
Leadership Qualities and Awakening of Islamic Ummah: Quranic

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Abstract

The holy Qur'an refers to some important qualities that play a decisive role in creating and sustaining an Islamic awakening. It was only with such qualities that the divine leaders could be able to awake and transform their respective societies. Thus, considering the Islamic awakening in the region and the world at large, and likewise, the role of both the leaders and the people in such a matter, it seems necessary to identify the leadership qualities and its significant role in the Islamic awakening based on the Qur'anic perspective.

Thus, the aim of this study is to examine the role of leadership qualities in the achievement of Islamic awakening. The methodology used in this research work was a descriptive analytical research method in which the available data are analyzed based on logical and textual evidences. The outcome of our research shows that the leadership plays a significant role of a moving engine in the fate of nations. Thus, the degree of success or otherwise of nations depends on their decisions and likewise, the spiritual conditions of their leaders.

Keywords: Leadership qualities, Islamic awakening, Islamic ummah, leadership and developments, second phase of Islamic Revolution

Introduction

Prior to the emergence of the regional revolution or the Arab Spring, the prediction of the formation of an Islamic Middle East was first made on the 8th of Esfand, 1388 S.H³ (corresponding to 27th February, 2010) by Ayatollah

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3. The abbreviation "A.H" is used in this article for the Lunar Hijri calendar while "S.H" is used

Khamenei (May his authority be prolonged) , the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran; the spiritual capital of the Islamic world. In a meeting with the participants at the Gaza Conference, he said: "Based on the realities that God Almighty has decreed, a new Middle East will be formed. That Middle East will be an Islamic Middle East."1

Thus, it was not long that an unprecedented revolution and awakening began in the Arab countries. This awakening led to the collapse of several puppet dictators of the Imperialism. Meanwhile, considering the current revolutions and awakenings created in those regional countries and in the world at large, the question arises: What criteria and prerequisites does the glorious Qur'an consider for the leaders and the nation on the issue of awakening? What effect does the leadership role have on the fate of nations?

However, before answering these questions, it seems necessary to define some important and relevant terms.

1. Conceptual Analysis

1. Islam

The term 'Islam' is derived from an Arabic root S-L-M; which According to Hans Wehr literally means submission; resignation and reconciliation to the will of God (Hans 1976: 426). According to Ibn Manthur and Az-hari, Islam in a religious context means a display of humbleness and obedience to the message of the Prophet.

However, in a technical sense, Islam is a set of religion teachings related to the genesis; resurrection; and social laws, that is, the worships and transactions that are obtained through revelation and prophecy (Tabatabai, 1374: 1/641).

Meanwhile, it is pertinent to say that we do intend the literal meaning of 'Islam' in this research, but we meant by the term 'Islam' a religion which comprises of beliefs, ethics, social norms and laws, and provides for the societal needs, as earlier pointed out by Allamah.

2. Ummah

According to Raghīb, the term 'Ummah' is described as *"Any group that comes together by an issue or an idea, and there is no difference whether such an issue is related to a particular religion, time or a place, and it does not matter whether it is a mandatory or an optional matter"* (Raghīb Isfahani, 1412: 85). Misbah Yazdi explains thus: *"From the Qur'an's point of view, the term 'Ummah' means a group of human beings who are in the direction of unity and commonality in all of them"* (Misbah Yazdi, 1378: 75). Meanwhile, in this study, we intend as 'Ummah' a group of human beings who have a single

leader, a single religion and a single goal, and which the Qur'an refers to them as a single community (See: Q 21: 92; Q 23: 52).

3. Leadership

From a religious point of view, the position of leadership is the right of the divine Prophets of God and their true vicegerents, which is technically being referred to as the *Imam*, the guardian or guardians of the affair etc. However, during a period of absence of the chosen Proofs of God (i.e., the Prophets and their vicegerents) , the religious scholars enjoy such a right.

Thus, we intended the general meaning of the term 'Leadership' in this research. The meaning encompasses all the three categories (i.e., the Prophets, the vicegerents of the Prophets, the righteous scholars) in terms of conditions and roles. Some Muslim scholars have mentioned more than twenty-six leadership qualities and requisites in their works (Misbah Yazdi, 1378: 374 _ 393).

It is sometimes possible to refer to leadership as a school of thought or a country. Similarly, this term is a common one used for both positive and negative leaders. However, we intended only the positive leadership in this research.

