews&fulltext=lusting+for+death%3Asome+unconscious+meanings+of+martyrdom+tradition>

⁸⁶ We will discuss this issue in the relevant chapters.

⁸⁷ Naomi Janowitz, "Lusting for death: Some unconscious meanings of martyrdom traditions" in *Psychiatric News*, March 18, 2005, p. 19.

⁸⁸ al-Masīrī, *Maosū'atul Yahūdi wal Yahūdiyyah was Sahyūniyyah*, vol:5, 1999, p.263.

powerful ritual and religious symbol that can have healthy or dangerous, cleansing or polluting connotations. The blood represented the life or soul.⁸⁹

In the coming paragraphs we want to clarify the extent of its veneration. Is there any biblical prohibition on human blood shed phenomenon? When, for a Jew, blood loses its veneration and he intends to shed human life?

The Book of Genesis presents a clear cut rule regarding human blood. Judaism places a high value on life. If someone intends to shed blood, OT's rule is a tit for tat situation; meaning blood for blood much like the Islamic system of *Qisās*. It does not legitimate blood shed as it says:

“Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed.”⁹⁰

The case of martyrdom is different because it carries a religious legacy as is mentioned in detail under the heading, *Historical study of martyrdom and suicidal attacks in Jewish history*. Kidush Ha-shem and Yom Kippur are the great manifestations of such Jewish acts.

1.5.1. Suicide (Hebrew *Ibbūd*)

No explicit forbidden injunction is found in the OT regarding suicide. Although a prohibition of suicide is derived from the book of Genesis⁹¹

“Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed.”

But it is not about suicide. It is about killing others. We are going to discuss this phenomenon in the following lines, in the light of *Hebrew Scriptures, Teachings of Talmud and Rabbinic law*.

Hebrew Scriptures: Although Hebrew Scriptures don't explicitly forbid suicide, the Judaic tradition came to prohibit it, partly in the belief that God alone gives life and takes it away, and partly on the basis of the sixth

⁸⁹ Leviticus, 17:14.

⁹⁰ Genesis, 9:6.

⁹¹ Ibid.

commandment, which forbids unjustified homicide.⁹² That's why a soft corner for suicide is found in the Hebrew Scriptures, as it says that suicide is a moral obligation.

1.5.2. Suicide as a moral obligation

Suicide is, for Jewish believers, a moral obligation as the only alternative to the commission of murder, incest, or idolatry.

Mircea Eliade is also of the opinion that suicides committed under pressure, as for example to avoid murder, idolatry, or adultery, were considered blameless.⁹³

In the 2nd century, the Jewish assembly of scholars determined that, for Jews, martyrdom as the offering of one's life is obligatory in the form of above mentioned three sins.⁹⁴ This is based upon the Biblical statement:

“You shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man does, he shall live in them: I am the Lord.”⁹⁵

It is derived from this verse that one should die rather than transgress the religious requirements. This verse is thus the source that one should not put in danger his own life through the practice of the religious requirements.

1.5.3. Hebrew Scriptures on three Cardinal Sins: Idolatry, Sexual immorality and Murder

In exceptional cases Judaism requires its followers to sacrifice their lives in faithfulness to God. The requirement is stated as “be killed but do not transgress.” In the following we have discussed the concept of three cardinal sins in the light of Hebrew Scriptures.

Idolatry

The first exception is based on “And thou shall love the Lord thy God

⁹² Marilyn J. Harran, “Suicide” in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol: 14, p: 126.

⁹³ “Suicide” in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol: 14, p: 126.

⁹⁴ Holger Preibler, “Martyr”, *The Brill Dictionary of Religion*, vol: 3, p: 1823.

⁹⁵ Leviticus, 18: 5.

with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.”⁹⁶ It means that one should surrender his soul rather than serve any god but the Lord.

The *Ballad of Hannah and her Seven Sons* tells a story well known from the Apocrypha *II Maccabees 6:12-17*. During the persecution of the Jews in Syria at the time of Antiochus Epiphanes (d. 163 B.C.E.), the seven sons of Hannah were commanded to worship an idol. Each refused, and each in turn was slaughtered.⁹⁷

Sexual immorality

The second exception is extrapolated from referring to the case of a betrothed girl who is raped by a man, “But if in the open country a man meets a young woman who is betrothed, and the man seizes her and lies with her, then only the man who lay with her shall die.”⁹⁸ The verse indicates that one is required to give one's life rather than sex.

Murder

The exception of murder is derived by logic, as the *Talmud* states, “It happened with Rava: A man came to Rava and told him that the governor of the city had ordered that he (the man) slay a certain man or himself suffer death, and Rava said to him: 'Rather than slay another person, you must permit yourself to be slain.’”⁹⁹ Another verse is found in Leviticus, “Neither shall thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the Lord.”¹⁰⁰

Teachings of Talmud

The Teachings of Talmud take an unambiguous position against suicide. Until the 20th century in the case of one's own intentional death, there were no mourning prescriptions.¹⁰¹ In this regard Geoffrey Parrinder says, “An individual

⁹⁶ Deuteronomy, 6:5.

⁹⁷ II Maccabees, 6:12-17.

⁹⁸ Ibid, 22:26.

⁹⁹ Sanhedrin 74a, *Babylonian Talmud*, Michael L. Rodkinson (ed.) (Boston: the Talmud society, 1918), vol: 3, p: 135.

¹⁰⁰ Leviticus, 19:16.

¹⁰¹ Chirly dos Santos, “Suicide” in *The Brill Dictionary of Religion*, vol: 3, p: 1823.

who has committed suicide is denied normal burial and mourning.”¹⁰²

Rabbinic law

However, *Rabbinic Law* regards persons committing suicide as an act of unsound minds those are not responsible for their action. Under these circumstances, they may still receive normal Jewish burial rites.¹⁰³

There is very prominent Jew; Israel Shahak who has unmasked the Jewish face in religious, historical and military perspectives. He presented evidences from Jewish history about killing non-Jews.

1.5.4. Contemporary Jewish View Point on Violence

Israel Shahak is a rare Jew indeed and his book is essential reading for anyone interested in the problem of the Jews. His book *Jewish History, Jewish Religion: The Weight of 3,000 Years* is all the more important for being a document by an acknowledgeable Jew, about the beliefs and behaviour of his fellow Jews. He was born in Warsaw in 1933, Shahak spent a portion of his childhood in the concentration camp in Belsen, from which he immigrated to Palestine in 1945. He grew up in Israel, served in the Israeli military, and became a chemistry professor. Like all Israelis, he became fluent in Hebrew. He cites the Jewish teachings regarding homicide:

“According to the Jewish religion, the murder of a Jew is a capital offense and one of the three most heinous sins (the other two being idolatry and adultery). Jewish religious courts and secular authorities are commanded to punish, even beyond the limits of the ordinary administration of justice, anyone guilty of murdering a Jew... When the victim is a Gentile, the position is quite different. A Jew who murders a Gentile is guilty only of a sin against the laws of Heaven, not

¹⁰² *A concise Encyclopedia of Judaism*, p.184.

¹⁰³ Suicide in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol: 14, p: 126.

punishable by a court. To cause indirectly the death of a Gentile is no sin at all.”¹⁰⁴

Thus any action by a Jew that brings honour, respect, and glory to God is considered to be a *Kiddush Hashem*, whereas any behaviour or action that disgraces, harms or shames God is avoided.

The ultimate act of *Kiddush Hashem* is that a Jew will be prepared to sacrifice his life rather than transgress any of three cardinal sins: Idolatry, committing certain sexual acts, or committing murder.

We conclude the discussion at the point that suicide is not any explicitly forbidden phenomenon in the OT. So there are no clear commands on its legitimacy. But on the other hand there are a large number of Biblical verses, Hebrew Scriptures, Talmudic Teachings, Rabbinic Law and scholarly opinions supporting the view that suicide becomes a moral obligation in three cardinal sins. It carries morality and the committed person becomes blameless and in the word of *Brill Dictionary* it gets the status of *Kiddush Hashem*. Mircea Eliade took a step forward and said that:

“The mass suicide at Masada in 74 CE and other mass suicides in Europe during the Middle Ages were considered in this light.”¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ Israel Shahak, *Jewish History, Jewish Religion: The Weight of 3,000 Years* (U.K: Pluto Press, 1994), chapter no:1. retrieved on August 20, 2009 from <http://engforum.pravda.ru/showthread.php?t=250610>

¹⁰⁵ Suicide in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol: 14, p: 126.

CHAPTER NO. 2

CHRISTIAN APPROACH TO SELF IMMOLATION

2.1. Sanctity of life in Christianity

The teachings of Jesus Christ are the continuity of the previous prophets. Every prophet was granted some special divine commands; those continued changing with respect to their present circumstances, but the sole commands remained the same. We can search out all such commands during Bible study; both the Old Testament and New Testament. The most important is that man has been created in the image of God. In Genesis, God says that He created man in His own image and the Bible says;

"Then God said, "Let us make man in our image."¹

And in the next verse He creates him and says;

"So God created man in his own image."²

Here man is dedicated to almighty Allah. Why? It is not a metaphorical language but a true narration of God's reflection. Unlike the other creatures of the universe man is a special creation of Allah. So man can be understood as a reflection only when he causes peace and love and proves himself a beneficial element for society. Otherwise he is worse than animals, as Saint Peter says, "But these, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct."³

In the next part of this verse Saint Peter calls such persons "Accursed children."⁴

Now the Christians have to think that whether they should become the reflection of God by participating in the peace activities or the reflection of Satan by disturbing people.

The ultimate result of being His image is to promote peace and love. A Christian should turn all the evils into good by doing well so that this world

¹ Genesis, 1:26.

² Genesis, 1:27.

³ 2 Peter, 2:12.

⁴ 2 Peter, 2:16.

becomes a paradise to live. For that is there any biblical statement which guides us to the way of peace? Yes, there is. There is a clear concept of *shalom* which means peace in the bible. The unique concept of *pacifism* is based on such teachings that we will discuss later in its just war section of this chapter.

2.2. Concept of peace and war in Christianity

2.2.1. Peace: Christian view point

The concept of peace in the NT is same as in the OT which is *shalom*. The only reason is that the Christians believe the OT only in the light of NT and *Shalom* does not contradict to Christian teachings. Let's repeat it for clear understanding of the coming paragraphs.

“The meaning of ‘Shalom’ is richly significant. It means peace, and is used about 300 times in the Hebrew Scriptures. It means wholeness. It is the cure for fragmentation, inner division, and imbalance in lives. It means completeness. We could call it a vision of oneness. *Shalom* has been written to stimulate awareness and to encourage the movement of thinking about *shalom* to living *shalom*.”⁵

NT is full of such presentations. Sometimes it changes its presentation way that makes confusion in getting the right understanding of *Shalom*. We find such verses of different meanings. The most important are as follows;

Hazrat Messiah said, “God of peace”⁶ and in another place “God is peace himself”.⁷

In these verses God and peace are mentioned in two different ways but the meaning is same. It means that where God's kingdom is predicated, *shalom* is also mentioned. *Shalom* is one of the essential contents of the theological message of both the prophet of Isaiah and Jesus. Thus we find in Isaiah:

⁵ Lester Reid, *Shalom*, retrieved on February 5, 2009 from http://nzbookshop.co.nz/christianity/shalom/prod_219.html

⁶ Romans, 15:33, Philippians, 4:9.

⁷ 2 Timothy, 3:16.

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!”⁸

With shalom goes social justice. Justice is something like the twin sister of shalom. The connection between justice and peace is rooted in the pre-Israelite religion and continues to the New Testament.

I started my study of the biblical roots of peace with “God of peace”. In the end, by quoting the biblical passages it is mentioned that God alone can give the fullness of shalom in the power of spirit. Man finds true peace with God alone that is true for the Old Testament as well. According to the Christian faith; God’s shalom has come to the world in a special way; the way of Jesus, for Paul says:

“We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”⁹

So peace has a wider meaning in biblical teachings. It is not confined to the specific meaning. It extends from an individual to the whole universe.

2.2.2. Peace establishing way

Bible is highlighting peace promoting steps. Peace can prevail only by respecting other’s religion, creeds, ideas and blood. There are many characteristics to adopt for a preacher. Such teachings are scattered in the whole Bible. Jesus Christ draws a picture of a peace promoter:

“And the LORD’S servant must not be quarrelsome but kindly to every one, an apt teacher, forbearing, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant that they will repent and come to know the truth, and they may escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.”¹⁰

⁸ Isaiah, 52:7.

⁹ Romans, 5:1.

¹⁰ 2 Timothy, 2:24-26.

True preachers don't love this universe. They do for the hereafter. It means that they do not hate each other because of colour or caste difference. They live with love and peace. Any one who hates his brother is like a murderer and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.¹¹ We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.¹²

The other verse says that closeness to God can only be found by serving others whether they are Christians or non-Christians. Here is a metaphorical style of such biblical statement. Allah makes us understand the manners in question answer style. It is a detailed description in the book of Matthew but we are quoting it here for its effect on spirits:

"When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left. Then the King will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.

Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed thee, or thirsty and give thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger and welcome thee, or naked and clothe thee? And when did we see thee sick or in prison and visit thee? And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me. Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no

¹¹ 1 John, 3:15.

¹² 1 John, 3:16.

food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me. Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see thee hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to thee? Then he will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me. And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."¹³

The beautiful verse concludes that humanity lies only in taking care of sick, thirsty, hungry, naked and the needy people. So the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind, tolerant, correcting his opponents with gentleness. He must be the saviour of humanity not the honour killer. If any time he gets a chance to supervise the things he must treat generously with God gifted abilities and guarantee the safety of human blood because the blood carries sacredness among biblical verses. It is very famous biblical quotation that blood is life. That's why The Bible is full of verses regarding the sacredness of blood. Let's trace the roots of blood rites in Christian tradition.

2.2.3. Roots of blood rites

In Christianity, the concept of blood is linked to the primitive sacrificial rites found in the Jewish time. We can see its transformation from Jewish tradition to the Christianity by studying the Bible.

Mr. Royden Keith Yerkes narrates its transformation history by saying:

"From the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., animal sacrifices had played a declining part in *Jewish* life. After a fall of two or three generations the temple had been rebuilt and sacrifices renewed. By the time of Jesus the ideas which grew from animal sacrifices were all on their way to spiritual development. When Jerusalem was destroyed, forty years after the ministry of Jesus, they disappeared

¹³ Matthew, 25:31-46.

and no one has desired their renewal. *Christianity* had utilized all their spiritual value and left them as hollow rites.”¹⁴

With the passage of time this sacrifice turned from animal blood into human blood. It is well explained in the previous chapter by Janowitz. She is the chairperson of religious studies at the University of California. Her essay is titled *Lusting for Death: Some Unconscious Meanings of Martyrdom Traditions*¹⁵

We have another evidence about it, as Royden Keith Yerkes further says:

“Animal sacrifices gave rise to a spiritual ideal for men. The climax of that sacrifice was always seen in the passion and death upon the Cross. he recognized blood as the well nigh universal symbol of life, and blood rites as the cultic expression of purifying power. He proposed to go farther than the ABC's of Christian teaching and carry his readers to maturity of thought.”¹⁶

2.2.4. Blood Rites in the New Testament

It is interesting that among the few qualities of Judaism which growing Christianity tried to continue, was the same prohibition of eating blood that we studied in chapter number one.

