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and shall experience neither fear nor grief.\textsuperscript{445} God is well pleased with those who followed in the footsteps of the vanguard of Islam—the first of those who forsook their houses and of those who gave them aid—in a spirit of devotion and graceful loyalty as well as those who followed them, as they are all with Him. For them God has prepared the garden of paradise, as their eternal home of supreme felicity.\textsuperscript{446}

\textsuperscript{445} Ibid., ii, 112.
\textsuperscript{446} Ibid., ix, 100.

Chapter IX
ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL TEACHINGS OF THE QUR'AN

A ECONOMIC TEACHINGS

1. The first economic principle emphasized by the Qur'\(\text{\text{"a}}\)n with repeated stress is that all natural means of production and resources which subscribe to man's living, have been created by God. It is He who made them as they are and set them to follow the laws of nature that make them useful for man. It is He who allowed man to exploit them and placed them at his disposal.\textsuperscript{1}

2. On the basis of the aforesaid truth the Qur'\(\text{\text{"a}}\)n lays down the principle that an individual has neither the right to be free in acquiring and exploiting these resources according to his own sweet will, nor is he entitled to draw a line independently to decide between the lawful and the unlawful. It is for God to draw this line; for none else. The Qur'\(\text{\text{"a}}\)n condemns the Midians, an Arabian tribe of old, because its people claimed to possess a right to acquire and expend wealth in any way they liked without restriction of any kind.\textsuperscript{2}

It calls it a "lie" if a man describes a certain thing as lawful and another unlawful on his own account.\textsuperscript{3} The right to pronounce this rests with God and (as God's deputy) His Prophet.\textsuperscript{4}

\textsuperscript{1} Qur'\(\text{\text{"a}}\)n, ii, 29; vii, 10; xiii, 3; xiv, 32-34; lv, 69-64; lxvii, 15.
\textsuperscript{2} Ibid., xvi, 118. "This verse strictly prohibits that people should decide according to their own views or wishes what is lawful and what is unlawful" (Baidawi, Ans\(\text{\text{"a}}\)r al-Tanzil, Vol. III, p. 193).

The purport of this verse is, as 'Askari explains, that you should not call a thing lawful or unlawful unless you have learnt of its being so from God or His Prophet, otherwise you would be telling a lie on God; for nothing makes a thing lawful or unlawful save a commandment of God" (Alis\(\text{\text{"u}}\)r, R\(\text{\text{"o}}\)h al-Ma\(\text{\text{"a}}\)\(\text{\text{"a}}\)n, Vol. XIV, p. 226, Idr\(\text{\text{"a}}\)rat al-Taba\(\text{\text{"a}}\)t al-Muniriyyah, Egypt, 1345/1926).

\textsuperscript{3} Qur'\(\text{\text{"a}}\)n, vi, 157.

3. Under the sovereign command of God and within the limits imposed by Him, the Qur'\(\text{\text{"a}}\)n recognizes the right of holding private property as implied in several verses.\textsuperscript{5}

The economic scheme presented in the Qur'\(\text{\text{"a}}\)n is based entirely on the idea of individual ownership in every field. There is nothing in it to suggest that a distinction is to be made between consumption goods and production goods (or means of production) and that only the former may be held in private ownership, while the latter must be nationalized. Nor is there anything in the Qur'\(\text{\text{"a}}\)n suggesting or implying that the above-mentioned scheme is of a temporary nature to be replaced later by a permanent arrangement in which collectivization of all means of production may be desired to be made the rule. Had that been the ultimate object of the Qur'\(\text{\text{"a}}\)n, it would have certainly stated it unequivocally and given us instructions with regard to that future permanent order. The mere fact that it mentions in one place that "the earth belongs to God"\textsuperscript{6} is not enough to conclude that it either denies or forbids private ownership of land and sanctions nationalization. Elsewhere it says, "Whatever is in the heavens and the earth belongs to God,"\textsuperscript{7} but nobody has ever concluded from this verse that none of the things in the heavens or the earth can be held in individual possession or that all these things should be State property. If a thing which belongs to God ceases to belong to human beings, certainly it ceases to belong to individuals and States alike.

It is equally erroneous to draw from verse xii, 10 the inference that the Qur'\(\text{\text{"a}}\)n desires to distribute all the means of livelihood in the earth equally among all men, and conclude that since this can be achieved only under nationalization, the Qur'\(\text{\text{"a}}\)n advocates or favours the introduction of that system. For the purpose of this interpretation the verse is wrongly rendered to mean that "God has put in the earth its means of sustenance proportionately in four days, alike for those who seek.\textsuperscript{8} But even this wrong translation does not serve the purpose. It would be incorrect to apply the words "alike for those who seek" to human beings alone. All kinds of animals, too, are among "those who seek," and there is little doubt that their means of sustenance have also been placed by God in the earth. If this verse, then, denotes an equal share to all who seek, there is no justification for restricting this equality of share to members of the human species alone.

\textsuperscript{5} Ibid., ii, 275, 279, 292, 293, 294; iv, 2, 4, 7, 20, 24, 29; v, 35; vi, 141; ix, 103; xxiv, 27; xxxvi, 71; ii, 19; lxi, 11.
\textsuperscript{6} Ibid., vii, 128.
\textsuperscript{7} Ibid., ii, 284.
\textsuperscript{8} The words of the text are; fi arba'ati ayyamin sawat' al-ladda'ilin. Zamanikhari, Baidawi, R\(\text{\text{"a}}\)zi, Alis\(\text{\text{"u}}\)r and other commentators have taken sawat' to go with ayyamin and interpreted it to mean "in full four days." No commentator of distinction has taken sawat' to go with a'da'ilin. However, even if it is allowed to go with it, it would mean "provided for the sake of all who seek," and not "for all who seek in equal measure." This latter interpretation is just untenable.
Similarly, it would be wrong to stretch those verses of the Qur'an which emphasize providing for the weak or the have-nots to extract from them the theory of nationalization. It should be seen that wherever it stresses this need of providing for the poor, it also prescribes the only way of meeting it, namely, that the rich and the well-to-do of society should spend their wealth generously for the welfare of their poor kin, the orphans, and the needy for the pleasure of God; in addition to this, the State should collect a fixed portion of it and spend it for the same purpose. There is no hint in the Qur'an of any other scheme proposed to be put in practice to meet this end.

