

International Islamic Federation
of Student Organizations



Maroof & Munkar

Syed Jalaluddin Ansar

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**IN THE NAME OF ALLAH
THE MERCIFUL THE COMPASSIONATE**

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Maroof & Munkar

Syed Jalaluddin Ansar

Translated By
Syed Amin Ashraf

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الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر

سيد جلال الدين أنصار

بالفقه الإنكليزية

الابتحاد الاسلامي العالمي
للنظمات الطلابية

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Preface

'Amr bi al-Marooḥ wa Nahi An al-Munkar' (Enjoin the good and forbid the wrong), a Quranic concept, holding key to the world view and value system of Islam, is discussed at length in the present book. The discussion brings home the points about the nature of this mission of Islam — modes of its enforcement, its relevance, and the changes that it brings about in society.

With reference to the prophetic mission a number of terms have been employed in the Quran, of which **'Amr bi al-Marooḥ wa Nahi An al-Munkar'** is the key concept. Terms other than **'Amr bi al-Marooḥ wa Nahi An al-Munkar'** lay emphasis on a particular aspect of **'Diyn'** (the Divine way of Life). Nonetheless the underlying spirit is the same.

The importance of **'Amr bi al-Marooḥ wa Nahi An al-Munkar'**, as evident from even a cursory glance at the Quran and Hadith, can hardly be overlooked. Not only is it a characteristic of Muslims but it also protects them from ruin.

There are, however, a number of questions about the nature and scope of this duty, for example, whether it is incumbent on all Muslims or on a few. Is it to be performed among Muslims alone? The book attempts at providing answers to the questions related to the nature, scope, pre-requisites, and conditions and regulations of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'.

Many Quranic verses dealing with 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' bring out the details about the nature, scope and conditions of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Of these verses and 'Ahadith' the more explicit ones have been quoted to adduce points.

Since many points discussed in different chapters are recurrent and inter-related, the reader is therefore requested to study the book as a whole.

Closely related to 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is the concept of 'Dawat Ila al-Khair' (Calling others to all that is good), as referred to in the Quran. A brief discussion on this concept made in the first chapter would help one appreciate well the concept of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'.

Mine is not a scholastic approach. I have tried to compile the directives made by Allah and the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) for the benefit of those who believe in the Book and Sunnah, without calling anything in question.

The divergence of opinion about the interpretation of certain Quranic concepts is a healthy

sign subject to the condition that the interpretation is made in terms of reference that are not contrary to the spirit of the Quran and Sunnah. For any viewpoint contrary to the spirit of the Quran cannot be acceptable. The interpretation must be in line with the purport of the Quran.

I have tried to examine all issues related to this concept, including the controversial ones. This should, I believe, lend authenticity to this book.

Nonetheless, some mistakes might have crept into my work, which, if pointed out by readers, would be rectified without any reluctance on my part. May Allah accept my effort and make it useful for readers.

24th. Feb. 1966

**Maulana Jalaluddin Ansar
Secretary
Idara Tahqeeq-o-Tasneef
Islami, Aligarh**

Translator's Note

The Quranic concept of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' (Enjoin good and forbid wrong) has not been discussed so far in detail. Maulana Jalaluddin Ansar Umri, a renowned Islamicist, has doubtless added something substantial to Islamics by writing a detailed book on this Quranic concept and he has been remarkably successful in bringing home the import of this Quranic concept at length. The Arabic version of this book has been so far reprinted thrice, which speaks itself of the wide acclaim accorded to it in the Muslim world.

The Maulana writes originally in chaste Urdu and has a spate of volumes on Islamics to his credit. My effort has been to convey the substance of his thought-provoking book and in so doing, I have tried my best to evade a literal translation. Nonetheless, for all acts of omission and commission I alone am to be blamed.

May Allah bless the writer for his efforts in the cause of Islam.

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Calling Others to All that is Good

Injunction for calling others to all that is good

In the Surah, "The House of Imran" occurs this divine Command addressed to the Believers:

Let there arise out of you

A band of people

Inviting to all that is good

Enjoining what is right,

And forbidding what is wrong:

They are the ones

To attain felicity. (III: 104)

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ

يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ

وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ

وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

The above verse refers to the Jews who have rejected the true religion and keep themselves busy in dissuading others from accepting it. That is the reason that accounts for their disaster and for their falling out of God's favour. Muslims have been, therefore, asked to attain God-fearingness and adhere to the tenets of Islam till their last breath. They have been also asked to unite against evil forces and end be not divided among themselves.

These commandments, as it is, are related to their spiritual development. To make it public they have been directed to invite mankind to all that is good and to enjoin good acts and forbid all wrong acts. The point under discussion has been elaborated by the classical exegete's remark quoted below, thus:

« اعلم أنه تعالى في الآيات المتقدمة عاب أهل الكتاب على شيئين ، أحدهما أنه عابهم على الكفر . . ثم بعد ذلك عابهم على سعيهم في إلقاء الغير في الكفر . . . فلما انتقل منه إلى مخاطبة المؤمنين أمرهم أولاً بالتقوى والإيمان . . ثم أمرهم بالسعى في إلقاء الغير في الإيمان والطاعة »

“God had condemned the people of the Book on two grounds in the preceeding verses. First, they have been censured for their transgression...Moreover, they have been castigated for their enticing others....Muslims have been first asked to attain faith and piety...Then they have been directed to bring others into the fold of Islam and of faith and submission”¹

According to Syed Mohammad Alusi:

« أمرهم سبحانه بتكميل الغير . ثم أمرهم بتكميل النفس ليكونوا هادين مهدين على صد أعدائهم . فإن ما قص الله تعالى من ما لهم فيما سبق يدل على أنهم ضالون مضلون »

1. **Mafatihul Ghaib. (al-Tafseer-al-Kabeer) Vol. 3, p. 19.**

God has directed Muslims to work for the perfection of others after having attained perfection. Thus contrary to the Jews they will be not only themselves righteous but will act also as the guides for others. For, according to God, as discussed in the preceding verses, Jews are transgressors and entice others to transgression.

