

## Chapter Six: War

### A. War in General

#### Grade 11

*One of the forms of solidarity among the Muslims is the obligation of a Muslim to:*

...Work for the protection of the Muslim state's borders against external aggression and work for the liberation of the occupied Muslims' land.

**Islamic Education, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) p. 110**

*Islamic moderate rules of war are presented to the student in an Islamic Education textbook.*

...Islam has encircled the rules of Jihad with a fence of mercy, humanism and morals, for it has enacted rules that soften its negative impact. It also treated all the problems related to war and established for that the highest systems of regulations and legislations which is harmonious with the spirit of the law:

1. Prohibition of sudden fighting and the obligation that a warning should precede the beginning of war...
2. Islam has prevented digression [from the rules] in war...
3. Islam has prevented the use of military means that involve ferocity and hideousness such as the mass destruction weapons nowadays, because they contradict Islam's kind and compassionate rules, which forbid [unnecessary] harm and ruin.
4. Islam has legislated the principle of reciprocity... In spite of that Islam has limited this principle with moral excellence and with respect for man's humanity. If the enemies commit [something] which contradicts man's dignity or contradicts morality, the enemies are not treated reciprocally but they are rather punished according to the [Muslim] commander or the ruler's discretion, like in cases of rape or mutilation of corpses.
5. Islam has legislated [rules] safeguarding the well being of messengers and ambassadors, because they enjoy what is termed diplomatic immunity...
6. Islam has not left a door leading to ending a war without entering it. Similarly, it has not left a door leading to war without closing it. It [Islam] expanded the reasons for ending a war: it ends with the conversion of the enemy to Islam, or with the conclusion of temporary peace between the enemy and the Muslims, which is armistice [*hudnah*], or eternal [peace], which is the protection [*dhimmah*] contract [of non-Muslims under Muslim rule], or with the Muslims' victory, or by the Muslim commander's decision...
7. Islamic law has taken care of the combatant prisoners of war and protected their lives and dignity. It also ordered to treat them with mercy, gentleness, humanism, kindness, righteousness, beneficence and respect and forbade their torture by hunger and thirst...

**Islamic Education, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) pp. 117-118**

*Nevertheless, war is still a reality talked of and sometimes praised, especially in poetical verses.*

Through here armies like you had attacked

Through here armies like you had fled

**Arabic Language – Linguistic Sciences, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) p. 11**

O war front that rises above the enemies' heads  
**Arabic Language – Linguistic Sciences, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) p. 22**

A stone – and the invaders' awe falls into the pits' mud  
**Arabic Language – Linguistic Sciences, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) p. 32**

## **Grade 12**

*No specific material on the issue of war in general has been found in the books for grade 12.*

## **B. Jihad**

### **Grade 11**

*Jihad and martyrdom are part and parcel of most Arab curricula, including the Palestinian. However, the textbooks for grade 11 feature relatively few references to the issue of Jihad, which may signal a somewhat moderate approach.*

*Jihad's purpose in Islam:*

The basic rule in the Muslims' relations with others is peace. Jihad was not enacted in Islam but for the purpose of safeguarding and protection of the call for [adopting] Islam and for the removal of obstacles separating between the individual and that call and prevent the realization of the inclusive virtuous Islamic regime, which is based on truth and justice and on the prevention of oppression and tyranny. This is done by argument and proof, not by sword and spear. And it is not achieved by coercion either... Jihad in Islam is therefore a means, not a goal, and it is not resorted to except after the failure of all peaceful means.

...Islam has encircled the rules of Jihad with a fence of mercy, humanism and morals, for it has enacted rules that soften its negative impact...

**Islamic Education, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) pp. 116-117**

*Jihad's reward:*

...Jihad is one of the gates of Paradise...

**Arabic Language – Reading, Literature and Critique, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 44**

*Jihad in poetry used for language exercises:*

O brother, the oppressors have exceeded the limit  
So Jihad and sacrifice have become necessary  
**Arabic Language – Linguistic Sciences, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) p. 78**

*Jihad poetry during the Crusades:*

### **Jihad Poetry**

Jihad poetry accompanied the Crusades from their beginning and lived with them in their [various] phases and developments until they ended with the Crusaders' departure from Muslim territory...

