

## *Chapter One*

### **PRINCIPLES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE IN ISLAM**

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#### **Main Thesis**

The first impression and the main thesis of this chapter is that the Qur'an does not teach us the art of slavery; it only teaches us the art of good governance: It is a different matter though that the Muslims are busy in reversing this process. The overriding objective of Islam is to establish a just socio-moral and economic-political order in this world. The Prophet (SAW) announced his Prophetic mission (in 610 C.E.) with social reforms such as the amelioration of the down-trodden, the have-nots in general, poor and the destitute, women, orphans, slaves, etc. were central to his mission (Nadwi, 1982). Both the Prophet (SAW) himself and his Meccan opponents were thoroughly convinced that if Islam were to unfold and implement itself in letter and spirit, it would entail a complete and comprehensive change of the existing (socio-moral and political) order. The Prophet (SAW) left Mecca for Madina (in 622 C.E.) and there he immediately assumed the managing of religio-political affairs of Madina (Būti, 1991). Here he initiated good governance by introducing social reforms (such as imposing Zakat for the betterment of the depressed layers of the society, rescuing the poor from chronic debts, to improve the defence of the new-born city-state, allotting shares in inheritance to women, regulating marriage and divorce, prohibiting usury and so forth), along with the promulgation of religio-moral and spiritual teachings of the Qur'an (such as the exclusive worship of God alone, and a firm faith in eschatology, that is, the day of judgment and the life hereafter). When people witnessed Islam being translated in practice and a just socio-moral order established, they entered the fold of Islam tribe after tribe so much so that when the Prophet (SAW) died (in June 632 C.E.) he was virtually a prophet-ruler of the entire Arabian Peninsula.

In spite of that, the Prophet (SAW) never claimed himself to be a ruler, nor did he ever claim to be a ruler whose rule was under his Prophethood. He just claimed to be a Prophet; yet he was a ruler nonetheless. What does it mean? It means that in Islam the relationship between the state and religion is not like that of two sisters, one helping the other. In fact, the state viewed in isolation, is nothing but a reflection of all those socio-moral and spiritual values that Islam stands for. More precisely, it was an instrument or a strategy through which the Prophet (SAW) realized his prophetic mission. In fact, Islam is deemed to permeate the entire gamut of our life and manifest itself not only in the mosque but also in the market place, in the schools and universities, in the courts and in battlefields. The issue would become amply clear if we understand that Islam is essentially addressed to the human heart and is supposed to cultivate in him a specific psycho-moral attitude, an attitude of submission to God and service to the humankind. In short, Muslims are enjoined to establish good governance through a just socio-moral order (or a state) wherein they could organise their individual and collective life in accordance with the teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet (SAW). It is the expectation of the Qur'an that its adherents would either reform the earth (by eradicating

corruption, exploitation, injustice and evil) or lay their lives in this process. There are no other (honourable) alternatives for them. They are enjoined to do justice as it is nearest to piety (*taqwa*). They are admonished to be careful lest the enmity of the community (or of a person) deter/hinder them from being just, fair and upright. This is the foremost obligation of the Muslims in general and the functionaries of an Islamic State in particular.

It is true that Mecca and/or Madina, the cities of the Prophet of Islam (SAW), were not industrial centers but they were positively renowned commercial centers of the era. They were located on the international trade routes and were truly well known hubs of the business world. Professional integrity and moral uprighteousness are pivotal ingredients for good governance in business as was the case for the Prophet (SAW) and his family. It does not matter whether it is the home, an office, an organisation, business, state or Government, one can hardly overlook the radical and revolutionary element, that is, the involvement of women in good governance. Islam emancipated women, right from its inception, and acknowledged their rights – right to life, right to liberty, right to equality before Law, right to education, right to inheritance (or property), right to run a business and make a decent living, right to marriage and divorce and run a family life in accordance with the injunctions of Islam, right to free thinking and free expression including the right to differ even with the personal rulings of the Prophet (SAW) and his righteous caliphs (may Allah be pleased with them). These provisions sound truly revolutionary, especially when we examine them in the light of socio-moral consideration rather than cheap labor and exploitation. Business management, in our view, is a miniatural form of state management or governance. Islam insists that our business transactions should be based on fair play and justice. We must ensure just treatment and treat humans as humans. Islam requires that capital and consumer goods should remain in circulation. Healthy and fair economic activity is indeed the lynchpin of the community or the state. Unless we are committed to the establishment of financial justice, we cannot promote peace and harmony in a society. Islam insists that our business deals/ transactions should be put to writing in the presence of the witnesses, and if there are any disputes, the matter may be referred to the courts of law for proper adjudication.