Two terms have been used in the above verse with reference to the duty required of the Muslim community:

- (i) Calling others to all that is good;**
- (ii) Enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong;**

Its Meaning and Connotations

Take "calling others to all that is good" first "Good" implies the religion of God delivered by the Prophet Muhammad (p. b. u. h.). "Good" in its wider context embraces the whole Islamic value-system, its beliefs and ideas, and its political, ethical and liturgical principles. It is the duty of Muslim to invite mankind to this "good". All that has been prescribed by Islam is good and what has been forbidden is evil. For Muslims this should be the only ideal of life, for all other systems or ways of life being evil are imperfect. Muslims should devote themselves to establish this way of life and root out all other systems.

"Calling to all that is good" stands for the message of Islam in its totality. Any effort lacking in

this essential pre-requisite cannot be a substitute for this duty. If the invitation is confined to a certain department of life, as for example, morals or politics, it will not and cannot serve the purpose. Such an attempt is no doubt commendable for being good in spirit, yet it is partial in nature. Muslims have been asked to do it fully not partially, as evident from many Quranic statements. An instance in point in the verse dealing with the righteousness of Abraham, Issac and Jacob:

And We made them
Leaders, guiding (men) by
Our command, and We
Sent them inspiration
To do good deeds,
To establish regular prayers,
And to practise regular

And they constantly served
Us (and Us only).

(XXI : 73)

وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ
يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا

وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ

الْخَيْرَاتِ وَإِقَامَ الصَّلَاةِ

وَإِيتَاءَ الزَّكَاةِ ،

وَكَانُوا لَنَا عِبِيدِينَ

In the above verse the phrase "to do good deeds" is used for actions done by the Prophets in accordance with the directive of God. Its scope is doubtless vast including the worship, dealings and morals which is known also as the religion or the Shariah. This makes it plain that "to do good deeds" has been the chief function of prophets and that they were the true embodiments. Allama Baghwi has commented thus on this verse:

وجعلناهم أئمة (يقتدى بهم في الخيرات) يهتدون بأمرنا
(يدعون الناس إلى ديننا) وأوحينا إليهم فعل الخيرات) (يعنى
العمل بالشرائع)

“We made them leaders and they guided men by our commands. In other words in all good acts the prophets were followed. That they guided men by our commands implies that these prophets invited people to the religion. That “we sent them inspiration to do good deeds” means that the command has been given to follow the way of the prophets.¹

The commentator Khazin has explained their “guiding men” with reference to following their way.² To do good acts is thus to follow His Command. The prophets were asked to follow and preach it and they were, therefore, true embodiments of this quality. This certainly helped them attain perfection and thus endeared them to God.

To appreciate the real meaning of goodness another instance in point is a verse occurring in the Sura “Maida”. Reference has been made in the verse to the corruption of the older revelations. None the less, the divine message has remained consistent. The rules of practical conduct have, however, been different, in varying degrees, in accordance with the milieu of a given

1. M'alim al-Tanzil vol. IV, p. 245.

2. al-Tavil Fil Maani al-Tanzil, Vol. IV, p. 245.

age. This accounts for the different laws ordained by Moses and by Muhammad (p.b.u.h). Though rules and laws may take different forms among different peoples, the underlying spirit has remained same. What is required thus of a believer is to adhere to the laws ordained by the Prophet. Those unwilling to follow it are transgressors:

To each among you
Have We prescribed a law
And an Open Way.

لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ

شُرْعَةً وَمِنْهَا جَا
..... فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ

x x
So strive as a race

In all virtues. (V : 48)

What is implied by “strive as a race in all virtues” is to follow the way of life recommended by the Prophet. This Quranic phrase has been interpreted by Ibn Kathir thus:

وهي طاعة الله واتباع شرعه الذي جعله ناسخاً لما قبله

والتصديق بكتابه القرآن الذي هو آخر كتاب أنزله

It stands for obeying Allah and His omission and for affirming His Book, The Quran, the last Revealed Book.¹

In Allama Alusi's words:

فسارعوا إلى ما هو خير لكم في الدارين من العقائد الحقة

والأعمال الصالحة المندرجة في القرآن الكريم

One should make it a point to follow all Quranic directives, for this alone ensures best of both the worlds.²

1. Tafseer Quran al-Azeem, Vol. II, p. 67

2. Roohul Maani, Part VI, p. 104

According to Allama Nizammuddin Qummi Nishapuri,

يعنى بالخيرات ما هنا ما هو الحق من الاعتقادات
والحقوق من الكاليف

In the Quranic verse, “strive as a race in all virtues” are implied such beliefs and actions which the believers have been asked to do.¹

In the light of above explications of the term “khairat” it is clear that the term is synonymous with obedience to Allah and to His prophet and with a readiness to follow the ‘Shariah’. This term sums up the entire way of life as ordained in the Quran. Muslims have been asked to invite others to this “goodness”.

One arrives at the same conclusion in the light of the comments of the exegetes made on the other verse in which mention is made of “inviting to all that is good”.

The Prophet’s Version:

On reciting the verse, “Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good”, the Prophet, as reported by Abu Jafar, remarked that the adherence to the Quran and to his tradition amounts to doing good. The invitation to all that is good, therefore, constitutes the invitation to follow the Quran and the Sunnah. Any invitation lacking in this fundamen-

1. Gharaibu’l Quran Dar Ghaib al-Furqa’ Vol. VI, p.135

tal pre-requisite cannot serve the purpose. Nor will it be an invitation to do all that is good in the real sense of the term.

Classical Interpretation:

The interpretations of 'Khair' (good) by classical authorities adduced below are reported by Abu Hayyan Andaulsi:

الخير هو الإسلام ، قاله مقاتل ، أو العمل بطاعة الله . قاله
أبو سليمان الدمشقي أو الجهاد والإسلام

"Good", in Muqatil's view, stands for Islam. It underlies, according to Abu Sulayman Damishiqi, obedience to Allah or it bears the implication of both Jihad and Islam.¹

For Allama Baghwi "goodness" is synonymous with Islam.² Same view is incorporated into "Jalalain". However, one should not lose sight of the fact that the obedience to Allah must be in every respect and this lies also at the core of the directive for "inviting to all that is good". In his gloss on "Jalalain" Allama Sawi makes this apt point :

إنما قصره عليه لأنه رأس الأمور

Islam being the fundamental concept has been regarded synonymuus with "goodness" in Jalalain.³

1. al-Bahar al-Muheet, Vol. III, p. 20.

