

The Continuity of Iqbal's Qur'anic Thought

The Genesis of Pakistan and the Islamic Revolution in Iran
Viewed in the context of Iqbal's Qur'anic Thought and its Continuity in Dr. Israr Ahmad

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“The Days of Allah” and Qur'anic Thought

When Almighty Allah (SWT) sent Musa (AS) with His *ayaat* (Signs or Proofs), He sent him with the specific mission of extricating his people, i.e., the Israelites or Banu Israel, from the darkness of ignorance into the light of Truth. In order that this objective be successfully pursued, Allah (SWT) further ordered Musa (s) as follows:

And remind them of the Days of Allah (Ibrahim: 14:5).

The “Days of Allah” are the historical landmarks which reveal the movement of the Truth in history. Time and again, in the historical process, Truth triumphs over its rivals and, according to Dr. Burhan Ahmad Faruqi, the direction of the movement of history is thus restored, time and again, to that of *Sirat Al-Mustaqeem* (the Straight Path). Qur'anic thought is that thought which penetrates the Qur'an with such creative insight as permits the thinker not only to discern the landmarks which constitute the “Days of Allah” in post-Qur'anic history (i.e., history since the revelation of the Qur'an), but also to understand the process of the movement of Truth in history and thus to penetrate and understand the true nature of the age in which he lives. Qur'anic thought thus provides the thinker with the means with which to respond appropriately to the challenges of his age.

The Qur'an is not a historical text. Its primary function is not one of recording history. Rather the Qur'an narrates the “Days of Allah” in order to teach us how to understand and interpret correctly; first, the world in which we live, and second, the age in which we exist. Whether they be the *ayyam* (Days) of Allah (SWT) or His *ayaat* (Signs) in the world, they must be studied, absorbed, digested, and become the eyes with which we see when we attempt to understand the world around us.

For example, the Qur'an narrates to us the episode of Pharaoh and Musa (AS), and expects us to use that story of history in a creative way to understand this present age, an age which is dominated by modern godless Western civilization. Pharaoh was powerful, and used his power to oppress and enslave the people of Allah (SWT); so too does the dominant modern West. Pharaoh claimed divinity and actively pursued the policy of coercion, intimidation, patronage etc., to achieve the goal of getting all people to worship him. So too, does the modern godless West.

It was the function of Prophet Musa (AS) to teach his people that Allah (SWT) intervenes in the historical process and Truth eventually triumphs. And, sure enough, the “Day of Allah” came. Prophet Musa (AS) and Banu Israel miraculously crossed the Red Sea to safety while Pharaoh and his armed forces all perished. None survived. So too, Qur'anic thought reveals that the dominance of the modern godless West and of the Jews over all of mankind will not last forever. Truth will triumph over falsehood one more time before history ends, and the enemies of Truth will suffer the fate which Pharaoh and his forces suffered. Indeed, not one of the Jews in Israel will survive. They will all perish!

In this particular milestone in history, i.e., the encounter of Moses (AS) and Pharaoh, the Qur'anic narrative combined *ayyam* of Allah (SWT) with *ayaat* of Allah (SWT) and required that the gaze of the believers be trained on a particular moment in history which was yet to come, and which, when it came, would witness the historic re-enactment of the essence of the encounter between Prophet Musa (AS) and Pharaoh. History would repeat itself. The Preservation by Allah (SWT) of the physical body of Pharaoh, and its discovery by Loret in 1898, constituted an *ayah* of Allah (SWT) of supreme importance for the understanding of this modern age. That *ayah* is located in the Qur'an

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in Surah Yunus, in which it is narrated how, just before his death by drowning, Pharaoh declared his faith in Allah (SWT). Declared Allah (SWT):

Now? When before this you were in a state of rebellion, and been of the wrongdoers (and were oppressing people)? This day We (have decided to) preserve your body so that you (i.e., your life, your death, and your dead body preserved over thousands of years) may be an *ayah* (i.e., a Sign of Allah which functions as a warning) for those who come after you. And surely most people are heedless of Our Signs. (Yunus 10:91, 92).

