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ISLAM AND THE CONCEPT OF POWER

Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah

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Second Edition

1401 A.H. - 1981 A.D.

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INTRODUCTION

In the name of God, the Merciful and Compassionate, Praise be to God, Master of the World; Blessings and Peace upon our Lord Muhammad and his noble folk and distinguished companions and followers who will go the Judgement Day with a virtuous record.

Those who work for Islam - who are playing a role of education and guidance - feel a great need for objective Islamic studies which deal with the problems of life from the standpoint of comprehensive Islamic understanding, because they face a terrible dearth of Islamic solutions in the face of the many problems which present themselves. They feel the challenges thus facing them: from within, when those proceeding along the path come forward putting question marks on more than one issue or problem; and from without, when the enemies of Islam arise to cast suspicion, accusations, and harmful ideas at this work and these workers, obscuring the Islamic vision of life and creating the impression that it is unable to keep up with the stages of development which present, with every new day, a new problem and a new picture of the future.

As for us, we confront the problem from a different position, namely the need of every creed for a clear picture of all the problems facing it, removed from all internal and external challenges. For it would be unnatural for the rank and file to anticipate challenges and to delve into research for Islamic solutions to problems or for the Islamic concepts for practical action, because that robs the rank and file of their confidence in ideals or action in the dilemmas that confront them.

On the one hand, there are questions that need answers. On the other hand, a search which arises from the need to confront challenges does not get underway unless there is a framework of issues raised by others. Thus, the research proceeds according to their thinking and deals exclusively with problems which they have treated from their own conceptual framework. It responds to what they have deemed valid and rejects what they have decided to reject, causing the concepts to be driven by the conceptual environment in which they live and within whose framework they operate.

So the way is cleared for deviant mentality to impose itself on concepts before they are imposed on the righteous mentality whose isolation had not been clear before. Moreover, many basic aspects of belief may escape us as a natural consequence of treating the problem in ways proposed by others, rather than from a comprehensive, objective approach which would touch on all aspects of a problem from a natural foundation for study and belief.

We approach the problem on the basis of comprehensive, independent research into the problems of belief, even though we may face challenges, for decisive response is directly related to properly formulating concepts in an Islamic conceptual environment. This would inspire in the Muslim rank and file confidence, perseverance, and activity that is action, rather than reaction to issues raised by others.

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This is one of the methods we can use to unite the Muslim's thought with his actions on the basis of an independent, genuine personality which views reality with confidence, power, and peace of mind.

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Perhaps we bring up nothing new if we suggest that this gives Muslim theoreticians the responsibility of doing research and study along these lines and that it should motivate them to marshal their energies to fill this terrible vacuum, as an Islamic obligation necessitating a struggle in the cause of God, a struggle with intellectual as well as practical aspects.

We know that God asks us to use the energies which he created in us to build a life that he would like and approve of, not for us to squander or to fling in an intellectual corner which would add nothing significant to life.

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Perhaps the subject of power is the most important one which we must study objectively, for it has a great role to play in the complete development of Islam. We, therefore, need to know its nature, its scope, and its limits lest we proceed in a direction contrary to the righteous Islamic path by committing ourselves to it through concepts alien to Islam which would remove us from Islam as far as our means are concerned, though Islam is our end.

I have tried to raise this subject as an independent topic in my Islamic studies because I have not found within the limits of my own reading a book dealing comprehensively with power. In fact, all that I have found in this regard are some scattered discussions within other Islamic studies.

Perhaps the title that I have chosen for this book will give rise to the idea that we are engaged in a serious study of power which will treat aspects related to struggle and doing battle and other concepts arising in the framework of war and peace. However, we look at power as a general issue dealing with all facets contributing to integrating Islamic existence and endurance, and its ability to persevere and continue, because material force does not represent a large part of the fruits of battle when it is not supported by spiritual force. Indeed, a large army may lose in battle against a small one if it is defeated spiritually due to internal and external factors robbing it of its self-confidence. For this reason we find warring countries depending on wars of nerves with each other to achieve the self-defeat which contributes to military defeat.

In this regard, we certainly must learn the ways of creating power. We must also investigate numerical growth as a factor in strength or weakness, because there is the idea that there is strength in numbers. Therefore, force tends to convince societies with many members of their power, and because of that they are made to lower their guard and rely on their own numbers. They are prevented from fulfilling the other conditions which turn numbers into an agent of strength rather than one of weakness.

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We have attempted to study the concept of social power as a vital element in forging power for the Islamic Nation, because the nation that does not possess the ingredients of power does not have the foundation to enable it to benefit from the other elements of material power. This is because a disintegrating society cannot gain from battle, no matter what kind of power it has, because weakness in the social fabric will upset the military balance in favor of the stable, cohesive society, no matter how limited its forces are.

Thus, a general look at power opens up to as many fields of study because of their close relationship in the matter of creating power for the Islamic Nation.

Perhaps some may find it strange that in our study of power, we speak of the issue of government in Islam and the need for complete change in the shape of Islamic life. However, if we ponder the subject deeply, we will find that the research proceeds in the framework of a familiar concept to many Muslims, the concept of change through force as something contrary to the Islamic line because the idea of government in these ages is not an Islamic thing. Rather, by some accounts, it is prohibited on the practical level because it endangers the safety of individual Muslims when they stand in confrontation with the infidel oppressor. This is the point of view of many Muslim thinkers and others, who, as they understand Islam as a personal and individual endeavor, do not approach the task of shaping society, let alone shaping the state.

There is yet another point of view which holds that God did not leave life in an Islamic vacuum. For if Islam is the final law of God concerning life, then we absolutely must work to apply it on all levels. We must search for suitable means to do that on the basis of the original Islamic experience which at times practiced kindness, and at other times violence and on the basis of Quranic verses and sayings of the Prophet which come up in the Sunnah (body of legal precedents consisting of documented accounts of what the Prophet said and did), which did not specify the limits of the resort to force with regard to time or place.

This is one point of view, in opposition to the other. They both approach research into the use of power for good or evil. The researcher into power must deal with the Islamic position on both these points of view, because the problem does not represent an intellectual luxury. Rather, it involves fateful issues for the lives of Muslims and their social, political, and military endeavors. That is what gives this topic in our consideration of power the utmost importance.

I have tried - to the extent possible - to clarify the Islamic idea of power with regard to belief and practice, from the standpoint of my understanding of Islam and to expose some erroneous ideas on this subject.

Finally, these discussions which I offer in my book represent, in my view, only the first steps on the path of this research which we hope will be completed by the innovative vanguard of our Muslim thinkers. For I do not claim to be

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infallible or omniscient. I truly hope as one in a responsible position to find in the consciousness of my readers critical thinking which will approach reading with a critical spirit - with no trace of flattery, solicitude, or carelessness.

A final word that I would like to address to the reader is that this book was written at sporadic intervals in a climate of war and strife in the area in which I was living in the Beirut suburbs, al-Nab'ah; it was written under frequent shell attack and by candlelight. This is something I mention for the record on the one hand. On the other hand, I praise God Almighty and give thanks to Him for the strength he has given me in these hard and trying circumstances and for the means he has provided to me for thought, work, and accomplishment.

He is the Most Merciful One; He is our Judge and most excellent guardian.

Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah

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PREFACE

Why this Discussion?

Why Power?

Power in the Holy Qur'an

In the Name of God, the Merciful and Compassionate

What is the position of Islam on the concept of force if it comes up (as an issue) for society, in the domain of life or belief, in the case of peace or war, for the individual or for society?

What position does it take on this concept? Is it in keeping with Islam, with its philosophy, its laws, and its way of life? Or is it contrary to it? And what are the limits to that harmony or conflict? Or, more precisely, what are its domains, and what are its horizons?

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What is the kind of power that Islam believes in? If it believes in power as a principle, is it a brute force which justifies anything, even aggression? Or, is it a power that stops before the borderline of aggression without crossing it?

* * *

In all of this, what is the relation to this concept of the Islamic moral precepts in the religious scriptures, such as forgiveness, pardon, remission (of sin), patience, and tolerance? Are they a sign of weakness, indicating that Islam encourages a morality of weakness for man, or are they a sign of power in harmony with the delineation of power in Islam? How would that be, or how are we to understand it?

These are some of the question marks confronting us when we address the concept of power in life and the position of Islam on that. These are the questions searching for an answer, with regard to conceptual problems when thought strives to solve these problems, and with regard to the problems of living when life goes forward to meet the problems of reality with practical solutions.

Why This Discussion?

This question is posed to us as we become immersed in this discussion.

Why this discussion? Why is it necessary? Are we facing an intellectual crisis which is debating the concept of power in Islam? Are we involved with power in a tale of ideas about which we theorize and analyze? Is this a case of life confronting the need for power - naturally - in all aspects of the reality in which we live as Muslims?

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As for the answer to this question, it is (1) that we are here to take a step forward in the search for the components of power. At the same time, we feel that among the foremost components of power in a person's life are: sketching the shape, delineating the idea, and analyzing opposing concepts which make our understanding of power "something puffed up and empty", with no substance at all, a debate of erroneous concepts misunderstood by some so that Islam is made answerable for errors in its theoretical research or in its practical behavior.

As for the relationship of this to reality, we clearly find it in the fact that imposes itself on us - that reality is nothing but the materialized version of what we have conceptualized and the ideas we have had. For the history of deviation from and adherence (to the righteous path) is the history of intellectual deviation which develops into deviation in practice, and the history of spiritual righteousness which takes form in proceeding along the righteous path.

In the light of the foregoing, we may come upon the idea that has a hold on the minds of many - that belief in God means a sense of weakness, and that a believing person is a weak person. This perhaps is in part what impels us to look for (the concept of) power in Islam so that we can prove the error of this thinking and change reality for believers, in their own eyes and in the eyes of others, so that it changes into another reality.

(2) Perhaps we are also impelled into this discussion by the tendency prevalent among some thinkers to formulate religious concepts in a framework which inspires weakness in the foundation of man's character and makeup, and augments this feeling that he has so that he feels crushed under the weight of this personal weakness and he feels he has no power or strength.

The danger of this tendency appears between man's sense of God Almighty's complete control and the continuing domination of the exploitative forces in society. This is because a person's feelings of loss of personal power before God make him submissive to the winds of power coming to him from the outside without his possessing any internal personal resistance to them.

(3) We may also find among the reasons for this discussion an attempt to focus on the aspect of war in Islam and to remove it from the realm of offensive war - as some delight in considering it - putting it into the realm of realistic - or defensive - war, and to reject the idea that war in Islam, or the power that it embraces is a type of call to Islam or a practical way to bring others into this religion.

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Perhaps we may find in all of this some vital intellectual aspects which clarify a previously unclear Islamic concept or unstable behavior which needs direction and guidance. We may, through this, achieve results which make this

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discussion and others like it a religious and intellectual necessity, putting our thoughts and deeds on a sound footing, which we must do. Or it might, at least, usher us into a serious endeavor which would put us in the right direction to get there (on a sound footing) on our practical way toward a better Islamic tomorrow.

* * *

Why Power?

And now ... why power? Is it an important one of life's momentous values which man seeks completely for its own sake as he seeks any of the principles needed for the self to prosper? Or is it one practical means by which the self arrives at formulating the values of life?

It is both at the same time. It is an internal value which makes man feel fulfilled and capable in the process of forging a personality. It is also an important means of forming life and of achieving sound values in it.

This is the picture - what we see and what we think.

To have power in life ... this means to be yourself and not someone else, and to take the reins of life to direct and control it, to let life give you its energy and resources to utilize and unleash as you wish and see fit, and to make out of them what pleases you.

As far as losing power, that makes you weak. You lose the ability to struggle and act. This means that you take on a different form, like an apparition which appears and vanishes to return in fleeting glimpses in faded colors, with features obscured. And you do not take part in life, except from far off, indeed, like a fleeting glimpse of faint lights coming across vast distances, diffident and embarrassed, so that the darkness of night will be penetrated but nothing will be disturbed except some marginal shadows, in complete tranquility.

That is the dynamic concept of life which presents power as one of the great influential values, in the scope of meaning that the word represents to encompass all of life, including thoughts, weapons, and stands.

That is the reality we have to deal with. In every instance where power increases, life progresses and develops, and the scope is widened for new energy and strength to emerge in innovative ways, and principles are set into motion to impose themselves on reality.

The reverse is also true. As for instances where weakness occurs, life begins to collapse and retreat, and energies diminish and shrink. They freeze up in the tiny space inside one, in paralysis and suffocation.

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Even history, the history of war and peace, in science, money and other areas, is the history of the powerful and their adversaries from among the partisans of truth and falsehood. As for the weak and those who seem weak to others, they have been unable to find a base to support their principles, thoughts, and self-interest, except after obtaining the means of power, not standing at the beginning of the road shuffling their feet and crying over past glory and lost power.

* * *

Therefore, our need for power is a need to build a personality which feels that its feet are firmly planted on solid ground as it goes through life, to hold the reins of itself and its own life. It is our need to transform the goals we believe in and the values we call for into a living reality which governs our life and plans it with power that confronts barriers, transcends difficulties, banishes obstacles from our path, and clears the way for us for constructivity, planning, and action.

Furthermore, we find that our need to develop power is the need for life which wants to benefit from the resources put in the ground, floating in the air, and hidden deep under the sea. It wants to put them to good use to serve mankind. If we do not have the power of knowledge and the power to control material resources of power, then we shall remain just where we are, gazing at them from afar just as someone dreaming views his dreams from a distance without having the means to realize them and transform them into actual reality.

* * *

Power in the Holy Qur'an

The Holy Qur'an speaks of power in more than one verse, as an attribute of the Dear and Almighty God. It spoke of it as an attribute of those who lived on earth and obtained the means of power, but their power did not benefit them at all in face of the power of God, may He be praised.

It (the Qur'an) contains much discussion of man's weakness, about the many weak points in his makeup, and in the way he lives, in general, and appeals to him to shed the causes of weakness and take on the means of obtaining power.

It also concentrates, in more than one chapter, on the call to power with regard to holy struggle and on planning for that in the advice it offers and in the regulations it stipulates. If we wish to follow Qur'anic verses we find that the Holy Qur'an, as a whole, is a practical blueprint for power in all aspects of intellectual and day-to-day life. It opens its doors to man and impels him to work to enter them. It guides him toward the practical means to achieve that and inspires the ability in him to achieve this goal through sound and realistic ways.

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We shall try, in the discussion which we shall undertake, to bring forth the characteristics of this power and its basic components based on the verses we read, Qur'anic insights we encounter, and its guidelines in this area. For it is the basic source in which we can be completely confident because it represents pure Islamic truth. We also must refer to the noble traditions contained in the Sunnah to elucidate to us what is in the Qur'an and to explain things needing (further) explanation so that we may - through all of this - fulfill the Islamic idea of power in all our practical endeavors.

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Chapter One

Power and Its Position In Ideology

1. The relation of the Religious Concept of Power to Social Weakness
2. Power in Realistic and Idealistic Frameworks
3. The Idea of the Power of Allah in the Ideology
 - A. Allah is Powerful and Severe in Retribution
 - B. Whoever Helps Allah Shall be Helped by Him
 - C. Allah is the Provider of Strength
 - D. Allah is the Source of Strength in Everything
4. The idea of the Power of Man in the Ideology
5. The Position of Human Weakness in the Ideology
6. The Relation between the Two Ideas
7. There is No Power and No Strength Save in Allah
8. We are of Allah and to Him We Shall Return

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What is the Islamic concept of man, in terms of weakness and strength? What is the idea that it aims to stir in human nature? Is it the inspiring idea that man possesses an awesome power which becomes grander and grander until he feels he can overcome every obstacle in every area of life, for there is no barrier of weakness to his capabilities and powers that would restrain him from the attempt. Or, on the other hand, man may be subject to feelings of weakness, possessing neither strength nor power, advantage nor disadvantage. He is a being overwhelmed by feelings of personal weakness based on the nature of his being and his existence.

1. The Relation of the Religious Concept of Power to Social Weakness

Some people may understand from Islamic religious texts, the Qur'an and other sources, that it embraces this second idea in its understanding of man. It embodies an image of man as weak and impotent, rather than strong and capable. In the beginning and end, the image begins with the creation of man, as the verse tells us: "He created man weak." (4:67) and "Allah creates you weak: after weakness He gives you strength, and after strength infirmity and grey hairs. He creates whatever He will. He is the all-knowing, the Almighty." (30:54) Thus, weakness represents the movement of life between the beginning and the end beyond the strength extended by Allah.

There are a number of verses that deal with man and his life, discussing him in terms of the idea of helplessness that makes him aware of his loss of personal strength; he is depicted as a feeble being who possesses neither advantage nor disadvantage, neither life nor death, nor resurrection. This image is absorbed into his emotions until it is transformed into a profound idea that dominates all his motivations, impulses and movements in life, and leads to a loss of self-confidence, resembling a kind of paralysis.

The Qur'an, when it confirms this, concentrates on the absolute need of Allah in order to approach His unlimited prosperity. There is for man no value in comparison with that of Allah. This is what is expressed in the verse: "Men, it is you who stand in need of Allah. He is all-sufficient and glorious. He can destroy you if He wants and recreate you. All is possible with Allah by His greatness." (34: 15-17)

This extends to all a person's movements, in his direction and deviation, in poverty and wealth, in sickness or recovery, in what he eats, drinks, and wears, in his life and death. He is directed by the truth of the Qur'an which depletes a person of all the strength he has to movement within a framework in which he can obtain self-sufficiency for these needs. For every movement, however small, is in the hands of Allah, as He rules everything. Man is like the slave of a mamluk who does not dare do anything, according to Qur'anic verses: "Say I do not have either advantage or disadvantage except as Allah wills." (7:187) "Allah misleads whom He will, and guides to the right path whom He pleases." (6:39) "Allah gives abundantly to whom He will and sparingly to whom He pleases. He has knowledge of all things." (29:62) "He who has made me is He who gives me guidance, food and drink, and cures me if I am sick, and causes me to die, then brings me back to life." (26:78, 81)

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The issue does not stop here in accounting for this view of man and his existence. Rather, it tries to make it into a daily crisis expressing the conditions of weakness and surrender in the face of the occurrences of life.

Perhaps the clearest expression of this is the well-known phrase, "There is no power and no strength save in Allah," which is repeated by the faithful in affirmation of this belief. It embodies the continuing and deep revival of the feeling of general helplessness that denies a person all his strength and power, for it depends only on Allah, for He grants strength and gives power.

The image becomes clearer still in the words repeated by the believers in the face of death, expressing complete surrender along the feeling that man is not an independent being, as in the following:

"We belong to Allah, and to Him we shall return." (2: 156)

These Qur'anic verses have been mentioned to show their harmony with this idea in expression and content. Proclaiming them in the face of misfortune is of great spiritual value for it raises its adherents to a high level by which they achieve a degree of distinction greater than the other believers. And it is said:

"We shall test your steadfastness with fear and famine, with loss of life and property and crops. Give good news to those who endure with fortitude, who in adversity say, 'We belong to Allah and to Him we shall return.' On such men will be Allah's blessing and mercy; such men are rightly guided." (2:155-7)

This situation embodies the feeling of submission in the face of absolute power and in the profound feelings of oppression that reveal to a person that he is owned by this controlling power and that he will return to it inevitably, in spite of the fact that he has free will. Thus, fear, famine, loss of property, life, and crops are expressions of the will of Allah, and we accept it with patience, contentment, and tranquility, because we are the possessions of Allah and He administers his possessions as He will.

This idea is clarified in the verse:

"Do not say of anything, 'I will do it tomorrow,' without adding, 'If Allah wills.'" (18: 23-24)

From this we understand the idea that inspires a person to stop working toward tomorrow's projects, jobs, and plans, and to work to achieve an attitude of submission. He feels that he has the ability to achieve any goal, or undertake any project, only with the will of Allah, or according to his design. There is no use in evaluating work, if one does not accept the idea of a free controlling will, which is able to ruin all projects, destroy every plan, and stop all work, for it is everything and the person in the face of it is nothing.

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If we depart from the Qur'anic environment, we come across prayers that direct man to their Lord, in a submissive spiritualism that expresses this oppression, and debilitating helplessness. We read, for example, in the well-known invocation of the Amir Ali Ibn Abi Talib "Have mercy on the physically weak, the fragile-boned, and the delicate-bodied, for just imagine how much more I am your weak servant, humble, wretched, and poor."

And we read in the invocation of Imam Ali Ibn Al-Huseyn Zayn Al-Aa'badin in the newspaper Al-Sajadiyya:¹ "Oh God, You turn away from me Your holy face, or You deny me Your prodigious grace or You forbid me Your Prosperity, or You cut me off from the reason that I have not the way to anything I hope for other than You, and I cannot find a meaning for anything I have without You, for I am Your servant and in Your hands. Take control of me, I have no command but Yours, penetrating in Your judgment, just in your decisions. I have no power outside Your authority, I cannot exceed Your ability. I cannot win over Your affection and I am not worth Your approval, and I cannot receive what You have except by obeying You and by Your mercy.

Oh, God, I have become and am constantly Your servant. I have no advantage or disadvantage except by You. I know this about myself. I recognize the limitations of my strength and the inadequacy of my power. I realize what You have promised me. What You have given me completes me, for I am Your servant, humble, weak, lowly, contemptible, poor, fearful, and seeking refuge."¹

What does all this mean? Does it not represent the extreme limit of the feelings of weakness, helplessness, and oppression?

Doesn't this participate in the Islamic image of a person, in emptying him of all feelings of strength? How can he, in such an environment, have confidence in himself and his abilities, and his capacity to move forward by creative ability? We know that the reading of the Qur'an and prayers represent daily worship that the Muslim practices almost every day, as he wants to come close to Allah by following a spiritual, submissive course. These images and thoughts are given a greater dimension in man's thoughts and feelings by their continual repetition and their subsequent establishment in his soul.

The atmosphere that religion creates in the soul of a person, whether Muslim or not, causes him to forget his feelings of personal identity until he devotes all his efforts and abilities to it, including his participation in heroic acts and victories on the field of battle. This is replaced by feelings of submission, that it is not he who is victorious but rather Allah is the victor, through him. This is what is expressed in the verse: "It was not you but Allah who slew them. It was not you who smote them; Allah smote them." (8:17)

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This is the logic of some of the philosophers who tried to study the religious thought reflecting this mentality, in order to explain the feelings of weakness, helplessness, and oppression in the face of tyrannic forces in society, and in order to obtain simple results not requiring long, involved research.

Let us follow some examples of this study which were influenced by one researcher in his discussion on this idea in the context of the characteristics of the bourgeois mentality. Dr. Hashim Nashabah, in the magazine Al-Nabatiyyah, said:

"If we want to examine this further in the description of the characteristics of the bourgeois feudalistic mentality, we find that there is a basic assumption that the human mind, within its limits, is incapable of understanding and recognizing the underlying causes in Allah's creation. The strength of Allah and that of nature are two overwhelming forces, and he cannot fight against either of them. Thus we find that the tyranny coming from the imagining Allah and nature leads to submission to tyranny in the form of a person. Thus, the utterances "I am nothing", "I cannot do anything" not only express the psychological condition coming from feelings of helplessness and deprivation, but also reflect the view that the universe limits and circumscribes the role of the individual and his aspirations.

In such a situation, it is evident that it is rooted in our daily situation, as well as in certain thought patterns.

The person in our bourgeois feudal society does not need a religious disposition to accept the saying of the Qur'an, "There is no strength nor power except in Allah" for man is of low rank. Religion teaches him daily that he was created as a weak being, "we were created as weak creatures." "Allah alone has ability." "You want and I want but Allah does what He wants." The individual lives in a world in which he knows ahead of time that he cannot control it and that his destiny in it is determined. "Everyone who lives, dies, and everything that dies, passes, and all that follows him, follows," in the end, as at the beginning, for Allah is right in everything. "We are of Allah and to Him we shall return." It is clear that an ideology like this by virtue of its pressure on continuing the authority of Allah encourages the continuing power of those having authority in society.

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This is a simple explanation of sociological phenomena that does not require involved research, for the sake of understanding its deeper causes, for it is evidenced in political reality as seen in the practice of oppressive rulers in various ages of history who tried to falsify man's understanding of things, just as they falsified their intentions in many life situation.

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Now

With this new idea, we may start from the beginning in order to examine the evidence of Islamic expressions of belief in Allah and their characteristics, man's situation in this, and their influence on the humanistic image of man and of his practical role in the direction of this image.

Is there a relation between the absolute role of Allah, in theology, and the image that represents the person as a weak being without will or choice?

Perhaps we can pose the problem in a more precise, detailed form for this difficult, involved discussion.

Does Islam try to embody, in life, an image of man as weak and helpless, instead of strong and able, through its representational religious thought on Allah and man?

Or, on the other hand, does Islam want to give a strong, impulsive, progressive personality for man, as a competitor who operates with the forces around him by his own strength? Or does it want to present evidence of the weak man who goes through life without freedom, whether he wants it or not, and operates with the forces around him in an attitude of weakness, surrender, and submission, assuming that he is helpless in understanding and controlling them?

What is the true image of Islam, or Islamic thought, between these two representations?

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The answer to this is the first view in its formulation, which attests to the strength of man, his effectiveness and his freedom to choose and to control many of the forces in life. In considering the Islamic concepts of Allah and man, their relationship is a source of strength that compels man to persevere, impelling him toward autonomous movement to grow and revitalize the life around him.

This is our general opinion on the subject, which has many aspects. We must explore, study, and analyze it so that the opinion may be expanded from the exclusive attention to detail to a more extensive view of the subject.

These may be summarized in several points:

1. Power in realistic and idealistic frameworks
2. The idea of the power of Allah in the Ideology
3. The idea of the power of man in the ideology
4. The relationship between the two ideas.

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2. Power in Realistic and Idealistic Frameworks

It may be useful for us, in understanding the idea of power in Islam in realistic and idealistic frameworks, to pose ourselves a question, so that we can define the situation by the answer: What is the goal of emphasizing the effects of power on man, his feelings of freedom of will and to exercise his abilities, and his ability for movement as he faces the issues of life?

Does having an idealistic viewpoint fill a person with feelings of complete freedom and a total will that has no limits, until it transforms the person into a God or almost a God?

Is this what we want? We recognize in this an intellectual arrogance that aggrandizes man's role in life to an imaginery level, without benefitting him at all.

Or we may want to have a complete, realistic image of man in this life, such that the person who feels that he has abilities of which he is proud far from any vital force that would deny his will or impose on it any lasting feeling of helplessness.

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We see that the end we aim for in the issue of man's strength or weakness rests in the second aspect of the question, because the problem resulting from the loss of his free will, transforming man into a God, did not occur. But rather, the basic problem is in the person's feeling of helplessness in the face of the forces of nature surrounding him, and the forces of oppressive groups suppressing his will in a way that denies and devalues his humanity, which causes the person unable to be in harmony with nature, himself, and others, due to the pressure of an oppressive ruler and the destructiveness of fear.

We find confirmation of these results in imaginary environments in which the idea of absolute power is in the minds of some of the people. For if we place the divine idea to the side, and proceed in our thinking on the basis of materialism, which denies the existence of forces outside the realm of nature, we may leave man face to face with nature so that he can work with it from a position of strength, not weakness, in spite of the fact he feels an intellectual pressure that is denied by his will. So what would the result be? Is it different from the realistic result that assumes the idea of the absolute authority of Allah?

He would be free to work with nature, to explore it, to make use of it to serve him, and to cooperate with its intricate mysteries, so nature would be reproduced and benefit from it in the abundance of things created in the form of natural things.

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However, if man transgresses the law, rebels against it, or follows his will and ignores it, he will remain at the mercy of these laws, for the process of change will still yield to the pressure of the laws that have governed man for eternity.

If a man transgresses the laws of life physically or spiritually, he escapes the pressure of his necessary, natural needs, because the law of material necessity does not leave him any ability to move outside his sphere, whatever the conditions are or how numerous the theories are.

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In summary, the idea of a free, limitless will, such that the person does not feel helpless in any situation, is one of the imaginary ideas when he lives in a framework as a limited being, because the limited being is still submissive, in his existence and mental and physical movements, to the boundaries that he lives within, his particular material existence, or his limited horizons in which his private and public experiences take place.

Free will and unlimited prosperity are among the descriptions of freedom, for they do not exist within limited boundaries. As far as the nature of the boundaries which stop the limited ability of man, they are not governed by limited experiences because they bring only partial results. Rather, the natural, irrefutable laws of life, which the person discovers after long effort, force him to subject his life to their processes so that there is a correspondence between the universal laws and the nature of life.

This is not a philosophy that fits within the framework of philosophic theories for it yields to those theories in discussion or argument. Rather, it is a living reality affirmed by the nature of life in all areas. For this reason, we have philosophic words and expressions.

* * *

3. The Idea of the Power of Allah in the Ideology

Now, here we are, face to face, with the idea of the "power of Allah" in Islamic ideology, as a stage of consciousness, and the relationship between it and the issue of man's weakness and strength.

We begin by looking briefly at some Qur'anic verses that discuss the "power of Allah" in the face of man's weakness, to study the nature of it, in addition to the goals of Islam. This is for the purpose of confirmation of this, and the areas in which the subject is discussed, so that we may come to the conclusion that was indicated at the beginning of this discussion, which is that the goal is far from an attempt to weaken man's position, by deepening his feelings of weakness and immobilizing his ability for autonomous movement. Rather, the goal is to protect a person from his weakness.

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If we study the verses that discuss the power of Allah, we find the subjects of the punishment of man for violation of divine commandments, by rebelling against the will of Allah, man's confrontation with the powers of evil in life, and the prosperity of man. Examples of these indicate that it is desirable for man to achieve a balance in his practical behavior, so that the power of Allah is a deterrent to deviation from the course, and serves to give strength in situations of weakness. We see this in what we read in the verses.

A. Allah is Powerful and Severe in Retribution

We see this in Hadith on the power of Allah, in the form of threats of punishment imposed on the unbelievers in this world and the hereafter, as a suggestion to others who rebel against Allah in the present and future. The punishments of those are discussed, for Allah's power has no limits. Nor do those rebelling have any defense, however strong they are. Let us look at some verses that deal with the subject.

1. "Like Pharaoh's people and those that have gone before them, they disbelieved Allah's revelations. Therefore Allah will smite them in their sinfulness. Allah is mighty and stern in retribution." (8:52)

2. "Have they never journeyed through the land and seen the fate of those who went before them, nations far mightier than they? There is nothing in heaven or earth beyond the power of Allah. He is mighty and all-knowing." (35:44)

3. "But when they face their punishment the wrongdoers will know that the power of Allah is all." (2:165)

4. "Arrogant and unjust were the men of Aad. They used to say, 'Who is more powerful than us?' Could they not see that Allah who created them was mightier than they? Yet they denied our revelations. And we sent them a howling wind over a few days, so that they might taste punishment in this life, for the punishment of the hereafter will be more terrible and they shall not be saved." (41:15-16)

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We may notice in the verses a concentration on the great power of Allah in order to prevent the power of man from an oppressive tyranny that would destroy his life and that of others. It discusses in various ways the power of those in power who are arrogant or oppressive. How could they stand firm for a moment in the face of the power of Allah when He could inflict punishment on them and destroy them? Then they face punishment in the hereafter which is the most shameful and severe. Man forgets to trust in his own free power when he is faced with responsibility and then recognizes that its results, on the Day of Judgment, are related to responsibility or deviation in the present or future. And this brings him to a submission to a greater power, for he bends down, surrenders, and begins a conscious accounting for his behavior to walk along the straight and narrow path.

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By this means, the verses serve the purpose of a warning, on one hand, and instruction, on the other hand, for it makes the great power of Allah a force that deters man from deviation and rebellion, from oppression and tyranny. At the same time, it brings forth a feeling of personal strength that guides him through life on a course that is far from the path of deviation.

We must point out an important point here, and that is that the power of Allah does not want to impose itself on a person's thoughts or his free will. Rather it tries to emphasize the factors of deviation by considering them wrong for the individual and society, as well as the idea of seeking a goal and searching for the path, and following the will that guides one in difficult choices reflecting self-determination on the basis of right and wrong. Thus, man lives in an atmosphere of vast freedom that does not compel the individual by any pressure. Rather, the matter stops at the influences which assist him in choosing, or in an environment that is conducive for thought and will.

Perhaps we would not be far from the truth if we said that living with power, in executory or practical areas, does not threaten the independent, conscious will of man, but, on the contrary, confirms it on the basis that it makes more precious the distance between the will and the influences of deviation, as it plays a practical and disinterested role, particularly if we know that it is directed toward those who are offered every means of knowledge, but rebel against it without need or evidence, but rather out of the isolated desire for dissension and deception.

* * *

B. Whoever Helps Allah Shall be Helped by Him

We notice in some verses an indication that the power of Allah is an element of security for the person who faces the forces of injustice and evil in a decisive situation, and helps him remain steadfast and brave.

It stays with him to give him strength and fortify his situation, however great the strength of the enemy, because Allah is with him and comes to his aid, making him strong, and giving support to his position.

Several verses talk about this:

1. "And when our judgment came to pass, we delivered Saleh through our mercy from the ignominy of that day, together with those who shared his faith. Mighty is your Lord and all-powerful." (11:66)
2. "Those who have been unjustly driven from their homes, only because they said, 'Our Lord is Allah.' Had Allah not defended some men by the might of others, the monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques in which His praise is celebrated daily, would have been totally destroyed. But whoever helps Allah shall be helped by Him." (22:40)

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3. "Allah turned back the unbelievers in their rage, and they went away empty-handed. He helped the faithful in the stress of war. Mighty is Allah and all-powerful." (33:25)

The power of Allah delivers man from internal feelings of weakness in the face of the forces of evil and oppression which try to destroy him spiritually by mobilizing great forces against him. So the person lives believing that Allah will not desert him when he is weak, but will give him renewed strength and does not withdraw His power.

The power of Allah is a source of great strength, for how could it be considered a source of weakness. In particular, we may look at the issue with the certainty that the opposing force has nothing against the power of Allah, and there remains no obstacle to man's power that would prevent him from pursuing an active role in life.

C. Allah is the Provider of Strength

The Qur'an speaks to us about the power of Allah, with respect to the prosperity He provides to His servants from His position of absolute power, and His comprehensive ability, because He created the causes for everything. Thus, man is reassured of his prosperity with a peace of mind from His creator. Thus, He closes the doors of feelings of weakness which restrict life or bring upon him the beginnings of poverty.

1. "Allah alone is the munificent giver, the invincible." (51:58)
2. "Allah is benign toward His servants. He is bountiful to whom He will. He is invincible." (42:19)

D. Allah is the Source of Strength in Everything

The discussion of the power of Allah in the Qur'an extends to all aspects of life, to all of its problems, all its blessings, and its tribulations, so that you feel that you are on a trip through the universe in the shadow of Allah. You meet Allah everywhere, in everything, from the smallest thing to the largest. For everything in existence has no advantage or disadvantage except in Allah, even for the Prophet. Thus, existence has great religious value. The Qur'an depicts man as free from every power, and from every personal inclination to obtain power, when he rests in the hands of Allah, as is said: "Say: 'I have no power to acquire benefits or to avert evil from myself, except by the will of Allah.'" (7:188)

Man, in all this, feels the power of Allah in all aspects of life that protect him, surround him or grant him strength, just as he is granted prosperity, health, and everything. He feels continuing protection at every time and in every place, so he does not surrender in a time of weakness which might lead to his downfall and his being at the mercy of despair and despondency.

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Thus, we see that the emphasis on the absolute power of Allah does not oppress man or cause him to suffer from his weakness. Rather, it makes him feel a strength that helps him solve problems by a realistic faith.

Perhaps those who are influenced by the divine ideology imagine that Allah represents an ordinary power, like one of the powers exerting control in life which governs man, render his will ineffectual, and suppress his freedom.

However, the Qur'an gives us an image that does not basically differ from this, according to which He is a righteous, merciful, compassionate creator who endows man with a mind and a will, just as He endows him with existence and provides him with everything to guide him along the path of goodness and away from the path of evil, making him an active force of goodness. Then He creates the impression in man that he is rich in everything and does not need anything which another can take from him because he has received from Allah, from the beginning to the end. Thus, the will of Allah and His power is not incompatible with man's welfare, because such a contradiction between the power of the Almighty and the welfare of the weak could only come about by the need of the powerful to exploit the weak, take advantage of him, and thereby achieve the will of the opponent to fill the incidental needs of the powerful against the weak.

4. The Idea of the Power of Man in the Ideology

The Islamic theological concept of man is based on two basic elements:

A. His role in the World. The Qur'an tells us about the large role Allah has given to man, as He is the creator of the earth, and has provided man with a great capacity to be aware of what is on the earth, on its surface and in its interior, and what is in space, in its atmosphere and its planets, and of universal forces and phenomena. This is something not granted by Allah even to His closest angels who praise and revere Him.

This leading role represents the highest position of power given by Allah to man. A greater role given to man is the administration of the world on earth, guiding and protecting it, on the basis of laws and natural practices that Allah entrusted him with in the framework of the divine mission that Allah has given him. It is said: "When your Lord said to the angels: 'I am placing on earth one that shall rule as My deputy,' they replied: 'Will You put there one that will do evil and shed blood, when we have for so long sung Your praises and sanctified Your name?' He said, 'I know what you do not know.' He taught Adam the names of all things and then set them before the angels, saying, 'Tell me the names of these, if what you say is true.' 'Glory to you,' they replied, 'we know only what You have taught us. You alone are wise and all-knowing.' Then he said to Adam, 'Tell them their names.' And when Adam had named them, He said, 'Did I not tell you that I know the secrets of heaven and earth, and all that you hide and all that you reveal?'" (2:30-33)

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We may notice the divine matter directed to the angels by the adoration of Adam, confirming the greatness of His creation, as proof of the position of power that Allah gave him, and His desire to promote him in it.

"If your Lord said to the angels, 'Prostrate yourselves before Adam,' they all prostrated themselves except Satan, who in his pride refused and became an unbeliever." (2: 34)

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B. Subjection of the World for Him, and for His Abilities in Several Aspects. First, he was created for his sake and his benefit. Thus, this gives rise to the idea that man is given the means to benefit from the world by his abilities according to his needs. Thus, he explores it and learns its secrets by serious research and profound thinking. Let us read some verses that discuss the original elements of this:

1. "Do you not see how Allah has subjected to you all that the heavens and the earth contain ... He has forced the sun and the moon into His service, each running for an appointed time." (2: 20,29)

2. "And He subjected to you the sun and the moon tirelessly and He subjected the day and the night to you." (33)

3. "It is He who created all that is in the earth for you." (2: 29)

4. "It is He who subdued the earth for you. Walk about its regions and eat of that which He has given you. All shall return to Him at the Resurrection." (67: 15)

5. "We have given you power on earth and provided you with a livelihood, yet you are seldom thankful." (7: 9)

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C. Allah's Respect for Man, and Considering Him the Most Favored of All. His creations making him follow Him, and calling him to account for his will, as is said: "We have bestowed blessings on Adam's children and guided them by land and sea. We have provided them with good things and exalted them above many of Our creatures." (17: 70)

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Then there are many verses that call man to take responsibility in making discoveries in life, learning its secrets by thinking about it in order to approach phenomena with an open, aware mind, and using that he knows to discover what he doesn't know, working with the world on the basis of consciousness, learning, and knowledge.

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"Say: Behold what the heavens and the earth contain." (10:101)
"They reflected on the creation of the heavens and earth, saying, 'Our Lord, You have not created these in vain.'" (3:191)

* * *

All of this brings us to the conclusion that man enjoys a great power by means of which he can explore the world with his intellectual abilities, and then work with it from a position of strength in subjugating its laws, in order to achieve what he wants in life, on the basis of his needs and goals.

This is the nature of religious thinking on the idea of man in terms of power and weakness. After this, we are told that religious thinking encourages feelings of helplessness, so man is made helpless in the face of nature. He does not have the strength to approach it and its mysteries or to know it. And he doesn't have the ability to work with it from a position of strength. According to this thinking, he is not able to benefit from it to any degree.

5. The Position of Human Weakness in the Ideology

According to the Hadith on the weakness of man, he submits to two points:

1. His weakness in the face of the absolute power of Allah, so that He is the source of his life and strength in the beginning and the end. So how could he compete with Him face to face?

2. His weakness in the face of the customs of life that man does not have the ability to change. Indeed, everything he can do is to live with it, to use secure means to protect himself from its results, or to discover the laws that guide him toward achieving a harmony with it, as we see in the position of man in relation to floods and earthquakes, or in his attempts to work with situations in foreign areas, on the basis of the production and use of equipment appropriate for its laws.

We do not believe that such feelings of weakness are relevant to religious thinking. Rather it is connected with the materialistic thinking that claims that man does not have the ability to challenge the laws of nature by changing or annulling them. All he has is his ability to know and discover the knowledge attributed to materialistic thinking. He does not consider himself in a position to challenge universal laws. All his thoughts and means advances man in his discovery of the world and provides a sure means of cooperating and living with it.

To summarize the Islamic idea on the weakness and strength of man. Man is strong in face of the world within its natural realm. Allah subjugated the world for him so that he could understand, discover, and control it. But he is weak in the face of Allah, because his strength comes from Him. And he is weak in the face of the laws of nature because he cannot leave the sphere of these laws as he

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himself is part of these laws, in view of the movement of his life and its surrender to the way of the world. For how is he able to rebel against it in pursuit of an imaginary ability that does not exist?