4. Qualification

Qualification is a condition that must be fulfilled before a right can be acquired and this, without any doubt plays a very vital role in social transformation. In a definition of Guy Rocher, "*qualification is defined as elements that are either appropriate or inappropriate, which make the effect (s) of one or more agents of change more active or slower; more intense or weaker*" (Roche, 1387: 32). According to Vago, "qualifications is defined as something that slows down or accelerates the change" (Vago, 1373: 223).

According to the present research, qualifications are a set of value elements that play a fundamental role in the awakening of the leader and the people. Meanwhile, it should be noted that such qualifications are common among the leader as well as the people.

2. Leadership Qualities and the Islamic Awakening

In the countries (such as Egypt, Yemen, Libya, Tunisia, etc.) where there were civil uprisings, the aspiration for the Islamic Ummah did not materialize as expected! What could have been the obstacles in these countries that need to be addressed? It seems that these countries, as well as other countries that have various domestic and foreign problems, are all suffering from a major problem!! And that is the lack of competent leader who possessed all the required qualifications.

It is a fact that the leaders, without a conscious nation, cannot play the desired role in the society and create a real awakening! Likewise, a nation will

not achieve its goals without a worthy leader. The similitude of a leader and the nation is like that of the body and soul, where the nation is the body, while the leader is the soul. The body without a soul has no personality, because it is the soul that gives cognition to the body. Likewise, the soul cannot display its strength and competence without the body.

In the holy Qur'an, some qualifications of the leaders as well as the nations are explicitly explained. And it is based on those qualifications, we can hope for the achievement and continuation of the revolution and the Islamic awakening. Therefore, the following are some of such qualifications:

2.1: Insight

One of the most important qualifications necessary for awakening is the possession of an insight in various events of the societies. If the leaders and the people have an insight, then many blind historical points will evade. Without any doubt, an insight plays an important role in creating and sustaining awakening. The Arabic term "*Basirah*" (i.e., an insight) is derived from the root letters "*b-s-r*" (Ibn Manthur, 1414: 4/65) and according to Raghīb, it is defined as the "perception of the heart" (Raghīb Isfahani, 1412: 127) while some lexicographers have taken the term "*Basirah*" to mean "sight" (Qurashi, 1371: 195).

Meanwhile, the derivatives of this Arabic word have been widely used in the Qur'an. For instance, the words "*basirah*" (i.e., insight), and "*Absaar*" (i.e., vision) have been generally used to mean vision or sometimes refer to the external eye which has a sensation or sometimes the inner eye and intellect, which means the mental and heart perceptions (Markaz Farhang, 1382: *Basirah*). In several verses of the Qur'an (such as Q 2: 96, 110; Q 3: 15, 20; Q 4: 58 etc.), the adjective "*Baseer*" is mentioned as a divine attribute.

In the glorious Qur'an, an insight is considered as the basis and one of the most important requisites for awakening: "Say, 'This is my way. I summon to Allah with insight—I and he who follows me ...'" (See: Q. 12: 108). It is pertinent to note that the Quranic exegetes have given different meanings to the term "*basirah*" in this verse, and these include: 'certainty and truth' (Abyāri, 1405: 10/148); 'awareness' (Baghdadi, 1415: 2/559); 'guidance and light' (Sayyid Qutb, 1412: 4/2034); and a 'conclusive proof' (Tabarsi, 1372: 5/411). Meanwhile, it seems that the term "*basirah*" (i.e., an insight) is essentially the means of distinguishing right from wrong. Thus, all the above-mentioned meanings are a requisite and outcome of it, but not its actual meaning.

If a nation possesses the means of distinguishing right from wrong, it will definitely distinguish the true leader from the fake one, and then the right and wrong paths will not be ambiguous to them. In this verse, the insight of the leader as well as the people is mentioned. That is to say, the leadership must possess full insight to facilitate the underlying conditions for awakening and

social changes in the society. In some narrations, the expression "... and he who follows me" is said to refer to Imam Ali and the other infallible Imams, *peace be upon them* (Abu Hamza Thumali, 1420: 214; Haskani, 1411: 1/372). Of course, such an interpretation seems to refer to a perfect and substantive example of the meaning of the verse, not its monopolistic meaning.

The leader of the faithful (a.s) while describing his insight, said: *"Know that the devil has gathered his party and provided the cavalry and infantry for his army. Indeed, I have an insight that cannot be separated from me. I have not concealed the truth from myself and it has not been concealed from me"* (Ibn Maytham, 1404: 1/285). A Sunni scholar, Ibn Abi al-Hadid al-Mu'tazili in his commentary of the expression *"And there is indeed an insight with me"*, says: *"The same insight which I had in all the important events during the time of the Prophet (s) is still with me"* (Ibn Abi al-Hadid, 1381: 1/239). And this statement refers to the verse 108 of Surah Yusuf. Similarly, it is narrated in a hadith from Imam Reza (as) that he said: *"We have eyes that are not like those of the common people and there is light in them which the devil (Satan) has no influence in it"* (Tusi, 1414: 245). A leader such as Imam Ali (a.s) with such an insight had three battles with three difficult groups: the traitors; the oppressors and the Kharijites (Ibn Abd al-Barr, 1412: 3/1117), as no one else could dared to fight with the Kharijites. He was the one who took the eye of sedition out of its bowl (Ibn Maytham, 1404: 2/387).

