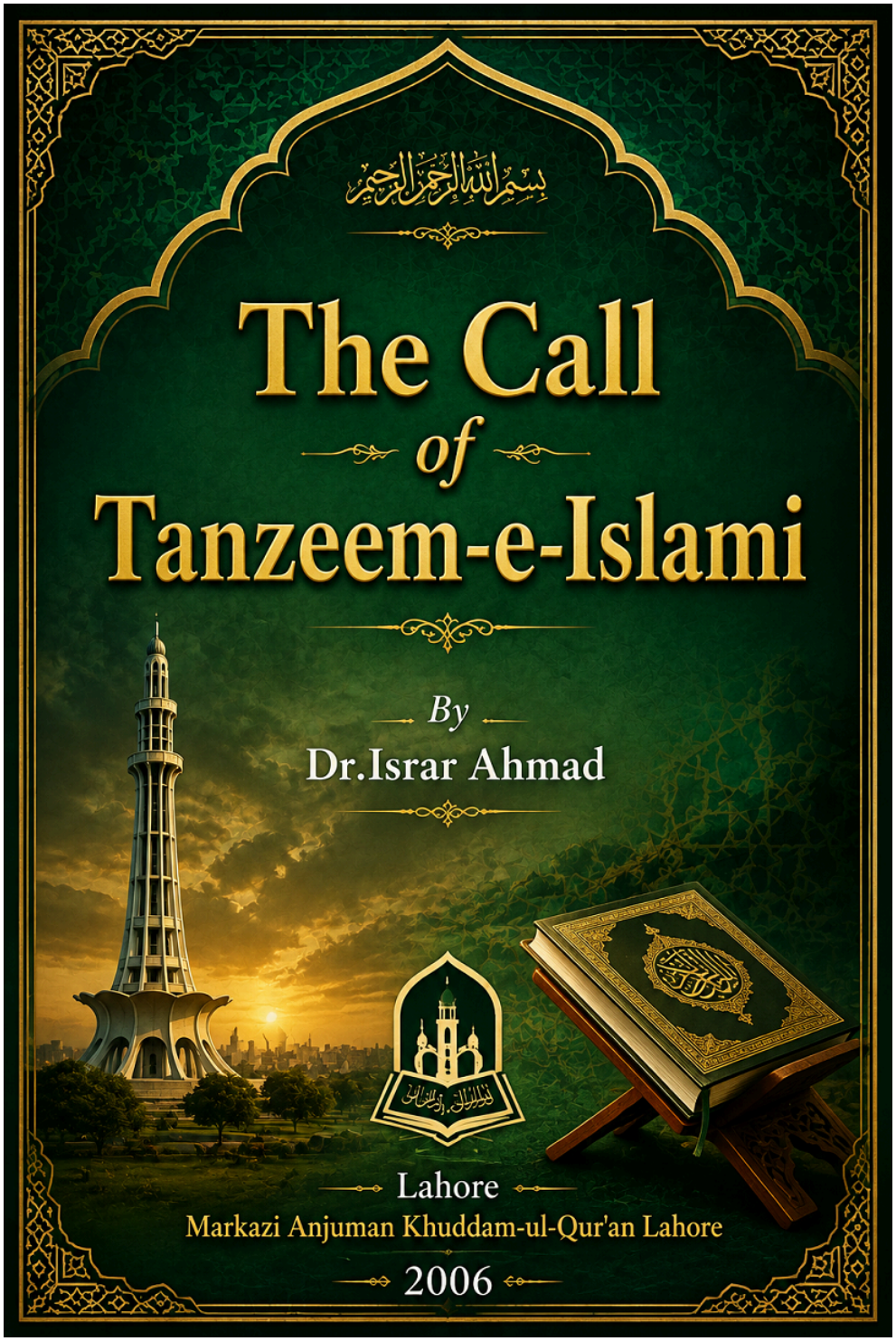


The Call of Tanzeem-e-Islami

ڈاکٹر اسرار احمد

The Call

of

Tanzeem-e-Islami

By

Dr.Israr Ahmad

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِّنَ الدِّيْنِ مَا وَصّٰى بِهٖ نُوْحًا وَّ الَّذِيْٓ اَوْحَيْنَآ اِلَيْكَ وَ مَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهٖٓ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ وَ مُوْسٰى وَ عِيْسٰٓى اَنْ اَقِيْمُوا الدِّيْنَ وَ لَا تَتَفَرَّقُوْا فِيْهِ...
(الشوریٰ42: 13)

The same Deen has He enjoined for you as that which He enjoined on Noah, the one We have sent by inspiration to you (O Muhammad!), and that which We enjoined on Abraham,Moses,and Jesus: namely *that* you *establish this Deen and make no divisions therein...(Al-Shura* 42:13)

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Introduction

The present booklet is an English translation of *Tanzeem-e-Islami ki Daw/'at,* a transcribed and edited version of a public lecture delivered by Dr.Israr Ahmad in Urdu,on December 24,1994, in Lahore (Pakistan). This lecture was selected for translation into English on account of its brevity and comprehensiveness as an introduction to Tanzeem-e-Islami and its methodology. The *Call* of *Tanzeem-e-Islami* is unique in its significance because it offers a biographical and intellectual background of the Ameer of Tanzeem-e-Islami, a synopsis of his view regarding the obligations of a Muslim according to the Qur'an and Sunmah,and his impassioned call to join hands in the struggle for lqamah Al-Deen through the discipline of an organized jama'ah.

Dr. Israr Ahmad (b. 1932) is well known as a scholar and teacher of the Holy Qur'an. Even though he is based in Pakistan, Dr. Israr Ahmad's profound and thought-provoking ideas have permeated among Muslims in many parts of the world, including North America. Through the audio and video recordings of his countless speeches and public lectures in both Urdu and English, Dr. Israr Ahmad has earned a reputation of being a scholar who believes in the organic relationship between faith and action. Dr. Israr Ahmad emphasizes that the primary deficiency of the Muslim Ummah is a lack of conviction (or Iman) in the metaphysical verities that have been revealed

by the Qur'an; as such, no effort for an islamic renaissance can succeed without a true revival and interiorization of Iman by means of the promotion and propagation of Qur'anic guidance and wisdom. At the same time. Dr. Israr Ahmad demonstrates how, through a sincere reading of the Qur'an and the Seerah of Prophet Muhammad (SAW),one becomes aware of the obligatory nature not only of obedience to Allah (SWT) and His Prophet (SAW)at individual level, but also of the struggle to establish a socio-politico-economic order that is based on such an obedience. While faith in metaphysical realities is the core and foundation of islam, this faith must be actualized in concrete socio-historical reality through a concerted effort for the implementation of Islamic teachings regarding the social, economic, and political spheres of life. It is on account of hiscognizance of the mandatory character of the duty to strive for *Iqamah* Al-Deen that Dr.Israr Ahmad has established Tanzeem-e-Islami. The present booklet brings to the fore certain significant dimensions of his Qur'anic thought that lie at the root of his life-long struggle.

While the ideas presented in this booklet speak for themselves, it is important to stress certain points that may otherwise be missed by the reader. First, the lecture itself was delivered in Lahore before an audience of Pakistani Muslims, and hence it naturally emphasizes the importance of the struggle *for Iqamah Al-Deen* in the context of Pakistani society. However, Dr. Israr Ahmad has asserted on numerous occasions that, according to the Qur'an, the obligations of a Muslim are exactly the same irrespective of time and space. Whether a Muslim happens to be born today or in the future, and whether a Muslim happens to live in a Muslim or a non-Muslim country, the fundamental duties and obligations remain absolutely identical. The contents of this booklet are,

therefore, as relevant for Muslims in Pakistan or Egypt as they are for Muslims in the United States or Canada. Secondly, neither the Qur'an nor the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) has ever ignored the material and social matrix in which a Muslim exists and within which the Islamic obligations must be fulfilled. As such, a thorough and incisive understanding of one's social context is essential for the fulfillment of these obligations. While Islam itself is universal and global, its applicability must take into consideration the local realities that may either support or hinder the efforts of a sincere Muslim to carry out the Divinely ordained responsibilities. This requirement is amply demonstrated in Dr. Israr Ahmad's endeavor to devise a methodology that is both feasible and practicable on the one hand, and takes into account the demands and prohibitions of Islam on the other hand. Thirdly, while Muslims living in any given part of the world are responsible primarily for trying to establish Islam in their own land, the fact remains that such a struggle is more feasible and more likely to succeed in some parts of the world than in others. While the future of the Islamic movement will depend on the response it generates in any particular country, Dr. Israr Ahmad firmly believes that Pakistan enjoys a special significance in this respect. Pakistan is the only country in the world which has no less than four hundred years of sustained Islamic revivalist efforts behind it, and whose very Constitution unambiguously recognizes Divine Sovereignty. In short, even though the hopes of its Ameer are quite naturally centered on Pakistan, it should be noted that the call of Tanzeem-e-Islami is based on the imperatives of the Qur'an and Sunnah, and it is, as such, global and all-inclusive in that it is directed to Muslims all over the world.

