

## Society and Islamic State

### Question No. 3

**Which one is important in an Islamic State: the realization of the religious society or the domination of the religious laws? Is the formation of a religious society possible only through Islamic State, or are there other ways as well?**

The most comprehensive definition of the “religious society” is as follows: A religious society is one which 'believes in religion', is 'religion-oriented', 'judges based on religion', and is 'favored by religion'.<sup>1</sup>

Among the goals of Islamic State are protecting, preserving and elevating the Islamic society as well as enforcing the divine laws. More specifically, these two elements, i.e. “Islamic State” and “enforcing the [divine] laws”, are inseparable.

Establishing a government is not the ultimate goal and ideal; rather, it is an intermediary and instrumental factor in providing welfare, security, justice, development, felicity, and guidance for the society. The holy Quran points out that one of the agendas of the righteous government is the guidance of human beings towards God and His servitude – which is the only way for human's perfection. It states:

الَّذِينَ إِنْ مَكَّنَّاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَمَرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ۗ وَلِلَّهِ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُورِ

***“Those who, if we give them power in land, establish worship and pay the poor due and enjoin kindness and forbid iniquity; and Allah’s is the sequel of the events.” (22:41)<sup>2</sup>***

Of course, the instrumentality of the 'government' should not result in its underestimation, because the Islamic State is a key instrument and an essential one without which many objectives of religion will vanish or fade. Therefore, religious texts do stress “the righteous' religious authority and Imamate”, giving priority to preserving the religious government over enforcing other subsidiary religious precepts. Imam Ja‘far al-Sadiq (PBUH) says:

*“Nothing has been emphasized on as religious authority in Islam.”<sup>3</sup>*

- <sup>1</sup>. See Sayyid Musa Mir-Mudarres, Jame'ey-e Barin, p. 209–10.
- <sup>2</sup>. The Qur'an, Hajj (22), 41.
- <sup>3</sup>. Al-Majlisi (ed.), Bihar al-Anwar, II, 18.

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