In the glorious Qur'an, the concept of "insight" is expressed as '*Furqan*' (i.e., a criterion), which is possessed only by those with divine piety, i.e., *Taqwa* (See: Q. 8: 29). Thus, some Quranic exegetes have interpreted the word '*Furqan*' as the same as 'insight' (Makarim Shirazi, 1374: 7/140; Qara'ati, 1383: 4/310). On the contrary, some Quranic exegetes have interpreted it (i.e., '*Furqan*') to mean the following: 'way out' (Ibn Jawzi, 1422: 2/204); 'light of religion' (Abu Muhammad, 1423: 71; Kashani Murtadha, 1410: 1/453); 'light of guardianship' (Gonabadi, 1408: 2/234); 'esoteric luminosity' (Mustafawi, 1380: 9/323); 'knowledge that distinguishes right from wrong' (Qomi, 1367: 1/272); 'victory' and 'guidance' (Kashani, 1336: 4/191).

In the opinion of Allamah, he believes that the word '*Furqan*' means something that distinguishes between two things; truth and falsehood as in the verse. Therefore, '*Furqan*' in beliefs means separating faith and guidance from disbelief and misguidance, but in practice, it means separating obedience and every God-pleasing deed from sin and every deed that prompts His wrath. And '*Furqan*' in thought and opinions means separating the right thought from the wrong one (Tabatabai; 1374: 9/71).

It seems that the meaning of Allamah is the most accurate. This is because what distinguishes right from wrong has different examples in the interpretations (such as light; guidance; knowledge, victory, etc.) that have been

mentioned. In the life human beings, the most important issue is identifying right from wrong; good from evils; friends from foes, and recognizing the causes of happiness and misery. If a person knows these realities well, he will reach his destination faster. Anyhow, what could be derived from this verse is that the efforts of the people and the society This is because the people and the society that are pious will be bestowed by Allah with special insight and knowledge, which are very useful on the path of life. It will also save them from lapses and negative changes and they shall be guided to the right path. The pious people are not only possessing the capability to recognize right from wrong, but whenever they are afflicted with the satanic temptations, they quickly awake and recognize the truth with the light of insight and escape from the temptations of demons (See: Q. 7: 201). The people of the region, in particular have recognized the evil beasts and they stood firmly by chanting slogans against them. Without any doubt, it is the people with an insight and divine values that could accelerate the ground for awakening in the society.

2.2: Perseverance

One of the requisites for creating awakening, ensuring its continuity and preservation is the perseverance on a path and goal. This is because a nation without resistance and steadfastness is not an awake nation. The Qur'an gives an emphasis to the endurance and perseverance of both the leadership and the nation in order to achieve victories. The remarkable victories of the people of the region, and the overthrow of puppet dictators, are the fruits of the perseverance displayed by both the leaders and the people in the region.

The Arabic term "*Istiqamah*" is derived from the word "*Qawama*" which means "moderation" (Ibn Manthur, 1414: 12/496). Thus, human endurance means remaining consistence on a path (Tureihi, 1375: 6/142). According to Raghīb, he says: The term "*Istiqamah*" is about a path that "has always been built on one way and the right path is likened to the same path. Just like the verse "Keep us on the right path.", the human endurance is his commitment to be steadfast on a path (Raghīb Isfahani, 1412: 690).

In the Qur'an, it is observed that the commandment of being steadfast is directed first to leader of the society before anyone (See: Q. 42: 15). This is because the continuity of an awakening in the society is possible by maintaining the spirit of endurance and perseverance in the leadership. However, the Holy Qur'an does not only consider the perseverance of the leadership sufficient, but it has also assessed the endurance of the people alongside with the leadership (See. Q. 11: 112).