No doubt, there is nothing in the Qur'an to prevent a certain thing from being taken over from individual control and placed under collective control, if necessary; but to deny individual ownership altogether and adopt nationalization as an economic system does not go with the Qur'anic approach to man's economic problems.

4. The fact that, as in other things, all men do not enjoy equality in sustenance and means of earning, is described in the Qur'an as a feature of God's providence. Extravagant disparities devised by various social systems aside, natural inequality, as it goes, is described as the outcome of His wise apportionment, issuing from His own dispensation. The idea that this inequality is to be levelled up and substituted by dead equality is alien to the Book of God.1

The Qur'an advises people not to covet that by which Allah has made some of you excel others; men shall have the benefit of what they earn and women shall have the benefit of what they earn, and ask Allah of His grace.12

It is sometimes tried to conclude from verses xvi, 71 and xxx, 28 that the Qur'an desires equality of provision for everybody. But both the words and the context of these verses tell that they do not attempt to disapprove inequality and equalize to take its place, but that the Qur'an has no thought of having equal division among men as an argument against taking some of God's creatures as His partners. They argue that when men are not prepared to share their wealth (given by God) with their slaves as equal partners, what on earth leads them to think that God will share His powers with His servants and have partners with Him from amongst His creation?13

5. The Qur'an also asserts with full and repeated emphasis that God has created His bounties for men so that they use them for their benefit. It is not His intent that men should have nothing to do with them and live a life of renunciation. However, He desires that they should distinguish between things pure and impure, lawful and unlawful. They should use and exploit only what is pure and lawful, and there too should observe moderation.14

6. To achieve this end the Qur'an ordains that wealth should be acquired by lawful means only and that unlawful ways and means should be discarded altogether: "O ye who believe, take not your wealth among yourselves in wrongful ways, but let there be trade among you by mutual agreement..."15

These "wrongful ways" have been detailed at length by the Holy Prophet and the great jurists of Islam have elucidated them in books of law. Some of them, however, have been described in the Qur'an as under:

(a) "And do not eat one another's property among yourselves in wrongful ways, nor seek by it to gain the nearness of the judges that you may sinfully consume a portion of other men's goods and that knowingly."16

(b) "If one of you deposits a trust on another, let him who is trusted (faithfully) deliver his trust, and let him fear God, his Lord."17

(c) "He who misappropriates (the public money) will come on the Day of Judgment with what he has misappropriated; then shall everyone be given in full what he earned."18

(d) "The thief, male or female, cut off his or her hands."19

(e) "Those who devour the property of orphans unjustly, devour fire in their bellies, and will soon endure a blazing fire."20

(f) "Woe to the defrauders who, when they take the measure from men, exact full measure, but when they measure or weigh for them, give less than is due."21

(g) "Those who love that indecent things should spread among the believers, for them is a painful chastisement, in the life of this world and the hereafter."22

(h) "Force not your slave-girls to prostitution that you may enjoy (some) gain of the present life, if they desire to live in chastity."23 "And approach


14 Aḥkām, ii, 188. Seeking to gain the nearness of the judges includes resorting to law-courts to lay a false claim to other people's property, or offering bribes to the judges to obtain a favourable decree. (Aḥkām, op. cit. Vol. II, p. 60.)

15 Qur'an, ii, 233.

16 Ibid., i, 161.

17 Ibid., v, 41.

18 Ibid., iv, 10.

19 Ibid., xxxiii, 1–3.

20 Ibid., xxiv, 10.

not fornication, surely it is a shameful deed and an evil way." 22 "The adulterer and the adulteress, flog each of them with a hundred stripes." 23

(i) "O ye believers, wine and gambling and idols and divining arrows are an abomination—of Satan’s handiwork; so avoid them that you may prosper." 24

(ii) "God has permitted trade and forbidden usury." 25 "O ye believers, fear God and give up what remains (due to you) of usury if you are believers indeed. If you do not do so, take notice of war from God and His Messenger. But if you repent you shall have your principal. Neither you wrong, nor shall you be wronged. If the debtor is in straitened circumstances, give him time till it is easy (for him to pay), and that you remit (the debt), by way of charity, that is the best thing for you, if you only knew." 26

Thus we see that the Qur’an has prohibited the following ways of acquiring wealth: (i) Taking another’s property without his consent or remuneration, or with consent and with or without remuneration in such a way that the consent is forced or obtained by guile. (ii) Bribe. (iii) Forcible acquisitions. (iv) Fraud, whether with private or public wealth. (v) Theft. (vi) Misappropriation of orphans’ property. (vii) Taking or giving wrong measure. (viii) Business which help to spread indecency. (ix) Prostitution and its earnings. (x) Manufacture, buying and selling, and carriage of wines. (xi) Gambling, including all such ways in which the transfer of money from one person to another depends on mere chance. (xii) Manufacture, buying, and selling of idols, and service of temples where idols are kept or worshipped. (xiii) Earnings from businesses like astrology, foretelling of fate, divination, etc. (xiv) Usury.