6. The Relation Between the Two Ideas

If we may summarize the idea of power in Islam, and compare the power of Allah with that of man, we find the following truth: the feelings of the absolute power of Allah do not cancel man's feeling of strength in himself. Rather, it increases his strength by considering Allah the source of his strength. And whatever increases his feelings of Allah's strength increases his confidence in the total source of that strength. He is not afraid that his strength will weaken or fail. The source remains constantly, merciful, wise, and knowing. He does not fear any other force in life that fights against him or annuls his power. His feelings for Allah may protect him from the threat of oppressive powers, because he is able to call for the help of Allah in the hope that He will give him support in his wisdom and general welfare.

As far as his weakness in the face of Allah, in Islamic thought, it is similar, to a large degree, to his weakness in the face of the forces of nature, such as wind, water, and food, in materialistic thought. Are these materialistic thinkers who try to philosophize about society and its effects able to consider the feelings of natural weakness, in the face of the needs that submit to universal laws, as a source of feelings of oppression which lead to submissiveness toward the oppressive forces in the world? We do not believe that there is any basis for an answer to this. For how do they adhere to religious thought, without withdrawing their thought from it?

7. There is No Power and No Strength Save in Allah

As for the saying "There is no power and no strength save in Allah," it expresses solely the idea that we have been commenting on, that is, that the source of power is Allah, as He created it and everything that comes from its continuation and expansion. This represents a call to extend power in a situation of weakness, on one hand, and the surrender to universal laws in a helpless situation, on the other hand. Thus, a situation can be imagined in which he stops, helpless, before the laws of nature which he cannot change. This is an expression of the limits of his power, for he does not have any ability other than that with which Allah has endowed him, and which is not incompatible with the nature of the world. Thus, the person who believes in Allah realistically is not able to practice his abilities except within the bounds of his potential and with the tools he has within him.

This, however, does not reveal in every incidental situation of helplessness what a person can do. Rather, it is devoid of realistic study of which universal laws are changeable, which are not, a comparison of them, and which ability a person has in the face of this or that situation.

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We do not deny that some people have made some practical errors in understanding universal matters, for they confirm the permanence of some phenomena, or universal conditions, or they believe that they can change something impossible to change, to the detriment of scientific progress. By experience, he is able to distinguish between the possible and the impossible, to learn the fixed bounds of universal laws, as opposed to changing phenomena. However, all of this does not make the religious saying indicative of helplessness because this is not its meaning. Rather it gives rise to the idea of scientific and cultural deficiency when an area of mistaken intellectual pursuits is examined with unclear, imprecise vision.²

8. We Are From Allah and To Him We Shall Return

The saying "We are From Allah and to Him We Shall Return" expresses a universal truth connected with the belief in Allah which says that all creation is governed by Allah, and that it all returns to Him because it does not have any immortality in this life,³ But does this mean that Allah imposes an existential helplessness on them and takes away the element of will and ability for movement and choice? We would never agree with this, because people, in religious thought, are servants of Allah and have a choice of right or wrong. Even in accepting Allah's legislative will, they may disobey the commands or intentions of Allah in some cases, just as they may obey Him in other cases, apart from any pressure from a practical viewpoint.

The saying expresses, in most situations, man's surrender to the condition of death as an unchangeable universal phenomenon. But this does not deny that continuation of the struggle against some of the accidental causes of death, like some incurable fatal diseases, by ignorance of their nature and of medicines, or some temporary disturbances of life that a person can overcome as a way of preventing its harmful results. There is a difference between your surrender to death as a phenomenon of physical occurrence that one encounters at the end, and your surrender to the causes of death that one can eliminate, change, or yield to a power greater than one's own. For it is not for you to surrender to these because you have the ability to confront them with the knowledge, instruments, and experience you have, or may acquire. However, you must yield to death, because it is a fixed law of physical existence of which you are a manifestation.

In view of this, we do not know how these sayings and religious texts have become responsible for man's submission to the authority of the executors in society, or for the realistic submission to this authority as a cause for a person's acceptance of a bourgeois, feudal society, due to these religious thoughts and the mentality of submitting to oppression. However, it is the reverse that is true.

We do not know the relation between these two. Because we are able to put our hands on these texts, we know they do not carry a meaning of weakness or helplessness. Rather a person can exercise power from a natural and material standpoint.

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Lastly, we do not see any connection between religious thoughts on Allah as all-powerful, and the idea that penetrates man with feelings of weakness and oppression. Rather we think that the first idea nullifies the second idea, because, on the contrary, feelings of extended power penetrate man, and fill him at all times with all the strength he can have in life, because divine power gives to man all the elements of power, and he has only to take from them to whatever degree he can.

We have seen in our discussion that the power of Allah in religious thoughts does not mean the suppression of man's will, but rather it suppresses the factors that would paralyze that will. The discussion of nature as an overwhelming force, which man is not in a position to understand or discover its secrets, or confront it, is found to be erroneous in its thinking, and, consequently, in its conclusion, from the standpoint of religious thought. The opinion is correct in that Allah entrusts the world and nature to man and calls on him to work with it by means of a deep, comprehensive awareness of its mysteries and laws which he has the ability to know through his thinking and experience. For he is the master of natural forces, and not their obedient, lowly, submissive servant.

As indicated in the Qur'an regarding the idea of man's weakness, it says: "He created man weak." But this was said in order to confirm the points of natural weakness found in his corporeal existence, and to lead to compliance with Islamic legislation, so that it would not burden him in life. Thus, we find in the beginning of the verse that talks about weakness and says, "Allah wants to lighten your burden," an indication that Islamic legislation is founded on tolerance and moderation, in keeping with the realities of human weakness.

This clarifies for us the distance between this verse and the suggestions of human weakness in the face of life and nature. This would cause the deepening of a mentality submissive to the world, which would lead to a mentality submissive to tyranny, just as the philosophers try to understand and come to conclusions about it.

In conclusion, if we examine the terms of Islamic ideology, in practical analysis, it brings us to the evidence of Islamic legislation, that a mentality submissive toward a bourgeois feudal society influences man's ability to move in every direction, and to maintain the freedom that began with his inner feelings of total power in the face of oppressive forces in the universe, and his free will in the face of the will of others.

In the legislative steps that motivate man, whether in the area of ideology and veneration, or in the area of work and subordination, we are compelled toward the intellectual satisfaction that the human freedom that Islam wants to confirm in the mind of man is not an incidental, secondary idea, but rather it is a basic Islamic principle, connected with its ideology and legislation. And Islam is not content, in emphasizing it, to talk about the power of man in the universe, in a comprehensive way, but rather it extends to a detailed discussion which touches every aspect involved in the decrease of this freedom, to wage a large-scale war on it in every aspect of life.

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As for the subject of the idolatry of Allah, or the worship of something other than Allah, the Qur'an does not treat this from the standpoint of its relation to the unity and devotion to Allah, in consideration of the greatness of Allah. Rather it wants to deal with it from the standpoint of the influence of the feeling of freedom within man, considering those who worship without Allah, or are submissive without being submissive to the will of Allah. How could man yield to such a servant, and how could a man venerate another man, like himself? For Allah created him free, with free will, in the face of others, so how could he abandon this freedom without cause? This is revealed in the verse: "Those whom you invoke besides Allah are, like yourselves, His servants." (7:193)

And the Imam Ali said, "There is no servant other than you, for Allah has made you free." 4

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We will discuss this aspect in detail in following chapters because we believe that Islamic legislation, with all its influence on ideas and wisdom, represents a continuing appeal for moral and material power in order to make man worthy of being Allah's deputy on earth and to have him conduct his life on the basis of strength, justice, love and mercy, without disturbing the balance in any one of these fundamental principles.

Footnotes

1. The newspaper "Al-Sajadiyya", Invocation #21, pages 76-77, House for the Revival of the Arab Legacy.
2. There is an unusual analysis of the meaning of this saying in the Method of Rhetoric of the Imam Ali, who questioned the meaning of their saying "There is no strength or power save in Allah." They said we have only what He gave us and only when He gives it. That which He owns, He has charged us with it. And when He takes from us, He takes His authority from us. This analysis indicates the idea that, at a glance, suggests that the commands in life given by Allah are tied to responsibility in existence and non-existence.
3. In the Method of Rhetoric of the Imam Ali, he said, "We are from Allah and to Him we shall return. And he said, 'Peace be upon you.' He told us Allah determines for us who shall rule. And he said to us, 'We shall return to Him.' Decide for yourselves our destruction." Method of Rhetoric, p. 485.
4. Method of Rhetoric, p. 401.

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Chapter Two

The Concept of Power in Confronting Tyranny

1. The Position of Islam on the use of Power Against Tyranny
2. The Qur'an Strengthens the Oppressed
3. The Power of the Oppressed in Confronting Tyranny
4. How "Enjoining What is Right and Forbidding What is Wrong" relates to Power
5. End of the Journey

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Where does mankind stand of the issue of fighting tyrannical forces in the world?

Does mankind submit, surrender, going along with the established fact? Some see the issue as "fate and divine decree" or "God's will," saying that as long as oppression is their fate, they have the prerogative of accepting divine decree and fate. They say that if oppression is God's will, then let them submit to God's will and to their own weakness, that God has wished upon the people.

Some say that they should rebel, taking action for change from more than one position, for if they are defeated in one place, or lose the ability to take action from this place, they can go to another location from which to fight and take action.

Thus the social question linked to more than one philosophical question ... the question that makes the practical subordinate to the ideological, since it is the active fact that embodies the idea ... what is Islam's position? Does it support submission, or rebellion and revolution?

1. The Position of Islam on the use of Power Against Tyranny

We believe that Islam's true position is on the side of rebellion and action in order to change oppression and tyranny. It will not take long to solve the problem of the oppressed person, he is not a justification for mankind to be negligent, weak or defeated, except under certain circumstances, as expressed in the holy verses:

"When angels take the souls of those who die in sin against their souls, they ask, 'In what situation were you?' They reply, 'We were oppressed on the earth.' The angels say, 'Was not the earth of God spacious enough for you to move yourselves away?' Such people will find their abode in hell--an evil refuge, except for those men, women and children who are truly oppressed, who have no means in their power, nothing to guide their way. For these there is hope that God will forgive, for God blots out (sins) and forgives again and again. He who forsakes his home in the cause of God finds in the earth many a refuge, wide and spacious. Should he die as a refugee from home for God and his messenger, his reward becomes due and sure with God..." (4:97-100)

These verses speak about the oppressed before God on the Day of Judgment, at the time that an accounting is made of what they did on earth and their surrendering to oppression by submitting to the oppressors, doing everything they wanted, everything the oppressors had planned for them. How were these positions dealt with? They had oppressed themselves by going along with the oppressors' plans, believing or assuming that their weakness and inability to act justified their submissive acceptance of the situation. However, the verse speaks of a specific concept facing them in terms of responsibility. There is room to flee if one cannot act at home. The earth is large enough for everyone.

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Whoever flees so that the word of God may be supreme in establishing right and justice on earth, far from pressures pushing him to follow deviant paths, will find sufficient room to do so. If he dies while on this mission, his reward will be sure with God since he died while fleeing to God and His messenger.

The only ones whom the Holy Qur'an exempts from responsibility are oppressed men, women and children who are unable to take action, and have nothing to guide them, to get out of their dilemma, no way to extricate themselves. They have been put in the position of begging for forgiveness without any power so that they will not be pushed into hastily considering themselves oppressed without a careful study of the situation from the standpoint of the power they have and of the subjective circumstances surrounding them...or because they failed at the beginning and gave into the pressures or intimidations of oppression, going along to the point of giving up some of their power, for when force was adopted and became rooted, they began to lose strength and close all their options. They become oppressed people with no means in their power, nothing to guide them. There are also other things that make men stand between fear and begging, with begging more likely, as you understand the meaning of the verb.

Many Qur'anic verses speak of the impotence the oppressed feel as a result of being crushed by the will of the powerful. Because of these feelings of impotence they give in to the plans, acts and misconduct of the powerful. The Holy Qur'an speaks to us in more than one verse about the conversation between both of these on the Day of Judgment, advising the oppressed, before they face God on this day, to rebel against the wishes of the powerful on earth and to try to arouse their God-given inner strength to confront the large and the small pressures of the powerful, since the oppressed person who follows the wrong path, despite man's ability to resist, is not justified before God and will bear complete responsibility before God. God has said:

"They will all be marshalled before God together; then will the weak say to those who were arrogant, 'for us, we but followed you. Can you then avail us at all against the wrath of God?' They will reply, 'If we had received the guidance of God, we should have given it to you. To us it makes no difference whether we rage or bear up with patience; for us there is no way of escape.'" (14:21)

The Qur'an takes great efforts in this regard to inculcate in the souls of helpless societies the idea of revolution against influential oppressors who push them to do what they wish them to. It gives us the vivid image of both sides facing their responsibilities--the oppressors for their oppression and the oppressed for their silence and their carrying out the plans, wishes and orders of the oppressors. Those who are followed begin to deny responsibility for the burdens of those who follow, placing full responsibility on them. The followers have no recourse before this evasive position but to feel the need to return to life to rid themselves there of those they followed, when they were needed.

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The Qur'an gives us the image, and orients it in more than one direction, in order to appeal to and issue a strong warning to these crushed people to free themselves of the oppressors immediately lest they face the situation after death that they would if they had capitulated to the oppressors.

"Then if those who are followed rid themselves of those who follow, they would see the punishment, and all relations between them would be cut off. And those who followed would say, 'If only we had one more chance, we would rid ourselves of them, as they have rid themselves of us.' Thus will God show them that their deeds will cause them regrets. Nor will there be a way for them out of the fire." (2:166-167)

"And he said, 'You have taken idols beside God out of love for each other on earth, but on the Day of Judgment you shall disown each other and curse each other. Your abode will be the fire and you will have none to help.'" (29:25)

2. The Qur'an Strengthens the Oppressed

In mobilizing the inner strength of the oppressed so that they will follow certain methods, the Qur'an begins to stress ridding themselves of feelings of impotence that compel them to behave in this unacceptable way.

The Qur'an begins by exposing those who worship idols instead of God or subjugate themselves to idols out of weakness and submission. It strips them of every element of strength, whether their ability in general to do good or harm, or their links with sustenance, death or life, or anything else, since the source of all these is God, and He is their return, for He possesses everything on earth, as the following holy verses state clearly:

"Say: 'Will you worship, instead of God, something that has no power either to harm or benefit you? It is God who hears and knows all things.'" (5:76)

"For you worship idols instead of God and you invent falsehood. The things that you worship instead of God have no power to give you sustenance. Seek sustenance from God, serve Him and be grateful to Him, for to Him you will return." (29:17)

"You take those other than God who create nothing, who are themselves created those who can do not harm or good, those who possess not death, nor life, nor resurrection." (2:3)

"Say: 'Call upon others whom you prefer to God; they have no power, not the weight of an atom in the heavens or on earth. No share have they therein, nor is any of them a helper to God.'" (34:22)

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Thus this method is spread and diversified in raising awareness of the folly they commit, since no matter how great the demonstrations of strength, nor how many sources they have, they cannot even help or harm themselves; how could they do so for others?

This idea is prominent in many verses, culminating in those who feel impotent before others being asked to stop themselves from falling under the influence of misleading phenomena around them and to make a comparison between themselves and the others, so that they can realize the obvious fact that these others have no secret power possessed by them alone, they have no unusual characteristic enjoyed by them alone, in fact they are the slaves of those like them. Then what meaning does subservience have; what cause is there for servitude?

"Those whom you call upon besides God are servants like unto you. Call upon them, and let them listen to your prayer, if you are truthful." (7:194)

They may say, "These verses talk about fighting those who serve other than God, not about following oppressors, conquerers and tyrannical persons."

"They were in reaction to the polytheism which dominated society at that time."

The reply is: Human idols, or others, resulted from the idolators' feeling that a god of stone or a god of flesh and blood possessed absolute or great power. This was the case with conquered societies that followed with the conquerers, a type of idolatry in practice, that might not have called itself that, but was just so in practice, since they felt that they needed the conquerers because they felt weak before their strength. The Holy Qur'an tries to combat this within the people, in order to rid them of any feeling of fear upon freeing themselves from the awareness of the strength possessed by the conquerers.

3. The Power of the Oppressed in Confronting Tyranny

The Holy Qur'an tries to make the poor oppressed aware of the need to take a positive stand to confront oppressors in order to resist them and shatter their strength. It gives them permission to fight in defense of their right to remain in their homes and of their freedom to practice the belief of their choice.

"God gave them permission to fight since they were oppressed. God can grant victory to those who were driven from their homes unjustly for merely saying 'Our Lord is God.' If this were not so and God had pushed the people together, monasteries, synagogues, churches and prayers to God would have been destroyed. God grants victory to those who give victory to Him, for He is all powerful." (23:39-40)

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God gave them permission to fight, referring to the circumstances and reasons for this permission--defending their legitimate right to remain in their homes, practicing their religion and performing their jobs. He then promises them victory over the aggressors if they continue on the right path, that finds in God both in its means and its end.

The Holy Qur'an then wishes to emphasize that the means by which the weak stand up to the strong who use their strength to oppress the weak should follow the same practices laid down for life--men should feel safe for their lives and their beliefs. If it is not so, no regime would be established on earth and no values or holy sites could coexist. It is the legitimate natural justification for fighting and killing those who violate freedom and life since it is the true way to build and perpetuate life based on a just regime.

The verse reemphasizes for those who fight for God that victory has been promised to those who give victory to God and who adopt victory, even after a period of time, as a way to raise spirituality, on the one hand, and to show that their battle is God's battle, which He oversees through His strength. It is the Qur'an's new, true means of mobilizing the weak through great strength by calling them to use this strength against the powerful by relying on their inner strength, and on God first and last, to show others that they possess this strength. However, they are unaware of it because they have seen demonstrations of strength by the powerful and have lost confidence in themselves, which has ultimately led them to defeat.

We see in some verses of the Qur'an that victory by these over the oppressors represents a great Islamic value:

"Those who are hurt by the oppressor will be victorious."

We have mentioned the preceding verses among the many that describe the devout faithful who obtain God's favor and forgiveness, and some refer to the fact that the oppressed do not bear the responsibility for what they may have caused by their victory over oppression; rather, the great part of the responsibility rests with the oppressors, since they are the cause of it all.

"Whosoever is victorious after being oppressed has no means. He who unjustly oppresses people on earth has the means and shall have a grievous penalty."
(12:41)

The Qur'an's method reaches its apex in this regard when God promises himself that the oppressed will inherit the earth, arising from the story of the rebirth of strength for the weak, a story confirmed by faith in the occurrence through God's promise to them:

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"And we wished to be gracious to those who were being oppressed in the land to make them leaders and heirs, to establish a firm place for them in the land and to show Pharaoh, Haman and their soldiers what they were taking precautions against." (28:5-6)

This verse may appear in the story of the children of Israel, but it represents an overall design in God's guidance for life--that no power whatsoever is lasting in its tyranny or its force, as expressed by the following holy verse:

"We shall divide these days among the people." (3:140)

And:

"Say: 'Oh God, You give power to whomever You please and You strip power from whomever You please. You honor whomever You please and You bring low whomever You please. In Your hand is all good. Truly, You have power over all things.'" (3:26)

4. "Enjoining What is Right and Forbidding What is Wrong"

The concept of force in confronting tyranny may be seen in the Islamic law derived from the commandment to do right and the prohibition against doing wrong, which is a religious duty imposed on Muslims in general as an absolute duty just like any other religious duty that requires God's punishment for anyone who violates it. It also assigns the greatest responsibility for negative neutrality when one has the ability to take firm, positive stands.

This duty is summarized as follows: God has obligated all Muslims to pursue any act of social misconduct, whether it be religious concerning individual rebellion against God's will in serving and dealing with Him, or social misconduct through collective behavior which strays from what the Message says is in the interest of the individual and the society. It may also be political misconduct represented by an oppressive rule of political tyranny against the weak and oppressed. This changes the issue of rule into an act of tyranny and aggression against the country and (God's) servants in the name of preserving the power of the government or the regime. It may be economic misconduct represented by monopolies, exploitation, corruption, usury, the foolish wasting of the people's money through thievery, bribery and preventing the oppressed and other groups from exercising their rights regarding oppressive and aggressive practices.

Therefore, Islam creates in the heart of society a self control which is not subject to official appointment nor traditional assignment, but is subject to the devout awareness of the divine message which becomes in the heart of man a defensive strength and in his physical embodiment becomes a preventative force in keeping with awareness of responsibility and its implications in the life of man.

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We have seen from the preceding true picture of this duty that resisting oppression and standing face to face with it is one of the most prominent aspects of the commandment to do right and the prohibition against doing wrong, since we know that establishing justice and destroying oppression are among the strong foundations on which the principles of Islam rest.

In light of this, we see how this religious duty becomes one of the positions of human strength in confronting oppression and tyranny since these are two of the greatest abominations in life.

Perhaps the image will be clearer if we follow the Holy Book and the Noble Sunna and the Hadith passed down by the members of the Prophet's family, peace be upon them. In the Holy Qur'an, we find following verses:

"Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong. They are the ones who will attain happiness." (3:104)

"Curses were pronounced on those among the children of Israel who did not believe by the tongue of David and of Jesus the son of Mary because they disobeyed and persisted in excesses." (5:81)

"When they forgot what they had said, we saved those who had ceased doing wrong and we gave severe punishment to those who were oppressors because of their sins." (7:164)

In the first verse, the appeal was made to bear responsibility for enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, since this is one way of salvation in the next world.

The second verse was a curse by the prophets upon those who were not desisting from what is wrong, which led them to blasphemy and disappointment.

The third verse was a comparison between the fate of the believers who stopped oppression and the fate of those who were oppressors and did not stop and did not prevent oppression, since the former found salvation and deliverance and the latter fell into the midst of punishment and censure because of their sins, oppression and straying from the right way.

In the Noble Sunna, the well-known words (Hadith) of the Prophet Muhammad, God bless and grant him salvation:

"Whoever among you sees wrongdoing, let him change it by his own hand, for if he cannot do so by his tongue or his heart, then this is the weakest of faiths."

In another Hadith of Muhammad, God bless and grant him salvation:

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"God loathes the weak man who has no religion, for it has been asked, 'What is the weak believer who has no religion?' and the answer was 'He who does not forbid what is wrong.'"1

In Nahj al-Balaghah: "The sharpest tooth of God's wrath can overcome the strongest falsehood."2

In the words of Imam 'Ali, peace be upon him, in the Nahj:

"...what are all good deeds and the Jihad for the sake of God when compared to enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong but a drop in a bottomless ocean, for they do not bring the end of life closer nor lessen one's blessings. Better the right word to an unjust leader."3

In the words of Imam Baqir, peace be upon him:

"Whoever goes to an unjust authority and speaks to him of God's strength and His Message and causes him to fear God shall have a reward equal to that of both man and jinn and of their works."4

In these words we see that forbidding what is wrong comes within the context of changing a corrupt society into a healthy society and standing up to oppression, as explained in the Hadith of the Prophet, God bless and grant him salvation, as quoted by Imam al-Husayn Ibn 'Ali, upon him be peace, in the address he delivered on the way to Karbala':

"Oh people, God's messenger has said, 'Whoever among you sees an unjust authority usurping God's holy precincts, being disloyal to the covenant with God or treating God's servants offensively and aggressively and you do not change him by word or deed, it is God's truth that you shall take his place, since these people have pledged themselves to Satan and have abandoned the Merciful One. They have been corrupt and have crossed all boundaries; they have been affected and have approved what God forbade and have forbidden what God approved. (Sentence unclear)."

We may find in the great al-Husayn's revolt signs of this important duty, since it arose as a revolutionary expression of stopping what was wrong. This was expressed in the address referred to above and in the first address with which he began the revolt:

"I do not come here with arrogance or pride or aggressiveness. I have come to ask that things be made right in my forefather's nation. I want to enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong."

The words of Imam 'Ali, peace be upon him, place the urging of what is right and the injunction against what is wrong in such a lofty position that all good deeds, with their far-reaching effect and great reward, become so small by comparison that the former duty becomes as the wide sea, and these deeds are as a

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lost drop of water in the depths of the rolling sea. He then raises the issue as it relates to belief in divine decree and fate, saying that this duty does not bring closer or make farther away the end of life, nor does it increase or decrease blessings. This position reaches its apex in the strength of the word that brings the oppressor face to face with his oppression and censures him for his tyranny and aggression.

Thus we find in this revolutionary duty the powerful position of Islam, which hopes for man to follow the path of strength in confronting oppression and tyranny, taking a firm positive stand on all manifestations of these and staying away from all negative positions, including neutrality, where the believer is frozen between the oppressor and the oppressed. The view of Islam toward the Muslim's responsibility is not found in his obligation to religious laws alone, but also directs him to help establish justice and resist oppression in a nation in general, even by using the force of pressure that imposes change, since the issue of freedom, when it touches on the well-being of the society and its regime, is not described in any legal or ideological wording in Islam.

5. End of the Journey

The concept may be summarized as follows: Passing judgment on any idea should depend on a thorough understanding of its dimensions and aspects, both in theory and in practice, as well as the practical results of these on the human level. However, man dashes ahead with his misunderstood, incomplete ideas to pass judgment on this concept or that, based on superficial conclusions. He does not have the spirit of learning or the responsibility of knowledge. In light of this, we have determined that the statements that we presented at the beginning of this study, concerning the relationship between belief and God's power and the mentality of the will that is crushed before oppression and subservient to it, have no foundation in our belief nor in its laws, nor in their permeating life through the Message. Rather, the issue is the opposite--it is one of refusing to submit to oppression since it lessens the chance for salvation in our belief and is a deviation from the straight path in our laws. This places the responsibility on those who go along, those who are neutral, those who stand still in the battle between oppression and justice, the spectators who do not support the battle or right in it, being content to follow it through binoculars, looking first at the winner then at the naive, fervent loser. Islam considers a negative position, or counter-positivism, to carry tremendous responsibility and divine punishment, even in cases of weakness that could have been changed to strength, for how can judgment be passed if man possesses strength but changes it into overwhelming weakness?

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Footnotes

1. Wasa'il al-Shi'ah (The Means of Shi'ism), sec. VI, p. 397.
2. Nahj al-Balaghah (The Way of Eloquence), p. 501.
3. Ibid., p. 542.
4. Wasail al-Shi'ah, sec. VI, p. 406.
5. Tarikh al-Tabari (Al-Tabari's History), section 2293.

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Chapter Three

Spiritual Strength

1. Colonialism and its Means of Destroying Spiritual Strength
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 - b. Studies Inspiring Submissiveness
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 - e. Islam Calls for Opening a Front Within
 - f. Spiritual Exercise is a Path to Strength, Not a Personal Preference
8. The Strong Believer is Better than the Weak Believer
9. There is no Weak Body with a Strong Will

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It may be useful for our discussion of Islam and the concept of strength to talk about spiritual force within the person so that we will be aware of the bases on which Islam builds the strong, tenacious Islamic individual, who in confronting difficult circumstances and great upheavals does not collapse, but faces all of this with a calm, alert spirit, acting with awareness and firmness based on a solid faith.

The value of this aspect of strength is seen throughout the difficult life that man endures in exercising physical strength and in confronting provocations, since spiritual strength raises his morale and enables him to live without fear, upset or upheavals, so that he can live instead feeling confidence, happiness, security, openness and awareness of the forces with which he fights the forces of aggression. Were it otherwise, the feelings of the weak person would guarantee self-defeat, which fills the soul with fear and destroys all willingness to resist. The man lays down his weapon before the others pick theirs up.

1. Colonialism and its Means of Destroying Spiritual Strength

We find that the powerful imperialist countries use this method to obtain the advantage in the battle--in advance--in their struggle with less powerful people or countries when they destroy the latter's internal resistance by raising all the elements that confirm and worsen this weakness in the minds of these people using various informational tactics.

a. Academic Materials

We find academic materials which are part of a specific psychological plan and present both truth and fantasy about the strength and control of these countries in an educated, clever way that makes the reader and listener feel that there is no use in resisting, that any attempt whatsoever would be almost suicidal, leading to nothing but ruin.

b. Studies Inspiring Submissiveness

These countries are not satisfied with the information, they also provide research, studies and statistics that emphasize the intellectual and scientific superiority of the peoples of these countries, giving those from weak, small or backward countries an inferiority complex, overwhelmed by these extraordinary, unmatched abilities. They lose their ability to have ambitions and to face issues of progress and development from a position of strength. Instead they seek help from the genius of these advanced peoples' human expertise and abilities, trying to absorb their intellectual and cultural wealth in general so that they can become a distorted image of these people and their culture. Thus they lose their cultural character, refusing to counter or interact with other cultures from a firm position of strength and adopting a subservient character grasping at every crumb offered by other cultures, without the latter having any fundamental role, whether small or large.

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c. Dubious Research Which Counters Cultural Legacies

Examples of this are studies and research aimed at destroying all the intellectual, apirtual and cultural wealth of less powerful peoples by raising their negative aspects and ignoring the positive ones. The powerful countries make cultural challenges in order to stop the intellectual, religious and cultural gift of history through the subconscious suggestion that the history is not strong enough, firm enough or vital enough to give the culture life. This is done in order to aliennate the nation from its spiritual and intellectual roots so that it will go through life rootless and easy prey for containment by others--a sure result of the frightening feeling of emptiness in the face of the fullness of others.

Other examples of this can be found in the orientalist trend that has existed in Europe for centuries, which began by studying our scientific, literary, spiritual and ethical heritage trying to raise doubts about more than one aspect of this heritage, to subjugate it to priorities and analyses which removed it from reality and its natural context or to impose other sources, destroying all true ties with its people and history. We have seen this in the orientalists' studies of pre-Islamic literature, etc., in which they raised doubts about the Holy Qur'an, or in their literary and historical studies, which tried to build up certain eras of no great re-historical reputation or concentrated on certain negative aspects in order to make them into positive, opposite phenomena, such as the Sufi movements and their analytical leaders and others.

We do not mean to call for a halt to the historical tradition derived from this literature or history, but we do wish to point out that the analytical means by which these issues are treated express the political or religious goals which these studies support.

We also see this method in the orientalist studies that have shown the interpretations, laws, history and the spiritual, intellectual and political character of Islam and have tried to greatly cloud these issues. Motivated by misplaced priorities, they even resorted to assumptions which do not rest on any historical or intellectual tradition or source in order to give Islam a bad image in the mind of its followers, destroy its holy character in their minds and obliterate its meaning, clearing the way for a new step--linking them with new figures, new concepts and a completely new religion, as with any nation that does not have the strength of its ideology, religion or heritage when confronted during its struggle with a new ideology, concept and religion.

For these reason, we see evangelism and colonialism in the Islamic countries going hand in hand with the orientalist movement in ancient and modern European history, since they converge on a single goal--to weaken Muslims intellectually, militarily, economically and spiritually so that they can control them from all sides, after having robbed them of their strength.

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d. Making a Nation into a Footnote to History

We should not overlook the despicable method employed by certain intellectual accounts or academic trends that seek to portray the heritage, civilization, character and dynamic strength of history in such a way as to put it at its peak and suggest that it has changed instead of progressed and in this suggestive manner to make our nation into a footnote to history, contemplating its events without adding anything new or taking a single step along the way. This gives even more ways of making events and figures of this history into fossils, going so far as to consider history holy and sacrosanct, above criticism or accusation--it has become almost divine. In this way, errors have become sacrosanct values and values have become cursed errors, depending on what people believe.

We see this in the studies linking the society with mere historical flowering, making history into a bulging drum, from which you hear nothing but echoes. This is just as we have seen in other studies which ignore the errors of the past, concentrating on the errors of the present until the people begin to live in a subservient, historical trance, either isolated from or disbelieving in reality. This leads to the crushing impotence whereby people lose confidence in themselves and in their ability to create and concentrate, with their eyes open to the past and closed to the future.

e. Rewriting History

We may encounter certain political, ideological trends which proceed in their historical studies and research on the basis of subjugating history to the ideological framework in which they operate, as one way of making people believe in the doctrine they wish them to or of making others feel the weakness of their own ideas when their history is diverted from its natural course, the Message also diverted to another, far-removed course.

This can be seen in the attempt by Marxist researchers to interpret Islamic history in a material sense, concentrating on Marxist theory in an attempt to give Marx's theory a comprehensive stamp based on the sum of historical events and to destroy the spiritual concept, making the Message a unique divine phenomenon unrelated to its social and political reality, which is in fact related to God and his instruction to humanity. This attempt even seeks to interpret all culture on the basis of this theory.

We do not wish to debate all of these trends, for we will get into a controversy over the validity or incorrectness of such ideas, which should be left for another time.

However, we do wish to give vivid examples of the means employed by political trends and colonialist forces to destroy the morale and spirit of less powerful peoples or of weak, helpless forces in order to weaken them psychologically and spiritually, preparing the way for their plan to contain them politically and ideologically to attain their goals without a political or ideological battle. We have seen the results of this in the ruin,

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exploitation and destruction of countries and peoples. The hellish plan continues and helpless peoples still live with struggle on the one hand and with the naivete that allows the plan to proceed on the other.

In view of the preceeding, we recognize the political, social and intellectual value of building spiritual strength in the souls of a nation so that it can play its role with strength and firmness.

Islam has tried, through its images of mankind and of life and its practical laws, to kindle in man elements of this strength which would keep him from weakness in order to help him maintain his equilibrium on his life's journey to God. This attempt is within the context of studying the factors of weakness that destroy man's character and an attempt to counter them ideologically and practically and to close the natural gaps through which they penetrate the lives of men.

2. The Role of Faith in Building Spiritual Strength

The building of spiritual strength centers around two elements, one positive and one negative.

- a. The positive element is the existence of internal or external influences guaranteeing awareness of the basic criteria for exercising strength through one's own supply of strength, or through the external source considered a pillar in any emptiness or weakness. The feeling of spiritual strength cannot be a reality if one's supply of strength is insufficient or if the sources of strength are not available, since ambition, pride and empty vanity in themselves do not constitute a basis for such a feeling it is a psychological state which derives its power and influence from actual life experience.
- b. The negative element is the feeling that others cannot cause man to be weak, or that he does not need them for the necessities of life. This is also true of the thought that they cannot bring him good or keep it from him, or bring him harm or defend him from it, or control his existence, his life or death. Rather, he should feel that he has the ability to resist, in which he can replace his hope of victory, for they are servants (of God) created like him and no different from him. If they are superior in one way, he is superior to them in another, and he can try to gain what he loses in order to make himself equal or superior to them.

In short, he obtains confidence in his strength through liberation from the fear that immobilizes his thinking and paralyzes his action and his resistance to defeat others automatically, without war or fighting.

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These are the two primary elements necessary for the birth of spiritual strength within man. How has Islam built spiritual strength within man in practical experience?

Islam has planned for the first element through two aspects of belief in God.

The first element is man's awareness of his own strength through the tremendous strength God gave him and the tools with which He enabled him to tap these forces, as well as the cosmic phenomena He tamed for him and the land he put at his service so that he would be its absolute master to create whatever new discoveries he wished for the good of mankind. This tells man that life is open to him, to use the utmost of his abilities to obtain its blessings, to defend himself, to build his life, to obtain every day new strength, increasing and growing toward wholeness and to discover each day a new horizon opening to him new fields for sustenance, strength and life.

Then the strength of God appears to him, the source of his strength, which not only produces strength, but continues to watch over, provide, increase and protect it from all things.

If his soul is filled with the absolute strength of God and he realizes that it is nearby at any time and any place, then he can feel secure and confident and derive profound feelings of inner strength that will continue to pour forth, grow and be renewed.

When sustenance was a cause for concern to man, the verses of the Qur'an assured him that, through belief in God, his sustenance was in God's hands for it was God who created the source of this sustenance, opened up the sources and brought forth the wealth. It is God who can provide and make lasting his sustenance at a particular time, for He provides for him from sources he could not imagine and from sources he could imagine; He may keep from him what he wants and what he imagines.

"For those who fear God, He prepares a way out, and He provides for him from sources he could never imagine. For whoever puts his trust in God, God will be sufficient for him, for God will surely accomplish His purpose; verily, for all things has God appointed a due proportion." 25:3

There was profound faith that good and harm are in God's hands to be directed and applied as He wishes and that life is subject to a precise plan which follows wisdom and mercy, according to Iman Ja'far al-Sadiq quoting 'Ali, Amir of the faithful, peace be upon him:

"'Ali said:

'No man will find a taste of belief until he learns that what affects him was not intended to pass him by and that what passes him by was not

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intended to affect him and that the all powerful God is the only one who can cause good or harm."⁽¹⁾

We see from the preceeding and will see in the following the concept of God's strength and man's strength through a belief that the positive element that brings man face to face with a profound feeling of strength on his own part linked with the all powerful God is not strange to the life of man and is not isolated from faith that encompasses life.

The second element is that of freedom from fear of other forces confronting man in his life, whether human, tyrannical forces that threaten man's sustenance and his life, or natural forces causing man to fear because of the burdens and difficulties that destroy all his works and plans, such as agricultural, manufacturing or other projects that are a part of life.

He has faced this element head on, analyzing the elements of fear by examing its sources and capabilities, as far as what it possesses and does not possess.

The Qur'an's intention was to rid man of all feeling of the overwhelming power of others and of any fear of any power other than God's power, whether human or non-human. This is because all concerns of life return to God, the creator of life. The intention was to portray these other forces as they really are, revealing that they are created and do not possess themselves and that it is only God who can do good or harm. The power these others possess is merely temporary and limited and may disappear at any time. Man can resist it with this own power or with the help of God. Consequently, he can feel free of fear from them and of overwhelming weakness in their presence. We shall see in the verses which we will read in this respect that the Qur'an kindles man's inner strength under God's care and strips the other forces of their control and effect so that man can face the struggle naturally, not quelling his wishes nor dampening his spirit nor paralyzing his life.

In this conflict in which man encounters the human forces which gather to oppose the supporters of right and to send messengers to warn them, frighten them and call them to retreat and withdraw from battle, they will bring upon themselves crushing defeat in the battle where they will lose their parity of forces. The Holy Qur'an shows us God's revelation in this regard:

"They said to them 'A great army is gathering against you,' and frightened them, but it inceased their faith. They said 'For us God is sufficient, and He is the best provider.' And they returned with grace and bounty from God. No harm touched them, for they followed the pleasure of God, and God is the Lord of bounties unbounded. It is only Satan that tells you to fear his worshippers. Be not afraid of the, but fear Me, if you have faith." 3:173-175

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This is the radiant picture the Qur'an gives of the believers who confront intimidation by superior forces, pressuring them to abandon God's call and follow the call of Satan. They took a firm stand, relying on belief that grows when faced with provocation and confrontation, increasing responsibility before the many who have strayed and are subjugated. They told those who warned them, who frightened them, that they would face provocation with their strength backed by God's absolute power. If the gathering groups rely on false appeal to support and defend them, then God will be sufficient for those who support right, providing them strength, support and defense. Thus they turned to faith in God to derive strength to stand firm and confront all these forces. They were victorious and returned to their bases unharmed with the grace and bounty of God. No harm touched them, and God is the Lord of unlimited bounties, which he denies to no one, and of grace which he denies to no one.

These verses conclude with the general principle of faith for believers whenever they are intimidated or are engaged in a war of nerves--that these are enticements and intimidations of Satan that only his followers give in to. Believers fear God and no other, no matter how strong, since God is the only power to be feared. For this reason, God wants them to follow this plan, just as those believers who faced provocation with steadfastness did, since they received the good things they wished for when they were steadfast as God wished them to be.

We see in these verses that the Holy Qur'an speaks of those who faced a great provocation, as an example to be followed, revealing that the question of linking strength with belief in God is a real issue faced by many of those who lead the appeal and is not merely an instruction or wish isolated from practical reality.

The Qur'an speaks in another verse of other examples, giving a vivid model of the follower who throws the provocation back on others and does not merely confront them with the reaction of their hearts to what they are doing:

"Those who preach the Messages of God and fear Him and none but Him, God is sufficient to call men to account." 33:39

This is the splendid picture of the preachers of God's word who stand up to all creation on the strength of their appeal to spread the Messages of God with raging strength and the great challenge of the Message to whatever appeal they make or whatever signs they bring in order to say that they fear none but God, that they are the party of God and his worshippers, who have no fear and no grief.

The Qur'an presents the picture clearly, and concludes the verse by considering their position in keeping with reality, since God is sufficient for them, the provider for all who seek his help in their tasks and misfortunes.

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We find another verse which does not give an example but presents the idea of total rejection of all means of intimidation and considers the man who gives in to it to have gone astray, to have nothing to guide him:

"Is not God enough for his servant? But they try to frighten you with others besides him, for those whom God leaves to stray, there can be no guide." 39:36

This method may not be limited to ideology, but may also include a practical aspect guaranteeing man that he will feel that God is sufficient for him and that he is free before others. This is what Iman Zayn al-'Abdin says in his plea for noble character, in which he refers to certain instances of weakness which make man abandon his principles under the pressure of the urgent need for money.

"Oh, God, bless me and do not bring me low, for I seek your sustenance and the bounty of your creation; I am praised by the man who gives to me and disparaged by the one who refuses me. You are the only one who gives or denies."(2)

He tells us about a case of pressure to do wrong in order to say that the individual and society, which man wishes to have stand firmly by his principles, must plan to rid themselves of this problem so that others will not take advantage of their weakness to create additional weakness.

In the Holy Qur'an, in addition to this image which counsels strength, we see another image of those who feel an impotence which destroys them and their strength.