And so the Qur'an teaches us that the discovery of the body of Pharaoh in 1898 provides an important clue to the understanding of the nature of the modern age — its godlessness, its arrogance, its oppression, and the fate which awaits it. Indeed, this particular Sign of Allah (SWT), located both in the Qur'an and in contemporary history, also leads us to the Jews, the Zionist Movement, and to the Jewish effort to restore the State of Israel. With Qur'anic thought one now realizes that the Jews have been deceived by one who is the master of deception, one who takes the road to heaven and makes it look like the road to hell, and vice versa. The Jews believe that their success in restoring the State of Israel is a sign that Allah (SWT) is with them. In fact, the effort to restore the State of Israel constitutes an act of defiance against Allah (SWT).

The believer now realizes the transcendental nature of contemporary reality. This is the age of *Dajjal*. This is the age of *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj*. The historical process itself now witnesses change in this turbulent age. The very rules of the historical process now change. Only the Qur'an provides the light with which to see and understand today's turbulent world. Unless one can penetrate the Qur'an and discern the "Days of Allah" as they unfold in contemporary history, unless one can develop the capacity to use the Qur'an as *Al-Furqan*, one will be deceived *in* this age and *by* this age!

But the use of Qur'an for understanding the age in which we live, and for responding authentically to the challenge of this age, is not possible without a creative intellectual effort. And this brings us to Iqbal's Qur'anic thought, the basic characteristic of which is its *intellectual creativity*. Is it possible and permissible to approach the Qur'an with a creative mind, seeking to acquire that Qur'anic light with which to explore, to examine, and to understand contemporary reality? Yes! says Iqbal. Indeed one of the primary functions of the Qur'an is to function as *Al-Furqan* (that which discriminates). The very essence of Iqbal's thought is his success in using the Qur'an as *Al-Furqan*.

Had Iqbal not penetrated the wisdom of the Qur'an and then used the Qur'an as *Al-Furqan* to demolish nationalism, the powerful forces ranged against the Muslim community in India would have achieved success. Iqbal perceived nationalism to be a false and supremely destructive concept and he denounced it. He was not deceived by *appearances* because he successfully penetrated *reality*. This is precisely what the Qur'an taught him to do in the story of Musa (AS) and Khidr (AS) in Surah Al-Kahf. Indeed, in my opinion, it is Surah Al-Kahf, — the understanding and explanation of the Surah and its application for the understanding of the modern age — which can today best distinguish Qur'anic thought from the rest.

The secularization of political thought in modern Western civilization led to the emergence of contemporary nationalism. "It is possible," asked Iqbal in his 1930 Presidential Address to the Annual Convention of the All India Muslim League, "to retain Islam as an ethical ideal and to reject it as a polity in favor of national politics?" That indeed was the true implication of the alternative adopted by Deoband's Husain Ahmad Madeni and by Abul Kalam Azad.

Iqbal examined nationalism with the Qur'anic principle of *Tauheed* and declared nationalism to be an evil force which "breaks up the 'one' into mutually ill adjusted 'many' and transforms the human outlook into a national outlook" with all the attendant dangers of *fitnah* and *fasad*. For Iqbal "it was unthinkable to a Muslim to construct a polity on national lines if it meant a displacement of the Islamic principle of solidarity."¹ He saw, because of the Qur'an, what Abul Kalam Azad and Hussain Ahmad Madeni could not see, to wit: "Both nationalism and atheistic socialism, at least in the present state of human adjustments, must draw upon the psychological forces of hate, suspicion and resentment which tend to impoverish the soul of man and close up his hidden sources of spiritual energy."²

Had the Qur'an not given to Iqbal the capacity with which to denounce nationalism in the manner in which he did, it is possible that Hussain Ahmad and Abul Kalam Azad as well as the host of inimical forces which would have gleefully supported them, would have carried the day, and all of Muslim India would have been enslaved through deception!

Allow me to now compare Iqbal's Qur'anic thought with that of Shaikh Muhammad Abduh, Shaikh Al Azhar. Abduh traveled to Europe in the late 19th century; this was a period when the French Revolution had effectively transformed the very foundations of European civilization from sacred Judeo-Christian to secular godlessness. The new European political secularism was a form of *shirk* and the new European capitalist economy was based on economic exploitation through *riba*. A new powerful godless predatory force was about to prey on all of mankind, sucking their wealth and, indeed, visiting upon mankind multi-dimensional oppression. The new secular European model of society was about to preside over the collapse of the entire edifice of values built by Christianity and Judaism over the centuries. Europe was now traveling on a road which led straight to Hell. What did Shaikh Abduh perceive? He examined the new European society, returned to Egypt and declared: "I went to Europe and found Islam but no Muslims. And I have returned to Egypt where there are Muslims but no Islam!"

