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## 12. From The Viewpoint Of Islam Who Should Act As Society's Guardian, And What Should Be His Way?

The rein of the Islamic society was held by the Prophet, and he Qur'an had made it incumbent upon people to explicitly obey the Prophet:

***“Therefore be careful of (your duty to) Allah as much as you can, and hear and obey and spend, it is better for your souls; and whoever is saved from the greediness of his soul, these it is that are the successful.” (At-Tghaboon,64: 12)***

***“The Prophet has a greater claim on the faithful than they have on themselves, and his wives are (as) their mothers; and the possessors of relationship have the better claim in the ordinance of Allah to inheritance, one with respect to another, than (other) believers, and (than) those who have fled (their homes), except that you do some good to your friends; this is written in the Book.” (Al-Ahzaab, 33: 6)***

***“Say: If you love Allah, then follow me, Allah will love you and forgive you your faults, and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.” (Aal-Imraan, 3: 31)***

And other verses.

Each verse of the Qur'an explains a part of the general guardianship of the Prophet in the Islamic society. What can fulfill the purpose of these who discuss this matter is:

Firstly, to study the character and way of the Prophet with great care and inquiry.

Secondly, to make a careful survey of all the verses passed on ethics, as well as the laws devised in connection with worship, transactions, politics and other relations and associations.

The reason that a scholar wrests from Divine revelation is clear and adequate enough, but it cannot be

discovered in one or two sentences<sup>1</sup>.

Another point to be remembered by the debater is that all the verses related to worship, Holy war, and the bounds of retaliation and such like, are addressed to all believers, and not only to the Prophet:

***Those who believe fight in the way of Allah, and those who disbelieve fight in the way of the Shaitan. Fight therefore against the friends of the Shaitan; surely the strategy of the Shaitan is weak. (An-Nisaa', 4:76)***

***O you who believe! be careful of (your duty to) Allah and seek means of nearness to Him and strive hard in His way that you may be successful. (Al-Maaida, 5:35)***

***(As for) the fornicatress and the fornicator, flog each of them, (giving) a hundred stripes, and let not pity for them detain you in the matter of obedience to Allah, if you believe in Allah and the last day, and let a party of believers witness their chastisement.***

***(An-Noor, 24:2)***

***And (as for) the man who steals and the woman who steals, cut off their hands as a punishment for what they have earned, an exemplary punishment from Allah; and Allah is Mighty, Wise. (Al-Maaida, 5:38)***

***O you who believe! fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may guard (against evil). (Al-Baqara, 2:183)***

***And spend in the way of Allah and cast not yourselves to perdition with your own hands, and do good (to others); surely Allah loves the doers of good. (Al-Baqara, 2:195)***

***But how can you disbelieve while it is you to whom the communications of Allah are recited, and among you is His Messenger? And whoever holds fast to Allah, he indeed is guided to the right path. (Aal-'Imraan, 3:101)***

***And strive hard in (the way of) Allah, (such) a striving as is due to Him; He has chosen you and has not laid upon you an hardship in religion; the faith of your father Ibrahim; He named you Muslims before and in this, that the Messenger may be a bearer of witness to you, and you may be bearers of witness to the people; therefore keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and hold fast by Allah; He is your Guardian; how excellent the Guardian and how excellent the Helper! (Al-Hajj, 22:78)***

***And there is life for you in (the law of) retaliation, O men of understanding, that you may guard yourselves. (Al-Baqara, 2:179)***

***So when they have reached their prescribed time, then retain them with kindness or separate them with kindness, and call to witness two men of justice from among you, and give upright testimony for Allah. With that is admonished he who believes in Allah and the latter day; and whoever is careful of (his duty to) Allah, He will make for him an outlet. (At-Talaaq, 65:2)***

***And hold fast by the covenant of Allah all together and be not disunited, and remember the favor of Allah on you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts so by His favor you became brethren; and you were on the brink of a pit of fire, then He saved you from it, thus does Allah make clear to you His communications that you may follow the right way. (Aal-'Imraan,, 3:103)***

***And Muhammad is no more than a messenger; the messengers have already passed away before him; if then he dies or is killed will you turn back upon your heels? And whoever turns back upon his heels, he will by no means do harm to Allah in the least and Allah will reward the grateful. (Aal-Imraan, 3: 144)***

***He has made plain to you of the religion what He enjoined upon Nuh and that which We have revealed to you and that which We enjoined upon Ibrahim and Musa and Isa that keep to obedience and be not divided therein; hard to the unbelievers is that which you call them to; Allah chooses for Himself whom He pleases, and guides to Himself him who turns (to Him), frequently. (Ash-Shura, 42: 13)***

And other verses.

All these verses show that religion is a social manifestation which God has revealed to people, and he does not wish His creatures to be infidels, and wants them all to maintain religion.

The conclusion is that all affairs of the community formed of individuals are related to them who have created that community.

