

## The Three Stages of Jihad

### *How a Weakened Muslim Minority Takes Over*

**I**F YOU LOOK at Muslim countries around the world, you will see that they are in one of the following three stages of jihad. (My source for these stages is Islamic theology based on the Quran.)

#### WEAKENED STAGE

This stage applies to Muslims when they are a weak, small minority living in a non-Islamic society. In this case overt jihad is not the call of the hour. Muslims submit to the law of the land, but they work to increase their numbers.

At this stage, Muslims follow the word given to Muhammad in Mecca: "There is no compulsion in religion" (Surah 2:256, *The Noble Quran*). You have probably heard people in the media quoting this verse to prove that Islam does not compel, or force, anyone to convert.

Another key verse Muhammad received at this time was Surah 5:105:

## ISLAM AND TERRORISM. . . . .

O you who believe! Take care of your own selves. If you follow the (right) guidance [and enjoin what is right (Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do) and forbid what is wrong (polytheism, disbelief and all that Islam has forbidden)] no hurt can come to you from those who are in error. The return of you all is to Allah, then He will inform you about (all) that which you used to do.

—THE NOBLE QURAN

This verse was a response to Muslims in Mecca who were wondering what to do about all the unbelievers around them. It basically told them, "Be responsible for yourself. Don't worry about the infidels around you. You and they will all go before Allah one day and be judged by your works."

These verses speak of living quietly and at peace with unbelievers; however, we need to remember that Muhammad received these words when Muslims were a small, weak group in Mecca. After his movement gained strength, Muhammad received new words that canceled out (*nasikh*) these verses.

### PREPARATION STAGE

This stage is when the Muslims are a reasonably influential minority. Because their future goal is direct confrontation with the enemy, they make preparations in every possible area—financial, physical, military, mental and any other area.

Let not the Unbelievers think that they can get the better (of the godly): they will never frustrate (them). *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 ene-

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mies, and others besides whom you may not know, but whom Allah knows.

—SURAH 8:59–60, ALI TRANSLATION, EMPHASIS ADDED

*The Noble Quran* includes some interesting commentary. Notice the words in parentheses:

And make ready against them all you can of power, including steeds of war (*tanks, planes, missiles, artillery*) to threaten the enemy of Allah...

—SURAH 8:60, EMPHASIS ADDED

This commentary should confirm for the reader that Muslims are practicing this verse in modern times.

### JIHAD STAGE

This stage is when Muslims are a minority with strength, influence and power. At this stage every Muslim's duty is to actively fight the enemy, overturning the system of the non-Muslim country and establishing Islamic authority.

This stage is based on the final revelation that Allah received concerning jihad, which is Surah 9:5. Though I quoted this verse earlier, it is so significant in Islamic thinking that it bears repeating:

Fight and slay the Pagans wherever you find them, and seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every strategem (of war)...

—ALI TRANSLATION

Muslims are commanded to kill anyone who chooses not to convert to Islam. The verse says "wherever you find them." There are no geographical limits.

## **ISLAM AND TERRORISM. . . . .**

### **MUHAMMAD'S EXAMPLE**

These three stages are exactly what the prophet Muhammad lived out. At first he showed no animosity to his enemies (Phase 1). After he left Mecca he spent his first year in Medina preparing his army (Phase 2). Then he declared jihad, went back to fight his enemies, completely conquered Mecca and brought it under his authority (Phase 3).

### **LEBANON**

The recent history of the modern nation of Lebanon can provide us a good example of the three stages in practice.

#### ***Stage 1: Muslims cooperate with the Christian majority.***

If you had visited Lebanon before their civil war you would have seen the Hawaii of the Middle East. The capital, Beirut, was called the Paris of the Middle East. Lebanon was the most beautiful natural setting around.

The Muslim minority lived in harmony with the Christian majority. That was because the Muslims were a weak minority with no power. There were no talks about jihad, or holy war, those days in Lebanon.

#### ***Stage 2: Muslims get outside help to prepare for attack.***

Slowly but surely, in the 1970s the Islamic minority started the preparation stage by getting support from Libya on one side and Iran on the other. Not too long after that the Lebanese civil war began.

#### ***Stage 3: Muslims wage war against unbelievers.***

The world watched as the beautiful country of Lebanon was divided into many pieces. Muslims denied any loyalty to

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their Christian brothers and sisters. They started militant groups that were after one goal—overturning the government and establishing an Islamic country.

One Islamic group was called Amal and was led by Nabih Bary; there was another Shiite group called Hizbollah, which was led by Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah.

Twenty years of war followed, but Muslims did not succeed in their mission.

*Compromise (Back to Stage 1)*

Right now Lebanon has a secular government with a Christian president and a Muslim prime minister. There is peace for the moment because they established a government that included all the warring parties.

They even made the founder of Amal the president of the parliament. They allow Hizbollah to exist in South Lebanon because, they say, “We must have them there to defend against Israel.”

**JUSTIFYING DECEIT**

The three stages of jihad show how circumstances are used to determine correct behavior. Another example of this in the Islamic mind-set is the use of deceit. Islam justifies lying under certain circumstances. In the next chapter you will learn what those circumstances are and how they apply to jihad.