If ever a man was totally deceived by the modern godless world, it was Shaikh Abduh. Common to Abduh, Hussain Ahmad Madeni, Abdul Kalam Azad and a host of others, was an incapacity to use the Qur'an as *Al-Furqan* and to recognize the new evil in the world. This is the basic reason why they were deceived. Because he was so thoroughly deceived, Abduh could not recognize *riba* in the European banking system. And so he gave his infamous *fatwa* which opened up the Egyptian economy to *riba*. Today, as a result, the Egyptian economy has been ruined.

Iqbal also went to Europe, not long after Abduh, but was not deceived by "appearances." He penetrated the "reality" of the modern Western civilization, its nationalism, secularism, and capitalism. He recognized the economic oppression, the political imperialism, and the essential godlessness of the new secular European model of society and he denounced it. Here is Iqbal's verdict on the same Europe in which the Shaikh Al-Azahr saw "Islam."

The idealism of Europe never became a living factor in her life, and the result is a perverted ego seeking itself through mutually intolerant democracies whose sole function is to exploit the poor in the interest of the rich. Believe me, Europe today is the greatest hindrance in the way of man's ethical advancement.³

Why was it that those trained at Al-Azhar and Deoband, who studied the Qur'an the classical way, failed to understand the modern world? Why was it that Iqbal, who never studied the Qur'an the classical way, succeeded where others failed? Was it because of methodology or *Usul Al-Fiqh*? This is a subject which needs to be seriously addressed.

Our conclusion is that Iqbal's Qur'anic thought made Pakistan possible. The success of the struggle waged by the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent to create Pakistan was the political miracle of the modern age. Nothing before, and nothing since, can match this magnificent success achieved by Indian Muslims. The most powerful and hostile forces in the world were all united in their opposition to Pakistan. The lesson here is that when one adopts Qur'anic thought in the manner in which Iqbal did, it becomes possible for the Islamic movement to succeed even when opposed by the

most powerful combination of hostile forces. The landmarks of history in the “Days of Allah” confirm this again and again.

The strategic importance of Tanzeem-e-Islami, we now wish to suggest, is that it is an authentic Islamic revolutionary movement which is the first fruit of the seed so lovingly planted by Iqbal, and it is led by a scholar of Islam who offers continuity with Iqbal’s Qur’anic thought. For the first time since the birth of Pakistan, the Muslim community of Pakistan has an Islamic revolutionary movement led by an Islamic scholar who uses the Qur’an in the manner in which Iqbal did, i.e., as *Al-Furqan*.

The Geography of the Islamic Revolution in the Modern Age

We now wish to direct attention to the geography of the “Days of Allah” in the modern age, i.e., the disasters and triumphs experienced by the “chosen” community of Allah in the age of *fitan*. The major disasters Muslims have experienced in the modern age have all been geographically located in and around the heart-land of Islam. The two most important of all disasters have been the destruction of the *Khilafah* and the restoration of the State of Israel in the holy land. Even the third major disaster, which has not yet occurred, but may soon occur, i.e., the abandonment of the *Hajj*, is geographically located in the same area, i.e., the heart-land of Islam. This represents the fulfillment of the prophesy of the Prophet (SAW) who located the brunt of the attack on the *Ummah* in that very geographic location i.e., heart-land of Islam. (Cf. *Hadith* in Sahih Buhari, according to which the Prophet (SAW) woke from sleep and was greatly agitated by what he had seen in sleep, i.e., the release of Ya’jooj and Ma’jooj, and declared “Woe unto the Arabs because of an evil which is drawing close!”).

We also wish to direct attention to the fact that the second major success Muslims have achieved in this age, a success experienced some thirty years after the birth of Pakistan, i.e., the Islamic Revolution in Iran, occurred in the same geographic area in which Pakistan is located. This also confirms another prophesy of the Prophet (SAW) who located the revolutionary initiative which will witness the triumph of Truth in the age of *fitan* in a specific geographic location, i.e., Khurasan. The ancient Khurasan was located in the area which is now included in Iran, Afghanistan and North-Western Pakistan.