*The blood is the life*¹⁷ is a biblical statement. It expresses a conviction not only of ancient Hebrews and later Jews, but of Christianity too. Blood is a powerful ritual and religious symbol. The blood presents the life or soul. In the NT we find a unanimous example:

Jesus Christ

The example of Jesus Christ is considered *Holy* and is a symbol of sacredness in Christian services. It is remembered as blood of Jesus Christ.

¹⁴ Royden Keith Yerkes, *Sacrifice in Greek and Roman religions and early Judaism* (New York: Charles Scribner's Son, 1952), p: 203.

¹⁵ For detailed description see Historical study of martyrdom and suicidal attacks in Jewish history in *chapter no.1*.

¹⁶ Royden Keith Yerkes, *Sacrifice in Greek and Roman Religions and early Judaism*, p.203.

¹⁷ Deuteronomy, 12:23.

Geoffrey Parrinder says, "The blood of Christ is a phrase used in the Holy Communion service."¹⁸

Judas Iscariot

The betrayer of Jesus Christ "Iscariot" may refer to a place called Kerioth. He was one of the twelve disciples. He was induced to betray the master to the High Priests for thirty pieces of silver, but after the arrest was filled with remorse, flung back the shekels at the priests and went and hanged himself.¹⁹ This important event has narrated by four gospels.²⁰

We find some other scenes in NT. For example, Gentile Christians were told to abstain for blood, "that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from unchastity. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well."²¹

It is a clear cut command for Christians to avoid such rites but they transgressed and did not take care of such commandments. Geoffrey Parrinder's words presents their transgression as he says:

"Though this prohibition was probably soon neglected."²²

When it is neglected, definitely a blood phenomenon took rise among the Christian society. As a result there came into being the bloody scenes in the history. The reason, although was not the religion but there was religious justification. We can find a lot of verses highlighting it; means biblical support. A lot of scholars point this out in their literary contributions. One of them is J.T.

¹⁸ Geoffrey Parrinder, *A concise Encyclopedia of Christianity*, p: 45.

¹⁹ E. Royston Pike, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Religions*, p: 217.

²⁰ Matthew, 10:4, Mark, 3:19, Luke, 22:3, John, 12:4.

²¹ Acts, 15:29.

²² Geoffrey Parrinder, p: 45.

Johnson who says, "In medieval Europe war was viewed as a means by which God's justice found expression as a providential mechanism."²³

2.3. New Testament on war

In scholarly written books on biblical contents, we find that Old Testament and New Testament contain different injunctions about war. The scholars describe that God in Old Testament is painted to be fond of war and violence and God of NT is regarded to be peace loving and affectionate.

How much this understanding goes right? Let's see in the coming bible quotations.

It is written in OT that he will be happy and successful who will push up the inferiors and strike them with the rock.²⁴

Contrarily the statement of OT narrates that a nation will not carry sword against other nation and nor they will do anything about war.²⁵

The NT on the other hand quotes the saying of Jesus that I did not come for peace but for sword.²⁶

He also said that my slaves would have fought war if my kingdom was for this world.²⁷

It further seems to be contrary to his famous command that those who will pick up sword will perish with it.²⁸

²³ J.T. Johnson, *Ideology, reason and the limitation of war: religious and secular concepts* (Princeton: Princeton University press, 1975), p: 34.

²⁴ Psalms, 9:137.

²⁵ Isaiah, 2:4.

²⁶ Matthew, 10:34.

²⁷ John, 18:36.

²⁸ Matthew, 26:52.

Thus we can say that this understanding is not correct as both the books carry all sorts of teachings about the subject. About such kind of Biblical teachings, Juergensmeyer says that the absence of any lucid commandment of the Bible on the subject has been titled to “Conspiracy of Silence” and an effort to defend Church and Christianity.²⁹

Perhaps the lack of any forceful stand of earlier Christian leadership caused the development of three religious trends and approaches in the coming history. The approaches are known to be:

1. Pacifism
2. Just war theory
3. Holy wars or crusades

2.3.1. Pacifism

The early church, the first 300 years, was strongly pacifist. The Christian argument for pacifism is based partly on Jesus’ teaching. His statements like, love your enemy³⁰ and ‘if any one strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also’ are the references for the beginning of this movement.³¹

The extreme example in this regard is that he did not allow his fellow Peter to save or defend him against his enemies or he did not call for help to twelve angels who used to be always in his company.³²

Some documents of second century from the Church of Rome and Alexandria named “Apostolic Tradition” are famous for the advocacy of pacifism. The documents reveal the commandment that one who has a sword in his hand should throw it away. One who joins army is not related to god. Joining army is blasphemy of God.³³

²⁹ Juergensmeyer, Mark, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (Berkeley Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2002), p: 25.

³⁰ Matthew, 5:44.

³¹ Matthew, 5:39.

³² Lull, Jacques F., *Violence: Reflection from a Christian Perspective* (London: SCM Press, 1970), p: 9.

³³ Ibid, p: 11.

Origen said that Christians 'do not go forth as soldiers'. Tertullian wrote, "only without the sword can the Christian wage war: for the Lord has abolished the sword." Clement of Alexandria wrote "...he who holds the sword must cast it away and that if one of the faithful becomes a soldier he must be rejected by the Church, for he has scorned God."³⁴

This changed rapidly in the time of Constantine and after that Christian philosophers began to formulate the doctrine of the Just War in their writings. From Constantine onwards Christian writers and preachers have used soldierly descriptions in their writings about the faith.

2.3.2. Just War Theory

At last Christians came to accept the benefit of military force use, for faith preaching and they started thinking the use of power for the establishment of the kingdom of God. They concluded after a long discussion that war is a vital tool in resorting justice and peace.

So the first supporting view to Just war is of St. Augustine. Thus, opening the way for the development of the view by Augustine is that in some circumstances wars could be just. James Turner Johnson further explains that *Augustine's* comments on just war are relatively few and scattered among works on various other topics; he never produced a systematic treatise on just war. The creation of the coherent, systematic concept of just war began instead with the canonist Gratian in his *Decretum* in the mid-twelfth century. Then in the mid-thirteenth century theologians such as Peter of Paris and Thomas Aquinas set the concept in a broader framework. By the time of Thomas, *Summa theologiae* the main line of the specifically Christian understanding of just war was established.

³⁴ *Christian ethics of war*, retrieved on December 19, 2008, from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/christianity/christianethics/war.shtml#top>

Among the Reformers, Martin Luther's position on just war was essentially that of Thomas Aquinas.³⁵

Aquinas, Thomas (C.1226-74) was a Christian saint and theologian of middle ages though knowing no Hebrew or Greek and very little history.³⁶ St. Aquinas in his *Summa Theologia* developed a theory on just war and described three conditions of war.³⁷

The Just War Theory was asserted as an authoritative Catholic Church teaching by the United States Catholic Bishops in their pastoral letter, *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response*, issued in 1983. There are three strict conditions for it.

- The damage inflicted by the aggressor on the nation or community of nations must be lasting, grave, and certain.
- All other means of putting an end to it must have been shown to be impractical or ineffective.
- There must be serious prospects of success.³⁸

This statement was referred as a justification for use of violence and war for the justice in the society. This view was further developed in the light of catholic teachings as it is described in *Catholic Encyclopedia*: "War in its juridical sense, a contention carried on by force of arms between sovereign states, or communities having in this regard the right of states."³⁹

2.3.3. Violence as a vital tool

³⁵ James Turner Johnson, "war and peace", *Christianity; the Complete Guide*, (ed.), John Bowden, (London: continuum, 2005), p: 1223-1224.

³⁶ E. Royston pike, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Religions* (London,:1951), P: 27.

³⁷ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologia* (trans.), Fathers of the English Dominican Province, (Benziger Bros.: 1947), (CCEL) CD-ROM, 2000.

³⁸ James Turner Johnson, "war and peace", *Christianity; the Complete Guide*, (ed.), John Bowden, p: 1225.

³⁹ War, *Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1917, retrieved on December 09, 2008 from <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/w.htm>

For many centuries Christians believed that it was right and proper to use violence (and thus war) to spread the faith and deal with its opponents. They did not regard violence as an inherently bad thing: whether it was bad or not depended on what it was being used for. The idea that violence is not inherently bad can also be seen in some versions of the Just War doctrine - violence (war) can be a vital tool in restoring justice and peace.⁴⁰

This thinking is covered under religious wars throughout Church history. It contains a lot of examples among them the major are the Crusades, knights Templar and violence type activities. Their detail with year wise is as follow;

2.4. Historical study of martyrdom and suicidal attacks in Christian history

In the light of biblical statements, martyrdom carried a unique status in Christian history. History is full of such kinds of activities, although they name it witness, martyrdom or heroic-suicide. The concepts are the same in the three religions, although the ways and methods were being changed with the passage of time. For example, it is called *Kiddush Hashem* by Jews, *martyrdom* by Christians and *Istish'hād* for the Muslims.

2.4.1. Who is a Martyr?

Greek word “witness” used of disciples who had witnessed the life of Christ⁴¹ and then of those who witnessed with their lives during the persecution of early centuries ‘with a baptism of blood’.⁴² Their witness for the word of God is narrated in the Revelation. We just put a quote from the detailed Revelation:

“The souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne”⁴³

⁴⁰ *Christian ethics of war*, retrieved on December 19, 2008, from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/christianity/christianethics/war.shtml#top>

⁴¹ Acts, 1:8.

⁴² Geoffrey Parrinder, *A concise Encyclopedia of Christianity*, p: 160.

⁴³ Revelation, 6:9.

This indicates the existence of martyrs for the word of God in the Biblical light.

2.4.2. Veneration for martyrs

Ancient Christianity offered its martyrs exuberant veneration. But as early as 300 AD, the great longing for martyrdom began to dry up. With the recognition of Christianity as a religion with equal rights and then the official religion of the Roman Empire, martyrdom lost much of its meaning and role in imperial territory. A specifically Christian devotion to the martyrs now appeared. Their graves became the sites of churches and chapels, and their veneration was tied up with divine service; at the same time, their bones were taken to other churches and deposited under their altars.⁴⁴

In spite of all this, we find a strong creed that martyrs have powers to forgive the sins. In the words of Geoffrey Parrinder, "Others were notable for sacred power or holiness, particularly the martyrs."⁴⁵ He further says that the tomb of martyrs became places of commemoration, and in Roman Catholicism, every altar should contain Relics of a martyr.⁴⁶

Mircea Eliade has a clear view in this respect. He says, "Early Christians were believed to be martyrs and to have the power of forgiveness of sins."⁴⁷

2.4.3. Christian martyrdom: Its basis

The Biblical concept of the meritorious activity of "blood witness" bases on the history of the following elements which *The Brill Dictionary of Religion* has mentioned:

- (a) Three men who preferred to stride in to the furnace of fire rather than pray to foreign Gods.

⁴⁴ Holger Preibler, "Martyrs", *The Brill Dictionary of Religion* (ed.), Kocku von Stuckrad, vol: 3, p:1158.

⁴⁵ *A concise Encyclopedia of Christianity*, p: 160.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Samuel Z. Klausner, "Martyrdom", *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol: 9, p: 231.

- (b) By way of Jesus' crucifixion, the thought of a sacrificial death was enhanced for Christians in a special way.
- (c) Persecution quickly supervening in the second century led to the development of concepts of the character of the Christian martyr.⁴⁸

2.5. Martyrs through Persecution of Christians:

The Christians were persecuted as a consequence of professing their faith, at the hands of both Jews from whose religion Christianity was a branch and the Roman Empire which controlled much of the land. This continued from the first century until the early fourth century, when the religion was legalized by Constantine I.

There was a general collapse of morale: some Christians admitted that they had been Christians but denied their faith and cursed Christ. They made offerings to the Emperor and the gods. But they also denied that Christians practiced enormities. The great majority of the early martyrs were Christians of a type which the church would later classify as heretic. Many bishops, who ought to have been an encouragement and example to others, gave up their sacred ministry, deserted their people, left the district, tried to make money, took possession of estates by fraudulent means and engaged in usury.⁴⁹ But there were some faithful who bore all kinds of persecution and became martyrs.

2.5.1. First Century Martyrs:

Many early Christians became martyrs because Romans persecuted them for not worshipping the Roman Gods. **St. Stephen** (died in 35CE) was the first Christian martyr. He was stoned to death because he was against the wickedness of his fellow citizens.

⁴⁸ *The Brill Dictionary of Religion*, vol: 3, p: 1158.

⁴⁹ Paul Johnson, *A History of Christianity* (New York: Athenum, 1980), pp: 71-74.

“And they stoned Stephen, calling upon *God*, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord; lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.”⁵⁰

Saint James the Just (died, 62A.D), also known as *James of Jerusalem* was an important figure in Early Christianity. He is generally identified by Roman Catholics with *James, son of Alphaeus*, martyred for the sake of religion. The first documented case of imperially-supervised persecution of the Christians in the Roman Empire begins with Nero in 64 A.D. A great fire broke out in Rome, destroying portions of the city and a number of Christians martyred.⁵¹

2.5.2. The second century martyrs:

There was no systematic persecution of Christians before the second half of the second century. The worst episodes were isolated incidents, as in the Rhone valley in 177A.D. Many Christians were tortured in stocks or in cells. Christians who were Roman citizens were beheaded. Others were given to the beasts. Severed heads and limbs were displayed, guarded for six days then burned the ashes.⁵² A detailed list of martyrs can be seen in J. Stevenson’s early Church history:

1. Martyrdom of Symeon of Jerusalem, 107CE
2. Martyrs of Bithynia in Asia Minor under Pliny, 112CE
3. Martyrdom of Ignatius of Antioch at Rome, 117CE
4. Martyrs of Jewish Revolt, 132CE
5. Martyrdom of Polycarp, the Bishop of Smyrna, 156CE
6. Martyrdom of Ptolemy and Lucius, 160CE
7. Martyrdom of Justine and his companions, 165CE
8. Martyrs of Lyons and Vienne, 177CE

⁵⁰ Acts, 7:59-60.

⁵¹ J. Stevenson (ed.), *A New Eusebius: Documents illustrating the history of the church to AD 337*(London, Cambridge: The University Press, 1995), pp: 1-12.

⁵² Paul Johnson, *A History of Christianity*, pp: 71-74.

9. Martyrs of Scilli in Africa, 180 CE.⁵³

2.5.3. The third century martyrs:

By the middle of third century a much more critical period had opened. Christians were now more numerous, better organized in their views. They did not even want to give or receive a reason for what they believe and simply say “don’t ask questions: just believe” and “thy faith will save thee.”

At the end of the third and beginning of the fourth century, the great persecution started until all Christians in the empire were commanded to sacrifice to the gods, banning Christian practices. Over 20,000 Christians are thought to have died during Diocletian's reign.