**Arabic Language – Reading, Literature and Critique, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 95**

*Jihad in the Palestinian conflict against Britain:*

The Jihad of Sheikh Izz al-Din al-Qassam

Sheikh Izz al-Din al-Qassam started his struggle in Palestine against Britain... He declared the Jihad at the end of 1935 and that was considered a fundamental change in the course of the Palestinian national movement, which had relied [until then] on political efforts... Many battles took place between the Qassamites and the British forces of which the last one was the Battle of Ya'bad forest near Jenin on November 20, 1935 in which Sheikh al-Qassam and some of his comrades became martyrs.

**Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 18**

**Grade 12**

*Jihad is not mentioned much in the books of grade 12, quite the same as the books of grade 11. But it is invigorated by the ideal of “ribat”.*

[The Prophet] said: “The main thing is Islam, its pillar is prayer and the peak of its hump is Jihad.”

**Arabic Language – Linguistic Sciences, Grade 12 (2006) p. 60**

*The following quotation depicts Palestine as the land of Jihad and adds to it another title, that of “ribat”, which is a traditional Islamic term denoting a state of taking up position against the enemy, such as that of a garrison. In this case, the term refers to the Muslim population of Palestine in its entirety. The use of the term in the PA textbooks is intended to intensify the religious aspect of the struggle against Israel. This issue first appeared in textbooks for grades 5 and 10<sup>48</sup> and it reappears here again.*

Palestine is the land of *ribat* and Jihad.

**Arabic Language – Reading, Literature and Critique, Grade 12 (2006) p. 114**

*Ribat* in God's cause: Islam has urged [the Muslims] to [perform] Jihad in God's cause in order to defend the [Muslim] nation's glory, dignity and land. *Ribat* in God's cause is [one] of the actions related to Jihad in God's cause. It means residing in regions where there is a conflict between Muslims and their enemies and the [Muslim] resident there is subjected to harm on the part of the enemies and lives in fear of them and in distress and [still] perseveres on this land in order to strengthen the Muslims vis-à-vis their enemies. The greater the fear in this country and the greater the harm suffered by its residents, the greater their reward would be...

The people of the Levant [Al-Sham] in general, and of Palestine in particular, are in a [state of] *ribat* to the Day of Resurrection... The reason for this [Divine] favor is that the decisive battles in Muslim history took place on its land. Its people are in a permanent conflict with their enemies and are in a [state of] *ribat* to the Day of Resurrection. History testifies to that, for the battle of Al-Yarmuk [636 CE] decided the conflict with the Byzantines, the battle of Hittin [1187] decided the conflict with the Crusaders and the battle of Ein Jalut [1260] decided the conflict with the Mongols.

There is no doubt that the people of Palestine's forbearance on their land these days and their perseverance vis-à-vis the harm and aggression they are facing are [one] of the greatest [forms of] *ribat* and theirs is God's great reward.

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<sup>48</sup> See Islamic Education, Grade 5, Part 1 (2004) pp. 77-78, 79 and Islamic Education, Grade 10, Part 2 (2004) p. 50. See also CMIP report “Jews, Israel and Peace in the Palestinian Authority Textbooks – The New Textbooks for Grades 5 and 10”, June 2005 pp. 56, 57, 59.

Question 4: The people of the Levant and Palestine are in a [state of] *ribat* to the Day of Resurrection. I will explain that.

**Islamic Education, Grade 12 (2006) pp. 86-87**

## **C. Martyrdom**

### **Grade 11**

*Palestinian martyrdom is a repeating theme in the PA schoolbooks, but in the case of the books of grade 11 the number of references to martyrdom is really small, which may indicate an effort to play down this issue.*

[The Palestinian poet] Fadwa [Tuqan], our great sister, bade farewell to her colleagues from her house window in Nablus. She also bade farewell to dozens of the beloved ones and the martyrs... She has almost become Khansa<sup>49</sup> of the Palestinian Arabs in a country where death has become the master of writing...