After this brief preamble, let us now turn to our main problem of finding some guidelines for good governance in Islam. If our presumption is not faulty, we can identify these principles with relative ease and comfort. Our contention is that the administration/governance of an organisation is analogous to the administration/ governance of the state. In fact, principles regulating the conduct of both are essentially the same.

### **Training of Manpower for Good Governance**

For good governance, the overriding objectives of Islam are the establishment of a just socio-moral order free from all sorts of oppression, corruption and exploitation, whether these elements are prompted by business magnates, employers or employees; sellers or buyers; the rulers or the ruled, the haves or have-nots. In order to realize these objectives, Islam lays a heavy emphasis on the psycho-moral training of the individual and society at large. This psycho-moral training is technically known as *tazkiya* (the purification of the self from animal passions), which eventually leads to *taqwa* (God fearing attitude). How are we to realize these objectives? What kind of preparation or combination is required for materialising this goal? In other words, how are we to train the manpower for good governance?

The *Sunnah* of the Prophet (SAW) indicates that he devoted his entire life to the preparation of appropriate manpower for realising these objectives. True, the Qur'an lays the burden of these responsibilities on the shoulders of the whole community rather than any specific elite class. But, as the community itself consists of individuals, education (*tazkiya* and *tarbiya*) of the individuals, therefore, becomes the immediate concern of the Prophet (SAW). Islam does insist that man should acquire *Ilm-al-Asma*, that is, scientific and observational knowledge, and attains mastery over nature (Ghazali, 1997). Further, it wants that the power thus gained through science and technology be exercised under the guidance of *Ilm-al-Kitab* or revelation knowledge. If power is divorced from wisdom and is exercised without the guidance of God, it can corrupt the mind and be ruinous to human race. Hence the cultivation of *taqwa* (God fearing attitude), beside professional skills and scientific acumen, is the ultimate goal of the Islamic system of education. Now, *taqwa* has two dimensions, that is, self-directed (*taqwa*); and the other-directed (*taqwa*). Self-directed *taqwa* has diverse shades and meanings; their essence, however, lies in preventing oneself from doing evil. Generally, it aims at the purification of our inner self, that is, our passions, instincts, sentiments and emotions are to be brought under the command of reason which, in turn, ought to be guided by revelation. Also, it means the development of our conscience that may help cognize the distinctions between right and wrong and motivates us to do the right and avoid the wrong. Further, it means the fulfillment of what has been commanded by the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (SAW) and to avoid what has been forbidden. More so, it signifies the willingness to lay one's life and property for the cause of God (Q: 57:20-21). It also stands for inner readiness/restlessness to sprout into something new. More precisely, it means the cultivation of God-fearing attitude, an attitude of accountability of God Almighty. This psycho-moral attitude is deemed to enable us to do justice to oneself; justice to those who come into our immediate relations; and to extend it (justice) to the community and finally to humanity at large.

This inner state of mind can be illustrated by an example. Let us assume that we have an arable piece of land, which is fully prepared for cultivation as well as all the suitable weather condition, such as, sun, water and air for it to grow. But if the seed that we sow is dead, its inner core and kernel is no longer ready to sprout into something new, then we won't have the desired results. The followers of Moses (peace be upon him) since they were devoid of *taqwa* or inner readiness to shoulder the responsibilities, even when they were asked by the prophet to go ahead and conquer Syria and Palestine (as these were the "promised lands" destined for them by God) they flatly refused to move any further (Q: 5:20-22). Preparation of the requisite manpower, therefore, is the most essential ingredient for change, revolution and good governance in society. For, if a man, who is expected to run the state, is corrupt and ill-prepared, the whole system would collapse. The history of some state can be another instance in point. Acquiring an independent separate homeland, massive sacrifices were made. Virtually, snatched away from the teeth of the enemies, but ill-equipped and ill-prepared for shouldering the responsibilities of an independent and sovereign state, they ended up in creating a real mess. Moreover, the Jews were able to recover and retrace their steps after forty years of groping in wilderness, while we have yet to arrest our down-hill sliding even after many decades of disgrace and humiliation. Unless we wake up from our dogmatic slumber, introduce revolutionary and drastic attitudinal changes, and prepare God-fearing leadership for the governance of the state, I am afraid, we might be forced to embrace the doom's day scenario.

