Definition of Jihad
by sheiikh Anwar Awlaqi(rh)

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Preface:

Verily all praises are due to Allah azzawajal, and all thanks to Allah for allowing me to complete this noble work.

This is the transcription of a part of the 1st lecture of Shaikh Anwar Awlaqi (rh) in his series of Mishary Al Ashwaq.

Please note that this transcription has been made on the level of understanding of normal people and if there is any benefit or good in it, then it is from Allah azzawajal and if there are any mistakes or errors it is from myself or shaitan.

I have edited some of the grammar and the arrangement of the words of the sheikh as during speech there might have been some grammatical errors and repetitions. I have also added headings for some of the paragraphs which the Sheikh doesn’t mention, but this has been done only with the intention that people may understand the work better while reading of our beloved sheikh Anwar al Awlaqi (rh).

I would request all of you to pray for the sheikh that Allah may raise his levels in Jannah and to accept him as a martyr. Also I would request you to pray for myself for verily I am weak and make mistakes and in bad need of your prayers.

Wa JazakumALLAH khair
**Definition of Jihad by Shaikh Anwar Al Awlaqi r.a**

“What is the definition of Jihad?”

**(Different types of meanings for a word)**

1 **Linguistic Meaning:**

“Because the concept has become quite confused now, it is necessary to do some study on the definition of what it means and I’m sure that you would benefit from this in terms of your discussion with people who might not have a clear understanding of what Jihad means. Now any word would have a linguistic meaning. Every word has a “linguistic meaning”, and this is when the word was originally formed: it was formed to mean something; For example. Horse! Horse has a linguistic meaning and it is the animal which we call horse. That is the linguistic meaning of the word.

2 **Share‘a Meaning**

But then you have words in Arabic that pick up which is called the “Share‘a meaning”. A meaning of Share‘a and this is a meaning that is new and that is given to a word… by who? By Islam.

For example, Salah is a word that was known to the Arabs before Islam. What did it mean? It meant dua. The linguistic meaning of Salah in Arabic is dua. Islam came and gave Salah a completely new meaning which is defined by the ulema.

“Salah is the actions and the words that are done between the takbeer and the salaam.”

So that is called Salah. This is a new meaning that was introduced by Islam.
3 M'naa U'rfee (Customary meaning):

And then you have the m'naa U'rfee: U'rfee is “customary”. So a word would have a linguistic meaning but overtime people will start using that word to mean something else and eventually the word will forget about its linguistic meaning. For example, in English, excuse me for choosing this word; this is the only word I could come up with; I did this very fast today. The word ‘gay’, Gay in English linguistically means “happy, pleasant”, it also meant “Brave”. These are the linguistic meanings of the word. But if you mention this word today, No one will recall these meaning, their minds will immediately go to “Homosexuals”. So the word picked some customary meanings and these customary meanings became the meanings understood by the listener when the word is used. You don't go around and telling people that “I'm gay” and you want to say that you’re brave or happy. You don’t do that anymore, so this is a customary meaning that is given to a word.

4 M'naa Istelahi (technical Meaning):

And then a word has m'naa “istelahi”. Istelahi means “technical”. So among a certain group the word would have a specific meaning .So example. The word minister in English, among politicians would mean something different than among religious groups. In a religious group a minister is the 1 who's in the church, who administers the prayers and all of that, he’s called a minister. But in this country in the political arena a minister is a head of a govt dept and in some countries he wud be the what is called in America “the secretary”, So the secretary of state would be the minister of state, so this is a technical meaning, the technical meaning changes from 1 group to another; or it could be the same. So these are the 4 meanings of the word.

5 Majaz (Figurative meaning):

And then we have a 5th and that is “majaz”. A word could be used ; could be borrowed to signify a different meaning ; that is a figurative speech. It is figurative speech. You don't mean it literally; you are borrowing the word for another meaning.

Ok, what is the linguistic meaning of Jihad? the Sharea’ meaning of Jihad? , the technical meaning? and the customary meaning?