This booklet is being presented to English-speaking Muslims in the hope that they will read it with open-minds and evaluate its arguments on the twin criteria of Qur'an and Sunnah. In the final analysis, however, the message of this booklet is practical rather than theoretical. It emphasizes the obligations of a Muslim with particular reference to the duty of striving for the establishment of Islam as a concrete socio-historical reality; in this regard, this booklet offers both a practical and realistic way of carrying out this obligation as well as the background and ideological foundations of a specific organized jama'ah through which this could be done. For those who become convinced of the arguments presented here, the question of putting their understanding and conviction into practice would then assume utmost importance.

Dr. Ahmed Afzaal

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Tanzeem-e-Islami is a unique Islamic revivalist movement in that there is no other comparable collectivity, at least in Pakistan, which is based on a personal pledge of allegiance to a specific individual. Since a Muslim can join Tanzeem-e-Islami only through giving a pledge (or baiy'ah) to its Ameer, it is imperative that I start my discourse by shedding some light on my own intellectual background and my personal motives behind the establishment of this organization.

My Intellectual Background

Today, I am nearing the end of sixty-third year of my life. During all this time. I had read and heard a great deal as well as done my own careful thinking on various issues. In addition, there have been numerous influences on my mind from several different directions. I cannot go into the details of all these ideational currents and inspirations at this time, but I must describe two of the most important factors that have been instrumental in shaping my ideas and perspectives. It was my childhood years during the early 1940's when I started to imbibe the milIi poetry of Allama Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938), the poet-philosopher of the Indian Subcontinent. I have been reading lqbal's first Urdu anthology-titled *Bang-e-Dara,* or "The Clarion Call"-since I was a student of class five. The emphasis of the major poems in this book is on reviving a sense of ideological community and a feeling of shared destiny among the Muslims; this theme has had a great impact on my heart and mind. My childhood was a time of tremendous social and moral deterioration among the Muslims throughout the world. Their decline had

reached its lowest ebb; majority of the Muslim Ummah was under the yoke of humiliating slavery under European Colonialism; almost quarter of a century had passed since the abolition of Ottoman Caliphate, and even this last symbol of their global unity was not there any more to reassure the Muslims. It was under these disheartening conditions that I read poems like *Tulu'e-Islam, Shama' aur* Sha'ir, and Jwmb-e-Shikua, with their emotional but deeply inspiring themes of unity, self-respect, confidence. struggle, and hope. During my later years in high school, I worked for the Muslim Students Federation as one of its ordinary workers and played my humble role in the Indian Muslims' movement for independence. After I passed my matriculation exams in 1947,I traveled with my family to the newly established Muslim homeland, literally crossing the valley of death and destruction. I traveled on foot a distance of 170 miles for over 20 long days; during the course of this migration, our caravan was much closer to death than to life. In the end, Allah (SWT) allowed us to set foot in our promised land, the country of our dreams, Pakistan. That was November,1947.

Muslims of India had gained their freedom from the humiliation of British rule and the threat of Hindu domination in the name of Islam. Pledges were made that if Allah (SWT) would grant us our freedom, we would make His Deen supreme in our new independent homeland. Immediately after independence, Jama'at-e-Islami and its founder Maulana Abul A'la Maududi came forward and presented the demand for an Islamic Constitution for Pakistan as the fulfillment of the promises that were made during the freedom struggle. I was quite naturally attracted to this call. Consequently, I spent the rest of my student life-which included two years of FSc in Government College Lahore and five years of MBBS in King Edward Medical College--working diligently as an active member of the Islami Jami'yat-e-Talaba, the

students' wing of Jama'at-e-Islami. The second major influence on my thought after that of Allama Muhammad Iqbal, therefore, is that of Maulana Abul A'la Maududi (1903-1979). Particularly relevant are the two significant features of his thought that became crystal clear to me. I had already accepted the first of these through the poetry of lqbal, but the writings of Maulana Maududi complemented that understanding by filling in the details left bare by Iqbal's general outline. From these luminaries, I learned that instead of being a mere "religion" in the ordinary sense, Islam is a Deen -a complete code of life-whose very nature demands that it be made dominant as a socio-political reality. Islam represents the Truth, and Truth is not to be subjugated by falsehood. Instead, Truth must become ascendant over all kinds of falsehood in all spheres of human life, both individual and collective. The second point that I learned from Maulana Maududi is that the practical obligations of a Muslim are by no means limited to *Salat, Zakat,* Saum, and Hajj-the well-known pillars of Islam-but that there are crucial duties beyond these modes of worship as well, including the obligation to strive for the establishment of Islam as a Deen. In this way, the comprehensive view of Islamic obligations became clear to me.

In short, two important but largely forgotten features of our Deen that I absorbed from the writings of Maulana Maududi included an all-embracing conception of Islam as a complete code of life that demands its own ascendancy and, correspondingly, a comprehensive and holistic view of the obligations of a Muslim that particularly takes into account the inescapable duty to strive for the supremacy of Islam.

I did not stop at this point, however, and kept studying other Muslim writers and scholars as well. More importantly, I studied the Qur'an itself in greater depth.

The more I studied and pondered, the basic ideas I had learned earlier gradually matured in my mind, their depth and breadth increased, and my own conviction in their veracity intensified. I have given these details only to point out that whatever I did for the cause of Islam during the subsequent years was done under the influence of this intellectual background.

Here I would, like to identify some important landmarks of my personal history. I came to Pakistan in 1947; after completing my medical education in 1954,I moved to Montgomery (now Sahiwal) where my parents lived; then, in 1965,I returned once again to Lahore with the resolve to invest myself fully for the cause of Islam. During the seven years from 1965 to 1972, I worked in my personal capacity. I continued my medical practice on a part-time basis during the initial five years, but while performing Hajj in February 1971 I decided to dedicate myself full-time for the mission of serving Islam. I can say with absolute confidence that from February 1971 to this day, I have not spent any of my energies or time for the sake of the usual worldly pursuits. Instead, each and every moment of my time and each and every bit of my energy has been spent for the cause of my *mission, Alhamdulillah!* Soon, with the grace and blessings of Almighty Allah (SWT), my efforts bore fruit and the Markazi Anjuman Khuddam-ul-Qur'an Lahore was established in 1972.under the aegis of which Qur'an Academy and then Qur'an College were subsequently established. Tanzeem-e-Islami itself was established in 1975. I had announced my intention of establishing this organization a year earlier in August 1974 (this speech is available in Urdu as *Azm-e-Tanzeeem).*

I would like to mention here that I have recently written a booklet in which I have laid bare all the details of my finances. My sole personal property before the

establishment of Tanzeem-e-Islami was a house in Krishan Nagar, which I sold to build another one in Model Town. Other than that, I do not own any property or wealth, except a personal checking account that has about four or five thousand rupees. I do not possess any bonds or shares, nor am I a partner in any business venture. All I have in terms of what is ordinarily called "property" is the house in Model Town, and even that I have already handed over to my children. (This booklet is available in Urdu as *Hisab-e-Kam-o-Besh.)*

My Motives Behind the Establishment of Tanzeem-e-Islami

Now I am going to discuss the second aspect of my background, that is, why did I launch this revivalist movement? I will discuss this in both negative and positive terms. First and foremost, let me make it very clear that I am not at all interested in the political game, that is, electoral politics in the sense of the struggle for power. In Pakistan, it is the feudal and the capitalist class whose members amuse themselves in this game of "musical chairs," and a person who has neither large land holdings nor huge amounts of capital is extremely unsuitable for any political activity in such an environment. If such a person enters the political arena, he inevitably becomes the agent or instrument for the fulfillment of someone else's ambitions for power, and through serving someone else he may succeed in securing some of his own personal interests. By saying that I am not a political person in the usual sense of the word, I am not only informing you of an actual state of affairs but also giving you the reason behind it. Now that I am very

much near the end of my earthly life, I can say with absolute certainty that I was never involved in this type of politics. with the exception of two months that I spent in the *Majlis-e-Shura* established by the Pakistani military ruler. Gen. Muhammad Zia-u1-Haq. I believed that he was

genuinely interested in doing something substantial for the cause of Islam, and that was why I had joined his national consultative body, even though I had rejected his offer to become a minister in the Federal Government Within two months in the Majlis-e-Shura, however, I realized that he was not serious about Islam, and so resigned. With this exception in mind, I can say that my life is free of any political activity for the sake of power. This means that the motives behind the estabjishment of Tanzeem-e-Islami had nothing to do with power politics.