2. Malim al-Tanzil, Vol. I, p. 334

3. Hashie al-Sa'wi, Vol. I, p. 152

Imam Ibn Jareer Tabari, the classical exegete, offers the following interpretation :

ولتكن منكم أيها المؤمنون أمة ، يقول جماعة يدعون إلى
الخير يعنى إلى الإسلام وشرائعه التى شرعها الله لعباده

O Believers! let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good. "Goodness" amounts to Islam and 'Shariah' ordained for all by Allah. ¹

According to Allama Abu Hayyan Andaulsi,

الدعاء إلى الخير وهو عام فى التكليف من الأفعال والتروك

"Inviting to all that is good" is of a general purport and includes the enjoining of right and forbidding of wrong as ordained in the Law. ²

Qazi Baydawi comments thus :

الدعاء إلى الخير يعنى الدعاء إلى ما فيه صلاح دينى ودنىوى

"Inviting to all that is good" being of a general purport implies an invitation to all that ensures the best of both the worlds. ³

In line with this are the opinions expressed by Shaykh Abul Sauood and Allama Syed Mahmood Aluasi. That such an invitation should be made is corroborated by both the Quran and the Sunnah. What is required by this invitation ensures the best of both the worlds. Likewise, all

1. Jama'ul Bayan, Vol. IV, p. 24.

2. al-Baharul Muheet, Vol. III, p. 20

3. Anwarul Tanzil www.nagorikpathagar.org

other invitations lacking in its spirit are contrary to Islam and bring about disaster, — this has been the consistent view of all classical exegetes. The Quran and the Sunnah, as pointed out by Shaykh Ismail Haqqi, require this duty of believers :

(ولتكن منكم أمة يدعون إلى الخير) «حاجة داعية إلى الخير أى إلى ما فيه صلاح دى ودينوى فالدعاء إلى الخير عام فى التكليف من الأفعال والتروك»

Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good calls for a body of believers engaged in this duty. Such an invitation stands for the preaching that ensures the best of both the worlds, for it encompasses all such acts which are either desired or forbidden.

In sum 'Dawa ila al-Khair, as corroborated by the Quran and the Sunnah and as interpreted by classical exegetes, is synonymous with Islam. What is required by this directive is not a mere verbal preaching of Islam. Muslims can do justice to this directive only when they devote themselves heart and soul to achieve this end. In pursuance of abiding by this directive they have to strive hard and take it up as a goal of their life.

CHAPTER II

Its Significance

The Invitation is the Quranic Term for the Prophetic Mission:

To enjoin "good" and forbid "wrong" has been the mission of the Prophets. This is the duty, according to the Quran, of Prophets and of his followers. The Quran speaks of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) thus:

For he commands them
What is just and forbids them
What is evil: (VII: 157)

يَا مَرْهُم بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
وَيَنْهَاهُمْ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ

Luqman Instructed his son to Enjoin Good and Forbid Wrong:

Luqman advised his son to enjoin all that is just and forbid all that is wrong and explained him that it calls for the courage and patience characteristic of the firm believers:

O my son! establish
Regular prayer enjoin what is

يُنَبِّئُ أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ

Just, and forbid what is wrong:
And bear with patient constancy
Whate'er betide thee; for this
Is firmness (of purpose)
In (the conduct of) affairs.

(XXXI: 17)

وَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
وَأَنْهَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ
وَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا
أَصَابَكَ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ
مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ

Though Luqman was not a prophet, he was certainly one of the righteous. Reference to his advice does not aim at throwing light on his excellent character but at persuading the believers of following this advice. As pointed out by Jassas:

إنما حكي الله تعالى لنا ذلك عن عبده لنقتدى به وننهي إليه

Reference has been made to his advice for making the believers assimilate and follow it.¹

The Righteous Among the People of the Book were Performing this Duty.

Though when Islam appeared the People of the Book, in general, had transgressed beyond limits, there did exist a group among them that was engaged in enjoining "good" and forbidding "wrong" and the Quran, approvingly makes mention of this group:

1. Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. III, p. 592.
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Not all of them are alike :
 Of the People of the Book
 Are a portion that stand
 (For the right) ; they rehearse
 The Signs of God all night long,
 And they prostrate themselves
 In adoration.
 They believe in God
 And the Last Day ;
 They enjoin what is right,
 And forbid what is wrong ;
 And they hasten (In emulation)
 In (all) good works :
 They are in the ranks
 Of the righteous.

(III : 113-114)

لَيْسُوا سَوَاءً مِنْ
 أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ أُمَّةٌ
 قَائِمَةٌ يَتْلُونَ آيَاتِ
 اللَّهِ آنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ وَهُمْ
 يَسْجُدُونَ ۝ يُؤْمِنُونَ
 بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
 وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
 وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ
 الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُسَارِعُونَ
 فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَأُولَئِكَ
 مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ

The Call termed as the Prophetic Mission;

The Quranic verse, quoted above, explains the fact that such a call constitutes the spirit of prophetic missions. As already indicated, it represents Islam in its entirety. For the prophets it was the foremost duty to enjoin good and forbid wrong. The above verse thus provides some insights into the nature and scope of the mission of prophets. This contention is testified by the views of the following classical authorities. In Imam Ibn Tayimiah's view

الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر الذي أنزل الله به كنهه وأرسل به رسله من الدين

Allah sent down Revelation and Books on prophets and made it incumbent on them the call to enjoin good and forbid wrong. This is one of the constituents of the religion.

According to Allama Qartabi,

إن الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر كانا واجبين في الأمم المتقدمة، وهو فائدة الرسالة وخلافة النبوة

The people of the Book were entrusted with the duty of calling to good and forbidding wrong. In it lies the significance of the prophethood and this entitles the Ummah to be the Prophet's successor.²

Allama Saifuddin Amadi has commented thus:

ما من أمة إلا وقد أمرت بالمعروف كاتباع أنبيائهم وشرايعهم ، ونهت عن المنكر كنهيم عن الإلحاد وتكذيب أنبيائهم

The call to good has been the duty of the People of the Book down the ages. For instance, their efforts to ask others to follow the message of prophets. So did they forbid all that is wrong. An instance in point is their opposition to atheism and transgression.³

1. *al-Haabetul Islam*, p. 63

2. *al-Ja'neyal Ahkam al-Quran*, Vol. IV, p. 47

3. *al-Ahkam fi Usool al-Ahkam*, Vol. I, p. 308

In Imam Razi's view,

الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر والإيمان بالله ، إن هذه
الصفات الثلاث كانت حاصلة في سائر الأمم