22 Qur’an, xvii, 32.
23 ib., xxiv, 2. Along with making adultery a criminal offence, the earnings of adultery are also declared forbidden. The Prophet of God (may peace be upon him) called it the most abominable of earnings. (Bukhari, Book 34, Ch. 115; Book 37, Ch. 20; Book 65, Ch. 50; Book 76, Ch. 46; Book 77, Ch. 96; Muslim, Book 22, Tr. No. 39, 41; Abu Da’ud, Book 35, Ch. 30, 63; Tirmidhi, Book 9, Ch. 37; Book 12, Ch. 46; Book 26, Ch. 23; Nasai, Book 42, Ch. 5; Book 44, Ch. 90; Ibn Majah, Book 12, Ch. 9.)
24 Qur’an, v, 93. The manufacture of and trading in all things prohibited in the Qur’an are also prohibited. Full prohibition calls for complete ban on profiting by anything connected with what is prohibited. (Al-Jassas, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 212.)
25 Qur’an, ii, 275. This makes it clear that in the case of trade the profits which a person makes over his invested capital, or in the event of a partnership in trade, the profit which the partner of an enterprise divide according to their shares in it, is lawful and allowed, but whatever a creditor charges from his debtor over his principal is unlawful and God does not allow it as truly earned income like the profit earned in trade.
26 ib., ii, 278–80. It is evident from the words used here that this injunction is related to transactions of debt and in such transactions if a creditor charges anything more than what he has advanced it would be usury, interest. The rate of interest to be charged, high or low, makes no difference in it. It is also immaterial for what purpose the sum is borrowed.

7. After prohibiting these wrong ways of acquiring wealth the Qur’an also strongly condemns the amassing of wealth in a covetous and niggardly way. 27 Along with this we are warned that love of wealth or a handkerchief after riches and pride of fortune have always been among the causes that have led men astray and ultimately sent them to ruin. 28
8. On the other hand, the Qur’an condemns it equally strong terms that one should squander one’s properly acquired wealth in wasteful pursuits, spend it for one’s own lust or luxury, and put it to no use save raising one’s own standard of living. 29
9. The proper course for man, according to the Qur’an, is to spend moderately on his own needs and those of his family. He and his dependents have rights to his wealth which must be granted without stint, but he cannot be allowed to squander everything on himself and his family, for there are other obligations, too, which must be recognized. 30
10. After he has satisfied his own needs with moderation, a man should spend what is left over of his well-earned wealth in the following ways:

"They ask you what they should spend (in charity). Say: ‘Whatever exceeds your needs.’" 31

"It is not piety that you turn your faces towards east or west. Piety is that a man should believe in God and the Last Day and the angels and the Book and the Prophets, and give his wealth for the love of God to his kinsfolk and the orphans and the needy and the traveller and to those who ask, and for setting the slaves free.” 32

"You will never attain piety until you spend what you love (of your wealth). And whatever you spend, God knows it well." 33

"Serve God, and associate no partner with Him, and be kind to parents and kinsmen and orphans and the needy, and the neighbour who is of kin, and the stranger who is a stranger, and the companion by your side, and the traveller, and the slaves that your right hands own. Surely God does not love the proud and the boastful." 34

"(Charity is) for those poor people who are so restrained in the way of God that they cannot travel in the land to earn their living." 35 The ignorant

27 ib., iii, 199; ix, 34; xlvi, 35; lvii, 24; lxiv, 16; lxxix, 24; lxx, 21; lxxxiv, 45; lxxix, 15–20; xlvii, 11; civ, 3; xlvii, 1, 2, 3, 7.
28 ib., xxviii, 56; xxxiv, 34, 35; cii, 1–3.
29 ib., vi, 141; vii, 31; xvii, 23.
30 ib., xvii, 39; xxv, 67; xxviii, 77.
31 ib., ii, 219.
32 ib., ii, 177.
33 ib., ii, 92.
34 ib., iv, 36.
35 In the days of the Holy Prophet these were the four hundred volunteers who had come from the four corners of Arabia and settled at Madinah. They had dedicated their lives to the pursuit of the knowledge of Islam and were prepared to go with any expedition of propagation or war when and wherever the Holy
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man regards them as wealthy because of their self-possession. You shall know them by their mark, they do not beg of men importunately. Whatever (wealth) you spend (on them) God surely knows it.

"They (the righteous) feed the needy, the orphan, and the captive, for the love of God, saying: 'We feed you for the sake of God alone. We desire no reward from you nor any thanks.'"

"(Excepted from the fire of hell are) those in whose wealth there is a fixed portion for the beggar and the destitute."

The Qur'ān not only tells that this kind of spending is the essence of piety but also warns that its absence in a society must mean its decay and ruination:

"Expend in the way of God, and cast not yourself with your own hands into ruin."59

11. Besides this general and voluntary spending in the way of God the Qur'ān enjoins expending of wealth as expiation of omissions and sins. For instance, if a man takes an oath and then foresees it, "the expiation for it is to feed ten poor persons with the average of food which you serve to your own folk, or to clothe them, or to give a slave his freedom; or if anyone does not find (the wherewithal to do so) let him fast three days."60

Similarly, if anyone makes his wife unlawful for him by declaring her to be his mother or sister by γύρνον ἐνομοχώρει. Later seeks to retract and take her again, it is ordained that "he should free a slave before the two touch each other, and he who has not (the wherewithal for that) should fast for two months consecutively... and he who is unable to do so let him feed sixty poor persons."61

Like expiations have also been ordained to make up for omissions in the performance of pilgrimage and proper observance of the month of fasting.62

Prophet sent them. Having devoted their whole time to these services they could do little to earn their livelihood. (Zamakhshari, al-Kashf al-Maš'ā'at al-Bahydhah, Egypt, 1343/1924.) Similarly, this verse will now apply to those persons who devote their whole time to study, or propagation of faith or other works of social welfare and do not find opportunity to attend to their own business.