Secondly, I did not start my mission to serve Islam as a religious profession either. Religion is not my profession, and it never was. Almighty Allah (SWT) had given me a better profession, that of medical practice. Although many persons have degraded this field through their un-ethical behavior, turning it into nothing more than a moneymaking enterprise, the fact remains that this field itself represents a genuinely noble profession. I had the choice to continue my medical practice and to become more and more successful in this field, but I gave up this profession in favor of my objective to serve the cause of Islam. Just as politics is not my field, religion is not my profession either.

Why, then, am I involved in all this? in the first place, it is my intense and overwhelming conviction that this is my obligation; I am duty-bound to invest my time and energy in this path, a duty that I cannot avoid under any circumstances. This strong sense of obligation is the main reason why I am engaged in the struggle for the cause of Islam, and it is with this sense of obligation that I invite you to join me.

Secondly, I am fully convinced that the reason why the Muslim Ummah is suffering humiliation and disgrace throughout the world is because of the abandonment of this duty. We know what is happening in Bosnia,

Chechnya, Kashmir, Afghanistan, and in other parts of the Muslim world. All these calamities that are befalling the Muslims are the various manifestations of Divine wrath; put bluntly, we are being punished by the Heavens because we have failed to fulfill the duty of establishing Islam on earth, a duty that has been entrusted to the Muslim Ummah as a whole and the struggle for which has been made obligatory upon each one of us. Unless we take the initiative to fulfill that obligation by establishing Islam in toto in at least one sizable country, the ongoing Divine punishment will not end. In other words, I am convinced that the Muslim Ummah cannot rid itself of the present state of humiliation, nor can it achieve success and prosperity in the world, unless it realizes its collective obligations and concerns itself with their fulfillment.

Thirdly, I have no doubt in my mind that the integrity and stability of our own country cannot be achieved without the establishment of the Islamic order. I have proved this point elsewhere on the basis of unassailable arguments that Islam is the foundation of Pakistan, and that the very survival of this country as an independent entity as well as its stability and integrity depend upon the implementation of the Islamic politico-socio-economic system. We cannot hope for a strong and stable Pakistan unless Islam is firmly and truly established in this country.

Thus, I believe that by struggling in the path of Almighty Allah (SWT),we can achieve three different goals at the same time-we can kill three birds with a single stone. However, I do not believe that all three motives enjoy the same importance. Salvation and felicity in the Hereafter is obviously much more important than anything we might gain in the fleeting life of this world. The second and third objectives have to do with the prosperity and worldly success of the Muslim *Ummah* in

general and of Pakistani Muslims in particular. The first objective is of course primary and of utmost importance. It relates to our ultimate success and salvation in the eternal life of the Hereafter, and this is my most important concern. For me, the primary motive for struggling in the path of Islam is the realization that this is my personal duty, regarding which I will be accountable before Almighty Allah (SWT) on the Day of judgment. The other two goals, while significant in their own right, are of secondary importance for me.

Obligations in Islam: A Comprehensive Approach

At this point, I am going to present before you the holistic and comprehensive conception of the obligations of a Muslim. As mentioned earlier, I learnt the essential framework of this conception from lqbal's poetry, but this skeleton was later fleshed out for me through the writings of Maulana Abul A'la Maududi who provided detailed expositions of Islam as a complete code of life and of what it means to be a Muslim. My study of the Qur'an and of the Seerah of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as well as my own deliberations on this subject have only assured me of the veracity and authenticity of this vision.

Let me make one important point before I describe these obligations. The three main obligations that I am going to discuss here are by no means easy to perform. The reward is the eternal life in Jannah, and a price has to be paid before we are entitled to get this coveted reward. We must exert ourselves in order to attain the most minor of the worldly benefits; how can we expect to gain eternal felicity without any hard work, without any sacrifice, and without having to face any difficulty? There is no doubt that the path toward Jannah is difficult to tread, but the destination is much more precious and valuable than anything we can ever imagine.

First Obligation: Ibadah

The first and foremost duty of every Muslim is what the Qur'an describes as Ibadah. This, in fact, is the purpose for which Allah (SWT) has created both humans and the jinns:

وَ مَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَ الْاِنْسَ اِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْنِ 0 (الزٰريٰت51:٥٦) -

I have not created jinns and humans except that they may serve Me. (Al-Dhariat 51:56)

This is also the fundamental call of the Qur'an to the entire humankind:

يٰاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوْا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِىْ خَلَقَكُمْ وَ الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُوْنَ 0(البقرة2:21) -

O People! Serve your Guardian-Lord who created you and those who came before you...(Al-Baqarah 2:21)

The concept of lbadah implies that human beings are required to obey the commandments of Almighty Allah (SWT) at all times and under all circumstances. Without any exceptions. The obedience to Allah (SWVT) that Islam requires is one that is total, unconditional, and all-inclusive. Partial and selective obedience is no obedience; it is, in fact, tantamount to ridiculing the commandments of Allah (SWT). If one obeys some of Divine directives (because he likes them) and rejects others (because he does not like them), then, obviously, he is

following the likes and dislikes of his own nafs rather than the injunctions of Allah (SWT). This attitude of selective obedience is so abhorrent in the sight of Almighty Allah (SWT) that He reserves the greatest of His punishment for anyone who adopts it. According to the Qur'an:

....اَفَتُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِبَعْضِ الْكِتٰبِ وَ تَكْفُرُوْنَ بِبَعْضٍ ۚ فَمَا جَزَآءُ مَنْ يَّفْعَلُ ذٰلِكَ مِنْكُمْ اِلَّا خِزْىٌ فِى الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا....(البقرة2 :85)

...Then is it only a part of the Book that you believe in and reject the rest? But what is the reward for those among you who behave like this but disgrace in this life?... (Al-Baqarah 2:85)

In this ayah, Allah (SWT) is responding to those who want to know the reason why the Muslims are so humiliated and disgraced in the world, why they are being whipped with different calamities and "misfortunes. "Allah (SWT) is saying to them, in effect, that while you did perform your prayers and your fasting, you also engaged in business transactions that involve riba. While you went for Umrah

every year, you also indulged in hoarding. adulteration, and various forms of cheating. By obeying the Shari'ah in some respects, and obeying the preferences of your own nafs in other respects, you made yourself worthy of this disgrace. The second part of the ayah is even more strongly worded:

.....وَ يَوۡمَ الۡقِيٰمَةِ يُرَدُّوۡنَ اِلٰٓى اَشَدِّ الۡعَذَابِ‌ؕ وَ مَا اللّٰهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعۡمَلُوۡنَ0 (القرة 2:85)

and on the Day of Judgment they shall be consigned to the most grievous penalty. For Allah is not unmindful of what you do.(AL Baqarah 2:85)

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In other words, you may deceive others by the outward appearances of piety and the charade of religious observance, but you will not be able to deceive Allah (SWT).He knows fully well what you do.

The first of our obligations as a Muslim, therefore, is to obey Almighty Allah (SWT) in all respects and at all times; this obedience must be total and not partial or selective; it must cover all aspects of our lives and not just some of them. This is by no means an easy task, and it is here that we appreciate the importance of the four pillars of Islam. After entering the fold of Isiam through Shahadah (testimony of faith), *Salat, Saum, Zakat,* and *Hajj* are the means that empower a Muslim; they provide him with the strength required to fulfill the all-important obligation of Ibadah. Thus, Salat is meant to remind a Muslim, no less than five times a day, that he is a slave and servant of Allah (SWT). Saum is meant to train a Muslim in the art of controlling his own baser self. Zakat is meant to cleanse the heart of the love for material possessions, which is one of the major obstacles in the way of Ibadah. Finally, we have Hajj that combines all these elements in its various rituals. In other words, the four pillars of Islam are the PRACTICAL exercises that keep the Muslims ready and prepared at all times for a life of total and all embracing obedience to Allah (SWT). These pillars are not to be confused with the obligation of lbadah itself, which has a much broader scope and application. In short, once a person has accepted Allah (SWT) as the only God, Muhammad (SAW) as the final messenger, and Islam as the true way of life, then the only logical course open to that person is to obey Allah (SWT) at all times and in all respects:

وَ اَطِيۡعُوا اللّٰهَ وَ اَطِيۡعُوا الرَّسُوۡلَ‌ۚ فَاِنۡ تَوَلَّيۡتُمۡ فَاِنَّمَا عَلٰى رَسُوۡلِنَا الۡبَلٰغُ الۡمُبِيۡنُ0(التغابن 64:12)

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So obey Allah and obey His Messenger; but if ye turn back the duty of Our Messenger is but to proclaim (the Message) clearly and openly.(AL-Taghabun 64:12)

Our Second Obligation: Da'wah

The second of our obligations as Muslims is to convey the message of Islam to others. This involves calling people toward the light of faith; enjoining all that is good and just and moral, forbidding all that is evil and unjust and sinful; exhorting the common people. elucidating the wisdom of the Qur'an to the more discerning elite, and debating in the best possible manner with those who persist in their rejection. This obligation is the logical corollary of the culmination of prophethood with the advent of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as the final messenger. It must be noted, however, that even when the institution of prophethood was operative, not only did the prophets themselves performed this duty but so did those who believed in them. Immediately after accepting faith in Islam, the Companions of Prophet Muhammad (SAW)would BUSY themselves in preaching and carrying the message of Islam to others; for instance, it was in response to the preaching by Abu Bakr (RAA) that six members of the Noble Ten(the Ashrah Mubashirah) became Muslims. But the culmination and finality of prophethood has a very important implication in this regard. Since there will be no more prophets after Prophet Muhammad (SAW),the entire venture of calling people towards Islam has now become the collective obligation of the Muslim Ummah. The collectivity of Muslims is now duty bound to carry on the mission of the prophets. While this involves an unprecedented honor that has been conferred upon the Muslim Ummah, it also implies a grand responsibility on her part. The Qur'an proclaims:

وَ كَذٰلِکَ جَعَلۡنٰکُمۡ اُمَّۃً وَّسَطًا لِّتَکُوۡنُوۡا شُہَدَآءَ عَلَی النَّاسِ وَ یَکُوۡنَ الرَّسُوۡلُ عَلَیۡکُمۡ شَہِیۡدًا.....(البقرۃ2 :143)

Thus have We made you a middle community that you might be witnesses over the nations and the Messenger be a witness over yourselves.... (Al-Baqarah 2:143)

I would like to stress that this is an obligation. Calling people toward Islam is not a supererogatory act of worship, something that has been left for us to decide whether or not we wish to do it. On the contrary. conveying Islam's message to the humanity at large is a fundamental duty of all Muslims. The Muslim Ummah is the custodian of the final and unadulterated Divine Revelation in the form of the Holy Qur'an, and it must perform its duty of delivering the message contained in the Qur'an to the rest of the world so that they can have no excuse of ignorance on the Day of Judgment. If the *Ummah* fails to perform this duty, the vast number of human beings who will thereby remain bereft of Divine Guidance will definitely have a complaint against the Muslims on the Day of Judgment. They will be able to appeal before Allah (SWT) that the Divine Message was never delivered to them; the responsibility for their misguidance would then fall on the Muslim Ummah. Our so-called privilege will then become the greatest of liabilities for us.

Even though calling humanity towards Islam is the collective obligation of the Ummah, it is obvious that the Ummah itself is made up of individuals like you and me. lf each one of us excuses himself from the performance of this duty by arguing that this is the responsibility of the Ummah and not his own

personal concern, then how will this obligation actually get fulfilled? Since the Ummah is obviously not performing this duty to the degree that it should, each and every member of the Ummah is therefore personally responsible in this regard. The duty of calling people toward Islam is the personal and individual

obligation of each and every Muslim-a duty that we can abandon only at our own peril.

The primary instrument for communicating the call of Islam to humanity is the Word of Allah (SWT). This has been made clear in the Qur'an itself:

....فَذَكِّرۡ بِالۡقُرۡاٰنِ مَنۡ يَّخَافُ وَعِيۡدِ 0(ق50:45)

So admonish with the Qur'an such as fear My Warning! (Qaf 50:45)

... قُلِ اللّٰهُ ۙ شَهِيۡدٌۢ بَيۡنِىۡ وَ بَيۡنَكُمۡ ۟ وَ اُوۡحِىَ اِلَىَّ هٰذَا الۡقُرۡاٰنُ لِاُنۡذِرَكُمۡ بِهٖ وَ مَنۡۢ بَلَغَ....(الانعام19:6)

...Say (O Mfuhammad!): "Allah is Witness between me and you. This Qur'an has been revealed to me by inspiration that I may warn you and all whom it reaches... (Al-An'am 6:19)

فَاِنَّمَا يَسَّرۡنٰهُ بِلِسَانِكَ لِتُبَشِّرَ بِهِ الۡمُتَّقِيۡنَ وَ تُنۡذِرَ بِهٖ قَوۡمًا لُّدًّا 0(مريم19:97)

So have We made the (Qur'an) easy in your own tongue that with it you may give glad tidings to the righteous and warnings to people given to contention. (Maryum 19:97)

....يٰۤاَيُّهَا الرَّسُوۡلُ بَلِّغۡ مَاۤ اُنۡزِلَ اِلَيۡكَ مِنۡ رَّبِّكَ ؕ وَ اِنۡ لَّمۡ تَفۡعَلۡ فَمَا بَلَّغۡتَ رِسَالَتَهٗ (المائدة5: 67)

O Messenger! Proclaim the (Qur'an) that has been sent to you from your Lord. If you did not do so, you would not have fulfilled and proclaimed His mission.... (Al-Mai dah 5:67)

We cannot convey the teachings and message of the Qur'an to others unless we first comprehend the Word of Allah (SWT) ourselves. That is precisely what Prophet Muhammad (SAW) has directed us to do: "The best amongst you is the one who learns and teaches the Qur'an." One of the obligations that we owe toward the Qur'an is that we must spend our time, energy, and mental capabilities in understanding

the guidance and wisdom that is contained in this Book; afterwards, we must explain, elucidate, and convey this guidance and wisdom to others. Each one of us is responsible for carrying out this duty in accordance with his talents and capabilities.

The point that I want to emphasize in this context is simply this: Calling people towards Islam is the personal duty of each one of us, and if we fail to fulfill this duty then we are going to be held accountable on the Day of Judgment.

Our Third Obligation*:* Iqamah ***Al-Deen***

The third of our obligations as Muslims is to try our utmost to establish Islam as a concrete socio-politico-economic reality. This objective can be described in many ways: establishment of the Islamic System of Social Justice, achievement of the domination of Islam over all spheres of life, and the establishment of Khilafah, etc.

Islam, as I mentioned earlier, is a Deen; it is not merely a "religion" in the ordinary sense of the word. A religion, as commonly understood, is only a collection of doctrine, rituals, and customs, with no relevance for the social, economic, and political institutions of society. Deen, on the other hand, is a complete code of life that embraces all aspects of human existence, both individual and collective. When I say that Islam is a Deen, what I mean is that it not only deals with metaphysical beliefs, rituals of

worship, and social customs and ceremonies, but that it also significantly affects and shapes the social, economic, and political aspects of collective life. Note that Deen, by its very nature, demands its domination and ascendancy in society. If it is not dominant, it becomes relegated to the position of a powerless "religion." In other words, what is dominant and ascendant is Deen, what is subjugated and powerless is religion.

Let me cite here an example to illustrate my point. Islam became dominant in the Arabian Peninsula as a result of the untiring efforts and sacrifices made by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his Companions (RAA).Later on, the Companions (RAA) embarked upon different expeditions where they would give three options to their opponents: First, accept the call of Islam and become our brethren; your life, property, and honor will be as sacred as our own. Second, accept the domination of Islam and pay jiziya; you shall be allowed to practice your religion in your private and personal affairs but the public order will be established in accordance with Islam. Third, if you reject both of these options, then we must fight and the sword will decide between us.

These three options clearly illuminate the difference between Deen and religion: Islam was the dominant public order, under the rule of which all other faiths were allowed to exist as religions. Nobody was forced to change his religion, but everyone was obliged to accept Islam's privileged status as the dominant public order. This is precisely what is meant by the establishment of Islam as a socio-politico-economic reality. It is easy to understand why there can be only one Deen in any particular part of the world at any given time, although there can be several religions.