To give you an example of Majaz before we go into Jihad. A man came to Muhammed pboh and said “O Rasoolullah pboh , do I still have a duty towards my parents after they die?”. So Rasoolullah pboh said “yes; you make Salah on them and then make istighfaar for them; & u fulfill their promises to others” & you are generous towards their friends & you fulfill their kinship”
But the point here is that Rasoolullah pboh said u make Salah on your parents; Does Rasoolullah pboh mean the Sharea’ meaning of Salah; the religions meaning of Salah? “No”; what does Rasoolullah pboh mean here? the linguistic meaning? So this is Majaz. Over here Salah is used in majaz sense, because Salah has already been given a new meaning by Islam, you can’t use it for the linguistic meaning. Whenever Salah is now used for the linguistic meaning, it’s used in a majaz sense. It is used in a figurative sense. So Rasoolullah pboh is figuratively saying that make Salah on them, which means you make dua for them.

**What is the linguistic meaning of Jihad?**

Jihad is a word that existed before Islam. It’s not a word invented by Islam. So the linguistic meaning of it according to “lisaan al arab” which is an authority in the Arabic language, Jihad means “exhausting your effort in a deed or a word”. You exhaust your effort, You go to the limit, You do your best in a deed or word.

So this is a very general meaning, you could be exhausting your efforts for Satan or you could be exhausting efforts for Allah. That’s all Jihad according to the linguistic meaning. So linguistically Jihad is struggling, striving for anything. It could be striving for money, striving to marry; striving to fight the kuffar or striving to fight the momineen. It’s all Jihad in a linguistic sense.

Now sharea’ introduced a new meaning to Jihad; and what is that meaning? According to “hasheth Ibn Abdeen”, which is a Hanafi book of fiqh;

“Striving to a limit in fighting in the sake of Allah directly or by money or intellect or by increasing the numbers, or other means “

And in the commentary it says that “other means” could be tending to the injured or preparing food.

So according to this definition it includes the direct fighting, but it also includes the indirect means of supporting by money or by intellect, your opinion; or by cooking food or by tending to the injured. But when we are saying indirectly here, the intention must be for that cause and it must be a deed that relates. So you can’t go for example. Say that “oh well im working as an engineer and that will…” there must be some link for it to serve the Qitaal; for it to be included in Jihad. So therefore Jihad is more general term than Qital. Qital is specific, Qital is the actual fighting; Jihad is more comprehensive; Jihad includes Qitaal and every thing that is supportive of Qitaal. Because Qital doesn’t stand alone ; there is a huge infrastructure that helps it and sometimes that infrastructure is manned by more people than the actual fighters.; the financial; infrastructure; The support infrastructure; the Intellectual infrastructure. But all that is within Jihad
Now this meaning only came about in Madina; it wasn’t in Makkah. This meaning came in Madinah,

**The word “Jihad” is mentioned in Makkah in 4 ayat:**

These ayat are  
Surah Al ankabut: 6, 8 & 69  
And, Surah Luqman: 15

The ayat in surah ankabut:  
Ankabut 6 = “and whoever strives he strives only for himself”

Ankabut : 8 “but if they strive to make you join with me in worship anything as a partner of which w have no knowledge, then obey them not”

So this ayah is talking about Jihad that is not for the sake of Allah. This ayah is saying that if your parents make Jihad against you to have you worship somebody besides me:: don’t follow them.

So you can see that in Makkah the word Jihad doesn’t have its Sharea’ meaning yet. Its still with the linguistic meaning of the word.

And the 3rd ayah:  
Ankabut : 69 “ The one’s who make Jihad in my cause ; we will surely guide them to our paths “

So this is not specifically talking about fighting. Its talking about fighting, it’s talking in a general sense.

And the ayah in Surah Luqman: 15  
"But if they strive to make thee join in worship with Me things of which thou hast no knowledge, obey them not; yet bear them company in this life with justice (and consideration), and follow the way of those who turn to me (in love): in the end the return of you all is to Me, and I will tell you the truth (and meaning) of all that ye did."

It’s the same as ayah before referring to the parents. So these ayat are clear?
“Jihad” in Madinah

Ok! In Madinah; Jihad is mentioned 26 times and invariably, they are referring to fighting in the sake of Allah swt, and this is the final meaning of Jihad.

