

Section 9: Muslims Should be Prepared For All Eventualities

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 65

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَرِّضِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى الْقِتَالِ ۖ إِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ عِشْرُونَ صَابِرُونَ
يَغْلِبُوا مِائَتَيْنِ ۖ وَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ مِائَةٌ يَغْلِبُوا أَلْفًا مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا
يَفْقَهُونَ

65. “O Prophet! Urge on the believers to fight. If there be of you twenty patient (steadfast men), they shall overcome two hundred, and if there be of you a hundred (steadfast ones), they shall overcome a thousand of those who disbelieve, for they are a people who do not understand.”

This verse negates the equilibrium of forces in figure. It emphasizes on the spirit, Faith and perseverance with patience, so, in order that no one supposes that the triumph of twenty fighters before two hundred ones is an exaggeration, it repeats that one hundred strivers may win one thousand fighters, if they are believers.

In the early battles of Islam, there has never been any statistic equilibrium. In the Battle of Badr, there were three hundred and thirteen believers in front of one thousand infidels. In Uhud, seven hundred Muslims fought against three thousand fighters.

In the Battle of Khandaq, three thousand strivers struggled before ten thousand enemies. In Muthah, there were ten thousand Muslims in front of one hundred thousand pagans.

One of the duties of an Islamic leader is to encourage people to Holy Struggle. The function of the statement of the commander before military activities is very effective.

Therefore, in wars and Holy Struggles, propagation is necessary. The verse says:

“O prophet! Urge on the believers to fight...”

The definite factor in the battlefields of Muslims is Faith and perseverance with patience, not the number of strivers alone.

That was why, at the beginning, under the command of Holy Struggle, the army of Islam, which was one tenth of that of the enemy, won the battle. The verse says:

“...If there be of you twenty patient (steadfast men), they shall overcome two hundred, and if there be of you a hundred (steadfast ones), they shall overcome a thousand of those who disbelieve...”

The soldier of Islam should have these three qualities: Faith, patience, and vigilance. The Qur'an qualifies 'the believers' with patience, while about the disbelievers, the verse says:

“...for they are a people who do not understand.”

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 66

الآن خَفَّفَ اللَّهُ عَنْكُمْ وَعَلِمَ أَنَّ فِيكُمْ ضَعْفًا ۚ فَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ مِائَةٌ صَابِرَةٌ يَغْلِبُوا
مِائَتَيْنِ ۚ وَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أَلْفٌ يَغْلِبُوا أَلْفَيْنِ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ

66. “Now Allah has lightened it for you, and He knows that there is weakness in you. So, if there be of you a hundred patient (steadfast men), they will overcome two hundred; and if there be of you a thousand, they will overcome two thousand by the leave of Allah; and Allah is with the patient (steadfast ones).”

The purpose of 'weakness', mentioned in the verse, is weakness in Faith and spiritualities, because the troops of Islam had not become decreased from the point of physical strength and number when they defeated.

In this verse, and the verse before it, the Qur'an points to three spiritual aspects which are the factors of victory, the absence of which is a preparation for defeat; they are: patience, Faith, and vigilance.

Thus, the main function in victory is by the leave and Will of Allah, else, in the Battle of Hunayn, where there were so many fighters Muslims defeated and ran away.

The verse says:

“Now Allah has lightened it for you, and He knows that there is weakness in you. So, If there be of you a hundred patient (steadfast men), they will overcome two hundred; and if there be of you a thousand, they will overcome two thousand by the leave of Allah...”

However, the patients are loved by Allah and they are in His refuge. The verse ends as follows:

“...and Allah is with the patient (steadfast ones).”

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 67

مَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ أَسْرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ يُثْخِنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ تُرِيدُونَ عَرَصَ الدُّنْيَا
وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ ۚ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

67. “It is not (fit) for any prophet to have captives unless he has thoroughly triumphed in the land. You desire the transitory world, while Allah desires (for you) the Hereafter; and Allah is the Mighty the Wise.”

Allah has allowed no prophet to take the members of the enemy as captives and to keep them as pledge in order to take money from them, or hold them under obligation and let them go; unless that he exaggerates in killing the heathens and destroying them so that it becomes as a warning to others and that he gains authority. The verse says:

“It is not (fit) for any prophet to have captives unless he has thoroughly triumphed in the land...”

The next phrase of the verse addresses the Muslims, not the Prophet (S) because their desire was that they could take money from the captives and let them go. The purpose is that, in the first battle, i.e. the Battle of Badr, before gaining authority on the earth, they took ransom.

The Arabic phrase: /arad-ad-dunya/ means the property of the world which is something vanishable. The verse continues saying:

“...you desire the transitory world...”

You pursue the wealth of the world while Allah desires the rewards of the Hereafter for you. The verse says:

“...while Allah desires (for you) the Hereafter...”

The helpers of Allah will never be defeated, and verily Allah acts wisely; then, do perform whatever He commands you, so that you enjoy the help of Allah. The verse ends:

“...and Allah is the Mighty the Wise.”

Surah Al-Anfal – Verses 68–69

لَوْلَا كِتَابٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ سَبَقَ لَمَسَّكُمْ فِيمَا أَخَذْتُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ

فَكُلُوا مِمَّا غَنِمْتُمْ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

68. “Had it not been for a prior ordinance from Allah, there would have fallen you a great chastisement for what you had taken to (improperly).”

69. “Eat then of what you have acquired in war as booty, (which is) lawful and good; and be in awe of Allah; verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”

Once more in this verse the Qur’an reprimands and scorns those who put into danger the important social interests for their own fleeting financial gains. It says:

“Had it not been for a prior ordinance from Allah, there would have fallen you a great chastisement for what you had taken to (improperly).”

But, as it was mentioned in some other verses of the Qur’an before, Allah’s way of treatment is that, at first He explains the ordinances, then there will be His punishment for the disobedient of them.

In the second verse, the Qur’an refers to another ordinance of the ordinances concerning captives of war, and points to the question of ransom.

After the time when the Battle of Badr was ended and some captives were taken, a group of Ansar (the Helpers) told the Prophet (S) that they had killed seventy pagans and had kept seventy of them in captive, all of whom were from his tribe and, in fact, they were his captives.

They asked the Prophet (S) to remit those captives to them so that they could take ransom from them for their emancipation. When the Prophet (S) was waiting for the descent of revelation in this regard, the verse was revealed and the permission of taking ‘ransom’ for their emancipation was issued.

However, the verse lets Muslims use this spoil of the war, (i.e. the amount they used to take for emancipating captives). It says:

“Eat then of what you have acquired in war as booty, (which is) lawful and good...”

This sentence may have a vast meaning, and, besides the subject of ‘ransom’, it encompasses other booties, too.

Then, it commands them to be Godwary and to avoid disobeying Allah. The verse continues saying:

“...and be in awe of Allah;”

This meaning refers to the fact that these kinds of booties being lawful should not cause that the aim of strugglers in battlefields to be gathering spoils of war or taking some captives for ransom, and if formerly they had such disgraceful intentions in mind, they must leave them out now.

At the end of the verse, the Qur'an promises remission and forgiveness about the past when it says:

“...verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”

Source URL:

<https://www.al-islam.org/enlightening-commentary-light-holy-quran-vol-6/section-9-muslims-should-be-prepared-all>