Social dimension of *taqwa*, on the other hand, enjoins us to prevent others from doing evil or spread corruption on land and sea, and endanger the collective good of mankind. *Jihad*

(an all-out struggle for the cause of God) is another integral part of this other-directed *taqwa* and is an essential instrument of social or global change. It has also surgical values. It may be underscored that while self-directed *taqwa* (education, *tazkiya*, and *tarbiya*) guards the frontier of our mind from external (ideological) invasions or internal erosions, the other-directed *taqwa* (or *jihad*) (Q: 61:10-12) protects the geographical and territorial frontiers of the state and safeguards our life, honour, and dignity, besides the preservation of our natural resources. The Qur'an, we may notice, is extremely critical of those who remain clinging to their homes and hearths and are /were reluctant to rush to the battlefield for laying their lives for the cause of God! (Q: 9:24, 81). Abu Bakr Siddique (RAA) observes in his inaugural address that if a community begins to tolerate moral indecency and allows the spirit of Jihad to cool down, it surrenders its right to exist on the face of the earth and qualifies instead for a safe burial (Mohammad, 1997). Of late, since the Muslims have allowed their spirit of jihad to cool off and have adopted an apologetic attitude, they have placed themselves at the mercy of their enemies. Innocent men, women and children are being killed in Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, Pakistan, Kashmir, Chechnya, Bosnia, Kosovo, and at so many other trouble-spots, while we do not hear even ordinary murmurings in Muslim World. We are just helpless spectators of the brutal massacre of the Muslims. Our enemies are subscribing to a strange logic; they contend that if a person dies for his country, he is a hero and a patriot, fit for all sorts of rewards and recognitions. But if he dies for the cause of God, his real Creator, which is the essence of *jihad*, he is a terrorist and fundamentalist. The irony is that Muslims are sucked into this vicious campaign of the enemy and are oblivious of the demands of *jihad*. Why all this? Obviously, lack of good governance. The Qur'an, for instance, advises the Muslims to keep their forces ready on war-footing so that their own enemies and the enemies of God dare not cast lusty looks on Muslim territories, fighters and committed men. Unfortunately, as the Muslims have not paid much attention to such injunctions of the Qur'an, none of the Muslim countries is self-sufficient in its defense needs. No wonder they are being mercilessly crushed all over the world.

Our emphasis on the education and training of the individual, however, should not be misconstrued as if we should ignore or marginalise the community. In the final analysis, it is the community of the like-minded people (brotherhood of the faithful) that is to shoulder the responsibility of establishing a just socio-moral order (or a state). The Qur'an (Q:18:65-70), for instance, advises the community to spare people from each of its layers/sections and send them for higher education and development of deeper insight into religion so that when they return to their respective layers, they are able to teach them the essentials of Islam and save them from drifting towards un-Islamic ways of life. Intentions of the Qur'an are well-pronounced here, that is, God-fearing attitude (*taqwa*) should be made vibrant in the community of believers as well. Further, it is the expectations of the Qur'an that only a community of this nature would do its utmost for the establishment of a just social-moral order. Iqbal (scholar, philosopher, poet, and thinker) and many other Muslim scholars maintain that, according to the Qur'an, (Q:2:213-214) nations are to be judged here and now, in and through history; only the individuals will be judged on the Day of Judgment. Nations, they contend, are flushed up by Allah so that He may see how far they are able to establish a just socio-moral order (in this world). When they fail to live up to the expectations of the Qur'an, they are pushed out of the commanding position and buried in the dust of history, probably never to be heard of again.

Further, the community is advised to settle its affairs through *shura* or mutual consultation and cooperation (Q: 42:38). *Shura* or mutual consultation, as a decision-making process, it may be underlined, was not introduced by the Qur'an; it was already prevalent in the

Arab culture. The Quran simply confirmed it and transformed it from a tribal institution to a community institution. For instance, we are familiar with the existence of *Dar-al-Nadwa* or the City-Council in Mecca before the advent of Islam (Ibn Hisham, 1980). It was the common practice that who-so-ever was to cross forty years of his age would become automatically the member of this City-Council. It may be noticed that even the Meccan non-believers were of the opinion that a person attained maturity of thinking at the age of forty. This is the age where his knowledge and experience could help him to reflect in a dispassionate manner and offer constructive plans/critiques for the betterment of the community. One may suggest that if we could somehow push the age limit (of our voters and those who are contesting; for public office) a little upward rather than pulling it downward, maybe we would stand a better chance to overcome some of the lingering difficulties of the modern democracy.