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12. But all such expense will count as expense in God's way only if it is really free from selfishness, guile, and display, and there is no attempt to hurt or lay anyone under obligation. One must also make no attempt to sort out the worse of one's goods to disburse in charity. One must give the choice of them, and bear nothing in mind except the love and pleasure of God.64

13. This spending of wealth which the Qur'ān variously terms as "spending in God's way" or charity or zakāt, is not a mere act of piety, an almsgiving; rather it is the third among the five pillars of Islam, viz., (1) the witness of faith (i'mān), (2) prayer (ṣalāt), (3) charity (zakāt), (4) fasting (ṣawm) and (5) pilgrimage (hajj). It has been mentioned constantly with prayer (ṣalāt) some thirty-seven times in the Qur'ān and both of them have been described with full emphasis as essentials of Islam, without which there can be no salvation.65 Zakāt, it says, has been a pillar of true religion preached by all the prophets of God.66

And so this zakāt is a pillar of Islam now in the religion of the last Prophet of God. It is as essential for one who joins the fold of Islam as bearing witness to the truth of faith (i'mān) or prayer (ṣalāt).67

Zakāt is not only for the good of society; it is also necessary for the moral development and edification of the giver himself. It is for his own purification and salvation. It is not only a tax, but also an act of worship just like prayer. It is an essential part of that programme which the Qur'ān prescribes for the amelioration of man's soul.68

14. But the Qur'ān was not content to infuse a general spirit of voluntary benevolence and philanthropy among people. It instructed the Prophet as the Head of the Islamic State to fix an obligatory minimum for it, and arrange for its regular receipt and disbursement.

"Take a charity from their wealth."69

The words "a charity" pointed out that a certain fixed measure determined by the Prophet was to be enjoined on people, besides the usual charity they practised of their own accord. Accordingly, the Prophet fixed a maximum allowable limit in respect of different kinds of wealth, and the following rates were fixed for the holdings that stood above that limit.70

59 Qur'ān, ii, 273.
60 Qur'ān, v, 36-40.
61 Qur'ān, ii, 276.
62 Qur'ān, ii, 278.
63 Qur'ān, ii, 279.
64 Qur'ān, ii, 280.
65 Qur'ān, ii, 281.
66 Qur'ān, ii, 282.
67 Qur'ān, ii, 283.
68 Qur'ān, ii, 284.
69 Qur'ān, ii, 285.
70 Qur'ān, ii, 286.
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(1) On gold, silver, and cash hoarding\textsuperscript{23} 2\% annually
(2) On agricultural produce from unirrigated land 10 \% annually
(3) On agricultural produce from artificially irrigated land 5 \% annually
(4) On livestock kept for breeding and trade—the rates are
different for sheep, goats, cows, camels, etc.
(5) On mines in private ownership and treasure-troves 20 \% annually

The Prophet of God imposed these rates of zakāt as a duty on Muslims like
the five daily prayers. As duties, and in being incumbent, there is no difference
between the two. According to the Qurʾān, it is one of the basic objects of an
Islamic State that it should institute prayer (ṣalāt) and manage regular re-
cceipt and distribution of zakāt.\textsuperscript{83}

It should be noted that although, as seen above, the collection and disburse-
ment of zakāt is a duty of an Islamic State, the believers will not be absolved
from paying it (privately), just as they are not absolved from prayer, in case
the Islamic State ceases to exist or is neglectful of its duty.

15. To the funds collected under zakāt the Qurʾān adds another item—a part
of the spoils of war. The rule prescribed by the Book is that the soldiers fight-
ing in a battle should not loot the spoils which fall into their hands after a victory,
but bring everything before the commander who should distribute four-fifth
of the whole booty amongst soldiers who participated in the engagement and
hand over the remaining fifth to the State for the following purposes:

“Know that whatever booty you take, the fifth of it is for God and the
Prophet and the kinsmen and the needy and the traveller.”\textsuperscript{84}

16. The income from these two sources, according to the Qurʾān, is not a part
of the general exchequer maintained to furnish comforts and provide for
essential services for all including those who contribute to the zakāt fund. On
the contrary, it is reserved for use on the following items:

“Alms are meant for the poor and the needy and those who work for the
poor”\textsuperscript{85} and those who work for the poor.

The Qurʾānic rule with regard to the property which a person leaves
behind him after his or her death is that it should be distributed among his
parents, children, and wife (or husband, as the case may be) according to a
specified ratio. If he leaves neither parents nor children, his brothers and
sisters (real, step, or uterine) should divide it. Detailed instructions relating
to this may be seen in chapter iv of the Qurʾān.\textsuperscript{86} We omit to reproduce them
here to avoid prolixity.

The guiding principle here is that property accumulated by a person during
his life-time should not remain accumulated there after his death but scatter
among his kinsfolk. This is opposed to the principle underlying primogeniture,
the joint family, and other like systems which aim at keeping accumulated
wealth accumulated even after the death of its holder.

The Qurʾān also rejects the system of adopting children to make them heirs,
and lays down that inheritance should go to those who are actually related,
not to those fictitiously adopted as sons and daughters to pass on property.\textsuperscript{87}

Vol. III, p. 161.) According to this definition, all those helpless children who are
not yet able to earn, and the cripple, and the old who are no longer able to make
a living, and the unemployed, and the invalids who are temporarily rendered unfit
to earn livelihood, are màṣāqīn.

87 Three kinds of men were given money for “reconciling of hearts,” during the
Prophet’s life: 1. Some opponents of Islam who persecuted weak Muslims or
set themselves hard against the faith were given something and persuaded to
adopt a lenient attitude. 2. Those who forcibly prevented the people of their tribes
or clans from embracing Islam were persuaded to give up this obstruction. 3. The
new entrants in faith were given monetary help to get over their financial difficulties,
so that they should live in their new environments among Muslims with equani-
mity. (Al-Jaṣṣāṣ, op. cit., Vol. III; p. 152.)