During the age of Western colonialism, Islam lost its domination as the established public order in the

Muslim world and was relegated to the status of a mere religion, ie., a private and personal affair of the individual. In the Indian subcontinent, for instance, the British established the rule of the Crown. This meant that the public order was to be managed and administered according to the dictates of the Viceroy who would implement the directives of the British government, and not in accordance with the injunctions of Islam. Under the British rule, the Indian Muslims were allowed to pray, fast, pay Zakat, and go to Hajj. They were allowed to believe in One God, to call adhan for prayers, to sacrifice animals at *Eid-ul-Adha* and perform other traditional rituals and customs. Despite this "freedom" to practice Islam in one's private and personal life, however, Islam no longer enjoyed the status of Deen because it was no longer dominant as the public order. In effect, Islam was reduced to the level of a religion with no power at all to influence and direct social institutions. A major portion of the Qur'an and Hadith, dealing with the collective life of Muslims, became inoperative and therefore irrelevant.

This state of affairs has continued to our own day; despite the end of colonialism, Islam is still nothing more than a religion in the Muslim world where the affairs of the society and the state are being run mostly in accordance with non-Islamic criteria. Secularism, instead of Islam, reigns supreme.

Since Islam is essentially a Deen, it requires its adherents to strive hard so that it can be actualized as a concrete socio-politico-economic reality in order that the sovereignty of AImighty Allah (SWT) can be established on earth. The struggle for the establishment of the Islamic order is the highest of a Muslim's obligations; it represents the supreme demand that our Creator-Lord makes from us. The re-establishment of the Islamic order obviously implies a fundamental change in the politico-socio-

economic system that is dominant in the Muslim world. In other words, the un-Islamic public order that is already entrenched must be uprooted and removed before Islam can take its place. Since every established order necessarily serves the interests of certain privileged classes, they naturally become the guardians and protectors of the status quo. Any attempt to change the established order leads to a backlash from these guardians who react forcefully and violently, using all the resources, at their disposal in order to prevent any fundamental change from being effected in the public realm. The struggle for the establishment of Islam as a Deen, therefore, is fraught with utmost hardships and travails.

Even though the goal itself is extremely difficult to achieve, the struggle in this path is still incumbent upon every Muslim. The importance of this duty is underscored by the fact that the message of the Qur'an cannot be effectively conveyed to humanity at large unless a model Islamic state is established where the Deen of Allah (SWT)reigns supreme, an Islamic state that can act as a beacon of light for the whole world. In other words, the Islamic ideals of equality, justice, and universal welfare cannot be translated into concrete, everyday realities unless Islam becomes dominant once again and its social, economic. and political teachings are actualized in at least one sizable country, so that this country then becomes a model for the guidance of entire humanity. If Islam is successfully and authentically revived in this manner, its domination will not remain limited to one part of the world but will necessarily spread far and wide, as happened during the period of the Rightly Guided Caliphate. The process, however, must start from a single country. As long as such a state does not come into existence, the idea that Islam is a complete code of life that offers practical solutions to the perplexing problems that are afflicting humanity today

will remnain a mere dogmatic and empty claim unsupported by concrete evidence.

The Muslim Ummah is responsible to struggle for the establishment of Islam,just as earlier nations were so enjoined.The Qur'an proclaims:

شَرَعَ لَكُمۡ مِّنَ الدِّيۡنِ مَا وَصّٰى بِهٖ نُوۡحًا وَّ الَّذِىۡۤ اَوۡحَيۡنَاۤ اِلَيۡكَ وَ مَا وَصَّيۡنَا بِهٖۤ اِبۡرٰهِيۡمَ وَ مُوۡسٰى وَ عِيۡسٰۤى اَنۡ اَقِيۡمُوا الدِّيۡنَ وَ لَا تَتَفَرَّقُوۡا فِيۡهِ....
(الشورٰی13:42)

The same Deen has He enjoined for you as that which He enjoined on Noah, the one We have sent by inspiration to you (O Muhammad),and that which We enjoined on Abraham,Moses.and Jesus: namely that you establish this Deen and make no divisions therein.(Al-Shura 42:13)

Two Prerequisites for the Struggle to Establish Islam

Of all the obligations described above, the struggle to establish Islam as a socio-politico-economic reality requires the maximum effort and sacrifices. An established and deeply entrenched public order cannot be transformed overnight; it requires patient and persistent struggle on the part of committed individuals. Similarly,such a transformation cannot be brought about by mere individual efforts; the task obviously calls for an organized struggle by a close-knit group. Individuals, no matter how pious and devout, have simply no chance of success in this endeavor.We find ample evidence of this in the history of the prophets,as narrated by the Holy Qur'an.

Almighty Allah (SWT) has sent innumerable messengers in this world. Regarding these prophets, there can be no doubt about the perfection of their character and sincerity, the depth of their faith, their utmost piety,and their commitment to the cause of Almighty Allah (SWT).

Despite their personal qualities, however, these prophets and messengers could not establish the Deen of Allah (SWT) because sufficient number of people did not respond to their call. Consider the personality of Prophet Abraham (AS), who has been conferred such outstanding titles as *Khalil Allah, Abul-Ambia, and Imam Al-Naas in the* Holy Qur'an, but who could not establish the Islamic order simply because he did not enjoy the commitment and cooperation of a sufficient number of followers during his lifetime. Prophet Isa (AS) is another venerated messenger of Allah (SWT), who has been called Ruh Allah in the Qur'an, but even he could not accomplish the task because the Israelites as a whole rejected his call. Similarly, we note that when Prophet Musa (AS) left Egypt, he had six hundred thousand Israelites with him. If we do not count the women, children, and the old, we can safely estimate that at least fifty thousand to one hundred thousand men were fit for fighting among these Israelites. When the moment for war arrived, however, these men refused to fight for the cause of Almighty Allah (SWT) and hence the revolutionary process stopped at this point. Prophet Musa (AS) could not establish the Deen of Allah (SWT) simply because his own people would not go to war due to their cowardice. The Deen of Allah (SWT) was finally established, however, under the leadership of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) because people did respond to his call in sufficient numbers and endeavored their utmost for this cause.

Thus, the history of the prophets clearly proves that individual efforts to establish the *Deen* of Allah (SWT) cannot bear fruit unless they take the form of a collective venture. In other words, unless a sufficient number of people extend their support and are willing to work collectively and harmoniously, the very best individuals who ever existed in human history cannot achieve the objective on the basis of their personal efforts alone. Thus,

if the struggle for the establishment of Islam is to be waged in our own times, a disciplined and organized jama'ah would be an essential prerequisite for such a movement to proceed. Indeed, nothing worthwhile has ever been achieved in the world without a well-orchestrated, collective struggle, and this universal principle clearly applies to the struggle for the supremacy of Islam. A jama'ah, therefore, is indispensable.

We know that what is a prerequisite for the performance of an obligatory duty itself becomes an obligation. This can be understood by means of a simple analogy. Salat is obligatory, but it cannot be performed without the ritual ablution, wudu, which therefore becomes obligatory as well. In the same way, the struggle to establish the Deen of Allah (SWT) is obligatory upon every Muslim; however, one cannot perform this duty in his individual capacity but only in the form of a group and collectivity. Therefore, the organization of a disciplined jama'ah and taking part in the collective effort through this jama'ah must also be considered obligatory. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) has made this explicit in the following tradition, narrated by Harith Al-Ash'ari (RAA) and reported by Imam Ahmad (RA) and Imam Tirmidhi (RA):

...آمُرُكُمْ بِخَمْسٍ أَمَرَنِي اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ بِهِنَّ: الْجَمَاعَةِ، وَالسَّمْعِ وَالطَّاعَةِ، وَالْهِجْرَةِ، وَالْجِهَادِ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ... [مسند احمد]

..I declare obligatory upon you five things. Allah (SWT)has commanded me to do so. They are: organization, listening, obeying, doing Hijrah, and doing jihad *for the* cause of Allah

In other words, the struggle for the cause of Almighty Allah (SWT)necessitates a jama'ah in which the

leaders are listened to and obeyed. Without a jama'ah *and* its strict discipline, the obligations of *Hijrah and Jihad* cannot be fulfilled.

Obviously, the struggle for the establishment of Islam cannot proceed by means of a disorderly and unruly group, just as it cannot be waged on an individual level; on the contrary, the nature of the goal itself is such that it requires deep commitment and discipline. Not only the members of a jama'ah struggling for the establishment of Islam must have deep commitment to the objective, they also need to be tightly organized in accordance WITH the strict discipline of "listening and obeying." The directives and commands coming from the Ameer of such a jama'ah, as well as from the umara appointed by him, must therefore be obeyed by the members; the only condition is that such an obedience must be fil-ma'roof, i.e., while obedience to Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was unconditional and absolute, the obedience to any Muslim leader after him has to be limited within the sphere of what is permitted in the

Shar'ah. No Ameer has the prerogative to issue a command that is in conflict with the established injunctions of the Shari'ah; if he gives such a command, he must not be obeyed. Within the sphere of what is allowed in the Shari'ah, however, the Ameer must be listened to and obeyed as a necessary condition of discipline.