And I'm saying this because nowadays, it is very common, to find among Muslims, the understanding that Jihad is primarily Jihad an nafs and the secondary meaning is fighting of the kuffar.

A hadith is always quoted in this context “we came back from the minor Jihad to the major Jihad” (Jihad an nafs). Now first of all this hadeeth as Ibn taymiyyah says is fabricated: never the less you still find that this is quite a common belief.

But if we look at the ayat, we find that the ayah would only make sense if Jihad is interpreted as fighting.

For example, the yah in Surah Taubah: 41

“March forth whether you are light or heavy and strive hard with your wealth and your lives in the cause of Allah.”

How come it only makes sense if it's referring to fighting?

“infiroo” The ayah is saying “march forth”, Jihad an nafs doesn't need marching forth, the Jihad of Satan doesn't need marching forth .The Jihad of Munafiqueen within the ranks doesn't need marching forth, you fought them right there in the neighborhood, You don't have to go out. So the ayah would only make sense if it's talking about Jihad Al Kuffar.

The next Ayah: Tawbah : 81

"Those who remained behind rejoiced in their staying [at home] after [the departure of] the Messenger of Allah and disliked to strive with their wealth and their lives in the cause of Allah and said, "Do not go forth in the heat." Say, "The fire of Hell is more intensive in heat" - if they would but understand."

This was in the battle of Tabuk, it was summer, It was right before the harvest which means that the food level is at the lowest right before the harvest and it's about to be at its highest if they would just stay behind to harvest; and this would be the longest journey ever, because their going from Madinah all the way to the Roman Empire, Tabook. & It's fighting a very formidable enemy, the Romans.; So this was a serious challenge and this is really the test of the true Eman and Nifaq, that's when the Munafiqueen truly showed their colors, it was in ghazwah Tabuk; because all the elements was against the Munafiqueen, the challenge was too big for them; so they told Prophet pbuh,these are excuses “we cant go” everyone came up with an excuse, So
when Rasoolullah s.a.w. left they were happy “farihal mukhallafoon” they were happy that they stayed behind, “they rejoiced” and they said “don’t go out, its too hot”; Allah azzawajal is telling them that jahannam is hotter than the summer of Arabia!!

But Jihad in this ayah can only mean going out.

And then the other ayah also **Surah Tawbah: 86**

“and when a surah is revealed; enjoining them to believe in Allah and to make Jihad with the messenger of Allah ; the wealthy among them ask you leave to exempt them and they say “leave us behind we would be with those who sit home”

See the wealthy are always hesitant to go out.

**Jihad in Ahadeeth**

What about al Hadeeth of Rasoolullah s.a.w.?

1 Abu Hurairah r.a says :- (in sahih muslim)

“Rasoolullah s.a.w was asked “is there any deed equivalent to Jihad? Rasoolullah pboh said ‘yes, but you wont be able to do it.’ SO the man asked again, he asked a 3rd time, Rasoolullah pboh told him the 3rd time ‘ what is equivalent to the Mujahid is the one who is fasting and praying continuously until the Mujahid comes back’

How come this hadeeth can only mean fighting? What is in this hadeeth that tells you straight away that this can only mean fighting?
"comes back", he came back. The mujahid came back. So your praying fasting until the mujahid comes back. So the 1 who is staying behind is actually doing what?? Jihad an nafs. The one who is staying behind praying and fasting is doing Jihad an nafs. So Rasoolullah s.a.w is saying that this person whos doing Jihad an nafs even if hes praying all the night, fasting everyday is not goingto get near to the one who goes out in Jihad feesabilillah.

2 The next hadith;

*Rasoolullah s.a.w was asked*
"Guide me to a deed equivalent to Jihad" Rasoolullah s.a.w said, “I don’t find any” then he said “When the Mujahid goes on Jihad(so now he’s going) can you enter your Masjid
and pray continuously and fast and never break your fast? The man said “and who could do that?”

This is bukhari

3rd hadith

Rasoolullah s.a.w said after he was asked “what is the best Jihad?”. So now the question is placed straightforward to Rasoolullah s.a.q “what's the best Jihad?”

