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## Munir el-Kassem: “May God bestow the title of Shaheed (Martyr) on us”

Original address: [http://www.iiid.ca/pages/Articles\\_det.php?id=68](http://www.iiid.ca/pages/Articles_det.php?id=68)

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Author: Munir el-Kassem

Undated document

Excerpt:

Until my writing of this article 1320 martyrs have already joined the ranks of the fortunate ones who have exited this life with the best of titles, "Shaheed". May God bestow this title on us.

### Original title: Gaza Massacre: Divine Will or Criminal Act

One of the most defining moments of the latest Israeli onslaught on Gaza was a Saturday afternoon when I was following the news on Al-Jazeera. My tears were spontaneously flowing on my cheeks as I was listening to the two young heroes who by now are known to a large number of people worldwide: Louay who lost his eyesight and Jamila who lost both her legs above the knees. My son was quicker than my ability to exercise parental judgement in allowing him to watch those graphic images. After a few minutes in my lap, I said to myself, why not? He shouldn't be any different than the multitude of Palestinian children who have been witnessing those images in front of their eyes, not on television. As the newscast moved to other images, my son asked me: Why doesn't God do something to stop those children from getting killed and wounded? Isn't God All-Powerful, as you say?

God indeed is All-powerful. However, in this life God has given humans the ability to choose between good and evil. This results in an on-going battle whose victims may exit life in a shameful manner, but they will proceed to an eternal life in Paradise away from all evil. This fact is clearly illustrated in Surat Aal-'Imran, Ayaat 169-171, " Think no of those who are slain, in the

way of God, as dead. Nay, they are living. With their Lord they have provision. They rejoice in what God has bestowed upon them of His bounty, rejoicing for those who have not yet joined them, but are left behind that on them no fear shall come, nor shall they grieve. They rejoice because of favour from God and kindness, and that God wastes not the reward of the believers. " All of us should understand that the life we are currently living is not the end by itself, but rather a mere testing ground to allow humans to freely choose which path they will take towards eternity. Here again we find the Qur'an explaining this reality in the same surah, Ayah 179, " It is not ( the purpose ) of God to leave you in your present state till He shall separate the wicked from the good. And it is not ( the purpose ) of God to let you know the unseen. "

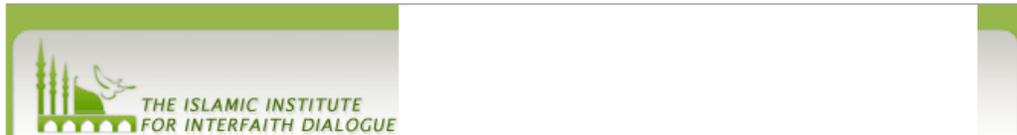
Everything in life, whether we like or dislike, has a divine purpose. One needs to understand that our pursuit of perfection may not necessarily intersect with the divine will; the latter will always prevail. We may not understand why certain things do happen, but this is due to our innately imperfect human nature. In Surat Al-Baqara, Ayah 216, God tells us, " Warfare has been ordained for you, though it is hateful to you, but it may happen that you hate a thing which is good for you, and it may happen that you like something which is bad for you. God knows and you know not." The massacre of Gaza, like the scores of massacres before it in Jinin, Ramallah, Ein Qaana, Kafar Qasem, Deyr Yaseen, Sabra and Shatila and many others, was committed by real criminals or, in today's language, terrorists, not because God wanted them to spread evil, but because they freely chose to betray God's trust which gave them the freedom to choose between good and evil. " ..and a soul and Him Who perfected it and inspired it to understand the way of iniquity and the way of piety. He is indeed successful who purifies himself of his sin, and he is indeed a failure who stunts it." Surat Ash-Shams, Aayat 8-10.

Why would one use his own words when certain ideas are most beautifully illustrated in the Qur'an. Along the lines of divine purpose, one reads in Surat Aal-Imran, Aayat 139-143, " Faint not nor grieve, for you will overcome them if you are ( indeed ) believers. If you have received a blow, the ( disbelieving ) people have received a blow the like thereof. And We bring these days to people by turns, and that God may identify those who ( truly ) believe and may choose martyrs from among you; and God loves not wrongdoers. And that God may test those who believe, and may expose the disbelievers. Or deemed you that you would enter Paradise while yet God has not made known those ( of you ) who really performed Jihad, nor has made known those ( of you ) who are patient? And verily you used to wish for death before you encountered it ( in the battle field ). Now you have seen it with your eyes ( and to it you are now averse )!

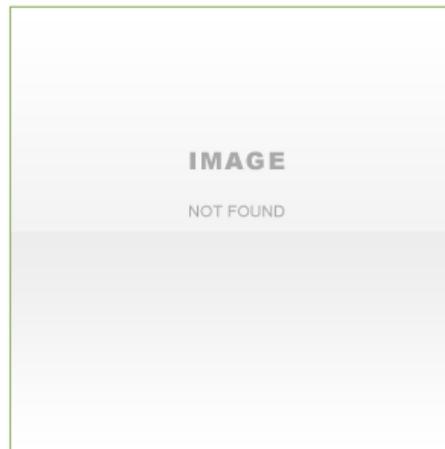
There are many dimensions to the terror that the Palestinians have been lately exposed to. In this short article, I just wanted to focus briefly on the religious dimension, as I tried to explain to my son something that is too difficult for his young brain to comprehend. Until my writing of this article 1320 martyrs have already joined the ranks of the fortunate ones who have exited this life with the best of titles, " Shaheed ". May God bestow this title on us. Those who are left behind to suffer the consequences of the Israeli massacre continue their test until they " graduate " into the " real " life in the Hereafter. All of us have to undertake testing, one way or the other. Some forms of testing may seem relatively unfair to the human eye. This is similar to a situation at a school where students may be required to work on different assignments in order to pass the course. Students may not understand how the instructor has injected equity into these different assignments, nevertheless, they have to work on them in order for them to pass. May God grant us wisdom to see beyond the surface of things, and may we possess the kind of faith that makes us resonate with Qur'anic Ayah # 155, from Surat Al-Baqara, " And surely We shall test you with certain forms of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives and crops; but give glad tidings to those who are patient, who say, when a misfortune strikes them: We belong to God, and unto Him we are returning."

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### Gaza Massacre: Divine Will Or Criminal Act



By Dr. Munir El-Kassem

One of the most defining moments of the latest Israeli onslaught on Gaza was a Saturday afternoon when I was following the news on Al-Jazeera. My tears were spontaneously flowing on my cheeks as I was listening to the two young heroes who by now are known to a large number of people worldwide: Louay who lost his eyesight and Jamila who lost both her legs above the knees. My son was quicker than my ability to exercise parental judgement in allowing him to watch those graphic images. After a few minutes in my lap, I said to myself, why not? He shouldn't be any different than the multitude of Palestinian children who have been witnessing those images in front of their eyes, not on television. As the newscast moved to other images, my son asked me: Why doesn't God do something to stop those children from getting killed and wounded? Isn't God All-Powerful, as you say?

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Munir El-kassem

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