The second prerequisite for the struggle to establish Islam, therefore, is baiy'ah, or the pledge of obedience within the limits of the Shari'ah, given to a particular leader who is deemed capable and trustworthy. Even though other forms of organization based on a constitutional model are also permissible, I assert that the institution of baiy'ah is much more preferable because it has been mentioned in the Qur'an, because it was practiced by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) himself, and

because most of the Islamic movements throughout history were based on this mode of allegiance and association. That is why I have adopted baiy'ah as the basis of organization and discipline in Tanzeem-e-Islami. It is only through a personal baiy'ah to me that a person becomes a member of Tanzeem-e-Islami.

I must clarify that the institution of baiy'ah does not negate the necessity for advice and consultation. Consultation or shura is such a basic need of the Ameer that he simply cannot do away with it. Before taking any decision, he must ask the opinion of his followers and associates and take their views into careful consideration. Contrary to the practice in the usual, democratic organizations, however, the final decision must rest on the judgment of the Ameer and not on the counting of votes. After everything is said and discussed, the Ameer reaches his own decision and issues a directive; when he does that, he must be obeyed. Otherwise, we can have an unruly mob but not a disciplined jama'ah. The traditional military imperative of "listen and obey" is exactly the kind of discipline that is required in the struggle for the establishment of Deen. This is also the traditional pattern of organization in Muslim history.

The importance and necessity of baiy'ah in Islam cannot be overemphasized. According to a tradition narrated by Abdullah bin Umar (RAA) and reported by Imam Muslim (RA), Prophet Muhammad (SAW) has said:

....وَمَنْ مَاتَ وَلَيْسَ فِي عُنُقِهِ بَيْعَةٌ مَاتَ مِيتَةً جَاهِلِيَّةً [صحيح مسلم]

.. whosoever dies in a state that there is no bond of baiy'ah around his neck, he dies a death of jahiliyyah.

This means that, truly speaking, to be without baiy'ah is against the spirit of the Islamic way of life. This hadith sheds light on a very important point. In terms of how they are organized collectively, there can be only two possible situations for the Muslims: either Islam is dominant as the public order, in which case the Muslims must pledge their allegiance to their leader or Khalifah *and* obey him within the bounds of Shari'ah; or the Islamic order is not established anywhere on earth, in which case they must pledge their allegiance to the Ameer of a *jama'ah* that is struggling to re-establish Islam as a socio-politico-economic reality. Baiy'ah is compulsory for all Muslims irrespective of whether Islam is established or not. Generally speaking, there is no third option for them.

The Methodology for Establishing Islam's Ascendancy

After emphasizing the importance of carrying out this duty, I am now going to talk about something more practical: What is the methodology that must be adopted in order to make Islam dominant as a politico-socio-economic order? Once again, I am going to discuss this in both negative and positive terms. Even though it should be clear to all, it helps to remind ourselves explicitly that Islam cannot be made dominant by mere wishing; there is no dearth of good wishes for Islam's domination among the Muslims, but the futility of such wishes is more than obvious. Similarly, this goal cannot be achieved by simply praying for it; we have been praying for the ascendancy of Islam and the well-being of Muslims in every Jumu'ah and Eid prayer for a long time, with little tangible effect. Even the most sincere prayers are rejected by Almighty Allah (SWT) if they are not accompanied by hard work and persistent struggle. Instead of only wishing or merely praying therefore, we must put in some real effort as well. We must exert ourselves to the utmost, and invest both our time and energies in order to turn the objective of

Islam's ascendancy into a concrete reality. Good wishes and sincere prayers will be effective only when they are accompanied by solid effort on our part.

The question is this: In what manner should we exert ourselves so that our efforts become truly successful?

One possible way to establish Islam is through taking part in the elections. If the majority of Muslims vote for us, we can come into power. Once we have the reins of political power in our hands, we can change the system through education, law, media, and other social institutions. So simple, yet so deceptive. Consider the situation in Pakistan, where eighty percent of votes are controlled by the feudal class. Through elections, therefore, the best that can be achieved is that one feudal lord may be replaced by another. It is certainly possible for a member of the Parliament to be supplanted by his uncle or nephew, but to believe that anyone other than a feudal lord can win the elections under the present conditions is simply a sign of naiveté.

The main argument against taking part in the elections, however, has to do with its ultimate purpose. Elections are not held in order to change the established politico-socio-economic order but only to run it properly. This is a crucial point that is often ignored by many sincere people who believe they can establish Islam through elections. Consider the Republican and the Democratic Parties in the United States, or the Conservative and the Liberal Parties in Britain. These political parties do not take part in the elections because they want to change the established capitalist-liberal-democratic order of their respective countries; they take part in the elections because each has something different to offer in order to run the system in the best possible manner. The details of taxation, health, labor, or immigration policies may be in dispute, but the system

itself is basically agreed upon. Since the politico-socio-economic system of a country cannot be changed by taking part in the elections, this is possible only through a revolutionary process that operates outside this system. The establishment of Islam represents a revolutionary change; it cannot be brought about by means of elections. Half a century of Pakistani political history is a living testimony to this fact.

The alternative is to call people towards Islam. The hope is that when we invite people towards Islam and they respond, our circle of influence will go on widening till a point will be reached where the majority of the populace will have been reformed. At this point, the entire system will change, automatically and without any friction or conflict, simply because the people who run the system would themselves have been reformed. This sounds tantalizingly possible, but the error, once again, is subtle. The fact is that the best da'wah efforts cannot change the majority of people. This has never happened in the history of any reform movement and is not likely to happen in future too, particularly when the call for reform involves the sacrifice of one's vested interests. I will give only one argument in support of my assertion, and I am confident that it suffices. Had it been possible to reform the majority of people through daw'ah work alone. Prophet Muhammad (SAW)-the Mercy to Humanity-would never have taken the sword in his hand. There can be no better teacher and reformer in the world than Prophet Muhammad (SAW); if he had to fight for the cause of Allah (SWT), if he had to sacrifice the lives of his closest associates, if he had to suffer the agonies and tribulations of war, then who is there to claim that Islam can be established today by merely calling people towards it? If it were possible to make Islam dominant by simply educating and reforming people, I assert that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) would not have allowed the blood of

even a kafir to spill, let alone the blood of his beloved companions (RAA)!

Do not get me wrong. I am not denying the importance of da'wah work at all. Indeed, the first step of any socio-political revolution is to call people towards the new ideology. In the case of Islam, this must be done at a large scale, using all available means of modern communication, in order to attract those who have kept their pristine nature or fitrah intact. But once such persons have been gathered, they must be consolidated into a disciplined jama'ah, and this jame'ah must then struggle as a unit in order that falsehood can be defeated and truth is made supreme. This is how the Prophet (SAW) himself proceeded, and this is how we must proceed too. Devoid of this vision, da'mah *for* the sake *of de'sah* alone cannot yield the desired result of the establishment of Islam's ascendancy.

The life of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) provides us with the guidance that we need regarding methodology. He called people towards Islam, organized those who responded to his call, trained them in discipline and spiritual purification, made them pass through the stage of passive resistance in Mecca when they were not allowed to retaliate even in self-defense; it was only after the number was sufficient and a base was available in Medina that he took the initiative and challenged the Quraysh by blocking their trade route. The resulting armed conflict passed through many battles and finally led to the defeat of falsehood and the triumph of truth. The same methodology must be adopted today, using all the modern means of communication, dissemination, training, and organization that are available to us.

The Final Stage

Let us assume that, by the grace of Almighty Allah (SWT),we decide to become His obedient servants in our

individual capacities, then we come together and become organized in the form of a disciplined jama'ah, then we pass through the stages of training and passive resistance. Suppose that now we are about two hundred thousand in a country like Pakistan. We have established Islam in our individual lives and in our homes; we have purged our social and economic practices from all that is prohibited in the Shari'ah. We, have given our pledge of allegiance to a pious and trustworthy leader, and we are willing to die for the cause of Islam. What do we do next? Should we take up arms and revolt against the Pakistani government?

My answer is an emphatic "no." I believe that even though the final stage of the revolutionary process that we observe in the life of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was characterized by armed conflict, the socio-political conditions have sufficiently changed during the last fourteen centuries to warrant an ijtihad in this regard. If the situation today were the same as the one we find during the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), there would be no need for any ijtihad. By definition, an *ijtihad* is needed only

when the objective conditions have undergone fundamental changes to the extent that a particular practice of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) cannot be implemented as such. I believe that this is the case in our times, and hence we need an *ijtihad* concerning the final stage of the revolutionary process.