The most distinctive characteristic of the successful struggle for Pakistan was the Qur’anic thought of Iqbal. Similarly, the most distinctive characteristic of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, a revolution which succeeded despite the fact that it was opposed by a combination of the most powerful anti-Islamic forces in the world, was the Qur’anic thought of Imam Khomeini.

Iran was experiencing rapid transformation from a sacred model of society to one which was being embraced and absorbed by the new modern, secular, and essentially godless model of society. Imam Khomeini remained aloof from the new godless model and denounced it as sinful, Satanic, and oppressive. The predatory Iranian elite which commanded awesome military power, vast economic and financial resources, a well-trained and sophisticated system of internal repression, and powerful international support which included the support of the two “super-powers” of the day, eventually found itself cornered and isolated from the oppressed masses. The masses were so united and so mobilized that the use of power to crush their dissent proved useless.

The revolutionary genius of Imam Khomeini was apparent in the manner in which he waged psychological war and succeeded in winning the support of, and in mobilizing, the masses. The very foundation of his revolutionary strategy in the age in which he lived, i.e., the age of *fitan*, was the courageous denunciation of oppression (political, economic, cultural, religious etc.) and his challenge to the oppressor. He chose his battlefield with care and wisdom. He identified, cornered, and destroyed the capacity of the enemy to resist. And that was the essence of the strategic and revolutionary dimension of the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (SAW). That enemy in Iran was, of course, the predatory elite. It was his genius that he was able to correctly identify the real enemy in this age! Iranian Muslim society was riddled with superstitious beliefs and deviations from what he believed in as authentic Shi’ah Islam. Yet he did not engage those matters as his primary battle-ground. His

strategic thinking recognized such matters to be strategically peripheral, and he was right. By avoiding those battlefields he was successful in getting the oppressed masses to identify with him and, eventually, to adore him. This was a crucial factor in his success. Muhammad Ali Jinnah pursued a similar strategy and he also succeeded. So, too, did Fidel Castro!

It was with the light of the Qur'an that Khomeini recognized and denounced USA (and the West) as the Great Satan. And it was also with that light that he could so marvelously read history and anticipate the collapse of Communism when no one else could do so. Let us here recall the letter he addressed to the former U.S.S.R President Gorbachev in January 1989, inviting him to study Islam and to accept it. It was in that very letter that he declared that Communism now belonged to the museums of history. And, sure enough, the "Day of Allah" came and the Berlin Wall fell in November 1989. A "super-power" disintegrated in the broad daylight of history, and Communism was on its way to the garbage-bin of history.

Men like Iqbal and Khomeini, who see with the light of the Qur'an, eventually succeed, where so many others fail, in mobilizing their people and transforming them into "an organized will fixed upon a definite purpose."⁴ And it is this which paves the way for success.

Our purpose is to draw attention to the fact that a single individual, transformed by the Qur'an into a creative force, can effect the transformation of an entire people. It is my opinion that the Muslims of Pakistan possess in Dr. Israr Ahmad someone who, like Iqbal and Imam Khomeini, sees with the light of the Qur'an and therefore possesses the capacity to offer to Pakistan a new beginning after fifty years of utter failure. His excellent booklet entitled *Islamic Renaissance: the Real Task Ahead* (first published as an Urdu tract in monthly Meesaq, June 1967) bears testimony to this. Only a people who are deaf, dumb, and blind would want to continue for another half century that which Pakistan has experienced these last fifty years.

The birth of Pakistan witnessed the end of the revolution. The flame was extinguished, and for fifty years the Muslim of Pakistan have suffered the frustration of life in the ashes of that flame. The flame died because the new-born Pakistan was devoid of leaders who could see with the light of the Qur'an, and who could use the Qur'an to understand, interpret, and respond appropriately to the world and its assembly of hostile forces. In that same address in 1930 Iqbal recognized that problem. Here is what he said:

Let me tell you frankly that, at the present moment, the Muslims of India are suffering from two evils. The first is the want of personalities. Sir Malcom Hailey and Lord Irwin were perfectly correct in their diagnose when they told the Aligarh University that the community had failed to produce leaders. By leaders I mean men who, by divine gift of experience possess a keen perception of the spirit and destiny of Islam, along with an equally keen perception of the trend of modern history. Such men are really the driving forces of a people, but they are God's gifts and cannot be made to order.⁵

The second evil to which he referred was the loss amongst Muslims of the herd instinct for internal solidarity.