Of course, perseverance and steadfastness are a very difficult task and it is the duty of every person who invites others to an endurance that is devoid of extremes based on his own ability (Tha'alabi, 1418: 5/153; Alūsi, 1415: 6/190). It is reported in a narration that no serious and more difficult verse was revealed

to the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) more than this verse (i.e., Q. 42: 15) ". Therefore, when he was asked by his companions on the reasons for his sudden gray hairs and the symptoms of old age? He said: "*The chapters of Hud (i.e., Q. 11) and Wakiah (i.e., Q. 56) made me old!*" (Tabarsi, 1372: 5/304). In some Sunni exegetical sources, the expression "*The chapter Hud and its sister chapter made me old*" was documented (Razi, 1420: 18/406; Baqwi, 1420: 2/473).

In addition, the issue of perseverance was so heavy on the shoulders of the divine leader to such an extent that after the revelation of the above verse, no one ever saw the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) smiling (Suyuti, 1404: 3/351; Tantawi: 7/285). In *Tafsir Nemuneh*, the author while explaining this verse categorized the factors that hastened the old age in the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) to four (Makarim Shirazi, 1374: 9/259).

The perseverance of the leader and the people bring about security in a society and the society consequently would be in better psychological conditions for awakening (See: Q. 41: 30). Resistance, purposefulness and faith are valuable resources (See: Q. 46: 13) that are also emphasized in Hadiths (Tabarsi, 1372: 9/17). If there is perseverance, the conditions for a good life and a positive awakening are ensured in the society (See: Q. 72: 16). Many Sunni (such as: Muraghi, n.d: 29/101; Mazhari, 1412: 10/90) and Shiite commentators (such as: Tabarsi, 1372: 1/559; Mughniyah, 1424: 7/439; Shirazi, 1423: 590) have considered the commandments of perseverance in this verse to relate to the group of jinn and humans.

In some Shiite Quranic exegesis, the interpretation of the verse is explained as follows: Imam Muhammad Baqir (a.s) said: "*If we remain steadfast on the guardianship of the leader of the faithful (i.e., Ali ibn Abi-Talib) and the successors among his offspring, and follow them in their commandments and prohibitions, we would nourish them with plenty of water, that is, their hearts would be entirely filled with faith.*" (Kulayni Ya'qub, 1365: 1/220). Similarly, it was also narrated from Imam Sadiq (as) while explaining the verse thus: "*We would have given them much knowledge that they would learn from the pure Imams*" (Tabarsi, 1372: 1/559; Huwaizi, 1415: 5/439).

In essence, all these symmetrical meanings point to the abundance of divine mercy and it indicates the material and spiritual blessings bestowed on the leadership and the faithful and resilient nation. This divine mercy is sometimes in the form of water, and sometimes in the form of faith and knowledge.

2.3: Patience

The leader as well as the people should always remain patient steadfast in the face of adversity. Patience is one of the common requisites necessary for both the leaders and the people. In the opinion of *Farahidi*, patience is

considered as an opposite of grief (Farahidi Ahmad, 1410: 7/115) and Ibn Manthur had similar view with *Farahidi* (Ibn Manthur, 1414: 4/438). However, according to *Tureihi*, patience is considered to mean 'a power of restraining oneself from expressing grief' (Tureihi, 1375: 3/358).

Raghib, a lexicographer of the Qur'anic lexicons, describes patience as forbearance during the period of hardships and problems. He then defines it as power of keeping the soul on what is acceptable by the intellect and the Islamic law (Shari'a) or refraining the soul away from what the intellect and the Islamic laws forbid. Patience is considered a general term that has different manifestations in different cases (Raghib Isfahani, 1412: 474). According to the researches carried out by some contemporary scholars, safe-guarding and control of the soul from anxiety and grief is considered as patience (Mustafawi, 1380: 6/181).

The Holy Qur'an considers patience as a positive requisite for achieving victories against the enemy (See: Q. 8: 65). The verse was revealed before the Battle of Badr (Balkhi, 1405: 2/124; Ibn 'Ashur: 9/45) and the determining factors of victory on the battlefields are faith and patience, not the material strength! Thus, if patience is accompanied with faith, the conducive atmosphere for social change and awakening in the society will be guaranteed.

In another verse, the Holy Qur'an discusses about the Children of Israel who overcame the Pharaoh's tyrannical government with patience and perseverance, and the previous slaves became the leaders and the landowners simply because they resolved to change their destiny by themselves, "We made the people who were abased the heirs to the east and west of the land which We had blessed, and your Lord's best word [of promise] was fulfilled for the Children of Israel because of their patience...". (See: Q. 7: 137)

Patience creates a positive mindset in the society to such an extent that it could destroy a pharaonic culture and thereafter introduced a new civilization to the world. According to Sunni (such as Mazhari, 1412: 3/400; Qasemi, 1418: 8/174) and Shiite Quranic exegetes (such as Sharif Lahiji, 1373: 2/84; Huwaizi, 1415: 3/343), the Israelites became the landowner of the Eastern and Western regions of the earth due to their patience. Of course, patience plays an active role in social transformation, and it has tremendous impacts on the fate of the society (See: Q. 32: 24). It is indeed the patience and certainty that make a person to reach the topmost level of leadership rank (Shokani, 1414: 4/297; Baydawi, 1418: 4/223), and also create a conducive atmosphere for the people to obey the leaders in the administration of the society (Tabari, 1412: 21/71; Tantawi: 11/156). Consequently, it creates a conducive atmosphere for positive changes in the society (Razi, 1420: 7/166; Shirazi, 1424: 4/297).