**The 'three articles of faith with the people
of the Books were; calling to good, forbidding
wrong and faith in Allah.'**¹

According to Allama Rashid Raza,

قد جرت سنة الأنبياء والمرسلين والسلف الصالحين على
الدعوة إلى الخير والأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر ، وإن
كان مخفواً بالمكارة والمخاوف

**This has been the tradition of all Prophets
and the righteous to call others to good
and forbid wrong, though this duty is
arduous.**²

The Call is the Duty of Muslims:

In the light of comments of classical authorities quoted above, the fact emerges that this call has been an essential duty of Prophets and their followers in every age. Muslims are not supposed to lead only a life of piety and righteousness. They have to invite whole mankind to all that is good and forbid wrong. A Muslim has to play the role of both a leader and a worshipper. In addition to his submission to God and offering prayers attendant upon it, he has to guide mankind also. Any lapse in neglecting anyone of the two

1. *Mafatihul Ghaib*, Vol. III, p. 27

2. *Taiseer al Quran*, Vol. IV, p. 32

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duties will render him answerable on the Day of Judgement. The following Quranic verse deserves the attention of Muslims :

Ye are the best
Of Peoples evolved
For mankind.
Enjoining what is right,
Forbidding what is wrong,
And believing in Allah.

(III : 110)

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ
أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ
تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَ
تَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ
وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ

The Muslim Ummah has been termed, in the Quran, "the best of peoples" marked by the two characteristics. First, the Ummah enjoins what is right and forbids what is wrong. Next, it believes in Allah. The belief in Allah amounts to total submission to His will : One can gain the firmness of faith by adhering strictly to His will. "The belief in Allah" (Iman bi Allah) has been explained by Khazin, an exegete, thus :

وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ أَيُّ وَتَصَدِّقُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَتَخْلُصُونَ لَهُ التَّوْحِيدَ

وَالْعِبَادَةَ

"You believe in Allah" means an affirmation of His Existence, and a total submission to Him.¹

That Muslims are "the best of peoples" bears the implication that they will lead mankind to

1., Al-Tawil Fi Maaniel-Tanzil, Vol. I p. 339.

the right path and will themselves be obedient to Him. These two duties entrusted to the Muslim Ummah make it the supreme community. It lends the Ummah something of prophets and the community imbued with the spirit of prophets is doubtless supreme. In his explication of the above quoted Quranic verse Allama Sawi says :

هذه الأمة لها شبه بالأنبياء من حيث إنها مهتدية في نفسها
هادية لغيرها

The above verse makes the Ummah resemble prophets. Like prophets Muslims are not only the divinely guided, but also guides of others.¹

The characteristics of "the best community" are thus: enjoining good and forbidding wrong and the belief in and obedience to Allah. The performance of this duty makes Muslims superior to other communities. Hazrat Omar recited the above quoted Quranic verse on the occasion of the Haj pilgrimage and remarked:

بأيها الناس . من سره أن يكون من تلك الأمة فليؤد شرط
الله منها

Those willing to be within the fold of "the best community" should first fulfill the requirements demanded of them by Allah.

Mujahid records the following observation on the verse:

كنتم خير الناس للناس على هذا الشرط أن تأمروا بالمعروف

1. Hashia as-Sawi Ala Tafseer Jalalain, Vol. I, p. 153
www.nagorikpathagar.org

وتنهوا عن المنكر وتؤمنوا بالله

You are entitled to be the members of “the best community” as long as you enjoin good, forbid wrong and believe in Allah.¹

According to Allama Qartabi:

(تأمرون بالمعروف وتنهون عن المنكر) مدح لهذه الأمة ما أقاموا ذلك واتصفوا به فإذا تركوا التغيير وتواطؤوا على المنكر زال عنهم اسم المدح ولحقهم اسم الذم وكان ذلك سبباً لهلاكهم

That “you enjoin all that is good and forbid all that is wrong” is the characteristic of Muslims, according to Allah. As long as they do it sincerely they happen to be the best community. However, any neglect in this respect will deprive them of this honorific title and will result in their disaster.²

This point has been developed by Imam Razi in the legal terminology thus:

إنه ثبت في أصول الفقه أن ذكر الحكم مقروناً بالوصف المناسب له يدل على كون ذلك الحكم معطلاً بذلك الوصف فيها هنا حكم تعالى بثبوت وصف الخيرية لهذه الأمة ثم ذكر عقوبة هذا الحكم هذه الطاعات أعني الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر والإيمان ، فوجب كون تلك الخيرية معلة بهذه العبادات

1. Jamsu'ul Bayan Fi Tafseerul Quran, Vol. IV, p. 28.

2. al-Jamey Al-Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. IV, p. 173.

This is the established principles of jurisprudence that a cause leads to a certain effect. According to Allah, Muslims are the best community on account of being engaged in enjoining good and forbidding wrong and being obedient to Allah. In consequence, these qualities are the prerequisites for this effect.¹

This call is thus an inseparable quality of Muslims. An image of Muslims lacking in this feature will be incomplete.

What Allah requires of the faithful is their performance of making the call to enjoin good and forbid wrong. A believer should not resort to monasticism. The real faith lies in taking an initiative in this direction by taking up cudgels against all that spells wrong.

The Muslim Ummah has been referred to in the Quran as "the best community" for it enjoins right, forbids wrong and believes in Allah. So are those people of the Book referred to as the righteous because they recite the Book, worship Him, believe in Allah and in the Hereafter, and enjoin right and forbid wrong.

The above discussion helps one realise that the qualities required of the best community and the righteous for guiding mankind are not mere personal virtues. Allama Abul Saood offers the following explanation of the term:

1. **Mafatih al-Ghaib (al Tafsir al-Kabir)**, Vol. III, p. 27.