What's the major Jihad. Sometimes if you just look at the saheeh ahadith ul find the answer ;so this hadith the man is asking Rasoolullah s.a.w.”what is the best Jihad?”
Rasoolullah s.a.w said the one who horse is killed and his blood is spilled”. So this is in the context of fighting, the Rasoolullah s.a.w. says that it is the best.

4th hadith

Ibn Abbas r.a narrates that the Messenger of Allah pboh said “When your brothers were killed at Uhud; Allah placed their soles in the insides of the green birds these birds drink from the rivers of paradise and eat from its fruits and travel in paradise to wherever they want”. So they said “We wish our people knew what Allah swt has given us, so they would desire Jihad and not neglect it.”

So over here the Sahaba the Shuhadaa of Uhud are saying in Jannah, we wish that the pleasure that we are in is conveyed to our people so they will not neglect Jihad. Notice here that they just said Jihad; they didn’t add a clause to it to define whether it is Jihad an nafs or Jihad. They just said Jihad.

Allah Azzawajal said, I will convey that to your brothers, So they became very pleased and that's when Allah revealed the ayat in Surat al Imran from ayah 169-171 talking about Al-shuhadaa.

“and don’t consider who die in the sake of Allah as dead but they are alive”

5th hadith
Abu Hurairah r.a narrates that one of the companions passed by a spring of fresh water in a valley and he said if I seclude myself from the people and stay in this valley to worship Allah, so this man wanted to do Jihad bin nafs; stay next to this fountain of water, devout himself to the ibadah of Allah azzawajal full time, stay away from the sins; stay away from the people, but he wanted to seek permission from Rasoolullah pboh first, so he went to Rasoolullah pboh and he asked him; Rasoolullah s.a.w told him “don’t do so” and then Rasoolullah s.a.w said “the posting of one of you in the path of Allah, is better than his prayer in his house for 70yrs, don’t you want Allah to forgive you and enter you into paradise, fight(Rasoolullah s.a.w used the word uoozoor) in the path of Allah for whoever fights (qatl) in the path of Allah a time equivalent to that of milking a camel, paradise s guaranteed for him.

This hadeeth is in Tirmidhi

Ok!

**Customary Meaning of Jihad**

So that’s in hadeeth now, lets talk about m’na al U’rfee; the customary meaning of Jihad. What meaning did Jihad pick up in the customs of people? So now lets say that 2 men are talking in the 1st or 2nd century of Islam (this ummah) and 1 of them tells the other Jihad, what would the other person understand, that is the customary meaning.

If we start the time of Rasoolullah pboh “the women came to Rasoolullah pboh and said: they came complaining to Rasoolullah that the men are praying jama’h and they are fighting Jihad. So the women are complaining to Rasoolullah s.a.w and saying that the men are fighting Jihad and we are not. So you can see that the customary meaning that they had of Jihad here is what? Fighting because women are not prevented from Jihad an nafss. Why would the women go & complain to Rasoolullah s.a.w unless they understood that Jihad meant to go out and fight the enemies of Allah. So they complained to Rasoolullah about that and Rasoolullah s.a.w responded by saying that “you Jihad is hajj” So over here you find that Rasoolullah s.a.w is using Jihad in a… what?.. mAjaz meaning. So for the women, your Jihad is majazi and that is hajj fee sabiliillah.

Omer bin khattab r.a when he was a khalifa he received from Abu Ubaidah Amr Bin Jarrah r.a., So Omer R.a stands up on the mimbur and he says “Abu Ubaidah is inviting you to Jihad”
he didn't specify what type of Jihad, he just said Abu Ubaidah is inviting you to Jihad. Abu Ubaidah sent him this letter from the front line. So the meaning was clear. The speaker and the listener exactly knows what the word means. There’s no confusion in their minds whatsoever.

Ali bin Zaid who’s from the later times, he is narrating a statement by Abu Talha r.a. He said Abu Talha r.a says “infirro Khifafan wa thiqala” “go out light and heavy” “young and old” and then he said “I don’t see any excuse for anyone.” After this ayah I do not see any one of you is excused. The narrator of the hadeeth said “and then he went out on Jihad”. And that was the end of the statement. “He went out on Jihad”. So the meaning of Jihad is clear to him. He went out on Jihad.