"Have you not seen those who were told to hold back their hands and to establish regular prayers and spend in regular charity? When the order to fight was issued to them, a part of them feared men as much or even more than they should have feared God. They said, 'Our Lord! Why have You ordered us to fight? Would You not grant us respite to our term, which is near?' Say, 'Short is the enjoyment of this world. The hereafter is the best for those who do right. Never will you be dealt with unjustly in the very least!'" 4:78

Those who flex their muscles at first, even when facing a test, lose their sense of responsibility and begin to make excuses, asking for a respite. The issue is not one of time or respite, it is a loss of faith in God and of fear that destroys man, until he becomes weak, angering God.

It is an image of a weak position because of weak faith.

The Qur'an's thinking in all these verses follows a single direction--the necessity of confronting a war of nerves with inner psychological strength that meets difficult situations calmly in order to plan for them with confidence and assurance, without trembling, for psychological defeat in a

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war of nerves is the true measure of defeat or victory in any of life's battles. When you defeat your enemy from within or he defeats you from within, you or he have nothing left to do but clear the battlefield of the banquished with no effort. Thus we see that in any war, the psychological battle is what decides the outcome everytime, everywhere.

The Holy Qur'an has taught us the practical means by which we can confront the war of nerves that uses scorn against God's work and His workers, so that they will not weaken, realizing that their position is not worthy of scorn, that the others are merely trying to weaken their self-confidence and destroy their spiritual strength by drawing a laughable picture to bring derision instead of judgment, criticism or debate.

In light of this realization of their goals, believers can proceed from a position of strength, turning this means against the other camp, not facing scorn with criticism or defense, but with an equal measure of scorn, laughing at them and their false beliefs, foolish customs and silly values that are truly deserving of scorn. This is the picture given by the verse which talks about the prophet Noah when he begins to build the Ark at God's instruction and his people laugh at him because he is aware of what will happen:

"He begins to build the Ark. Whenever the leaders of his people pass by, they ridicule him. He said, 'If you ridicule us now, we can in our turn look down on you also with ridicule. But soon you will know on whom a punishment will fall that will cover them with shame, on whom will be unleashed a punishment everlasting.'" 11:38-39

3. The Relationship Between Trust in God and Freedom from Fear

The Holy Qur'an stresses placing trust in God as one of the psychological elements which bring confidence and assurance and eliminates fear. It is one way of counseling strength since it protects man from the destructive psychological distress caused by feelings of weakness before human or natural forces stronger than he when they threaten to destroy all his works and plans.

Trust in God was an element of faith against ignorance or the unseen when man had done everything necessary for the success of his work and then wanted to take action:

"...Consult them in affairs. Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in God..." 3:159

The divine passages conveyed by the prophet Muhammad, God bless him and grant him salvation, gave the true picture of trust in God. These are

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found in certain quotations from the Life of the Prophet, in which an unusual conversation occurs between the Prophet and Gabriel about several questions and interpretations regarding Islam:

Quoting the Prophet: "I said, 'What is trust in God?' and he said, 'The knowledge that whatever is created cannot do harm nor good, nor can it give or take away and it is also the renunciation of that which is created, if the person also works for no other but God, spreads the word of and fears no other but God and obeys no other but God.'"(3)

In certain quotations, we see the exhortation to strength represented by trust in God, as in the words of Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad al-Sadiq, peace be upon him: "Wealth and power move from place to place. When they find a place of trust in God, they take root."(4)

As he said in reply to questions from some of his companions about trust in God, "What is the extent of trust in God?" he said, "Certainty." When asked what was certainty, he said, "With God, you fear nothing."

4. The Relationship Between Contentment and Freedom from Fear

Islam has tried, through its appeal for strength, to counsel man to be content and not to feel greed, which makes him bound by his need for others, and not to be overwhelmed by his limitless wishes, falling under the fire of servitude to others.

Contentment with oneself was an expression of self-sufficiency through man's abilities to fulfill his wishes. This makes man lose his hunger for any wish he is unable to fulfill or any need he cannot meet. Thus he loses the crushing need for others because he feels wealthy before them. Fear of others has no meaning when he differs from them or is isolated from them, since fear is subject to desire, the strength of which warrants fear. If man loses this desire, he loses the feeling of danger.

Religious passages have given us the best picture of this. In the brief words of Iman 'Ali:

1. "Greed is eternal slavery."(6)
2. "The greedy person is enchained by shame."(7)
3. "A king is satisfied with contentment."(8)
4. "The greatest wealth is to renounce what man possesses."(9)

In the words of Ima Ja'far Muhamad Ibn 'Ali al-Baqir, the fifth iman from the Prophet's family:

"The man enslaved and led by greed is miserable, as is the man enslaved and debased by desire."(10)

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In the words of Iman Abi 'Abdallah Ja'far Ibn Muhammad al-Sadiq, the sixth imam from the Profet's family:

"There is nothing more odious for the believer than to be enchained by desire."

All of these passages consider greed to be weakness, slavery and poverty, causing man to his self-confidence and inner strength. They consider contentment to be power, through which man controls himself and controls a position of active, strong freedom before others. For this reason, Islam called for the rejection of greed in order to reject the destructive fear that results from greed.

5. The Relationship Between Abstinence and Freedom from Fear

The Islamic concept regarding contentment coincides with Islamic thinking on abstinence, since it is the inner strength through which man controls all his whims and appetites so that they do not tyrannize him, nor make him act contrary to his principles or put him in positions of weakness where his desire and its strong link with his needs will make him fall victim to them, suffering internal slavery by the world, with all its appetites, living under the mercy of continual fear of people or situations which he cannot manage.

The passage which most clearly embodies the essence of this statement may be the words of Iman 'Ali, peace be upon him:

"Abstinence does not mean possessing nothing, it means that nothing possesses you."

Another statement of his which goes into the details of the concept, through the Qur'anic interpretation of the view of life adopted by Muslims, is that quoted in Nahj al-Balaghah:

"Abstienence is explained by a few words in the Qur'an: 'So that you do not regret what you have list. do not rejoice in what you have been given.'"(12)

This verse is prompted, according to Imam 'Ali's interpretation and its application to abstinence, by confronting the world in a very natural way, not crushed by losses or ignored by profit, since he does not feel bound to one or the other by a relationship that extends beyond the natural one by which man meets those things in life with which he has a simple, normal relationship.

Thus we see how abstinence is a factor in freedom from fear of the world when it is faced realistically and wisely.

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6. The Path to Spiritual Strength

Islam does not merely give general principles for spiritual strength, but tries to teach man the practical way to attain these principles.

This is true regarding faith in God, through which man is assured of divine ability, freeing him from fear of all other forces and building his inner strength.

Islam provides means that will guarantee growth and strengthening of faith by thinking of creation of the heavens and the earth and of the greatness or forces therein, or by studying man, any man, in his limited power at a particular time, place and period of life, which amount to nothing. One can also study the great powers he cannot attain or exercise in his own life. Then one should turn to the great bounty which God has bestowed on man in all spheres of his life, without which man could not continue to live for even a moment, and should put himself eternally in God's hands, humbly praying with man's heart the embodiment of the divine presence, to become a daily awareness, harboring feelings of weakness. This is the way the Qur'an instructs us and stresses, simplifies and gives details that clarify all aspects of this instruction.

It has been observed that one can attain the concept quickly and profoundly as did the first Muslims who adopted the way of knowledge along with the way of faith because faith in Islam follows the way of knowledge to its goal.

Regarding contentment and feelings of self-sufficiency, which eliminate the greed and craving which cause man to fear others as a consequence of his fears of what he envies, Imam 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib, peace be upon him, has said:

"If you want to be satisfied, then the simplest of what is on the earth will satisfy you, but if you do not want to be satisfied, then nothing on earth will do so."

What he is trying to tell you is: You will continue to be hungry and thirsty for what you do not find, no matter how long you have lived, because as soon as you get what you need, you will find new needs which can arouse your thirst and hunger. You cannot achieve any assurance or stability or feel any happiness within yourself.

You will remain a victim of the need for others, feeling profoundly overwhelmed and enslaved. You will remain bound by your impulses without the freedom to escape from their chains in a natural, safe way.

Therefore, you must think of a way to achieve this, while preserving your character, strength and honor. This way is through contentment within and abstinence before all the desires and whims of life so that desire does not represent for you the message of life, but merely a natural need which preserves life within a limited, context.

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7. The Inner Struggle

This is a path to spiritual strength regarding what man wants and does not want and a path to strength of the will regarding what he does and does not do, so that in his practical, inner life, he can be decisive regarding the tendencies he follows and the acts he accepts. The inner struggle is what Islam wishes for man so that he can monitor himself to keep his good instincts pure and free from evil and at the same time monitor his actions to keep them on the right path, free from harm, so that he will live in total unity between what he thinks and what he does, not surrendering to duality of thought and action--thinking what he does not do and doing what he does not think. This is the best path to unity and steadfastness, not weakening in the face of division and indecision. It is the way by which spiritual strength becomes an effective element in man's existence, motivating him for good and not immobilized as a concept hidden in the mind, or a feeling wavering out of hesitancy and embarrassment.

a. Between Excess and Neglect

In the inner struggle, man has erred between excess and neglect. One faction has encircled every aspect of the soul, leaving no room to move or to wander the wide, full earth so that they will not deviate or stray, and they have closed all doors to them--they have left no opening through which to see the world. They have nothing but empty walls with only a ray of light. They contemplate the shape and colors of these walls as much as possible, and have prohibited all desires and whims, immersed in books and excessive punishment, as if punishing people were prescribed by religion or were a ceremony of faith by which they came closer to God, being rewarded on earth and in the hereafter.

b. When the Inner Struggle becomes Weakness

The result of the preceding is a further weakening of the soul, since the battle becomes a useless exertion, with the method not yet put to the test because man has avoided getting involved, choosing to distance himself from its enticements. For this reason, man has not attained strength through action on the battlefield; rather, strength tested its bravery with no enemy on the field, like the man who imagines an enemy attacking him and when he is attacked in reality, finds something he has not counted on and thinks that defeat is the best way to save himself.

This the path many choose when they isolate themselves from mankind and from life because they fear being put to the test and fear failure. They avoid all the struggles of life and issues of faith because they raise doubts and questions. They struggle of life lays them open to its temptations and the punishment of hell.

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They also do wrong when they want to do right and stray when they want to be guided in their lives. They fail when they want to be victorious, since the sign of doing right and being guided is to stay on your path and be guided in your way when confronted by diverging paths and crooked ways. The indication of victory is to stand fast in battle, not to flee from it, since the deserter is defeated even though he may be safe, for he has not achieved the honor of war even though he may have obtained the results of victory.

As the poet said long ago:

"Bravery is not to die of thirst, but to gulp water."

c. Hedonistic Groups

One faction believes that man has the full right to enjoy life and all its pleasures and grants itself every freedom to accept life, taking everything that he can, following every path he wishes, racing into wide, open spaces, not hesitating to go anywhere toward any goal. They would open up all horizons, looking and going to all beautiful and glamorous places, never asking for victory in the battles of desire, since they do not believe that there is a holy battle in this regard. They do not get involved in the struggle for life for the sake of the greater issue since they do not believe in struggling for any issue. They believe instead that the poor should surrender to the existing situation, bringing upon themselves efforts and hardship. They do not believe that fleeing from battle is a despicable defeat because they do not believe in the holiness of battle, or rather, in the holiness of anything in life.

These people face life with the view that desire is sacred and a basis for all beliefs, acts and ideas. Whatever fulfills man's desire is proper and good and whatever does not is false, corrupt and evil since they measure everything by man's happiness, or lack thereof, considering life merely an opportunity for pleasure and enjoyment.

They are not philosophers, but they derive their actions from their philosophy. They are weak, crushed by their desires, defenseless. We find that they have something in common with the first group in their defeat in the face of struggle, even though they differ in that the first group was defeated on the battlefield of life by killing the life within and the second was defeated by the pleasures of life, plunging in until they were too full, without raising a weapon against this great human and spiritual collapse.

d. Islam takes a moderate position between excess and neglect, asking man to take from this world and give to it with consideration and trying to make moderation into a firm position, drawing a line between what he takes and what he gives with an open, alert will, not choking in a fog of prohibition nor collapsing because of licentiousness. Man should take from life what will meet his natural wishes and needs as a living being.

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Temptations live within him like a large, deep world, motivating him to satiate his hunger and thirst. However, he should place restrictions before them if they could become harmful to him or his society. Conversely, man should leave pleasures and desires and set up internal and external controls to assure adherence and moderation, without harming his body, his mind, his life or the lives of others. This is the path to the natural strength that fills the spirit and the will and governs man and society so that one side is not weakened for the sake of another, nor one path strengthened at the expense of another. It is the moderate system of giving strength with consideration that allows weakness with consideration so that man may be complete in his acts and in his life without any internal or external pressure.

All of the foregoing requires a learning stage, during which man studies points of weakness and points of strength, thinking about both and analyzing them and wanting to change ideas into actions.

This may only be possible through a practical plan which seeks to lessen the pressure of temptation and desire by weakening their impulses and results so that pressure will not become a factor to disturb moderation or to weaken the will, since the will and its being weakened are limited by the force or weakness of internal pressure on practical impulses. If impulses are moderate, the will will follow, and vice versa. An immoderate will is the result of undisciplined impulses.

e. Islam Calls for Opening a Front Within

This practical plan mentioned above is for man to open a war front within himself, beginning a continual battle against the pressures of wrongdoing which try to weaken his will, just as he proceeds in his battle against the external enemy. However, the enemy within, with its tyrannical temptations and pleasures, is more dangerous than the external enemy, according to Islam, which considers the battle waged by man against the tyranny of desire within himself to be more vicious than his battle against other enemies because the external enemy fights with weapons he can see, which he can counter with weapons of equal or greater strength.

If the battlefield between you and your enemy is large, you have freedom of action and you fight in keeping with the fact that you are separated from him and he is separated from you; you both have the capability to confront the other fiercely. However, the enemy within--your temptations and desires--fight you with unseen weapons since they awaken within you feelings and sensations which bother and burn, hiss and arouse, explode--as soon as you restrain them on one side, they flare up on the other.

You are not fighting on a large battlefield or in a separate entity--the battlefield is your entire being, character, ability. How can man make his single being into two incompatible personalities, fighting against each other?

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This is the greatest battle, as the Prophet Muhammad said, God bless him and grant him salvation, when he returned from battle in a well-known speech to his followers:

"Welcome a people who have finished the smaller battle and still have the larger battle ahead."

They said, "Oh, Messenger of God, what is the larger battle?"

He answered, "The inner struggle."⁽¹⁵⁾

It is the difficult battle in which you will be attacking with the same personality with which you defend, and defending with the same personality with which you attack. You are fighting yourself to win over yourself; however, the weapons you will use are your principles, your mind and your will and the weapons fighting these will be your temptations, pleasures and greed. When you win, however, you will have the strongest of all forces--that conquers all factors of weakness, from the strongest to the weakest.

Whoever can be victorious over himself can conquer other enemies easily.

In this way the inner struggle requires constant training in order to attain and complete strength in a determined way through various spiritual exercises, which may consist of pledging to renounce some permitted acts in order to get accustomed to refusing something that is legally allowed in order to better control oneself when confronted with what is prohibited. It may consist of long-term renunciation of certain matters that are in doubt, when no decision has been made as to their permissibility or prohibition, even though ignorance is a legal excuse, so that man will have built-in resistance to those things that are known to be prohibited. For according to imams from the Prophet's family:

"Whoever renounces a possible sin, will definitely renounce one that is obvious."

The time may be long or short, depending on one's natural circumstances, the circumstances of the situation or the circumstances of those carrying out this exercise, since the goal is to achieve a natural resistance to wrongdoing by lessening internal pressures and the influences of external pressures on man's will, all of which means different types of exercises, different periods of time and different types of people.

f. Spiritual Exercise is a Path to Strength, not a Personal Preference

We should raise an important point here--this exercise is not an end in itself, to turn into a personal preference, as some who practice it

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have done. We speak of those who violate the law in their harsh exercises, which could lead to certain prohibited damages, since this is in the nature of exercise. For some people, it could become a way of obtaining special favors which have no relationship with practical control, such as the exercise practiced by some to achieve a state of spiritual discovery in which they look at certain aspects of life in general or of their private lives. Such states do not approximate the Islamic concept of spiritual strength, which does not view the constriction of the self in its desires an inner value bringing one close to God, for if it achieves one goal, it misses many others affecting his social life and his relationship with the people around him since his actions are linked to their lives. We see this in Imam 'Ali's conversation with al-'Ala' Ibn Sayyad al-Harithi, when he criticized his brother for wearing the aba' and withdrawing from the world, as quoted in Nahj al-Balaghah:

"Oh, enemy of yourself, spite has taken ahold of you. You have thought of your family. Do you not see that God has given you good things and hates for you to take them and scorn God this way."(16)

It is obvious that man should maintain a moderate, natural course, not pursuing exercises that make his life difficult or make him behave unnaturally while trying to distance himself from wrong.

Many sayings of the Prophet Muhammad and the imams from his family have stressed this type of struggle and the foundations on which it can rest and the practical self-control that protects it from weakness and deviation, as well as stressing that it is a great gauge of strength. According to the Prophet Muhammad:

"The strong person is one who conquers himself."

And:

"The strong person is not the one who wins in battle, but the one who controls himself in anger."

There are several references to the fact that the highest level man can reach in the struggle is the one where he becomes a person who is spiritually above the desire to oppress--he not only refrains from oppressing others, he has reached the psychological state in which he does not even think of oppressing anyone.

As the Prophet advised 'Ali:

"'Ali, the best person in the struggle is the one who does not wish to harm anyone."(17)

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In the well-known statement by Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq, giving us a gauge of the greatest value for he who struggles against himself and is victorious against the strong pressures of weakness:

"Whoever controls himself when he has desires, when he is fearful, when he has appetites and when he is angry, will be saved by God from the fire."(18)

"The believer is he whose satisfaction does not lead him into sin or falsehood, whose anger does not prevent him from saying what is right and who does not take more than is his due when he could have done so."(19) (or his ability to harm others doe not lead him to do so).

Those who study ethics have begun to study the means by which man can carry out this type of struggle in his public and private life, and they stress adherence to the legal aspect as the aspect which maintains spiritual strength in a positive manner without succumbing to negative aspects. Thus the concept will not become, as we have referred to, something that harms the health, mind or social interaction and so that man will remain, as Islam wishes, natural, while still controlling his life through his spiritual and ideological strength.

8. The Strong Believer is Better than the Weak Believer

The Hadith (of Muhammad) follows the same direction as the Qur'an, concentrating on inner strength of the believer, as seen in Majma' al-Bahrayn: "The strong believer is better than the weak believer."

This confirms the fole that strength plays in God's evaluation of the believer and His considering it a religious value in addition to faith. Perhaps this concept is based on the religious truth that considers faith in God to be a clear call to strength and constant seeking after it, since weakness arises from fear of others on the one hand and from the loss of responsibility for establishing truth and destroying lies, which depends on great strength, on the other. Both of the former are the opposite of faith, which arises from trust in God and a feeling of responsibility.

In this regard, we see that the Hadith emphasizes spiritual strength as the basis for the necessary physical strength, which if separated from the spiritual awareness of inner strength, will become an evil thing, opposed to righteousness and esteem, rather than being a firm basis for the society of believers in their lives.

9. There is no Weak Body with a Strong Will

Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad al-Sadiq said:

"There is no weak body with a stong will."

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This describes the role of spiritual strength and its influence on man's movement toward the large and small issues of his life, for the strength of self-motivation gives the body doubled strength, renewed vigor and passionate activity. Weak motivation encourages the body to be lax and lazy, resulting in weakness and collapse.

For this reason, during the decisive moments of their existence, nations have tried to increase this spiritual strength through zealous means which raise excitement to high levels so that they can motivate men quickly toward their established goals.

According to Amir of the Faithful 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib (in Du'a' Kamil):

"Let me serve you with all my strength and I will give even more from my heart."

In light of all the foregoing, we should try to strengthen the good impulses within us, as a means to inner, spiritual strength, so that mankind may quickly and actively reach its admirable goals.

Footnotes

1. The Means Used by the Shiah, Vol 6, p. 157.
2. The Sahadiyah Journal, p. 78.
3. The Means Used by the Shiah, Vol. 6, p. 152.
4. Ibid., p. 166.
5. Essence of the Origin, p. 158.
6. The Path of Eloquence, p. 501.
7. Ibid., p. 508.
8. Ibid., p. 508.
9. Ibid., p. 534.
10. The Means Used by the Shiah, Vol. 6, p. 321.
11. The Path of Eloquence, p. 353.

Footnotes, cont.

12. The Path of Eloquence, p. 353.
13. The Sufficient (Al-Mazandaraniy's Commentary), Vol. 9, p. 385.
14. The Sufficient (The Haidariy Press in Teheran), Vol. 5, p. 12.
15. The Path of Eloquence, p. 324.

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Chapter Four

Power of the Community

1. What is the Community and what is the Power of the Community?
2. It is Necessary to Lessen Feelings of Individuality.
3. The Islamic Concept of Liberation which does not Separate the Social Structure.
4. Power of the Community and Its Reality.
5. The Reality of the Weak Community.
6. This Concept in Its Ideal Framework.
7. The Comparative Concept of Reality and Idealism.
8. The Power of the Community and Its Detailed Elements.
9. The Intellectual Aspect, Its Positiveness.
10. The Intellectual Aspect, Its Negativeness.
11. The Freedom of Thought
12. Emotional or Sentimental Aspects, Their Positiveness.
13. The Community of the Believers and the Oneness of Its Members
14. The Brotherhood of Believers.
15. Love--Hate in God.
16. The Emotional Aspect, Its Negative Side.
17. The Practical Aspect, Its Positive Side.
18. Comprehensive Responsibility.
19. Social Solidarity.
20. The Decree for what is Right, Patience, Endurance, and Compassion.
21. The Order for what is Well Known
22. The Practical Aspect, Its Negative Side.
23. Final Issue.

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Man is individualistic and communalized, and he is an independent being who assimilates his needs and thoughts to himself. He is part of everything, the framework of common life shared with others, whether it be in one house, one province, one nation, or one world. And the individualistic life has a type of power in which man expresses himself and protects himself from aggressors. The communal type is another kind of power in which the community protects its structure, its independence, and defends itself from individual aggressors as well as groups of aggressors. And here we will attempt to search for the Islamic concept of societal or communal power through what the Qur'an and Sunna have presented us with realistic concepts of the first attempt at an Islamic society and what elements of power it includes or what the Sunna and the Qur'an want us to include in our lives in a new attempt.

Then we will continue to study by using the vocabulary of the Sharia (legal vocabulary) with respect to thought, emotion, and behavior, and its positive and negative aspects, so that we may have a complete picture of the base on which it is focused and of the structure on which it stands firm. As for the reasons for proceeding in this manner, it is because we have not found in the Qur'an and Sunna instances or analyses of the society and its weakness and its strength. Where elements of weakness and strength alternate, independently or directly, there we find some thought, hence an illusion that indicates that the basic leadership of the structure of the society had a strong and firm basis rather than a society that is weak and faltering.

1. What is the Community and what is the Power of the Community?

Some social scientists answer the first question by stating that the society is the collection of individuals who live together and have the same traditions, customs, hopes, and goals which they hope to accomplish by specific means.¹

As for the commonly accepted meaning of social power, we refer to the society domain in its practical aspects, which are made similar by cohesiveness and bonds among its members on the basis of common thought, feeling and deed toward a unified and common goal. As to what it means of material power with respect to arms, money, knowledge and other things, that which it is necessary for the individual or society or community to obtain in order to have practical power, this is not what we mean in this instance, because this type of power represents the raw material which the communal or individualistic power uses or fabricates in granting increasing activity for freedom outburst.

Rather, what we wanted to hear was the instance of power by means of relations that occur among segments of the society, in order that a unified and cohesive and well-connected community be created from this, by means of elements that lead us into these relations, whether they be negative or positive. And it may seem to us that collective power is synonymous where it comes closer to the profound concept of the community. And whenever common feelings or thoughts, hopes, goals and traditions repeat, the cohesiveness and bond and solidity increase which make the power that this group of cohesive well-connected individuals a natural order.

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2. It is Necessary to Lessen Feelings of Individuality.

In light of this, we feel that the means that are appropriate for sociologists or Islamic scholars, or for Muslims in general, is to resort to attaining of an increasing amount of collective power through strengthening of collective incentives that would lessen the individualistic feelings of the individual so that he would acquire the beneficial and conscientious feelings of the social bonds which tie him to others so that he may feel consequently the new unified vibrant existence of power and life. The religious text that we are presenting stresses the basic elements in the strengthening of incentives and relationships and feelings of social responsibilities.

3. The Islamic Concept of Liberation which does not Separate the Social Structure.

We may encounter in the Hadith (sayings and deeds of the prophet) that we later on face explanations in the Sharia and tendencies that discuss some of the conditions by regarding these tendencies or explanations from the Sharia as paths for deliverance or liberation in this life or in the hereafter from which one may be inspired to move these tendencies and explanations from the subject that we are in opposition to. But we notice in this realm that the Islamic concept of liberation in the hereafter or in this world does not separate from the concept of the social structure of life--looking toward the strong ties between the explanation from the Sharia and between communal life as a whole. And there is no individual verse in the Sharia that does not deal with the social or the collected aspect. Since in the Sharia (Islamic law system) there is a non-existence of the individuals to mankind, strange to mankind versus the community. But rather we note that in the virtues and values of individuals to mankind is a social aspect to the individual in which Islam makes him a part of the community to which he has ties, in the process of give and take so that he may be the element of the power that is not a mere heavy burden but which power can be taken without him giving back a double measure of his power to the community.

Thus we are able to understand from Islamic narrations the aspects of the individual and of the community in relation to mankind. The process is a blending of these two aspects and the meeting of two personalities. It is not a dual process which makes mankind yield to the twofold personalities that man feels that in the twofold process of splitting and separation, ending in a destructive struggle in which man lives the reality of self-division and of mental division. This may become clear to us in the concept of observing organs of the body, each one of them that has a specific duty which requires the organ to carry out the certain task that he possesses in a certain time, a task connected with and related to the basic framework or structure of the body so that it may proceed collectively in the practical duties of other portions of the body. And we have studied some of the religious texts that discuss the punishment that God sent down to the corrupt, to the communities that deviated from His wishes, or that distorted the path that He had decreed for this. And as a result of this deviation from true task towards destruction, it may seem strange that these texts have a connection with the power of the community, and consequently the Hadith that deals with it.

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Because God's punishment of the communities that were in rebellion against His commands and His plans was a divine concern which was related to a divine will, the issue of punishment and merit for rebellion or for obedience became related. And it was not connected with the conditions of the social order in its movements and structures because the problem was not such as it may seem, because the problem of punishment was not something far removed from this world. It was not a heavenly concern, as they say, but rather it was a natural result of rebellion or insurrection in the community, and the weakening of the elements of discipline and cohesion in the society. We know that the legislative explanation of the Sharia did not proceed except by means of bonds between the vital concerns of mankind in the life of the community or for man's dedication to avoiding corruptness and harmful behavior. And as such secular power proceeded to be preventive element in the beginning when it was an element of the formation of life in the community, and when it (secular punishment) is transformed to an effective reality. And perhaps we will realize from some of the verses that the devine planning represents a symbol of the destruction of the society at the revival that the secular punishment that God sent down to the people was a living picture of the natural destruction that they brought down upon themselves when they changed the society on the basis of deviating from the righteous path to a weak and demolished community which is governed by greed, impulse, and private concerns which resulted in disintegration and separation.

And perhaps we can understand from some of the other verses that discuss the natural destruction rather than the destruction descending from the atoms. And as such, some of the Qur'anic verses may have been inspired by the destruction in the following same. And in another Qur'anic verse in which the saying goes and we may understand that destruction as in the first verse is the destruction that was the result of the opulence of which the community and all its surroundings enjoyed, as was the corruption that represented the sufferings and crises and problems that were posed to the community as a result of its deviating and wrongful practices in which the people tolerated their responsibilities and faced in this consequence the outcome of their responsibility.

4. The Power of the Community and Its Reality.

We may find some characteristics of the concept of the Islamic community in verses that discuss some of the characteristics of the first Islamic community, composed by the Prophet Muhammad and his followers on the levels of growth and integration until they reached the peak of power so this may be a living example which may be imitated in the communities that we would like to produce in the present or in the future, and the saying: Muhammad is the messenger of God and those who are relentless against the non-believer compassion is among them when they are seen praying and bowing, appropriate for Allah's grace and satisfaction as are in their faces after praying; we have people such as these in the Torah and the Gospel, as a crop which emerged splintered and raw; and the level of their following Allah's path pleases the sowing of anger in the non-believers and God promises those who believe and work for his concerns forgiveness and a great reward.

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We find in some of the betrayals of the prophetic or Islamic community at its onset deep feelings of compassion that represent a characteristic of the community. So that it may be transformed into procedure of sympathy and moral behavior which is demonstrated in their lives with a feeling of responsibility that carries over into their practical relations, so that we see the individual affecting his brothers is because how God affected him, or the association of the community of Muslem conquerors from the immigrants who came from Mecca to join them in a new Islamic society, a new unified Islamic society so as to increase by their brotherhood the power in a double dimensin in order that those coming to Mecca would increase the power of the prophets following by joining their brotherhood, by their possessing capacities of capability of knowledge, faith, courage, and the characteristics of the saying which follows Sura (chapter 59, verses 7-9).

To the needy and the wayfarer, that it not become a commodity between the rich among you and whatsoever the messenger giveth you, taketh you, and whatsoever he forbideth, abstain from it. And keep your duty to Allah for Allah is stern in reprisal. And it is for the poor fugitives who have been driven out from their homes and their belongings, who seek bounty from Allah and his messenger. They are the loyal. Those who entered the city and the faith before them love those who fled unto them for refuge and find in their breasts no need for that which hath been given them but prefer the fugitives above themselves though poverty become their lot. And who so is saved from his own avarice such are they who are successful.

There were feelings of love, affection and goodness to those coming to Mecca fleeing from their persecuted religions. Those who God and his prophet Muhammad were victorious over and trusted in what he had promised them and they left their houses and their money for the sake of God and they fled in search of the favor and satisfaction of God. And they were a new force to end the new Islamic society. They are individuals of this community, of the of the community of the prophet's followers who welcomed or received them with open and pure hearts not slighting or being upset with anyone and not feeling any burden or hardship from this. But rather this power is transformed toward collective activity to the point of arousement or agitation with the poor and the needy instead of the rich and contented, and they would go hungry so that the appetites of their brothers would be satiated. They would go thirsty so that their thirst be quenched, and they would tire themselves so that their brothers could rest.

And we may understand from portions of the verses that proceed from the base of belief and not from any other emergency or temporary base that this arousal was not subservient to innocent feelings or a change in the nobleness of the Arabs in Jericho, very self-defensive, but rather the bse of belief was subservient to the aware of the spirit of belief on which the spiritual practical base of the new Islamic community was focused on and which was considered as in awe of the responsibility of all individuals of the community. And we may comprehend from the word compassion in extending it in its prophetic tradition to the meaning that has been extended in a more humane context to interactions and relations, from the standpoint of this very usage of this word.

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And we found in verses that discuss the nature of the apostle and the movement of the apostles which is considered an issue as all that do not transcend and become one type of the compassion of God to people of the world (Sura 31): In Allah's compassion which is soft to them and if he were coarse covering the hearts to not be scattered from amongst them and what we were sent by you of compassion to people of the world.

The Qur'anic verses mentioned discuss the flexible and gentle style that the Prophet Muhammad used in speaking to his people, the great spirit which was compatible with his humane behavior towards them, and of the great heart that was opened to them. There was an abundant amount of loyalty, affection and love, that all this was created, stemming from man's compassion and from the apostles. Also, Hadith pertaining to compassion were mentioned in the verses that focused on the basis of marital relations in Islam, on the basis of friendship and compassion, regarding that friendship demonstrates sympathy in the framework of mutual feelings of love from which compassion emanates.

The concept that governs marital life by means of each appreciating the circumstances of the other, has an embodiment of compassion, in a framework of daily duties and practices for the issue of life. (Sura 30, verse 31) "And from his verses he created from those from yourself, a spouse to be with and to make between you substance and compassion." And as such, we may understand from all this, that compassion is not a sudden feeling which lives in the heart, to be expressed emotionally and sporadically, in which feelings of goodness in a sense of sympathy flow into other lives, but rather compassion is a procedure of interaction and association, of general pragmatic behavior.

The compassion that embraces the positive circumstances that surround the individuals of the community, their approach to Islamic affiliations that are considered to be: belief in God and his Apostle which is an abstract and conscious act, inspirational to people, as is the blending of the lineage that unites them to one mother or one father. As God, Allah, has said in the following: "Muslims are a brotherhood from which the social aspect of interaction is stressed to us, affiliated with the emotional aspect connected with faith in God who joins the heart of mankind. In light of this man does not feel, in the nature of legal relations, that yield to superior approaches coming from outside, but rather searching for a forgiving nature, as any other forgiving relationship or any other natural forgiving demeanor, which is consistent with charitable motives, from the beneficial source of the spirit, through the means of love and giving. As such, we understand how the characteristic of mutual compassion is one of the factors of the cohesiveness of the community and consequently one of the sources of the community's powers.

The next characteristic in this verse is that we find emotional factors greatly interact with violence. This position is in regard to the attitude toward non-believers who represent the external element that threatens the oneness and goodness of the community and, in their threat of the base on which cohesiveness and power rest, which is faith in God and in his Apostles. And there is a violent group who confronts this with zealously and harshness because the issue is not one of appeal and conviction but rather an issue of

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response to the enemies, and protection for the future. God described this attitude in a detailed image in one of the "killing" verses. We may deduce from this verse that the solidarity toward the non-believers was not limited to a belief in a religion other than Islam, but rather extended from all acts or deeds that desired to internally weaken the community, or to weaken its faith or the consequences of the state, and this encounters attitudes in its appeal, to declare war on hypocrites. By the same power, and foundations, for declaring war on non-believers as the saying that goes: O Prophet! Strive against the disbelievers and the hypocrites. Be harsh with them in this unified attitude that the splendid Islamic concept of the society and its affiliations which rely on compassion, cooperation from within, in order to construct a foundation, relations built on severity, power and violence, internally and externally, in order to protect the structure from destruction and integration.

As for the third characteristic, that expresses the goal that embodies the social affiliation and practices based on it, it is to be the base by which the Islamic community is distinguished from other contemporary communities, and those that follow, based on tribal, regional, or clan affiliation, or another foundation that does not go back and is not connected to God, but rather it is a tribal and ethnic solidarity.

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There were no feelings of selfish considerations or geneological or financial or linguistic considerations in the Islamic community from which the people knew that the bases for consideration are communal and international affiliations and its effect in the community to be leaders of the opposition for support and repudiation, love and hate. For brothers there was one consideration which governs these affiliations stemming from a grand goal in which everything in life was defined for them, to which their general and particular feelings and emotions and thoughts yielded. This is the aspiration for the favor and satisfaction of God. This is what distinguishes naturally due to God, the strength of the community from its weakness to the degree of dissension which this aim represents. The Qur'an spoke all this in this idea from the previous verse.

This is a living example of the integral power of the community that is cultivated young, then widens the route for new study that supports and strengthens. As such, it, the society, remains thriving and advancing until it emerges into the advance and high level of life in the unlimited space with the position of power, cohesiveness and independence.

These are some of the shining characteristics of the realistic picture that through itself gives us a clear concept in its natural environment by way of the pragmatic attitude far removed from all idealism or fiction of which dillusion flutters in parts of dreams. These verses have been able to indicate qualities of the characteristics of the Islamic community.

Victory was obtained by Islam, and all enemies, whether internal or external were eliminated in a short span of time.

5. The Reality of the Weak Community

The Qur'an gives us another picture of the community which represents splitting, decline, and weakness. One of the factors of weakness was the concept of the Jewish community that lacked cohesiveness in its superficial or external form, but it did not hesitate to reveal itself and disintegrate in the reality of its reaching practices so that it was the antithesis of the Islamic community at that time. In order to enter into a pragmatic and aware comparison between a defeat of this community and a victory of the other community, when they came face to face in the struggle of ideologies or belief and life. Stemming from their both using their internal weapons which moves the hand and pushes forward their steps, and if they were affected by arms, then they affected the areas of paralysis whereas arms moved there and infused vitality into the heart of the battle.

To transform the comparison to a new comparison in the contemporary struggle between our community and other communities that boldly embark on the contemporary struggle ends for struggle in the future in the battle between power and weakness and between truth and falseness.

We have a clear picture of the Jewish community in Medina when the soldier entered into battle with the Muslim community. Do not kill them collectively unless you are in a protective force or group or behind a wall. The strength

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among them is great, and judge them collectively while their hearts are scattered. Because they are a people without reason, the strength among them is great. The power here was not directed against elements that threatened the unity present, due to the absence of feelings of a unified community, so that it was transformed to self-scattered units without affiliation or connections in the image behind which the individual contradictions and special interests of persons lay hidden, which made each group or individual an entity with his special interests, ways, procedures, and goals which were opposed to the interests of the groups or other individuals with his goals and manner or procedures, which made the realm for strike, dispute and clashes become greater, as was the case between one community and another community when they lived the reality of war and large-scale killing. And the result was the increasing severity of strength of some versus the others, and consequently a downfall of attitude and a defeat in battle.

The superficial image represented a unity which fused together individuals in a common rank. This is a deceptive image which only deceives the simplest of the simpletons, for the true environment did not look on matters realistically but made do with looking for its superficial aspects. They dazzled and deceived and avoided the true picture. If we came near them and lived with them and learned of their circumstances we would find ourselves facing another concept very far removed from superficiality, whereas their observation would be of difference in members, procedures and feelings, that is, the difference in trends, attitudes and progress. There is no thought to unify them and no specific interest to join them together, but rather an internal division which is transformed to an external division, and that is what we see in the following saying: Their hearts are scattered. Then the verses concluded with an image of revelation on the basis of all this, and that is that they do not realize the truth because if they comprehend the truth and look to reality with realistic eyes, then they would open the wide door of life and would not restrict the general aspect that unites but rather would widen them for the individual needs that do not conflict with the needs of the community.

These two pictures may be an honorary task in the Islamic community and a critical or censored task in the Jewish community except that the basic goal was the prominence of elements of power here or elements of weakness there. But they erupt in the same time, in the same direction where the honor stemmed from here and criticism from there, from the basis of consideration of social cohesiveness as a source of strength and its absence as a source of weakness.

6. This Concept in its Ideal Framework

We have seen some Qur'anic verses that discuss death by necessary decrees and ideology. By regarding them as one of the bases that support the strength of the community and its cohesiveness because of the value of the community, we defined the degree by the obligation of its individuals to the duties to which they are obligated. Inasmuch as that which governs relationships and sets behavior is that which shapes unity that joins the various groups and combines the various sets or groups which the following Qur'anic verse express as going outside of this principle, a weakened takes place, no matter what the circumstances and incentives are, even in rebellion.

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Then the verses attempt to present an image of strength and weakness by means of the obligation of the basic creed and rebellion against this creed by means of presenting the ideals that embodies the abstract concept in the sensitive example that follows: of the woman who knitted wool and then afterwards tore it apart.

Fulfill the covenant of Allah when ye have covenant in it and break not your oath as to the exacerbation of it, and after ye have made Allah certain of you blow away all that is unknown of him. And be not like unto her who unravelleth the thread after she hath made it strong to fend filaments making your oath a deceit between you because of a nation being more numerous than another nation. Allah only tries you their God and He barely will explain to you on the day of resurrection that which ends the difference.

7. The Comparative Concept of Reality and Idealism

We have seen the verse that advocates the community to be cohesive on the basis of grasping for the rope of God and to seize not to split, because the motives for truth, however great and varied and serious they might be, are not as important as that which threatens the safeguards of God's cable, because above all else it is considered that humane relationship by God, which is the principal, the firm and the everlasting affiliations, because it was started from the beginning of civilization on earth and lasts until the end of the world, so that it may begin again in another life in which other relationships are limited and transient affiliations will not strengthen the continuation due to eternity.

Then the verse proceeds in a comparative style between the reality of the present in the continuation of the safeguarding of God's cable that represents power and cohesiveness and between their past reality in the continuation in the ignorance of God so that they know the grace, love and spiritual peace that they now enjoy.

To the extent that spiritual and bodily warfare was necessary, all of which resulted and separates from this, from good and bad appeals, all of which leads to one or the other, to happiness or misfortune, in this world or in the hereafter, and in what it represents of the power in their lives of this reality or from the weakness of history's reality.

And hold fast all of ye together to the cable of Allah and do not separate, and remember Allah's favor unto thee - how ye were enemies and he made friendship between your hearts so that ye became as brothers by his grace, and how ye were in the grate of an evasive fire, and he did save ye from it. Thus Allah made it clear his revelation unto you that halfway ye may be guided.

This is a logical connection to the birth of cohesiveness and of the safeguarding of God's cable that represents interaction on the basis of faith, and the league of movements and oneness of goals by which hearts were joined. As a natural result of the unity of memberships in members of the group and goals the transformation to affiliation of brotherhood in God which is what one of the Qur'anic verses mentions in the Hidrian image.

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The Muslims are a Brotherhood

This is the basic attitude in the Islamic concept of societal cohesiveness that represents the foundation of power from whence its living affiliations is connected with responsibility to the faith and whereas this is the realistic image that Islam wants to construct in the life of Muslims, to embody living examples to other communities to imitate it, and to be binded by Islam in its surrounding.