2.4: Divine favour

One of the necessary requisites for creating a desirable awakening in the society is a divine favour. Many people are not aware of this crucial factor. It is in fact the main factor that overshadows all forms of human movements and actions. An awakening is one of the special divine blessings that cannot be achieved without a divine favour. The leader as well as the nation could only initiate awakening in the society by a divine grace.

The scholars have mentioned different meanings for this Arabic term "*Taofeeq*" which include "*provision of the means to achieve a desired good*" (Tureihi, 1375: 5/247). Thus, the expression "*Taofeeq from Allah*" means a good luck; which is the creation of harmony between two or several things, and thus, it is also being interpreted by some language experts as "reform or rehabilitation" (Qurashi, 1371: 7/229). The Arabic term "*Wifq*" means harmony between two things and "*Taofeeq*" is therefore referred to as the conformation or harmonization of human actions (good or bad) with destiny, but it is customarily used only for the good actions (Raghib Isfahani, 1412: 877).

Thus, what could be derived from the explanations of the lexicologists is that the term "*Taofeeq*" means provision of means on an affair and this is achieved through harmony between two things. Some Quranic exegetes also give a similar meaning. For instance, according to Sheikh Tusi, "*Taofeeq*" is a favor in which there is obedience and that is achieved based on the knowledge of Almighty God (Tusi, 1375: 6/51). That is to say, "*Taofeeq*" is the provision of the means and the removal of the obstacles towards attaining a desired goal. It is understood from the explanation of Allamah that he considers "*Taofeeq*" as the provision of the means to salvation/success by God (Tabatabai, 1374: 10/552).

Meanwhile other definitions of "*Taofeeq*" by some scholars include: 'conformity of someone's thought and action with worship and obedience to God, and preparation of the preliminaries and means towards attaining a desired goal' (Mustafawi, 1380: 11/285) ; 'the application of a means to achieve a desired good' (Mazhari, 1412: 5/111) ; 'conformity of the desires of a servant with that of His Lord' (Neyshabouri, 1416: 4/45) ; 'formation of power of obedience in a servant and facilitation of the path of righteousness' (Baqwi, 1420: 2/462). "*Taofeeq from God*" therefore is the provision of conditions and means of attaining goodness and happiness from God and in conformity to divine will. In the light of this, a conformity of the desire of a servant to God's will is referred to as "*Taofeeq*". In a hadith of Imam Ja'far Sadiq (as) , he said while interpreting the verse eighty-eight of Surah Hud: "*If a servant observes what God Almighty ordered him to do by being obedient to Him, his deed is indeed in conformity with the Order of God Almighty and the servant shall be called a conformer. But if a servant desires to do anything in disobedience to God, and He (The Almighty) separated him from such sin and he henceforth*

abandons it. Thus, his forsaking of the sin is by the favor of God Almighty.” (Saduq, 1398: 242)

Refraining from bad behavior is a divine favor and generally speaking, the term “*Taofeeq*” is usually used in reference to good deeds. But according to this hadith, abandonment of sin and transgression is also called “*Taofeeq*”. Actually, the term “*Taofeeq*” is an attribute of God pertaining to His action, in the sense that if a person needs certain facilities and conditions to perform any good deeds, which are beyond his strength, but God, by His grace creates those conditions in accordance with the ability and competence of the believers. And consequently, such a person is able to perform such a good deed conveniently.

In addition, a man is unable to repel many evils from him, because many of those evils are hidden from him, but God, out of His special grace, frees him from being caught in such an evil. In essence, the two acts (i.e., performing good and refraining from evil acts) are done with divine favour. In another word, performing good and avoiding bad acts (individually or collectively) require the determination and at the same time, a divine consent, because, it is with the presence of both the physical and spiritual conditions and causes that an action is actualized.