88 Refers to the Muslims who were captured in war by the enemies as well as the
non-Muslims who came as war captives to the Muslims and wanted to be set free
on payment of ransom; reference is also to the slaves who lived in bondage from old.

89 The cause of God includes jihād (war) and hajj (pilgrimage). One who proceeds
on war can avail oneself of zakāt even if one is well-to-do so far as personal effects
go, because one’s personal effects are often inadequate to enable one to prepare
for war and provide for the expenses of the way. Similarly, one who runs short of
money on pilgrimage deserves to be helped with zakāt. (Al-Jaṣṣāṣ, op. cit., Vol. III,
pp. 156–57; al-Shaukāni, op. cit., Vol. IV, pp. 144–46.)

90 A traveller, even though he is rich at home, deserves to be helped with zakāt
if he runs short of money on the way. (Al-Jaṣṣāṣ, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 157.)

91 Qurʾān, ix, 80.

92 Verses 7–12 and 176. According to the Holy Prophet’s elucidation, in the
absence of the nearest relatives the inheritance will go to the nearer, and in their
absence, as a last resort, to those who have at least some relation with the deceased
in comparison with mere strangers. But if the deceased leave no relation of any
kind, the property will be added to the general exchequer of the Islamic State.
(Al-Shaukāni, op. cit., Vol. VI, pp. 47, 56.)

93 Qurʾān, xxxiii, 4, 6. 187
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is also why, where unintelligent use of private property is causing, or is likely to cause, harm to the collective interest of society, it allows guardians or magistrates to take it over in their own hands, without, however, disturbing the owner's right of owning it or benefiting by it. 69

20. The Qur'ānic direction in respect of properties, wealth, and incomes that belong to the State is that they should not be used for the welfare of rich classes only but of all alike and particularly the poor whose interest deserves more looking after than that of any other class.

"Whatever God has bestowed on His Messenger, (taking it) from the people of these towns, is for God and the Messenger, 70 and the kinsfolk, 71 and the orphans and the needy and the traveller, in order that it may not circulate among the rich of you (only). . . . (It is also) for the poor emigrants who have been expelled from their homes and possessions." 72

21. In the matter of levying taxes the Qur'ān teaches the principle that their incidence should lie on those who possess more than they need, and on that part of their wealth which is surplus after all legitimate needs have been met.

"They ask you what they should spend. Say: 'What is spare after meeting your needs.'" 73

The characteristic features and basic principles of the economic scheme drawn by the Qur'ān for man and described in the above twenty-one paragraphs may be summed up as follows:

i. It works a happy co-ordination between economic and moral values.

Instead of being treated as distinctly separate things, the two are drawn together into a harmonious blend. The economic problem has been tackled not from the purely "economic" point of view; it has been solved after being appropriately placed in the overall scheme of life based on ethical concepts of Islam. (Paras 1, 2, 4, 5.)

ii. All resources and means of living are regarded as God's magnanimous gift to mankind; this implies that all kinds of monopolization, individual, collective, or national, should be discouraged and all men should be provided with free opportunities of earning on God's earth to the maximum limit possible. (Para 5.)

iii. It allows individual right of ownership but not to an unlimited extent. Besides putting restrictions on it in the interest of other individuals and society as a whole, it admits on a person's property the rights of his relatives, neigh-


69 By this is meant the expenditure on the administration and defence of the Islamic State. The Holy Prophet (on whom be peace) and his successors, the Caliphs drew their own subsistence and paid their officials (except those of the zakād department) from this source.

70 For explanation, see note 54.

71 Qur'ān, lix, 7-8.

72 Ibid., ii, 219.
bours, friends, the needy, the unfortunate, and, so to speak, of all members of society. Some of these are made enforceable by law; as for others, arrangement has been made to educate people morally and intellectually enabling them to understand these rights and prepare themselves to honour them of their own free-will. (Paras 3, 5, 7-14, 16, 18, 19.)

iv. The natural way for the economic system to operate according to this scheme is that individuals should work it and try to improve it with free endeavour. However, they are not left to do as they may without checks and restraints of any kind. For their own cultural and economic welfare and for that of their society this freedom has been curtailed within limits. (Paras 6, 14, 21.)

v. Man and woman are alike declared owners of the wealth they earn, inherit, or acquire by other lawful means, and allowed to derive benefit from their possessions. (Paras 3, 4, 17.)

vi. To preserve economic balance people have been urged to give up miserliness and renunciation, and to take the gifts of God to good use. But at the same time they have been strongly warned not to indulge in extravagance of any kind. (Paras 5, 7, 8.)

vii. To secure economic justice it has been assured that unjust means are not employed to force the flow of wealth in particular channels. Nor should wealth acquired by just means remain stored at a place and fall out of circulation. Arrangement is also made to ensure that wealth remains in constant use and circulation, particularly for the benefit of those classes which are deprived of their due and reasonable share for one reason or another. (Paras 6-8, 10, 11, 14, 16-18, 20.)

viii. The scheme does not depend much upon the interference of law or the State to ensure economic justice. After declaring a few unavoidable things to be the responsibility of the State for this purpose, it seeks to enforce the other items in its plan through the intellectual and moral uplift of the individuals comprising a society and its general amelioration. Economic justice is thus secured in perfect concord with the principle of allowing the exercise of individual freedom in the economic field. (Paras 5-21.)

ix. Instead of producing class-conflict it puts an end to the causes of such conflicts and produces a spirit of co-operation and comradeship among the different classes of society. (Paras 4, 6-10, 12, 14-16, 20, 21.)