8. The Power of the Community in Its Detailed Elements

As for the intellectual detail and legal vocabulary that Islam wanted, in itself a transformation of these environments to pragmatic practices whose progress would be limited by laws of the Shaddiyah that designate to man the righteous path that he should proceed upon to seek positive steps that serve to deepen and strengthen the concept. And as for the negative steps that pose an obstacle between the elements that want to weaken the community and between the attaining of goals for the integration of the community's power from within the base of the element of power and its integration. And from outside in the demolition of material and human obstacles that are placed in the path of power, growth, advancement and flourishing that the community enjoys.

We will see in the coming instance that the study that it deals with is divided into several aspects in the positive and negative progress, because of the values and strength of the community have three aspects. One is the intellectual aspect; two is the emotional aspect; three, the behavioral aspect. All these aspects have a positive line which represents in its internal content the wealth of the intellectual community of one thought, one feeling, and behavior harmonious with the thought, feeling, and common goals of the community. We will attempt to look at all aspects in summary.

9. The Intellectual Aspect

Islam emphasizes protection of the intellectual base that is found between the individuals of the community beginning with the creed or ideology and ending with general concepts of mankind and life, because this widens the realm of behavioral gaps in the intellectual and pragmatic structure in the life of the community. We notice in this area that the Qur'anic text that focused on one concept in an instance of three when the issue of faith came up, regarding it as a base for interaction of Muslims in their community and between Muslims and others in their unified community. In the Islamic community be called for oneness of faith which was expressed in the following Qur'anic verse:

Say ye people that I am the messenger of Allah to you all--to him that owns the heavens and the earth, there is he who lives and dies and believes in Allah and His messenger the prophet who believes in Allah, his words, his following, because you are rightly guided.

In the apostolic community the appeal to unify on the general basis of faith came in a speech to the people of the Book, mainly Muslims, Jews, and Christians, in the following saying:

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Say oh people of the scripture, come to an agreement between you and us, that we shall worship none but Allah, and that we shall ascribe no partner unto him, and that none of us shall take others for lords besides Allah, and if they turn away then say, bear witness that we are they who have surrendered unto him.

And the saying in this area of what Muslims must say to others in the placing of the true base for oneness of faith in the call to interaction:

Say, oh Muslims, we believe in Allah and that which is revealed unto us, and that which was revealed unto Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and that which Moses and Jesus received and that which Moses and Jesus received, and that which the prophets received from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them and unto him we have surrendered.

In this respect we see Qur'anic verses that discuss the point of cross section of thought under various feelings. This is a feeling of the safeguarding of God's cable in the saying that follows:

Hold fast to God's cable together, and do not split apart. And in the safeguarding of God in the following saying:

He who holds fast to God is guided to the direct path. And to adhere to the firm grip:

He who does not believe in false Gods but believes in Allah, indeed he adheres to the firm grip, which he does not break apart from and he is heard on by God. And he who surrenders his countenance to Allah, he is good and indeed adheres to the firm grip.

We have seen in this respect the verses that discuss those that live a life of intellectual duplication between belief and non-belief, to destroy and condemn morally, and to threaten those with punishment. In comparison between these and believers who live a life of the oneness of faith and its ramifications and all that it includes:

Lo, those who disbelieve in Allah and his messengers and seek to make distinction between Allah and his messengers and say: we believe in some and disbelieve in others, and seek to choose a way in between, such are disbelievers in truth, and for disbelievers we prepare a shameful doom.

But those who believe in Allah and his messengers and make no distinction between any of them, unto them Allah will give their wages and Allah was ever forgiving and merciful.

Believe ye in part of the scripture and disbelieve ye in part thereof? Of what is the reward of those who do so. Say ignominy in the life of the world, and on the day of resurrection they will be consigned to the most grievous doom, for Allah is not unaware of what ye do.

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10. The Intellectual Aspect--Its Negativeness

The Qur'an emphasizes the rejection of trends and approaches of non-believers, those that stray from the right path, and the comparison of various communities that attempt to widen the realm to heresy and blasphemy of the apostle and of messengers. From the standpoint of protecting the class or personality characteristics and concentrating on its approach in all possible ways, even by resorting to dialogue that reveals the falseness of their blasphemous and erroneous thoughts. In what the dialogue is able or resorts to completely deprived practices, or to launch an attack on them, or other means of weakening and stagnating the community.

The Qur'an discusses many ideas and approaches as it discusses the many communities in constant search who would stop in the face of the apostle regarding it as one of the factors for the weakening of the community's power. By working to destroy the intellectual basis and to transform it to a torn, split and factioned community. The community that dons religious garb carries the mantel of religion and thought or that works in the field of politics and economics. We notice in this area three outstanding examples which the Qur'an discusses.

a. Generosity

The wealthy who possess riches and money work to obtain freedom to govern and to exploit, so that their interests remain flourishing in order to serve their selfish interests and their ambitions. They approach all good and sound appeals that join people under one general unifying issue in order to live in a believing community, far removed from error and far removed from strain. Having a goal based on truth and unity, far removed from the idea of evilness and exploitation and therefore it has practical results to utilize their money in a war of profit and the companions of the profit, of leaders and followers, or to incite separation, unrest, division and rebellion. The Qur'an discusses wealthy people in more than one verse. First, which we see in the intellectual aspect here, and in the pragmatic aspect in the Hedith Plecete.

To inspire us with the necessity of stopping in the face of our plans for sabotage and for deviation from the right path, that works to weaken and destroy the community. And we send unto any township a warner that Istapapat once declared:

Lo, we are disbelievers in that wherewith ye have been sent and they say, we are more than you in wealth and children, we are not the punished. Say, oh Mohammed, lo my Lord enlarges the provision for whom he will, and narrows it for whom he will, but most of mankind know not.

And the chieftains of his folk who disbelieved and denied the meaning of the hereafter and whom we had made soft in the life of the world said:

This is only a mortal like you who eateth of that whereof ye eat, and drinketh of that ye drink. If ye were to obey a mortal like yourself, them, lo, ye surely would be losers. Doth he promise you that you, when you are dead

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and have become dust and bones will again be brought forth? Be gone, be gone with that which ye are promised. There is not but our life of the world, we die and we live, and we shall not be raised again. He is only a man who has invented a lie about Allah, we are not going to put faith in him.

We notice in the Qur'an's focus on the rich, regarding them as the social class opposed to the apostle, this stems from their attitude with its natural complications to the conditions of wealth that they live in and from the social character that creates for them freedom of movement in domination and exploitation, which goes against the line of the apostle and its planning for an honorable life, far removed from exploitation of his fellow man by means of feelings of superiority based on wealth or any other mundane concerns.

We notice that in the last verses that were presented to us, that the wealthy were directing a call to other classes to distance themselves from the apostle without raising a coming voice, which indicates their submission to great economic pressure imposed upon this class who accepted Islam.

Those who distinguish between the Ullumah, or the religious followers of Islam, and others, politicians and rulers, who interacted with the elements of division and dissension that was present in the community or that worked to create its existence in order to be able to manipulate as they pleased, and to exploit what they were able to exploit. As for their means of doing so, it was to increase intellectual difference so that they would be able to transform huge obstacles which would divide the community amongst itself, which would weaken its emotional factors and mundane ambitions, creating from it a thought that is a human creation to those who think of it even if there was more than one aspect connected with it, and moving away from it. On the basis of concentration on these differences on relative matters or approximately as such. However, these instigators of intellectual difference remained following factors of division and neglect those factors that brought the community together, and as such transformed the community to splitting and to factions which represent in the community's life several divisions or several divided and dispersed feelings with specific concerns and goals from which the community loses its unity, strength and integrity.

We see in these signs of religious dissension that divides the community into two groups in the framework of one religion. In the political differences that are spread in the community into several groups, in which the country is divided into provinces or regions. Thus the country is extended or expanded to a point that the community falls quickly before the selfishness of these people.

In the game of bloody warfare between scattered concerns and different ambitions and different thoughts that feed on these concerns and support these ambitions. In this respect we see the Qur'anic verses that discuss some types of existence in every time and place.

Lo, as for those who sunder their religion and become schismatics no concern at all hast thou with them. Their case will go to Allah, who then will tell them what they used to do. And be ye not as those who separated and disputed after the clear proofs had come unto them, for such there is an awful

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doom. And obey Allah and his messenger and dispute not one with another lest ye falter and your strength depart from you, but be steadfast, lo, Allah is with the steadfast. Do not share company with those who worship many gods, but rather make known to all parties of your joy. Lo, religion with Allah is the surrender to his will and guidance. Those who formally receive the scripture differed only after knowledge came unto them through transgression among themselves. Who so disbelieveth the revelations of Allah will find that lo, Allah is swif and reckoning. It was made known to ye from the religion what Noah recommended and that which we commended unto Abraham and Moses and Jesus saying: Establish the religion and be not divided therein. Dreadful for the idolators is that unto which thouest callest them. Allah chooses for himself whom he will, and guideth unto himself him who turneth toward him. And they were not divided until after the knowledge came unto them, though rivalry among themselves.

We notice that the concentration or focus in some of these verses regarding the causes in differences that come to the Qur'an in which they differ which is the desire, envy and hostility without which the base would have no influence or practicality. As such, anyone who leaves followers to dissension and division deserves to be punished. And more so, that the dissension is placed with the killing and the struggle because the issue is one of heretical groups which follows: There is no thought that opposes or clashes with it, and this is what the Qur'anic verse emphasizes.

And give them plain commandments, and they differed not until after the knowledge came unto them, though rivalry among themselves. Lo, thy lord will judge between them on the day of resurrection concerning that wherein they used to differ. And now we have set thee, oh Muhammed, on a clear road of our commandment, so follow it, and follow not the whim of those who know not.

The originators of the appeals of a non-believing and erroneous nature moved internally or to the external in order to weaken the basic pillars of belief in Islam, or to destroy it as one of the means of destroying the community's unity and strength. Islam had wanted Muslims to stand against this and to prohibit this from the practices of their freedom. And to exploit points of weakness in the community and to implement them in its surroundings of its concepts. its ideology and its life.

11. The Freedom of Thought in Islam

As for the intellectual freedom, which relies on what Islam believes with respect to freedom of thought inasmuch as to choose what they wish to with respect to creed, thoughts, ideas and concepts, stemming from the following saying:

Do not hate those in the religion, for the path of guidance is made clear to you. And in the saying that follows:

Say, it is the truth from the Lord of you all, then whosoever will, let him believe, and whosoever will, let him disbelieve.

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As for these intellectual freedoms, Islam had ensured it in a purely intellectual context, that which is directed to intellectual originators and specialists, to discuss and debate on them, and to convince them of their beliefs or thoughts, or to convince them of their thoughts, ideas, and beliefs.

And this is the collectiveness of culture, in open debates where the great Ullumah, or learned scholars of Islam, have the ability to defend and to attack, to convince, and to be convinced. From this we understand intellectual freedom in Islam, which is mixed with freedom and obligation. It is not a separate freedom which opens the area to chaos or to change the people's lives or thoughts without protecting them from the factors of error or the elements of freedom or without caring for them or without caring for their creed, in order to grow in a natural environment.

It was not a separate or detached obligation which closes the window of thought or hardens them to look on opposing thoughts that others think. One of man's rights is to think as he pleases, and to grow as he pleases, because he alone is the one that bears the responsibility of his beliefs and thoughts. However, it is the right of the call of Islam to defend itself and its thoughts and it is its duty to prove invalid all appeals that follow. As such, we have seen the Qur'an open its heart to all thoughts that existed in their error. As such it was invaded by thoughts in its ideal state which opposed truth and supported falsehood. Then the concept of the faithfulness of all without adding or diminishing, even if the realm of thought were to be open to man, it would not enter into his thoughts alone. But this indicates before man's thoughts is that which he receives or defends and which is a reply to the defeat of erroneous or opposing thoughts, so that he may live in a comparative concept, allowing the power of movement within the framework of freedom of thought, subservient to the precise structure and feelings of responsibility and obligation.

We notice that the practical aspects of this type of intellectual freedom in Islam, the history of appeal in Islam, and the men who opened their hearts and thoughts debates and mosques, to opposing thoughts that went to the limits of announcing heresy with all clarity in the area of struggle as that which the Imam Jafril Asaduq transmitted or quoted to us.

...who set up debate clubs with atheists in Bat Ala Harang granting them freedom of speech without pressure or hate or trying to arouse the jealous religious mobs against them. Believing that the freedom and approach is the only way to attain faith as the strength of new thoughts. Some of it is transmitted to us by the history of the Amusqi Qavanti in the Qavanti's Muqmin era who held out to the Imam Ali Idimus Adida, the eighth imam of Islam, an open call which relied on complete or near complete free dialogue with the non-believers and the various denominations within the framework of freedom and splendid tolerance.

Islam believes in freedom of thought as a part of its belief in the general freedom of man in the life of the community to the extent that they do not harm the social structure of people and do not permit manifestations of weakness to express themselves or to cross over into the life of the community in the

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movement which comes back and collapses and without which similar intellectual protection feeds on the element of great power. As such, it attempts to surround itself and the community regarding the power of the community, with its control separate from Islam in its structure completely as any obligatory system with a certain ideology. It does not permit freedom for the enemies of freedom but rather gives freedom to friends of freedom and objective thought who lives the responsibility of thought by the same power that they practice the responsibility of life.

We can say, in summary, of the intellectual aspect of power of the community, that Islam looks to thought as the basis of the social cohesiveness and equilibrium that represents the unity substituting for power. As such, the Islamic concept of responsibility imposes on Muslims individually as well as collectively the obligation to work on the intellectual strength in themselves by providing abundant and profound aspects in addition to aspects of comprehensiveness and extension in order to protect its thoughts and natural and flourishing growth, and to move in this direction toward opposing thoughts or opposing communities. To confront it with all its power, whether the power be demonstrated by dialogue to those who like dialogue, or to respect intellectual strength in the framework of a sound concept in which results are obligatory whether they may be demonstrated by violence in word or otherwise to those who do not prefer dialogue, but rather insist on destruction far removed from all responsibility or obligation.

12. Emotional or Sentimental Aspects, Their Positiveness

It is evident in Islam that planning for human relations was a focus of the planning on two basis. The legal basis of the Shadiuh and the emotional basis in the Ataqiyah.

In the first basis, there is a structure of the legal aspect that restricts the relations of all parties which are not to be overstepped. It specifies movements and steps that change from within for the ideal in which the affiliations lie within the framework of chaos that destroys everything around it. And for the second basis, it leads to binding of relations or affiliations of feeling, so that the tides that yield to these affiliations are changed to intentional feelings of self from which necessary conditions and progress emerge, by a splendid and forgiving way of which there is no affects of coercion or demand from near or far.

These precise plans move within a profound and vast philosophy within the formation of man, in which legal practices and social affiliations are transformed to a heavy burden which weighs man down and in which his progress is lost, which drives him to destroy. Looking to the weight of obligation on man's spirit, especially since he has the traits of perseverance and unity, as such, it was inevitable that man would yield to circumstances of emotional intimacy which interacted with the nature of affiliations as it interacted with things connected with its own issues, and this is what Islam proceeded upon in all legal and social conditions which obligates, consequently, limiting individuals and communities.

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Islam attempted to create laws which move within non-obligatory laws in a moral approach and sympathetic conditions in which practices are transformed to practices that are self-rewarding. In light of this, the Islamic planning and the question of social cohesiveness was what the social power of the Muslim community was focused upon. The positive progression that the transformation of the affiliations of believers to active feelings of interaction with the suffering and problems and needs of the community, as was the emotional feelings of the question of self and the issue of family. Islam considered the community a large human organization which yields to the plan that was generally placed on the human foundation. This aspect is demonstrated in the assertion of the nature of social affiliations which imposes the humaneness of humane feelings in the sympathetic movement with all active concerns. Whereas the awareness and feelings of Muslims are demonstrated as concerns of individuals on the basis of the oneness of the individual and collective personalities in feelings of life and their interactions at the least.

13. The Islamic Community of Believers and Oneness of its Members.

One of the social approaches was that the Muslims regarded their collective lives as the oneness of its members in suffering and feeling completely, as an example of one body in the relationship between its members. From the emotional aspect from which man is inspired or is aware that he does represent an individual entity or an individual personality towards others, but rather represents a segment of all completely, as it is hand with hand and eye to eye and the head and the body. As such, the Islamic characteristics impose this from the aspect of the Islamic formation being connected in its segment with the accomplishment of great goals from the community, in the continuation or in the continuity of its intellectual and spiritual basis in the great doing and giving. This was what was expressed in this famous Adese, as the Muslims and their compassions are like one body. If one member is afflicted or has a complaint, they call to each other to proceed in watchfulness and protection. We notice that in this Adese, the focus is on the emotional unity that is represented by the words - mutual compassion toward one another that inspires spiritual and compassionate substance.

14. The Brotherhood of Believers

We notice that some verses gave relationships between believers and the trait of relationships from which came the power of foundation that surrounds these bonds. As such, the movement towards practical responsibility was considered a natural response of this as was mentioned in the following saying:

Verily, Muslims are a Brotherhood and must be brought together amongst their Brothers.

We teach them a lesson that makes spiritual concerns of the matters of Muslims from the basic evaluations to the Islamic personality where man flees and loses his concern and lives in an atmosphere of mindlessness vis-a-vis the suffering and problems of others based on the Islamic characteristic which makes

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the societal issue connected with the spiritual makeup of a human being belonging to Islam. ²

As such, the individual person meets the societal personality in Islam and thus we hear the saying derived from the prophet:

He who is not concerned with the matters of Muslims is not a Muslim.

Islam is not limited to these affiliations, the characteristics of Brotherhood, or the legal aspects, but attempts to have its characteristics yield to the first Islamic social practical attempt in Medina when the prophet Muhammad fostered a Brotherhood between the Ansad or the followers of Muhammad and the new Hadijeme, the people who left Medina.

Between the Ansad and Themselves and new Hadijeme and Themselves

As a result of the fostering of Muhammad that the spirituality lived in the Muslims in a spiritual content that was transformed to a practical content of respecting one another so that one would share equally with his new Brother in faith. If he did not have money, he fell back upon the concept on which the feelings of Brotherhood is based.

15. Love--Hate in God

There were plenty of Ahadisi that discuss the love and hate in God as the basis for affiliations between Muslims that rose to the level of value that drew them near to God, making them worthy of His grace, which gave rise to the issue of love and hate in God. A positive direction in the making of emotions where that moved within the movement of the ideology and was harmonious with its environment as such the faith in God was transmitted by emotional bonds.

As it was regarded, as an intellectual bond which joined the people on the basis of thought and emotions. In these Ahadisi the teacher Muhammad said:

If one is to learn if there is goodness in someone, look to his heart and if he loves the people who are obedient to God and hates the rebellious people, then he is good and God loves him. But if he hates people obedient to God, and loves rebellious people, then there is no good in him and God hates him and there is bitterness in love. ³

And from another Hadis:

He who loves God and hates God and gives to God, he is among those who have fulfilled his belief. ⁴

And another Hadis that goes:

All those who do not love the religion and hate the religion, have no religion. ⁵

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Perhaps the saying by that the emotional issue does not impose and its creation is not possible is self-evident. But rather it is an internal process which is subjugated to the intellectual currents that are transmitted by deed and by applying oneself to a goal, to things which are self-settling in the debts and continue to grow in gradual movement until they touch feelings. Then they start become transformed into good emotions and decisive emotional circumstances.

16. The Emotional Aspect, Its Negative Side

Islam emphasizes the approach of personal emotional conditions, stemming from close and sincere relations. Decisively, it would like to make this approach yield to the ready progress that creates faith thought and determines the emotional interaction with personalities and things.

There was no range for paternal or filial emotions or any other type of family feelings, inasmuch as if the brother, father or son deviated from the path of God or destroy His commands and intentions. But the emotional movement in this direction lessen many of the feelings of the value of the faith in God in the minds of man, because the idea of human love, love for man, rejects and scorns faith and struggles against it and destroys it. It does not rest on balance in its affiliations which makes one prefer the personal aspects over the ideological aspects and the process of appraisal and preference, as for the ratio of rating things that surrounds man or confronts him in his life, which bonds man by personality, money or by other superficial bonds. It is inevitable that Muslims because of liberation, because of the spirit of emotionalism that binds man, is continuously with his apostle and with his Lord. To free himself from his apostle and from his Lord when these things pressure him greatly in circumstances of directing a call of responsibility to refuse these things or to deny them, to walk far away from them in the areas of sacrifice and redemption.

As such, negative emotional feelings are lost that call to the outside world on the basis of the apostle that the community focuses on their role in weakening the individual in the procedural action of responsibility and consequently it loses its effect on the process of responsibility in the community's life when it calls for an opening of the area of family and emotions which divides the value unity and the integrity of the community.

Islam guides man to reject these emotions, since they draw nearer to his grand values so as to bind him by vast extended ties in the life of the community as in all, so that the feelings of self remain mere emotions touched by the soul. But these emotions or these feelings are not able to make the community move far from their goals, conditions and commutal concerns. As for the general thought that advocates the refusal of feelings of self, inasmuch as may conflict with the feelings of the apostle true to expression, are demonstrated in these verses:

Thou wilt not find folk who believe in Allah and the last day loving those who oppose Allah and his messenger, even though they be fathers or their sons or their brethren or their clan, as for such, he has written faith upon their hearts and has strengthened them with a spirit from him and he will bring them

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into gardens underneath which rivers flow wherein they will abide. Allah is well pleased with them and he is well pleased with them. They are Allah's party. Lo, is it not Allah's party who are the successful. Lo, those who believe, do not take your fathers and brothers to love the non-believers. And he who follows him, verily he is doomed. Say, fathers, sons, brothers, spouses or their clan, their money to commit a crime and their commerce are stagnant and the misfortune who are satisfied, love God and his apostles and strain themselves for his faith to be on the lookout until God comes of his command.

As for the thought that goes with the distance of personality or personal emotions, which did not come close emotionally or practically to faith in God. This is demonstrated in the Hadith that Al Ghojih narrated regarding the Imam el Ibin Sinzain el Abdene, in the threat of ethnic solidarity that Islam struggled against.

The solidarity in which the originators said: "Man sees the evil of his people, but what of the good things of another people? It is not tribal solidarity in which man loves his people, but the tribal solidarity saves him and his people from doom." 6

As such, Islam was raised to the highest of realistic levels whenever man did not ensure the liberation of feelings, genuine in his soul, due to the ties of a personal aspect of his personality, but rather all that he advocates to permit these who are drawn to the point of sincere feelings towards Islam and to walk in its path with power and motives. As such, Islam guarantees the community its protection from the individual balance that weakens its power and threatens its integrity.

17. The Practical Aspect, Its Positive Side.

It is inevitable that all intellect would originate an emotional combining of practical planning and embody thought and deed and feeling and movement, because this is the stipulation of realism's thought, the vitality of emotions. If it had not been, the process would be entirely imaginative or dreamlike and living in a fog.

As such, Islam attempted to give the concept, or emotions, their practical role in the just religious values and in the field of realistic planning. It was no longer mere things living in thought or resting in feeling without overstepping its boundaries. The Qur'an had given many Hadiths on faith and its connection with deed, by regarding it as one of the manifestations of the sincerity of faith and its realism inside oneself, so that we may see many verses and religious Hadiths that express a pragmatic distinction of the non-believers, to acquaint the non-believer with the nominal-Muslim, or the Muslim who was only Muslim in word only, from deed, and its realistic consequences, because both represent two facets of practical deviation from the direct path. If reality were united with them, they would not have any movement or social value. In the Qur'anic verses that preceded in this manner, we have the following:

And pilgrimage to the house is a duty unto Allah from mankind, for him who

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an find a way thither. As for him that disbelieveth, let him know that lo, Allah is independent of all creatures.

And from the Hadith that was mentioned in the Hadith of Imam Jafit Asadiq, on the aspects of the non-believer:

The fourth aspect of the non-believer abandons what Allah has commanded for the strength of man. Say if we took your example to shed your blood, and to not go out of your houses, thereupon you decided while witnessing the killing of yourselves, and a group of you went out of your houses, showing hostility and coming as he did, showing respect for you. You believe part of the book and disbelieve in other parts. And you are non-believing by abandoning what Allah commanded the might of men and their faith to belief in which they did not accept and did not better from this faith. And the parts of you that are non-believers in this world, on the day of resurrection you will receive the harshest of punishment and Allah will punish ye that do.⁷

We notice in some Qur'anic verses the tendency of rivalry of non-believers, hinting with the non-believer to pragmatically deviate which makes the graveness of his practices extended to the intellectual graveness in people's lives. The Hadith begins with deviations where there is one of the signs of a non-believer, as in the saying that goes: I saw those who lied of their religion and that who we must be orphaned, and counted among the unfortunate.

18. Comprehensive Responsibility.

In light of this Islamic concept of social power on the base of social cohesiveness by means of obligations to general and specific responsibilities as one of the signs of intellectual and emotional bonds. We notice that in the beginning that Islam gave responsibility in an extended and comprehensive dimension in people's lives. The social act of responsibility of collective body of Muslims was considered under the power of divine punishment, and it was every Muslim's duty to bear the responsibility and to undertake it, according to the space in which he is present, and to the role that represents its focus, and this is what the following famous Hadith demonstrates:

As all of you alarm someone, and so all of you are responsible for his being alarmed.

We find in some of the transmitted Hadiths on the Akl'bate emphasizing the responsibility that the individual possesses with respect to capacity, capabilities, to the community that needs these capabilities of the community are the capabilities of the individuals. And it is the community's right to guide the individual's capabilities in its areas and to not withhold or exploit the capabilities in their personalities, or to deviate from its aspect, or to change them to a path that is not theirs. And thus we see the Hadith of the Imam Jafit Asaduq.

Allah did not let his servant live in luxury, but rather obliged him to be in need of him, and he who is benevolent to God, he will make him powerful, and

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his needs rest on what he, or Allah, guarantees. And his tolerance of those who without him would be weaker than him. And he who is benevolent to Allah, he makes him vast in his needs for money, whereupon he supports the poor with gifts and religious duties. And he who is benevolent to Allah, Allah makes him honest in his house, beautiful in his image, and his need to praise God as such even if it does not last a long time. And he grants him rights of weakness to the circumstances of his honesty and beauty.

We see in this area a focus on, in this Hadith, on the word "need", that inspires a basic concept that makes the act of accounting of its curtailment rely on man's strong need for God, in what he does, what he leaves, that the capacity that he is bestowed with, on the undertaking of his responsibilities.

19. Social Solidarity

Islam decided the social solid structure in the obligatory laws of the Shaddiyah in the moral planning for man's personality, behavior, and his general concepts about life and the world. We find this in the area of wealth, in the structure of obligatory and commendableness that consider it a basic right of the deprived party.

The concept of charity is not demonstrated to the degree that the concept of right is demonstrated, so that we see the transmitted Hadith describing the poor with the adjective "co-owner". The poor are considered a partner of the wealthy to the extent of the Shaddiyah law of all that the word "partner" alludes to. The order of the Shaddiyah, or clear judgment, demonstrates in this consideration of the distribution of wealth, a compulsory deed which makes prayer useless together, as if the dress that the plain person wears is a source of truth, and transactions in which he is affiliated are corrupted.

The man says in all his realistic behaviors and dispositions that affect judgment. Qalini had narrated regarding the Imam Jafit Asaduq the following:

God shares between the rich and the poor and he clothed him to those who are not co-partners.

Islam was not restricted to this but was accustomed to other fields which was demonstrated in man's undertaking of the financial expenses and assistance outside of the point of legal right. This was mentioned in the Hadith in the explanation which follows:

A man came to the Imam Ali ibn Hussein Zain al Abdini, the Hadith of his son Imam Muhammad Abaquh, and said to him, "Tell me about the word of God and the power of the cowardly. In their wealth is the known right to the beggars or to the deprived. What is the right of the needy?" And Ali said to him, "The right of the needy is the money that is donated. It is not almsgiving, nor is it donating that is obligatory duty." The man said, "Then if it is not almsgiving, nor voluntary giving, but it is what money that men give if they want more." And the man said, "And if they want less, than what they already possess, what do they do?" And the Imam said, "Reach for compassion, and with it shrink in weakness, and there both. Or reach to a brother in Allah or to his deputy."⁹

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In another Hadith of Imam Jafus came this saying in the explanation of the following saying:

He said, "It is the debt that is owed, the knowledge that is known, and that which strays from almsgiving."

The role of social solidarity is made clear to us in the financial aspect and in other ways in the affiliations of the Muslim community, one to another, in the two following Hadith:

1) The Hadith of Imam Jafus to one of his friends, Wandu ibn Nuanin, who posed this question to him: "What is the right of the Muslims to each other?" Sabit said, "The Muslim has seven duties, among which is the right but that he has the obligation to forfeit something and leave his profits in obedience of God, and God did not make his fate." I said to him, "Make it as such, or what is it?" He said, "Ya mo mat, o my'alla. I am a brother to you, and fear that you be ruined and do not protect and learn and do." I said, "There is no power but God." He said, "Make easy the way from him. Love him as you would love yourself, and hate for him, what you would hate for yourself. The second truth is to avoid his superficiality and to follow in his satisfaction and obey his command. The third truth is to aid yourself and your wealth, tongue, hand and men. The fourth right is to be his eyes and his proof. The fifth right is not to be satiated while he goes hungry, and do not drink while he is thirsty. Do not be clothed while he is naked. The sixth right is to be a manservant to him, and not to his brother. It is necessary to wash his clothes and make his food and bed. The seventh right is to be devoted to him, and dutiful to his call, and to tend his sickness, and to attend his funeral. And if you do all these things, which come to issue, you will reach his providence."

2) The Hadith of the Imam Muhammad ibn Ali Al Baqir, in what was related about him in the book of Kaffee. One of his followers said, "One of them came to my tent and put his hand in my cup, and took of my need, but did not pay me," and said, "What do I know of this?" The Imam Baqir said, "Not a thing. And if the people did not erase or wipe out their dreams."

We notice in these two Hadiths that Islam was directed in its moral and legal aspects to create bonds between Muslims on the level of integrated membership, that transforms the social solidarity to a natural and spontaneous movement in which there was no pressure or obligation to join rank. We have seen in some religious texts the emphasis on the strength of the social role in the question of solidarity. Inasmuch as it represents the principal value of God on the level that a large number of great religious practices are preferred, such as the Haj pilgrimage to Mecca.

The Hadith mentions the Imam Ali Jafir Muhammad al Baqir, who made a comparison between the seventy commendable needs and the undertaking of economic solidarity for some of the respected households of the Muslims. Then he made the comparison to another respect of a second choice--the social solidarity of those mentioned from which one can deduce that the social action is raised to a grand level that comes near to God as a pure society worshipping which is characteristic as other individuals worship of the thoughts in man's

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soul which indicate that the closest road to get to God, after religious duty, is serving his worshippers. It is in the Qur'an that the Amom Mohammed el Bakuf said to one of his followers:

The Ah'llelibate deviating from the Muslims, is the more relevant of their environment, and the most severe of their deficiencies. And to overt their countenances to people loving me. He who needs and needs and needs and needs and is like me and such and such, until they reach ten and then to seventy. We see in this direction the following things Hadith. Who believes in me those who remain full while his neighbor is hungry at his side while he is known.

And in the Hadith of the Imam Jafit Al Saduq to some of his followers who posed to him this question: "People have an abundance of things whereas their brothers are in extreme need, does it not extend to almsgiving but then extends to being satisfied while their brothers are living in a severe time?" And he said, "A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim, and does not unjustly treat him, deprive, or abandon him. It is the right of the Muslims to eagerly strive to cooperate in equality with people in need, and to sympathize with those who are Allah's command, and in them Allah has compassion for those who have compassion for others.

And in the famous Hadith: Creation is a dependent of God, and I love creation to Allah, he who raises the creation and enters the Ah'llelibate happy.

This is the general concept of social solidarity that is blended with the realistic aspect and the humane aspect, so that both may emerge together in the serving of social power that protects the community, its life, and that aids the growth and continuity of its permanence, from which the issue is transformed to its antithesis in circumstances of extension of selfish, exploitative and isolated smearing of its individuals.

The social balance begins with rebellion and occupation and ends with the weakness of the community with its loss of the elements of cohesiveness, and consequently to its rebellion and collapse. And perhaps the social attempt that existed in many of the walls communities that collapsed their structures and destroyed their relationships. It was a living proof of the truth of Islam that thought that defined solidarity at its pinnacle in the growth and power of the community. The Imam Sadiq expressed this truth in a splendid Hadith which brings to the surface problems in its economic aspects in a realistic manner. The Imam said:

The permanence of Muslims and of Islam is to put their wealth to those who know the truth and make that which is conventionally known, and that the destruction of the Muslims and of Islam to put wealth in the hands of those who do not know the truth, and do not make that which is conventionally known.

20. The Decree for what is Right, Patience, Endurance, and Compassion

There is another type of social solidarity which is demonstrated in the aspect of social awareness that the individual of the community bears their responsibility in the permanence of basic issues, living within the conscience

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of all, and whereas the community is exposed to chaotic and distorted procedures in what they believe in or yield to, influences of weakness that challenge by means of subsequent crises, the large consequences that faces in the path of aiding towards or helping towards a goal, or receiving selfishness that leads to prohibition of a common emotional and practical state.

For other individuals of the community as a natural result of the lack of profound feeling for the suffering and problems of others, which leads to the loss of compassion. Islam approaches that leads to necessitate external cover to this issue, for the individuals of the community, with the general need as one of the stipulations of success in this world, and in the hereafter as one of the bases of social power in the life and continuity of the community. And feelings of recommendation were brought to the surface by way of the Qur'an that demonstrated mutual awareness of truth and the necessity of maintaining it alive in the conscience of man which gradually weakens from the factors of neglect and forgetfulness that comes to the surface by means of instances of subsequent life that men occupies more mundane things in life.

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Then the recommendation for endurance was brought up by the Koran, in its consideration of the necessary powers of the soul that poses power of an attitude in the life of man. Before the calamities, shocks, challenges and difficult attitudes it balances and defends the toleration and continuity of walking along the path in spite of all sufferings and loss. Then came the feelings of compassion and it is being considered the feelings that protect the spirituality and its continual interaction with the sufferings that punish severely by means of many crises and the severe difficulties so that man remains in relation to the humane element in his soul entering an emotional compassion by awakening in him emotional compassion, cooperation, sympathy, and commonality in all humane concerns and sufferings so as to end their lives together. This is what we see in the following verses.

The error in which mankind remedied the loss to those who believed and did good deeds, good and recommended deeds of truth and endurance. It was these who believed and did the recommended deeds of endurance and compassion --the originators of the right side.

21. The Order for what is Well Known.

There is a third type of social solidarity which is represented in the posing of right and conventional knowledge in people's lives and in the unity of energy in this path, because this is the path on which to build the society. And if we gave individuals the freedom to do what they want and abandon what they want, the communities would be yielding to a mixture of individuals in its upheavals and changes so that life would be transformed to an extension of islands that indicate control of the structure, thus the matter that threatens the collapse or social rebellion to the loss of the precise element that protects cohesiveness and achieves power.

In light of this, the matter of conventional knowledge from the duties peeking into Islamic law and the undertaking of justice before those who judge and those who are judged, and the abundance of security and control over the structure, and obligations to religious and legal duties the social individual and the protecting of dignity and glory to provide efforts to individuals in spite of these judicial, civil, religious, military and social and economic laws--which makes the implementary aspects of the legal duties extended into responsibilities of the people toward each other of the same level that they practiced their private responsibilities toward their private business.

The saying goes: Giving the communities individual freedom imposes obligations of general and special duties contradicting the freedom of the individual personality that decides the general bonds of man's rights which represents the direct and clear aggression of this freedom. The answer to this is that Islam does not believe in freedom removed from the practices of the structure, but rather emphasizes the obligatory freedom that yields to the legal boundary of the community's apostles and as such all structures rely on obligatory concepts where they intersect the freedom of the individual with the freedom of the community in communal issues and they represent one freedom and that is one of the bases of selecting duties of the individual aspects which is considered the beginning of the neglect of the community as a whole. Because

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the beginning of social deviation is the individual deviation. Then it proceeds to others in a similar fashion. There is a fourth type of social solidarity which is represented in feelings of responsibility toward individuals of a community that oppose enemies of any kind. With all his capabilities and if he refrains from doing such or neglects it, he is going outside of the realm of the solid family and so the Hadith goes: "He who hears a man calling to Muslims and they do not answer--verily he is not a Muslim."

22. The practical Aspect, Its Negative Side. .

The prohibitive principles was demonstrated in its indefiniteness that joins types of positions by means of actions--all conditions of deviation--moral, social, economic, and political and educational corruption, because this as a matter of common knowledge was the real task to issues of the factors of growth and spread of corruption in the community because there is more than one condition of deviation that does not reveal the power in passing degree of the types which makes the matter of dealing with and confronting it extremely difficult due to the tie to deep roots that are extended by means of long history and repeated practices where the individuals of the community are able to reveal in its first stages and to look to the absence of obstacles within the behavioral practices that do not conceal people from each other. Some Hadith discuss the matter of conventional knowledge and prohibitive or indefiniteness in the framework of a deluged or overwhelmed struggle in the path of power.

But what we want to discuss here are the connections with social power. It is sufficient for us to examine some of the defects which exemplify the deep influences that left a neglect of this aspect in a lives of the people of the community. Its educational book gave this phrase: "How would it be if your women were corrupt and your youth simple and they were not commanded with conventional knowledge and did not end with the unacknowledged?" And it was said to him: "What is this, o Prophet of God? He said "Luxury and evil from this." How was it so if you were commanded and finished with conventional knowledge and it was said to him: "O, Prophet, what could this be, luxury and evil from this?" And how can this be if you saw conventional knowledge, unacknowledged, and the unacknowledged is well known. And in another Hadith, the prophet of God said that if serving God was done in secret, it would hurt the actions, but it were done openly nothing would harm him.

The Imam Jafit Etim Muhammad Asaduq said, "That he who continues with his religious duties to Allah and to stop the people who are the enemies of God." And in another Hadith, Imam Ali Gigin Musqarodah said, "To believe in conventional knowledge or to use it in evil, one must advocate one's goodness and not to defer to their wishes."

And we know that the Hadith did not mean that the power of evil or choosing as a result of leaving it to conventional knowledge. It was a command from God or a facilitation of this, but rather it yields to the causitive nature of things that encounters consequences of its progression. It is natural that power of evil extends feelings of evilness without prevention. The power of choice is weak. Naturally in this instance the education of God is not

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considered one of the means of God's help to his servants, but the role of God's education in Islam is not to represent worshippers in these instances that man possesses in his command by his ability for the natural causes, but rather demonstrates in its instances that which weakens in itself the separate movement or in a special forum to ask for God's help in this. Because of the invocation so that God may give them the strength where there is no strength, to get help where there is no room for human help, and by normal means. And as such we comprehend the ways of progress in the Hadith from deviation, the negligence of the struggle, and the opposition to the appeal for the matter by the unacknowledged concept were exchanged views were changed.

We know from the Hadith that what presented to us the struggle confronted deviation and is not limited to talk but extends to struggle by means of armed force. We find this clear in the Qur'anic verse that discusses the community's responsibility in attitudes against repressive parties in circumstances of struggle between two sets of Muslims and the rejection of and the acceptance of arms.

Verily that two parties of Muslims kill each other and then make peace, and one of them wanted to kill the other, and he killed the one he wanted, so that he died under Allah's command. And then the party that made peace was justice, acted more justly so that due to God's love of the just. And in the following Hadith:

What a nation has made sanctified, let not them take from its weakness the truth of its strength which was not enjoyed.

Some Qur'anic verses discuss the principles of the declaration of protest of practices deviating from the unacknowledged inasmuch that if man was not able to forceably resist or to continue protest, even if the message is negative, such as a boycott, which is a collective indication of the refusal and its being considered something far removed from the reality of the people, which opens this realm to an increasing amount of rejection of violent deeds, which eliminates deviation of this issue in its proponents and roots.

The Qur'anic verses discuss some circumstances that Muslims rely on and one of the counsels that is formed by Muslims and non-Muslims. Hadith vary until they end in examination on Allah's verses, and in their confrontation of it, and in their scorn for it. Muslims did not have the power to prevent this occurrence or to resist actions of its originator.

The Qur'an commands one to come out of this counsel as a negative procedure to announce protest and the non-support of an instance. The saying goes:

We have already revealed unto you the scripture that when we hear the revelations of Allah rejected and derided, do not sit with them who disbelieve and mock. Even if they boldly expound in the Hadith that they are like you, since Allah brought together the hypocrites and the nonbelievers. And whence thou seest those who meddle with our revelations withdraw from them until they meddle with another topic, and if the devil cause thee to forget, sit not after their remembrance with the congregation of wrongdoers.

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And in some Hadith related by Imam Jafut Asadah in the educational book of Sheik Muhammad ibn Hussein Tsah, Esthaltiq said to a group of his followers: I was right to take the clean from amongst you away from the sick, and how you were not right to me as such, while you reach to an ugly man amongst you, and did not deny him, and did not go away from him until he left you.

The emphasis of the struggle of the individual to flee was mentioned in the famous Hadith, and the struggle is based on some individuals in specific realms that oppose the life of the community as in all, where it leads its evil influence in issues pertaining to the future of people, which gives us a concept that connects between individual freedom and freedoms of the society. The individual is given his freedom and practices of his specific issues and the community has the right to protect its social freedoms by restricting the individual's freedom, because this is the one path that together preserves the life of the community and the life of the individual.

The saying that rests of Allah's limits, and the realization in itself is an example of the anxious people in a vessel and some of them in the upper and lower parts of the vessel were afflicted. And those in the lower, that if they past to thse above, said, "If I had broken through and in our lot we would take those above us and we would leave them, and he who wished to die, we would take him higher and higher together."