In the same vein, the creation of an awakening by a leader in a nation requires the consent of God. If this is achieved, the conducive atmosphere for the society to move towards absolute perfection will be created. The Qur'an, in the words of Hazrat Shuaib (a.s) , has attributed such a success to God, Almighty (See: Q. 11: 88). According to Hazrat Shuaib, God's favour is a crucial factor required for the reformation of the peoples' affairs and prohibition of evils. And this favour is achieved when the servant is determined and willing to do good or quit bad acts. Similarly, the willingness of the people is also an important factor to achieve a desired success (See: Q. 4: 35). In this verse, the desire or willingness of the judges is considered a crucial factor towards achieving a desired reconciliation between the couple. Thus, if the willingness and determination of a servant is to make a reform in the society, he will attain it only by a divine grace, which is a crucial condition for success in every task.

3. The role of leadership in the Islamic awakening

A worthy leader has a leading role in moving the society towards perfection and salvation. However, if the leaders of a society do not have the required requisites, such a society will fall rather than progressing. In the holy Qur'an, there are references to the roles and impacts of these two types of leadership. Positive leaders will always be instrumental to the progress and salvation of the people. In the light of this, references are made to some worthy leaders, such as Noah, Hud (See: Q. 11: 58) , Salih (See: Q. 11: 66) , Shuaib (See: Q. 11: 94) , Moses and Aaron (See: Q. 37: 114 _ 115) , who were instrumental to the salvation of the religious and righteous adherents.

On the contrary, the Qur'an while making reference to role and impacts of the negative leaders on the fate of the people says: "They will say, 'Our Lord! We obeyed our leaders and elders, and they led us astray from the way'" (See: Q. 33: 67). The verse states that the people will complain about their fake leaders who made them miserable on the Day of Judgment. And the people in order to dissociate themselves from their leaders will also request from God a respite to return to the world! (See: Q. 2: 167)

Today, the fate of many nations is in the hands of the most corrupt individuals of the society. Those pharaohs of our time do whatever they deem helpful for their continual repression of the people. In this regard, they are more sophisticated and dangerous to Pharaoh (of Prophet Musa's time) , because that Pharaoh killed only the sons of Israelites. But the pharaohs of our time are killing everyone; young and old, male and female. It is based on this context that the role of the 'Moses' of our time becomes more apparent and difficult (See: Q. 14: 5) , because it is only the 'Moses' that can cut off the hands of the pharaohs from the nations.

This present period is an age of awakening and interestingly the people are relatively aware of the original identity of most of their political office holders. However, the way forward and methodology of liberation from the evil agenda of those dictators are yet unknown to many countries of the world. Then, what should be done in such case? In a situation like this, the necessity of a competent leadership arises. A leader who, in the shortest possible time, will give the spirit of awakening to the people and who shall remove all corrupt systems but introduce a divine lifesaving system instead. Of course, the holy Qur'an made references to some divine leaders who had initiated the greatest revolutions in history through positive changes! One of such men of God is the Prophet Muhammad (*peace be upon him and his household*) , whose life has been prescribed by the Qur'an as a perfect role model for all human beings: "There is certainly a good exemplar for you in the Apostle of Allah..." (See: Q. 33: 21).

On a thorough studying of the biography and preaching methodologies of the Prophet (*peace be upon him and his household*) , one could observe that he has made great and positive reformations in all ramifications; both in the people as well as the society. For instance, the system of government at that time was tribal, which gave right and leadership right only to the most powerful and oppressive ones (Laver, 1373: 47). But the noble Prophet (pbuh) completely changed this social system and he introduced a new system which is based on justice and fairness. He (pbuh) made a total reform in the cultural and political realms of the Arabs. This was pointed out in the saying of Imam Ali (as) while describing that period: "God sent the Prophet (*peace be upon him and his household*) with a message to warn the world, and to be a trustee of His

revelations, while that you; the Arab nation, had the worst religion, and lived in the worst land; located within the rough stones and the deaf snakes (and that is the reason why you are fearless). You drank the infected water; and ate the unpleasant foods; spilled the blood of one another; cut off the bond of kinship; idols were very famous among you (idol worshipping was your custom and religion) and sins pervaded your whole existence" (Abdu: 67).

In essence, Imam Ali (as) made a comparison between the two cultures: a pre-Islamic and the Islamic cultures. It was in the pre-Islamic culture of the age of ignorance (i.e., *Jahiliya* period) that the immoralities such as murder; severing of the bonds of kinship; practicing the worst form of religion and the worst conditions of livelihood were considered as values. In such a prevailing atmosphere, the divine leader, along with a divine law (i.e., the Qur'an) brought about a kind of social revolution in that land. Thus, in terms of religion, he brought the best religion in the form of Islam (See: Q. 3: 19). A Religion that brought with it all the human happiness of this world and the hereafter. He revived human values and refuted all deviant religions (See: Q. 3: 85). This religion brought about a fundamental change and real awakening in the pre-Islamic Arab society and freed them from the worship of insignificant stone and wood (See: Q. 21: 66).

