

'Abd al-Azīz Ibn Bāz on Terrorism & Related Issues¹

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Shaykh 'Abd al-Azīz Ibn Bāz² on Specific Incidents of Terrorism (the Riyadh Bombings of 1995)

The following is the reply of the esteemed scholar, 'Abd al-'Azīz Ibn Bāz, to a question about to the recompense of those who cause terror among people and infringe upon their safety and security like what occurred with the bombings in Riyadh in the 'Ulayyá neighborhood last Monday (11/15/1995) that was carried out by criminals concerned only with terrorizing those who once felt safe and secure, killing innocent people and thereby causing the servants of Allāh (ﷺ) to remain in constant fear. What follows is the text of his answer:

1 Some of the "Related Issues" may not seem directly related to terrorism at first. However, keep in mind that many of these issues are the very core of some Muslims' anger and frustration with governments, both Muslim and Non-Muslim. – T.N.

2 'Abd al-'Azīz Ibn Bāz: The late former Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia (1330-1420 Hijrah / 1909-1999). - T.N.

There is no doubt that this is a grave, sinful act and extreme evil that results in nothing but widespread corruption and oppression. There's also no doubt that such a crime can only be carried out by someone who does not believe in Allāh and the last day. You will never find one who believes in Allāh and the last day – with correct faith – who would do a detestable criminal act like this, an act from which nothing is gained except the harming and injuring of people and mass devastation. Such incidents and others similar can only be perpetrated by immoral souls full of animosity, envy, evil, corruption, and void of faith in Allāh and His Messenger. We ask Allāh for rectification and safety; we ask Him to help those in authority in any way possible to thwart the plans of these people and to retaliate against them because their crime is a great one and their destruction is enormous. There's no strength or power except by Allāh. How could a true believer or Muslim ever approve of such a horrible crime resulting in such transgression against people, massacring them and injuring others with no right? All of this is evil and an enormous crime. We ask Allāh to frustrate the plots of these people, restrain them, and tighten their affairs around them. And we ask Allāh to cause failure to them and their supporters. We ask Him to grant success to the authorities in capturing them, serving justice against them, and exacting retribution from them for this horrible act they committed.

I advise and encourage anyone who knows any information about these people to relay it to the appropriate authorities. It is an obligation upon anyone who knows anything about them to report them as this is a form of cooperating for the prevention of sinning and transgression and to preserve the people's safety. Reporting them is also the way to achieve justice against these oppressors...³

Hijackings, Kidnappings, & Bombings

He (Shaykh 'Abd al-Azīz Ibn Bāz) said – may Allāh have mercy on him:

³ This was published in al-Madīnah newspaper on 6/25/1416 Hijrah. See also Majmū' al-Fatāwā wal-Maqālāt (vol. 9, pg. 253).

All praise is due to Allāh. May prayers and peace be upon the Messenger of Allāh, his family, his companions, and whoever follows his guidance.

It is well-known to anyone with the slightest amount of common sense that hijacking planes and kidnapping embassy officials and similar acts are some of the greatest universal crimes that result in nothing but widespread corruption and destruction. They place such extreme hardships and injuries upon innocent people, the extent of which only Allāh knows.

Likewise, it is also well-known that the evil and harm of such crimes don't affect one specific country or group. Rather, the dangers affect the whole world over. No doubt, whenever crimes are of this nature, it becomes obligatory upon the governments and other responsible authorities, such as the scholars and others, to give them the highest of concern and attention and to expend all possible efforts in preventing their evils and in eradicating them.⁴

Suicide-Bombings⁵

Question: What is the ruling of someone committing suicide by strapping explosives to himself in order to kill a number of Jewish people?

Answer: We have already given our opinion of this many times before that such an act is never correct because it's a form of killing oneself and Allāh says:

﴿ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ ﴾

And do not kill yourselves.

[Sūrah al-Nisā', 4:29]

4 Majmū' al-Fatāwá wal-Maqālāt (1/276).

5 It is important to note that this particular religious verdict is dealing explicitly with Islam's condemnation of suicide itself; the question is about this specific act. As for the general forbiddance of killing people, Muslim or non-Muslim, whether by suicide attacks or not, this prohibition is clear from the verdicts given throughout numerous other articles on this site (Answering-Extremism.com). -T.N.