Fifty years after the birth of Pakistan the time has now come for us to recognize a revolutionary Islamic thinker and movement located in the same geographic region in which two successes have previously been achieved, and offering continuity with the Qur'anic thought of Iqbal. Fifty years after the birth of Pakistan and after fifty years of frustrated life in the ashes, it is time for Pakistan to recognize Dr. Israr Ahmad to be what he truly is, the guide who can revive the flame and offer Pakistan a new birth. With him as a guide, Pakistan can be taught once again to recognize and learn from the "Days of Allah."

And with the light of the Qur'an creatively applied to our contemporary situation by such a guide, it is possible for us to achieve a third success and triumph for Islam in Pakistan. Only then would the revolutionary struggle for Pakistan be truly completed. The revolutionary struggle which gave birth to Pakistan will not be complete until Islam (i.e., the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet) become the foundation of Pakistan. The struggle to achieve that goal must once again be

taken up and pursued by any means necessary and permitted by Islam. Tanzeem-e-Islami is precisely that revolutionary Islamic movement which, fifty years after the birth of Pakistan, offers itself to guide such a revolutionary struggle in Pakistan as would:

- honor the struggle for Pakistan and honor those who successfully led that struggle.
- return to 1947 and reconstruct Pakistan in the Iqbalian Qur'anic model of a State representative of Islam.

The Continuity of Iqbal's Qur'anic Thought

Prof. Yusuf Saleem Chisti (d. 1984) was arguably the most prominent expert in comparative religion, philosophy, and Islamic thought that Indian subcontinent has produced in the recent past. The fact that he had a close and intimate relationship with Iqbal spanning more than fourteen years is not an insignificant factor in this regard. Consequently, Prof. Chisti was eminently qualified to judge the worth and caliber of a work in Islamic thought. According to him, Dr. Israr Ahmad's brief treatise *Islamic Renaissance: The Real Task Ahead* contained the *most* insightful diagnosis of the malaise afflicting the Muslim society as well as the most effective cure, that he had come across in more than fifty years of surveying the literature produced on this topic by Muslim thinkers.⁶

What is the basic argument presented in this work? According to Dr. Israr Ahmad, genuine Islamic renaissance cannot take place in the Muslim society unless there is an authentic revival of *Iman* among the intellectual elite. He further argues that the Holy Qur'an constitutes the only source for such a revival of *Iman*. This diagnosis and proposed cure of the disease afflicting the *Ummah* differs from the analysis given by others in that it locates the source of Muslim weakness in the deficiency of Muslim personhood, not in the weakness of Islamic institutions. One can clearly detect the echoes of Iqbal's philosophy of the Self echoing in the work of Dr. Israr Ahmad. The only remedy for the reconstruction of the Muslim personhood is the strengthening of *Iman* by a strengthening of the bond between the Muslim and the Qur'an. This requires articulation of the Qur'anic wisdom in the most sophisticated contemporary idiom so as to attract the intellectual elite in Muslim society towards Islam. This, in turn, is possible only through the efforts of sincere and dedicated scholars of the Qur'an. The need of the hour, therefore, is to produce young Muslims inspired by the call of the Qur'an who dedicate their lives to studying the Qur'anic sciences.

Here the continuity of Iqbal's Qur'anic thought in the work of Dr. Israr Ahmad is quite apparent. The centerpiece of Iqbal's thought, as well as the source of his visionary insights, is the Qur'an. Similarly, Dr. Israr Ahmad has also consciously striven to make the Qur'an the centerpiece of his thought and his mission. There can hardly be any doubt that Dr. Israr Ahmad has done more for the propagation of the Qur'anic message in the post-World War II era than any other individual. The popularization of Qur'anic *duroos*, founding of Qur'an Academies and Qur'an Colleges, the setting up of translation and *tafseer* sessions of Qur'an during Ramadan, the proliferation of audio and video tapes of Qur'anic discourses – all this has been achieved under the able leadership of Dr. Israr Ahmad. It is not an exaggeration to claim that he has done as much as an individual could possibly do in calling the people to "Return to the Qur'an." Not only has Dr. Israr Ahmad rendered this personal service to Qur'anic thought, he has also succeeded in producing a cadre of young and committed students of the Qur'an who will carry this mission forward after him.