2.5.4. The fourth century martyrs:

By the spreading of Jesus mission beyond the Christian territory, there started political martyrdom trend in Christendom from Roman Empire. The imperial policy was generally one of incorporation: the local gods of a newly conquered area were simply added to the Roman pantheon and often given Roman names. Samuel Z. Klausner elaborated the situation in Mircea Eliade’s Encyclopedia that is summerised under the coming headlines.

Christian communities within the Roman Empire were a political minority. The martyr of this minority suffered passively, inviting violence but inflicting only moral or psychological pressure on the adversary. Examples are fourth-century Christians in *Asia Minor* following the victory of Constantine. It can be estimated that more Christians have been killed for religious reasons in the last 50 years than in the church's first 300 years. A group of people presented themselves to the Roman governor of Asia, C. Arrius Antoninus, declared themselves to be Christians and encouraged the governor to do his duty and put them to death.⁵⁴

⁵³ J. Stevenson (ed.), *A New Eusebius: Documents illustrating the history of the church to AD 33*, pp: 18-46.

⁵⁴ Samuel Z. Klausner, “Martyrdom”, *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol: 9, pp: 231-232.

There is no doubt that this and later persecutions were extremely effective. The blood of the martyrs, as Tertullian had claimed, might be the seed of the faith.⁵⁵ The Christianity became an official religion by Constantine and they remained involve in their social and religious activities for centuries till they listened the call for crusades.

2.5.5. Crusades/ Holy operation (11th century)

Crusades are great manifestations of Christian teachings of war. These wars were a campaign of Catholics and orthodox Churches on the slogan of "Atonement of sins and forgiveness from social responsibilities." Such statements established its sanctity. Pope Urban II the leader of Christian Military's sermon at Clermont Ferrand on November, 1095 is a great evidence on its religious sanctification. He asked his followers to come out against Muslim who occupied the Holy Land of Jerusalem and were rulers there.⁵⁶ Geoffrey Parrinder has narrated the reason of the war mentality, saying, "Pilgrimage to the Holy land was undertaken down the ages, permitted by Arab rulers after the 7th century. But the capture of Jerusalem by the Turks in 1017 led Pope Urban II in 1095 to declare a crusade to regain the Holy places."⁵⁷

What were the Muslims occupying there that made them wage a holy war against them? Were the Christians banned to visit the holy lands for pilgrimage? The answer is in 'no'. the original situation is mentioned by Lee Griffith. He wrote that there were no such injunctions that the pilgrimage of Jerusalem or Bethlehem was a religious duty for Christians. Rather St. Augustine was of the view that visit of Jerusalem was a dangerous and useless journey. St. Jerome

⁵⁵ Paul Johnson, *A History of Christianity*, pp: 71-74.

⁵⁶ Muhammad Al- 'arūsī, *Al-hūrūbus salībiyyah fil-mashriq wal-maghrib* (Tunisia: Dārūl Gharbil Islāmī, 1982), p: 34.

⁵⁷ Geoffrey Parrinder, *A concise Encyclopedia of Christianity*, p: 79.

refused to travel and visit the holy places in Jerusalem for the sake of any spiritual gain or reward.⁵⁸

Then what was the reason to wage a Holy War?

The answer is in The Catholic Encyclopedia, “ As individual they were inspired by a variety of motives: religious idealism, politics, economic reasons, adventure or a hope of spoils.”⁵⁹

In fact the Journey to Jerusalem was a punishment as Christian Scholars asserted. But when they started Crusades it became a way of salvation by killing the Muslims, while they chanted the slogan ‘Atonement of sins’ and the Holy War broke out.

2.5.6. A dark side of that Holy operation (crusades):

Christians broke all rules of Just war Theory. They made no difference in killing men, women, old, children, sick and handicapped. There were streams of blood in the streets of Jerusalem. The height of bloody seams even touched the bellies of horses.⁶⁰

This holy operation reached its climax when Christian soldiers boiled the flesh of Muslims to eat and burnt on fire the bodies of Muslim infants after piercing iron sticks through their softened flesh.⁶¹

A terrible scene of Crusade was seen when Orthodox Churches of Constantinople were destroyed by these soldiers of God. The crosses were stitched on their customs when they were raping thousands of Greek Women.⁶²

⁵⁸ Griffith, Lee, *The War of Terrorism and terror of God* (Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Company, Grand Rapids, 2002), p: 101.

⁵⁹ *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Robert G. Broderick (ed.) (Atlanta & London: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1986), p:325

⁶⁰ Fulcher of Charters, *History: The End of the World* (ed.), Lewis H. Lapham and Peter T. Stuck (New York: History Book Club, 1997), p: 54.

⁶¹ Maalouf, Amin, *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes*, trans. Jon Rothschild (New York: Schocken Books, 1984), p: 39.

Crusade is very complicated or very controversial subject to discuss. That's why the Christians of this era interestingly condemned the previous interpretations of Crusades and are now reinterpreting it. A detailed discussion of this reinterpretation is coming in the following paragraphs.

2.5.7. Reinterpreting the idea of Crusades: crusade against crusaders

There is very important question, why we rethink the idea of the crusades? Its answer lies in the following reality:

“History makes people dream, intoxicates them, gives them false memories, and exaggerates their reflexes, keeps their old wounds open.”⁶³

Paul Valley's view point towards the history is very accurate because the crusades although might be a thing of past, but they still occupy the minds and hearts of the people. From previous description, it can easily be understood that Crusades derive its legitimacy from theologies of armed action in Bible. We just quote here a Christ's saying in the explanation of armed theologies. Jesus Christ says, “I did not come for peace but for sword.”⁶⁴

This verse is a kind of inspiration to extend the Christian realm by hook or by crook. Here is a quotation from Mathew Henry's commentary on the verse, “It is great encouragement to those who are doing Christ's work, that it is a work which shall certainly be done. See how the care of Providence extends to all creatures, even to the sparrows. This should silence all the fears of God's people; ye are of more value than many sparrows.”⁶⁵

The crusades were a series of military conflicts waged by the West. But how did they start? Understanding the crusades is difficult without understanding the 'wider context' of church reform. Lets come to see it by the

⁶² Oldenburg, Zoë, *The Crusades*, trans. Anne Carter (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1998), p: 580.

⁶³ Mohammad Arkoun, *Islam, to reform or subvert* (London: Asia Bookroom, 2006), p:300.

⁶⁴ Matthew, 10:34.

⁶⁵ Mathew Henry (1706), *Concise Commentary on the Whole Bible, Christian classics Ethereal Library (CCEL)*, CD-ROM, 2000.

eyes of a British historian, Christopher Tyrman's view in his famous book *God's War: A new history of the Crusades*. He says,

"The areas where reform was sought include simony (Traffic in ecclesiastical offices or preferment's), concubine (Cohabitation without being legally married) and investiture (The ceremony of installing a new monarch). Investiture controversy was a tussle as to how the Pope would be appointed by the secular king. The church wanted no interference from the emperor in this appointment. A bitter experience was encountered when the Roman Emperor rescinded his imperial support of Pope Gregory VII. These reforms, famously known as Gregorian Reforms, were a voice raised by the clergy against the irreligious, by the spiritual against the secular. One of the active advocates of Gregorian reforms was Pope Urban II. In the air of reformation there came a call from the Byzantine Emperor for saving the land from the Muslims. The church was quick to respond. Pope Urban called for the people gathered to liberate the Holy Land."⁶⁶

It resulted in a clash between Christian forces and Muslims. But was it really a war between two faiths as it is generally highlighted in history books or it was something else? Tyrman says no, it was not between two faiths but three faiths; the third were Jews. He argues,

"The fighting was not limited to Muslims. The Jews too were targeted, which might translate the crusades into a Christian enterprise. But even then it was not the end of that. The second and the third decade of the 1200s witnessed the Albigensian Crusade (from the city of Albi) in which Cathars, a religious sect, were the main target. Another group targeted was the Hussites which was a Christian movement. Then there were the pagans. Even the Greek Orthodox Church was perceived as a threat. The city of Constantinople was sacked during

⁶⁶ Ishmael Khan, "Re-interpreting the crusades" in the *Review weekly* (Dawn), May 2008, p: 4. (a review on *God's War: A new history of the Crusades*, Christopher Tyrman)

the fourth crusade in 1204. A crusade was even launched against individuals like the king of Aragon.

In short, war was waged by the Roman Catholic Church against those not subscribing to their belief. The Cathars and Hussites were declared heretical groups by the Church. Tyrman says that such anti-Christian wars can only be termed "crusade against crusaders."⁶⁷

The editor of *The Encyclopedia of Christianity* has the same point of view:

"We must be careful neither to make "Crusades" a mere slogan in criticism of the church nor to use the term uncritically for any good cause. We must study the crusades as a historical phenomenon. The historical summary reveals a clear development. Initially, the first three crusades began as imperial venture. The Papacy headed the 4th and 5th crusade as it reached under Innocent III. Finally all efforts of Pope Gregory X (1271-76) to keep the crusading movement alive failed. The idea of Crusades also changed. Religiously the fiddles (faithful) were believers, but in feudal law they were also liege-men. The crusades fell into the swamp of politics and religious enthusiasm waned in consequence. There were also internal enemies like Moors in Spain, heretics in the south of French (Cathari) and Hohenstaufens. The misuse of Crusades is more than their destruction in crusades. The movement collapsed because it lost its resonance in Christian people."⁶⁸

It means that what started as Gregorian reformation (internal reformation) took the shape of a war against Muslims (external conflict) and with the passage of time became a war against the non-Catholics (internal conflicts). That is to say that what had started as internal reformation between state and church, moved into internal conflict.

⁶⁷ Re-interpreting the crusades, *Review weekly* (Dawn), May 2008, p: 4.

⁶⁸ Helmut Roscher, "Crusades", *The Encyclopedia of Christianity* (ed.), Erwin Fahlbusch, Jan Milic Lochman, John Mbiti (Michigan/Cambridge: Grand Rapids, 1999), vol: 1, pp: 738-740.

2.5.8. Knights Templar and Others (12th century):

French knights formed a group at Jerusalem in 1119 for the purpose of defending the Holy Places of Palestine from the attack of Muslim Saracens.⁶⁹

Parrinder mentioned its detail here and said "After the capture of Jerusalem by the first crusade in 1099, King Baldon founded 'the poor knights of Christ' to defend the city from the Muslims. They adopted a form of monastic rule and built monasteries and castles. They became wealthy, but were charged with immorality and heresy and the order was suppressed in 1312. The temple church in London is a round building modeled on the church of Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem."⁷⁰

They were the suicide attackers who never took care of any difficulty that occurred in their mission. Roman Catholic Church was on their back providing legality. Not only the Knights Templar, but *The Catholic Encyclopedia* also highlighted the other Orders of Knights, "the twelfth century saw the rise of several orders of knighthood that were actually religious orders although military in character. These were Knights Hospitallers of St. John 1113, Knights Templar 1118 and teutonic Knights in 1190."⁷¹

The writer tells us that they actually started after they inspired by religious teachings but their intentions turned to the military activities.

On other side they attacked a Great Muslim territory of Spain and killed as much they could do at the name of 'kingdom of God.' Samuel Z. Klausner pictured it as follows;

Christian Persecution of Muslims (13th century)

The Christians forced both the Muslims and Jews to embrace Christianity during the Christian conquest of Spain, from the 13th century to the 15th century,

⁶⁹ E. Royston pike, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Religions*, p: 371.

⁷⁰ Geoffrey Parrinder, p: 232.

⁷¹ *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Robert G. Broderick (ed.) (Atlanta & London: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1986), p:326.

for establishing justice in society. A number of Muslims and Jews manifestly accepted Christianity, while continuing their previous faiths. The Christian state urged to expel those who had remained Jews and Muslims.⁷²

Renaissance Era (from 15th century on ward):

In Christian history this era is considered a reformation age. It is the age of church's separation from state. Church history of this age is full of violence, religious terrorism and martyrs of every kind. They killed, in the name of religion, their scholars, philosophers, scientists and even clergies who challenged the church authority. Especially the protestant martyrs' rate rose. Protestant Martyrs of the 16th century are celebrated in Jean Crespin's *histoire des Martyrs*.⁷³ In the sixteenth century, the cult of the martyrs with its abuses, was subjected to sharp criticism on the part Reformation Churches, while Council of Trent itself intervened by laying down restrictions and imposing an order. They can be studied in detail in Will Durant's famous book *The Reformation*.⁷⁴

2.5.9. Twentieth century:

In the twentieth century, Catholic priest Max Joseph Metzger (1887-1944) suffered the death of martyrs at the hands of the National Socialist terror."⁷⁵

Bonhoeffer was a protestant theorist who was martyred in Nazi camp in Germany. His martyrdom is cited by moral theorists as an example of how Christians can undertake violence actions for a just cause and how occasionally Christians are compelled to break laws for a higher cause. These positions are also held by his colleague Niebuhr (1942) for a righteous cause and martyred. Niebuhr named such actions "as surgeon's knife".⁷⁶

⁷² Samuel Z. Klausner, "Martyrdom", *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, Mircea Eliade (ed.), vol: 9, p: 233.

⁷³ D.S.Girling, *New age encyclopedia*, vol: 25, p: 5.

⁷⁴ Will Durant, *The Reformation* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1957), ch. 3-6.

⁷⁵ *The Brill Dictionary of Religion*, p: 1158.

⁷⁶ Mark juergensmeyer, Christian Violence in America, *Annals of the American Academy of political and social Sciences*, Sage publications, vol: 558, (July, 1998), p:5-6.

In contemporary age there occurred a new phenomenon in political martyrs. They get its legitimacy from religion and do what they want. They also include women attackers.

Naomi Janowitz is of the view that animal sacrifice had been an exclusively male preserve, a patriarchal system, where women were not allowed to participate. But when some Jews moved from animal sacrifice to human sacrifice, women got involved as well. Also, a number of Christian martyrs throughout the ages have been women.⁷⁷

One of the world's foremost authorities on the subject, Professor Pape has created the first comprehensive database of every suicide terrorist attack in the world from 1980 until today. He mentioned a christian women suicide attacker who was a factory worker (Elias Harb).⁷⁸

2.6. Legitimacy and illegitimacy of martyrdom and suicide

It is interesting that in the Bible itself, no clear prohibition of suicide is found. Only the church fathers negatively evaluated suicide or its attempt and more and more strictly punished the person who committed suicide. That's why there is difference of opinions regarding suicide; is that a sin or not in Christian point of view? *The Brill Dictionary of Religion* mentions that it is not sin while John W. Wade negates it.