When these principles were worked out and put into practice in governmental and social spheres during the time of the Holy Prophet and his "Guided Successors," many more injunctions and precedents came into existence. But our present study precludes that discussion. Books of history, biography, traditions, and jurisprudence abound in such matters and may be consulted for details.

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Economic and Political Teachings of the Qur’ān

B

POLITICAL TEACHINGS

1. The political philosophy of the Qur’ān is essentially based on its fundamental concept of the universe which should be clearly kept in mind for its proper appreciation and right appraisal. If we study this concept of the universe from the political point of view, the following four points vividly come into prominence:

(a) That God is the creator of the whole of this universe including man and all those things which he exploits and harnesses into his service.74
(b) That God Himself is the sole master, ruler, director, and administrator of His creation.75
(c) That sovereignty in this universe does not and cannot vest in anyone except God. Nor has anyone else any right to share this sovereignty with Him.76
(d) That all attributes and powers of sovereignty are solely His prerogatives. He is living, self-existent, self-sufficient, eternal, omniscient, omnipotent, and exalted above all flaw, defect, or weakness. His is the supreme authority; everything submits to Him willingly or unwillingly; to Him belong all powers. He can dictate whatever He likes and none has the power to interfere in or review His commands. No one can interfere with Him save by His leave. Nobody has the power to harm those whom He intends to benefit and none can protect whom He intends to harm. He is accountable to none; everyone else is accountable to Him. He is the guardian of one and all. He can protect against all, but none can give quarters against Him. His are the powers of inflicting punishment or granting forgiveness. He is the supreme Lord over all other rulers. He grants an opportunity to rule on His earth to whomsoever He desires and withdraws this privilege whenever He so wills.

These essential powers and attributes of a sovereign being vest solely in God.77

2. On the basis of this concept of the universe the Qur’ān asserts that the real sovereign of mankind too is the same as the sovereign of the whole universe. His is the only rightful authority in human affairs just as in all other affairs of creation. No one else, be he human or non-human, has any right to give orders or decide matters independently.

There is, however, one vital difference.

In the physical sphere of the universe the sovereignty of God is established

74 Ibid., ii, 29; iv, 1; vi, 73; xiii, 16; xxxv, 3; lvi, 58-72.
75 Ibid., vii, 54; xx, 8; xxx, 26; xxxi, 5.
76 Ibid., ii, 107; iii, 154; vi, 57; xiii, 16; xvi, 17; xvii, 20; xxv, 2; xxviii, 70; xxx, 4; xxxv, 40-4; lvi, 5.
77 Ibid., ii, 255, 284; iii, 26, 83; v, 1; vi, 18; vii, 128; x, 65, 107; xiii, 9, 41; xvii, 11, 26, 27; xxi, 23; xxiii, 88; xxxvi, 83; lix, 23; lxvii, 1; lxxxii, 22; lxxxv, 13-16; xcv, 8.
by itself regardless of whether one willingly submits to it or not. In that sector of his life even man has no option to do otherwise. He too finds himself totally regulated by the inexorable laws of nature like any other object from the tiniest speck of an atom to the magnificent galaxies in space. But in the volitional sphere of his life man has been allowed a certain amount of free-will and God has not coerced him to an unwilling submission. Herein He has chosen only to invite and persuade mankind through His revealed Books (the last of which is the Holy Qur'an) to surrender themselves before His Lordship and acknowledge His sovereignty with deliberate willingness. The Qur'an has discussed the different aspects of this subject at great length. For instance:

(a) The Lord of the universe is indeed the Lord of man, and this position must be fully recognized by him.86

(b) God alone has the right to decide and order. Mankind should submit to none save Him. This is the only right course.79

(c) The right to rule belongs to God alone because He is the creator.80

(d) The right to order and decide belongs to God because He is the ruler of the universe.81

(e) His rule is right and just, because He alone comprehends reality and none else is in a position to give unerring guidance.82

3. On these grounds the Qur'an lays down that an unadulterated obedience is the due of God alone; that it is His Law that should rule supreme; and that to obey others or to follow one's own wills against the Law of God, is not the right way.83

The Qur'an also asserts that no one has the right to transgress the limits that have been laid down by God for the regulation of human affairs.84

It also points out that all orders and decisions in contravention of the Law of God are not only wrong and unlawful but also unjust and blasphemous. It condemns all such orders as anti-Islamic and the attempt to abide by them as negation of faith.85

4. Then the Qur'an says that prophets are the only source of our knowing the Law of God. They alone are the bearers of revelation and are in a position to convey to mankind the commandments and directions of their Lord. They again are the persons divinely authorized to explain those commandments by their word and deed. Thus, the prophets are embodiments of the legal sovereignty of God. That is why obedience to them has been considered to be obedience to God Himself and faith in them has been made a necessary condition for dispensing belief from disbelief.86

5. According to the Qur'an, the commandments of God and the Prophet of Islam constitute the Supreme Law and the Muslims as such cannot adopt any attitude other than that of complete submission to it. A Muslim is not allowed to follow his own independent decisions in matters which have been finally and unequivocally decided by God and His Apostle. To do that is a negation of faith.87

6. The right form of government for mankind according to the Qur'an is one in which the State relinquishes its claim to sovereignty in favour of God and, after recognizing the legal supremacy of God and His Apostle, accepts the position of Caliphate (vicegerency) under the suzerainty of the Rightful Ruler. In this capacity all the legislative, executive, and judicial powers of the State will necessarily be circumscribed by the limits which have been described in Para 3, 4, and 5 above.88

7. The conception of Caliphate as it has been put forth by the Qur'an, can be summed up in the following terms:

(a) All the powers that man possesses in this world are in fact not his own, but have been endowed to him by God Almighty. The Lord Himself has assigned to man the position in which he may exercise these delegated powers within the limits prescribed by Him. Man is thus not an independent master but a vicegerent of the real Sovereign.89