Consequently, the pre-Islamic society of the Arabs was transformed from idolatry to a godly society. Killing of children (particularly a female child) which had become a popular norm in the Arabian Peninsula was prohibited and the bloodshed was completely forbidden. He named the rival tribes in Medina (such as Aws and Khazraj who had conflict of more than thirteen years) as '*Ansar*' (i.e., The helpers) (Markaz farhanq, 1382: 5/48). From among the Meccans, he named the Quraysh tribe as '*Muhajireen*' (i.e., the emigrants) and he united these two Arabian tribes (i.e., Muhajireen and Ansar) under the fold of Islamic brotherhood (Ibn Habib: 71; Ibn Qutaybah, 1992: 17; Ibn Sayyid al-Nas, 1414: 1/230). In this way, the people of these two lands (i.e., Mecca and Madina) came out of the tribal system and they were placed in a new Islamic system. Thus, the limited tribal bond was transformed into a new concept called Islamic brotherhood and fraternity (Damashqi, 1986: 3/226).

In line with this, the long years of enmity and discord between the tribes of Aws and Khazraj was replaced by God with friendship and unity (See: Q. 8: 63). The friendship between the two tribes was so intimate to such an extent that the helpers (i.e., Ansar) agreed to give all their possessions to the immigrants; resided them in their homes, and they gave up their shares from the spoils of war (Waqidi, 1409: 1/379). Such a friendly relationship gave that community a direction that made it to progress rapidly. In addition, instead of a tribal system, it presented a world system based on two main pillars, that is, guidance and truth. The ultimate goal of such a system is the victory of truth (in the form of a

religion) over falsehood (See: Q. 9: 33; Q. 48: 28; Q. 61: 9). The ultimate goal of religion is to ensure a continuous movement of the people and the society towards perfection, but this cannot be achieved without the purification of religion from every form of impurities (See: Q. 8: 39).

Of course, a true leader will not only lead (guide) the society to the spiritual well-being, but he will also be instrumental to its material developments (See: Q. 33: 27). The society of the period of the noble Prophet (*peace be upon him and his household*) evolved politically, as he introduced a new political and social systems to the world based on divine values and a monotheistic worldview. He created an intellectual revolution in such a way that the pro-tribal people demanded for a new world system. The fact is that such a transformation might be impossible except with the leadership of a righteous person. Thus, if there is a righteous leader, he will definitely create a righteous nation, and consequently, the society will move towards awakening, progress and development in every respect. On the contrary, if there is an unrighteous leader, the society will deviate from its path and shall witness degradation and fall. Unfortunately, the Islamic community experienced such a fate after the death of the holy Prophet, *peace be upon him and his household*, (Ibn Qutaybah al-Dinuri, 1410: 1/23)

According to Hazrat Fatima (peace be upon her) , the main reason for the disparity in the Islamic community after the Prophet was due to the fact that the people distanced themselves from the leadership of the Ahl al-Bayt, *peace be upon them* (Khazaaz Qomi, 1401: 199). In a nutshell, it is the leadership that develops the society and leads it towards material and spiritual perfections and attainment of the pleasure of God. Thus, the main engine of awakening and transformation is a righteous leader, who awakens the people and the society at large.

However, the major setback in the Islamic and non-Islamic countries today is the leadership problem. Presently, the people are relatively awake, but unfortunately there is lack of competent and righteous leaders, who shall take charge of these movements. Meanwhile, it is pertinent to note that most of the regional revolutions took its model from the Islamic Revolution in Iran. Thus, the exportation of the revolution declared by Imam Khomeini is realized, as we are witnessing today, the awakening of various Islamic and non-Islamic societies. At present, the nations need strong and competent leaders such as Imam Khomeini, to save them from tyrannical rulers. The triumph of the Islamic Revolution in Iran under the leadership of Imam Khomeini (ra) was without any doubt, indebted to the sincere sacrifices, continuous resistance of the Shiite scholars and the steadfastness of the people (Nargesi, 1389: 249).