For example *The Brill Dictionary of Religion* says that no explicit prohibition of suicide is to be found in the bible itself. Only *Medieval Christianity* sees it as a sin against the Creator, nature and society. Thus, persons who commit suicide are

⁷⁷ Naomi Janowitz, "Lusting for death: Some unconscious meanings of martyrdom traditions", *Psychiatric News*, p: 19, retrieved on September 17, 2008 from <http://pn.psychiatryonline.org/cgi/search?sortspec=relevance&journalcode=psychnews&fulltext=lusting+for+death%3Asome+unconscious+meanings+of+martyrdom+tradition>

⁷⁸ Robert Anthony Pape, *Dying to win: the strategic logic of suicide terrorism*, (Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2006), p: 78.

condemned to eternal damnation as a spiritual punishment. Suicidal persons were categorized as transgressors. Until 19th century, the church determined that their burial places must be outside the country and burial timings must be early morning or late night. "Protestants" very largely adopted the "Catholic" notions. But Martin Luther modified the main focus. He condemned the act of suicide, but not the persons committing it, regarding suicide as a work of the devil.⁷⁹

John W. Wade the writer of suicide article in *The World Book Encyclopedia* points out that Christianity has always considered suicide a sin, and many Christians have believed that the person who committed suicide gave up his hope of getting to heaven. Then the writer presents his observation of committing suicide reissue in Christians and Jews. He says, "*Roman Catholics* are less fond to commit suicide than Protestants. *Jews* have a lower suicide rate. Suicide is against the law."⁸⁰

It was all about suicide but what bible says about martyrdom? In answering this we only quote a biblical verse in the blessing of a martyr who accepts death for the word of almighty Allah. That is, no doubt a great evidence on its legacy.

"Those who are slain for the word of God."⁸¹

Exodus 32: 26-28, is very important part of the Bible for its different interpretations by the Christian saints. It provides the legacy of violence.

"Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, "Who is on the LORD's side? Come to me." And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him. And he said to them, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'Put every man his sword on his side, and go to and fro from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and

⁷⁹ *The Brill Dictionary of Religion*, p: 1823.

⁸⁰ John W. Wade, "Suicide", *The World Book Encyclopedia* (Chicago: field enterprises educational corporation), vol: 13, p: 117.

⁸¹ Revelation, 6:9.

every man his neighbor. And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses; and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.”⁸²

Michael Walzer describes how Moses recruits the sons of Levi to carry out a programme of execution in the name of God. This establishes the significance of the text for anyone interested in sacred violence.⁸³

Walzer then proceeds to set out the three main citations of the text. The first was by St Augustine, who used it to justify the persecution of the Donatists, arguing that the difference between the oppressive behaviour of Pharaoh and that of Moses evidenced in Exodus 32: 26-8, lay precisely in motive, which in Moses' case was loving chastisement. The second citation was that of Aquinas. In contrast to Augustine, he saw the passage as dangerous, because of the interpretation which had been given to it by the radical reformers of the eleventh century. They had emphasized the duty of latter day Levites, as men of God, to use violent means in order to purge the church of evil. For Aquinas this was an unacceptable invitation to disorder, and he countered this exegesis by arguing that this was Old Law and bore no relevance to the New Dispensation. Finally there was Calvin's interpretation of the text. He returned to the Augustinian viewpoint that the text pointed the way for contemporary Christians to behave, but radicalized it substantially. The mediation of Moses, so important for Augustine, was superseded by the Protestant view of the elect being directly mandated by God, and the full grimness of the task which faced the new Levites was emphasized in terms of their having to kill their own brethren in God's service.⁸⁴

The Augustinian, Thomist, and Calvinist interpretations of these three verses in Exodus formed the legitimate use of violence in God's name.

⁸² Exodus, 32: 26-28.

⁸³ M. Walzer, Exodus 32 and the Theory of Holy War: The History of a Citation, *Harvard Theological Review*, vol: 61, 1968, pp: 1-14.

⁸⁴ B. Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross: Catholics and Huguenots in Sixteenth Century Paris* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), p: 151.

2.6.1. Contemporary Christian View Point on suicidal attacks

Protestants leaders trace the roots of their violent ideas from 'dominion theology' that the Christianity must reassert the dominion of god and from the 'reconstructionist theology' that rooted to sixteenth-century reformer John Calvin who asserted the authority of god in all worldly matters. They allow use of the religion in politics.⁸⁵

2.6.2. WCC (World Council of Churches)

WCC (world council of churches) is a religious platform for Protestants. It can be said by their international policies in current affairs that they follow the current politics and support the affairs of their own interest. For example they have strong views about suicide martyrdom. WCC members condemned terrorism and suicide bombings from the Palestinian side and at the same time when a Palestinian suicide bomber killed nine people and wounded sixty in Tel Aviv on April 17, 2006 the WCC condemned neither the attack nor the support of Hamas to it.⁸⁶

If we proceed to a more detailed consideration of positive, favorable attitudes toward violence, it is because violence seems to be the great temptation in the church and among Christians today. Today it is Christians' acceptance of violence, and the theologies thereby engendered, which appears to be the central problem. Now it seems to me that, in spite of certain World Council of Churches pronouncements on "Church and Society," this problem has been neither clarified nor solved.⁸⁷

2.6.3. The Roman Catholic Church

⁸⁵ Mark juergensmeyer, Christian Violence in America, *Annals of the American Academy of political and social Sciences*, Sage publications, vol: 558, (July, 1998), p: 8.

⁸⁶ Leonard Grab and John K. (ed.), *RothAnguished hope: Holocaust scholars confront the Palestinian-Israeli conflict* (Michigan: Grand Rapids, 2008), P: 38.

⁸⁷ Jacques Ellul, *Violence: Reflections from a Christian Perspective* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1969) ch: 2

The Roman Catholic Church has published its policy against contemporary violence suicidal attacks in the whole world. In the following we have quoted some statements of Catholic personalities and news reports in this regard:

Archbishop Domonique, Diputy secretary of Vatican for states addressed the UN Secretary on Sep. 24, urging the group to seize this moment and become a valid advocate in the cause of reaching a world free of Nuclear Weapon.”⁸⁸ On October 18, 2009, Pope addressed a ceremony at world youth day and stated a policy for all the Christians that, “it is the Christians’ responsibility to hold on peace whether they are persecuted harshly.”⁸⁹

President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari met with Archbishop of Canterbury and Pope benedict on October 03. They all agreed to condemn the universal terrorist wave. In a ceremony held in the 70th memory of World War II on 1st September, Pope Benedict stated that,

“War is destruction while peace and forgiveness is life.”⁹⁰

⁸⁸ *The Christian Voice (weekly)*, vol: LVII, no: 42, October 04, 2009, p: 8.

⁸⁹ *Agāhī weekly*, vol: 3, no: 40, September 20, 2009, p: 2.

⁹⁰ *Agāhī weekly*, vol: 3, no: 38, October, 2009, p: 2.

CHAPTER NO. 3

ISLAMIC APPROACH TO SELF IMMOLATION

3.1. Sanctity of life in Islam

Islam demands its followers to live with peace and love, respect others and venerate the blood of humanity, as is mentioned in a famous hadith “a Muslim is from whose tongue and hand other Muslims feel safety.” Its reason lies in a divine relation of man to Allah “man is vicegerent of Allah”. Man’s creation on the image of God leads to the argument that man’s life means existence of GOD and his death deface the image of GOD. As a vicegerent of Allah man has a special status and responsibilities. Let’s discuss in detail the creation of man, its status and responsibilities in the coming lines.

3.1.1. Creation of man:

Islam says that man is the best creation of the Creator. The Qur’ān reveals that man is handiwork of Allah and *He created man on his own pattern.*¹ Abdullah Yusuf Ali explains that *as turned out from the creative hand of God, man is innocent, pure, true, free, inclined to right and virtue, and endowed with true understanding about his own position in the universe and about God’s goodness, wisdom and power.*²

Another verse has the same meaning, *Whom I have created with my hands (power).*³

Similarly the Prophet of Islam declared that every baby is born on the true nature of submission to Allah but the parents make him Jew, Christian, or Mushrik.⁴

3.1.2. Status of man:

Man is a special creation of Almighty Allah. So it becomes natural that he may be given special and distinguished position as compared to other creatures in

¹ Rūm, 30:30.

² *The Holy Qur’an*, translation and commentary, Abdullah Yusuf Ali (Islamabad: Dawah Academy, 1990), p: 754.

³ Sād, 38:75.

⁴ Tirmidhi, Muhammad bin ʿIsā (209-279 hijrah), *Jām ʿal-Tirmidhi*, bab al-qadar, hadith no. 2138 (Riyadh: Dār as-salām, 1999)

the universe. According to the Qur'ān *man is vicegerent to Him*.⁵ This status is both the distinction as well as the responsibility. This specialty of man was due to his acceptance of being accountable for his actions and deeds. Such challenging post was regretted by huge and gigantic creature of the universe.⁶ The Qur'ān further discloses that the element of *fasād (to make mischief)* in the composition of man was pointed out by the angels when Allah ordered them to prostrate to man. The angels hesitated to follow his commandment as they knew that man is quarrelsome and argumentative creation.⁷

3.1.3. Responsibilities: Sanctity of life

To the extent of man's status, there comes burden of responsibilities. What kind of responsibilities a Muslim has in this regard? He should live with peace and love, respect others and venerate the blood of humanity. By doing that Allah will bless him a great blessing because human blood obtains much importance in its social rights as Qur'ān narrates;

“If any one slew a person - unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land - it would be as if he slew the whole people: and if any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people.”⁸

“Those who invoke not with Allah, any other god, nor slay such life as Allah has made sacred, except for just cause, nor commit fornication; and any that does this (not only) meets punishment.”⁹

At another place of the Qur'ān, Almighty Allah addressed the last Prophet (PBUH) “Say: “Come, I will rehearse what Allah hath (really) prohibited you from”: Join not anything as equal with Him; be good to your parents; kill not your children on a plea of want; - We provide sustenance for you and for them;-

⁵ al-Baqarah, 2:30.

⁶ al-Ahzāb, 33:72.

⁷ al-Baqarah, 2:30.

⁸ al-Mā'idah, 55:32.

⁹ al-Furqān, 25:68.

come not nigh to shameful deeds. Whether open or secret; take not life, which Allah hath made sacred, except by way of justice and law: thus doth He command you, that ye may learn wisdom.”¹⁰

So the ultimate result of being vicegerent is to promote peace, prosperity, love, tolerance and humbleness. A Muslim should turn all the evils into good deeds by suitable and affordable way so this world become a paradise to live. Does Islam present any system of promoting love and peace for all human being in its sacred texts?

3.2. Peace: Islamic view point

Islam is nothing if not the religion of peace .The word ‘Islam’ itself comes from the same root as ‘Salam’ (peace). Every Muslim salutes his brother; ‘peace be unto you’. The Qur’ān narrates the qualities of a true Muslim very beautifully in the following verse;

“For those who believe and do righteous deeds, will be in Gardens; beneath which rivers flow: That is the great Salvation, (the fulfilment of all desires)”¹¹

The verse promises a reward of Paradise only for those who act upon Allah’s command, preach Allah’s message of doing good deeds and surrender before Allah. But entire submission does not mean any cheap fatalism, for the Qur’an defines it:

*By (the taken of) Times(through the ages), Verily man is in loss, except such as have faith and do righteous deeds and (join together) in the mutual teaching of truth and of patience constancy.*¹²

A Muslim’s first duty is to ensure peace where he lives, not only for himself but for others as well. He should risk his life for this noble cause. He is

¹⁰ al-An’am, 6: 151.

¹¹ al-Burūj, 85: 11.

¹² al-‘Asar, 103: 1-3, The Holy Qur’an, translation and commentary, Abdullah Yusuf Ali, p: 127.

enjoined to fight for religious freedom and the protection of all places of worships; mosques, churches or synagogues.

A true Muslim's life after death, as well, shall be perfect peace, for salvation is nothing but attainment of complete peace. Paradise is the 'the house of peace; *Dār al-Salām*. The Holy Qur'ān says, "And 'peace' be their greeting therein."¹³ Paradise is nothing but peace, "No frivolity will they hear therein, nor any taint of ill, only the saying "Peace! Peace"¹⁴

Even Allah calls the non-believers to embrace Islam announcing Islam a house of peace "But Allah doth call to the home of peace"¹⁵

In short, Islam is a structure of peace and its master architect is Allah Himself who is the author of peace.

Islam claims that its teachings are rational and logically considerable. It is for the good of whole mankind not for the Muslims only. "Its teachings present a paradigm of convincing logic behind the phenomenon of warfare. Its framework is constructed on a number of levels namely, creation of mankind; status of man; freedom of action; liberty in option of the ways of life and gaining power and authority to curb injustice in the state and society."¹⁶

This religion has general welfare of mankind, emergence of social justice and righteousness in human society. Even for the construction of such society, Islam sometimes recommends the use of power that must go for the betterment of humanity, when it needs. That's why the concept of War in Islam is not for the destruction but for the construction of a just state. We shall talk about this in the lines to follow.

¹³ Jonas, 10: 10.

¹⁴ al-Wāqī'ah, 56: 25.

¹⁵ Jonas, 10: 25.

¹⁶ Sohail Hashmi, Interpreting the Islamic ethics of war and peace, *Islamic political Ethics: civil society, pluralism and conflict* (Oxford: Princeton university press, 2002), p: 198.

3.3. War: Islamic view point

3.3. 1. The philosophy of war (fighting): A Qur'ānic consideration

When all religions teach peace and love, from where comes clash among the people even among themselves? Why people start fighting although they are religious? Is it religion that teaches them to do so? Does religion have answer about that? Yes, Islam has a beautiful answer for that. Qur'ān describes that the only reason of fighting is *the difference of opinion*. Where there is clash of opinion, there is fight and war. A great Qur'ānic evidence.

After the Qur'ān mentioned the story of the war between Ṭālūt and Jālūt it commented on the reason of war in other verses saying:

“If Allah had so willed, succeeding generations would not have fought among each other, after clear (Signs) had come to them, but they (chose) to wrangle, some believing and others rejecting. If Allah had so willed, they would not have fought each other; but Allah Fulfilleth His plan.”¹⁷

This verse narrates clearly the core reason of war in general. Allah means that the fight has fallen actually and the reason is *the difference*. The greatest kind of difference is *the religious difference* and its confirmation can be obtained throughout the human history. Although the fight motive is *the difference*, Allah was capable of the prevention of war but he did not do so. Why? He made it as fixed law from the laws of the human life. So till the Day of Judgment it is a cosmic law of fighting war.

“If Allah had so willed, they would not have fought each other; but Allah Fulfilleth His plan.”¹⁸

It would not be understood from the previous Qur'ānic description that the religious people are the preachers of fight and they become close to Allah with the going through of what they name the *sacred war* that kills each living

¹⁷ al-Baqarah, 2:253.

¹⁸ Ibid, 2: 253.

thing and destroys all, in the name of “the Lord”. There comes another verse that defines the war mission that it is pushing the evil people back from their corruption or condemning the occupations of the wicked people some of them by some. Allah said in a verse that precedes the previous verse;

“And did not Allah check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief: But Allah is full of bounty to all the worlds.”¹⁹

It does not mean that the difference requires a fight necessarily, but where there is a fight the reason is *the difference*. So the previous verses presented a general theory of war. What is Islamic paradigm of fighting? What does Islam say about the concept of war?

3.3.2. The revolutionary theory of war

A process of evolution is found in each and every command of Islam. The Muslim community was prepared in psychological and moral terms to accept new commands. The example of the prohibition of liquor (drinking) is a suitable reference in this context. The same situation is with Jihad commandments.