(ويأمرون بالمعروف وينهون عن المنكر) صفتان أخريان
 لامة أجريتا عليهم تحقيقاً لمخالفتهم اليهود في الفضائل المتعلقة بتكميل
 الغير أثر بيان مباينتهم لهم في الخصائص المتعلقة بتكميل النفس ،
 وتعريضاً لمعادتهم في الاحتساب بل بتعكيسهم في الأمر بإضلال
 الناس وصددهم عن سبيل الله فإنه أمر بالمنكر ونهى عن المعروف

“Enjoin right and forbid wrong”—these are the characteristics of the righteous and these virtues make them remarkable. Jews are despised for dissuading others from following the religion of God. In so doing they are doubtless guilty of enjoining wrong and forbidding right.¹

According to Abu Habban Andualsi:

لا كلوا في أنفسهم سعوا في تكميل غيرهم بهذين الوصفين

After attaining perfection they (the righteous) attempt at making others perfect by enjoining right and forbidding wrong.²

In Luqman's advice reference is made to enjoining good and forbidding wrong” along with the act of establishing prayer. The two parts of this advice indeed symbolise the state of the perfection of self and of others. Allama Syed Mahmood Alusi discusses this point thus:

**(يا بني أقم الصلاة) تكملاً لنفسك . (وأمر بالمعروف
 وانه عن المنكر) تكملاً لغيرك**

1. **Irshadul Aqal, al Tafseer Abi Saood, Vol. II, p. 506**
2. **al-Baharul Muheet, Vol. III, p. 36**

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“O my son! establish regular prayer”
aims at perfecting oneself whereas “enjoin
what is just, and forbid what is wrong”
refers to make others perfect.¹

Imam Razi explicates it further:

إذا أكلت نفسك بعبادة فكل غيرك فإن شغل الأنبياء وور

ثهم من العلماء هو أن يكلوا في أنفسهم ويكلوا غيرهم

After achieving perfection by establishing
prayer they are engaged in making others
perfect. This has been indeed the practice
of the prophets and their successors that
in addition to achieving their own perfec-
tion they help others achieve the same.²

The following verse, occurring in the Surah
“Repentance” helps one appreciate the qualities
embodied in the righteous:

“Those that turn (to God)

In repentance ; that serve Him,

And praise Him ; that wander

In devotion to the Cause

Of God ;

That bow down and prostrate

Themselves

In prayer ; that enjoin good

And forbid evil ; and observe

The limits set by God ;

الْثَّائِبُونَ الْعَبِدُونَ

الْحَامِدُونَ السَّائِحُونَ

الرَّكَعُونَ السَّجِدُونَ

الْأَمْرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

وَالنَّاهُونَ عَنِ

الْمُنْكَرِ وَالْحَافِظُونَ

1. Roohul Maani, part 21, p. 89.

2. Mafatihul Ghaib, Vol. VI, p. 578.
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(These do rejoice). So proclaim
The glad tidings to the Believers.

(IX : 112)

لِحُدُودِ اللَّهِ
وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

Some of the qualities mentioned in above verse are personal such as repentance, prayer, and devotion to the cause of God. What they do for the welfare of mankind in general is termed, "enjoin good and forbid evil". In Allama Ibn Kathir's view:

ينفعون خلق الله ، ويرشدوهم إلى طاعة الله بأمرهم
بالمعروف ونهيهم عن المنكر مع العلم بما ينبغي فعله ونجى تركه
وهو حفظ حدود الله في تحليته وتحريمه علماً وعملاً . فقاموا بعبادة
الحق ونصح الخلق . ولهذا قال « وبشر المؤمنين » لأن الإيمان
يشمل هذا كله ، والسعادة كل السعادة لمن اتصف به

They help mankind and by enjoining good and forbidding wrong and lead mankind to obey God. They distinguish well between good and evil. Being aware of the Law they follow it both theoretically and practically. Thus in addition to worshipping God they do acts of benevolence for mankind. On account of performing this role "the glad tidings" have been promised to them, for faith being an all-embracing phenomenon includes all virtues and deliverance is for those who embody these virtues¹

This point has been summed up by Allama Syed Mahmood Alusi thus:

1. Tafseer Ibn Kathir, Vol. II, p. 397
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كانه قيل : الكاملون في أنفسهم المكملون لغيرهم

The above quoted verse indicates that they are perfect in themselves and attempt at making others perfect.¹

For Imam Razi, to enjoin right and forbid wrong is the most arduous duty:

كل ما سبق من الصفات عبادات يأتيها الإنسان لنفسه ولا تعلق شيء منها بالغير . أما النهي عن المنكر فعبادة متعلقة بالغير .
النهي عن المنكر أصعب أقسام العبادات

The duties other than enjoining good and forbidding wrong are essentially personal. However this call concerns the whole mankind. To forbid wrong is the most arduous duty. 2

According to Ibn Tayamnia:

ومن عبادته وطاعة أمره الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر
بحسب الإمكان

To enjoin good and forbid wrong to the extent possible for one forms part of obedience to God.

Allah, has in fact, entrusted Muslims with the duty of guiding and reforming mankind and in pursuance of this aim they have been asked to enjoin good and forbid wrong. This is indeed the test of one's faith to do so. This duty is

1. Roohul Maani, part II, p. 32.

2. al-Tafseer al-Kabir, Vol. IV, p. 523
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doubtless prophetic in spirit and Muslims being the successors of prophets are supposed to perform it in future. If they shirk this duty, they are bound to go astray. As pointed out by Hazrat Hasan Basari :

قال النبي ﷺ : من أمر بالمعروف ونهى عن المنكر
فهو خليفة الله في أرضه وخليفة رسوله وخليفة كتابه

The prophet told that one enjoining good and forbidding wrong is the vice gerent of God, of the Prophet and of the Book.

Importance of the Call is Corroborated by Ahadith:

In consonance with the above quoted Quranic verses are a number of sayings of the Prophet which throw light on the importance of this call to inviting all that is good and forbidding all that is wrong, for it is held next in importance to such supreme virtues, as for example, God-fearingness and knowledge of religion etc. A true believer is not only .. pious and virtuous but also a preacher inviting mankind to all that is good. This is one of fundamental duties. Anyone found negligent of this duty is not an ideal member of the community. Above all, the Prophet not only insisted on performing this duty but warned of incurring God's displeasure consequent upon neglecting this duty . As reported by Darrat b. Abi Lahab:

قام رجل إلى النبي ﷺ وهو على المنبر فقال : يا

رسول الله ، أى الناس خير ؟ فقال ﷺ : خير الناس أقرامهم
وأنتقامهم وأمرهم بالمعروف وأنهاهم عن المنكر وأوصلهم
للرحم

