9506 - Parent’s Permission to Go for Jihaad

the question

I want to find out about jihaad (fighting) for the sake of Allaah. I am the eldest of my brothers and my father is dead, but my mother is alive and I have a wife and children. I asked my mother to agree to my going for jihaad but she refused. Can I go for jihaad?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Jihaad is one of the best of deeds, as is honouring one’s parents. If a person wants to go for jihaad, he has to ask their permission. If they give him their permission, all well and good, otherwise he should not go for jihaad, and he should stay with them. Staying with both or one of them is a kind of jihaad (striving for the sake of Allah). The basis for that is the report of Ibn Mas’ood (may Allaah be pleased with him), who said: “I asked the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), ‘Which deed is most beloved to Allaah?’ He said, ‘Prayer done on time.’ I said, ‘Then what?’ He said, ‘Honouring one's parents.’ I said, ‘Then what?’ He said, ‘Jihaad for the sake of Allaah.’ The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) told me about them and if I had asked more he would have told me more.” (Agreed upon. Al-Bukhaari, 1/134; Muslim, 1/89-90)

‘Abd-Allaah ibn ‘Amr (may Allaah be pleased with them both) said: “A man came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and asked for his permission to go for jihaad. He said, ‘Are your parents alive?’ He said, ‘Yes.’ He said, ‘Then your jihaad is with them.’” (Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 4/18). According to another report: A man came and said, “O Messenger of Allaah, I have come to engage in jihaad with you. I came and my parents were weeping.” He said, “Go back and make them smile as you have made them weep.” (Narrated by Ahmad, 2/160; Abu Dawood, 3/38).

It was reported from Abu Sa’eed (may Allaah be pleased with him) that “a man migrated to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) from the Yemen. He [the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him)] said, ‘Do you have anyone in the Yemen?’ He said, ‘My parents.’ He said, ‘Did they give you permission?’ He said, ‘No.’ He said, ‘Then go back to them and ask their permission. If they give you permission, then go for jihaad, otherwise honour them.’” (Narrated by Ahmad, 3/75-76; Abu Dawood, 3/39).

It was reported from Mu’aawiyah ibn Jaahimah al-Sulami that Jaahimah came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and said, “O Messenger of Allaah, I want to go out for jihaad, and I have come to consult you.” He said, “Do you have a mother?” He said, “Yes.” He said, “Then stay with her, for Paradise is at her feet.” (Narrated by Ahmad, 3/429; An-Nasa'i, 6/11).

All of these reports and similar ones refer to the person for whom jihaad is not an individual obligation. But if it becomes obligatory on an individual and he does not go for jihaad, this is a sin, for there should be no obedience to any created being if it involves disobedience towards the Creator. Among the things that make jihaad obligatory on individuals is when the imaam [Muslim ruler] calls him for jihaad, in which case he has to go to the front line. And Allaah is the source of strength. May Allaah bless our Prophet Muhammad and his family and companions, and grant them peace.