In any case, it may be emphasized that *shura* or mutual consultation offers us the guidance of collective wisdom of the community and saves us from a narrow or partisan outlook. *Shura* remained in practice in some form during the period of the rightly-guided caliphs. However, it was pushed out of court when the Ummayyads took control of the political affairs of the Muslim State (Ghadban, 1989). *Shura* suffered a further setback in later days when the caliphate became weak at the center, and different Sultans/Ameers became de-facto rulers in remote areas of the Muslim Empire. Obviously, *shura* lost its relevance altogether as these Sultans/Ameers were engaged in self-serving activities rather than promoting the cause of the community. It is really pity that *shura* could not be institutionalized amongst the Muslims, otherwise it might have changed the entire complexion of the Muslim world, besides having far reaching consequences for the non-Muslim world as well.

In good governance, community is also to serve as a watch-dog of social norms and values. It is to have a vigilant eye on the conduct of its rulers and the functionaries of the state. This critique and vigilance is likely to save the rulers from lust and greed and similar other vagaries/corruptions of power and authority. Further, it seems that the ruler is obliged to seek consultation/*shura* from the community or its representatives. Of course, he is not entitled to select the people of his choice arbitrarily for consultation and then feel free to accept or reject their advice/*shura*. Apparently, the members of the *shura* are to represent the general will of the community and this will is to be honoured by the ruler. In fact, the ruler runs the affairs of the state not for himself; but on behalf of the community and for the community. He cannot impose himself on the community against its wishes. He can enjoy this position so long as he enjoys the trust and confidence of the community and he loses his right to govern their affairs if he loses their trust and confidence. Our history is replete with such instances where the Prophet (SAW) himself is known to have accepted the *shura* of his companions as opposed to his own opinion. For example, in the Battle of Badr, the Prophet (SAW) selected a specific spot for the encampment of the Muslim fighters/*Mujahidun* (Nadwi, 1982). One of the companions of the Prophet (SAW) enquired of him as to whether he had selected this place under the guidance of revelation (in which case it would be binding and obligatory) or was it the result of his personal discretion. The Prophet (SAW) replied that it was indeed his own choice. On hearing this, the companion of the Prophet, who was apparently well-versed in war strategy, submitted that in that case they should move a little further and occupy an elevated place. This would give them an edge over the enemy, as they would be able to oversee them and hit them from a vantage point. The Prophet (SAW) immediately accepted the proposal even though this decision was to determine the destiny of the Muslim Ummah. Likewise, in the Battle of *Uhud* the Trench, the Prophet (SAW) accepted the recommendation of Salman Farsi (RAA) to dig the trench to defend

the city (Madina) (Nadwi, 1982). Similarly, when the siege was prolonged causing serious difficulties for the Prophet (SAW) and his companions, the Prophet (SAW) thought of a plan to ease the situation. He talked to the Ansar and proposed that perhaps the Muslims should promise some of the lands produce to some of the tribes, currently engaged in the siege (along with others) and induce them to pullout. After listening to the Prophet (SAW), the Ansars submitted (to the Prophet) that even in pre-Islamic days, they had never yielded anything to these tribes. Since that they had embraced Islam, it would not be appropriate for them to lose heart and offer the enemy temptations of this kind. The Prophet (SAW) immediately withdrew his own recommendation and accepted the opinion of the Ansar.

It appeared that in a Muslim state, the ruler is obliged to ensure the participation of the community in the affairs of the state and benefit from its collective wisdom rather than bypassing the community by exploiting its illiteracy and ignorance. If the community is ignorant, whose fault is that? When all is said and done, it is the state and its intellectuals (that is the *Ulema* and *Mashaikh*) who are responsible to teach the basics of Islam to the community and enable it to play its role effectively. The Qur'an does warn us that if the community fails to fulfill its responsibility, it is likely to be written off. So we have to wake up and do our duty before we run out of time. The community has to change itself from within before it aspires to effect change in the outside world. It has to monitor vigilantly not only its own performance, but also the performance of its rulers. And if they deviate, the community has to do everything possible to straighten them out. This soul-searching, this vigilance, ought to be an on-going process, otherwise there is a serious danger of falling into disarray and disintegration. It appears that our national reconstruction should be initiated from the education (*tazkiya* and *tarbiya*) of the individual as well as the community at large. Both must be made equally vibrant with God-fearing attitude (*taqwa*). Only then can we have the right kind of manpower for the governance of the state. The state and its functionaries can facilitate this process. This is not only the best way, but the only way for good governance and to save ourselves from total disaster.