Once while the Prophet was delivering a sermon on the pulpit someone asked him, "O Messenger of Allah, who is the best man?" The Prophet told him that he is the best who is most pious, recites the Book frequently and takes a keen interest in enjoining good and forbidding wrong and maintains kinship with his relative.¹

On the authority of Abu Huraira the Prophet is reported to have remarked:

الإسلام أن تعبد الله لا تشرك به شيئاً ، وتقيم الصلاة ، وتؤتي
الزكاة ،^١ وتصوم رمضان ، وتحج البيت ، والأمر بالمعروف
والنهي عن المنكر ، وتسليمك على أهلك . فمن انتقص شيئاً منهن
فهو سهم من الإسلام يده ، ومن تركهن كلهن فقد ولي الإسلام
ظهوره

Islam implies obedience to Allah, avoiding 'Shirk' establishment of prayers, performance of Haj, fasts and Zakah, call to enjoin all that is good and forbid all that is wrong. One who neglects anyone of the above duties is guilty and if he neglects all of them, it amounts to transgression.²

1. Musnad Ahmad , Vol. VI, p. 432.

2. Riwayatul Hakim, Vol. I, p. 21
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According to Hazrat Abullah b. Abbas, the Prophet once remarked:

ليس منا من لم يرحم صغيرنا ، ويوقر كبيرنا ويأمر
بالمعروف وينه عن المنكر

He is not one of us who has no affection for the young and no respect for the old and who does not enjoin good and forbid wrong.¹

On the authority of Hazrat Huzaifa it is reported:

والذى نفسى بيده لتأمرن بالمعروف وتنهون عن المنكر
أو ليوشكن الله أن يبعث عليكم عذاباً منه فتدعون فلا يستجيب
لكم

By Allah Who is Supreme all of you should enjoin good and forbid wrong otherwise you will incur Allah's displeasure which is inevitable.²

As reported by Hazrat Jabir,

قال رسول الله ﷺ : « أوحى الله عز وجل إلى جبريل عليه السلام أن اقلب مدينة كذا وكذا بأهلها ، فقال يارب إن فيهم عبدك فلاناً لم يعصك طرفة عين قال : فقال : قلبها

1. Riwah Ahmad, al-Targheebwa al-Tarhib, Vol. IV, p. 12

2. Tirmizi Abwab al-Fitan.

عليه. وعليهم فإن وجهه لم يتمر في ساعة قط

The Prophet told once Allah asked Jibrail to destroy a certain town. Jibrail pleaded for a pious resident of the town. But Allah asked Jibrail to destroy the town including the pious man, for despite his piety he never attempted at enjoining good and forbidding wrong.¹

Consensus on the Significance of the Call:

Islamists, be they classical or modern, unanimously consider the call as fundamental to Islam and regard it as an essential duty:

For Zahak:

الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر فريضة من فرائض
الله كتبها الله على المؤمنين

The call to enjoin good and forbid wrong is one of the essential duties of Muslims.²

Imam Ghazali comments on this duty in his work thus:

الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر هو القطب الأعظم في الدين وهو المهمة التي ابتعث الله لها النبيين أجمعين ، ولو طوى بساطه وأهمل علمه وعمله لتعطلت النبوة ، واضمحلت الديانة ، وعتت الفترة ، وفشت الضلالة ، وشاعت الجهالة ، واستشرى انقساد ، واتسع الحرق . وخربت البلاد ، وهلك العباد . ولم يشعروا بالهلاكة إلا يوم التناد، وقد كان الذي خفنا أن يكون

1. Riwayat Baiqahi,

2. Fatahul Qadeer, Vol. II, p. 363.

فلما لله وإنا إليه راجعون . إذ قد اندرس من هذا القطب عمله و
علمه ، وانمحى بالكلية حقيقته ورسمه ، فاستولت على القلوب
مداينة الخلق ، وانمحى عنها مراقبة الخالق . واسترسل الناس
في اتباع الهوى والشهوات استرسال البهائم . وعز على بساط
الأرض مؤمن صادق لا تأخذه في الله لومة لائم . فن سعى
في تلافى هذه الفترة . وسد هذه الثلمة ، إما متكفلاً بعلمها
أو متقلداً لتنفيذها . مجدداً لهذه السنة الدائرة ، ناهضاً بأعبائها
. ومتمشراً في إحيائها كان مستأثراً من بين الخلق بإحياء سنة أفصى
الزمان إلى إقامتها ، ومستمكاً بقربة تتضاءل درجات القرب دون
فرونها

The call to enjoin good and forbid wrong is one of the pillars of Islam. Prophets have been sent down the millenia to perform this duty. Without this duty the mission of Prophets becomes meaningless and soulless. Any lapse in performing this duty results in the spread of ignorance, anarchy and disaster in general, through people may not be even aware of their negligence. Alas! decay has set in the foundation of Islam. The image of Islam, therefore, looks today distorted both outwardly and inwardly. Guided as they are by worldliness Muslims have become subservient to passions hence no better than wild beasts. Rare are such Muslims who have devoted themselves exclusively to God. Therefore, one who tries to put an end to this sad state of affairs is the best person on the earth. He is to be credited

for the revival of real Islam. One who enjoins good and forbids wrong will restore the religion its right place. In so doing one will become the favourite of God.

The above introductory note is followed by the chapter on "The Call to all that is good and forbid wrong":

الباب الأول في وجوب الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر
وفضيلته والمنعة في إهماله وإضاعته . ويدل على ذلك بعد إجماع
الامة عليه ، وأشارات العقول السليمة إليه ، الآيات والأخبار
والآثار

The first chapter deals with the significance and importance of the Call to all that is good. It discusses also the repercussions attendant upon the negligence of this duty. To adduce the point are quoted the Quranic verses, sayings of the Prophet, consensus of the community and views of the companions of the Prophet.¹

According to Abu Bakar Hassas,

أكد الله تعالى فرض الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر في
مواضع من كتابه ، وبينه رسول الله ﷺ في أخبار متواترة
عنه فيه . وأجمع السلف وفقهاء الأمصار على وجوبه

The Quran has stressed, in many places, the significance of the call to all that is good. Likewise, the Prophet makes men-

1. Ahiya Uloom al-Din, Vol. II, p. 269

tion of it frequently as well as explicitly. So are the classical authorities agreed upon its significance. ¹

For Allama Ibn Hazam,

اتفقت الأمة كلها على وجوب الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر بلا خلاف من أحد منهم

This has been the consensus of the community that the call to all that is good is Wajib. There is no divergence of opinion about it.²

Imam Nauvi holds,

قد تطابق على وجوب الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر الكتاب . والسنة وإجماع الأمة . وهو أيضاً من النصيحة التي هي الدين

The Book, Sunnah and classical authorities on Islam all bear testimony to the significance of 'the duty of the call to enjoin good and forbid wrong. Religion stands for benevolence and this call aims at this benevolence.³

Imam Shaukani explicates the point thus:

وجوبه ثابت بالكتاب والسنة . وهو من أعظم واجبات الشريعة : وأصل عظيم من أصولها . وركن مشيد من أركانها وبه يكمل نظامها ويرتفع مقامها

1. Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. II, p. 582.