What are the ways in which socio-political conditions have changed? First, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his Companions (RAA) were facing non-Muslims. There were believers on one side and disbelievers on the other; the demarcation was clear and there was no ambiguity. Today, the defenders and guardians of the secular and un-Islamic public order are themselves Muslims, at least in the legal sense, which brings in a significant change of scenario. Secondly, there

was no central government in the Arabian Peninsula during the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad (SAW); this means that there was no organized system of governance, and hence no standing armies to defend the status quo. The battles between the Muslims and the Quraysh and their allies were basically between volunteer armies. Both sides possessed the same kind of armory and means of locomotion-swords, spears, bows and arrows, camels. horses, and so on-the only difference was in terms of quantity. Today, any movement that challenges the socio-political establishment is likely to face the military might of organized and highly resourceful governments. The clash is now between unarmed, or at best poorly armed. masses on one hand and well-equipped, trained militaries on the other. This is an obvious recipe for suicide. A bilateral armed confrontation, therefore, is no longer feasible.

What, then, should be the methodology for the final stage?

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) has said: "Wisdom is the lost treasure of the believer; he has more claim over it wherever he finds it." The practice of the Prophet (SAW) was in accordance with this principle. He accepted the suggestion of digging up a trench around Medina in order to block the legions of attacking disbelievers in the Battle of Ahzab, even though this was a method used by the Persians and was not known at all in Arabian Peninsula. If we are truly looking for guidance, therefore, it is only to our own advantage to be totally open-minded and unprejudiced as to the source of the guidance. In accordance with the Prophetic saying, we should appropriate wisdom irrespective of where we find it. The question for us is this: Where can we find a workable alternative to armed conflict?

We find this guidance first in the non-violent, non-cooperation movement that was launched by Gandhi against the British government, and it goes without saying that this movement shook the foundations of British Raj in India. Gandhi wanted his movement to be totally non-violent, and when in a single incident the demonstrators failed to control themselves and killed a number of policemen, Gandhi

simply called off the entire movement by arguing that he will not lead people who are unable to practice non-violence. Although several factors were responsible for the eventual withdrawal of colonialism from the Indian Subcontinent, the non-cooperation movement led by Gandhi did play an important initial role. Secondly, the popular uprising against the Shah of Iran provides us with more evidence of the feasibility of this approach. Although several different groups were involved in this uprising and some of them did resort to violent means, the eventual leader of the revolt, Imam Khomeini, advocated a non-violent approach. By adopting a strategy of unilateral pacifism in which unarmed demonstrators courageously faced heavily armed soldiers in the streets of Iran, the people ultimately triumphed against all odds. Indeed, no system can work without the cooperation of the masses, and experience has shown how the most secure and the most firmly established socio-political order collapses when unarmed people refuse their cooperation and persist in their disobedience and defiance. While suppression and violence from the established order is inevitable, the unilateral pacifism and non-violence on the part of the seekers of change soon succeeds in converting the silent majority, further facilitating the eventual revolution. This is precisely what I believe to be the realistic alternative to an armed conflict in today's world.

Except for this ijtihad, which replaces armed conflict with a non-violent resistance movement, the rest

of the methodology is derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah. The title for this movement shall be nahi anil-munkar, i.e, the Islamic imperative to eradicate everything that is evil, wrong, unjust, or immoral. According to a well-known and oft-quoted tradition of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), there are three levels of this obligation depending on the availability of strength and resources, viz., eradicating evil with one's hand (i.e., with force);eradicating evil with one's tongue (i.e., through persuasion);and eradicating evil with one's heart (i.e., by cultivating personal abhorrence against it). As long as the required strength is not available for us to carry out the highest level of *nahi anil-munkar, we* must continue to raise our voices against all un-lslamic practices that have become prevalent in Muslim societies. We must use all the available resources of mass communication to try and persuade the people in authority to eradicate these un-Islamic practices, and we must fulfill this duty to the best of our ability. However, once we have the necessary strength in terms of the number and training of committed individuals at our disposal, we shall move on to the highest stage of *nahi anil-munkar* and try to eradicate evil through force, i.e., by means of a popular resistance movement. We shall target a particular evil in society, and employ all the contemporary techniques of peaceful and non-violent agitation and civil disobedience to eradicate that evil, including street processions, public rallies, strikes, and sit-ins. We shall not damage any public or private property; we shall not attack anyone under any circumstances, but at the same time we shall be willing to lay down our own lives. Our willingness to sacrifice our own lives for the cause of Islam will be matched only by our firm refusal to hurt anyone or destroy anything. I am convinced that this is the only workable methodology for our times, one that is within the limits of the Islamic Shari'ah, and one that has the potential of eventually

bringing about the desired ascendancy of Islam as a socio-political reality.

I firmly believe that terrorism, which is characterized by indiscriminate destruction of innocent lives, is forbidden in the Shari'ah. Far from leading to the establishment of Islam, such an approach only alienates its perpetrators from the masses whose sympathies they ultimately need. As described above, the correct methodology is that the seekers of change must be ready and willing to sacrifice their own lives without threatening the lives and property of others, including those of their oppressors.

Consequences of the Struggle for Islam's Ascendancy

Assuming that a sufficient number of Muslims are galvanized by this vision and the movement proceeds according to the methodology that I have charted out and discussed in detail elsewhere, what will be the results and consequences of this struggle?

The first outcomne of this struggle, which is in fact the ultimate goal of the whole venture, is that those who sincerely participate in it will be rewarded in the Hereafter. From the perspective of the individual participants, whether or not the movement gains any tangible success in this world is simply immaterial in the final analysis. If the "real" life is one that we shall live in the Hereafter-and there can be no doubt that this is indeed the case-then the only worthwhile success is one that is gained in the life-to-come rather than what we may or may not enjoy in the transient life of this world. This is precisely why the Day of Judgment has been called Yaum Al-Taghabun in the Holy Qur'an, i.e., the Day of ultimate winning and losing implying that the real loser is the one who loses on that Day and the real winner is the one who succeeds on that Day. Thus, irrespective of whether or not

the desired revolution is actually brought about, if we succeed in spending the better part of our time, resources, and talents in the sincere and unwavering struggle for the cause of Allah (SWT) then we shall be successful in the Hereafter, In sha-Allah. The struggle, and not the attainment of goal, is what guarantees salvation. The Qur'an itself describes a person's admission into the "gardens of eternity" as the "supreme triumph," while treating the achievement of a "speedy victory" in this world as something of secondary importance (Al-Saff 61:11-12). In this regard, it is instructive to reflect upon those Companions of the Prophet (SAW) who died before the Conquest of Mecca. Consider Yasir (RAA) and his wife Sumayyah (RAA), two Companions who were brutally tortured and then slain in the early years of the Islamic movement. Consider Hamza (RAA), who was martyred in the Battle of Uhad. These and numerous other Companions did not live long enough to witness the triumph of Islam, but no one can doubt that their own salvation is guaranteed because they had invested themselves fully for the cause of Allah (SWT).

Thus, if I were to spend the greater part of my physical, mental, and monetary resources in the struggle to make Islam supreme, then I would be able to present these efforts as an "excuse" before Almighty Allah (SWT) on the Day of Judgment. I would be able to plead that even though I myself could not succeed in making the Truth dominant in the world, I did not lend support to falsehood either, nor was I one of the "neutral" bystanders; instead, I would be able to say that I had exhausted myself for the cause of making Islam the supreme reality in the world, and this would be my "excuse" for living under the rule of falsehood and kufr.

Even though real felicity for the individual is that of the Hereafter, the possibility of achieving success in this

world at a collective level cannot be ruled out either. It may be that Almighty Allah (SWT) will appreciate our efforts and our intentions and bless the struggle so that it actually leads to the domination of Islam in this world. This is by no means impossible.

Here, I would like to present before you the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), which demonstrate that the ascendancy of Islam is bound to be established before the end of the world. I have said this on numerous occasions, and I will repeat this once again to you: The establishment of Islam as a socio-politico-economic reality is such a difficult objective that I would never have imagined that this is really possible if it were not for the unambiguous sayings of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Indeed, if even the great and mighty messengers of Allah (SWT) could not achieve this objective with the sole exception of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), how could the ascendancy of Islam come about for the second time through the efforts of worthless and insignificant persons like myself? Logic and rational analysis does not allow us to believe that such a gigantic feat can ever be accomplished in the future. But we are not bound by appearances and material causality alone, when we have clear and unequivocal prophecies of Islam's global domination by none other than the most truthful person. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) himself.