And the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسَهُ بِشَيْءٍ عُدَّ بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

“Whoever kills himself by any means, he will be punished by it on the Day of Resurrection.”⁶

The person should rather strive and seek to guide them and if fighting is legalized and legislated, then he fights alongside the Muslims. If he’s then killed in this way, then Allāh is praised. But as for killing himself by booby-trapping his body with explosives, thereby killing others and himself, this is wrong and completely impermissible. Rather, he should fight with the Muslims only when fighting is legitimately legislated. As for the actions of (some of) the Palestinians, they are wrong and produce no benefit. Instead, it is compulsory upon them to call to Allāh by teaching, guiding, and advising and not by such actions as these.⁷

Political Overthrows, Revolutions, Demonstrations & Protests

Question: Are political demonstrations organized and carried out by men or women against rulers and governments considered legitimate ways of correcting people? If someone dies during such protests, is he then considered a martyr?

Answer: I do not believe political demonstrations, neither by men nor women, are considered a remedy (to influence the leaders). Rather, I see them as ways leading to more tribulations and evils. They bring about oppression of people and violations of their rights. However, the Islamically-legislated ways are things such as writing, sincere advising, calling to that which is good by safe means – the means used by the people of knowledge, the companions of the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), and those who afterwards

6 Recorded by al-Bukhārī (no. 6047) and Muslim (no. 176) from the ḥadīth of Thābit Ibn al-Ḍaḥḥāk (رضي الله عنه).

7 Taken from the cassette: Fatāwá al-‘Ulamā’ fil-Jihād.

followed them in righteousness. Some legitimate means would be by writing (to the leaders and rulers), personally speaking with them, calling them, or advising them. No one should publicly slander them upon the pulpits (during lectures in the mosques) and other places saying, “They do this and that!” and “All this evil is because of them!” And from Allāh we seek help.⁸

Ibn Bāz, may Allāh have mercy on him, also said:

These and other violent means are some of the most dangerous ways people oppose the truth. They result in chaos, oppression, enmity, and beatings. Similar to this is what some people carry out of political demonstrations which also cause great harm to those calling to the truth. They stage marches in the streets, screaming and shouting, all of which has nothing to do with the correct way to reform, rectify, and call to that which is good. The correct way is by visiting and writing in a noble and respectful way.⁹

Obeying the Governments & Authorities

Question: Some people – may Allāh guide them – do not believe the pledge of obedience and allegiance to the governments to be an obligation in these countries. What’s your advice regarding this?

Answer: We advise everyone to listen to and obey them as we’ve previously and always said. We warn against rebelling and revolting against any of the leaders in authority; these are some of the greatest sins. Rather, they are from the religion of the Khawārij. This is the religion of the Khawārij and Mu’tazilah; they reject the command to listen to and obey the leaders if they see them commit a sin, eventually opposing and rising up against them. This is wrong and contradictory to what the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) commanded. He ordered that one must listen to and obey the leaders in the good they command. He said:

8 Taken from the cassette: Fatāwá al-‘Ulamā’ fī Ṭā`ah Wulāt al-Amr.

9 Taken from the magazine: al-Buḥūth al-Islāmiyyah (38/210).

مَنْ رَأَى مِنْ أَمِيرِهِ شَيْئًا مِنْ مَعْصِيَةِ اللَّهِ فَلْيَكْرَهُ مَا يَأْتِي مِنْ مَعْصِيَةِ اللَّهِ وَلَا
يَنْزِعَنَّ يَدًا مِنْ طَاعَةٍ

“Whoever sees from his leader something of disobedience to Allāh, then he should dislike what he does of sinning against Allāh, but he must not remove even a hand-span away from obedience (to him).”¹⁰

And he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

مَنْ أَتَاكُمْ وَأَمْرُكُمْ جَمِيعٌ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَشُقَّ عَصَاكُمْ وَيُفْرِقَ جَمَاعَتَكُمْ فَاضْرِبُوا عُنُقَهُ