2. Al-Fasal al-Malah, Vol. IV, p. 171

3. Shirahul Muslim, Vol. I, p. 51

The significance of enjoining good and forbidding wrong is testified by both the Quran and Sunnah. It being one of the essentials of the religion is like a pillar on which rests the high edifice of religion.¹

It is thus clear that this call is the collective duty of the community. The Islamic state owes the responsibility of performing this duty. This call, as pointed out by Imam Ibn Taiymia, is the spirit of Islam and the offenders are to be punished by the state through war:

كل طائفة خرجت عن شريعة من شرائع الإسلام الظاهرة المتواترة فإنه يجب قتالها باتفاق أئمة المسلمين. وإن تكلمت بالشهادتين . فإذا أقرروا بالشهادتين وامتنعوا عن الصلوات الخمس وجب قتالهم حتى يصلوا . . . وكذلك إن امتنعوا عن الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر وجهاد الكفار إلى أن يسلموا أو يؤدوا الجزية عن يد وهم صاغرون

Any section of the community found neglecting any of the essential duties, according to the consensus of ummah, is to be punished through war. Even those who believe in Allah and in prophethood yet fail to establish prayers five times a day are to be checked and should be asked to establish prayers. Similarly those neglecting the call to enjoin good and forbid wrong, and making compromises with non-Muslims are to be punished through war.²

1. Fatahul Qadeer, Vol. I, p. 337

2. Majmus Fatawa Ibn Taiymia, Vol. IV, p. 181.

Real Meaning of a Quranic Verse:

The explication of a Quranic verse in this context, it is hoped, will not be totally out of place. This verse occurs in the Surah Maida:

O ye who believe :
Guard your own souls :
If ye follow (right) guidance,
No hurt can come to you
From those who stray.

(V : 109)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْفُسُكُمْ
لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَن ضَلَّ
إِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ

The import of the above verse appears somewhat contradictory to the concept of the call to enjoin good and forbid wrong. It looks as if Islam asks the believers to take care of themselves alone. However, on studying the verse in its proper perspective it is to be realised that the above verse, addressed in particular to the Muslims of the first generation, brings out the idea that hostile forces can do them no harm. It does not bear any implication to give up the call to enjoin good and forbid wrong. As rightly pointed out by the classical exegetes, the above verse makes it abundantly clear that if the believers follow right guidance, none can do them any harm. And to follow right guidance includes the call to enjoin good and forbid wrong. This view indeed sums up the spirit of Islam. Zamakhshari comments on the above verse thus:

ليس المراد ترك الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر : فإن

من تركهما مع القدرة عليهما فليس بمهتد، وإنما هو بعض الضلال
الذين فصلت الآية بينهم وبينه

It does not imply that the call to enjoin good is to be shirked. For he is not among the guided who does not perform this duty, though he is in a position to do so. It is indeed the testing ground for believers how sincerely they perform the duty.¹

According to Allama Abu Saood,

ولا يتوهم أن فيه رخصة في ترك الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن
المنكر مع استطاعتها . كيف لا ومن جملة الاهتداء أن ينكر
على المنكر حسبما تقي به الطاقة

That one may give up the call is a fallacy. To be guided implies that one should enjoin good and forbid wrong to the extent possible.²

So does Abu Hassas remark:

ومن الاهتداء اتباع أمر الله في أنفسنا وفي غيرنا فلا دلالة
فيها إذاً على سقوط فرض الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر

The guided believer is one who strives not only for his perfection but for that of others too. The above Quranic verse does not at all negate the duty of enjoining good and forbidding wrong.³

1. Al-Kashaf p. 386

2. Irshad Aqal al Saleem Vol IV p. 199-200

3. Ahkam al Quran Vol II p. 592

In one of his sermons the Caliph Abu Baker chided those who cited the verse to be an excuse for shirking the duty. For him the above verse indeed reiterates the significance of this duty. He is also reported to have remarked, in another place, that the verse is generally misinterpreted, for the Prophet himself tells:

إن الناس إذا رأوا المنكر بينهم فلم ينكروه يوشك أن يعمهم
الله بعقابه

At a time when people become indifferent to the spread of evil, they incur God's displeasure.¹

In sum, the above-quoted Quranic verse does not negate the significance of the duty of enjoining good and forbidding wrong. As already indicated, the verse, in fact, emphasises the idea. In both the Quran and Ahadith the duty is termed as important. This accounts for the unanimous view of classical as well as modern Islamicists on it. The only way to make Islam the world order is to perform the duty, for it is demanded of us by Allah and it has been the duty of Prophets.

1. Musnad Ahmad. Vol. I, p. 9.

CHAPTER III

'Farz-e-Kifaya' or 'Farz-e-Aain'?

The view that 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is a duty shared by scholars of all shades of opinions. Scholars are, however, at variance on categorising it under the head of 'Farz-e-Aain' for some consider it to be 'Farz-e-Kifaya.' A discussion on the nature of and differences in the two kinds of duty—the collective and the obligatory—will help us appreciate the point under discussion. Below is reproduced the gist of Allama Ibn Badran Hanbali's discussion on this issue.

The Difference Between 'Farz-e-Kifaya' and 'Farz-e-Aain':

Both the duties, 'Farz-e-Kifaya' and 'Farz-e-Aain', make allowance for the human psychology. With a view to obtaining desired effect a few out of the whole Ummah have been asked to perform 'Farz-e-Kifaya.' Since the duties performed by a few Muslim serve the purpose, all others have been exempted from performing the same. Con-

trary to it is 'Farz-e-Aain' that calls for the active involvement of the whole Ummah.¹

In the words of Maulana Abdul Ali Ansari.