According to a tradition narrated by Imam Ahmad (RA) on the authority of Nauman bin Bashir (RAA), Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is reported to have said to his Companions(RAA):

تَكُونُ النُّبُوَّةُ فِيكُمْ مَا شَاءَ اللهُ أَنْ تَكُونَ، ثُمَّ يَرْفَعُهَا إِذَا شَاءَ أَنْ يَرْفَعَهَا، ثُمَّ تَكُونُ خِلَافَةٌ عَلَى مِنْهَاجِ النُّبُوَّةِ، فَتَكُونُ مَا شَاءَ اللهُ أَنْ تَكُونَ، ثُمَّ يَرْفَعُهَا إِذَا شَاءَ اللهُ أَنْ يَرْفَعَهَا، ثُمَّ

تَكُونُ مُلْكًا عَاضًّا، فَيَكُونُ مَا شَاءَ اللهُ أَنْ يَكُونَ، ثُمَّ يَرْفَعُهَا إِذَا شَاءَ أَنْ يَرْفَعَهَا، ثُمَّ تَكُونُ مُلْكًا جَبْرِيَّةً، فَتَكُونُ مَا شَاءَ اللهُ أَنْ تَكُونَ، ثُمَّ يَرْفَعُهَا إِذَا شَاءَ أَنْ يَرْفَعَهَا، ثُمَّ تَكُونُ خِلَافَةٌ عَلَى مِنْهَاجِ نُبُوَّةٍ ثُمَّ سَكَتَ،[مسند احمد]

The period of Prophethood will remain among you so long as Allah wills, then He shall cause it to end. After that, there will be Khilafah among you on the pattern of Prophethood, and this will last as long as Allah wills, and then He shall cause it to end. After that, there will be a reign of oppressive monarchy, and this will also last as long as Allah wills, and then He shall cause it to end. After that there will be a period of enslavement, and this will last as long as Allah wills, then He shall cause it to end. Finally, there will again be Khilafah on the pattern of Prophethood. (the narrator adds: "then the prophet became silent")

In another tradition narrated by Imam Muslim (RA) on the authority of Thauban (RAA), the Messenger of God (SAW) is reported to have said:

إِنَّ اللهَ زَوَى لِي الْأَرْضَ فَرَأَيْتُ مَشَارِقَهَا وَمَغَارِبَهَا، وَإِنَّ أُمَّتِي سَيَبْلُغُ مُلْكُهَا مَا زُوِيَ لِي مِنْهَا..... [صحيح مسلم]

Allah folded up the whole earth for me (in a vision), so that I was able to see all the easts and all the wests, and surely the domination of my followers will be established over all those places that were shown to me by thus folding the earth...

Similarly Imam Ahmad (RA) has narrated, on the authority of Miqdad bin Aswad (RAA) that Allah's Messenger (SAW) said:

لَا يَبْقَى عَلَى ظَهْرِ الْأَرْضِ بَيْتُ مَدَرٍ وَلَا وَبَرٍ إِلَّا أَدْخَلَهُ اللَّهُ كلمة الاسلام بِعِزِّ عَزِيز أَو ذُلِّ ذليل إِمَّا يعزُّهُمُ اللهُ عز وَجل فَيَجْعَلُهُمْ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا أَوْ يُذِلُّهُمْ فَيَدِينُونَ لَهَا [مسند احمد]

There shall be no house on the entire earth-neither of bricks nor one made of camel's skin--but Allah will cause the word of Islam to enter it, either with the honor of the one who deserves honor, or with the subjugation of the one who is defeated. That is to say. Allah will confer honor on some and they will embrace Islam, and He will cause the others to give up fighting and they will surrender before the rule of Islam.

The predictions made by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in these traditions are firmly grounded in the Holy Qur'an itself. Both the minor and major premises of this argument are clearly described in the Qur'an, the inescapable conclusion of which is the ultimate establishment of worldwide supremacy of Islam. The major premise consists of the fact that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was appointed a messenger of Almighty Allah (SWT) for the whole humanity (Al-A'raf 7:158;Al-Anbia 21:107; Al-Furqan 25:1;Saba 34:28;& Al-Jumu'ah 62:2-3),whereas the minor premise is represented by the fact that the purpose of his advent was to make the true way of life or *Deen Al-Haq* dominant over all aspects of

human life (Al-Tawbah 9:33; Al-Fath 48:24; &z Al-Saff 61:9), and that Almighty Allah (SWT) will perfect His Light despite the resistance from the unbelievers (Al-Tawbah 9:32 & Al-Saff 61:8). The conclusion that necessarily follows from these premises is that the final aim of the advent of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) will be fulfilled only with the establishment of the ascendancy of Islam over all aspects of life, all over the world. Since Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is a messenger for the entire humanity, and since the purpose of his advent is the

establishment of the supremacy of Islam, how could the world come to an end without the objective and goal of his advent being fulfilled in totality, that is, without Islam becoming dominant all over the globe?

Thus, I am arguing with full conviction and conscious understanding, on the basis of the guidance of the Qur'an and the traditions of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), that a time will definitely come before the end of the world when Islam will reign supreme throughout the world. I have not an iota of doubt in my mind that this is destined to happen. What remains to be seen, however, is who amongst us gains eternal reward by participating in the struggle for this cause, and who engages himself in other pursuits and thereby misses the opportunity of earning this reward and of saving himself from Hell-fire. This is a choice that each one of us must make.

The **Special Case of Pakistan**

After these two consequences-eternal bliss in the Hereafter and the possibility of Islam's revival and ascendancy in this world-I would like to describe the third outcome of the struggle. I firmly believe that the establishment of the Islamic public order in Pakistan will lead to its strengthening as a free country and will guarantee its integrity and stability. I have very high hopes regarding this land of ours. Although I am not as unquestionably certain of this as I am regarding the worldwide domination of Islam, I do believe that the process of Islam's ultimate triumph will start from Pakistan. I tend to believe that Almighty Allah (SWT) has selected this part of the world as the starting point for the global ascendancy of Islam. Far from being my wishful thinking, there are in fact several indicators that point in this direction. For instance, note that during the first millennium of Islam, the great reformers appeared almost exclusively in the Arab world. By the start of the second

millennium, however, the Indian Subcontinent became the main center of reform and revivalist movements. Thus, Almighty Allah (SWT) caused extraordinarily great personalities to appear in this part

of the Muslim world during the last four centuries; these include Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi (11th century Hijnal), Shah Waliyullah Delhvi (12th century), Sayyid Ahmad Barelvi (13th century),and more recently, Maulana Mahmood Hassan Deobandi, Allama Muhammad Iqbal, Maulana Muhammad llyas,and Maulana Sayyid Abul A'la Maududi (14th century).This shift from the Arab world to the Indian Subcontinent cannot be without significance. After the partition of India in 1947, Muslims belonging to Pakistan have now become the custodians of the intellectual and revivalist heritage of the last four hundred years. I have proved elsewhere that the birth of Pakistan itself is miraculous, as it cannot be explained by the ordinary causal mechanisms that operate in the world. In addition, this is the only country in the world that was carved out in the name of Islam, and whose Constitution contains a revolutionary pronouncement in the form of the Objectives Resolution that proclaims the absolute sovereignty of Almighty Allah (SWT). Based on these facts, I believe that Pakistan has a central and crucial role to play in the Divine Scheme for the revival and ascendancy of Islam. It seems to me that Islam will be made dominant as a socio-politico-economic reality initially in Pakistan, before becoming global in the long run.

Islam is not only the raison d'etre for the emergence of Pakistan, it also provides the sole justification for its existence as a separate and independent country. Any progress that we make towards the establishment of Islam in Pakistan will also lead to the strengthening of this country. This will be the third outcome of our struggle for the cause of Islam.

A Final Word

I pray to Almighty Allah (SWT) that He accepts the exertion that I have gone through in delivering this lecture. I have explained these points in details in several of my public addresses and Friday sermons; most of them are available in audio/video tapes and many in printed form. These sources can be referred for details or further clarification. In today's lecture I have brought all these points together in a summarized format. I invite you to ponder upon these arguments and see if they are deficient. incomplete, or lacking in coherence. I also invite you to consider these arguments in relation to the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah, and judge for yourself if I have deviated from these teachings in any way. If your heart testifies that the arguments are cogent and are firmly and securely grounded in the Book of Allah (SWT) and the Sunnah of His Prophet Muhammad (SAW), then I invite you to join Tanzeem-e-Islami and become a part of the struggle for the cause of Islam.

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