We may see by this great Islamic concept of Qur'anic verses that emphasizes the consequences of oppression and deviation, which is not limited to these two concepts, but opposes the life of the people together, because the individual dispositions are not individual in its area and consequences, but were individual in its personality and motive and this is what the following saying expresses:

Claim for yourselves temptation, which does not afflict those who oppress those amongst them.

And perhaps we may find in the Qur'an some shining attitudes that the Qur'an sent down to attack the position which existed with Muslims who wanted to hold the prophet responsible for harmony with him. And he defended some of his loyal people who professed faith in donating their money to Muslims and raising in activation to one of the Jews, thus exploiting the mutual hostility between Muslims and Jews, as one of the means of emphasizing the accusations and the firmness of innocence there. And Allah was inspired to his prophet to refuse this, as the following says:

Lo, we reveal unto thee the scripture with the truth, that thou mayest judge between mankind by that which Allah showeth thee. And be not thou a pleader for the treacherers. And seek forgiveness of Allah. Lo, Allah is evergiving and merciful. And plead not on behalf of people who deceive themselves. Lo, Allah loveth not one who is treacherous and simple. They seek to hide from men and seek not to hide from Allah. He is with them when by night they hold discourse displeasing unto him. Allah ever surroundeth what they do. Oh, ye are they who will plead with Allah for them on the day of

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resurrection. For who will then be their defender?

To the point of treating the issue, the principle that came up was that the subject is one of loyalty and belief, and it is inevitable to encourage the first, and to defend the second. And as such, you defend the loyal people and those defending the faith, because this is the path harmonious with reality, and its focus, which does not look to religious differences, because the protection of loyal people by defending them, and to argue for the interests and needs of Islam, which opens the realm to great and extended loyalty in Islamic life, when Muslims aspire to protect, with all their possible loyalty, and to attach it to the innocence of another religion which participates in the issue of faith and justice. This was mentioned in a Hadith relating to the refusal of such, emphasizing that the principle reason for rebellion of the people of the communities was to those who came before them and undertook the limits of the conditions, who died noble and who were spiritual, being so abstentious as to severe the hand. It is the Islamic focus on the community's integrity affiliated with the nullification of religious and social groups in the application of the law.

23. Final Issue.

The Islamic concept of social power is the birth and continuity of the power in the people's lives, which is necessary in order to transform individuals of a community to human beings (entities) united in thought, feelings, and behavioral practices, stemming from these bound relationships that end in social unity, which is the basis of power; and subsequently, all factors of deviation and its characteristics, to prevent them from harming this unity in any aspect or way.

Footnotes:

1. Principles of Sociology, by Hasan Sa'fan, p. 28.
2. The Means Used by the Shiah, Vol. 11, p. 559.
3. Ibid., p. 445.
4. Ibid., p. 431.
5. Ibid., p. 440.
6. The Sufficient (Notes on Mirror of the Minds), Vol. 2, p. 377.
7. The Sufficient (The Haidariy Press in Teheran), Vol. 1, p. 163.
8. The Sufficient (Al-Mazandaraniy's Commentary), Vol. 9, p. 305.
9. The Means Used by the Shiah, Vol. 6, pp. 29-30.

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Chapter Five

Numerical Power

1. Numerousness and Its Relation to Power
2. Analysis of the Prophetic Hadith on Encouraging Propagation
3. The Decline of Populations
4. The Majority is Not Necessarily Right
5. Democracy is Not Necessarily Right
6. The Shura is Not Democratic
7. How a Small Troop Overcame a Large Troop
8. The Story of Saul and Goliath
9. The Battle of Hunayn

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1. Numerousness and Its Relation to Power

Some think that the numerical force of any nation is of great value in calculating its power in comparison with other nations, for it evokes feelings of terror and awe in the minds of others and feelings of power in the minds of their friends. Thus, it prepared for battle with formidable capabilities which bring victory or make its casualties - if they occur - insignificant, because those remaining from a large number will be many, no matter how great the extent of casualties in the battle.

Accordingly, this idea explains those honored Prophetic Hadiths which call the nation to procreate and multiply so that they may be in a position of power among nations.

It is said in the Hadith according to Imam Ja'afar As-Sadiq that the Prophet of Allah said: "Marry so that the nations will be made abundant by you tomorrow on the day of judgment, even if a child arrives defeated at the door of Paradise and is told, 'Enter Paradise,' and he says, 'Not until my father enters before me.'"

And they understood from this Hadith that the Prophet's call to multiply was a vital factor distinguishing it among nations, and of great value for the nation.

* * *

However, the case is not as it appeared to them, in our opinion, for numerical size, in itself, is not the basis of power unless it is endowed with other factors which organize and direct its capabilities, and which consist of vital elements other than that of numerousness, as determined by the realities of life. Based on the nature of things, the view assumes one practical theory for any aspect of reality, but there must be many factors to complete the picture and bring great results in life, whether it is gaining power, or achieving a balance of power.

If we look more closely and specifically at the facts, we may regard quantity as a factor of weakness, if it does not have the material forces which supply it with life-sustaining food, weapons that defend it from the stratagems of the enemy, and the industry by which it achieves self-sufficiency in consumer goods, etc. We see this in some of the African and Asian nations, like India, which has been hurt by famine and stifling economic crises because its large population did not have the adequate material strength it needed to continue with life, for whatever reason - not having the necessary organization for these capabilities, exploitation by the greed of the controlling authorities, the destructive conditions of drought and famine, or for other reasons. This caused the nation to grow weak from trying to fill the need for food, using the whole budget to fill this need

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and turning to others who took advantage of their needs to ruin them and their pride and honor by obvious and hidden imperialist means.

But to return to the subject, groups that consider numerousness to be worthless cause the nation to contract and diminish until it loses its ability to survive and continue. Because of this, we do not believe that birth control and regulation has any absolute human value for all nations at all times and in all places. However, we do support it on the basis of observation and objective evidence which reflects what is going on within the nation. Thus, the requirements of a nation may require regulation of procreation and reproduction within certain limits at a specific stage. Or the nation may require an increase in its population in another stage.

What we want to point out is this, that quantity, in any aspect of life, does not represent an absolute value, unless we add to it the "essentials" and "quality" with which a strong race is made, as well as the element of organization.

2. Analysis of the Prophetic Hadith on Encouraging Propagation

As far as the Hadith of the Prophet Mohammed on the subject of propagation and reproduction, he does not deny what we have determined. But in other Hadiths, he tries to look at the issue from the side concerned with the element of power that depends on other factors. We have seen this, in the many summons in the Qur'an and the Sunna, to follow the ways to gain material and moral strength. This Hadith is not useful if it gives a basis for refusing the idea of birth control, if Islamic welfare requires it, because the Hadith only deals with the need to multiply, which represents the continuing Islamic need for many troops. Similarly, there are Hadiths that treat other aspects of life on the basis of this Islamic concept so that he who reads it imagines that it pertains to most aspects or that it is incompatible with other concepts. Likewise, we notice this in the Hadiths that call for work as a means of obtaining wealth, and for the pursuit of natural pleasures and other aspects of a secular life, in contrast to the Hadiths that awaken a desire to renounce the world and call for asceticism. Some people adhere to the first way and attribute to Islam an attitude that isolates the individual from life. Some adhere to the second way and Islam is seen as secular and material, concerned with worldly matters and not giving the soul a large role in its thoughts and feelings.

However, each one of them would be incorrect, because each group of these Hadiths proceeds in a direction that is not incompatible with the other. Rather, they attempt to complement each other, to give a comprehensive, balanced Islamic concept of life which wants the individual to build his life on the basis of the truth, not letting the tendencies of ambition and greed to dominate him or dissuade him from his course. Thus, he renounces life without being isolated, and he desires it without being a slave to it. He expresses a desire for life by his feelings of freedom from the greeds and

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and pleasures of life. He expresses renunciation by his feeling that the basis of life is his mission in the realm of the truth.

* * *

By means of this course, by understanding the religious texts that treat aspects of life from the viewpoint of Islamic concepts, we can understand the honored prophetic text that calls for propagation. We may understand from it the principle that, with the other principles of power, completes the total Islamic picture.

That which may confirm this for us is the famous prophetic Hadith in which the Prophet Mohammed addresses his companions and talks to them about the future that awaits them in the movement of Islam:

He said that the generations call for you just as a meal calls for its bowl. They said, "Have faith in the few, oh Prophet of God." And he said, "No, you must believe in the many, for you are like the sand of a stream." We understand from this Hadith that the Prophet of Allah called for propagation so that they could be proud of the nation on the Day of Judgment, that it would reach such a high level so as to achieve a position of high standing among nations and to become an effective power influencing and guiding the lives of others. Abundance is not a burden that weighs heavily on life. Rather, it is like the sediment of a stream which carries from the rocks that which is neither useful nor beneficial.

This completes the impressive image that Islam wants for its nation, a picture of a nation of large population, strong in learning, knowledge, weapons, and wealth within the Islamic framework bestowed by Allah.

As far as nations with large populations but weak in power, Islam does not approve of them. Rather, it prefers they have a balanced strength that determines life, instead of being determined by it, that guides the movement of history, instead of being directed by forces that are set in motion in the course of history.

3. The Decline of Populations

The Qur'an deals with the idea of majority and minority in many of its verses. It repudiates the idea of those who consider numerical quantity a standard for pride on the basis that it represents a moral value in the evaluation of society.

It is said in the Sura of Worldly Gain: "Your hearts are taken up with worldly gain from the cradle to the grave. But you shall know. Before long, you shall come to know. Indeed, if you knew the truth with certainty, you would see the fire of Hell. You would see it with your own eyes. Then you will be questioned on that day about your joys." (1:8)

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This Sura was revealed - in which is seen the causes for its revelation - in the time of the Quraysh, the Bani Abdu Manaf Ibn Qasi and the Bani Sahm Ibn Umru and their chiefs grew in number, and most of them were from the Bani Abdu Manaf. Then they said "We are prepared for death" and they visited the tombs and they considered them and said, "This is the tomb of _____ and this is the tomb of _____ for most of them are of the Bani Saham because they were the numerous in pre-Islamic times."¹

This image was a reproach to them, instructing them that the thing that should concern them and stimulate their interest is useful work whose results are directed toward God, suggesting to them that pride should be taken only in work, not in number, and in quality, not in quantity.

4. The Majority is Not Necessarily Right

In other areas the Qur'an deals with the spiritual conditions of people living in the presence of a wrong majority and right minority. They may be defeated spiritually by this, or they may imagine that right is on the side of the many. It tries to tie us to the reality of things so that we can penetrate its depths and recognize its characteristics, enabling us to distinguish the bad from the good and the right from the wrong.

"Say: 'Good and evil are not alike, even though the abundance of evil tempts you. Have fear of you men of understanding, so that you may triumph.'" (5:100)

We encounter, in this area, the conversation of the Imam Ali, Commander of the Faithful, with some persons, one of whom was Harith Ibn Hout, on the subject of his war with the people of Al-Jamal in Basra. And this man faced the Imam with this question, "Do you think the people of Al-Jamal were in error?" The Imam said, and he knew the weak point in his understanding of the matter things, "You looked below you, but you didn't look above you, and you were at a loss. You didn't recognize right or wrong, but you recognized who has strayed."²

This man was following a false idea, and imposing it by force, that is, regarding the straying of a people in such large numbers as unlikely. It appeared to him that only the majority was enough to refuse an idea judged to be in error. However, the Imam answered him by focusing on a realistic standard to distinguish between right and wrong in a person's life by defining the nature of the right by its intellectual features, and the nature of the wrong by its identifying characteristics, not by the element of majority or minority. By this means, he derived a correct judgment and based his intellectual satisfaction on clear, decisive vision of the principles that he judged to be fundamental for evaluation, not on the basis of quantity. Let us take from it the principles which should govern life:

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We understand from this verse, the divine guidance of the Prophet, that the means of deliberation for Muslims before making a decision, and beginning its implementation, is similar to educational methods in its rationale. They should not be isolated in their confrontation of issues and handling of situations requiring wisdom and responsibility. This is because isolation in opinion, in issues which have more than one side, and encompassing many levels, will leave much room for error in the process of making a decision and implementing it. Neglect of many of the vital aspects of an idea, in its details and inclusiveness, naturally results in error.

Thus, the Shura, in the verse, guides one to fight against isolation of opinion and independence from others by virtue of it, without adopting their point of view, in order to think about, discuss, and account for his opinion. But it is not apparent in the opinion upon which the majority agrees in the Shura, whether or not right is on the side of the minority. Therefore, the verse turns to the Prophet Mohammed to request a finalization of the opinion, after the counsel, whether it agrees with the Shura or not.

Perhaps this is what inspires us in the verse that talks about the nature of the relations that govern Muslim society in private and public cases, from the point of view of its emphasis on the principle of the Shura. The Prophet said, "Those who obey their Lord and attend to their prayers and conduct their affairs by mutual consent, and who give of what has been bestowed on them." (42:38)

We find here a concentration on these characteristics in terms of the principle, without going into its details. This causes us to stop at the limits of the principle without going beyond it to the means of wisdom the people used or their decision-making procedures. But this doesn't justify for us the subjugation of Islamic legislative issues to that which is not sufficiently evidenced in the texts, literally or figuratively, in order to make Islamic legislation satisfactory to the people whose opinions differ from it, and to those of limited awareness, for they differ in opinion, inclination, and desire due to different circumstances of time and place. Thus, Allah indicated to His Prophet the truth regarding the matter of satisfaction and discontent.

His words are: "For the Jews and the Nazarenes will not be content with you until they have doubled your wealth." (3:130)

If a person wants to obtain the approval of others, there is a price for this, and that is the renunciation of his own principles in adopting the principles and positions of others. He will not obtain this, in the end, as long as the others differ in viewpoint, principle, and position. He will change into a person who abandons his positions daily, in a confused and changing way, in accordance with changing circumstances, so that at the end he has lost himself,

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his strength of character, and his position. In summary, Islam does not want the person to be psychologically defeated in the face of the expressions of the majority, whether in issues of belief or disbelief, or of right and wrong, because numerical majority does not give a position intellectual power, just as it does not give it fundamental military power.

7. How a Small Troop Overcame a Large Troop

The Qur'an, in other verses, points out the error in considering majority a basic factor in victory even in the most severe situations which are related to numerousness people's minds. This is shown in Qur'anic stories which demonstrate the principle in the context of Islamic or non-Islamic conflicts in which a large number of infidels entered into battle against a small number of believers. The organized few were victorious, for they were superior in planning and specific calculations, over the divided larger troop, who rested in the pride of their numerical greatness as a basis for winning the battle.

Perhaps the Qur'an wanted to demonstrate the idea in terms of an objective situation dealing with defeat and victory, apart from the ideological membership of the victors or the defeated, for the believing majority were defeated by a smaller group of infidels in some cases in which realistic conditions for victory did not exist in that particular battle, while the infidels were working to make use of them. The small troop of believers were victorious when they transformed their faith into a new strength in battle, doubling what strength they had. Thus, the Qur'an talks about this case in two stories occurring in different times and places, one dealing with a victorious troop, the other with a defeated troop.

8. The Story of Saul and Goliath

First, the story of Saul who was leading a small camp of believers against Goliath who was leading a large, infidel camp. This story, in a number of verses, gives us a mental picture of the smaller encampment facing the problem of the larger troop that opposed them. The Qur'an, applying its methods of revealing an idea, depicts for us the conditions of the fearful and defeated, and those believing that Allah was fighting on their side.

"Have you not heard of what the leaders of the Israelites demanded of one of their prophets after the death of Moses? 'Annoint for us a king,' they said, 'and we will fight for the cause of Allah.' He replied, 'What if you should refuse to fight, when ordered to do so?' 'Why should we refuse to fight for the cause of Allah,' they replied, 'when we and all our children have been driven from our dwellings?' But when at last they were ordered to fight, they all refused, except a few of them. Allah knows the evil-doers. Their prophet said to them, 'Allah has appointed Saul to be your kind.' But they replied, 'Should he be given the kingship when we are more deserving than he? Besides, he is not rich at all.' He said, 'Allah has chosen him to rule over you and made him grow in

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wisdom and stature. Allah gives his sovereignty to whom He will. He is all-knowing.' Their prophet also said to them, 'The advent of the Ark shall be the portent of his reign. Therein shall be tranquility from your Lord, and the relics which the House of Moses and the House of Aaron left behind. It will be borne by angels. That will be a sign for you, if you are true believers.' When Saul marched out with his army, he said, 'Allah will put you to the test at a certain river. And all but a few drank from it, and those who crossed it were the believers. They said, 'We have no power this day against Goliath and his warriors.' But those who believed they would meet Allah replied, 'Many a small band has, by Allah's grace, vanquished a mighty army. Allah is with those who endure with fortitude.' When they met Goliath and his warriors, they said, 'Lord, fill our hearts with steadfastness. Make us firm of foot and help us against the unbelievers.' By Allah's will they defeated them. David killed Goliath, and Allah gave him the kingship and wisdom and whatever knowledge he wanted. Had Allah not defeated some by the might of others, the earth would have been spoiled. But Allah is bountiful to the believers." (2:246-259)

We may notice that the believers' troops greatly feared the force of the non-believers' troops, because of their greater number, which caused an anxiety in the ranks that almost led to a moral defeat before a military one, had it not been for the bravery of some of the smaller, careful troops, who rejected the signs that indicated a victory for the enemy. This gave them new, compounding strength, giving them a new vision of the situation, making them calculate the specific characteristics of the troops and those having many men. Thus, their greatest concern was instilling this value in the men by a deep connection with Allah and by taking refuge in Him, for He endowed them with great force in their confrontation with the multitude. This is expressed in the verse: "When they met Goliath and his warriors, they said 'Lord, fill our hearts with steadfastness, make us firm of foot, and victorious over the unbelievers.'"

9. The Battle of Hunayn

The second story took place in Islamic history, in one of the Mohammed's battles with the polytheists. It is the Battle of Hunayn which began with a large defeat by the Muslims in an environment dominated by the flourishing of the majority. They moved by means of it toward victory and its dreams, and ended with the divine victory of the most holy and good. This was due to the precise movement that the smaller force depended on under the leadership of the Prophet Mohammed within the framework of faith and careful planning.

The Prophet's army consisted of 12,000 men so that even Abu Bakr said 'we shall not be conquered today by lack of men,' The Prophet ended his march to Hunayn, and the chief Ibn 'Auf (leader of the polytheists) sent three soldiers to him with a message for the companions of the Prophet of Allah. And they returned to him after they had scattered the troops out of fear. The Prophet of Allah faced Abdul Rahman Ibn Abi. He entered their camp, walked around it, and brought back information on them. When it was night, the chief Ibn 'Auf went to his companions and mobilized them in the Hunayn valley. He instructed

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them to launch one fearful campaign attack on Mohammed and his companions in the evening. The Prophet mobilized his companions at dawn and arranged them in lines, and placed brigades and banners among the followers.

In the Emigrants brigade, he made Ali Ibn Abi Talib in charge, and banners were carried by Sa'ad Ibn Abi Waggas and Ali Ibn Abi Talib. The brigade of Al-Khazraj was led by Habab Ibn Al-Munthur, and the brigade of Al-Awas was led by Assayid Ibn Hadir. Inside each Al-Awas and Al-Khazraj they attacked the men of high position, and the Arab tribes which had brigades.

For the Prophet had offered peace from the day he left Mecca, and he placed Khalid Ibn Al-Walid at the head of them, and he was still in the vanguard when he reached Al-Ja'rana. The Prophet of Allah went down to the Hunayn Valley to mobilize them and rode his white mule Duldal and put on armor and a helmet. He met those from Hawazin in the morning's twilight, the multitudes, the likes of which he had never seen before. The battalions left through the valley's pass and ravine, and launched an attack. They discovered the use of horses by the Bani Salim Mulliyah, and the people of Mecca followed them, and the people following them were defeated. The Prophet of Allah said, "Supporters of Allah and Supporters of the Prophet of Allah, I am the servant of Allah and His messenger." And the Prophet returned to the camp and the defeated returned to him and stayed with him. With them on that day came Abbas Ibn Abdul Matlab, Ali Ibn Abi Talib, Al-Fadal Ibn Abbas, Abu Sufyan Ibn Al-Harith, Ibn Abdul Matlab Rabiya, Ibn Al-Harith Ibn Abdul Matlab, Abu Bakr, Umar Asama Ibn Zaid, and others from the people of his house and his companions. He began to say to Abbas, "Call the community of supporters, the companions of As-Sumra, the companions of the Sura of the Cow." And He was loud-voiced. They devoted themselves as though they were camels. And they would say to their children; "Here I am! Here I am! And they attached the polytheists supervised by the Prophet of Allah." And he looked at the fighting and said, "Now, there was fierce fighting. I am the Prophet and this is the truth." Then he said to Abbas Ibn Abdul Matlab: "He offered me stones, so I offered him stones from the earth. He disfigured their faces and threw the stones at the faces of the polytheists. They were defeated beside the Ka'aba and Allah threw terror in their hearts and they were defeated, and not one of them cared about the other."⁴

The Qur'an talks to us about the practical lessons derived from the great experience that cost Islam many believing soldiers, making it a foundation for the Islamic movement in the future, including its directions in battles and what it could deduce from signs. He said: "Allah has assisted you on many a battlefield. In the battle of Hunayn you trusted in your numbers, but they availed you nothing. The earth seemed to close in on you and you turned your backs and fled. Then Allah caused his tranquillity to descend upon His Prophet and the believers. He sent invisible warriors and punished those who did not believe. Thus were the unbelievers punished." (9:25-26)

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To summarize the idea that we were trying to bring out from the religious texts in the Qur'an and the Sunna: Allah wants feelings of confidence generated by large numbers not to restrict a wider vision of the situation. This requires study of the terrain in which the battle takes place, and of the circumstances that surround it, and specific external and internal factors that may contribute to victory or defeat.

On the other hand, Allah does not want the person to be morally defeated in the face of a numerous enemy, but rather he should think of victory as a distinctive achievement which makes a minority having the basic elements of power into a force which controls the situation, be it militarily or non-militarily.

In a word, the individual should think of the majority as one element of strength but not the only element. Also, majority should not be a measure of right and wrong, when people are caught between two groups different in their ideas, just as they differ in number.

On the basis of this, a realistic viewpoint is determined, within practical and natural boundaries, and there is no room left for naivete or deception, nor should the role of any element of quantity or quality be neglected in life.

Footnotes

1. Ways of the Shiites, Vol. 14, page 3.
2. Convention on Reports on the Interpretation of the Qur'an. Vol. 10, page 534.
3. The method of Rhetoric (Lebanese Publishing House) page 561.
4. The Generations of Ibn Sa'ad, Vol. 2, page 152.

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Chapter Six

The Ethical Aspect of Power in Islam

1. The Greater Goals of Power in Islam--the Negative Aspect
2. The Greater Goals of Power in Islam--the Positive Aspect
3. Application of the Concept

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What type of power does Islam call for, by its proposing the idea of power in this life?

Is it the type of power that justifies any behavior on the part of the one who possesses it, even aggression?

Or is it the type that sets unbreachable limits for itself, acting within the scope of law and proceeding on an Islamic, ethical foundation defined by the greater goals of Islam?

We may find the answer in two main points:

Firstly, the overall goals of power in Islam and their relationship with the ethical basis of Islam.

Second, the practical application of the general idea to lawful practices in wars and battles waged by the Prophet, since these are a legal basis for their application in Islam.

The Qur'an speaks often of the punishment which the oppressors can expect from God, with no power to do anything about it, and describes the debasement they will face on the Day of Judgment. Man becomes so threatened that he begins to expect anything, according to Him:

"Those who have oppressed others shall see what kind of hereafter awaits them." 36:337

We see in the sayings of the Prophet and the Imams from his family many instances stressing the danger of oppression, when the oppressed feels no strength of his own and turns to God for help in avenging himself against his oppressor:

Quoting Imam 'Ali quoting the Messenger of God: "God said, 'My anger will be greater against the oppressor who oppresses one who has no helper but me.'"(1)

According to Iman Ja'far al-Sadiq: "There is no greater oppression than when the oppressed have no help but God."(2)

And: "God told one of his prophets in the kingdom of the tyrants, 'I have not used you to shed blood or take belongings; I have used you to keep from me the voices of the oppressed, for I would not have caused their oppression had they not been non-believers.'"(3)

We see this in the moralistic, ethical poems derived from religious passages confirming the dangers and results of oppression, as a warning to the oppressor not to become accustomed to the power that leads him to oppress others, since there is a greater power that can take revenge on him, now or later, as the poet says: [Note quotation follows]

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1. The Greater Goals of Power in Islam--the Negative Aspect

We know that throughout history, power has been a problem for oppressed groups because it has given the stronger forces the means of exploiting and oppressing weaker peoples, leading these to use all their might, in the past and present, to acquire new strength with which to defend themselves and what is dear to the.

We also know that power any power, tempts man to tyrannize and control others because this fulfills his natural desire to establish his presence and feelings before others out of pride. The following Qur'anic verse may address this issue:

"Man transgresses all bounds when he sees himself as self-sufficient."
96:6-7

We also see that many movements, past and present, have tried to augment this aggressive spirit in their societies, such as the Nazi, Facist and other racist movements, and have done so directly or indirectly. This has materialized in various colonialist guises in ancient and modern times.

Other trends have tried through their philosophies and practices to turn mankind away from this spirit. They have tried through the Message to return man to the greater goals in life--those of using power to protect the Message from aggression so that it can proceed with freedom of thought, appeal and practice. In light of this, we encounter power in Islam. We must search for the atmosphere that Islam motivates within the Muslim in everyday Islamic life so that growing strength will remain an element for good, not evil, and will become a tool to protect life from enemies, not to destroy it for the sake of superiority and absolute control.

We see all of this in the nature of faith in God and in his advice to man concerning power, through the relationship between creator and created, in the broad goals of Islam and in the direct aims of fighting.

From this we derive a definitive conclusion: under no circumstances does Islam approve of the use of power individually or collectively for any corrupt purpose, aggression against life for purely personal, distorted reasons or for greed. Islam wants man to use his power to build life on a strong foundation of faith, justice and peace.

We will try to spell out each of the elements that would create the atmosphere Islam wishes to see within man, and in his life, in order to protect his strength and to protect others from its improper use.

a. We see initially that belief in God, Whose strength and ability are limitless, prevents the man who lives this belief from surrendering to these deviant psychological factors that would make him lord it over others, since he knows that God's absolute power controls his power, for he is nothing compared to it, and he refrains from harm or hostility toward others.

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[Following verses are apparently misplaced from earlier passage.]

"You sleep while the oppressed is awake; he is calling [God] against you, for God does not sleep."

Another poet says: "There is no hand that God's hand does not control; there is no oppressor who will not experience a greater oppression."

The Qur'an not only tells us about God's punishment for tyrants in the afterlife, but portrays tyrants whom people judged severely and who were punished by God on earth, being completely destroyed by earthquakes, etc., because of their corruption and tyranny. This came as a warning to others what would await them if they behaved in the same way.

"Do you not see how your Lord dealt with the 'Ad of Iram, with lofty pillars, the likes of which were not produced in the land? And with the Thamud, who cut out rocks in the valley? And with Pharaoh, the lord of stakes? All of these transgressed beyond bounds in the lands and heaped therein mischief upon mischief. Therefore your Lord heaped on them a scourge of punishments, for your Lord is like a guard on a watchtower." 89:6-14

b. Here we see the goals of Islam that diverge greatly from the aggressive goals pursued by man in strength and life.

In the strength of Islam, we do not see that strength that arises from the need for self-confirmation by showing off or through pride.

We see the holy verses that expose those who flaunt their strength in society in showy ways. The Qur'an advises us to scorn them and the postures they adopt before others.

"Do not walk on the earth insolently, for you cannot rend the earth, nor reach the mountains in height." 17:37

This is a picture of those who try to flaunt their feelings of importance by walking on the earth with power, raising their heads in superiority and stepping heavily on the earth to confirm their power. The Qur'an tells them, "No matter how heavily you step, you cannot break the earth or have any effect on it, you will only be hurt by your heavy step. No matter how high you raise your head, you will not be as tall as the mountains. Why do you make the effort? Why do you make this meaningless display?"

We may find the same picture in another verse about being overly scornful:

"Do not puff up your cheeks at men, nor walk insolently on the earth. God does not love an arrogant boaster." 31:18

The man who twists his neck [arrogantly] resembles the camel, that twists its neck out of pride. We leave it to the reader to imagine how ridiculous this

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image is of a man who tries to make himself look important before others--he finds himself and others face to face with the image of a camel in a particularly humorous situation.

3. The strength that Islam wishes us to have in life is not that which seeks to destroy what is around it in order to get rid of an underlying inferiority complex. Rather, it is the opposite--a position of countering the self in a determined psychological struggle, resulting in the opening up to the Message, instead of a closing off of the self, as we see in Imam 'Ali Ibn al-Husayn Zayn al-'Abdin's prayer:

"Oh, God! Let me not be oppressed by anyone, for you can defend me. Let me not oppress anyone, for you are able to apprehend me."

Here we see man praying to his lord for help in overcoming himself, seeking God's strength and ability to control the hidden unjust tendencies within him, which are kindled by his ability to oppress others.

And:

"Let me not harm any believer, man or woman, or any Muslim, man or woman."

In another prayer we see so much of this spirit that there is a feeling that this spirit is being wronged by the people through total rejection and hatred.

"Oh, God. As you have made me hate being oppressed, keep me from oppressing others."

Imam Zayn al-'Abdin was asking God to protect him from oppressing people because of his growing hatred of oppression, as he also hated others' oppressing him.

He elevates this spiritual feeling and reveals the pureness deep within the soul, which is embodied in the feeling toward those who do him ill and are hostile to him. He is thinking of their fate when they stand before God and how they will face His punishment for their hostility and evil. He is thinking as the person who has strength in the hereafter because he is as who has right on his side before God, as opposed to the one who has done wrong. He forgives if the one who is right forgives. He is thinking of them humanely on one hand and practically on the other. On the humane side, he does not want anyone to suffer or be punished because of him. On the practical side, he feels, as a man, that he has erred before God as this man has erred before him and wants to forgive so that he can ask God to forgive him, for God is more merciful than he, and he cannot ask God's forgiveness for someone who has wronged him to then punish him for his disobedience and rebellion. The situation becomes one of practical reconing--seeking forgiveness with forgiveness and mercy with mercy. God is pleased with the humaneness of the idea and its practicality. The following are parts of the prayer that elevates the soul with every word of prayer and act of submission:

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Oh, God, whenever someone wrongs me, forgive him. Let me not be the cause of his punishment. Give your pardon in place of my forgiveness and your mercy in place of my prayer for him. My strength will not stand firm in the face of your kindness and your goodness is more than I can bear. (4)

This is the kind spirit, that thinks of life, rest and peace for all people and whose concerns of earth and the hereafter live as one act, one idea and one prayer so that people may be rid of their burdens and be happy with the mercy of God in this world and the hereafter.

This is the Islamic spirit that eliminates any inferiority complex so that the self can be aware and open to all people for good, both friends and enemies, which is one characteristic of Islamic spiritualism, with its gift of the ever-expanding spirit on the paths to righteousness.

4. Islam does not promote the type of power that aims to establish bases to colonize and control people and countries, to control peoples' natural resources and raw materials for the purpose of investment and exploitation, considering them consumer markets for manufactured and agricultural products of the more powerful countries, as ancient colonialists did and modern-day colonialists do now when they use political and military strength to debase peoples because they feel racially superior or because they need the raw materials produced by colonized, weak countries to feed industry in the colonialist countries. This is the case with natural resources such as oil, gold and other metals needed for industrial growth and has been a reason for colonization of our countries in ancient and modern times, whether by Europeans or Americans, whose feet we have lived under directly or indirectly. One reason for this was these countries' need to sell agricultural or manufactured products, be they consumer goods or means of war produced by weapons factories, which prompts them to create new, unnecessary needs for these peoples. They then brand these peoples with the character of their industrial culture so that they are bound intrinsically to them in every public and private sphere.

To this end, dissention and wars were fabricated, and growth of industry in the developing countries, which sought self-sufficiency in consumer goods, etc., was prevented. The colonialist countries came along and converted these economies into war economies, absorbing the resources of other countries and giving them a small taste of the weapons they produced, as a natural result of their stirring up internal and external problems that led to war. Thus the colonialist game continues until these countries fall victim to bankruptcy under the pressure of military burdens and huge debts, completely collapsing and again falling prey to colonialist plots.

Islam totally rejects this because of the basis on which this power rests and the way more powerful forces behave. We find in the Holy Qur'an many references to tyrants throughout history, how they ruled, their crimes against their people and their attempts to break the latter's ranks in order to expand the basis on which they rule.

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The Pharaoh is given as an example of the ruler whom the Qur'an exhorts the people to rebel against and destroy his power, when it speaks of Moses and the message given to him to save his nation from tyrannical and harsh rule:

"...Pharaoh was mighty on the earth and one who transgressed all bounds."
10:83

"...Pharaoh and his chiefs behaved insolently. They were an arrogant people." 23:46

"Pharaoh raised himself up in the land and divided its people into factions, oppressing a small group, killing their sons and sparing their woman, for he was indeed corrupt. We wish to bless those who are oppressed, to make them leaders and heirs, to establish a firm place for them in the land and to show Pharaoh, Haman and their armies the things against which they were taking precautions."
A-Qasas [28:]4-6

This shows us what the oppressor does to make his power a springboard for corruption, of which the Qur'an gives examples in the story of Pharaoh. God then promises the oppressed victory if they follow him and choose victory as planned for them in God's Message. This is what happened when Pharaoh was drowned by the sea and Moses was victorious over him.

The Qur'an gives other examples of tyrants who used their power to oppress the weak. God sent prophets with his Message in order to change the situation, and then sent punishment to destroy them when they did not accept His word. These were the 'Ad, the people of Hud, of whom the Qur'an speaks in more than one sura, showing us their tremendous power on the one hand and their abuse of this power on the other to show that God does not approve of power that prompts man to behave thus, for if he does not follow the right path, God will be watching for him, as He has been for every tyrant in the past, whether at present or in the future:

"The 'Ad rejected the apostles. Their brother Hud said to them, 'Will you not fear God? I am to you a messenger worth of all trust, so fear God and obey me. No reward do I ask of you for it. My reward is only from the Lord of the Worlds. Do you build a landmark on every high place to please yourselves? And do you get fine buildings in the hope of living in them? When you exert your strong hand, do you do so like men of absolute power? Now fear God and obey me. Fear Him Who has given you freely all that you know. Freely has He given you cattle and sons and gardens and springs. I do fear for you the penalty of a great day.' They said, 'It is the same to us whether you admonish us or not. This is nothing but an old trick of the ancients, and we are not the ones to be punished.' So they rejected him, and We destroyed them. In this is a sign, but most of them do not believe." 36:123-139

We find Islam, in other verses, rejecting this basis, since the goals of Islam, in all the human and non-human power that God has created or is creating, disapproves of corruption and all signs of the powerful. Islam arose in order to eliminate corruption and feelings of greatness that place others on a pedestal and allow them to think that they have the divine right to control other people, as we see in the following verse:

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"That home of the hereafter we shall give to those who do not plan high-handedness or corruption on earth, for the end is best for the righteous." 38:83

In the preceding verse we see two bases on which God evaluates man:

1. He rejects high-handedness on earth, which arises from man's feeling that he is superior to others. He embodies this feeling in his relationship with them and with God, making him justify any act that helps him reach this goal. Islam rejects this, trying to make man think more humanely, not thinking that he has any distinction over others, but is created like them and may be better than they in some respects while they are better than he in others. He has no right to ask anything of them because of his superior aspects, just as he would not want them to ask anything of him based on the characteristics or works that set them apart from him.

2. He rejects corruption, for God does not like corruption nor the work of those who are corrupt, which clashes with the greater goals of Islam to build life on earth and in heaven on what is right: "...We created them only for just ends..." 44:39. What is just is established only through fairness and propriety, on which the messages and acts of the prophets were based: "We sent down our messengers with clear signs and sent with them the Book and the Scale so that man may stand forth in justice..." 57:25.

The Qur'an gives diverse examples of those who use their money or standing for corruption or control over countries and peoples to feed their criminal tendencies based on the inferiority complex they have given others. The Qur'an shows us the results of their behavior in the hereafter as an admonition to people to reject those who aim to obtain power.

God says the following in giving us an example of the man who asks the people to give him power by supporting him, in the name of right, justice and reform. When they so do and he gets the authority he wishes, he takes power, repudiates what he said and carries out his hidden plans for corruption and destruction: "There is a type of man whose words about this life may dazzle you. He calls God to witness about what is in his heart, yet he is the most contentious of enemies. When he turns his back, his aim everywhere is to spread corruption on the earth and to destroy crops and cattle. But God does not like corruption. When it is said to him 'Fear God,' he is led by arrogance to more crime. Hell is sufficient for him--an evil bed." 3:304-306

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When the Qur'an speaks to us about Qarun, "who God gave treasures the keys of which would have been a burden to strong men":..."his people said to him, 'Exult not, for God does not love those who exult. Seek with what God has given you the home of the hereafter, and do not forget your portion in this world, but do good, as God has been good to you. Seek not corruption in the land, for God does not love those who are corrupt.' He said, 'This has been given to me because of a certain knowledge I have.' Did he not know that God had destroyed, before him, generations which were superior to him in strength and greater in the amount they had collected? But the wicked are not called immediately to account for their sin."
38:76-78

He is one of the people who felt that the power of money justifies all their acts, even ignoring the admonition that they use their power for good while using it for evil, since he believed that this power was of his own doing, even though it came from no power other than God, and no person has control over what he wants to do.

The Qur'an gives us examples from the past, when tremendously wealthy and well-armed forces arose, seizing the feelings of the people. However, they soon fell victim to the laws and instructions of God, which destroyed all tyrannical and aggressive forces.

The fate of these people was the same as that of their predecessors:

"Then We caused the earth to swallow him up...those who had envied his position the day before began to say the next day, 'Those who reject God will assuredly never prosper.'" 38:81

In short, the Qur'an condemns all of these evil examples of strength in order to point man toward the goals he must pursue with his power and in order to define the straight path it wants man to follow--Islam does not want strength to arise from or aim at corruption, but to be for what is good, with all steps taken toward good at whatever time and place.

Basically what we want to say is that Islam does not approve the use of power in order to realize goals that are contrary to Islamic values, since power and its means are gifts from God, and God's religion cannot allow them to be used for something of which God disapproves. This is an outline of the ethical aspect of power when its goal is negative. The negation of power becomes a moral characteristic which prevents this power from expanding or acting contrary to Islamic values. Positive power represents an act against moral values, since the ethicality of any act follows the broad foundation of the moral structure of life, and if this foundation in Islam rests on compliance with the will of God and his plans for man's greater good, then practical ethics must follow this way, following exactly the same course. It is also the source of the rivers that produce living things, water and beauty, as well as the roots that spread,

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sending out shoots, blooms and fruits. If these sources stopped producing, the rivers would become swamps that would quickly dry up. If the roots stopped absorbing water from the earth which gives the shoots of life, they would become dry wood. In all aspects of life, the branch is an extension of the root, not to be separated from it lest it becomes a lost particle in a vacuum.

2. The Greater Goals of Power in Islam--the Positive Aspect

The discussion in the preceding paragraph about the objectives of power in Islam was about the negative aspect rejected by Islam because of the practical spheres toward which this power is directed.

In this paragraph, we will delve into the positive aspect of the objective of Islam, which we should achieve and embody in our goals and values so that their distinctiveness will be clear in Islam and serve as the dividing line between the Muslim character and the character of the non-believer. For a lack of a clear idea of man's basic characteristics causes him to lose himself, when he imagines that he is living them in his thoughts and in his life.

The Qur'an defines the positive and negative aspects by defining the basic division between the use of power by believers and that of non-believers:

"Those who believe fight in the cause of God, and those who reject faith fight in the cause of evil. So fight against the friends of Satan. Feeble indeed is the cunning of Satan." 4:76

These are the parallel, or rather the opposing lines, since each goes in a direction different from that of the other. The believers believe in God in their religion and their existence as a basis for imagining life; they see God as the beginning and the end, and they act with faith in God in order to obtain His pleasure and His mercy.

The non-believers, who have not answered the call to faith and are not affected by it, have sold their souls to a false god, who has been boundless in his oppression. They do not stand for justice, right and good, but for oppression, falsehood and evil. They are not open to God in order to be open to the good that this faith will bring to man and life. Instead, they remain under the influence of their temptations and greed, both petty and grand, without the mercy and care of God. We have seen how Islam rejects the way of the false god when we discussed the evil aspects that Islam would want eliminated from power, since it believes that weakness of action in the face of temptation to do evil is strength itself when values are weighed in Islam.

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God's way is an outline of all of life's goals through which power is guided by Islamic legislation, since force is a gift of God, being created by Him, and the means of power are also God's creation and a basis for practical action. If it is a gift from God, then man must use it God's way.

Islam has told man of his responsibility to fight for the sake of God with his goods and his person and to fight the groups that stand in the way of God's path, for there is nothing but this path, in which man must use his ability, for this is the nature of faith. It is the ethical basis which justifies fighting which could lead to the death of others or of oneself, since life remains a very important value upon which laws cannot impinge. It could lead to authority to kill, unless this conflicts with a greater goal, since goals are mutually respected when it comes to life. Its manifestations struggle in real life, with legislation serving the best of objectives since it deals with preserving the best aspects of life. For this reason the important values in life embodied by Islam in its legislation, interpretations and practical plans for the growth of life were in harmony with God's creation and took precedence in legislation, for when values were placed on one side and the lives of followers and enemies on the other, there was no doubt--one of them had to lose, since for life to continue to follow God's values, many martyrs and enemies would have to fall along the way. For this reason alone, we understand how killing can be a great ethical value instead of a hideous crime.