### **The Right Man for the Right Job**

Another principle of good governance that the Qur'an insists upon is the selection of the right man for the right job. In other words, merit is to serve as the sole criterion of selection of manpower in an Islamic state. Race, color, and creed should not be allowed to influence decisions. It may be underscored that the Prophet (SAW) recruited even non-Muslims for diplomatic services sheerly on the basis of their competence. The Prophet (SAW) from amongst his own blood relations assigned some state responsibilities only to Ali (RAA).

Abu Bakr Siddique (RAA) meticulously avoided even a single appointment of any of his near relations in state administration. He strictly maintained that the state should not only ensure the right man for the right job but should also provide them adequate professional freedom so that they could do full justice to their job. For if the ruler tends to interfere constantly in the work of his officials, they would lose heart and remain suspended in their work. Omar-e-Farooq (RAA) retained the above provisions. i.e. the right man for the right job; and adequate professional freedom so that the worker could put his heart and soul in his work; and added strict vigilance and transparent accountability as necessary elements of good governance. He used to oversee the performance of his governors and to call them for yearly accountability at the time of Hajj. He

used to invite public opinion or complaints against the respective governors of various units of the state. In one of these sessions, one Egyptian citizen made a complaint that his governor's son had challenged him to a horse-race, and when the former was beaten in the race, he lost his temper and flogged him (the Egyptian). The matter was reported to the governor, but he failed to uphold justice. On listening to this complaint, Omar (RAA) asked the Egyptian chap to flog the son of the governor in the same manner as he was flogged by him (Al' Aniy, 1989). He also reprimanded the governor and asked him as to who had authorized him to treat human beings, who were born free and sacred as his personal slaves. He even went further and suggested that perhaps it would be advisable for the governor to attend to the sheep/goat of Bait-ul-Mal as he was better suited to govern beasts and animals rather than the human beings.

Also, he used to advise his officials or state functionaries to be easily accessible to the people and not to hide themselves in palacious houses or place guards between themselves and the public. Besides, in his over ten years of stay in office, he appointed only one of his relatives as a tax collector: and he too was sacked later under drinking charges.

Islamic history has preserved another important document concerning the problem of good governance. It is recorded that when Omar bin Abd al-Aziz (RAA) was elected to the office of Amir-al-Momineen, he wrote a letter to Imam Hassan Basri (RAA) soliciting his assistance and advice in the selection of appropriate manpower for the governance of the state (Majidah, 1987). The latter responded that, in his opinion, the community could be divided into three different categories as follows:

The first category consisted of those who were really fed up with the vicissitudes of politics. They had resigned from the thicks of life and were given to the remembrance of God. This class was no longer available for the service of the state, and he would be well advised to leave them alone.

The second category consisted of those who happened to be extremely anxious and ambitious to get an opportunity of this kind. They might knock at his door day in and day out expressing their keenness for the service of the people, while in reality they would be desirous to serve only their own selfish interest. He would be well advised to keep such people at a safe distance and avoid assigning them any responsibility in the state.

The third category was a strange mix. Here, if a person was intelligent and efficient, he was dreadfully dishonest. If per chance, he was honest, he was dreadfully stupid and simpleton and could hardly see anything beyond his nose. These two qualities (intelligence and honesty) rarely go together. If he was fortunate to find some individuals of this caliber, he should try to get them involved in the governance of the state. They alone can serve his purpose.

## **Trust and Credibility**

Another principle that attracts our attention is that the ruler should never lose his trust and credibility with the community or the masses. If he deceives and cheats the people and feeds them on falsehood and lies, he loses his respect and credibility. Since they do not trust their ruler, they feel incurably reluctant to make any sacrifices for him or the state. We may refer here to the meticulous care demonstrated by the Prophet (SAW) during his last night in Mecca. His residence, as we know, was besieged by a force carefully drawn from the major Arab tribes and these men were planning to kill the Prophet (SAW) jointly so that they could pre-empt any retaliation of Bani Hashim, the Prophet's tribe (Būti, 1991). At this critical moment what troubled the Prophet (SAW) most was how to ensure a safe return of the *Amana* of believers, and non-believers. He was least concerned about his own life and safety. Instead, he was solely

worried about the preservation of his trust and credibility even with his blood thirsty enemies. He felt relieved only when he could advise Ali (RAA), his beloved cousin, to lie in his bed for the night; return safely the Amanas of the Meccan non-believers in the morning and then follow him to Madina.

