

More Evidence: Forecasting the Future of Islam

Wilson: From reading the history of Islam, it seems that the future of the new faith and of its followers was very doubtful at the time of the revelation. The success of Islam afterwards and the growth of the numbers of its followers were unexpected. I often wondered if the unexpected success and rapid growth of Islam were foreseen by the Prophet and forecast by the Qur'an.

The forecast of this would be an impressive evidence on the truthfulness of Muhammad, because the future of the whole faith and its followers seemed to be very dark at the time of revelation.

Chirri: The Holy Qur'an contains definite prophecies dealing with the future of Islam and its followers.

One of those prophecies deals with the future of the Muslims. It assures the Muslims of a future religious freedom and promises them a mighty state:

“God has promised those of you who believe (in Islam) and do good that He will surely make them rulers in the Earth, as He made those before them rulers, and that He will surely establish for them their religion, which He has chosen for them, and that He will surely give them the feeling of security in exchange of their fear, so they will worship Me, not associating aught with Me; and whoever is ungrateful after this, they are the transgressors.” 24:55

When this prophecy was revealed, the followers of Islam were a very small minority of the inhabitants of Al-Hijaz. It was revealed, approximately, in the fifth year after the Hijrah when the Muslims were a few thousands, bitterly antagonized by all the inhabitants of Hijaz and the rest of the Arabian Peninsula. None of the Muslims at that time had a feeling of security, nor were they able to practice their religion freely. There was nothing indicating that such a hated and bitterly fought minority would survive, nor was the future of this new religion humanly predictable.

In spite of all these facts, the prophecy was revealed in a definite and unconditional form.

More prophecies are contained in the following verses which predict the triumph of Islam and the defeat of its opponents.

“They desire to put out the light of God with their mouths, but God will perfect His light, though

the disbelievers may be averse.” 9:32; 61:8

“He is the One Who sent His Messenger with the guidance and the true religion, to make it outweigh all other religions though the polytheists may be averse.” 9:33; 61:9 and 48:28.

The first verse predicts that the opponents of Islam will not succeed in putting out the light of God, nor will their attacks hinder its growth. God will make His light, Islam, perfect, though its opponents will oppose it strongly. They may argue, fight, assail and mobilize all their intellectual and material forces, determining to revoke Islam, but all that will not extinguish its light, nor will that prevent it from becoming full.

Both verses predict definitely and unconditionally the victory of Islam over its opponents.

When this prophecy was revealed, the small Muslim community was defending itself against the Polytheists and other hostile elements in Arabia. Afterwards it had to defend itself against the Persian and Byzantine Empires.

Each of these powers was incomparably greater and richer than the Muslim state. The Persian and Byzantine Empires were the outstanding forces in the world. To defeat them both is to defeat all considerable forces in the world and to become the world's superior power. This would fulfill completely the meaning of the prophecy, but this was seemingly impossible. We always expect the defeat of any single and relatively weak army when forced to combat on more than one field more than one superior power. This becomes clear when we remember that the mighty German army had been defeated twice in the twentieth century, only because it was fought by stronger allies on more than one front.

It may be the most remarkable military event in history, that the inhabitants of Madina and Mecca, whose number did not exceed a few thousands, could defend themselves, after the death of the great Prophet, against the attacks of the apostate Arabs. With the exception of the Muslims of these two cities, almost all the Arab nation had apostatized after the death of the Prophet.

The Muslim state was compelled, afterwards, to fight against the Byzantine and Persian Empires. These two great empires fought the Muslims simultaneously on two different fronts. The scanty Muslim forces were forced to divide themselves in order to maintain the defense. The result was a wondrous military phenomenon.

The two great powers were vanquished and Persia was completely defeated. Within one hundred years, the vast area extending from the Atlantic Ocean to India, came under the rule of Islam. Those poor and helpless people, at the time of the revelation of this prophecy, suddenly became the superior power of the world. The Prophet, relying on the heavenly information, had forecast this triumph which took place after his death. Speaking to Odey, son of Hatam (a Christian chief who joined the new faith afterwards), the Prophet Muhammad uttered the following:

“...Thou dost not incline to Islamism,” continued Muhammad, “because thou seest we are poor. The time is at hand when true believers will have more wealth than they know how to manage. Perhaps thou art deterred by seeing the small number of the Muslims in comparison to the number of their enemies. By God, in a little while, a Muslim woman will be able to make a pilgrimage on her camel, alone and fearless, from Kadesia (Iraqi area) to God's temple at Mecca. Thou thinkest, probably, that the might is in the hands of the unbelievers; know that the time is not far off when we will plant our standard on the white castles of Babylon.”¹

¹. Life of Muhammad by Washington Irving, chapter 32.

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