This revolution even affected the intellectual framework of the Western world, and many Western thinkers failed to comprehend its reality! Henry Alfred

Kissinger, a National Security Advisor under the presidential administrations of Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, said: *"Ayatollah Khomeini, through a well-thought-out plan, created crisis in the western world. He made plans with such a lightning speed that political analysts and leaders had no time to make counter-plans. Nobody could foresee the Imam Khomeini's decisions. His words and deeds differed from the standards prevailing in the world. He got inspiration from somewhere else. The Imam Khomeini's enmity with the West, too, had to do with the Islamic teachings and in his enmity; too, he had good intentions"* (Hajati, 1387: 36). Why did the West fail to comprehend the reality of this revolution? Hameed Moulana says: *"It is not surprising that those who were unaware of the spirituality of the Islamic Revolution and always had their own geopolitical and economic criteria for studying and analyzing the revolutions remained ignorant of the causes and essence of the victory of the Islamic Revolution."*¹

In addition, the famous Cambridge University professor Theda Skocpol, who had extensive researches on the French, Russian, and Chinese revolutions, said: *"The overthrow of the Shah's regime, from the perspective of the Shah's American friends; the journalists; politicians and even the sociologists like me, was a tremendous and unbelievable incident."* He also added: *"This is because the revolution that took place in Iran was, in my opinion, outside (beyond) the rules of other revolutions, and I confess that this revolution also discredited my views about the revolutions in France, Russia and China."*² The head of the CIA, who was dismissed due to the triumph of the revolution in Iran and its unpredictability, said in response to US President; Bush: *"What happened in Iran is an 'indefinite' phenomenon, and our computers could not understand it!"* (Hajati, 1387: 45).

Of course, it is the Shia Islam that nurtures such a unique personality. According to the latest information, Israel has assembled a 15-member committee of experts in various disciplines to identify the personality of Seyed Hassan Nasrallah; the Secretary General of Hezbollah in Lebanon³. Today, the need of the regional countries and the world is to achieve the leadership of righteous leaders who respect the people; realize the human aspirations; create a lasting peace; and achieve a prosperous and secure world. The way-out and the challenges were explained by the Supreme Leader of Islamic Republic; Grand Ayatollah Khamenei (as) in his Friday prayer sermon in Tehran. With regard to the Islamic awakening in the Arab and North African countries and likewise the destructive and deceptive role of colonialism in hijacking and preventing the triumph of these revolutions, he said: *"Today, two poles have been created between the oppressed people of the world under the leadership of the Muslim*

movement and the world's arrogant powers led by the United States, NATO and Zionism, and there is no third entry.¹"

In the world today, two opposing fronts are present; the colonial powers headed by the United States and the oppressed people of the world, under the leadership of Iran. A thinker of the Islamic world, Allamah Mohammad Iqbal Lahori, has pointed to this fact in his famous poems: "*Tehran is the Geneva of the Eastern world, Maybe the fate of the planet will change.*" In this poem, he has pointed to Iran's pivotal role in regional developments, and more importantly, if the people of the Eastern region form an alliance with Iran, not only will their problems be resolved, but the fate of the world (all societies) will change positively.

Conclusion

Without any doubt, awakening paves the way for the individual and collective developments. Muslims have seen many ups and downs throughout history. Colonialism has always tried and is trying to dominate and influence the fate of the Islamic nations by putting the most corrupt individuals in power. Besides, it has also plundered many of the material and spiritual assets of the Muslim nations, and designed a massive cultural invasion on its agenda, in order to snatch the traces of religiousness from the region.

Such matters caused the religious reformers, such as: Sayyid Jamal Asad-Abadi, Muhammad Abdu, Mawdudi, Allamah Iqbal, Imam Khomeini, etc., to launch a movement with sole intention of awakening and reforming the society. Meanwhile, the first fruit of such movements came in the form of an Islamic Revolution in Iran and it consequently gave vitality and self-confidence to the Islamic Ummah again, and a new life to the Islamic Resistance, especially the Palestinian issue. In the world today, particularly the Arab countries of the region, a wave of Islamic awakening has denied the global arrogant powers of its rest. The new Middle East has changed its nature and is ready to embrace a new Islamic Middle East.

Therefore, in view of such developments, this paper has tried to examine the necessary leadership qualities from the Qur'anic point of view, in order to create, sustain, and spread the awakening in the region and the world at large. Since the awakening has two main pillars: the leadership and the nation. Thus, the Qur'an has presented the common qualities of both the leaders as well the people. In addition, the role of leadership in the Islamic awakening was inspired by the biography of holy Prophet, who in the shortest possible time made the great revolution of history and presented a new and perfect model to the world. In the light of this, if those qualities and conditions are met, the favourable ground will also be prepared for the creation, continuity, preservation and expansion of the Islamic awakening.

NOTES:

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3. Jumhuri Islami Newspaper of 21st Bahman, 1372 S.H.
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