Under these circumstances, (where the enemy was hell-bent to take his life and had already ousted the Muslims from the city and confiscated their houses and properties) even if the Prophet (SAW) were to ignore this obligation, nobody, including his enemies, would have found any justification in blaming him for his negligence. But the Prophet (SAW) was determined to honour his commitment and maintain his trust even with his sworn enemies. Now contrast this act of the Prophet (SAW) with what we have witnessed in many countries, poor plans of documentations of economy, sales tax, freezing bank accounts of individuals and groups, and business deals with known dishonest and untrustworthy regime, etc. Consequently, they have shattered the trust and confidence of their own people beyond repair, causing devastating loss to the economy, and drainage of money and intellectual mind.

### **Crime and Punishment and Equality before Law**

Islam is uncompromisingly committed to the dignity, equality, and freedom of man. He is a trustee and vicegerent of God in this world. In this respect, all human beings, regardless of their religion, caste and creed are on equal footing. They are all from Adam (AS) and Adam was raised from dust. As humans, we all have equal rights. If, one commits any violence against another, Islam does allow mutual forgiveness. We are allowed even to take blood-money and forgive the murderer if we so desire. The Qur'an teaches us that forgiveness is better than revenge. Of course, these are all pre-court adjustment/accommodations. Once the case is reported to the court for judicious settlement, then it has to be settled in open court on the merits of the case. There is no room for secret proceedings or exparty decision. Islam wants both the contending parties be given a fair chance to present their case. Besides, human rights are truly sacred and inviolable; they cannot be suspended or jeopardised without proving the man guilty in a fair trial. Here the law is to treat equal cases equally and unequal cases unequally. When the Prophet (SAW) was approached to show leniency and exonerate to an influential Quraish lady involved in a theft, he explained that earlier communities were destroyed by God mainly because they were selective in the application of law (Balawi, 1994). When their wealthy and powerful ones committed any crime, they could escape from punishment, whereas, the poorer ones were subjected to harsh punishments. In Islam, he emphasised, even his own daughter Fatima (RAA) would have to suffer the same punishment (if found guilty of a crime) as any other woman.



It may, however, be emphasised that Islam seems to be interested in the elimination of crimes rather than the criminals. It concentrates on reformation, education, and transformation of human minds so that the crimes or the criminals are not born in the first instance. We may recall here two separate cases, one of a male and another of a female. First, a man came to the Prophet (SAW) and confessed that he had been guilty of adultery and wished that he be punished and purified. The man was stoned to death, but the Prophet (SAW) never questioned him as to who his partner to crime was. Similarly, a woman came to the Prophet (SAW) and confessed that she had committed adultery. She too implored that she be punished (to death) and purified. Her case was spread over years. But here again the Prophet (SAW) never asked her as to who was her partner to the crime was. Contrast this to present day police investigations, especially in Muslim countries.

It is really a pity that Islam is now characterised as a religion of harsh punishments only. Its positive and beneficial aspects, such as its commitment to justice and social reforms, its deep concern for the amelioration of the down-trodden and have-nots in general, its keenness to protect human dignity, human equality and human freedom, as well as its eagerness to establish a just socio-moral order by eradicating corruption and exploitation, are all, and similar other ideas/visions of Islam, now considered as a matter of history. Due to the poor governance of Muslim rulers and more so the poor performance of our intellectuals, we have failed to present the true face of Islam. Just think of some punishments in some countries where both the guilty and innocent men, women, children, and even family relatives, regardless of guilt and innocence, have been treated alike. Justice is the key ingredient to establish faith and trust in rulers, and consequently to protect and promote national interest.

### **Proper Job Description**

It was a common practice during the life of the Prophet (SAW) and his righteous caliphs that when a state functionary was appointed, his job was clearly defined/ described. The functionary was supposed to present this document to the community so that they could be watchful of his performance. In case he was negligent of his duties, the matter was reported to the head-office or the caliph. The functionary was called upon to explain his position and in case he was found guilty of negligence, he was asked to mend his ways or be replaced by the central authority. If the job is not clearly defined, we cannot hold him/her accountable for his omissions or commissions. It is obligatory that the employee should be fully informed of his rights and duties.