In this respect no Individual has superiority over another, and social matters are not confined to a few individuals in the society to make others exempt. The Prophet himself in this respect was no different from other people who were in an inferior position. God says:

***"... I will not suffer the work of any of you that worketh to be lost, be he male or female, the one of you being from the other.... ". (Aal-Imraan, 3: 194)***

The general acceptance of this verse shows that as the members of the Islamic society influence one another and God does not spoil this influence. Again God says:

***"The earth is God's, and he can bequeath it to whichever of His servants He wishes and a good end is for the virtuous."(Al-A'araaf, 7: 128)***

It must not be omitted that the Prophet has one great distinction, and that is invitation, guidance and education:

***"He reads to them His verses and purifies them ; and teaches them the book and wisdom." (Al-Jumu'a, 62:2)***

Therefore, the Prophet has been appointed by God in order to attend to all the affairs of his followers and undertake the guardianship of their affairs of this and the next world and as long as he lives to act as their leader and absolute Imam.

What should not be ignored is this, that this regime is different from monarchy in which God's property was considered absolutely lawful for the holder of the crown and throne and God's creatures as his

servants to do what he liked with them, and issued any verdict he wished concerning them.

Moreover, the Islamic regime is not a democratic way or the social ways which are based on exploitation and material gratifications, for, unlike them Islam has ways which prevent it from having any similarity with them, as illustrated below:

**(a)** One of the great differences between these schools and Islam, is that, as the former societies are based on material gratification, they possess a spirit of recruitment and exploitation.

This spirit is that spirit of human pride which subjugates everything to human will and action, and even subjugates men to another man's will and action. It allows a man to attain a desired goal by any way he wishes, and dominates whatever he wants in his own interest. This way is exactly the kingly despotism which existed in the past, and has now assumed the form of a civilised society. This state is before our eyes, and we can see the oppressions and injustices of strong nations to weak ones, as recorded in the pages of history

Formerly the way was for a man called Pharaoh, Caesar or Kasra to do what he desired to the weak and helpless people of the time. And if sometimes he offered an apology and accounted for his actions, he claimed that such deeds were the privilege of the sovereign and in the interest of the country, and for strengthening the foundation of the government. A ruler believed this to be the right of his genius and lordship, and he used the sword as an argument for his actions. This was the old system.

And the new system is no different. If you study the political relations existing between powerful nations and weak subordinates today, you will see that history and historical events have repeated themselves and are constantly being repeated. The only difference is that the personal form of the past has taken the social form of the present, but the spirit is the same and the atmosphere is the same.

The way of Islam is quite free of such indulgence of desires. and our reason is the Prophet's methods in conquests and agreements.

**(b)** Another difference between the ways of the Islamic government and other forms of governments, as recorded by history, is that in such societies some kind of class differences have always existed ending in corruption. These class differences whether from the viewpoint of wealth or rank or position resulting in corruption, have always been an inseparable part of such governments, but the society created by Islam is a society consisting of similar parts in which no member has priority over another, and there is no feeling of superiority, haughtiness and lordliness.

The only difference based on human nature is virtue, and virtue is a matter related to God, not to people:

***Surely those who lower their voices before Allah's Messenger are they whose hearts Allah has proved for guarding (against evil); they shall have forgiveness and a great reward.***

***(Al—Hujraat, 49: 3)***

***"... Therefore hasten lo good deeds." (Al-Baqara, 2: 148)***

Thus with respect to the course of law and the removal of class differences in social matters, all people, whether the winner or loser of a suit, the ruler and the ruled, the head or the subordinate, the freeman and the slave, man and woman, rich and poor, big and small, are in the same position in Islam. The best evidence of that is the character of the Prophet<sup>2</sup>.

(c) The executive power in Islam does not consist of a privileged class of society, but all members of an Islamic society wield to it. Each individual has a duty of directing others to goodness and charity, and forbid badness.

In short there exist many differences between the school of Islam and other schools, which are not concealed from the eyes of a true scholar.

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All the points mentioned above, existed in the lifetime of the Prophet (S), for the leadership and guardianship of society belonged to the Prophet to himself, and his method of governing had no similarity with those of other governments, for the reasons mentioned above. But after the Prophet (S), the Muslims as a community believe that the nomination of a Caliph as a ruler is the concern as a whole of Muslims.

The Shi'ite sect, however, believe that the Caliph is chosen explicitly by God and the Prophet (S) and as explained in the theological books, the number of Imams after the Prophet (S) has been twelve.

In any case, after the Prophet (S) and in the absence of an Imam, such as the present time, the government of Islam is undoubtedly a concern of the Muslims. What can be deduced from the Qur'an concerning this matter is that the Muslims are duty bound to choose the ruler for their society according to the same method employed by the Prophet (S).

His method was the tradition of the mission of the Imam, not the ways of kingship or empires. His way was to propagate God's injunctions among people without any alteration. And in the case of what are not injunctions, such as the events which occurred at different times or places, he managed them in consultation with the council of Muslims.

The proof of all this is the numerous verses which we have already quoted on the subject of the Prophet's leadership and guardianship. These verses to which may be added verse 21 of chapter 33 complete our discussion.

***"The way of God is Prophet is a good example for you" (Al-Ahzab, 33:21)***

<sup>1</sup>. It means that not only one or two, rather all the evidences must be examined.

<sup>2</sup>. Greetings be on the Prophet (S) who possessed this character.

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