**Arabic Language – Linguistic Sciences, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 44**

*A language exercise with the word “martyrs”:*

The school commemorated the martyrs.

**Arabic Language – Linguistic Sciences, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 56**

### **Grade 12**

*The books of grade 12, on the other hand, include more references to martyrdom. Note the relatively extensive use of this issue in language exercises.*

The killing which a Muslim may face in the cause of elevating God’s word and supporting His religion: The [Qur’anic] verse has made it clear that these martyrs are alive and provided for by their Lord, and cheerfully enjoy what they get from His favor, although we do not feel this life and do not know of its reality. Therefore, it [i.e., the verse] has forbidden us to describe them as dead.

**Islamic Education, Grade 12 (2006) p. 9**

Belief drives the believer to sacrificing soul and property and investing them in God’s cause, because the believer knows that God greatly rewards for investing in His cause and for sacrificing for the sake of His religion.

**Islamic Education, Grade 12 (2006) p. 66**

[The poet] likened the martyrs who light the road to liberty with their blood to stars which light the road... and they indicate the martyrs’ great number and their high status.

**Arabic Language – Reading, Literature and critique, Grade 12 (2006) p. 12**

The martyrs in the Negev prison vie with one another  
To form with their blood the dialectics of death-life  
And they baptize their bodies in sand

**Arabic Language – Linguistic Sciences, Grade 12 (2006) p. 13**

*The following reference compares martyrdom to a wedding party.*

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<sup>49</sup> Khansa’ was a poet of pre-Islamic times who was known for her lamenting poetry. She later became a Muslim and lost her four sons in one of the early conquest battles.

O my homeland, I would not cry in this wedding  
For our Arabness refuses that we cry over the martyrs  
**Arabic Language – Linguistic Sciences, Grade 12 (2006) p. 13**

I found the Palestinian mothers of the martyrs steadfast.  
**Arabic Language – Linguistic Sciences, Grade 12 (2006) p. 59**

For the sake of Palestine our blood was spilt.  
**Arabic Language – Linguistic Sciences, Grade 12 (2006) p. 59**

By your life! I see my death  
But I hasten my steps to it  
**Arabic Language – Linguistic Sciences, Grade 12 (2006) p. 81**

By your life! This is a man's death  
And if one asks for a noble death – this is it  
**Arabic Language – Linguistic Sciences, Grade 12 (2006) p. 85 (and also 99)**

Upon my word, I shall continue acting on the martyrs' path.  
**Arabic Language – Linguistic Sciences, Grade 12 (2006) p. 85**

## **D. Terror**

*Terrorist activity against Israel is neither openly rejected nor encouraged in the PA books. But there are signs indicating implicit support of such activity in the framework of the national struggle for liberation. One of such signs is the recurring reference to Palestinians jailed in Israel for such activity as "prisoners-of-war". "Fidai" – a traditional Islamic term denoting a fighter who is ready to sacrifice his life for a cause is usually reserved for members of the Palestinian armed organizations, which carry out attacks against Israelis.*

### **Grade 11**

The prisoner-of-war's experience in contemporary Palestinian poetry is considered a rich and distinguished experience in its indications, meanings and forms which express the prisoners-of-war's suffering, their distress and tasting of all forms of trouble, humiliation, oppression and repression and their yearning for getting rid of the bond's humiliation and enjoying the moment of liberation and freedom which is not to be separated by any means from their homeland's freedom and independence...

...The prisoner-of-war has become older [or greater] and his eyes are shining  
And the heart is yearning for life.  
**Arabic Language – Reading, Literature and Critique, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) p. 72**

...The continuation of Israeli policy against the Palestinians such as the assassinations, the arrests and the refusal to release the prisoners-of-war...  
**Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 91**

## **Grade 12**

Till when captivity, my homeland, till when  
The prison's shackle has already gnawed at the bone  
Our great prisoners-of-war are a beacon of pride  
They have not bowed their head to the humiliation of the shackles  
**Arabic Language – Linguistic Sciences, Grade 12 (2006) p. 111**

O *Fidai*, your abode is Paradise, God willing!  
**Arabic Language – Linguistic Sciences, Grade 12 (2006) p. 112**