There are many appeals in the Qur'an for man to use his strength in this direction and struggle with his wealth and himself, these being the two greatest strengths he can use for the sake of God, to pursue the noble objectives God wishes for man in this life and the hereafter:

"Fight in the cause of God those who fight you, but do not go too far, for God does not love transgressors." 2:190

"Let those fight in the cause of God who sell the life of this world for the hereafter. To him who fights in the cause of God, whether he is killed or is victorious, soon shall We give him a great reward. And why should you not fight in the cause of God and of those who, being weak, are ill-treated--men, women and children whose cry is 'Our Lord, rescue us from this town, whose people are oppressors, and raise for us one who will protect and one who will help.'" 4:73-75

"Then fight in God's cause, you are held responsible only for yourself, and rouse the believers. God may restrain the fury of the non-believers, for God is the strongest in might and in punishment." 4:83

"Those who believed, those who suffered exile and those who fought in the path of God have the hope of God's mercy. God is oft-forgiving and most merciful." 2:217

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"God loves those who fight in His cause in battle array, as they were a solid structure." 61:4

The Qur'an not only calls for fighting for the sake of God, as in keeping with faith, but describes the great spiritual values given to the fighters, whether they are killed in battle or survive after proving their bravery and fulfilling their duties:

"Not equal are those believers who sit at home and receive no hurt and those who strive and fight in the cause of God with their goods and their persons. God has granted a higher grade to those who strive and fight with their goods and persons than to those who sit. Unto all God has promised good, but those who strive and fight He has distinguished above those who sit, by a special reward ranks specially bestowed by Him and forgiveness and mercy. For God is oft-forgiving and most merciful." 4:94-95

"God has purchased the believers' persons and goods, for theirs is the Garden. They fight in His cause and kill and are killed. A promise binding on Him in truth through the law, the Gospel and the Qur'an. Who is more faithful to his covenant than God? Then rejoice in the bargain which you have concluded. That is the supreme achievement." 9:112

"Think not of those who are killed for God's sake as dead. They live, finding their sustenance in the presence of their Lord. They rejoiced in the bounty provided by God. Regarding those left behind, who have not yet joined them, the martyrs glory in the fact that they have no fear nor cause to grieve." 3:169-171

"To him who fights in the cause of God, whether he is killed or is victorious, soon shall We give him a great reward..." 4:73

Whenever we speak of God's way and whether God needs fighting for his sake, this is not the issue, for God does not need victory, he is mightier than this. It is we who lose the way, and God's path guides us to right, success and happiness in the afterlife. It is an issue of man, not of God, for he is the giver of all things, even our guidance and our straying. Again, when we speak of God's way, what are our goals in following His way? We cannot cover all of this, since it involves life itself; however, we can touch on certain fundamental aspects of the objectives of fighting as stated in Islam.

1. Seeking to build life on the basis of faith in God, His messengers and His laws by considering strength a practical starting point to make the movement stronger and quicker and to give those who are striving a greater sense of confidence, with the strength they receive from their faith, mingled with the strength imposed on them by the situation, and prompting people to become more deeply involved in the Islamic appeal.

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2. Protecting the religion from suppression by its enemies by their restricting its freedom or placing impediments that would prevent it from penetrating deeply into the lives of the people, and protecting its followers from being lured away from their religion through pressure of punishment or exile or through the destruction of their private and personal interests.

3. Victory by the helpless, oppressed forces over the oppressors, who create colonialism, exploitation and aggression within our lives.

4. Weakening the power of the polytheists and destroying their name, so that unbelief will not remain a power to prevent Islam from following its course and realizing its revolutionary, reform goals.

5. Defending the people and blocking aggression against people, countries and holy places and fighting against the aggressors.

These are a few of the goals in what is understood as "God's way," which Islam wants man to use strength to pursue. Sacrificing one's goods and person for this reason is considered a great value in life, which will raise man by stages in God's favor.

Again we ask the same question--do these goals justify their means, the destruction of the many souls fighting for their sake or enemies fighting for opposing goals.

We find the answer to this in certain Qur'anic verses which give the philosophy of fighting and the use of force in the face of aggression against religion, people and life, with the preservation of life on a basis of order and righteousness, prohibiting corruption and evil behavior:

"...and if God had not checked one people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of corruption, but God is full of bounty for all the worlds." 2:251

"To those against whom war is made, permission is given because they are wronged, and God is most powerful to help them, those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right for no reason except that they say 'Our Lord is God.' Had God not checked one people by means of another, there would surely have been destruction of monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques, where the name of God is said often, for God is full of strength, exalted in might, those who, if we establish them in the land, establish regular prayer and give regular charity, enjoin what is right and forbid wrong. With God rests the end of all affairs." 22:40-41

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In the first verse, the issue is treated from a broad standpoint--prohibiting corruption on the earth and the collapse of life, since opening the way to tyrants and aggressors would make life subject to their aggression and tyranny, making life easy prey for all means of corruption and oppression, even killing.

In the second verse, the philosophy of war is given from the standpoint of freedom of religion because of its relationship with the situation of the weak Muslims in Mecca, who were oppressed by the polytheists because they said "Our Lord is God." They were punished and expelled from their land. Defending their freedom of religion and themselves from the oppression they were subjected to was their innate right. Otherwise, the believers would not have been able to pursue their lives in freedom and dignity.

If we wanted to counter the idea in these verses, we would put the idea in its natural context and ask ourselves the question:

"What would we do in the face of oppression, tyranny and pressure against religious freedom and freedom of action in life?"

Would we stand with our hands tied, refraining from any type of defense or attack, leaving the tyrant and the oppressor to do as they wished?

Can negative positions solve the problem of life, or preserve life's sanctity and people's lives?

"Yes" is not the answer because it would complicate rather than solve the problem, for tyrants do not understand love, sustenance or tenderness. They know only one type of weakness, which tempts them to be even more tyrannical. In the silence of the weak, they find only one manifestation of submission to their tyranny, for nothing is more appealing to tyrants to continue their tyranny than the weakness of the weak, the feebleness of the exhausted, the loss of the voice that would speak a strong word of right or lack of a position that would answer power with power. Thus, there are only two options--withdrawing from the position taken by the Message, as well as its principles and reforms, leaving life an easy morsel for those who would do all manner of evil, or confronting these persons in various ways, even by sacrificing one's goods and person.

By taking the Jihad and defense as two basic principles, Islam takes the difficult choice, choosing confrontation because it is in the overall interest of mankind. This makes the principles and characteristics of the Message the center of importance before which the lives of individuals at various stages of history pale in comparison. They pale before life stretching throughout all phases of history, for the Message is not merely

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an idea separated from reality, or mere action unrelated to the necessities of life, it is the deep meaning of life. When man loses it, he loses life, since life that loses its true meaning loses life itself.

Thus we understand the "ethic of power" in Islam--it does not represent flexibility in peace that preserves the soul, nor severity during war that destroys life. It is the greater goal that gives an honorable life existence and permanence. It governs flexibility as well as severity, and it deals with peace as well as with war. War and peace are not the concern of Islam alone, but of all messages and principles, for they are the concern of life and of people and the values in which they believe. We find the concept of war and peace occupying a prominent position in the legislative and ethical basis because of its totally intertwined, indivisible relationship with this basis.

Theorists have considered war a natural element of human nature, (illegible) instincts such as the fighting instinct, tempting him to oppress and do wrong. It is considered an exception to the principle that prohibits fighting and condemns severity (illegible) totally natural, just like all the issues arising from life.

We do not wish here to debate one idea or another, we are merely saying that Islam does not stray from its basic spiritual and ethical principles when it encourages Jihad, allows fighting and (illegible) severity in order to meet the requirements of defense and protection imposed by (illegible), as a religion that challenges oppression and wrong-doing and destroys heresy and anarchy (illegible) the legality of eliminating wrong-doing opens the way to the legality of eliminating the wrong-doers, if their wrong-doing is (illegible).

(Translator's comment: Pages 186-189 are missing at this point. Pages 176-179 are found in their place.)

Iman 'Ali said: "When you say, 'We hate death,' by God I have never wanted to meet death or have it come to me. When you say, 'They are the strongest in the East,' by God, I have never gone to war without hoping that a group will join me, be guided by me and live under my protection. I prefer this to fighting them because of their errant ways."(9)

Issue that led him to it; he was linked to it by the issue which he followed wherever it led and stopped whenever it stopped. It was not a war that he chose for personal pleasure, but one of duty imposed upon him by the Message and by the need to defend life.

This divine stand may be derived from Muhammad's position discussed in certain books of the Hadith, when a messenger was sent to him: "Get

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to know the people. Do not attack them until you make an appeal for them, for there are no people on earth, tent-dwellers or city-dwellers, that I would not prefer to have you bring me as Muslims than to have you bring me their sons and women and kill the men."⁽¹⁰⁾

We see the Islamic view of war in the holy verses in which Muslims are asked to answer a call for peace if the call represents a practical, firm position related to the Message and to the reasons for which the war was begun. Insistence on war and rejecting peace in this situation would be fighting for no reason, making it merely a selfish act, less related to the concept than to the self. In this manner, it would lose the ethical nature that justifies its existence and legitimacy from the Islamic point of view, becoming an unethical war of ignorance.

"If the enemy is inclined towards peace, you should do the same and trust in God..." al-Anfal (9:61)

"Oh, you who believe, enter into peace whole-heartedly, and follow not the footsteps of Satan, for his is an avowed enemy to you." 2:208

"...if they withdraw and do not fight you, instead sending peace, then God has given you no way to make war on them." 4:90

From these verses, we learn that it is the Muslims' duty to respond to peace initiatives on the part of others to end a war in such a way that would meet the general interest of the Muslims by realizing the goals for which the war was begun. Aggression is forbidden or repudiated, whether by the non-Muslims' embracing Islam, by the two sides agreeing to contracts or by financial obligations imposed by Islamic legislation for peaceful coexistence between religions within specific conditions and laws.

In concluding this chapter, we find the definitive conclusion that decides whether war is ethical in Islam on the basis of the principle of importance, which derives its legality from the law of competition, or the good and evil acts to which Islamic legal rulings are subject to when made and legislated. We know that God commands only for good and puts an end only to evil, and that if good and evil are brought together and compared regarding one subject, the subject will be neither all good nor all evil, but will have something of each. The decision will be based on the larger, more influential one. Good defeated remains totally good, and evil defeated remains wanting. The right belongs to what will serve the greater interest of man and life.

In light of the above, Islamic legislation goes along with war in keeping with the objectives of the war, its development and escalation, stopping when these objectives end--when objectives of selfishness, greed

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and appetite come onto the field, as expressed by the Prophet when one of his companions asked him to define God's way regarding war. As seen in the Hadith, a man came to the Prophet and said: "Man fights for profit, for fame and for status. What is God's way?" The Prophet said, "Whoever fights to make God's word the highest is following God's way."(11)

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Footnotes

- (1) Missing
- (2) (SIC) Al-Kafi (Mazandarani's Commentary) vol. 9, p. 361.
- (3) Ibid. p. 362.
- (4) Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah al-Du'a' 29 p. 128-129.
- (5) Ibn Khaldun said in support of this opinion: "War and various types of fighting still occurred in the Caliphate after God outlawed them. Their roots are the desire for vengeance by one group against another. Each is joined by the members of his tribe. If they lodge a complaint and the two factions agree, one of them asks for revenge and the other defends. This is a natural thing from which no nation or era is free. The cause of this revenge is usually jealousy, competition, aggression, defense of one's God or religion or one's king and preparation for the foregoing. Ibn Khaldun's Prologue p. 270-271.
- (6) The Effects of War in Islamic Jurisprudence, Wahbah al-Suhayli, p. 104. For further study of the concept see our book, Uslub al-Da'wah fi al-Qur'an the section entitled "The Prophet's Wars and Raids."
- (7) Wasa'il al'Shi'ah, sec. 11, p. 43.
- (8) Ibid. p. 46.
- (9) Nahj al-Balaghah, p. 91.
- (10) Sharh al-Sayr al-Kabir, vol. 1, p. 59.
- (11) Nayl al-Awtar, sec. 7, p. 214.

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Chapter Seven

The Appeal and the Concept of Power

1. The Relationship Between Power and the Call to Islam
2. Verses and Quotations Urging Fighting and Jihad in the Name of the Appeal
3. Islamic Jurisprudence and the Relationship Between Jihad and the Appeal
4. Interpretation of the Ideological Bases of Islam
5. The Relationship Between Jihad and the Appeal
6. Conditions Under Which Peoples Embraced Islam in Conquered and Unconquered Countries
7. The Relationship Between Power and the Sovereignty of Islam

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1. The Relationship Between Power and the Call to Islam

What is the relationship between the call to Islam and the Islamic concept of power? Does Islam consider harshness, coercion, fighting and the other terms understood as power as means to bring others to the Islamic faith? The person who refuses to recognize Islam would have no choice but to submit to pressures forcing him to recognize it without consideration for his ideas or satisfaction.

Finally, can we consider the power represented by the Islamic conquests a basis to explain the spread of Islam throughout the world?

This is the question that was raised and is still being raised by many propagandists hostile to Islam as a way to say that it cannot continue under circumstances of intellectual freedom without military or other pressure on the battlefield of ideas, leaving the idea alone to face the facts on an internal level, without interference.

Perhaps they assume that the issue they raise concerning Islam is not open to dispute, but is an established fact on the basis of the Qur'anic verses about fighting and jihad and the sayings of the Prophet appealing for these, or the constant practice of Islam, going from one war to the next, one raid to the next, with one slogan urgently appealing to others to embrace Islam under the threat of death if they refused. If practice coincided with legislation in Islam, then there was no doubt as to the nature of the idea proposed in both theory and application.

The purpose of this is to portray Islam as a religion that believes in using despotic means and taking life in an uncivilized way, not recognizing man's freedom to choose and reject, in order to distance people from Islam.

They prejudiced Westerners so much about Islam that we see the great author Bernard Shaw astonishing an Islamic scholar with whom he met in certain countries to lecture on the philosophy of peace, by the quote in Al-Muslimun from a conversation he had with Shaykh 'Abd al-'alim al-Sadiqi, whom Shaw surprised by saying:

"You have talked about the philosophy of peace. As a Muslim, it would have been more appropriate for you to talk about the philosophy of war, since Islam was spread by the sword."

If we look at this discussion for a while, we see how much this great author was influenced by this concept, since, after the Muslim scholar tried to correct his viewpoint with regard to the accusation he leveled at Islam, he asked, "We could establish the supremacy of many interpretations of Islam, but do the Muslim masses agree with your interpretation? Do they

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believe that Islam has never been spread by conquest and that this is inappropriate?

The falsehood does not stop here, for some have tried to refute the ability of the peaceful means used by Islam to achieve any success. In their view, the religion was unable to achieve any progress because its instruction and principles alone could not encourage anyone to embrace Islam voluntarily. Frederick (DNYUN) Maurice (or Morris) said, "It is definite that Islam met with success only when attempting a raid."

The interpretation of these peaceful means as a specific period during which power would not be used, as a practical matter, can be understood through the words of the author of Al-Da'wah ila al-Islam (The Call to Islam): "European writers have affirmed many times that the Prophet followed a totally new path after he fled to al-Madinah, where his life changed. They say that he was no longer the messenger spreading good news to those whom he had convinced of the need to trust in the religion revealed to them, but seemed to be intent on using all his authority and political skill to impose himself and his ideas."(1)

These are some highlights of the anti-Islam thinking as far as the analyses and questions it has raised. Does Islam answer these questions through legislation and application, or not? How?

2. Verses and Quotations Urging Fighting and Jihad in the Name of the Appeal

In dealing with these questions, we may have to review the verses which are the legal basis for the means of the appeal in Islam, or rather, the means by which Islam believes others should be brought into the religion so that we can learn if Islam encourages the use of power, or if it establishes the principle of free will and choice.

The following are some of these holy verses:

"Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious. For your Lord knows best who have strayed from His path and who receive guidance." 16:125

"And do not dispute with the People of the Book, except with better means, except with those who do wrong. Say, 'We believe in the revelation that has come down to us and in that which came down to you. Our God and your God is one, and it is to Him that we bow.'" 29:45

"Let there be no power in religion. Through stands out clear from error. Whoever rejects evil and believes in God has grasped the most trustworthy hand, and God hears and knows all things." 2:256

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"If your God wants everyone on earth to believe, do you hate them until they become believers?" 11:99

"Say, Right comes from your Lord, for whomever He wishes will believe and whomever He wishes will be a non-believer." 17:29

What do we understand from these verses?

The idea is clear...there is no power in the religion because the elements of faith are of clear integrity and the elements of non-belief are obviously sinful. What is the use of power or pressure...what is the advantage, as long as faith is subject to ideological and emotional satisfaction, which power cannot touch since it operates on the body, not the soul, and no man can enter within another to sow faith by power. The natural way to do so is by the proper word, representing wisdom, the good message and guidance. This is the peaceful way of doing so, for God wanted men to attain faith by choice, after preparing the means for them. He did not want to create faith in them as He created their bodies.

What has this to say to the theory that the appeal to Islam was spread by pressure, power and threats of power? The reply is that this theory is isolated from the facts of Islamic legislation regarding the appeal.(2)

However, is this enough to refute the theory?

Perhaps not, for some holy verses consider fighting one way of spreading Islam in the world until faith in God prevails and there is no trace of the false religions. This is shown in the following holy verse:

"Fight them until there is no more tumult or oppression, and faith in God prevails. If they cease, let there be no hostility except to those who practice oppression." 2:193

We learn from this verse that one reason for fighting is so that Muslims are not enticed away from their religion and that another is so that faith in God will prevail. This suggests that the call to Islam is one objective that justifies Islam's entering battle.

In other verses we may find the decisive position in which war imposes on people two things--fighting or Islam.

"Say to those who lag behind, 'You will make the appeal to a strong people, fighting them until they become Muslims. God gives you a good reward. If you hold back as you did before, He will punish you severely.'" 84:16

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Certain quotations state or imply that the sword is the basis of the appeal or of compliance and that God wishes to impose it on man in all spheres of his life. In quoting Ibn 'Umar, Ahmad says, "The messenger of God said, 'The sword was placed in my hands to serve God. My sustenance was put under my spear, and those who contradicted my order were made low.'"(3)

Al-Bukhari quoted Abi Harirah as saying that the Prophet said, "You ordered me to fight the people until they say 'There is no god but God.' If they say this, they protect their blood and possession from me, for they are accountable to God."(4)

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq quoted the Messenger of God as saying, "All good is in the sword and under the sword. For all people, the sword is the key to heaven or hell."(5)

Imam Ja-far al-Sadiq said, "God sent His Messenger to the people for ten years, and they refused to accept Islam until he was ordered to fight. Good is in the sword and under the sword, everything goes back to its beginning."(6)

These quotes consider the sword to be "the symbol of strength, fighting and severity" a basis for making and perpetuating the appeal. This is especially true of the last quote, which states that peaceful means were not able to humble or convince people, until permission and the command to fight were given. Then Islam spread throughout the lives of men and they were convinced ideologically and practically. Is there still doubt that power is considered a basis for the call to Islam.

The quote, "You commanded me to fight the people..." does not mean that fighting is for the sake of the call to God, but that the fighting should be ended by embracing Islam and that the fighting may be for some reason other than those stated in the Holy Qur'an.

3. Islamic Jurisprudence and the Relationship Between Jihad and the Appeal

In Islamic jurisprudence, we find many statements by Muslim jurists which make the jihad one means of the appeal, or a tool to pressure people in order to encourage them to embrace Islam.

Muhammad, known as Ibn Rushd al-Qartabi, said in his book Bidayat al-Mjutahid wa Nihayat al-Muqtasad:

"Muslims agree that what is meant by 'fighting the People of the Book'--except the people of the Book from Quraysh and Christian Arabs'--

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is one of two things: having them embrace Islam or pay a tax levied on non-Muslims. "Fight those who do not believe in God and the Day of Judgment and who do not prohibit what God and His Messenger prohibit nor follow the religion of right and who were given the Book so that they will pay a tribute, for they are lowly." Islamic juristical experts also agree in general on his statement, "Prescribe to them the laws of the People of the Book." They disagree on whether the People of the Book were the same as the polytheists and whether tax would be accepted from them.

The great Shaykh who wrote Kashf al-Ghita' said, when speaking of the divisions of the jihad: "The fifth is jihad against non-believers and going where they are to make the appeal to Islam and to obedience to the Prophet's message from the Almighty King."

We see in these two books, which are examples of Sunni and Shi'ite jurisprudence, that they consider the jihad to be a door through which to bring non-believers to Islam, since it is one way of making the call to Islam. This tells us that Islam encourages the use of power to bring others under its influence.

Thus we find authors, tradition and decisions by Islamic jurists based on the above which support the view of an intrinsic link between power and the call to Islam. What do they have to say?

Our comments on this may be summarized in three points:

First, a discussion of the interpretation given us by the verses and quotations we have presented in an attempt to define them on practical, precise bases to reaffirm our rejection of the theory linking the call to Islam with coercion.

Second, the relationship between the legal bases for the jihad and the call to Islam.

Third, a review of the actual circumstances under which peoples in countries conquered through jihad embraced Islam as well as those that were not conquered, in addition to the role that the jihad played in the preceding.

4. Interpretation of the Ideologicas Bases of Islam

In discussing the first point by which we wish to explain the meaning of the verses and quotations, we differ from those who link the appeal to the use of pressure and power. We should begin from a basic linguistic principle defined by Islamic scholars in separating what is specific in meaning and what is general when we talk about conditions for using a term

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when it has come into usage without being well defined. For this reason, they described conditions they called "precedents of judgments" by which they meant precedents consisting of elements of judgment in keeping with that of the speaker, who does not use a term without defining it in accordance with the way of judicious men.

One thing they said about these conditions was that when a speaker uses a term, he chooses the meaning he wants the term to have, since words have many meanings that the speaker could have intended. He may have intended all the meanings, to link his objectives with these meanings, or he may have only had some of them in mind. We must understand this aspect in order to know the true meaning of the words. Let us take the dispute over the verse about dogs trained to hunt--"Eat what they catch." The verse has two meanings--eating without immolating the animal, or without cleansing the impurity left by the dog. The experts in jurisprudence say that it refers to immolation and not to cleansing. Therefore, we use the term and decide that it is permissible to eat an animal killed by a dog before we reach the animal or that we can slaughter it without necessitating immolation. However, its impurity must be cleansed, since the verse does not explain this aspect, which has been decided by general principles of Islamic law.

In light of this, we must take the aspect which the words are dealing with in order to define the meanings, ignoring the aspects which the speaker has left to another time. What the speakers want is to define the words in these cases. On this linguistic basis, we will delve into the verses and quotations dealing with fighting.

The first verse intends to remove restrictions in the path of the appeal by destroying those elements enticing believers away from their religion and preventing them from practicing it and from making the appeal. Fighting was intended to prevent such enticement in order to realize the greater goal of having faith in God prevail. However, the holy verse does not give us any justification for killing for the sake of the call to God.

The second verse was an appeal to those lagging behind to join the ranks of those who fight non-believers. The latter are given two choices--Islam or fighting. It does not tell us that the fighting was merely for the sake of the appeal; it merely says that the battle will be decided on this basis, without telling us the reason for the fighting--it may have to be a reply to aggression or protection against it. In both of these cases, one of these two choices is unavoidable.

When we look at the quotations, we find that they consider fighting necessary for any principle that wants to be established on firm soil, in the midst of the storms that would tear it up by the roots. With power, it will stand to reply to aggression and to provide itself and its followers

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with defensive or aggressive protection, in accordance with the greater good. In other words, strength is a vital requirement for principles that wish to respond to provocation, for even though flexibility may work more than once, it achieves no concrete result in the majority of instances. As for its being a legitimate goal with regard to the appeal, we find no trace of the appeal's being based on power in any sense. Even the last quotation, which spoke of the division between the period before Muhammad's emigration to al-Madinah and the period following the emigration, referred to responding to aggression with equal or greater force. With regard to the period following the emigration, when Islam made progress and enjoyed freedom to make appeals and convince the people, there is no reference to the success of the call to Islam after Muhammad's arrival in al-Madinah being based on legitimization of fighting for the sake of this call to God as a way of getting people to embrace Islam. The only thing we find is the obligation to use power against aggression, with the appeal made through the usual means based on wisdom and positive exhortation.

In summary, in the religious passages we have reviewed in the Qur'an and the Sunna, we find no support for the theory that the call to Islam is an objective of fighting or that fighting is a means of forcing people to embrace the religion. We find only that fighting is considered a legitimate means of protecting the appeal from provocations by its non-believing enemies.

5. The Relationship Between Jihad and the Appeal

We can summarize the second point, that of the relationship between the legal basis for jihad and the appeal to Islam, by going back to the verses or quotations regarding jihad, with the following conclusion: legitimization of jihad arose from Islam's need for strength, like the need of any principle that wishes to grow and to govern life. It is contradictory that any ungodly principle could be subject to human will and choice, since it is an issue that would not derive from a sacred obligation beyond the life of man but from selfish human desire like any natural thing for which man does not feel an inner imperative to do or leave. However, religions represent the will of God, creator of man, who wants him to build and govern his life on His will. Man does not have the freedom, from a selfish point of view, to accept or reject the will of God. From the standpoint of responsibility, if he has the freedom to choose or not choose it under threat of punishment, he would undoubtedly meet it and become familiar with it, so that the act of choosing would be a starting point for through knowledge, since there is no responsibility without knowledge. In light of this, knowledge is the responsibility of man to himself and to his Creator. From a sensible point of view, there is no excuse for ignorance. Furthermore, knowledge is divine pleasure given by God to man to enable him to exercise responsibility, which rests on man, for God does not accept any excuse.

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For this reason, the prophecies are the only way of knowing the will of God, for God's Message comes from them, and the proof rests on them. How can they play their natural role in life?

It is obvious that spreading the message will play a large role. But how can it do so with obstacles in its path, obstacles such as the opposition that would destroy the Message by destroying the people of the Message and the obstacles that would wish the Message to stop at its original geographical borders. Another obstacle is those who believe that the Message is a challenge to their religion and beliefs and those who find the Message limiting their power to oppress and tyrannize. What can the message do in the face of this?

Should it shut itself up in a prison cell with no way out, prey to all its enemies, unable to do any good or ward off any harm? If it must do this, what is the reason for its existence, why should it be God's Message to the people if it flees from the people at the first sign of a challenge or opposition? How can it help perpetuate the admirable principles in life if it cannot grant itself the ability to survive through the strength of a firm position?

The natural reply is absolute freedom of action for the Message in spreading its general and specific judgments and its means and goals to every corner of the earth, since this is in keeping with the Message's applicability to every time and every place. This goes along with its responsibility to give knowledge to all people, entitling it to create great power to face these obstacles and to confront provocations as the only way for it to survive and protect itself from aggression and from those who would strangle its freedom and to make sure that the people hear its voice, also protecting its followers from oppression and enticements away from their religion. This is why the jihad is a just, practical law, related to the nature of life in good and evil, truth and falsehood. Its position is no different from the defensive and aggressive policies of all countries which follow a specific path or general principles which go beyond their geographical boundaries. The following is the Qur'an's interpretation of war:

"If God did not defend one people from another, the world would be overrun with corruption." "Had God not checked one people by means of another, there would surely have been destruction of monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques, where the name of God is said often..."

Thus we find that the relationship between jihad and the call is one of power protecting the Message and giving it room to spread its voice to all corners of the earth, not one of power that imposes Islam by coercion and threat.

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Thus we see many scholars, commentators and others, who are against the idea of "abrogation" in the Holy Qur'an in certain verses that call for forgiveness and the call to God with wisdom and positive exhortation and the verses that call for fighting, since some want to consider the second to be an abrogation of the first.

However, the idea was the opposite, for the other verses are still valid in all cases regarding the call to Islam. The verses about the sword and fighting are totally unrelated to this, since they concern the issue of maintaining the strength of Islam and Muslims and the freedom of the call to God by removing human and other obstacles from the path of the call, which can only be done through fighting.

There are quotations that tell us how the battle is changed into an appeal to the people of the country to open up to Islam. This is done by setting forth the basic elements of the Message and explaining the greater goals for which it seeks to build life on a firm foundation.

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq, quoted in the Hadith of the Prophet, said that Amir of the Faithful 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib said, "The Messenger of God sent me to Yemen, saying, 'Ali, do not fight anyone until you call him to Islam, for if a man is guided by God because of you, it is the best possible thing for you.'"(8)

In the story of al-Zahri, he said, "A man from the Quraysh came to 'Ali Ibn al-Hysayn and asked him what the call to the religion was. He said, "Say: In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate, I call you to God and to His religion. This involves two things: one is knowing God, and the other is working to please Him. By knowing Him, you know of His oneness, His mercy, His ability over all things and that it is He who bestows good and who does harm to everything. Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. What he has brought is the truth from God and anything else is falsehood. If they respond to this, they shall have the same benefits and responsibilities as Muslims."(9)

We understand from these two quotations that the call to Islam must come before fighting, and we learn from the word "guidance" in the first quotation and from the explanation of elements of the call in the second that the call is not merely the traditional words that fighters say before battle to relieve their consciences, like meaningless words, but is a true appeal based on all the means and ideas on which the argument for right rests. It is based on the path to guidance by relying on the true nature of the Message, the good word and wise acts, an open heart filled with love instead of hatred and the spirit of the message instead of the spirit of authority. In this atmosphere, how could we think that jihad arose as a means for coercion to embrace Islam?

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Some may say that calling to Islam in an atmosphere of power does not allow for freedom of will or of choice, since the man who sees a sword before him cannot understand a word of what has been said to him to think about it or to debate it. How could he debate something from a position of weakness before the position of strength held by the army of the appeal?

We would reply that the legislation we are discussing requires that those concerned create a suitable atmosphere in which to give the appeal with freedom, without pressure or coercion, since the issue is one of faith, more than one of control. The leadership must be responsible for this, since it is the basic condition for jihad, in which the commander bears responsibility for the call to God more than responsibility for victory in the fight, as the Prophet said to 'Ali when he sent the latter to Yemen. Some people may think that this spiritual atmosphere is an allegory that exists in fantasy, not in reality, but it was real in many of the Prophet's wars and in many of the Islamic conquests. If we had not found such leaders and followers in the ranks of the Islamic army, then jihad may not necessarily have become a duty because it would have been kept from its mission and goal, become a distorted image of Islam, instead of a true picture. The sayings of Imams of the Prophet's family describe some such instances, including a quote from Abu Hamza al-Thamali: A man said to 'Ali Ibn al-Husayn, "I accepted the hajj and rejected the jihad, for I found the hajj easier, and God said 'God has purchased the believers' persons and goods.'" 'Ali Ibn al-Husayn said, "Read what follows." He read, "Those who turn to God, who serve Him and praise Him...those who observe the limits of God." 'Ali Ibn al-Husayn said, "If these people appear, we will not need to do anything about the jihad."

Muhammad Ibn 'Abdallah al-Samandari said to Abi 'Abdallah (Iman ja'far al-Sadiq), "I was ready to go into battle. They called me, and I went with them. He said to me, 'I saw you go out, take a prisoner and then release him, reaching an agreement like those of the Prophet concluded with the polytheists. Would you then kill him?' I said, 'By God, I would not kill him.' He said, 'Then do not go out.'"(11)

In speaking of his father, Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq said, "The Amir of the Faithful ('Ali Ibn Abi Talib) said, 'The Muslim does not go into the jihad with one who does not believe in the decision and who does not carry out God's order.'"(12)

Some may consider these sayings a departure from the encouragement to wage jihad, but we are considering what will help us get a grasp on the truth of the matter. It would be unnatural for us to encourage jihad that was not based on legal conditions. Otherwise, it would become a battle for the sake of unjust rule and support for sin and aggression, not for righteousness and strength. For this reason, the Imams from the Prophets

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family took precautions to preserve the strength and well-being of Islamic legislation and to prevent the people from separating themselves from it. We may understand better through the well-known prayer in Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah, Imam 'Ali Ibn al-Husayn's prayer for the Thaghur people, who were fighting the enemies of Islam with the Umayyad army, which represented a deviant regime, according to Imam Zayn al-'Abidin. However, it was not their war, it was Islam's war, and in his view it differed from other cases that were the backbone of the regime. In view of this, these quotations were in protest of the un-Islamic situation which was taking on the characteristics of Islamic legality, as well as being practical instruction to the people to try to change it, noting that it is a non-binding duty on others to carry out any duty that does not rest directly with certain people.

6. Conditions Under Which Peoples Embraced Islam in Conquered and Unconquered Countries

The third point is to review the conditions under which peoples embraced Islam in conquered and unconquered countries and the role that jihad played in this respect. We see here a vital point--the presence of many non-Muslims in Islamic countries who were not subjected to any religious oppression by the Islamic regime or the Muslims in the country. This shows that coercion to embrace Islam was not intended by Islamic law to be one of the responsibilities of the regime or the average Muslim.

We also see Muslim majorities in regions that were not part of the Islamic conquest or which were conquered but were not affected for a long time. The appeal was made calmly and simply, without hostility. It was accepted with openness and clear thinking, and groups began to accept the revelation that the appeal to wisdom and the good exhortation, not conquering power, were what helped spread Islam throughout the world because people were convinced by its rulings and interpretations. We will offer several observations in this regard from a book on comparative religions:

a. Historians say that at Islam's inception, the most important period for the spread of Islam was one of peace following the treaty of al-Hudaybiyah between the Quraysh and the Muslims. This period lasted 2 years, and historians say that more people embraced Islam during these 2 years than during the almost 20 years from the inception of Islam until this treaty.

b. Some European authors say that Islam did not go beyond the Sahara in Africa until after the decay of the great states in the Maghrib and that in these areas, Islam relied on culture, thought and the appeal, spreading among the Berbers. An Islamic state arose beyond the Sahara which played a great role in history.

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c. Islam spread widely throughout Indonesia and Africa. Where is the power that spread it in these huge countries and attracted millions of hearts?

d. The crusaders came to the East during the time when the Abbasid and Fatamid caliphates were weak in order to wipe out Islam, yet Islam attracted groups of crusaders, who embraced it and fought in the Muslim ranks. Thomas Arnold says, "The Muhammadan appeal to its crusader enemies attracted a significant number, even during the first stage--during the 12th century. This phenomenon was not limited to the average Christian, but included commanders and leaders, who also joined the Muslims at times of Christian victories." Arnold also quotes certain Christian historians: "On the night of the battle of Hatin, six commanders from the Kingdom of Jerusalem were taken over by Satan and surrendered, joining the ranks of the enemy without being forced to do so." How can we say that Islam was spread among the Christians by power?

e. During the 7th century A.H., the Mongols launched a brutal attack on the Islamic world, letting blood flow, destroying the Islamic culture, destroying palaces and mosques, burning books, killing scholars and even killing the caliph and his family. They removed the Abbasid caliphate in 656 A.H. taking control. All the Muslim forces in the capital and the surrounding areas were crushed. But in no time, Islam had attracted the conquerers who joined what they had attacked and tried to destroy. Can we say that Islam spread among the Mongols through power?

Sir Thomas Arnold comments on this by saying, "Islam knew no greater disaster than the Mongol attacks. The armies of Genghis Khan swept along, destroying in their path, the capitals of Islam and its cities and culture. However, it did not take long for Islam to arise from the ruins and manage, through the appeal, to attract these barbaric conquerors and force them to embrace Islam."

f. A Christian author, the Frenchman Hubert ?Deshon?, who was governor of French colonies in Africa until 1950, said in his book Religions of Black Africa:

"In the majority of cases, the spread of the call to Islam was not based on power, but on persuasion by scattered followers who had no power but their deep faith in their Lord. Islam was often spread by slow, peaceful means from one people to another. Whenever the aristocracy embraced the religion, which was the initial goal of the proselytizers, the rest of the tribe followed suit. Another matter that facilitated the spread of Islam was its simplicity, lack of complicated principles and ease of affiliation, since it required only that a person announce his submission to Islam by uttering the two articles of the creed and he would be considered a Muslim."(13)

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g. In his book The Call to Islam, Arnold says, "It appears that the theory which holds that the sword was the reason for people's converting to Islam is not true. If the sword was used occasionally to support the religion, the appeal and persuasion, not power, were the main characteristics of this call."⁽¹⁴⁾

h. Gustave Lebon said, "When we discuss the Arab conquests and the reasons for their victories, the reader will see that power was not a factor in the spread of the Qur'an. The conquering Arabs allowed the defeated freedom of religion. Consequently, when certain Christian peoples embraced Islam, and took Arabic as their language because they saw that the Arabs were just, which they had not seen from previous masters, and because of the simplicity of Islam, which they had not known before. History has proven that religion is not imposed by power. When the Christians conquered the Arabs in Spain, they preferred to kill or expel them rather than allowing Islam. Islam was not spread by the sword, but by the call alone, and it was by the call to Islam that later groups who attacked the Arabs, such as the Turks, the Mongols, etc., embraced the religion."

i. The Englishman George Sale, who translated the Qur'an into English, said, "We will not go into the reasons that Muhammad's laws met with unprecedented welcome, since those who imagine that they were spread by the sword alone, are gravely mistaken."⁽¹⁵⁾

From the preceding passages, we see that the jihad was not a means of spreading Islam, but allowed the appeal freedom and give people freedom to accept the appeal. This remains the primary role of the appeal in most of the countries where Islam has entered through efforts of love and faith.

7. The Relationship Between Power and the Sovereignty of Islam

When the Prophet Muhammad received the Message, he had two goals: to rid the earth, particularly the Arabian peninsula, of idolatry, and to establish the sovereignty of God's religion on earth.

Consequently, his rulings did not please the polytheists or the People of the Book. The People of the Book, but not the polytheists, were allowed to enter into a taxation arrangement which made their relationship with the Muslims subject to specific contractual obligations. This did not prevent, however, a unity of position governing the arrangement--the subjugation of all policies to the Islamic authorities. We shall try to evaluate this situation from a general point of view and then go into detail. We have already dealt with the general aspect in our book Uslub al-Da'wah fi al-Qur'an, as follows:

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We must ask ourselves one question, "Did Islam takes these steps since this was an Islamic state, representing the sovereignty of God?" as some Orientalists say. We must also ask ourselves, "What can Islam do about the polytheists who still threaten its existence and the well-being of its state? What can Islam do to preserve its integrity and thought?"

Many attempts have been made at treaties and documents so that all could live in peace until matters settled down. What was the result of these attempts?

The others used the opportunity to renew their strength and attack the Muslims. This is proof that they were not ready to live in peace with Muslims and with Islam. They made Islam take a firm position toward them.

In general, the polytheists and non-believers cannot come together with Islam in any way, not because of disputes over details of treaties or over the regime in power, but over the issue of belief in unity and faith in God, which must destroy heresy, and the belief of the polytheists and non-believers, who see a belief in unity as an attempt to destroy their beliefs. From this arises the knowledge that one must fight the other.

If the dispute is at this level, how can these two live in peace, how can they live peacefully in the same state?

One freedom that is imagined for the polytheist belief is the worshipping of idols. How can Islam allow this when its first task is to cleanse the earth of idols, in theory and in reality?

Here we can begin to answer what Islam can do, since what we have said makes the possibility of their living, as citizens, in the Islamic state impractical and unrealistic, even if they pay the tax. If they wish to live, the only thing they can do is to embrace Islam, because polytheism is considered by Islam to be against human nature.

Here we realize that it is not merely a matter of an ideological difference, but also the fact that the issue also affects the fate of mankind. Furthermore, polytheism is not considered a religion that can be considered for freedom before Islam, since it represents a deviation from the natural state of the life of man.

Therefore, Islam cannot allow freedom for either the ideology or the followers of this principle, for this would mean allowing freedom for corruption on the earth, which no belief can allow.

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Its followers must be subject to the Islamic state, and consequently, to the control of Islam as a means of controlling corruption and evil. How can they be made subject?

Power is the answer...not the power that initiates hostilities, but the power that is the last test for reform...not the power that is considered a way to get others to embrace Islam, but the power that tries to subjugate them to the control of Islam and to make them realize the practicality of recognizing the power of the new appeal. This makes their belief, if polytheism is a belief, remain within the private parts of their lives, not to show itself in the lives they lead in the Islamic state. This would also bring them face to face with the experience of life in Islam, in the hope that their eyes and hearts will open to reality. The first step toward enabling themselves to remain and to keep the rights of citizenship in the Islamic state is to recognize this purely superficial form of Islam that is represented by saying the two articles of the creed, although this is not considered a religion, according to Shaykh al-Tawsi. The other steps by which they would acknowledge Islam, untouched by polytheism and corruption, will remain, in the hope that they will embrace Islam, awakening their nature of God's voice.

Here we see the answer to the first question about whether this was power in religion. If what is meant by this is using power to get people to embrace Islam, then we condemn it, as does the verse which we have offered which rejects power in religion. It is not an issue of an appeal, since that is an issue of the intellect and heart, which cannot be forced, just as there is no need for power in its superficial form, since the clarity of the religion and its truth obviate the need for power. If what is meant by the question is a way to subject polytheists and non-believers in general to the Islamic state as a way to control them and eliminate them from the earth for the sake of an Islamic state free from corruption, then we do not reject it as a way to keep the state and the Islamic religion free from aggression and wrong. However, this is not "power in religion" meaning forcing others to enter into the religion, but forcing them to be subject to it.