### **Adequate Salaries**

The Holy Prophet (SAW) is on record to have emphasised that our state functionaries should be given adequate salaries so that they can meet the financial needs of their families. This is also essential to get their full involvement in their duties and safeguard them from all sorts of temptations towards corruption and bribes.

### **Work Specialisation**

Islam requestes that the functionaries should do their duties as best as is humanly possible. They should not waste their time and talent. Further, Islam also requires us not to assign work beyond

the capacity of a worker. If we do so, we are advised to share the burden/load and help the worker in the realization of his assignment.

### **Consultative and Participative Format of Management**

Islam insists that where revelation is silent, we are supposed to conduct our affairs through consultation and *shura*. *Shura* ensures the guidance of collective wisdom. It also gives a sense of participation to those who are consulted in the decision making process. It gives the participants a sense of belonging to the organisation, which, in turn, enables them to sacrifice for the organisation. If decisions are made unilaterally, they tend to alienate the employees.

### **Mutual Respect**

An employee should be a well-wisher of his employer and vice-versa. Mutual care and concern can make the work place more pleasant and congenial. In hospitable working conditions, workers can contribute for the collective good of the organisation. If workers are alienated because of the cold and cruel attitude of the company owners, it can damage productivity and lower the dividends of all concerned.

### **Authoritative and Dictatorial Administration**

Repressive and authoritarian administration can damage the organisation or the state beyond repairs. Such an environment discourages the employees from taking creative initiative to boost the output of the organisation. Freedom of thought and action are indispensable for the betterment of the state or an organisation.

### **Reverse Migration**

It may be emphasised that the Qur'an is the testament of human dignity; testament of human sanctity; testament of human freedom, and testament of human equality. Man is to be treated as the foundational stone of all its socio-political and economic system. The establishment of a just socio-moral order wherein such an individual can thrive and realize his excellence becomes the ultimate goal of Qur'anic teachings. The realisation of this goal, however, would remain highly elusive unless our educational system (along with our socio-political system) makes both the individual and the community equally vibrant with the fear of God (*taqwa*). Even an all out struggle (*jihad*) is expected from the Muslims for the realisation of such a state. It should not be missed, however, that Islam is a religion of peace. It cannot recommend war and violence *per se* as an end in itself. But if war becomes inevitable for the establishment of peace and justice (and the reformation of this earth), Qur'an expects the Muslims to participate in it rather than run away from it.

It is really a pity that Muslims have abandoned the Qur'an, one of the most vibrant and revolutionary document ever known to human mind. Their individual and collective life is no longer inspired by its teachings. Iqbal rightly laments that after Ghazali, intellectuals of the Muslim world left pure orthodoxy and migrated towards mysticism. If he was to re-assess the

current situation, he might have added: alas: they have moved further to secularism and outright nihilism. Unless our intellectuals initiate a reverse migration and try to re-discover the Qur'an (and the Sunnah of the Prophet (SAW)) and implement them in their individual and collective life, the chances of our resurgence would remain terribly bleak. Still, there is a glimmer of hope though God enjoins us to make Islam dominant over all other religions. This vision of the Qur'an is still to be materialised; to be materialised with or without us is a different matter. Let us hope and pray that God enables us to be a party to this Qur'anic mission.

In conclusion, we may recapitulate that for good governance, the primary objective of Islam is the establishment of a just socio-moral order in this world. In order to realize this objective, it lays heavy emphasis on the *tazkiya* or moral purification of the individual and the society which eventually cultivates in them a specific psycho-moral attitude, an attitude of *taqwa* (God-fearing attitude). When both the individual and the society are vibrant with a sense of *taqwa*, we can have the requisite combination for running a state or an organisation. The essence of Islam, it may be observed, lies in submission to God and service to humankind. It is really a pity that Muslim societies all over the world are falling short of their moral ideals. One could only hope that they would mend their ways before it is too late.

I may wrap up this chapter by quoting Ibn Arabi with a slight modification: The Qur'an tells us that God has, "breathed His own spirit in man". Now it is up to man to bear witness that God is indeed present in him. So all that you, me, and the Muslim *Ummah* have to prove is that God is indeed present in us. If we do that, it would positively revolutionise the *Ummah* and enable us to fulfill the aforesaid Vision of the Qur'an.

### Further Readings

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