“Whoever comes to you while you are all in a state of unity and he seeks to cause rebellion and tries to divide you, then (the legitimate ruler could) execute him.”¹¹

So, it is not permissible for an individual to revolt against or leave the allegiance and obedience to his legitimate leader (government, president, king, etc). Neither is it permissible to promote such concepts because these acts are some of the greatest evils and foremost means leading to tribulations and enmity among people. As for the one who calls to that, this is the religion of the Khawārij. Such a person deserves capital punishment because he disunites the people and thereby plants the beginnings of a revolution. It is an obligation to warn with the utmost effort against this. It is also an obligation upon the leader of affairs that if he comes to know of someone promoting this ideology, he must forcefully apprehend him in order to prevent further calamities among the Muslims.¹²

10 Recorded by Muslim (no. 1855) from the ḥadīth of ‘Awf Ibn Mālik al-Ashja’ī (رضي الله عنه).

11 Recorded by Muslim (no. 1852) from the ḥadīth of ‘Arfajah Ibn Shurayh (رضي الله عنه). Also, like many other legislations in the Quran and Sunnah, this is a conditional, legitimate capital punishment verdict to be determined and carried out by legitimate leaderships or governments, not unconditionally by individuals.

12 Taken from the cassette: Aḥdāf al-Ḥamalāt al-‘Ilāmiyyah ʿĪd Wulāh wa ‘Ulamā’ Bilād al-Ḥaramayn.

Harming Non-Muslims Residing in Muslim Lands

Question: What is the ruling of showing hostility towards foreign tourists and visitors residing in Islamic lands?

Answer: This is forbidden. Showing hostility is not permitted against anyone whether he is a tourist or worker because he's been guaranteed safety and security merely by entering the country legally under a contract of peace. So, hostility towards them is not allowed. Rather, if any issues need to be raised, then the proper authorities must be informed in order for them to be prevented (from committing any crimes). As for individuals showing hostility and aggression toward them, this is forbidden. Individuals have no right to kill them, beat them, or harm them in any way. Instead, it is binding upon them to bring any matter to the attention of those in authority. Any form of aggression against them is considered a transgression against someone who has entered the country in peace, being guaranteed safety, and is thus impermissible. So, if there occurs anything from them (foreign tourists and visitors) that is questionable, then the matter should be raised to the appropriate authorities – those who have the capability of preventing them from entering the country or preventing them from the crimes, if any, they may be committing.

As for advising them and calling them to Islam or to abandon committing sins, this is required if they are Muslims. The general legislative evidences indicate this.

We seek help from Allāh as there is no strength or power except by him. May he send prayers and peace upon our prophet Muhammad and upon his family and companions.¹³

Hostility towards Non-Muslims

Question: Some young people today think that showing enmity towards disbelievers, those who reside in Islamic lands or those visiting here, is sanctioned by the Islamic

¹³ Majmū' al-Fatāwá wal-Maqālāt (8/239).

legislation. For this reason, some of them even think it is permissible to kill them or kidnap them if they see from them something they detest.

Answer: It's forbidden to kill a non-Muslim resident or anyone who legitimately and legally entered the country with the permission of the government under a contract of safety (indicated by the issuance of a visa). Showing any type of aggression towards them is also impermissible. Any criminal actions that occur from them must be reported to the legitimate Islamic authorities.¹⁴

Purchasing Products Manufactured by Non-Muslims

Purchasing products from non-Muslims is of course permissible. The prophet (صلى الله عليه) used to buy things from Jews. Even when he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) died, his shield was in the possession of a Jewish man, pawned for food to feed his (the prophet's) family.

He used to clarify to people their (the non-Muslims) beliefs so that people would not take them as their closest and most intimate friends. But as for buying things from them for which there is a need, then this is a simple matter.¹⁵

14 Majmū' al-Fatāwā wal-Maqālāt (8/207).

15 Taken from the cassette: Sharḥ Kashf al-Shubuhāt.