A man came to Abu Musa Al Ashari r.a when he was in the masjid. “O Abdullah ibn Qais r.a if I were to pick up my sword and make Jihad for the sake of Allah and then I'm killed, where will I be?”Abu Musa r.a said, “In jannah”. So the man is saying If I pick up my sword then I go out in Jihad, which is, the meaning is clear.

So this is the customary meaning.

The technical meaning of Jihad among the scholars of Aqeedah, scholars of fiqh, scholars of hadeeth, is also fighting fee sabillillah. If we look at some of the statements of the fuqahahaa, in hanafi in “al inayah”; “ sharh al hidaya”

It says *Jihad is calling towards the true religion and fighting with ones soul and wealth against those who reject it.*

Al shirazi in “al Muhazab” which is shafi book, very brief, *“Jihad is fighting”. “Al Jihad hual Qitaal”* Full stop.

In Al Malki bok “ Muwahib al Jaleel fi sharh muqtasir al qaleel”. It says “*Jihad is a muslim waging war against a nonmuslim who has no peace agreement with the muslims and the fighting is for the sake of the word of Allah to prevail . Jihad is also fighting the non muslim who attacks the Muslim territory and it is also the Muslims attacking the non Muslims in their land.*” This is the definition in the Muwahib al Jaleel fi sharh muqtasir al qaleel which is a malki book.

Just simply look at the table of contents in any book of the Salaf, a book of fiqh. And when you see the chapter of Jihad, open up the chapter and see what it’s talking about.
It’s only talking about fighting fee sabiliillah. The heading on the chapter would be Jihad and then you go straight on to fighting, Al Qitaal.

For example, Some of the books, I looked up just a sample; “Al Mughni” by Ibn Al Qudama r.a “Al Umm” by Imam Al Shafiee ra, ‘Al Mudawwana’ by Imam Malik r.a, The 3 commentaries on “Muqtasir Qaleel” by AL Qarshi and Ulaish and al hattab, Al Muhalla by Ibn Al Hazm “Subl al Salam” by Sina’ani, “Niel Awtar” by Al Shawkani r.a, AL Fatawa Al kubra y Ibn Taymiyyah r.a.

The chapter that is talking about fighting, they called it the chapter of Jihad; they didn’t call it Qitaal, they said Jihad, the meaning was clear to them.

Not only that whenever you run across a hadeeth that uses the term “fee sabiliillah” Ibn Hajr Al Askalani r.a says” whenever “fee sabiliillah” is used in a hadeeth, it means Jihad fee sabiliillah” So whenever you come across a hadeeth and it says “whoever does this in fee sabiliillah” It means Jihad. And this is the statement by Ibn Hajr al Askalani r.a

Some examples of that

Salman Al Farsi r.a said, The messenger of Allah pboh said; “Being stationed in the path of Allah swt for a day,(So here you have path of Allah, fee sabiliillah means path of Allah swt or cause of Allah, that’s how it is translated in English). Whoever stationed “fee sabiliillah for a day is greater than fasting the days of a month and praying its nights; and if he dies, his reward of deeds he used to do would continue and its provisions would continue and He would be spared the trials of the angels of the grave."

In Al Tirmidhi; there’s a hadeeth by Abdullah Ibn Amr. r.a. He says Rasoolullah s.a.w said “two eyes will not be touched by the hell fire, an eye that comes from the fear of Allah and the eye that spent the night in a guarding post in the path of Allah.”

So according to the other interpretation that fee sabiliillah means every thing, why would you need to guard? Why would a guard stand if fee sabiliillah means anything? So it necessarily means fighting.
In another hadith narrated by Nasai, AL Hakim, Al timid &abu dawud, Amr bin Absa r.a said ‘we were laying siege to Al Taif and I heard the messenger of Allah swt say “Whoever shoots an arrow fee sabilillah will be rewarded like on who has freed the slave”

Now shooting arrows can only be in fighting.

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