(b) Every nation that acquires the power and authority to rule over any part of the world is in reality a vicegerent of God in its domain.90

(c) This vicegerency, however, cannot be right and lawful unless it is subservient to the commandments of the real Sovereign. Any State independent of Him and not subservient to His commands is not a vicegerency. It is really a revolt against the Lord.91

8. The powers of a true Caliphate do not vest in any individual nor in any clan, class or community, but in those who believe and do good. The text of xxiv, 55 that "God has promised to those of you who believe and do good that He will most certainly make them His vicegerents on the earth..." is quite clear on this point. According to this verse, every good Muslim is fit to hold the position of a Caliph. It is this aspect of Islamic Caliphate that distinguishes it from a kingship, an oligarchy, and a theocracy. It is different even from modern democracy. There is a basic difference between the two. The edifice of democracy is raised on the principle of popular sovereignty; while in Islamic Caliphate the people themselves surrender their independence to

86 Ibid., vi, 164; vii, 54; x, 31; cxiv, 1–3.
87 Ibid., iii, 154; xii, 3; xlvi, 10.
88 Ibid., vii, 54.
89 Ibid., xx, 38–40.
90 Ibid., ii, 216, 220, 255, 232; ix, 11, 176; viii, 75; ix, 60; xxiv, 58–59; lx, 10.
91 Ibid., vii, 3; xiii, 37; xvi, 36; xxxix, 2, 11–12; xl, 1; xcviii.
92 Ibid., ii, 229; lviii, 4; lxiv, 1.
93 Ibid., iv, 80; v, 44, 45, 46, 50.
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the sovereignty of God and of their own accord limit their powers within
the four corners of the divine Law and the promise of vicegerency has been held
out to them only if they are morally good.

9. The government of a State established with a view to running an Islamic
Caliphate cannot claim an absolute or unlimited obedience from the people.
They are bound to obey it only so far as it exercises its powers in accordance
with the divine Law revealed in nature and the Sacred Book. There can be
neither obedience nor co-operation in sin and aggression.

10. In all affairs of the State, right from its constitution to the election of
its Head and members of its parliament, and the matters of legislation and
administration, the Muslims should make it a rule to take counsel among them-

11. The following qualifications must be kept in view in choosing the people
responsible to run the State:

(a) They must have faith in the principles according to which they have
to manage the affairs of the Caliphate. Evidently, an ideological system
cannot work in the hands of those who do not subscribe to its principles.

(b) They should not be unjust, licentious, forgetful of God, or transgressors
of divine limits. They should be, on the other hand, honest, trustworthy, God-
fearing, and virtuous.

(c) They should not be unwise and ignorant. They must be rather educated,
wise, intelligent, and both bodily and intellectually fit to pilot the State.

(d) They should be men of integrity so that they may be safely entrusted
with public responsibilities.

12. The constitution of such a State shall be based on the following prin-
ciples:

(a) "O ye who believe! obey Allah, and obey the Apostle and those of you
who are in authority; and if you have a dispute concerning any matter, refer
it to Allah and the Apostle if ye are (in truth) believers in Allah and the Last
Day. That is better and more seemly in the end." This verse elucidates five constitutional points: —

(i) That obedience to God and His Apostle must be given priority to
every other obedience.

(ii) That obedience to those who are in authority is subject to the
obedience to God and His Apostle.

(iii) That the Head of the State must be from amongst the believers.

Economic and Political Teachings of the Qur'ān

(iv) That it is possible for the people to differ with the government and its
rulers.

(v) That in case of dispute the final authority to decide between them is
the Law of God and His Apostle.

(b) The Qur'ān does not give us any hard and fast rules about the method
of election and consultation. It lays down only broad-based principles and leaves
the problem of their practical implementation to be decided in accordance
with the exigencies of time and the requirements of society.

(c) In those matters about which clear injunctions have been given or
definite principles laid down or limits prescribed by God and His Apostle, the
legislature has only the right to interpret them, or to frame bye-laws and rules
of procedure to bring them into practice. As for those matters about which
the Supreme Law is silent, the legislature is allowed to legislate for all pur-
poses and needs of the society keeping in view the spirit and the general
principles of Islam. The very fact that no clear injunction exists about them
in the Qur'ān and Sunnah is sufficient to show that the Lawgiver has Him-
self left it to the good sense of the believers.

(d) The judiciary must be free from every pressure and influence to adjudicate
impartially without being carried away by the public or the people in authority.
Its foremost duty is to give verdict strictly in accordance with the law and
requirements of justice without being swayed either by the passions or preju-
dices of its own members or those of others.

13. This State comes into being for two main purposes. First, that justice
and equity should be established in human affairs and, secondly, that the
powers and resources of the State should be harnessed for the welfare of the
people, i.e., for promotion, for them, of all that is good and eradication of all
that is evil.

14. All citizens of the State, whether Muslims or non-Muslims, must be
guaranteed the following fundamental rights, and it is the bounden duty of
the State to safeguard them against all types of encroachment: —

(a) Security of person.
(b) Security of property.
(c) Protection of honour.
(d) Right of privacy.
(e) The right to protest against injustice.

