

Highest Rank of Piety = Faith in God & Hereafter + Struggle with Sacrifice (Jihad)

Sura 9, At Tawbah [The Repentance], Medina 113, 9H [after Tabuk]

The Quran's Text & Yusuf Ali's translation:

أَجْعَلْتُمْ سِقَايَةَ الْحَاجِّ وَعِمَارَةَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ كَمَنْ... ^{up}

9: 19. Do ye make the giving of drink to pilgrims, or the maintenance of the Sacred Mosque, equal to (the pious service of)

...أَمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَجَاهَدَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ...

those who believe in God and the Last Day, and strive with might and main in the Cause of God?

...لَا يَسْتَوُونَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ...

They are not comparable in the sight of God:

...وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ (١٩)

and God guides not those who do wrong.

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ أَكْثَرُ
دَرَجَةً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ...^{up}

9: 20. Those who believe, and suffer exile and strive with might and main, in God's cause, with their goods and their persons, have the highest rank in the sight of God:

...وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

They are the people who will achieve (salvation).

Transliteration *Allazina a_manu_ wa ha_jaru_ wa ja_hadu_ fi sabililla_hi bi amwa_lihim wa anfusihim, a'zamu darajatan 'indalla_h(i), wa ula_ika humul fa'_izu_n(a).*

Muhammad Asad's translation:

9: 19 Do you, perchance, regard the [mere] giving of water to pilgrims and the tending of the inviolable House of Worship as being equal to [the work of] one who believes in God and the Last Day and strives hard in God's cause?

These are not equal in the sight of God.

9: 20 **Those who believe, and who have forsaken the domain of evil and have striven hard in God's cause with their possessions and their lives have the highest rank in the sight of God ; and it is they, they who shall triumph [in the end]!**

[Asad's note 30 – See surah 2, note 203, and surah 4, note 124]

Muhammad Pickthall's translation

Those who believe, and have left their homes and striven with their wealth and their lives in

Allah's way are of much greater worth in Allah's sight. These are they who are triumphant.

Ali's comments:

1269. Giving drinks of cold water to thirsty pilgrims, and doing material services to a mosque are meritorious acts, but they are only external. If they do not touch the soul, their value is slight. Far greater, in the sight of God, are Faith, Endeavour, and self-surrender to God. Men who practice these will obtain honour in the sight of God. God's light and guidance comes to them, and not to those self-sufficient beings who think that a little show of what the world considers piety is enough.

1270. Here is a good description of Jihad. It may require fighting in God's cause, its a form of self-sacrifice. But its essence consists in;

- a true and sincere Faith, which so fixes its gaze on God, that all selfish or worldly motives seem paltry and fade away, and

- an earnest and ceaseless activity, involving the sacrifice (if need be) of life, person, or property, in the service of God.

Mere brutal fighting is opposed to the whole spirit of Jihad, while the sincere scholar's pen or preacher's voice or wealthy man's contributions may be the most valuable forms of Jihad.