The Qur’ān contains a number of verses that commend *Jihād* and *Qitāl*. These verses were revealed on the prophet Muhammad (PBUH) at different occasions in his life of 63 years. A keen study of these verses exposes a grand contextual and situational arrangement in the revelation. The teachings have been identified in three progressive stages; non-confrontation, Jihad within the ancient structures and lastly, the command to fight unbelievers.

(a) Non-confrontation:

The prophet (PBUH) and His companions faced great resistance from the tribes of Makkah. A number of Muslims were slaves and they had to suffer unbearable cruelty from their non-believer masters. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) never thought of revenge and adopted non-confronting way. In this crucial situation Allah commanded Him (PBUH) to adopt non-confronting way. It is

¹⁹ Ibid, 2:251.

said in many verses as follows;

“Follow what thou art taught by inspiration from thy Lord: there is no god but He: and turn aside from those who join gods with Allah.”²⁰

“Invite (all) to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious.”²¹

“Bear, then, with patience, all that they say.”²²

What beautiful teachings of Islam are here regarding Jihad theory! It teaches us to be peaceful at any cost. The non-confronting act is practically found in the life of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) because of these Qur’ānic commands. As a result of such teachings, we find the life of the messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) full of sufferings from non-believers. For a long time he hated Jihad, We can conclude his (PBUH) **pacifist style** regarding Jihad as follows;

1- He was not wishing an encounter with the enemy. He also taught it to his companions. Abdullah Bin Abi Aofa (may Allah be pleased with hi) is reported to have said

“That the messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) addressed! People! Do not wish the encounter with the enemy, and, if you met them then be patient and know that the Paradise is under the shadows of swords.”²³

2- He was resorting to the peace when he was presented to it, in spite of that this peace was appearing in the Muslims eye sometimes including the detraction of their rights as the *Treaty of Hudaibiyah*. Its detail can be seen in Surah al-Fatah, no. 48.

3- He was avoiding the extravagance in the killing of opponents. One of the great witnesses is the conquest of Mecca in Ramadan in 8H.

²⁰ al-An’am, 6:106.

²¹ an-Nahl, 16:125.

²² Qāf, 50:39.

²³ Bukhāri, Muhammad bin Ismā‘īl, *al-Jām‘ as-sabīh, Sabīh al-Bukhāri*, Kitābul Jihād was-siyar, hadith no.2966 (Riyadh: Dār as-salām, 1999)., Muslim ibn al-Hajjāj, *al-Jām‘ as-sabīh, Sabīh al-Muslim*, Kitābul Jihād was-siyar, hadith no.4542 (Riyadh: Dār as-salām, 1999).

It is true that the war with Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) turned into mercy because He saved the humanity direct or indirect from many of the bad leaders; Abu Jahal, Hie Bin Akhtab and Abdullah Bin Ubai Bin Saloul and showed the high manners to the Muslims until in the severest battle fields. So they moved from the idolatry to the worship of one Allah, from the fabulous rituals to prayer, fasting, Zakat and the pilgrimage.

Jihad within the ancient structures:

When enemies of Islam crossed all limits to tease Muslims, the divine command immediately ordered them to stand up for their defense. This defensive Jihad was not free of conditions but in the light of tribal and moral parameters. For example, Allah says at many places of the Holy Qur'ān. All these verses are revealed after *Treaty of Hudaibiyah* in Madinah:

“But fight them not at the Sacred Mosque, unless they (first) fight you there; but if they fight you, slay them. Such is the reward of those who suppress faith.”²⁴

“The number of months in the sight of Allah is twelve (in a year) - so ordained by Him the day He created the heavens and the earth; of them four are sacred: that is the straight usage. So wrong not yourselves therein, and fight the Pagans all together as they fight you all together. But know that Allah is with those who restrain themselves.”²⁵

“They ask thee concerning fighting in the Prohibited Month. Say: "Fighting therein is a grave (offence); but graver is it in the sight of Allah to prevent access to the path of Allah, to deny Him, to prevent access to the Sacred Mosque, and drive out its members.. Tumult and oppression are worse than slaughter.”²⁶

²⁴ al-Baqarah, 2:191.

²⁵ at-Taubah, 9:36.

²⁶ al-Baqarah, 2:217.

In the cited verses, the conditions of Jihad are mentioned. Imam Muhammad bin Jarir at-Tabri narrates these as the prohibitions of Jihad. For example; al-Shahr al-Ḥarām, (the prohibited months) al-Balad al-Ḥarām (the prohibited city) and al-Iḥrām. (wearing special costume of pilgrimage).²⁷

The command to fight unbelievers

At last the Holy Prophet (PBUH) was obliged by Allah to fight against non-believers for the establishment of justice and faith in society. Why? Because the only authority falls in the hands of Allah. Everyone is bound to submit to His sovereignty. It is a religion of all humanity and assures the peace and progress for all mankind. The peace creator knows better what to do at what time

At last the Holy Prophet (PBUH) wrote letters to the contemporary rulers to embrace Islam but they considered it a threat. It ended with confrontation to the so-called authorities as happened in the battle of Mu'tah and Yarmuk. When Muslims found no way except confrontation; Allah commanded them to wage a war (*Qitāl*) against the enemies of Allah by saying;

“Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of Truth, (even if they are) of the People of the Book, until they pay the *Jizya* with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued.”²⁸

“Prophet! Strive hard against the unbelievers and the hypocrites and be firm against them, their abode is Hell, an evil refuge”²⁹

“And fight them on until there is no more Tumult or oppression, and there prevail justice and faith in Allah; but if they cease, Let there be no hostility except to those who practise oppression.”³⁰

Because of this divine order the Holy Prophet (PBUH) announced Jihād

²⁷ at-Tabri, Muhammad bin Jarīr, *Jām al-bayān 'an t'awīli āe al-Qur āan* (Beirut: Dār al-fikr, 1984), vol. 2, p: 19.

²⁸ at-Taobah, 9:29.

²⁹ at-Tahrīm, 66:9.

³⁰ al-Baqarah, 2:193.

against them and trained Muslims (Mujāhidīn) to promote Islamic concept of justice for society. He sent many groups of Mujahideen for confrontation of unbelievers. They always returned victorious in every battle in different ways. The Holy Qur'ān contains a lot of such battle scenes. For example; Battle of Badr, Ghazwat Uḥad, Ghazwat Bani Naḍīr, Battle of the Trench (Khandaq), Battle of Banu Qurayṣa, Hudaibiya treaty, battle of Ḥunain, and Abdullah Bin Jahsh's sariyyah...etc. How Qur'ān describes these battle scenes in its own style? Have a glance:

3.4. Blood rites in the Holy Qur'ān; *The battle scenes in the Qur'an*

The Qur'ān recorded from the Prophet's biography some of the battle scenes in general and some of the eventual elements. The most important Qur'ānic places that show the prophet's *Maghāzī* (wars) are organized here according to the events date as follows:

1- Al Baqarah narrated Abdullah Bin Jahsh's *sariyyah*. The verse has answered about the question that erupted after this *sariyyah*, why the Muslims fought in the month of Rajab (the unlawful month).so what was the reason for fighting in the sacred month. Then the verse answered as follows;

“They ask thee concerning fighting in the Prohibited Month. Say: "Fighting therein is a grave (offence); but graver is it in the sight of Allah to prevent access to the path of Allah, to deny Him, to prevent access to the Sacred Mosque, and drive out its members." Tumult and oppression are worse than slaughter.”³¹

2- Al-Anfāl (Spoils of War): It has covered many of *Battle of Badr's* scenes. It represented the exit of Muslims from the city of Madinah not a readiness for the fight, their preference for getting Abu Sufyan's convoy on the confrontation of Quraish army, the will of Allah unlike that, the supply of angels to the believers

³¹ al-Baqarah, 2:217.

by Almighty Allah and the temptation of *Satan* to the fight then his abandonment of them...etc.

3- *Al 'Imrān* (Family of Imran): It has touched in tens of verses *Ghazwa e Uhad*. After the shooters left their places from the mountain contrary to the order of messenger of Allah, it confirmed that what injured the Muslims from the killing is because of them and despite this; the martyrs have for them a special position with their Lord.

4- *Al-hashar* (The Gathering): it is covered with the talk about *Ghazwa e Bani Nadbeer*, and shows that Allah is the one who brought the unbelievers out of Messenger's city by what Allah threw the fear in their hearts, while Muslims were not thinking that they would get out of their fortresses and their houses. It also describes the hypocrites' attitude who promised the *Bani Nadbeer* but they returned and let them down.

5- *Al-Ahzab* (the Clans): it describes many sides from the Battle of the Trench (*Khandaq*) that is also called the Battle of *Al-Ahzab*. The noble surah showed the Muslims attitudes intensity in this battle regarding the hypocrites, the barrier of polytheists and the treason of Jews, until Allah bestowed upon its messenger and upon the believers. Then it removed about them the distress, and made every enemy leave place from them. The surah also described the Battle of *Banu Qurayza*³² a fast description because its events are an extension of the Battle of the Trench.

6- *Al-Fath* (Victory): it touches the *Hudaybiya* treaty scenes, for example the annunciation of the conquest of Mecca, the consideration of *Al-Hudaybiya* reconciliation its preface and *Bait e ridhwan* (the pledge of allegiance of satisfaction). We also find in *Al-Mumtahena* the exception of women from the condition of *Hudaybiya* treaty, who comes from *Quraish* to the city of *Madinah* as a Muslim.

³² *al-Ahzāb*, 26.

7- Tawbah (The Repentance): It shows how Allah helped the Muslims in the battle of Hunain and supported them by His soldiers, after they were defeated at the beginning of the battle when their abundance pleased them. But the Battle of Tabuk has taken the biggest share of Tawbah (Repentance). After the battle, it talked about the three companions of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) those were left, and then the prophet educated them with the abandonment, until Allah forgave them.

After a keen observation of these scenes a common man easily concludes that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) turned the terrible concept of war into the beautiful concept of Jihad. That's why most of the non-Muslim analysts commit the sanctity of Jihad. They name it "a classical revolutionary theory of war" as we put it in the concept of war in Islam with reference to Firestone³³ and Rudolph Peters.³⁴ So in the following paragraphs we discuss in detail the concept of jihad that forced even non-Muslims to commit Jihad's veneration and sanctity, in the light of Qur'ān and Sunnah.

3.4.1. Concept of Jihad and its forms:

Jihad is not only an individual act but also a collective one. It is not only a necessary choice but a human freedom, combined with historical importance as Allah says;

"Those who believe, and adopt exile, and fight for the Faith, in the cause of Allah as well as those who give (them) asylum and aid, - these are (all) in very truth the Believers."³⁵

Jihad is directed against the unbelievers 'al-kuffar' not the people of the book in principle. "O prophet, strives hard against the unbelievers and the hypocrites, and be firm against them."³⁶

³³ Firestone, Rueven, *Jihad: The origin of Holy War in Islam* (New York and Oxford: Oxford university press, 1999), p: 50.

³⁴ Rudolph Peters, *Islam and colonialism: the doctrine of jihad in modern history* (Paris and New York: Mouton Publishers, 1979), pp: 12-14.

³⁵ al-Anfāl, 8:74.

The Jews in the Hadith are the first enemy to try hard against because they broke the covenant. They do not maintain any promise. Muslims are striving against them till the end of time. Jews hate Arabs because prophecy switched from the former to the later. God condemned them to aberration, to the Diasporas.³⁷

Jihad: Its lexical meaning:

The word Jihad is derived from *Jahada*, meaning "he exerted himself". So literally Jihad means exertion, striving. But in religious sense it signifies the exertion of one's power to the utmost of one's capacity in the path of Allah.³⁸

Ibn Rushd mentions that Jihad is an all-round struggle and makes it obligatory for a Muslim to exercise all his powers, may be in the form of intellectual or physical capabilities, or his gift of speech or his moral strength, courage and steadfastness in the face of hardship and his worldly riches.³⁹

The Muslim jurists have narrated many kinds of Jihad accordingly. All the forms are in the light of Qur'an and Sunnah. It demands detail, if we discuss all its forms. but put it here shortly. After a deep study of Islamic literature, we conclude that Jihad in the legitimate term has two basic meanings;

1. The special meaning
2. The general meaning

The special meaning of Jihad:

The scholars have stated a general Qur'anic rule that when the word *Jihad* is mentioned separately in the texts of Qur'an and Sunnah, it does not fall except on the fight with infidels by sword (Jihad bis saif). This meaning is supported by the verses of jihad which revealed in the city of Medina. One of those verses is in Surah at-Tawbah;

³⁶ at-Tahrīm, 66:9.

³⁷ Hassan Hanafi, *Al-Jihad in Islamic Tradition, the Besiege of Time* (Cairo: Book publication center, 2006), vol: III, pp: 169-194.

³⁸ al-Afriqī, Ibn Manzūr, *Lisānul 'Arab* (Beirut, Lebanon: Dārul kutubil-'ilmiyyah, 2003), word: Jahada.

³⁹ Ibn Rushd, *Kitāb al-muqaddimāt al-mumabhidhāt* (Cairo: 1325 A.H.), vol: 1, p: 259.

“Go ye forth, (whether equipped) lightly or heavily, and strive and struggle, with your goods and your persons, in the cause of Allah. That is best for you, if ye (but) knew.”⁴⁰

There is also a Hadith supporting this meaning, “Hazrat Abdullah Bin Masoud (may Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that I asked the messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) which practice (amal) is better? He said: the prayer at its time, I asked: then? He replied: then gratitude with parents, I asked: then? He said: the jihad for the sake of Allah.”⁴¹ It is the special meaning of Jihad, by sword.

Jihad by the general meaning:

The jihad by the general meaning is a wide concept. It approaches to its linguistic meanings and includes many kinds of obediences (Ibādāt). This meaning is found in some of the Meccan verses that descended before the permission for Jihad as in below:

“Therefore listen not to the unbelievers, but strive against them with the utmost strenuousness.”⁴² Here the believers are told to wage a war against the non-believers but with the Qur’ān not by swords.⁴³

Another verse, “And any strive (with might and main), they do so for their own souls, for Allah is free of all needs from all creation.”⁴⁴

Imam Al-Qurtbi said, explaining this verse, “As Suddi and others said: this verse is revealed before the imposition of Jihad .Ibn Atiya said: it is before the conventional jihad, but it is a general jihad in Allah's way and in seeking for his satisfaction.”⁴⁵

⁴⁰ at-Taubah, 9:4.

⁴¹ *Sahīh al-Bukhārī*, Kitābul Aadāb, hadith no. 5625, *Sahīh al-Muslim*, Kitābul Iman, hadith no.85.

⁴² al-Furqān, 25:52.

⁴³ Al-Tabari, *Jāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wili āyāi al-Qur'ān* (Beirut, Lebanon: Darul Fikr, 1988).

⁴⁴ al-'Ankabut, 29:6.

⁴⁵ al-Qrūtbi, Muhammad ibn Ahmad, *Aljām' li-Abkāmīl Qur'an* (Berut: Daru ihyā-it-turāsīl-'arabi, 1985), vol:2.

This means that Jihad was not known as *Qital* until the prophet (PBUH) reached Madinah. It also means that the concept of Jihad progressed as many other functions of Islam. So, it becomes clear from this description that Jihad has two meanings: the general and the special one. The general one has different kinds under itself.