Why is their being subject to Islam represented by the formulaic recognition of Islam? This is clear from what we said earlier about Islam's removing corruption from the earth by cutting off any ties with polytheism and what we said to the effect that giving freedom to polytheists would give religious expression to polytheism and Islam, which is impractical and unrealistic. This is the opposite of Islam's position toward the People of the Book, whom it finds to be in a natural religion and to whom it can grant freedom from a practical point of view.

What has caused us to emphasize here submission to the sovereignty of Islam, rather than coercion to embrace it, is that the Islamic

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authorities were observing the presence of hypocrites, who were secretly non-believers, while pretending to be Muslims:

"If hypocrites come to you saying, "We believe that you are the Messenger of God and God believes that you are His Messenger, God knows that they are lying." In other words, when they said that they believed in the message by repeating the creed, the Prophet knew this. Nonetheless, they were judged under Islam because they were subject to the control of the Islamic state. He also knew that there were disturbing elements to their Islam, but this was related to the nature of the state, which did not want to give voice to polytheism, but to remain with unity and the Message.

We must not forget, as we end our discussion, that the issue concerns conditions of war between the Muslims and the non-believers. Different circumstances would require another discussion, for which there is no room here.

(Ignatz) Goldziher says, "Muhammad did what he did in the contest of the Arab world around him (illegible) his nation: fighting non-belief and spreading the word of the Islamic faith. However, there is something more significant--the expansion of Islamic sovereignty, God's sovereignty. The goal of the Islamic jihad was not so much to change people's religion by bringing them into Islam, but to subjugate the non-believers.

We have arrived at a decisive conclusion--Islam did not use power to change people's religions and bring them into Islam, but used power to subjugate non-believers to Islamic sovereignty in order to preserve itself and the state. This subjugation took different forms--People of the Book were made to pay a tax, and polytheists were made to proclaim the two articles of the creed.(16)

The preceding is from a general point of view. We shall now touch on several details:

1. The issue of freedom emphasized the concept of "human freedom" according to the West, which grants freedom to the individual even at the expense of the group, or grants freedom to the group, even at the expense of the whole person because it does not believe in a holy guiding idea. The idea that governs man is the child of his thinking and can change in accordance with his will. In this way, democracy was the highest form of representative rule in which the people govern themselves.

However, we consider freedom to be linked to man's interest and no freedom can be granted that opposes the will of God because that would oppose man's interest. For this reason, the bases for freedom in Islam differ from those of others.

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Islamic though is found in all countries that are guided by it in a comprehensive fashion, along with its laws and actions, and is considered "directed democracy," or the people governing themselves through those who represent their ideas, so that the general good of all will be represented.

2. The call to Islam went hand in hand with building the state, which required that the interpretations and methods of the appeal be mingled with those of the state. Many imagine that Islam fought for the sake of the appeal, but it really fought for the state that was based on the appeal, protecting the appeal and the state at the same time. This is what we call "the sovereignty of God represented in the sovereignty of the Islamic authorities on earth." This is what we should always emphasize in order to draw the line between them so that people will know the difference between sovereignty and the appeal.

3. Should Muslims declare war on non-believers whether or not they begin the war? Sunni and Shi'ite jurists have made ruling in this regard on the basis of verses commanding that polytheists be fought until they surrender to God and People of the Book until they pay a tax. The jurists differ on whether war should be declared once each year--"When the holy months have passed, kill the non-believers wherever you find them." They differ on whether it should be done after the holy months, or whether ability should be taken into consideration or whether the greater Islamic interest should be considered. "There may be more need if the enemy's strength is feared, or it may be left for 1 or 2 years if the Muslims are short in numbers or equipment or if there is some impediment or if their love for the practice of Islam is greater than their desire to fight."(17)

We believe that the issue is not clear in this way, for all we have is that jihad is within its legal requirements and cannot be considered fundamental. We may find that the foundation of Muslims' relationships with others is peace, under conditions allowing the realization of the results required by Islam and the Muslims. If peace brings about a position of weakness for Islam and the Muslims, then war is legitimized. This may be what the following verses tell us: "Permission is given to those who fight because they are oppressed." "Fight for the sake of God those who fight you but do not be aggressive." These and other verses legitimize jihad in accordance with the natural circumstances which demand it, making the issue look for justifying circumstances, rather than the other way around.

This may be what the verses that appeal for peace are telling us:

"Oh, you who believe, enter into peace whole-heartedly, and follow not the footsteps of Satan, for he is to you an avowed enemy." 2:208

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"But if the enemy is inclined toward peace, let you do likewise and trust in God." Al-Anfal (8:)61

"God does not forbid you with regard to those who do not fight you for your faith nor drive you out of your homes from dealing kindly and justly with the, for God loves those who are just. God only forbids you with regard to those who fight you because of your faith and drive you out of your homes and support others in driving you out, from turning to them. Those who turn to them do wrong." 60:8-9

"If they withdraw from you and fight you not, but send you peace, then God has opened no way for you to fight against them." 4:90

We believe that this cannot be interpreted precisely, because the issue arose within a specific context, like the verse that speaks of "after the end of the holy months." It is speaking of the polytheists who broke a treaty and tells Muslims to stop fighting during the holy months, allowing them to resume afterwards. The justification for the fighting was found in the war declared at that time between Islam and polytheism.

The verse "Fight the all polytheists as they fight you" directs Muslims how to fight. The verse about fighting people of the Book does not go into detail, for there is no reason the Qur'an cannot leave details for a later verse or saying by the Prophet, just as Islamic legislation gives the idea first, to set down a principle, leaving the details for writers and tradition.

Perhaps where some researchers, jurists and interpreters make their mistake is by looking at each verse in isolation and relying on unproven information. They speak of one verse abrogating another, where there is no possibility of this, making the people lose the total Qur'anic aspect of the legislation.

The true value of the Qur'an in these issues is the wonderful coordination that represents unity, so that each detail becomes part of the whole. We can understand the Qur'an only on this basis.

We find certain important jurists saying that the non-believers must begin the war because of the extreme persistence and urging of the Prophet before he would do so, citing his biography, particularly with regard to the army of Usama Ibn Azyd.⁽¹⁸⁾ We would like to make one basic comment-- the biography of the Prophet does not speak of the duty to begin the war, but does indicate that it was legal to wage jihad within the conditions at that time.

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All that we want to do is to voice reservations about the idea supported by many Islamic jurists that war is a fundament of the Islamic Shari'ah and that peace requires justification. The position closest to Islam is pro--perhaps that of considering peace fundamental and war an unusual case that requires justification. Or perhaps the issue of peace and war is subject to the interest of Islam and the Muslims, with neither being fundamental but the latter being unusual. Each is fundamental and necessary in its place.

In light of this, we have the right to refute the idea with which some Orientalists try to oppose Islam. They speak of the bellicose spirit of the leaders of Islam because of the legitimization of jihad to try to extinguish the continuing fires of war throughout the world, which never allow the world to find security or stability.

We can say that Islam is no different from any other religion that is not limited to regional or national areas, but extends throughout the world. It has an all-encompassing responsibility toward the life of man, separate from a spirit of conquest or control. In war and peace, it is subjugated to the general interest of mankind. The greater interest may dictate peaceful means for a belief to enter the life of man, or harshness may be the best way. Those in charge of planning for the acts of a belief must choose one or the other without fear and must carry out what they have chosen based on confidence in action in all cases.

Perhaps the story of the sovereignty of Islam imposing strength and severity arose from just this.

4. Muslim jurists have spoken about the peace between the Muslims and the non-believers and have disagreed--as is their wont--over the length of time. Was it limited to a specific time, or is it secondary to what is seen to be in the interest of the Muslims and Islam? Some say 10 years, and some say 20. Some say that it was not limited to a specific period. Each can back up his theory with the Prophet's dealings with the non-believers. We believe that the best theory holds that it depends on the greater Islamic interest. With regard to support from the acts of the Prophet, we have said that the time set by the Prophet for war and peace is not the final, legal word, but represents action subject to the interest of time, without being obligatory for Muslims except as a general principle. The jurists and legal experts say for this reason that the act indicates no more than permission, since this is its clear meaning, while other aspects are subject to the knowledgeable readers' interpretation of what is clear and what is hidden.

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Thus we find no legal objection to Muslims' taking the modern path followed by various countries in their thoughts and systems of government regarding treaties and truces which may be long-lasting and concluded because of unusual circumstances, in accordance with regional or national interests imposed by the political situation. If the interests of Islam necessitated this path, Muslims would have to go along. We do not take contemporary regimes as our basis for legislation, but the system of agreements legalized by Islam as a basis on which to deal with people, goods and honor during war and peace. The holy verse had decided this: "Keep agreements." The message is the same in other verses describing treaties that the Prophet was concluding with the polytheists and others. We do not intend to go into detail about ruling for jihad during war or peace, for there is not room in the scope of this book. However, we do want in this brief discussion to point out the legal flexibility of Islam, which is not restricted by any development in life and does not conflict with its broad precepts. We would also like to reply to the anti-Islamic theory that seeks to portray Islam as a local religion which arose from human thinking bound by its special environment. Legislation regarding war and peace exists within the context of the historical perceptions accompanying the age of the appeal and are inseparable from this context. It cannot be extended to other ages in history with different circumstances and perceptions of war and peace. We would like to understand the error of this way of thinking through this discussion so that we may reach a conclusion defining the fundamental precepts of Islam for legislation of all reasonable developments in life.

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Footnotes

- (1) Muhammad Husayn Fadhallah, Uslub al-Da'wah fi al-Qur'an (Means of the Appeal in the Qur'an), p. 101-103, second printing.
- (2) For more information, see our book Uslub al-Da'wah fi al-Qur'an, the chapter entitled "No Force in Religion," p. 134, second printing.
- (3) Sharh al-'Ayni, al-Bukhari.
- (4) Fath al-Bari, section 6, p. 85.
- (5) Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, section 11, p. 5.
- (6) Ibid., p. 9.
- (7) Bidayat al-Mjubahid, section 1, p. 389.
- (8) Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, section 11, p. 30.
- (9) Ibid., p. 31.
- (10) (11) and (12) Ibid., p. 34.
- (13) Muqaran al-Adyan, section 3, pp. 185-188.
- (14) Athar al-Harb fi al-Fiqh al-Islami (The Effect of War on Islamic Jurisprudence) (from al-Da'wah ila al-Islam) pp. 71-771.
- (15) Ibid., (from Hadarat al-'Arab (Civilization of the Arabs), pp. 76-77.
- (16) Uslub al-Da'wah fi al'Qur'an, pp. 157-163, second printing.
- (17) Missing
- (18) Jawahir al-Kalam, section 21, p. 49, sixth printing.
- (19) Ibid, p. 48.

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Chapter Eight

Change and the Logic of Power

1. Man is the Producer of Change
2. What are the Means of Change in Islam?
3. Can Religion Be Separate from the State?
4. Islam as a Call and a State
5. Is There a Contradiction Between the Shiite Ideology of the Mahdi and the Idea of State?
6. There is No Contradiction Between the Two Ideas
7. Change, by Amicable Means at One time, by Violence at Another
8. Islamic Revolutions Give Legislative Support to the Revolution Today
9. There is no Relation Between Infallibility and the History of Revolution in Islam
10. Did Violence End with the Completion of Al-Huseyn's Revolution?
11. The Imams Must Refute Deviant Movements
12. The Imams Sympathize with the Righteous Islamic Movements
13. Phases Governed by Expressions of Peace
14. Piety is the Exception to the Rule
15. Organizational Actions are a Safeguard Against Danger
16. Organizational Activity
17. Insertion and Position in the Hadiths
18. Forces Outside the Framework of Islamic Government
19. Marxism and the Idea of Change by Force
20. The Difference Between Islam and Marxism

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21. Change Does Not Disregard Islamic Morals
22. Islam Refuses to Accept Treachery

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Islam set out to change the external form of the world as a religion searching for the roots that tie it to reality and uprooting them by force in order to allow new roots to grow and spread towards a new reality.

1. Man is the Producer of Change

The Islamic concept of change was that it was not the product of unnatural circumstances, or factors imposed on man, paralyzing his ability to act. Rather, change came from natural circumstances that man can control, and that are subject to his will and choice within certain limits. Thus, it is derived from a position of will and choice, not from one of oppression and compulsion. Thus, man was, according to Islam, the producer of change because he represents the practical movement of life within the practical sphere of things. Koranic verses talk about the evil aspect of reality and tie it to human will, as in the following: "Corruption appeared on land and sea, and what the people have earned in the hereafter by their deeds, they will endure. But some who have worked perhaps they may return."

Thus, human suffering came from the practical choices manifested man's general and particular behavior on an individual and social level. For man creates his own suffering, because he created its natural causes in life by his own choice and will. The source of change in the individual is within him, in his thoughts and feelings, because thought and feeling determine his ideas and choices from which his opinions and actions stem. We may notice that reality generates an idea in man's mind, an image in his imagination, or a feeling in his heart. These are transformed into practical steps that embody the thought, image or feeling in the context of reality, with no difference between general issues--on the level of principles, desires or things--and particular issues--on the level of individual practices. The reality of life is the history of thoughts and feelings. Even those who consider reality the basis of thought, since thought reflects objective reality, are accustomed, after the generation of thought, to attribute reality to it in the following stage.

In the light of this, are the two Koranic verses:

"Allah does not withhold His favors from men until they change what is in their hearts." (8:54)

"Allah does not change a people's lot until they change what is in their hearts." (13:13)

This idea conveys to man: To change reality, you must change yourself from within by changing your ideas, thoughts, and feelings regarding the issues that you face, the things that surround you, or the people that live with you. Islam tried to give man an educational, flexible program, which directs the person with precision and consideration, and by means of which he is directed

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toward Allah with awareness and knowledge. On the basis of this, he should take general responsibility for his life and person by means of large concepts, and extensive, widespread legislation in every practical area. Intellectual change should be joined with practical change, and a new Islamic formulation of the idea of truth should be achieved for man.

However, if life begins from within, in the process of release and expansion, it also happens that the internal yields to the influence of external pressures from the environment and other sources, as a natural result of man's influence psychologically and intellectually on what occurs around him. Thus, Islam tried to surround the daily life of the Muslim with factors that would deter him from straying from the right and diminish the internal pressure from other sides. Thus, the Islamic orientation is towards the interior, in order to establish a psychological foundation in man, just as external deterrents are used as a means to protect and fortify this foundation.

This is the Islamic idea on the issue of change within the framework of a person's individual reality. Thus, we want to explain the methods of the Islamic call that emphasizes the establishment of its principles within man, in his thought and life.

The issue of change in social reality, whether in practical deviation under an Islamic organization, or an infidel organization that embodies practical and ideological deviation is tied to the issue of compliance and resistance, weakness and strength. It proceeds in a number of intellectual directions. The answer is found in one great question that places the issue in its natural framework.

2. What are the Means of Change in Islam?

What are the means of change in Islam when the matter depends on the implementation of Islamic control over reality in idea and application?

Does Islam think that the peaceful means that typify the Islamic call and its methods are founded on the satisfaction and tranquility that begin with the individual and end with society so that all of its individuals come to the word of Allah? The issue of organization and its control are a definite result of all this. These means represent, in a word, the good course, and a supporting or non-supporting position according to the determining conditions. Perhaps this is embodied in countries of a democratic or parliamentary nature, by their parliamentary means that express a democratic system and a unified legal method for the process of change by the vote of an absolute majority, leading to a majority of votes in the parliamentary council of the new, proposed system.

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Or does Islam believe in many of the revolutionary principles of violence and rebellion as the one method of change? We may, accordingly, make use of armed power, resorting to every element of popular influence, even anarchy, against corrupt governments controlled by evil forces, considering it a legal means by virtue of its general and specific results.

3. Can Religion be Separate from the State?

Perhaps we need, in seeking a precise answer to this question, to pose a second question that would determine for us the nature of the practical application of this religion, so that we may learn the nature of the religion's movement by its means and its goals. How does Islam proceed or does it proceed in life, as a religion to plan man's situations and movements? It does want to govern life in all times and places such that the law is its mission in life, along with the legislation within it?

Or does it proceed as a religion accompanying the person as an individual until life calls him to the Law, bringing to him every means of confidence in its results, without negative attitudes or problems, so he accepts it with ease? However, he may not be prepared because he is following it for the wrong reason; it appeals to him for patience and avoidance of everything that would hurt his life. Perhaps some people who still reject the signs of the separation of religion from state, or from politics, consider that religion has an importance that differs from that of the nation, and consequently, it is a different entity in its framework, concept, and application. The nation has its own idea founded on the legislative and executive organization of the people's life in its general and particular relations. Its applications are represented in the systems it uses for implementation by all possible means, by violence or flexibility, or a combination of both, according to different circumstances and needs.

As for religion, its idea is based upon worship of Allah with all that it involves in terms of rituals and specific practices, within the framework of spiritual concepts and the morals that purify man's soul and his behavior in all his relationships. Its practical applications are represented in Allah's call for wisdom, His exhortation for good deeds, and the argument that the best method is far from violence and from every material relation tying it to particular worldly matters in Law and life. Due to this, those rebelling against religious matters should not force other people, or oppose them for its sake, or compel them to sacrifice for its sake, even if the case is one of resistance to oppression and tyrants. This is evidenced in the Koranic verses that refuse compulsion in religion, and give a new aspect to the identity of the Prophet as a messenger, a warner, etc. This gave rise to the idea that words, not bullets, are the weapons of religion.

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It is said:

"There shall be no compulsion in religion. True guidance is now distinct from error. He that renounces idol-worship and puts his faith in Allah shall grasp a firm handle that will never break." (2:256)

"Say the truth from your Lord, for who so wants, believes, and who so wants, does not believe." (18:3)

"Your duty is only to warn them, you are not their keeper." (88:22)

"Your mission is only to give warning for every nation has its mentor." (13:8)

"Your mission is only to give warning; it is for us to do the reckoning." (13:40)

In the light of this, it may be seen that the religious scholars deviated from their religious mission when they entered politics, or when they resorted to power to oppose some of the political, social, and economic situations within the country. Their natural field is the mosque, not life.

4. Islam as a Call...and a State

But we have doubts about the position diametrically opposed to this opinion because Islam is a call and a state. From the intellectual standpoint tying it to the issue of faith and disbelief, it is a call, and Islam uses all its means of persuasion to give the religious concepts a position of power for man's intellectual and emotional satisfaction. In this framework, refined, gentle, and just methods are advanced, along with discussion of what is the best method, thereby evolving one method for this purpose.

However, from a practical viewpoint, Islam is a state governing the private, individual lives of people, as well as their general social lives in all its political, social, economic, military, and other aspects. It uses, in this framework, any methods that the good of the state requires, violence in a violent situation, and flexibility in a flexible situation, because that is the only way to maintain order and prevent anarchy. In this framework methods involving suffering, disruption, killing, imprisonment and other means of oppression and violence are advanced.

As far as the fact that Islam is a state, as well as being a summons, we see no reason to enter into its juristic details in our discussion. However, it is sufficient to point out that Islamic jurisprudence contains a complete, comprehensive system for life, taking into account the general needs of man in all areas to offer solutions for it, including a system for war, defense, and general domestic and foreign relations, which indicates Islam's legislative determination as a state. This is in addition to its implementation in the

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history of law so that we find no legislative gaps detracting from the complete establishment of the state.

We find the best way of presenting the idea of the necessity of an Islamic state, from a juristic viewpoint, is the analysis of Mr. Huseyn Al-Bar Wajardi, who examined the traditions of the Shiite Muslims in the 14th century of the Muslim era. He said, "There is no doubt for him who follows the laws of Islam and its regulations, for it is a political and social religion, and its judgments are not limited to the original, legal religious observances to be performed by the individual and to ensure happiness in the hereafter. Rather, most of its judgments are tied to municipal policies, the organization of society, and the ensurance of happiness in this generation. These include acts and policies concerned with ordinances, punishment, indemnity, judicial and legislative judgments to settle disputes, and the many regulations arising to ensure the funds needed to maintain the state of Islam, such as the one-fifth tax, the aims tax, and similar taxes.

For the sake of this the general public and individual agreed that the sphere of Islam must embrace a leading, managerial role in the regulation of Muslim affairs. Indeed, this is one of the requirements of Islam."(8)

It is said, on another subject, "It is no secret that municipal policy, the ensurance of spiritual efforts, and matters connected with the announcement of regulations and the guidance of Muslims, has been, from the beginning, involving a number of sects and their respective affairs. The Messenger of Allah regulated and managed the affairs of the Muslims. They came to him to settle their disputes, the regulations were announced to the states, and he requested the one-fifth tax, aims tax, and other monies. Thus continued the course of the Caliphs after him, the orthodox calips and the others, until the Commander of the Faithful, who undertook the command of the Muslims, and the demonstration of the regulations to the states. In the beginning, they worked with the political ministers in centers of instruction and guidance, such as the mosques. And the Imam of the mosque himself was like their commander. After that they built the gathering mosque near the office of the principality, and the Caliphs and the princes themselves managed the weeks and holidays. Indeed, they regulated the matter of the Hagg as well, so that the three religious observances contained political benefits not found in other holidays just as it was not concealed who was regulating them.

This mixture of spiritual efforts and political benefits was one of the distinguishing characteristics of Islam."(1)

Perhaps this interlocking or intermingling between the nature of the state and that of the Islamic call, or between the methods of a messenger and those of a ruler, leads in many situations to suspicions and misgivings, and to a division between religion and state, in the opinion of some researchers.

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5. Is There a Contradiction Between the Shiite Ideology of the Mahdi and the Idea of State?

Some people, regarding this opinion, may take a conservative position, or one of denial, by employing the ideology of the twelfth Shiite Imam. They believe in the missing Imam, "the awaited Mahdi", and think that the official control of the state should belong to the Imam or his personal or general representative. But if the Imam was missing, and he did not have a personal representative, by necessity he did not have a general representative having such absolute authority. Since there is no evidence of this, we must put the issue aside and be satisfied with the individual aspect of religion and not try to deal with its social aspect, except in the matters involving the avoidance of chaos, as far as possible. Perhaps they are relying on some incidents involving Imams from the family of the Prophet which they imagined or which inspired this idea.

6. There is no Contradiction Between the Two Ideas

However, we refuse to accept this, just as we refused the idea previously, based on the general evidence that determines the legislation of the state, as there is no difference in it between one time and another. We may understand from the need for order and a state in the time of the Prophet and the Imam that the issue does not depend on the presence of infallible leadership. Rather it is subject to life's need for a prevailing system to keep it safe from destruction and chaos. This is confirmed for us by the nature of the contents of the Sharia and its application to the general social aspects that enter into governmental policy and its administration. For, if we deny the idea of state, we have annulled all of these regulations, because we deny the legality of the existence of the basic condition for its survival and continuity. We cannot believe that Allah sent His messenger with extensive legislation to establish the foundations of justice in life. Moreover, this was restricted to brief period of time, since it was dependent on limited conditions and did not have widespread application. They thought that the establishment of a just, Islamic leadership, which was self-sufficient in knowledge, religion, and administration by the application of general regulations within an Islamic government was an unlawful agent when it punishes man just as it punishes any disobedience that constitutes an attack on the people's authority over themselves. If a legal ruler whips someone for drinking wine, he does so without justification, because the matter is not equivalent to the loss of legal authority which would justify this for him. We believe that the cause for such intellectual tendencies lies in the understanding of the texts or religious cases, which is an attempt to confirm a literal understanding of the text, apart from its general context, which might explain some of its details, as every text is tied to its circumstances and environment.

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In the book The Essentials of Language there is a commentary on this opinion adhered to be some people who refute delegation of the authority for the matter to the legitimate ruler during a time of absence by setting limitations and regulations among the people on general matters. He said, "It is strange how some people are suspicious of this. It is as though they had tasted the food of Islamic jurisprudence without understanding any of its words or symbols, nor contemplating its words 'I have made him to govern over you and judge you.'

From this came a desire for order in a time of absence so that they would be regulated in many recurring matters.. They did not empower them in the time of absence with some matters they knew they did not need, just as the holy war of the Islamic call required a Leader, armies, and commanders in which they knew they were limited. And the Companion said, "If I had a number of these disabled men, and they were forty in number, they would be destroyed. In general, then, the problem would emerge from the clear facts that do not require evidence."⁽²⁾

7. Change, by Amicable Means at One Time, by Violence at Another

Government must be unrestricted, and the state must exist, in any time or place. But what is the best method to attain this and to change a corrupt government to a just one, or change an infidel state to an Islamic one? Is this done by friendliness or violence, or both at the same time, each by taking into account its positions and circumstances?

We may affirm Islam's high estimation of friendliness, as expressed in the prophetic Hadith: "Kindness is what gives something its ornament and what elevates it to importance," and, "Allah grants to kindness what he does not to violence." It was the Prophet Muhammad's way to resort to a flexible method in everything, as far as possible, whether in the area of the Islamic call or of government, for he put off using a method of violence when kindness was possible. If gentle means failed, violence could then be used to obtain the solution to a problem, or to attain a goal, because violence has many individual negative aspects. This was the practical method used at the beginning and end of the call to Islam; it avoided war as much as possible, entering it only if compelled to by the enemy or by the nature of the general circumstances surrounding it.

The jurisprudence of the Muslims regarding the matters of good deeds and prohibition of the forbidden for the individual influenced the issue of resorting to violence, even killing, when control over deviation is restricted. Thus, they determined its legitimacy from the standpoint of principle, and they differed regarding whether or not the Imam's authorization was needed. The advocates of this justified the connection between legality and the Imam's

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authorization for individual behavior or for anarchy or chaos. We are inclined to confirm this, because we believe that general executive legislations do not reside in the sphere of independent, individual actions, but rather are subordinated to the total course of the state, as far as possible. This is perhaps similar to situations in other areas, for there must be a coordination that requires the authorization of the highest leaders for the higher good of Islam.

In general, regarding the process of change which is not safe from harm or danger, some scholars view the matter of good deeds and prohibition of the forbidden as a condition of protection from harm. However, others think that these conditions are subordinated in legislation to individual conditions within the system. General situations involve concentrating on the foundations, maintaining the Sharia, imposing order, and applying justice, so that there are no stipulations, no restrictions, and no errors in the legislation, as many conditions involve the possibility of danger, particularly in situations in which the Islamic call must deal with confrontation and response.

Some of the honored Hadiths concentrate on the separation of these regulations even in dangerous situations, as in the Hadith according to Imam Abi Ja'far Mohammed Al'Baqar, who said, At the end of time, the hypocrites who read and have recently become devout are incompetents who have nothing to do with good deeds or the prohibition of the forbidden, except if they believe they will be harmed. They make excuses for themselves. They adhere to the lapses of the scholars and to the corruption of their actions. They accept prayer and fasting, and whatever does not burden them or their finances. And if something is harmful they use their money and their bodies to refuse it, just as they refuse the highest religious duties and its honors. The matter of good deeds and prohibition of the forbidden is the way of the prophets and a program for the righteous; it is a great religious duty involving other religious duties, ensuring the orthodox rites, analyzing gains, and opposing tyrants. Thus, the earth will thrive and they will take vengeance on the enemy, and set matters right. But they deny Him in their hearts while they express piety and beat their brows. They are not afraid of Allah, and they become arrogant. But they will be brought to justice, for they have not means. 'However, those who oppress the people and desire the earth without justice, they will have the torment of pain.' They fight them with their bodies, and they hate them with their hearts, not asking for authority, nor wanting money, nor wanting oppression to be triumphant, until they return to the command of Allah and obey him."(3)

In the Hadith according to the Imam Ali in which Al-Tabri quotes Abdul Rahman Ibn Abi Layli, it is said: "I heard Ali say, on the day we met the people of the Sham, 'Oh you believers, they are our enemies and they refuse to be called to Him. To deny them in one's heart is a loss of security and innocence. He who denies them with his tongue is lost. He

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is the best of his companions who opposes the enemy with the sword so that the word of Allah is the highest, and the word of the oppressors is the lowest. This attains a peaceful course and preserves the way and the light in the certainty of his heart."

In the speech of the Imam Al-Huseyn where he left Mecca, he said: "Oh you people, I have not eliminated evil, arrogance, oppression, or corruption. However, I have eliminated the demand for reform in the nation. And, I want to command that which is good and prohibit the forbidden."

In his speech when he met Al-Har Ibn Yazid Al-Riyahi: "Oh you people, the Messenger of Allah said, 'A ruler who is unjust, seizing power unlawfully from the sacred precinct of Allah, diverging from the Suna of the Messenger of Allah, disloyal to his promises, and working in the service of Allah with misdeeds and hostility is not changed by words or deeds. Justice belongs to Allah when He enters within man, even if those people abandon the pious deeds of the Merciful, do the deeds of Satan, are preoccupied with evil, and ignore the law. I am more just than he who changes."

We notice in these texts an emphasis on the practical connection between good deeds, the prohibition of the forbidden and the comprehensive Islamic course in terms of change, particularly as seen in the first Hadith which expresses this legislation as the total principle on which all the general means needed for society to achieve its goals depend. Included in this is revolution against a corrupt situation or oppressive government within the framework of its application to the wisdom of Allah in everything. We may also notice in the third Hadith according to Al-Huseyn, the confirmation of the application of this principle as regards to the undertaking of revolutionary movements or reformations. Thus, the Imam Ali considered his struggle in Sofin against an opponent representing a deviant government to be a practical application of the principle of good deeds and prohibition of the forbidden. The Imam Al-Huseyn saw his rebellion against the deviant Ummayyad government as a manifestation of the process of change toward a just Islamic government.

8. Islamic Revolutions Give Legislative Support to the Revolution Today

In the light of this, we may understand the lawfulness of the Islamic revolutions in order to correct deviations in the shadow of oppression by means of combat which may lead to death and destruction, because they were not set in motion by any particular justifications tied to the specific information. We cannot, on the basis of this, consider it a legal support for our movement in ideal conditions; rather, its applications are derived from the nature of the general principles that govern every activity or movement. This activity is not silent, without expression or meaning; rather, it is one of the factors distracted by its justifications and legal positions, which gives these standpoints a comprehensiveness and

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and expansiveness. Thus, we may consider the indications, which were given in the wars of the Imam Ali and his son, the Imam Al-Huseyn, concerning the issues of war and peace, and greatness and dignity, as signs of Islam tied to general Islamic principles, not to personal authorization by the Imam just because he was the Imam, or agreed with some of the ordinances. We do not find this a firm basis for overall legal regulations. Rather, they are only suggestions which may be used to solve the dilemma which the ordinances may have fallen into in applying individual legal decisions for protection of the self, etc, or for general activities related to the life of Islam and Muslims.

9. There is no Relation Between Infallibility and the History of Revolution in Islam

Some people have tried to relate such movements to the issue of infallibility in situations involving a complete knowledge that safeguards its security in battle and the soldiers' lives. They advance, with this idea toward legitimate, righteous goals by legal means. They are not permitted to stray if they must go to battle, nor may they violate the law. They move within this framework, only with supervision or authorization. This did not prove to be correct according to what we have in the way of texts.

Moreover, we disagree with this thinking because the movements occurring under the Imams Ali and Al-Huseyn were not subject to unusual instructions or unclear planning. Rather, they evolved on the basis of planned situations, and calculations for war and peace, whether in circumstances that required entry into battle, or in military strategies for combat, or the legal principles set in motion in the field of battle. Thus, the results of combat vary according to the differing, objective circumstances that bring victory at one time, and casualties at another. The matter is not limited to the wars of the Imams, but applies to the wars of the Prophet, which were also subject to the natural conditions of war, the counsel for planning and implementation, and the differing results of victory and defeat. ON this basis, we do not find ground there to say that these cases were set in motion within a framework of infallibility. Rather, all that we can say of it is that there were a kind of confirmation and higher settlement due to the inspiration of the Prophet in some of the battles that needed it, as in the Battle of Badr. However, it was not so in all the battles, for we notice that a revelation came to the Prophet Mohammed after some battles had ended to reproach the Muslims for their behavior and deviations, as we see in the Battles of Ahad, Huneyn and Al-Zab.

IN conclusion, we would like to say on this subject, that it is within the ability of the ordinances to apply just generalizations to good deeds and prohibition of the forbidden in the legal determination of revolutionary movements and reforms by violent means, whatever their cost in casualties,

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while keeping to the general rules for planning and implementation to increase the possibilities for gain and success. We may also find in Islamic reform movements the applicable legal support in terms of general principles, which make us believe in the idea that justifies violence as a means of changing the government and its methods, or the ruler and his methods, in compliance with some of the precautions that we feel are necessary. The movement derives from a conscious leadership that has legitimacy of movement from the standpoint of the characteristics that must be abundant in a leader. Thus the government will have legitimacy by means of the juristic guidelines that we spoke of earlier in our discussion.

10. Did Violence End with the Conclusion of Al-Huseyn's Revolution?

Some people imagine that the issue of change by force ended with the conclusion of the Al-Huseyn's revolution, and the Imams of the Prophet's family began a peaceful period, with no opposition of the ruler. Rather, they made peace with him, and, not content with this situation, they tried to extend it to the lives of their followers and the Shiites. We find that some incidents begin with piety and end with opposition by the sword, and the issue is left for undetermined amount of time. He is inspired by hope, yet, he drowns in the fog of the unknown at the end, which makes the peaceful period extend for life's duration. Perhaps this negative thought keeps many people from an organized Islamic movement which considers wisdom its main goal. On the contrary, it impels some to resist partisan Islamic movements, if they live within the sphere of justice and are directed towards its goals, by considering them a cause of harm to the individual or collective Islamic situation. They consider piety a major element in practical behavior within the framework of a deviant government, and they require piety in the behavior and speech of the Imams, so as to give legitimacy to any Islamic movement whatever its type or whatever its practical goals are.

However, we maintain that this superficial opinion is built on improvisation, not on study and depth, and gives rise to a number of issues.

11. The Imams Must Refute Deviant Movements

A. The Imam's refusal to depart from a righteous judgment and give their support to some of the armed movements that were undertaken by some of the Alawites at that time was based on the nature of a leadership that did not take into consideration the welfare of the state as a Muslim concern, nor the profits from battle, so that they might not lose any religious capability, and consequently, legal rights. This made the issue, in their view, an issue between Abbassid judgment and Alawite judgment, as represented in some of the movements of Bani Hasan from their paternal cousins. This made the issue hopeless as far as the implementation of a just Islamic order, and the maintenance of forces opposing the government, so that their

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involvement in hopeless battles could not achieve any goal in the present future. Some discussions pointed out that the Imams had information or predictions that indicated negative results for those movements.

12. The Imams Sympathize with the Righteous Islamic Movements

B. The Imams support or sympathize with some of the movements or leaders that arise against a deviant government, as a result of their belief in its motives or the sincerity of its leaders regarding justice and true Islamic leadership, for the revolution is not for themselves but to destroy an oppressive power and to establish a just government, to tear down the powers of evil and build a power of justice. We see this in the positive attitudes of the Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq regarding the movement of Zaid Ibn Ali l'bn Al-Huseyn. He came secretly to Ayas Ibn Al-Qasim and said, "Hear that I am a servant of Allah," and Ja'far Al-Sadiq said, "May you be fortified by Allah. He has no equal. Look to yourselves as a man who has sheep to watch over, and who finds a man who knows more about his sheep than him. And if one of you struggles by himself to try it, then the other would remain working what was evident to them. But he has only one soul which would be lost, and he went to repent. And you are more just if you choose for yourselves what is coming next. Look at any thing you leave and don't say this is what Zaid deserves, if Zaid was knowing and truthful and didn't call you to him, but called you to be content with the family of Mohammed; but he left it to become a leader of society to refute it, leaving that day any thing that called him to be satisfied with the house of Mohammed. We witness for you that we are content with it but he defies us today, and no one is with him, and even if there were brigades and banners he would permit only for us to meet with the Bani Fatimah and him, and by Allah, you have only that which you can meet about...discussion." (4)

We have seen that the issue does not revolve around the nature of the movement and its legality. Rather it derives from the goals of the movements and their leadership that inspire, as do some other texts, the idea that is directed against some of the rebels in that era who have no qualifications for leadership.

All of this must be effectively refused in order for the Shiites to remain in a stable position which does not cause the membership of rebels to Imam Ali's movement, a part from its leadership and goal. Thus, we understand that refusal of the movement, and living in the establishment of the righteous, is an additional deterrent that was directed towards the demands coming from wayward leaders. On this basis, the movement was not prohibited if they were progressing along the path that coincides with that of the family of the Prophet under the shadow of leaders that satisfied them. Perhaps this was a warning to their companions in the movement by considering that the stage was not a phase of the movement if it did not

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bring a tangible, practical result. Or, perhaps it has dangerous results, like a loss of leaders among them, which would diminish Islamic intellectual expansion along the path of righteousness, and consequently the loss of Islamic origins in the life of Islam to a large extent. The correct change, in view of the establishment of righteousness, is the best practical stage for the success of the movement. It appears that this is fixed in the framework of the government of the Imams, not in that of groups whose course requires the bringing forth of new leaders.

13. Phases Governed by Expressions of Peace

C. It is clear from what we have presented that the nature of a phase governed by expressions of peace ordering calmness, stability, and lack of movement is not the nature of the message. It is not possible for the Imams of the Prophet's family to refuse a revolutionary movement against oppression in a time when their instructions, tendencies, and studies, for their followers, were directed toward a struggle with tyranny and the oppressors by negative means, by abandoning cooperation with them, by positive antagonistic means, or by establishing justice and destroying evil, even by the sword, just as we have seen in the examples we have offered.

14. Piety is the Exception to the Rule

D. The issue of piety is not one of the basic legislative principles that is characteristic of a natural, continuous, legitimate government. Rather is characteristic of an exceptional government which enters into the realm of practical necessities and are transmitted to others, on matters which would constitute a danger to the security of their actions, or those of the leader's representatives supervising the actions. However, the principle does not deal with the aspect of need, only with the aspect of authorization and excuses, in most cases.

15. Organizational Actions are a Safeguard Against Danger

E. The issue of partisan organizational actions, for Islamic powers, does not constitute a danger to the concept, that is, to struggle in the name of the defense of Islam. Indeed, we may find in it an element ensuring continuity of the present situation, in which infidel parties and heresies are multiplying. It appears to us that neglect of this aspect gives an opportunity for an amplified role of non-Islamic forces, and the diminishing of the role of Islamic components in life, because every period of time has its own method of working which corresponds to its social and political circumstances. The Koran focuses on the party of Allah and the party of Satan, as a phenomenon tying the forces of the faithful and those of the infidels one to another, as their connection forms parties out of the human groups. The means of connection differed in their characteristics according to various circumstances, as we have remarked.

Perhaps the practice of power, by a partisan organization, has the most influence and comes closer to the goal than any violent or non-violent factor

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that does not submit to the organic ties between the individuals in society, in view of their set instructions, united positions, and a shared, clearly-defined goal. This is what gives power, considering that it achieves a unity that ensures a progressive vitality in most situations and most directions, instead of a cloudy, emotional unity in which every person is neglected, along with his attitude and his methods of thinking and working that may differ from those of the others. We see this in the situation of Muslims whose loyalty the majority may not need, but they are needed for Islam's organization and concentration, and for the unity of its methods and goals. Otherwise, this would lead to a dispersal of capabilities, a weakening of forces, and a confusion of positions.

16. Organizational Activity in Shitte History

We were not far from the truth if we say the Shiites knew a kind of organization concerning the principles of leadership and designated positions, determining each person's role and responsibility so that it would not cross that of the others, overstepping or hindering them. We have read regarding the methods of organization of authorized representatives and their relations with various groups here and there, that they had a specific area for each representative in which the others could not interfere. This placed the issue of organization in a closely connected historical sequence.

As far as the activity of these organizations, and their movements in the direction of a deviant, corrupt or infidel position, they were subject to the general legislative regulations which might or might not authorize violence, whether it be the violence of combat or not, whether it lead to the possibility of danger, or not. Related to all of this is the matter of the necessity of the legal security of the movement. We will not discuss the details here because that is a subject involving various conditions in every situation. Rather we will discuss its principle and foundation as we have talked about the holy war, the Islamic call, and other aspects of the methods of working for the state and call of Islam.

17. Insertions and Position in the Hadiths

F. We will try and take a look at basic historic evidence, and that is that the issue of insertions and position in the Hadiths spoken by the Prophet, his companions, and the Imams, which assured or leaned toward a political situation on one hand, or a sectarian orientation, on the other hand, according to the political or sectarian membership of the narrators, or their interests in this faction or that. This causes an extremely careful wariness regarding the information given to people and what they were summoned to do, even in trustworthy incidents, because the writers may have used bad methods by having confidence in fabricated information. This was done by means of inserting their information into the books of those who

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were trusted by virtue of the tradition of their writing. This was done in spaces not yet written in those books that used the method of metaphor, which offered room for insertions, and the others did not pay attention to it. On the basis of this, falsifications passed through as authentic and were not identified. For this reason, it was necessary to yield, to a large degree, to the Hadiths calling for weakness and immortality, tranquillity and calm, protection of self and possessions, and surrender to a corrupt situation. This made the issues of power, the holy war, sacrifice, grandeur, dignity, the victory of Allah, and pursuing the right whatever the cost, a matter limited to a specific historical sphere and limited to certain persons. Some Koranic verses have been lost, an understanding of the vitality of the changing movements, and the transformation of the Muslims, just as they change now, like the sediment of a stream in which there is nothing to be gained for themselves or others outside of the movement as a whole. We would like to raise the possibility that the rulers in those periods tried to employ some of the narrators and writers who dealt with the Hadiths, and who sold the verses of Allah for a small price by altering the words in their place, or by inserting that which was appropriate to their political or sectarian interests or positions. Among these are the Hadiths that caution people, and dissuade them from thinking of revolution or criticism, and give their headquarters the sanctity of faith, whatever wrong they have done, or whatever their activity. For example, those who explained the verse: "Obey Allah, obey the Messenger, and the chief of command among you," claimed 'the chief of command' to be every ruler, not matter his characteristics, just or tyrannical. We would like to offer the suggestion that this could be a basis for research, criticism, and consideration. There is no way to confirm the effect of religious Hadiths on the movement in producing our Islamic ideas on existence and on life.