For Iqbal the reconstruction of the Islamic personality could only be achieved by returning to the Qur'an, and he expressed this eloquently in his poetry. But the reconstruction of the Islamic personality was not an end in itself; rather, it was a means to an end. Once the Islamic personality had been reconstructed, a struggle had to be undertaken to reconstruct Islamic institutions and society. Iqbal was convinced that such a struggle could only be carried out by a group of Muslims who had organized themselves in a disciplined group under a capable leader, and whose discipline was governed according to the institution of *Baiy'ah*. Thus, between 1932 and 1935, Iqbal worked tirelessly and at great personal risk to organize a genuine Islamic *Jama'ah* committed to establishing Islam in this world – a group organized on the basis of the institution of *Baiy'ah*. In his correspondences with his close associates, Iqbal made it clear that he had received unmistakable

signals from the unseen to proceed with the attempt to organize such a group on the principle of *Baiy'ah*. But due to a number of historical factors this attempt did not produce any lasting results.

Nearly forty years after this abortive attempt by Iqbal to establish an authentic Islamic *Jama'ah* based on the institution of *Baiy'ah*, Tanzeem-e-Islami was founded under the leadership of Dr. Israr Ahmad. Consequently, the Tanzeem is the fulfillment of Iqbal's dream of seeing such a group come into existence. This group would not only be struggling for the supremacy of the Qur'an and *Sunnah* in the world, it would also be organized according to the principles contained therein. Even in the closing years of the 20th century, Tanzeem-e-Islami remains the only revolutionary Islamic group in the Indo-Pak subcontinent organized according to the Qur'anic and Prophetic principles of organization — that of *Baiy'ah*. This *Sunnah* of the Prophet (SAW) had not only been abandoned by the Muslims, it was a *Sunnah* that was left rotting in the open and not even given a proper burial. Throughout the history of Islam, Islamic reform movements have known no other mode of organization besides the one based on *Baiy'ah*. It is only in the 20th century that this mode of organization has been abandoned by the Muslims. Iqbal, being aware of this historical reality, as well as the philosophical and spiritual significance of this institution, advocated and actively worked for the establishment of a revolutionary Islamic party organized around the principle of *Baiy'ah*.

Dr. Israr Ahmad's penetrating study and untiring service to Qur'anic wisdom evidence his intellectual continuity with Iqbal the thinker. His establishment of Tanzeem-e-Islami based on the principle of *Baiy'ah* evidence his link with Iqbal the activist. Consequently, it is not an exaggeration to claim that the continuation and evolution of Iqbal's Qur'anic vision manifests itself in the thought and activities of Dr. Israr Ahmad.

Endnotes

1. Iqbal, Allama Muhammad., Presidential Address delivered at the annual session of the All India Muslim League at Allahabad on December 29, 1930; included in Abdul Wahid, Syed (Ed.) *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal* (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1964)
2. — Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, Edited and Annotated by M. Saeed Sheikh, 2nd Edition (Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture and Iqbal Academy Pakistan, 1989) p. 149
3. — Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam., op.cit., p. 142
4. — Presidential Address 1930., op.cit
5. — Presidential Address 1930, op.cit
6. Prof. Yusuf Saleem Chishti., Letter written to Dr. Israr Ahmad, first published in monthly *Meesaq*, December 1967 and January 1968. Cf., Ahmad, Dr. Israr., *Da'wat-e-Ruju' ilal Qur'an ka Manzar aur Pasmanzar* (Maktaba Markazi Anjuman Khuddam-ul-Qur'an Lahore, 1990) p. 59

According to a tradition narrated by Anas (RAA) and reported by Imam Bukhari (RA) and Imam Muslim (RA), Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: Help your brother whether he is an oppressor or oppressed. A man asked: O Messenger of Allah! I can help him if he is oppressed, but how do I help him if he is an oppressor? The Prophet (SAW) replied: Stop him from oppressing, that is how you can help him.

According to a tradition narrated by Ka'b Ibn Ayad (RAA) and reported by Imam Tirmidhi (RA), Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: Verily every *ummah* is tested, and the test of my *Ummah* is wealth.

According to a tradition narrated by Abu Hurairah (RAA) and reported by Imam Tirmidhi (RA), Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: When the best amongst you are your leaders, the wealthy amongst you are generous and kind, and your affairs are settled with mutual consultation, then the surface of the earth is better for you than its belly. However, when the wicked amongst you are your leaders, the

wealthy amongst you are miserly, and your affairs are in the hands of your women, then the belly of the earth is better for you than its surface.