1. *jihad bil-Ilm*(knowledge)
2. *jihad bil-Mal*(wealth)
3. *jihad bil-Amal*(deed)
4. *jihad bil-Nafs*(Self)

All forms are derived from Qur'ān and Sunnah. Muslim jurists have mentioned all its forms in detail in the source books (Ummahatul kutub). The meaning that is our subject to discuss in this research is the Jihad by special meaning (*jihad bis-saef*). In the coming paragraphs we see at what extent does the Holy Qur'ān support this special meaning? Let's have the Qur'ānic evidences.

3.4.2. Qur'ānic verses on Jihad:

The *Jihad fi-sabelillah* is one of the greatest rituals of Islam. Jihad achieves an apparent part from the establishment of religion. It is a great blessing of Almighty Allah on the earth as is announced in the coming verse:

1- "Allah hath purchased of the believers their persons and their goods; for theirs (in return) is the garden (of Paradise): they fight in His cause, and slay and are slain: a promise binding on Him in truth, through the Law, the Gospel, and the Qur'ān: and who is more faithful to his covenant than Allah? Then rejoice in the bargain which ye have concluded: that is the achievement supreme."⁴⁶

When the believing souls (Muslims) heard this generous call, they offered their lives in the jihad squares. Allah informed of His love for mujāhidīn in the

⁴⁶ at-Taobah, 9:111.

following verse: "Truly Allah loves those who fight in his cause in battle array, as if they were a solid cemented structure."⁴⁷

2- "Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into (the hearts of) the enemies, of Allah and your enemies, and others besides, whom ye may not know, but whom Allah doth know. Whatever ye shall spend in the cause of Allah, shall be repaid unto you, and ye shall not be treated unjustly."⁴⁸

What a beautiful and encouraging verse for *Jihad fi-sabilillah*. It shows Allah's love for the establishment of a real Islamic state for promoting justice and peace for the betterment of society. Do we have any support for it from the great tradition of Hadith (Sunnah)?

3.4.3. Ahadith on Jihad

In the "non-confrontation topic" we proved that the messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) hated the war. But here we find a great prophetic praise of the jihad for the sake of Allah (fi sabeel lillah). Can we say here is a contradiction?

Absolutely not. How? If you remember, at starting a classical revolutionary theory of war is proved referencing the Qur'an and Sunnah. Of course he was never willing to have war. He always searched for peace and patience in all his early life. But when all schemes failed to apply, the war remained the only way to adopt so where is the way except fighting? That's why we find a prophetic praise to Jihad in the following ahadith:

- 1- "If it could not be difficult for the people, I would not have sat after a *Sariyya* (brigade) and liked that I would be killed for God's sake (fi sabeel lillah), then revived, then killed, then revived, then killed."⁴⁹
- 2- "Blessings for a person who takes his horse's rein for God's sake (fi sabeel lillah) with his shaggy head and dusty feet."⁵⁰

⁴⁷ as-Saff, 61:4.

⁴⁸ al-Anfal, 8:60.

⁴⁹ *Sahih al-Bukhari, Kitabul Iman, babul Jihad minal Iman, hadith no.36*

- 3- "The Jihad for the sake of Allah (fi sabeelillah) is a gate from the gates of Paradise. Allah, by it, saves from the concern and the grief."⁵¹
- 4- A man asked the messenger of Allah, "Allow me the tourism. The prophet (peace be upon him) replied; the tourism of my nation (*Ummah*) is the jihad for the sake of Allah (fi sabeelillah).⁵²

The reader of these Ahadith neither finds what expresses only the love of war itself nor the love for killing and fight itself, but it is a sacrifice for Allah's sake (fi sabeelillah). And that sacrifice reaches at the peak during the war. So the Noble Ahadith elaborated in the favour of Jihad and martyrs for God's sake, are not in the favour of shedding the blood, and are not the call for launching the war against the whole humanity. But it is a call for the sacrifice for Allah's sake and also an encouragement, because Jihad has its legitimate reasons in Islam. As a result of such Qur'anic and prophetic praise, Jihad is often termed the sixth pillar of Islam. There came into being a large number of Muslim commanders. Hadhrat Khalid (R.A) and Hadrat Abu Ubaidah are the most famous. The title of arch-martyr (sayyidu shuhada) goes to Ibn 'Alī, Hadrat Imam Husayin (R.A). They set a martyrdom history for all mankind.

3.5. Historical study of martyrdom and suicidal attacks in Islam

Before I start discussion about martyrdom and suicidal attacks, let me talk about the term suicidal attacks. It is totally west-created term that does not get place in Islamic paradigm. It presents total military action without the interference of Allah or religion. So the Muslim scholars condemned it in their writings all over the world. Ustaz hasan hanafi from Cairo University recommended *voluntary martyrdom* instead suicidal attacks. He says, "Voluntary martyrdom is a technical term for the Arabic *Istish'hād*. It is more accurate than

⁵⁰ Ibid, *Kitābul Jibād*, Babul hrāsah, hadith no. 2887.

⁵¹ at-Tabrani, *Musnadu-sha-miyyīn*, hadith no.1502 (Beirut: Mo'ssasa-tur-risālah, 1996), vol: 2, p:363.

⁵² Abu Dāwood, suleman ibn al-ash'as (275-202, hijrah), *Sunan Abi Dārwood*, *Kitābul Jibād*, hadith, no.2486 (Riyadh: Darus Salām, 1999), p: 1407.

the pejorative term “suicide-bomb”, because martyrdom is neither suicide nor bombing.”⁵³ That’s why I’m using here the term *Fedā’ī activities*.

Before entering the meritorious history of Muslim martyrdom, let’s see the definition of martyrdom and all its derivatives in the coming lines.

The Term Shahādah:

The extension of the meaning of *shahīd* to martyrdom was likely a borrowing from Syrian Christians for whom the connection of martyrdom with an act of witnessing was deep rooted and reflected the linguistic usage. The term martyr in Greek and *shabada* in Syriac both carried the dual meaning of witness and martyrs.⁵⁴

The term *Shahādah* which means martyrdom appears very few times in the Qur’ān, only for two, three times. It has a general meaning of ‘witness’ the verb *Shabida* means ‘to witness’.

Etymologically, it is derived from *Shahadah* which means to see. *Istash’hada* means to witness on one’s self or to testify.⁵⁵ The word *shahida* in the meaning of martyrdom is mentioned only for three times in plural form, in the Holy Quran.⁵⁶

Martyrdom is an act of witness, that there is injustice in the world and that is the only means to discourage it. It is a self-sacrificial act. Almighty Allah, the Angels and human senses are also witnesses. The prophet is also a witness.⁵⁷ The soul will also be a witness on the Day of Judgment. The same term and its derivatives appear in the Hadith more than in the Qur’ān.

⁵³ Hasan hanafi, voluntary martyrdom, *Orient Moderno monthly*, February, 2006, p: 201.

⁵⁴ Muhammad Imtiaz Zafar, *Violence, terrorism and teachings of Islam*, 2006, p.80.

⁵⁵ Rohi Baalbaki, *Al-Mawrid, modern Arabic English dictionary* (Berut, Lebnon: Dār El-ilm Lilmlāyin, 1995), word: Shahida.

⁵⁶ an-Nisā’, 4:69, az-Zumar, 39:69, al-Hadīd, 57:19.

⁵⁷ al-Ahzāb, 33:45.

3.5.1. Who is a *Shahīd*?

Although there is no set definition given to the word *Shahīd* by classical legal authorities. The title was conferred to those who died for the sake of Islam. In general the title of *shahīd* was given to those who died in the battle for Islam. Many other circumstances of martyrdom are listed in other sources. To the Prophet (S.A) is ascribed the saying that not only those who are slain for the faith are to be regarded as martyrs. Some other causes of death are enumerated which make the sufferers worthy of the honorable title of a *shahīd*.

“A person who is killed for the sake of his money would be martyr; a person who is killed for the sake of his religion would be martyr, a person who is killed for the sake of his body would be martyr, a person who is killed for the sake of his family would be martyr.”⁵⁸

Islamically *Shahid*'s definition does not focus any specific area or any person. The previous Hadith means that we can not title *shahid* to only a person dying for religion but others also are counted as *shahid* because the holy prophet (PBUH) expanded its meanings.

3.5.2. History of Martyrdom activities

Persecution age:

Martyrdom also lies in the depth of Muslim historical tradition as a reaction against the injustice. Muslims were persecuted during Islam's earliest period and some individuals since that time had suffered for actually being Muslim or had died rather than convert to other faith.

Hadrat 'Ammār and Sumayyah (R.A.)

The first martyr during the early growth of Islam are male and female; Hadrat 'Ammār and Sumayyah (R.A.). They are deeply respected and highly venerated. Hadrat Imam Hussein (R.A) in the Islamic tradition is a model of self-

⁵⁸*Jām* [*al-Tirmidhi*, Kitābud-diyah (ed.), Ibrahim Atwah 'Aod, hadith no.1418 (Turbe-Istanbul, Turkey: Cagri Yayinlari), vol: 3.

sacrifice in struggling against authoritarianism, illegality, misuse of power and corruption. It is still the source of inspiration to all liberation movements.

In the Holy Prophet's (PBUH) age we find a lot of *Martyrdom activities*. There were very famous traditions of fighting war bravely that the Sahabah (R.A) entered the rows of enemies with sword unfearing the death, waiting for the most beautiful promised Paradise made for them. No doubt they set the examples of *martyrdom activities*. The Seerah Books are full of such activities. Afterward it got a considerable status in Islam and the followers walked in their footsteps. It was a general style of fighting but later, there came some Muslim sects. They presented it as a department of Islam and crossed the limits of Jihad. So the Muslim historians do not value them because they were transgressors. Among them are *Fedayeen /Assassins*. They were the first group called Fedayeen in the history as we are going to discuss them in the following lines.

3.5.3. Fedayeen /Assassins (Hashishi'ens) from 11th to 13th century:

Fedayeen is the plural of *Fedā'i*, rooted in Arabic that means a person who can sacrifice even his life for the cause. They are known as *Bāṭiniyyah* sect as well. Their doctrines were essentially esoteric. Those who were caught red handed were assassinated immediately on the spot or after a judicial process.

This group is known to be active in terrorist activities in Persia and Syria from 11th to 13th century. They traced the rationale of their activities from religion. They wanted to develop a society and state of Islam according to their own understanding of religion. Their target was to eradicate all tyrant oppressor rulers. They sought to achieve a just society conducive enough to welcome the emergence of Mahdi (A.S).⁵⁹

This terrorist group was organized by Hasan ibn Sabah. He was born in Qum in mid eleventh century. He was taught in Shii religion and believed in authority of Twelve Imams. Later on he accepted Ismaili verdict of Shii sect of

⁵⁹ Muhammad Imtiaz Zafar, *Violence, terrorism and teachings of Islam*, p: 18.

Islam. He propagated the emergence of Mahdi and wanted to create a complimentary state for his appearance. The Assassins established their centers and forts in far flung areas and mountain valleys to avoid the reach of authorities and government agencies. These forts were established in Persia and Syria. Their names are Qil'a Alamut, Qila al-Bozi, Qila al-Masayaf.⁶⁰

It is interesting to note that most of such murderer did not try to escape and were ready to accept any punishment. They used to confess the commitment of their action and pronounce to the truth of their movement.⁶¹

David Morgan elaborated as they had taken marijuana (Hashish) before killing so could not runaway. They used to be hallucinated in the truth of promised gift of paradise in life after death by their masters as a result of their heroic act. A Fidai used to pierce a dagger in the heart of his target in the meetings. Killing of a political figure in public meetings, a religious personality during his Friday sermons and a judge in the court were the most favorite places of Fidais. they had terms with Christians. It helped them to create an atmosphere of terror in the country and establish the power and authority of their masters. Death as a punishment was martyrdom for them.⁶²

3.5.4. The emergence of the Fedā'ī activities in modern Islamic territories (20th century)

Such kind of war is seen after the discovery of explosives in this modern age. We speak about the emergence and the development of the *Fedā'ī* activities in its advanced contemporary image in the Islamic countries, and its change into a new style of jihad styles and especially in the occupied territories.

⁶⁰ Syed Qasim Mahmud, *Shahkār Islāmi Encyclopedia* (Lahore: al-Faisal Nāshrān, 2001), p:847.

⁶¹ M. Levey and M. Meryerhof, "The Assassins", *Urdu Dā'ira-e-ma'ārife-islamiyah* (Lahore: Danish Gāh e Punjab, 1995), vol: 8, p: 1354.

⁶² Hashīshiyah, *Dā'ira tul m'ārif Tashayyu'*, Ahmad Sadr, Kamran Fani, Hasan Yusafi (eds.) (Tehrān: Nashr saeed shahīd, 2002), vol:6, pp:373-374.

Fedā'i activities started in Palestine after the Jewish occupation on the Palestinian territories in the last Hijri century. The fedayee activities came from *Gaza* in the years of 1955 AD and 1956 AD as a new phenomenon in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Fedā'i activities moved to Lebanon in 1982 AD. And from first of the famous *Fedā'i* activities was the bombing on the headquarters of the Israeli military command in Sour on 11/11/1982. Then these activities moved to Beirut against the French and US forces, where it was the explosion of the American embassy in Beirut 18/04/1983 AD.

The Afghan war: The Russian Afghan war fell because of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 AD. This war witnessed a number of the fedayeen.⁶³

As for the jihad in Chechnya: The first Russian invasion of Chechnya started in December, 1994. After the fall of capital (Grozny) and the escape of Mujahideen to the valleys and the mountain regions, the Mujahideen resorted to the launch of blitzes, the fedayee activities that targeted the Russian forces and the army convoys, in addition to the acts of assault and the raid on the Russian sites, which had the great effect on the defeat of Russians, their signing the agreement in August 1996 AD and their exit from Chechnya. Then there was the second invasion in September, 1999 AD. The resistance works developed, and through them a kind was prominent a new from the fedayee works that the militant exploded themselves for the vexation of enemy.⁶⁴

⁶³ Khalid ibn sultan, "History of Afghanistan" in *The Encyclopedia of war: Moqātel minas sebrā'*, 2000, Retrieved on September 17, 2008, from

<http://212.100.198.18/openshare/Behoth/Siasia2/lebnon-Afghan/index.htm>

⁶⁴ History of Chechnya in *The Encyclopedia of war: Moqātel minas sebraa*, Retrieved on September 17, 2008, from, <http://212.100.198.18/openshare/Behoth/Siasia2/Afghan/index.htm>

3.6. Legitimacy and illegitimacy of Martyrdom and suicide

Some modern jurists and thinkers see *Fedayee activities* as illegal because of three reasons: the prohibition of killing one's self, the prohibition of killing innocent people and the prohibition of Muslims killing Muslims.

Other Muslim jurists and reformers legalize it reinterpreting the sacred text according to the modern circumstances in Palestine, Iraq, Chechnya and Kashmir...etc.

The debate question is how to define the suicidal activities?