99 Ibid., iv, 58; vi, 48; xxxviii, 26.
100 Ibid., iv, 58; vi, 48; xxxviii, 26.
101 Ibid., iv, 58; vi, 48; xxxviii, 26.
102 Ibid., iv, 58; vi, 48; xxxviii, 26.
103 Ibid., iv, 58; vi, 48; xxxviii, 26.
104 Ibid., iv, 58; vi, 48; xxxviii, 26.
105 Ibid., iv, 58; vi, 48; xxxviii, 26.
106 Ibid., iv, 58; vi, 48; xxxviii, 26.
107 Ibid., iv, 58; vi, 48; xxxviii, 26.
108 Ibid., iv, 58; vi, 48; xxxviii, 26.
109 Ibid., iv, 58; vi, 48; xxxviii, 26.
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(f) The right to enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil. This includes the right of criticism.107

(g) Freedom of association. provided it is used for good ends and does not become an instrument for spreading dissensions and creating fundamental differences in the society.108

(h) Freedom of faith and conscience.109

(i) Protection against wrongfully hurting one’s religious susceptibilities.110 The Qur’an has clearly laid down in this connection that in matters of religious differences an academic discussion can be held, but it must be conducted in a fair and decent manner.111

(j) Limiting the responsibility of every person only to his or her own deeds.112

(k) Security from action being taken against anyone on false reports about his or her crime.112

(l) The right of the destitute and the needy to be provided with basic necessities of life by the State.114

(m) Equal treatment of all its subjects by the State without discrimination.115

15. An Islamic State has the following rights against its citizens: —

(a) That they must submit to its authority.118

(b) That they must be law-abiding and should not disturb the public order and tranquillity.117

(c) They must give unstinted support to the State in its rightful activities.118

(d) They must be prepared to sacrifice their life and property for the defence of the State.118

16. The Qur’an gives the following important directions about the foreign policy of the Islamic State: —

(a) Sanctity of treaties and pledges.120

(b) Honesty and integrity in all transactions.121

(c) International justice.122

(d) Respect for the rights of neutrals in war.123

107 Ibid., iii, 110; vi, 78–79; vii, 165.
108 Ibid., ii, 191, 256; x, 99.
109 Ibid., vi, 108.
110 Ibid., xxix, 48.
111 Ibid., vi, 164; xvii, 15; xxv, 18; xxxix, 7; liii, 38.
112 Ibid., iv, 58; xvii, 36; xlix, 6.
113 Ibid., ii, 10.
114 Ibid., xxviii, 4.
115 Ibid., iv, 59.
116 Ibid., v, 33; vii, 85.
117 Ibid., v, 2.
118 Ibid., ix, 38–41.
119 Ibid., viii, 42, 58; ix, 7; xvi, 91–92; xvii, 34.
120 Ibid., xvi, 94.
121 Ibid., v, 8.
122 Ibid., iv, 90.
in different parts of the world, all of them will be equally Islamic. And instead of there being any nationalistic conflicts among them, they will extend fraternal support and co-operation to one another. Not only that, there is every possibility of their joining together in a world confederation of their own.

(vi) The real spirit of this State lies in subordinating politics to morality and conducting affairs conscientiously and God-fearingly. Honour and eminence must come through moral excellence alone. Paramount importance should be given to character besides ability in selecting men of authority. Honesty, fairness, and justice are to prevail in every sphere of domestic administration. And the whole foreign policy is to devolve upon truth, faithfulness, love of peace, fair dealing, and international justice.

(vii) Policing is not the only function of this State. It does not come into existence merely to maintain law and order and to defend its territory against external attacks. It is a State with a purpose and a mission. It must positively strive for the achievement of social justice, promotion of good, and eradication of evil.

(viii) Equality of rights, status and opportunities, supremacy of Law, cooperation in virtue and non-co-operation in vice, sense of accountability to God Almighty, sense of duties more than that of rights, unity of purpose between the individuals, society, and the State, guarantee of the basic necessities of life to everyone in need, are the fundamental values of this State.

(ix) The relations between State and individual are so balanced in this system that neither the State has been vested with absolute authority reducing individuals to virtual slavery, nor has individual freedom been allowed to turn itself into licence threatening the interest of society. On the one hand, by guaranteeing individual rights to its citizens and by making the State authority subject to the Supreme Law of God and the democratic process of ḍūla, it provides ample opportunities for the development of individual personality and protection from undue interference by others. And, on the other hand, it binds the individual to a definite code of morality, makes it obligatory for him faithfully to obey the orders of the State working in accordance with the Law of God, to co-operate wholeheartedly with it in the cause of virtue, to avoid disturbing its tranquillity, and to sacrifice even his life and property in its defence.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


BOOK THREE

EARLY CENTURIES

(From the First/Seventh Century to the Fall of Baḥrānī)

Part 1. Theologico-Philosophical Movements

Chapter X

MUʿTAZILISM

A

THE GENERAL MUʿTAZILITE POSITION

Subsequent to the times of the Companions of the Prophet of Islam, the Muʿtazilite creed made its appearance. It had its inception nearly two centuries after the migration (Hijrah) of the Holy Prophet to Madīnah. The Muʿtazilites were thoroughgoing rationalists. They believed that the arbiter of whatever is revealed has to be theoretical reason.

Let us, for a moment, consider why the Muʿtazilites were so named. The story goes that one day Imām al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī was imparting instruction to his pupils in a mosque. Before the lessons were finished someone turned up and addressed him thus:

"Now, in our own times a sect of people has made its appearance, the members of which regard the perpetrator of a grave sin as an unbeliever and consider him outside the fold of Islam. Yet another group of people have appeared who give hope of salvation to the perpetrator of a grave sin. They lay down that such a sin can do no harm to a true believer. They do not in the least regard action as a part of faith and hold that as worship is of no use to one who is an unbeliever, so also sin can do no harm to one who is a believer in God. What, in your opinion, is the truth and what creed should we adopt?"

Imām al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī was on the point of giving a reply to this query when a long-necked pupil of his got up and said: "The perpetrator of grave sins is neither a complete unbeliever nor a perfect believer; he is placed midway between unbelief and faith—an intermediate state (manṣūlah bain...}

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1 The name of this sect is ahl al-ʿaqīd.
2 This group is called the Murjīʿites. The same was the belief of Jahm bin Ṣafw also.