* * *

All of this is part of a discussion on the methods of change by force within the Islamic government if its leaders deviate from justice, or if its laws deviate from Islam. The result of research was a confirmation of the principle, along with general precautions that make the whole movement subject to the higher Islamic good. If the movement created some dangerous situations for Islam and the Muslims, it became legally forbidden as in the case of the presence of foreign or native enemies who exploited internal differences or revolutionary movements, to penetrate to the interior, to find an outlet for their own interests, or to seize control. Thus, as we have noticed in the actions of imperialism in weak countries, they take advantage of religious, sectarian, or political differences to enter the country, in the name of some factions or parties, so that they can colonize it in the name of goodness, civilization, and the restoration of order.

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This requires workers to be cautious about this, and not to give free rein to it, unless they study the situation with precision and comprehensiveness. Thus they support, if they can, counter reactions in a country under the control of infidels, in a time when they want to keep it on the right path. This was embodied in the Imam Ali and his position among the caliphs who promoted him, when they did not represent the legal position of the government, from the standpoint of justice, so that he would hold a supportive, assisting position. He rejected revolution and violence, afraid of exposing the general Islamic security to danger from the surrounding enemies. This is what is meant by the following:

"I am surprised by the way people throng around someone (Abi Bakr) to pledge allegiance to him so that he takes their hand if he sees the people have turned away from Islam and need to be told the truth about the religion of Mohammed. They are frightened that I won't rescue Islam and its people, if I see a rift or destruction, and those afflicted by it. In the passing of your state however, is the enjoyment of the few days that remain of it, just as a mirage remains, and gives new life in those days until evil is banished and passes away, and religion is secure."(5)

18. Forces Outside the Framework of Islamic Government

As far as the discussion of change by force outside the framework of the Islamic government, as in the case occurring within the framework of an infidel organization and its country, this is related to the discussion of the holy war and the different governments within it, and to the differences in the kinds of disbelief, such that one disbelief is affiliated with the Bible, and another may be tied to a polytheism. The nature of the internal activity from which the movement for Islamic power is derived paves the way for control of the country in a gradual way, beginning with its growth and support, so that the government will submit to its various methods. Believers in the Bible are subject to the conditions of their conscience and to the complex agreements between them and Islam, and the unbelievers not believing in the Bible are tied to agreements as well, but involved agreements must be forbidden with their people, and the use of force must not be used to change a complicated situation, unless they depart from the agreements, and violate the contract.

As for those who are not subject to an agreement or alliance, they assume an attitude of war and hostility. For Islam has to extend its control, and implements its laws and regulations, on the basis of its ideology and ideas, by its initial power, so that the Word of Allah becomes the highest, and the word of the infidels becomes the lowers.

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19. Marxism and the Idea of Change by Force

We come by means of what we have presented, to the difference between the logic of the power of change in Islamic legislation and its logic in Marxist thinking. We must first take a look at the Marxist idea of change. It is based on a belief in historical materialism, which subjected all of the changes and developments in history to the law of "historic determinism," as represented in the struggle of oppositions in things which impels the pace of history towards the development of relations of productivity which govern everything. Accordingly, a "revolution" which creates change is an absolute necessity imposed by the nature of things in the shadow of the objective conditions which are produced by the process of the struggle.

The author of the book, Studies in Society explains to us the nature of revolution in "historic determinism": "Revolution, in historic determinism, is a necessary element of the class struggle, when the struggle is derived from a necessary movement whose goal is to take possession of the means of government and to divest the class controlling the affairs of society of its use of the means that it employs to servie its goals."

Revolution does not just mean the formal substitution of government, as in an upheaval and rioting, but rather it means a decisive, total change in all aspects of the social structure.

Revolution in this meaning is an element of development, established in nature, just as it is established in society, and by which it completes the transformation toward a total growth deriving from the culmination of partial changes. This is what took place in Al-Juneyn, when the change made there reached maturity in the generation of the revolution of Al-Makhad. Or it may result in the hatching of a new life after its incubation is complete, and it has rebelled and destroyed its shell, just as water changes its state, when changes in its parts reach a maximum temperature and it suddenly reverses to a state of gas. In all of these cases, accumulation of changes, or quantity, lead to a specific change in the material substance. In society, when differences between social levels accumulate and reach an extreme limit, and control is in the hands of a small minority which is restricted by the interests of the established position, and the people become a large mass that has no place in the established position. Revolution occurs to achieve a change that will ensure the benefit of the majority, and the revolution is preceded by a decline in operation of the government and increased awareness and a gathering of a majority for the opposition. They cut off all connections between the government and the people, and widen the gap between them, since the government is not used to considering the benefit of the majority. Then revolution is undertaken to break up the government's position that has lost its equilibrium. They then set up a new position as opposed to the government which expressed the desires and interests of the

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enemy. Thus, the revolution upsets the position of the ruling minority that was unable to maintain it, and which oppressed the greater number of people who were no longer able to bear its corruption and its burden.

Class distinctions are considered one of the basic conditions giving rise to the class struggle that leads to social revolution. It raises class consciousness which makes the rising class feel, on one hand, that it equals the established position and must resist it, and causes it, on the other hand, to organize its ranks and mobilize its forces, determining its patterns and offenses to create a new position to complete its mission. Thus it is necessary for every revolution to have symbols of the class which will incite enthusiasm and inflame their souls and an effective revolutionary organization that structures the movement, determines its plans, and ensures victory over the established system. These means must be available to it even in the most extreme conditions of weakness, so that those remaining from the conventional troops are not able to conquer them with ease and facility. This revolutionary organization is necessary to penetrate all of the aspects of social life, so that they may enter into the apparatus of the controlling class, so that the citizen is not estranged from its forces, and so that they can attract to it everyone from the social classes, just as the revolutionary movement in France used the literary and aristocratic salons of the 18th century as platforms to call for its representatives.

Historical evidence indicates that revolutions are precipitated by social disasters, such as famines, wars, and defeats. These factors help spread the call to revolution, strengthen the spirit of discontent and rebellion, and bring hesitant and indecisive elements to the side of the revolution. Evidence also indicates that social revolutions are preceded by a period of internal unrest in which incidents of political assassinations, disturbances to security, destruction, riots, demonstrations, and other such incidents take place, which all together are evidence of tension in the social situation and the possibility of the outbreak of a revolutionary fire to extinguish its causes. In such situations, revolution takes place if its fire breaks out as a social affirmation uniting the nation and gathering its ranks under the banner of revolution, so that the forces of resistance fall apart with ease, and perhaps exceed everything that was expected and gain adherents of the previous position within the ranks of the revolution. Marxism believes that the proletariat is able to maintain control, even if it does not have the ability at the time, in terms of sufficient bases and administrative trainers able to organize the country. In that case, as Lenin says, we may seize control first, and then create the appropriate conditions for the development of the proletariat, following the course of advancement of the oppressors so that we may raise the cultural level of the workers' republic. For we have many foundations for leaders and administrators springing from the labor class.

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As far as the role of the parliament, Lenin says that: "The history of the revolutionary movement shows that parliamentary controversy is nothing but a training session and a means to help organize the controversy among the proletariat outside the parliament. The basic issues of the workers' movement, however, may be solved in the shadow of capitalism by force and the struggle between parliamentary republics directly, or by general strikes and revolution."(6)

(2) Lenin says in another text that the bourgeois revolution would not have been possible without the destruction of the apparatus of the bourgeois country by violence (Foundations of Leninism, p. 66).

Engels said in The Communist Manifesto: "Communists do not try to conceal their opinions, goals, and schemes, but announce openly that their goals cannot be reached or achieved except through the destruction of every traditional social structure by violence and force." (The Communist Manifesto, p.8).

Thus, revolution occurs decisively on the basis of the class struggle taking place due to opposition between the interests of the classes, and by means of the dialectic which governs the course of life and history. Thus, the role of the working class, if they achieve the conditions of the struggle or are precipitated toward it with all the influence they can gather, is to destroy everything they can and create chaos in every aspect of life.

Nothing is unlawful in order to obtain the basic goal realized by the process of transformation and development.

20. The Difference Between Islam and Marxism

Islamic thinking considers basically peaceful means for legal movement, in conditions that permit it, to achieve its goal or stages of the goal, because "Allah is a companion who loves kindness, and He gives to kindness what he does not to violence." If process of change leads to violence, he must pursue it, but not on the same basis which Marxism emphasizes. Islam does not consider that class struggle is the only factor which changes life and history, and accelerates the pace of development, because we do not believe in a theory that has only one factor, whether it is the economic factor, as Marx claims, or sex, as Freud claims, or society, as Durkheim claims. On the contrary, we believe that life encompasses many aspects and is subject to many factors in its developmental movement, and in its manifestations in the process of change.(7) Thus, the issue of change by force is not set in motion by the class situation, but occurs within the framework of all of the factors of the situation. By awareness, revolution achieves its identity in a movement that diminishes negative attitudes, and stimulates many positive attitudes.

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(A) This gives the revolutionary movement or Islamic reform a freedom of operation for it is not bound to a specific circumstance, not to a designated republic, only to objective circumstances that tie it to the interest of the movement and its reality, or the republic that protects it or that achieves harmony between idea and reality.

21. Change Does Not Disregard Islamic Morals

Reform movements in Islam do not disregard its morals and deep values, but keep closely to the broad Islamic course in all its steps, and maintain a realistic integrity, that does not inhibit movement, or stop it, because the morality of its practices is established within the bounds of the important principles that govern the law of competition in life. If a movement wants to defy some of the moral limitations, it is possible that the interdiction and prohibition may be lifted from those boundaries and things, if the security of the larger goal is involved.

22. Islam Refuses to Accept Treachery

Islam refuses to accept treachery or breaches of trust, including promises, unless others begin the betrayal or break their promise, or if it appears they will. Then he may act freely in business affairs because this releases him from his restrictions and promises.

(B) In this framework, the Islamic revolution becomes a humanitarian revolution because it consists of all the levels and groups of society and because the principles governing it embody human support in cooperation with reality, on one hand, and the value of man, on the other hand.

In summary, violence and non-violence as means of change go together, along with the greater goals of Islam in life. There must be a careful awareness of stages in terms of their relation to the goal and of the measures taken in relation to both the goal and its stages. The method of application and the movement must be subordinate to the moral, Islamic plan, within the framework of reality. Thus we may achieve security for the movement, in theory and application, so that there are few problems and many benefits in all its' aspects.

In a word, Islam did not derive its legislation for methods of change from a philosophy that related reality to violence, nor does it consider it basically in its practical idea of change. Rather, it came from a realistic philosophy that considers man the basic force in change. In this framework methods develop by means of man's realistic progress within himself and outside him, because man is not a rigid creature living in a rigid mold, but is a developing being with tendencies, movements, and influences that vary in flexibility and dynamism.

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Thus, friendliness may be the best method for the movement when the field is free from violent threats that would force a confrontation by violence, and violence may be the better method when the issue is a struggle involving confrontation by severe measures. This is the logic of reality in every practical experience, including the Marxist experience whose opinions on violence and flexibility varied according to the force or weakness of the opposing pressure. Perhaps this is what caused some of the large communist parties in France, Italy and Spain, to adopt a new theory that limited the method of change to revolution. They thought that the possibility of attaining this by democratic, parliamentary means in the western manner, based on the study of current evidence, did not permit the revolutionary method based on Marxist thinking, particularly in Europe whose thinking on the methods of implementation of an idea was not in keeping with the idea that man's position, as an individual and in society, is not based on his contentment and personal will. We may find in the promotion and growth of this idea, a great indication of the realistic Islamic awareness of its working methods, capabilities, and goals in life.

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Footnotes

- (1) Al-Badr Al-Zahir in the Friday Prayer and the Traveller's Prayer, page 22-23.
- (2) The Essentials of Language in the Explanation of Islamic Laws, Vol. 21, p. 397, Sixth Edition.
- (3) This is the opinion of the late Mr. Mohsan Al-Hakim, one of the examiners of the Shitte Islamic tradition in this age. He answered the following question:

"In your practical message in the cahpter calling for good deeds and prohibition of the forbidden, if it does not harm the person or his property, we think that the upright believers have commanded the doing of good deeds and prohibition of the forbidden, in the face of what they endure from the forces of evil and error, so is this activity of theirs incorrect?

Answer:

The conditions of good deeds and prohibition of the forbidden that we have mentioned and that Islamic jruisprudence deal with, are the conditions of the recognized prohibitions such as forgetting prayer, drinking wine, or taking money from people, or such things. This is not the basis of religion or the essence of Islam. As far as prohibition of things on the basis of religion, this requires struggle and sacrifice in order to maintain the principles of religion and its foundations, just as the holy war requires many ages and places to maintain the essence of Islam and the existence of the religion. These upright believers undertake sacrifices and what comes from the forces of evil or error of this type. (Taken from the book Waiting for the Imam by Abdul Hadi Al-Fadli, p. 142 footnote).

- (4) Missing
- (5) The Method of Rhetoric, p. 451.
- (6) Abdul Fatah Ibrahim, Studies in Society, p. 272-4.
- (7) The Foundations of Leninism, Stalin, p. 23.5.

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Chapter Nine

Relation Between Power And Faith

1. Faith and Power
2. Battle of Badr and the Cause of Faith

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1. Faith and Power

Some people say about progression and regression, victory and defeat of the Islamic movement in life: "We did not win, because we lost faith in God and in our mission, and the others won their battles against profanity because they started their struggle based on faith."

Many think this is a simplistic and naive explanation. We are with those who reject this view as a general explanation, but we support it from a different standpoint based on the following remarks:

1. How do we explain the pagans' victory in some battles if faith in God was everything in the battle and in life.

2. How do we explain the Muslims' loss of some of the battles fought under the wise leadership of the Prophet Muhammad whose faith in God was at its strongest, as happened in the battle of Ohod that was lost by the Muslims after a winning start, even though faith was abundant at the base at the leadership levels.

3. The question of victory and defeat in life depends on logical elements related to the nature of the battle such as the weapons used, the quality and quantity of fighters, the leaderships, the political circumstances, the military strategies and the geographical and regional conditions which govern its path. Based on God's universal laws which tie causes to consequences and actions to reactions, all these elements affect the battle whether the outcome is regression or progression, victory or defeat. Many Qur'an verses call for readiness and for getting all the elements necessary for success. These verses also describe the defeat and decline of nations and the pains and suffering endured by societies living under corrupted rule. As His holy words say: "Mischief has appeared on land and sea because of the need that the hands of men have earned that God may give them a taste of some of their deeds: in order that they may turn back from evil." 30/41.

And His holy words say: "When we decide to destroy a population, we first send a definite order to those among them who are given the good things of this life, and yet transgress, so that the word is proved true against them, then we destroy them utterly." 17/16.

To put this case in proper perspective, we observe the following points:

1. Faith in God gives the human being an immense spiritual strength. This feeling of strength links the human being with the Greater Force which gives him the feeling of protection from any other force. Hence he will have the spiritual freedom from any submission to any human power regardless of its magnitude.

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2. Faith in God defines the goal for the human being and gives him religious and moral appreciation of his goal. This prevents him from using war for pillage, loot or rape.

3. Faith in God requires the fighters to be true for the cause of war, by preparing all necessary means and providing all the elements to win the war, as said in the following glorious ayat: "Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into the hearts of the enemies of God and your enemies." 8/61.

Also preparing a total strategy as His holy words say: "...and fight the pagans altogether as they fight you altogether." 9/37.

And His holy words say: "You who believe fight the unbelievers who gird you about." 9/134.

Faith requires total dedication in battle to the extent of martyrdom, regardless of the battle's direction toward victory or defeat. A clear witness to that is the glorious ayat which considers retreat a great sin, punishable by the wrath of God and by the flames of hell as His holy words say: "You who believe, when you meet the unbelievers in hostile array, never turn your backs to them. If any do turn his back to them on such a day unless it be in a stratagem of war, or to retreat to a troop of his own he draws on himself the wrath of God, and his abode is hell, an evil refuge indeed." 8/16-17.

4. Faith in God makes the believer a winner in either victory or martyrdom. In martyrdom he will go to heaven, and in victory he will receive the blessings of God in life and in heaven thereafter, as indicated by the following glorious ayat in a discussion between believers and atheists: "Say, can you expect for us any fate other than the one of two glorious things Martyrdom or Victory? But we can expect for you either that God will send His punishment from Himself, or by our hands. So wait expectant, we too will wait with you." 9/52.

Therefore faith becomes an active element which guarantees victory for the human being and provides the society with new forces of good in life.

In light of the above, it is not enough to say; we should only have faith to win the battles of the present time. But we have to say that our faith will require us to prepare for the battle and to victory through our understanding of faith. We should link ourself through faith with God, the supreme force to obtain victorious results through his protection in difficult and surprising situations. The loss of faith affects the roots of the battle, because those who fight the battle from a particular view or a different political affiliation, will lose their motives to fight and will lose the

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cause to go to war when their hearts get emptied from faith in God. The main cause becomes absent from their minds, hearts and lives. And we do not have a new cause to adopt that will fill the soul and the mind as do others who have specific causes in their battle with us.

The conclusion is that the relation between faith and strength is represented by the role that faith plays in giving the battle a new and basic force which added to other forces will provide a total and complete force that will lead to victory. Hence the absence of faith will lead to a battle without soul and without life.

2. The Battle of Badr and the Cause of Faith

Some might say that victory achieved by Muslims in the battle of Badr proves that force is not everything, as Muslims were in a weak position lacking money, men and weapons, while the "Mushrikoom" were in a very strong and well equipped position.

Our answer is that: When we speak of the role of physical force in achieving victory in a battle, we do not ignore the important role of psychological forces and God's goodness that surrounds the fighters and give them a new spiritual and uplifting forces, which strengthen their positions, and determine the direction of the battle toward victory. A single soldier with high spirits and morale can defy a group of soldiers psychologically defeated, because high morale yields magnified physical strength.

God told us amply about the spiritual climate in which the Muslims lived during the battle of Badr. Also about the important role the glorious Qur'an played in strengthening them spiritually, and in eliminating their fear and weakness in front of the huge military force of the polytheists and pagans who surpassed them in weapons, equipment and money. The Lord said: "Remember you implored the assistance of your Lord, and He answered you. 'I will assist you with a thousand of the angels, ranks on ranks'. God made it but a message of hope and an assurance to your hearts, in any case there is no help except from God and God is exalted in power, wise.

"Remember He covered you with a sort of drowsiness to give you calm as from Himself, and He caused rain to descend on you from heaven, to clean you therewith, to remove from you the strain of Satan, to strengthen your hearts and to plant your feet firmly therewith.

"Remember thy Lord inspired the angels with the message 'I am with you'. Give firmness to the believers, I will instil terror into the hearts of the unbelievers, smite them above their necks and smite all their fingertips off them." 8/9-12.

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And also said: "God had helped you at Badr, when you were a contemptible little force; then fear God; thus may you show your gratitude."

Remember the say to the faithful: "It is not enough for you that God should help you with three thousand angels specially sent down?"

"Yes if you remain firm, and act right, even if the enemy should rush here on you in hot haste, your Lord would help you with five thousand angels making a terrific onslaught.

"God make it but a message of hope for you, and an assurance to your hearts. In any case there is no help except from God, the exalted, the wise. That He might cut off a fringe of the unbelievers or expose them to infamy, and they should then be turned back, frustrated of their purpose." 3/124-127.

We notice from these ayats (verses) that during the time of this battle, Muslims had high morale, because of their feeling that they are fighting with God's strength and under His immediate protection which provided them with tremendous unseen powers that gave them a magnified energy and self confidence to achieve final victory. He says in another ayat discussing the high morale of Muslims before and during the battle. They estimated properly the size of their polytheist and pagan enemy because of a vision that the Messenger Muhammad had. While the polytheists and pagans underestimated the believers strength and numbers which led to their defeat.

"Remember in your dream God showed them to you as few. If he had shown them to you as many, you would surely have been discouraged, and you would surely have disputed in your decision, but God saved you, for He knows well the secrets of all hearts. And remember when you met the enemy, He showed them to you as few in your eyes, and He made you appear as contemptible in their eyes. That God might accomplish a matter already enacted for to God do all questions go back for decision." 8/43-44.

Other glorious ayats inspired the Prophet Muhammad and gave him a spiritual plan to heighten the morale of his soldiers by stressing the importance of patience and determination which gave them a magnified force by a ratio of ten to one. However, if the Muslim cannot increase his level of patience and determination to the fullest, he will still be in favorable position by two to one which increases his fighting strength.

"Apostle! rouse the believers to the fight. If there are twenty amongst you, patient and persevering, they will vanquish two hundred. If a hundred, they will vanquish a thousand of the unbelievers. For these are a people without understanding. For the present, God has lightened your task for He knows that there is a weak spot in you. But even so, if there are a

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hundred of you, patient and persevering, they will vanquish two hundred, and if a thousand they will vanquish two thousand, with the permission of God. For God is with those who patiently persevere." 8/65-66.

We should not ignore other elements that helped the Muslims win the battle. But it is mainly the spiritual attitude of the Muslims who felt that they were fighting for a cause and considered themselves soldiers of God, tied to His will and linked to Him by love, obedience and faith. At the same time they were avenging themselves from the oppressive atheists and polytheists who persecuted their brothers and their families; this introduced to the battle a personal character in addition to the religious mission which gave it a general character. All this took place in a sacred spiritual atmosphere, while the atheists were fighting without cause, except for materialistic ends which were without any spiritual meanings.

The conclusion we draw from the battle of Badr is that logical reasons exist behind victory achieved by Muslims. These are inner reasons that strengthened their concentration and their spiritual attitude, and exterior reasons related to the conditions of the atheists. Finally, we should mention that the basis of everything is God who created life in its appearances and aspects, all subject to meticulous universal laws that determine their motion, time, location or action that all fit into a pattern which makes life achieve a wise end as His holy say:

"Verily, all things have we created in proportion and measure". 54/49.

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Chapter Ten

Morals of Power and Morals of Weakness

1. Morals of Power and Morals of Weakness
2. Morals of Masters and Morals of Slaves According to Nietzsche
3. Discussion of Nietzsche's Concept of Morals

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1. Morals of Power and Morals of Weakness

Islam and other religions believing in a supreme being call for good morals such as forgiveness, patience, humbleness and charity. We find in some ayats that God prefers these morals to the other violent attitudes and qualities such as revenge and punishment. In these glorious ayats:

"And if you do punish them, punish them no worse than they punish you. But if you show patience, that is indeed the best course for those who are patient." 16/126.

"The recompense for an injury is an injury equal thereto in degree, but if a person forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is from God. For God loves not those who do wrong." 42/37.

"If you forgive, it is the nearest to righteousness." 2/237.

Thus, Islam calls for forgiveness and friendship rather than war and violence. Moreover, christianity calls for forgiveness and peace with the aggressor as basis for a virtuous life. As said in Matthew 5:9: "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

Christ also said in Matthew 5:21-22: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Ra'-ca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."

Christ also said in Matthew 5:38-44: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist no evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

"And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

"And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

"Give him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy.

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"But I say unto you love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you."

Are these morals of power or morals of weakness? And is forgiveness and peace compatible with the call of the Qur'an to fight the enemies of Islam?

To answer that we have to define the true concept of power and of weakness.

Some might think that power means violence, fighting and revenge. And weakness means pacifism and forgiveness, but is it so? We do not dismiss that courage and will to retaliate are aspects of power in materialistic life. However, these are not always practical aspects of power, as they could be considered weaknesses in some instances, if we look in depth at all the circumstances involved.

Power is present in several domains and under various aspects in life.

In the military battle, we see power as determination, military know-how, physical training and other elements that lead to victory. Also weakness is seen as retreat, defeat and poor resistance. In some cases retreat can be seen as an aspect of power and not of weakness, depending on the military strategy. This is the most common aspect of power known to people, because of the many wars that took place in the history of their nations. These wars and battles affect individuals, who often accept the military manifestation as the only aspect of power, and shape their conception of power.

In the intellectual battle, we see a struggle of an idea against another in order to convince someone or to subject him to a certain conviction. In this case, strength manifests itself in the power of conviction, power of proof and of argument, style and words used to express a certain meaning.

Also knowing the weak points of one's idea and the strong points of the opponent's idea is an aspect of power, because this will help steer the discussion toward winning this intellectual battle. Being unable to prove a point or an idea by strength of argument, proof and others, and resorting to shouting, threatening and interrupting is definitely a sign of weakness, which bears no value in the intellectual battle.

There is also the political and social battle between groups of individuals. In this battle, the fighting parties try to crush each other's position and status. In this situation using peaceful and non-violent means such as silent marches, hunger strikes ... is an aspect of power, as these means will stand up against oppressive and imperialistic regimes to achieve the desirable change, which is unobtainable by military force and actions.

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Using force and violence to confront the ruling regime is an aspect of weakness and a suicidal action, as this will give an excuse to these regimes to use their superior military power and totally crush their opposition. Therefore, it is an aspect of strength to restrain from responding to defiances and challenges put forth by these regimes. Self restraint, patience and suppression of one's emotions of anger and frustration is never a sign of weakness. This attitude of self-control eliminates all emotional encounters with the ruling regime and provides for rational and logical thinking and planned actions which lead the movement to the sought political or social change.

We can now differentiate between morals of power and morals of weakness by differentiating between power and weakness. Also, we have established that violence is not power and pacifism is not weakness. Patience is an aspect of strength because it gives the human being the power to endure pain, humiliation, hunger, and losses in the battle. Also patience gives the human being the power to restrain his emotional behavior and thus provides for rational thinking and planning for the battle. In war and in peace patience is an element of inner strength as in God's Holy words about patience in the following ayats:

"And bear with constant patience, for this is firmness of purpose in the conduct of affairs." 31/17.

"For those with patience, and those who forgive, for this is firmness of purpose in the conduct of affairs." 43/43.

In another ayat, patience is considered the foundation of strength that supports us in depression and humiliation. As in God's Holy words:

"How many of the Prophets fought for God, and with them fought large bands of Godly men? But they never lost heart if they met with disaster in God's way, nor did they weaken in will nor give in. And God loves those who are firm and patient." 3/146.

The Imam Jaafar Al-Sadek considers patience to be the foundation of the inner human freedom which is the spirit of freedom.

He said: "The free is always free, even in prison, misery and under oppression."

Forgiveness, pardon and other similar virtues in Islam are a moral and spiritual strength.

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Refraining from revenge after being attacked, and suppressing one's feelings of retribution or punishment is a great moral strength. Forgiving instead of punishing is considered a great virtue in Islam, as mentioned in the glorious "Hadith" by the Prophet Muhammad: "Forgiving gives us virtue, therefore forgive and God will love you."

The teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ are similar to Islam. He spoke of the great spiritual value of forgiveness as a great virtue that requires self-confidence and moral strength which lifts us to higher spiritual levels and eliminates our feelings toward using violence. Also, the Lord Jesus Christ accepted violence as a last resort to achieve justice as in Matthew 10: 34-39 "Think not that I have come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace but a sword. For I have come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

And in St. Luke 12: 49-51 "I have come to send fire on the earth and what will I, if it be already kindled?"

"But I have a baptism to be baptized with: and how am I straightened till it be accomplished!"

"Suppose ye that I have come to give peace on earth? I tell you, nay but rather division."

We can conclude that Islam and Christianity have similar conception of strength and non-violence and they both advocate a balance between strength as an instrument to achieve justice and non-violence as a means to spread love, toward a fuller, holier life.

Exploring Arrogance and Modesty

Is modesty an aspect of weakness and arrogance and aspect of strength?

The opposite is true as Islam considers modesty a sign of strength and arrogance a sign of weakness. Modesty reflects self-confidence. A modest person has a good understanding of himself, his qualities and his flaws, his strengths and his weaknesses. He always feels that he can strive for better qualities and higher ideals, and thus displays a natural behavior and a positive attitude toward others.

Arrogance and vanity and other feelings of superiority are the result of poor understanding of ourselves. Also, they stem from fear of other people's strength. All this creates a feeling of inferiority and constant anxiety that distorts the normal behavior of the human being and pushes him to imagine himself a great achiever with superior qualities.

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In the noble "Hadith" the Prophet spoke of modesty. He said: "Modesty dignifies the human being; be modest God will forgive you." Also the Imam Jaafar Al-Sadek spoke of arrogance. He said: "No arrogant man but vileness in his soul."

From many famous quotes we find that the oppression of poor and weak people is a sign of weakness and not of strength. A strong person has no fear whether he is governing or governed. He does not feel the need to oppress people. On the other hand, a weak person oppresses people as a means to fight against his fears, thus weakening them by his oppression which makes him feel secure. As expressed by the Imam Zein Al-Abideen: "I know that there is no oppression in your rule, as oppression is a sign of the weak."

2. Morals of Masters and Morals of Slaves According to Nietzsche

It may be necessary to take into consideration Nietzsche's conception of the morals of power and of weakness. As a great European philosopher of the nineteenth century, he established the idea that sets violence as a criteria for morals of power and non-violence as a criteria for morals of weakness. He called the morals of power morals of masters and those of weakness morals of slaves. In his book "The Moral Philosophy", Dr. Rafeek Taweel spoke in details about Nietzsche's conception, we quote: "The morals of slaves are the morals of the poor and helpless and they are the majority. They have patience, modesty, humility and other Christian weak traits, which priests have learned to use to their advantage by becoming more authoritarian. Contemporary scientists have accepted these values and replaced God with science, they magnified the importance of equality, freedom, democracy and other similar illusions.

The morals of masters give the human being authority and power. He becomes proud of his power and disdains weakness and forgiveness. He respects rudeness and likes frankness. He hates cheating, lying and compromising. He likes victory in battles and he wants to defeat his competitors and walk over their bodies without any mercy.

But slaves revolt against the values of masters and they replace them with different values that fit their conditions. The values of masters meant force, adventure, power, courage, and other similar positive traits and the values of slaves meant humility, modesty, pacifism and other weak negative qualities. The slaves' hatred for their masters and their desire for revenge resulted in switching their set of values with their masters'. Thus weakness, non-violence, obedience, patience, modesty ... etc. became virtues, because the slaves were unable to rebel but obey, unable to react but be patient, unable to achieve but be humble. Nietzsche added that the values of slaves contradict the laws of nature. If it is natural for the

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weak to perish, then the slaves must provide help and hospitals for the weak. If it is natural to retaliate, slaves must be patient and obedient, and not revengeful. If it is natural to have classes in the society, then the slaves must not be envious and call for equality. They also possessed other meeker values that the Jews displayed under the oppression of the Romans. By their shrewdness the prophets managed to establish the values of the humiliated slaves as the human moral values; thus, poverty became virtue and wealth became evil. Thus Nietzsche's ideal was based on the use of strength to defeat others, egotism, rudeness, self-assertion to achieve individual happiness and to strive for becoming the 'Superman'. Through survival of the fittest, we reach the 'Superman' who wants to submit others to his will and wants his life to be a constant adventure and a constant battle with his competitors. Humanity errs when it helps the feeble and the meek and does good when it promotes those who have strength. It is wrong to rely solely on nature to achieve this selection process; therefore, it is necessary to educate the generations and to make marriages a mean of purifying the progeny and not only a means of conception, by rejecting love as basis of marriages, instead by matchmaking the best girls with the best boys.

3. Discussion of Nietzsche's Concept of Morals

We wrote the following:

1. We have seen that Nietzsche did not understand the values pertinent to the morals of slaves.

Weakness is not a virtue, but strength that enables the human being to realize himself in life is a virtue. Strength is something and violence is something else. Strength is a virtue when we choose non-violence to violence and doing good instead of harm. It is a virtue when we obey, and we do so because we are mature and responsible and because we stand up to our convictions and understand our obligations and needs. Obedience does not mean humiliation and submission, it is a responsible action with which we assert our capabilities and personality. Patience is an element of strength, otherwise we cannot explain how the masters endure losses and violence from their competitors and opponents.

Also, the patience of the slaves is a sign of strength because they can retribute but choose not to do so. Modesty is not what he said. It reflects self-confidence and shows that a person has a good understanding of himself, his qualities and his flaws. Modesty motivates us to strive for better qualities and higher ideals, thus we display a natural behavior and a positive attitude toward others which help us earn their respect.

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2. Nietzsche's concept of morals is based on the materialistic power of the masters which the slaves did not have. However, the real strength is the moral inner strength which the slaves had. And it is this moral strength that gave them the power to revolt against their masters and to take over; otherwise, they would have lost their determination to reach their goal and their fate would have been a defeat.

Through history, we can establish that the "strong masters" lived in a moral and spiritual vacuum, and they derived their strength from their money, weapons and power, while the "weak slaves" had inner strength which they filled with life and action.

3. The evaluation of strength in the context of violence defeats the purpose of using strength in life to achieve progress, because strength does not manifest itself in violence but in the motion of individuals and groups who give life an inner power that propels it to new horizons of justice and progress.

4. The pains endured by the individual and the society, because of their good non-violent morals, are much greater than the pains endured by the powerful individuals because of their morals of violence. This greater pain endured by the society and the individual is impossible to handle without strength. Physical strength such as muscular strength and weapons is not everything in the cause of human progress.

5. It is pitiful to accept the killing of thousands and millions of people who have the intellectual strength but no physical strength or beauty such as philosophers, scientists, politicians, leaders and others as means of purifying the progeny through the marriages of the best physically fit boys and girls. This can never lead to the progress of human life.

Footnotes:

1. The New Testament, p. 13.
2. Ibid, p. 14-16.
3. Ibid, p. 34.
4. Ibid, p. 36.
5. Dr. Tawfeek Tawil, The Moral Philosophy, pp. 231-234.

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CONCLUSION

1. The Strength We Want
2. Educating for Strength

1. The Strength We Want

Islam wants us to be strong to achieve two goals:

1. To allow the nation of Islam to reach its goals through its strength and by relying on force and resources to protect these goals.
2. To prevent war, by building a strong military defense that will deter the enemy and force him to think seriously before making any move. Military force should be superior if possible or at least equal to the enemy's force. Military build-up should establish a continuous balance that will create a deterrence for the enemy, because aggression happens when the aggressor believes that he can win the war. The balance of forces creates a deterrence that makes aggression an act of suicide. Strong nations are pursuing today an arms race to prevent a war. They are researching and building new weaponry and new spying systems such as satellites that follow and detect the enemy's movement and equipment. In addition, they have created a network of human spies that can see, hear and analyze what these sophisticated machines cannot do.

These two goals are mentioned in the glorious ayat about strength in Islam and requires Muslims to be strong to defend Islam and themselves. It says: "Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into the heart of the enemies, of God and your enemies ..." 8/61.

We notice when we read this glorious ayat the importance of the sentence "to the utmost of your power." This ayat requires the nation of Islam to get ready, to its fullest extent, for the war regardless of all imaginary goals and of practical unexpected obstacles which we can overcome by our quick and intelligent actions. If the nation cannot be fully ready, then it must be ready to the extent allowable by the prevailing conditions. The nation should be ready even if the enemy's force is superior, because any force achieved by the nation will weaken the enemy and delay his progress. However, readiness for the war should not be a temporary action. It should be achieved in a constant path, regardless of the failures or the successes attained, and regardless of the ability or inability of the nation. Weapons are not enough to achieve the required strength, because the struggle or war between Islam and its enemies is more than a military struggle. The enemies of Islam are

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fighting us politically, culturally and economically to weaken our military power. A poor economy does not provide enough resources to buy or develop weapons, and a politically divided people weaken the nation's resolve and determination to succeed.

In order to achieve victory, we should rely on scientific and educational strength. Through education we can cultivate the minds and develop the necessary technologies to build our own weapon systems and be militarily self-sufficient to gain victory.

However, to produce the necessary weapons we need the economical resources such as raw materials and other resources. Political strength is necessary to rally people behind the idea of acquiring the necessary resources to build the needed weapons. We should not compromise on our principles and basic beliefs in order to acquire the strength needed. Also, we should not make any concession that affects our faith and ideology. However, we should exploit fully and totally the resources and energies we have, develop them and use them to serve us and achieve our goals in life. We should not let these resources get into the hands of our enemies who will use them against us and humiliate us, as we see today in the case of oil resources found in the Muslim world. Some imperialistic groups try to use our resources to control us and pressure us and harm our national interests.

Strength is not being enthusiastic or emotional. It is rather a process of thorough thinking, planning, training and controlling our emotions to reach our goals despite the defiances, challenges and pressures set before us. As said in the noble Hadith by the Prophet Muhammad: "A strong man does not lose his temper, rather he stays calm and rational when angered."

Anger weakens the person's determination to surmount the obstacles encountered in the battle. When a person loses his temper, he loses his rational thinking which he needs to direct the battle toward victory. Therefore, the person who controls his temper and suppresses his emotions will use his strength in a more logical and efficient way that leads him to win the battle.

If strength is to protect our goals in life, then we should not seek strength from those who try to destroy these goals. The cooperation of some people with the imperialists in order to overthrow a political regime is wrong. As we have seen in the cooperation between the Arabs and Great Britain to end the Ottoman rule, which led to the replacement of the Ottomans by the oppressive British and French colonialism under a mandate. When we seek help from political parties or organizations, we should deal with them in a balanced way in order to stay independent and free. Otherwise, we will be under their mercy and oppression subjected to realizing

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their goals and objectives, without deriving any benefits to our cause. The glorious Qur'an warned us from surrendering to the enemies of God as in God's holy say: "You who believe! Take not into your intimacy those outside your ranks: They will not fail to corrupt you. They only desire your ruin: Rank hatred has already appeared from their mouths: What their hearts conceal is far worse. We have made plain to you the signs if you have wisdom." 3/118.

"Ah! You are those who love them but they love you not: Though you believe in the whole of the Book, when they meet you they say 'We believe.' But when they are alone they bite off the very tips of their fingers at you in their rage. Say: 'Perish in your rage; God knows well all the secrets of the heart.' 3/119.

"If aught that is good befalls you, it grieves them; but if some misfortune overtakes you they rejoice at it. But if you are constant and do right, not the least harm will their cunning do to you; for God compasses round about all that they do." 3/120.

We cannot trust those who do not adopt our ideology, and we should not ask for their assistance, because their help will not be based on their belief in our cause and ideology, rather on submitting us to their goals. Therefore, they will try to exploit and divide us so that we fail in achieving our goals. As in God's holy say: "...Nor will they cease fighting you until they turn you back from your faith if they can. And if any of you turn back from their faith and die in unbelief, their works will bear no fruit in this life and in the hereafter; they will be companions of the fire and will abide therein." 2/217.

As a conclusion, we should not rely on those who do not share our cause and our ideology, because their goals are different than ours. Hence, is their strength...

They will transform us into a tool which they will use to achieve their goals. Therefore, we have to be careful and wise in the cooperation between the strong and the weak which most of the times results in an abuse of the weak by the strong, and this, under the pretext of agreements and treaties.

God asks us to achieve strength by cooperating with the believers (Muslims) in order to form a new strength based on the principles of faith in Islam. He said: "Yea, to those who take for friends unbelievers rather than believers: It is honour they seek among them? Nay, all honour is with God." 4/139.

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Educating for Strength

We should concentrate on Islamic education to increase our understanding of the concept of strength and to fathom its deep Islamic meaning. This will eliminate the primitive concepts of strength that limit our understanding to the physical aspect only, and provide a foundation on which we build a strong Muslim personality.

The glorious Qur'an and the noble Hadith attempt to eliminate the wrong concepts about strength and they explain these concepts from an individual and social perspective. We have seen how Islam considers justice a source of strength, and oppression a source of weakness. This is clear in some of the Prophet's discussions about strength when he tried to explain its true and deep meaning, as in the following holy Hadith: "The Prophet was passing by and saw two people lifting stones. When asked about the reason, they replied 'we want to find the strongest among us.' The Prophet said the strongest is he; when angry will always say the truth; when powerful will not forcefully interfere; when contented will not sin."

This presents an understanding of the concept of strength and a balanced attitude which recognizes the limits of physical human strength, thereby enabling us to use it wisely and justly.

It is necessary for the Muslim ideology and the Muslim movement to eliminate all such misconceptions. Otherwise, we will suffer from the consequences of losing our ideology and the dying of our cause.

In the end, we are with the cause of Islam, its ideology, its movement and its reality, because it is the cause of the human being in his ideology, his movement and his reality. Our cause must remain strong and free from deviations in order to reach its goals of building a strong Muslim personality that can control strength and direct it toward the Islamic mission. As in his Holy say: "God is full of strength, exalted in might, able to enforce his will. Those who we establish in the land, establish regular prayer and give regular charity, command the right and forbid the wrong: With God rests the end and decision of all matters." 22/40-41.

We are to free the mind from misconceptions in order to achieve an open scientific movement that will encompass our present and future in a planning operation complete and total.

We hope we have partially achieved this goal in this book, at least we hope this discussion might lead to other discussions and to new ideas for the Moslem thinkers.

The last of our calls is: God is praiseworthy, master of the universe, to Him we entrust ourselves.

Muhammad Hussein Fadlalah
25 Jumad Al-Awwal 1396 H
May 25, 1976 (AD).

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