At the very start of this chapter we mentioned the sanctity of human life that Islam considers killing of a single person equivalent to the killing of humanity. It is all about others but what about us? What is Islamic view on suicide? Is it forbidden or does it have any kind of legitimacy?

Here we elaborate that suicide is not permissible in any social, economic or psychological condition at any cost. Killing one's self is clearly forbidden as Qur'an declares;

Nor kill (or destroy) yourselves.⁶⁵

We find another verse in the holy Qur'an supporting this meaning;

وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ⁶⁶

“and make not your own hands contribute to (your) destruction.”

The verse has general meaning. If any Muslim Mujahid has not any aim of vexation to the enemy in his embarking, such kind of attack would be illegal. If he has a vexation to the enemy in his embarking, it does not enter in the generality of the verse.

Many sayings of the Holy Prophet can be quoted from the hadith books for that meaning. Only two ahadith from Bukhari Sharif are mentioned here:

⁶⁵an-Nisā', 4:29.

⁶⁶al-Baqarah, 2:195.

1-Hazrat Abu Hurairah (R.A) relates that the Prophet said he who kills himself by burning in the fire shall always be burning himself in the Hellfire.⁶⁷

2-Hazrat Abu Hurairah (R.A) relates the Prophet's saying that he, who kills himself by throwing himself from mountain, will be punished with the same kind of deaths in hell continuously. He, who kills himself by taking poison, will continuously be killing himself in hell and he who kills himself by piercing arrow will continuously be killing himself by piercing arrow in his body and he will remain in the hell for good.⁶⁸

In the light of above mentioned verses and ahadith, Muslim scholars and all Fiqhi school of thoughts of Islam did not allow any body to kill himself and that suicide is *Haram* in Islam. That's why the scholars mentioned the low rate of committing suicide in Muslim societies.

Obviously, the suicidal activities are forbidden within the Islamic states and for the invaders, there is not a single opinion in its illegitimacy. All the Fiqhi School of thoughts recommend every kind of defensive war even suicidal attacks as a last and effective weapon.

3.7.1. Fedā'ī activities as a reaction to an action

Fedayee activities are reaction to an action because an action generates reaction. Primary violence generates secondary violence. It announces that there is injustice in the world and that is the only means to discourage it. It is a self-sacrificial act. It is strange or we can say a double standard of the modern world that if Palestinians kill Israeli civilians, it is crime and if Israel kills Muslim innocents it will not be a crime but a legitimate self-defense activity. There is no doubt in its legitimacy. We can put here the Qur'ānic verses as an evidence.⁶⁹ I have mentioned all its legitimate way and suitable time in the above.

⁶⁷ *Sahih ul Bukhari*, kitabul Janaiz, hadith no.1365.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, kitabut tibb, hadith no.5778.

⁶⁹ See the verses; al-Nisā, 4:69, al-Zumar, 39:69, al-Hadīd, 57:19.

From the above references; don't conclude that you can kill non-Muslims where you find them. No, its legitimacy starts as a defensive war only in the battle fields. We find in Islamic history that Hadhrat Umar (R.A) provided them all human rights. They had right to live, to worship, to express independently...etc even during the warfare they have rights. These are common non-believers' rights. We can see its short glimpse from the day of the Holy Prophet up till now. But what are the obligatory rights for combatants and non-combatants during war?

3.7.2. Rights of Non-combatants

The teachings of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) regarding Jihad carry a unique importance during the whole human history. We quote here the sacred teachings of which every Mujahid had to follow at every cost so that everyone can compare the Islamic concept of jihad with new world order of *so-called war on terrorism* by the international terrorists.

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) differentiated the combatants from non-combatants. Regarding non-combatants, he ordered the Muslim Mujahideen not to kill them. Only those enemy persons may be killed who are present on the battle scene and are actually participating in battle. The killing of women, servants and other non-military personnel is strictly prohibited, even if they are present on battle scene. Regarding this, an important saying of the Holy Prophet is given:

“The Holy Prophet (PBUH) forbade the killing of old man, women and children.”⁷⁰

3.7.3. Rights of Combatants according to the Prophetic Teachings

Not only the non-combatants but also the combatants' rites are found in the hadith books. While fighting, the last messenger of Allah taught his companions to be sincere for Allah's sake, be disciplined, don't transgress, don't

⁷⁰ *Sunan Abi Dāwood, Kitābul Jihad*, hadith, no.2614.

mutilate; don't fight for spoil of war...etc. A Set of rules for legitimate war (Jihad fi sabilillah) is quoted here briefly.

1. Before Islam people used to burn their enemies in the fire but it is Islam that forbade to burn the enemies. *Burning is not allowed except for Allah.*⁷¹
2. Mutilation of the dead bodies of the enemy is strictly prohibited.⁷²
3. Prisoners of war are not to be decapitated.⁷³
4. The holy prophet forbade beating the enemy after tying.⁷⁴
5. The killing of the blind, the old and those who are physically incapable of fighting is prohibited.
6. The killing of monks, the hermit and other religious people is not allowed Muslims army is not allowed to destroy the harvest, do the unnecessary cutting of trees and killing of animals in the enemy territory.

Hadrat Abu Bakr (R.A) asked Hadrat Yazeed ibn Abi Sufyan to follow the war declaration of ten rules, when he left for Jihad to Syria. Imam Malik ibn Anas(R.A) quoted it in his Muwaṭṭa "don't kill monks, hermits, women, children, the old man, trees animals, camel, palms trees, don't devastate an area, do not show back in war, don't corrupt the spoils of war, honor the people who surrender etc."⁷⁵

Islamic Shariah laid down an elaborate set of rules. No Muslim soldier is allowed to violate these rules. Acting upon these rules we can be the true preachers of peace in this world and success in the hereafter.

⁷¹ Ibid., vol. 3, p.126.

⁷² *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī, Kitāb al-Siyar* (ed.), Ibrahim Atwah Aod, p:164.

⁷³ Surah Muhammad, 47:4.

⁷⁴ *Sunan Abi Dāwood, Kitābul Jihad*, vol: 3, p:137.

⁷⁵ Imām Mālik ibn Anas, *Al-Mo'ta*, ktābul Jihad (Turbe-Istambul, Turkey: Cagri Yayinlari) vol: 2, p: 448.

CHAPTER NO. 4

Comparison between the three religions

4.1. Analysis and conclusion

Before analyzing the phenomenon of self-immolation it will be suitable to review the above discussion. I have argued in the preceding pages that a proper discussion of the concept of self-immolation takes us beyond the minimal definition of self-immolation. This concept expands to martyrdom and religiously motivated suicide.

In each tradition, some issues are more important than others. In each there are certain points upon which there is an apologetic behaviour on both sides for example Samson's suicide in Judaism and Crusades in Christianity. Most of the scholars of both religions differed greatly in interpreting them as we saw earlier.

We return to the issue which is the problem of our thesis.

In the contemporary world, there is a tussle between Muslims and Non-Muslims on the issue of suicide attacks. Thousands of Muslims and non-Muslims have been killed in the name of "Attaining Paradise" or "Revenge". The west claimed that the Muslims were terrorists and fundamentalists. So they are responsible for the current situation.

Some scholars say that all the Muslims are fanatic, barbaric and terrorist due to the teachings of their religion. One, who is not a progressive and moderate Muslim, will definitely be a fundamentalist and always be a threat to the peace. Some scholars are of the opinion that the Qur'an contains illogical lessons not consistent with the civilized way of life. "The commandments in chapters eight and nine instigate and activate an ordinary Muslim to violence."¹

If so, are the followers of other religions pacifists? They never ever highlighted terror activities in their teachings! Their history is full of *turning the other cheek* style as

¹ Cobb, Kelton, "Violent faith", *11 September: Religious Perspectives on the Causes and Consequences* (ed.), Ibn Markham and Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi (Oxford: one world publications, 2002), pp: 137-139.

the Bible states? They always welcomed the invaders? They never picked up the sword for the safety of their religious and social rights?

We are ashamed that the answer is in “no”. Just have a bird eye view on martyrdom history of the People of the Book (*Ahl al-Kitāb*).

4.2. All the three religions performed violence and terrorism

It is certain that the Qur’ān contains inciting towards jihad that can be found in the Gospels directly preaching the idea of Crusade as later theology was to construct it; but the God of Israel in the Old Testaments is equally warlike, playing an important role in the expansion of Jewish territory, which is a precondition to eternal salvation. The founding religious texts have contributed extensively to the establishment of structural violence that erupts frequently in all societies. Their war history, martyrs’ sacredness, violence supporting views and self-immolation phenomenon is as clear as the sun that can be studied in previous three chapters under the heading ‘history of martyrdom and suicidal attacks.’ Now we are going to analyse the three traditions according to their **principles and practices** in the light of sacred texts.

4.2.1. Judaism: Principles & Practices

The first and the foremost principle of the Jewish tradition is to honor mankind at every cost. It is not allowed to destroy human body because man is Godlike and was created in the image of God. To kill a person means to deface God. On one hand Judaism puts a lot of emphasis on the equality of humans while practically, on the other hand, this element is totally absent. The real picture of such dichotomy can be found in the *Deuteronomy*:

“For you are a people holy to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his own possession, out of all the peoples that are on the face of the earth.”²

² Deuteronomy, 7:6.

So they treat the other people as they are rejected people while the Jews are chosen. The other people have to serve them to maintain the sovereignty of Jews for God's sake. They are acting as the verse meaning in all fields. As a result their religious books have also the same style of dealing with non-Jews as the *Talmud* and *Mishnah* narrate.

Talmudic dealing with non-Jewish people:

It is very strange that a deep study of Talmud leads us to the argument that Jewish Law is not human-friendly. It only cares for the Jews. Dr. Yūsuf Hinā Nasrullāh lists the Jewish behaviour towards the non-Jews. He says,

- 1- Talmud provides legality to cheat and fraud the non-Jews.
- 2- It says that Allah will not forgive a Jew who found a lost luggage for anyone and returned back to him.
- 3- It also legitimates to steal other's assets.³

Here the *Mishnah's* teaching is very important because it turns the upside of human sanctity down. It neither teaches submission nor turning the other cheek to the offender but commands to take a step forward and kill him before he kills you.

“If one comes to kill you, be first and kill him”⁴

The practical implication of this rule is not seen throughout the Jewish history. Let me narrate a natural fact. It is a natural fact that a dominated person always seeks ways to be free. He always tries to get free by hook or by crook and never loses a chance to get rid of him. For this, the use of every unfair means can not be ignored.

If we study the Jewish history from the first destruction of Temple till Israel, the previous natural fact is viewed hundred percent true. They also used unfair means in different ages; sometimes directly and sometimes indirectly. Their Martydom history is richer than others.

³ Yūsuf Hinā Nasrullāh, *Al-Kanz al-Marsūd fī Qawā'id al-Talmūd* (Berut: 1968), p: 75.

⁴ *Mishnah*, Sanhedrin72, retrieved on October 14, 2009 from http://www.come-and-hear.com/sanhedrin/sanhedrin_72.html

4.2.2. Christianity: Principles & Practices

The central focused principle of Christianity is to sanctify human blood. Jesus Christ's teaching of turning the other face is a concrete evidence to respect and love the humanity. That's way the early church was pacifist by conviction until the era of Constantine.

By the passage of time, it became increasingly corrupted by close links to the Roman state, thus opening the way for the development by Augustine of the view that in some circumstances wars could be just. On this view just war tradition is the product of a corrupted Christianity.⁵ As the quotation shows that there occurred a war phenomenon that led them to use power to extend the Christian territory. So they did as their thinkers told them to. They started using power that led them to its unjust use in later centuries.

4.2.2.1. Practices: The unjust use of Church power

Jeremy Cohen In his *Christian Theology and Anti-Jewish Violence in the Middle Ages* (Chapter 3), focuses on two examples of anti-Jewish violence; the persecutions of Jews during the First and Second Crusades and the burning of the Talmud in Paris in the 1240's.⁶

In numerous instances of harsh anti-Jewish preaching as in John Chrysostom's late fourth-century Antioch, Isidore of Seville and Julian of Toledo's seventh-century Visigothic Spain, and Lyons of the ninth century Bishops Agobard and Amulo. This concrete evidence attests to increased physical attacks on Jews or an overall decline in Jewish well-being.⁷

Christians took a step forward by forcing both the Muslims and Jews to embrace Christianity during the Christian conquest of Spain, from the 13th century to

⁵ James Turner Johnson, "War and Peace" in *Christianity: the Complete Guide*, John Bowden (ed.) (London: Continuum, 2005), p.1223.

⁶ Anna Sapir Abulafia, *Religious Violence between Christian and Jews* (Britain: Palgrave publishers, 2002), p: 16.

⁷ Ibid, p: 12.

the 15th century, for attaining justice in society. A number of Muslims and Jews manifestly accepted Christianity, while continuing their previous faiths. The Christian state urged to expel those who had remained Jews and Muslims.⁸

The Crusade is also a strong example. Talking about the reasons of crusades a Muslim scholar says that there was no pure religious motive behind the crusades but strong warrior feelings. Pope Urban II utilized all the resources to encourage the *People of Book* against Muslims.⁹

4.2.2.2. Pope's apology:

The Christian Church has oppressed millions of individuals in an attempt to control and contain spirituality. At a time when so called "religious right" asserts that Christian values will save society from its uncontrolled sins, the ordinary citizen should know exactly how the Christian Church has attempted to 'save' societies in the past. It is a harsh lesson. To get rid of this harsh lesson, Pope John Paul II had urged the Roman Catholic Church to seize the current Christian violence on the occasion of the new millennium to recognize "the dark side of Christianity."¹⁰ In a 1994 confidential letter to cardinals which was later leaked to the Italian press, he asked,

"How can one remain silent about the many forms of violence perpetrated in the name of the faith-wars of religion, tribunals of the inquisition and other forms of violations of the rights of persons."¹¹

Unfortunately so many have remained silent. But Helen Ellerbe broke this silence circle and presented some of the long-hidden shameful secrets of organized patriarchal religion in her famous book *The Dark Side of Christian History* that reveals

⁸ Samuel Z. Klausner, "Martyrdom", *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, Mircea Eliade (ed.), vol: 9, p: 233.

⁹ Muhammad Al-Arusi, *Al-Hurub al-Salibiyya Fi al-Mashriq Wa al-Maghrib* (Tunisia: Darul Gharbil Islami, 1982), p 277.

¹⁰ Peggy Polk, "Papal State", *Chicago Tribune*, June 5, 1995, p. 2.

¹¹ Ibid.

in careful detail the tragedies, sorrows and injustices inflicted upon humanity by the Church.¹²

The detail of the Pope's apology: the celebration of Jubilee Year 2000 the Vatican issued an extraordinary document, 'Memory and Reconciliation: The Church and the Faults of the Past', which *inter alia* acknowledged guilt and sought forgiveness for the Catholic Church's sponsorship and use of violence in the past. Naturally the Crusades and the Wars of Religion loomed large in the Vatican's view of how Christ's message of peace had been, in its eyes, drastically forgotten.¹³

John Kelsay says, "In our reflection on our past, we do confess that the church has not always been consistent with New Testament teachings. For example, it was Pope Urban II who launched the First Crusade in 1096 claiming a divine right to reclaim the Holy Land. But today, no responsible Christian church leader or theologian of whatever communion would advocate the resort to war for the spread of the Christian faith or the reconquest of a lost territory."¹⁴

Dr. Arif Zakauallah, an analyst in International Islamic University Malaysia describes the historical facts about that how much pacifists they were, in his famous book *The Cross and the Crescent*:

"Luther, in his famous book *On The Jews and their lies*, suggested to condemn all the Jewish teachings, their sacred books should be captured, their houses, schools, and synagogues should be fired. On the other hand Muslim Rulers from Egypt to Spain and Morocco to Turkey provided all the life facilities to the migrated Jews. When Christians ruled Spain, they established the religious courts by which Muslims were persecuted till death even Muslims were thrown out of Spain."¹⁵

¹² Helen Ellerbe, *The Dark Side of Christian History* (USA: Morningstar books, 1995).

¹³ *Memory and Reconciliation: The Church and the Faults of the Past*, The International Theological Commission (London: Catholic Truth Society, 2000), p, 35.

¹⁴ John Kelsay. Louisville, *Islam and War: A Study in Comparative Ethics* (Westminster/John Knox Press: 1993), p: 34. retrieved on May 12, 2009 from <http://www.levant.info/MER005.html>

¹⁵ Dr. Arif zakaullah, *The cross and the crescent*, Qazi Akhtar (urdu trans.) (Islamabad: Jang publishers, November 30, 2008), p: 12.

4.2.3. Islam: Principles & Practices

Islam's central focus is also to save humanity at our utmost effort. If someone kills a person it means he killed the whole of humanity. The whole Quran and Hadith literature are full of saving humanity from destruction.

As far as the practical approach to its commandments is concerned, Islam has a long history of sanctifying humans. Not only humans but also animals are respected in Islam. Of course, Islam has war teachings but it is not like ancient war style. Islam is not apologetic on its attitude on war. Its approach on war is logical and practical. Murder of an individual equals to the death of whole mankind. Besides, Islam does not tolerate taking of human life. Islam urges to spend any cost for the prevalence of justice and equality in human society. Allah commands to wage war against those who snatch the right of worship from the believer of any religion¹⁶ or against those who disturb the peaceful living of human beings¹⁷ and to shun oppression.¹⁸ Therefore, in this war of the protection of basic human rights particularly in Palestine, Muslim jurists mostly have sanctified all those method and strategies that serve the purpose.

Those who consider Islam as a religion that essentially condones violence for its theological beliefs and political aims pick certain verses from the Qur'ān, link them to cases of communal and political violence in Islamic history and conclude that Qur'ānic teachings provide justification for unjust use of violence.

While the same can be done practically for any religion, Islam has enjoyed much more fanfare than any other religion for the last thousand years or so.¹⁹

Summing up the above discussion it is obvious that as one can not pick up one āyah of the Qur'ān without its context similarly one will have to look at the holistic

¹⁶ al-Hajj, 22:39.

¹⁷ al-Mā'idah, 5:33.

¹⁸ al-Nisā, 4:75.

¹⁹ Ibrahim Kalin, *Islam and peace: A survey of the sources of peace in the Islamic tradition* (Islamabad: IRI, 2006), p: 3.

nature of the religion of Islam i.e. its historical context, its cultural limitations, and its unique temperament, its theological and ethical perceptive.

4.3. What gives birth to religious extremisms? Man or religion

What gives birth to religious extremism and religious wars is not a belief system, but men who transform belief into specific cultures and national identities. For if all the faithful limit themselves to the effort to seek God and to love him, the search for his love could not be the cause of wars, hatred or discrimination.

The question comes in the minds of many people concerned about religion in one way or another. The answer is usually in the affirmative and it is easy to cite example from history. One may describe the crusades, the inquisition in medieval Europe or Jihad as nothing more than a history of war. Two theorists; Strenski and Halbwachs are of the same opinion. They interpreted such kind of violence in its ritual form which is discussed by Talal Asad.

Talal Asad is a famous American Muslim sociologist. He quoted one of the suicidal attacks' reasons. Although he is not agreed upon it, but this opinion shows the arguments against religion. He quoted the opinion of a well-known theorist of religious studies Ivan Strenski. He makes the point that explaining suicide operations in terms of "personal psychological motivation" isn't enough and urges that one needs a sociological and theological perspective. He proposes that the phenomenon is better understood through the religious concepts of sacrifice. Strenski reminds us that Halbwachs was perhaps the first theorist to distinguish analytically between suicide and sacrifice. For Halbwachs, the distinction turns on *society's* attitude, something most clearly evident in its ritual form. When self-immolation is expressed in a ritual form, it is to be read as sacrifice; without that form, it is suicide. Strenski's analysis

thus proceeds from the claim that since sacrifice is the essence of religious subjectivity, violence is integral to it.²⁰

The other view is that religion does not call for violence. Religious teachings are peaceful at their base. But some specific teachings are manipulated with violence for political gains. Violence is committed in the name of religion but not condoned by it.

P. Partner is a specialist on religious war studies. He presents his opinion on religious acts of killing one another, "The history of holy war, from the Biblical Hebrews to our own times, is a history of texts belonging to scriptural religions; it is also a history of human behavior. Violence that men do, they seek to justify."²¹

Both views have strong cases and make important points about religion and violence. In speaking of religion and violence, the usual method is to look at the sacred scriptures and compare and contrast them with historical realities that flow from their practice or lack thereof because the community had not lived up to the standards of the religion as demanded by the text.²²

4.4. Can religion be blamed for extremism and terrorism?

Is it religion that makes people act so inhumanly and a danger for others while it has detailed text on peace? The answer is in 'no'.

It is the governments, political parties and leaders that use acts of terrorism in different shapes including suicidal attacks to serve their political interests. They too have agenda that is often determined by their religion, ethnicity or political goals. If we all had cared for humanity, we would have not allowed millions of Jews to suffer during the second world war, thousands of Bosnian women to be raped, millions of Palestinians to live in refugees camp and we would have come together to show our

²⁰ Tala Asad, *On suicide bombing* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), P: 42-43.

²¹ P. Partner, *God of Battles: Holy Wars of Christianity and Islam* (London: Harper Collins, 1997), p. xvi.

²² Ibrahim Kalin, *Islam and peace : A survey of the sources of peace in the Islamic tradition*, p:3.

determination to protect human life and human dignity. Yet we all find ourselves incapable of stopping this madness. There are forces that are constantly plotting to hurt fellow humans. There are people who are waiting to pour more fuel to add to the fire and there are countries that are keen to see wars and destructions.

Only religion can not be blamed for extremism and terrorism. There are other reasons too as Shaul Kimhi and Shemuel have concluded; “most researchers tend to agree that suicide terror is a multi-factorial phenomenon. The various explanations for suicide terror include personal and group motives, environmental conditions, and their interactions.”²³

One of the world’s foremost authorities on the subject, Professor Pape has created the first comprehensive database of every suicide terrorist attack in the world from 1980 until today. He narrated the same analysis that every suicide terrorist campaign has had a clear goal that is secular and political. He further presents some realities saying:

- Suicide terrorism is not primarily a product of Islamic fundamentalism.
- The world’s leading practitioners of suicide terrorism are the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka—a secular, Marxist-Leninist group drawn from Hindu families.²⁴

God describes himself as the guarantor of world peace to his creation but the people acting on his behalf have done every thing possible to destroy peace. Can we Muslims, Christians, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, atheists and everyone else come jointly rather than using religious or nationalistic labels to declare our anger and serve the political agenda of the power elite. For such purpose we need to give up our vested interests in the name of humanity alone. Otherwise we will keep on excluding others on various counts. Consequently we will remain alone facing everyone against us.

²³ Ami Pedahzur, *Root Causes of Suicide terrorism* (Rout ledge: New York, 2006), p: 84.

²⁴ Robert Anthony Pape , *Dying to win: the strategic logic of suicide terrorism* (Pennsylvania state: Random House, 2006), p: vii.

So self-immolation defined as martyrdom and suicidal attack, is not only a matter of sacred and legal texts and their different interpretation according to different schools of thought or political affiliation but also a circumstantial one which occurs once the socio-political ground does permit. It is accidental, not substantial. It is not linked to any religion, culture, people or a historical moment, but it is common everywhere once circumstances permit in Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan, Chechnya, Kashmir...etc. or in Ireland, Sri Lanka, Oklahoma, Germany and the rise of new Nazi party, or France.²⁵

4.5. Religion: the solution to all problems

The phenomenon of self-immolation is as old as man himself. Human history is full of aggressive and destructive attitude of man at individual and collective levels. Nations boast about the wars they won but it is a pity that no one is ready to be known as terrorist. There is a general perception that terrorists are always among enemies not in our circles.

World religions although not directly on violence and terrorism but on the subjects of war and battles, they have guided their followers. There is no exception. Christianity along with the slogan of 'Love thy neighbor' and very strong tradition of pacifism chalks out the rules of just war theory. Its history carries the centuries of bloody Crusades.

Human killing, peacelessness and terrorism have become challenges for world societies at national and international levels. We cannot count the terror events that occurred under the umbrella of religion or politics. The world is full of such instances. An uncountable figure of terror activities can be seen in internationally published reports for example world watch institute, Washington. A valuable estimate of nuclear

²⁵ Hasan Hanafi, "voluntary martyrdom", *Orient Moderno Monthly* (French journal) February, 2006, p: 212.

figures is given below by Geoffrey Lean, an environment editor of the '*Independent on Sunday*' mentioned. He wrote:

“Every hour or every day the world spends more than \$ 100 million on soldiers, weapons and ammunition. The world’s five full-fledged nuclear powers; the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France and China, together hold about 19,000 nuclear warheads in 2004. In addition some 9000-10,000 Russian warheads are in storage or await dismantlement. Since 1945, some 128,000 warheads have been built; about 70,000 by the United States; 55,000 by the Soviet Union/Russia; 1,200 by United Kingdom, about 1,260 by France and some 600 by China.”²⁶

These terrible figures do not come into being by any religious organization but by the governments raising slogans of peace.

The whole world is seeking peace in any way. If we study peace work we will find a lot of categories for promoting peace. Mostly, scholars emphasize on peace training from childhood, forgiveness, heart purification and meditation. We are presenting here the steps that the sacred books are highlighting for centuries.

The need of the hour is to remove all bad effects horrifying the human minds. It is the duty of all religious leaders to save humanity because the maximum world is the follower of any particular religion. Has religion any peace programme to save human being and to make this effected world a paradise? Yes, but with the request to act upon them honestly. We can conclude it in three steps:

4.5.1. Humans are Godlike:

According to the Book of Genesis. “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them”.²⁷

Islam says that man is the best creation of the Creator. The Qur’ān reveals that man is handiwork of Allah and *He created man on his own pattern*.²⁸

²⁶ Geoffrey Lean, *Vital Signs*, retrieved on May 17, 2009 from <http://www.worldwatch.org/vs2009>

²⁷ Genesis, 1:27.

²⁸ Rūm, 30:30.

God created us in His own image to have an abundant life. He did not make us as robots to automatically love and obey Him. God gave us a will and a freedom of choice. We chose to disobey God and go our own willful way. We still make this choice today. This results in separation from God.

4.5.2. The purpose of revealed books:

Their purpose is to judge the matters which disturbed the human peace and made the people bloody beasts. The Holy Qur'ān says, "He sent the Book in truth, to judge between people in matters wherein they differed."²⁹

The Bible narrates it like that, "Some were sick through their sinful ways, and because of their iniquities suffered affliction; they loathed any kind of food, and they drew near to the gates of death. Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress; he sent forth his word, and healed them, and delivered them from destruction."³⁰

4.5.3. Not to criticize one another:

The holy books allow discussing the matters seriously to solve them but forbade degrading and depressing others as Qur'ān says, "Revile not ye those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest they out of spite revile Allah in their ignorance."³¹

And Bible says, "But avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels over the law, for they are unprofitable and futile."³²

4.5.4. Spirituality, a universal truth:

It is the sole message of all the prophets from Ḥaḍrat Adam (A.S) to the last prophet of Allah. The better way to get it is to serve others. It is a clear cut rule of the textual study as the Holy Qur'ān says, "So strive as in a race in all virtues."³³

²⁹ Al-Baqarah, 2: 213.

³⁰ Psalms, 107: 17-20.

³¹ Al-An'ām, 7: 108.

³² Titus, 3:9.

³³ Al-Ma'edah, 5:48.

And in the Holy Bible, “For if any one sees you, a man of knowledge, at table in an idol's temple, might he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? And so by your knowledge this weak man is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. Thus, sinning against your brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food is a cause of my brother's falling, I will never eat meat, lest I cause my brother to fall.”³⁴ Ḥaḍrat ‘Īsa says, “Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.”³⁵

³⁴ 1 Corinthians, 8:7.

³⁵ Revelation, 3:20.

Conclusion of the Study

“Suicidal attack” is a contemporary term which is neither found in The Holy Qur’ān nor in The Holy Bible. The sacred teachings are silent regarding suicidal attacks. But there are some concepts close to the subject and attract the attention of our minds to understand this modern phenomenon in the light of sacred texts. These concepts can be named Martyrdom and Suicide but suicide motivated by religion. The title of Self-immolation for all these terms, in my understanding, would be suitable which seem as an umbrella term for these.

In any attempt to describe and evaluate three religious traditions, the sacred texts may provide some useful insights into the nature of all religions. All the core issues of the subject are rooted in their sacred texts. The text witnesses war history, battle scenes, blood rites and martyrdom. The narrated issues are so common that none can deny. On the basis of these essential affirmations other beliefs and practices have developed in each tradition; some important are Martyrdom and Religiously motivated suicide or self sacrifice. One thing which should have become clear to the reader of earlier chapters of this work is that there is a considerable difference of opinion on Martyrdom and Suicidal attacks.

The facts of martyrdom and religiously motivated suicide are as deep as religion itself. All the three religions highly venerate them and announce a high rank for martyrs in Paradise. As all the religions claim themselves to be complete codes of life, they have different religious dimensions of economics, politics and society. Whenever the religious people were killed even politically, the religions tend to call those killed as ‘Martyrs’.

One thing is very important that in the past history it did not occur as a ‘phenomenon’. There were some circumstantial and environmental exceptions that created martyrs. But in the contemporary world it has become a worldly phenomenon. The whole world is terrified by its bad effects. No one is safe or has peace at any place while the world has progressed, civilized and educated.

Where does the reason lie? The reason lies in our certain world view and contextual behaviour towards the religious texts and its interpretations as is mentioned in detail. Now the need of the hour is Peace.

How can we achieve Peace on Earth? Some suggestions:

1. First and utmost, we must find it within ourselves. By sharing our inner peace with others, peace will spread. Attainment of peace should start as a grassroots movement.
2. Not only can we teach others about peace but we can put pressure on governments and political candidates that continue to advocate war as the main solution to civil and international conflict.
3. We can end starvation, reduce poverty, create jobs and work towards common goals such as worldwide justice, peace education, pollution control and planet management.
4. There must be a world religious court to solve the difficult and conflicting religious affairs.

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