المقصود من الإيجاب قد يكون أتعاب المكلف بالاشتغال به
كما في الأركان الأربعة وقد يكون المقصود شيئاً آخر يجب لأجلهما
يحصل المقصود بمحصله فإذا حصل المقصود لا يبقى الواجب
واجباً كالجهاد فإنه إنما وجب لإعلاء كلمة الله تعالى، فإذا أتى به
البعض حصل الإعلاء، وسقط الوجوب

Certain duties keep the believers engaged constantly such as the four obligatory acts prayers, fasting, 'Haj' and 'Zakat.' While other duties aim at preparing the believers ready for certain acts such as the duty of 'Jihad' which is concerned with upholding and championing the cause of Allah. Such a duty performed by even a few followers serves the purpose.²

'Farz-e- Kifaya' Incumbent on all or on a few ?

All scholars agree on the above account of the difference between 'Farz-e-Kifaya' and 'Farz-e-Aain' Nonetheless, the point whether 'Farz-e-Kifaya' is incumbent on all or on a few is controversial. So is the question whether the performance of 'Farz-e-Kifaya' by a few believers exonerates others from performing the same. Most of the scholars

1. al-Madkhil ila Mazhab al-Imam Hanbal, pp. 103-4.

2. Fawatihur Rahmat bi Shirah Muslim al-Suboot, Vol. I, p. 63.

subscribe to the former view. Imam Razi, Allama Ibn Subaki and Imam Shatabi, however interpret it otherwise. Similarly, it is controversial who is to perform 'Farz-e-Kifaya.' Those who have to perform 'Farz-e-Kifaya' in Ibn Subaki's view, are not some particular persons. God knows them well. Nonetheless, the performance of 'Farz-e-Kifaya' by either some particular persons or commoners exonerates others from doing it. Some scholars insist that only those entrusted with this responsibility ought to perform 'Farz-e-Kifaya.'¹ Only those capable of so doing, according to Imam Shatabi, should perform it.

Consensus on 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkir' as Farz-e-Kifaya:

There is consensus on the view that 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' happens to be Farz-e-Kifaya. Some categorise it under the head of 'Farz-e-Ain'. For Syed Mahmood Aalusi,

إن العلماء اتفقوا على أن الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر
من فروض الكفاية ، ولم يخالف ذلك إلا التزوير اليسير

Scholars, with occasional voices of dissent, hold that 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi al-Munkar' is 'Farz-e-Kifaya'.²

Among the scholars who interpret it as 'Farz-e-Kifaya' some consider it to be duty of certain persons while others think that its performance by a few believers exonerates all other believers.

1. Jamaal-Jawamai, Vol. I, pp. 186-7

2. Rooh al-Maani, Vol. IV, p. 21.

In sum, majority of scholars believe it to be Farz-e-Kifaya' on the following grounds. First, these Quranic verses are adduced :

Let there arise out
of you
A band of people
Inviting to all that is
good,
Enjoining what is right,
And forbidding what is
wrong :

(III : 104)

Ye are the best
Of People, evolved
For mankind,
Enjoining what is right,
Forbidding what is
wrong :

(III : 110)

وَتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ
إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ
لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ

The above Quranic verses, Ibn Arabi Maliki holds, describe 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' as 'Farz-e-Kifaya'. A band of people, according to the Quran, should devote itself to enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong. It, however, appears in the light of the other Quranic verse that the whole Ummah should perform this duty. One may thus legiti-

mately infer that the duty falls under the category of 'Farz-e-Kifaya' and its performance by a few believers exonerates others.

Most of the exegets are of the view that it is 'Farz-e Kifaya' which ought to be performed by a few. Of this view point Zamakhshari and Bayzawi are the exponents:

من للتبعض ، لأن الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر من
فروض الكفاية

(The word) "min" is used for 'Tabaez', for 'Amr al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is included in 'Farz-e-Kifaya'.¹

Commenting on the above quoted Quranic verse Abu Bakar Jassas says:

وحقيقته تقتضي البعض دون البعض فدل على أنه فرض على
الكفاية إذا قام به بعضهم سقط عن الباقي

The duty of 'Amr al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is incumbent on a few believers not on all. That it is 'Farz-e-Kifaya' is certain. If it is performed by some, it exonerates all others.²

1. al-Kashshaf, Vol. I, p. 224. It is strange logic to interpret 'Amr al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' as Farz-e-Kifaya reference to the use of the word, 'min'. The writer should have better presented some evidence relating to the Arabic grammar that the word is used for 'Tabaez'.

2. Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. II, p. 35

Imam Ghazali has elaborated the point thus:

ففيها (أى الآية) بيان أنه فرض كفاية لا فرض عين ،
وأنه إذا قام به أمة أسقط الفرض عن الآخرين إذ لم يقل : كوتوا
كلكم آمرين بالمعروف بل قال : ولتكن منكم أمة ، فإذا مهما
قام به واحد أو جماعة سقط الحرج عن الآخرين

The Quranic verse under discussion points out that ‘Amr bi al-Maroo’f wa Nahi An al-Munkar’ is ‘Farz-e-Kifaya’ not ‘Farz-e-Aain’ and of its performance by a few exonerates others from doing it, for the Quran makes it explicit that ‘let there arise out of you a band of people’. All Muslims are not supposed to perform it. The performance by a few thus exonerates others from doing it.

Since the performance of ‘Amr al-Maroo’f wa Nahi An al-Munkar’ is quite a task, only a few have been entrusted with the responsibility of its performance. Those who perform it should be well-versed in matters of ‘Shariah’ and workings of the human nature. In fact, only a few are blessed with such a capability. As a consequence, it tends to be ‘Farz-e-Kifaya’, as pointed out by Zamakhshari:

لأنه لا يصلح إلا من علم المعروف والمنكر ، وكيف
يرتب الأمر في إقامته ، وكيف يباشر ، فإن الجاهل ربما نهي
عن معروف وأمر بمنكر ، وربما عرف الحكم في مذهبه ،

وجهله في مذهب صاحبه فناه عن غير منكر . وقد يغفل في موضع اللين ويلين في موضع الغلظة ، وينكر على من لا يزيد إنكاره إلا تمادياً أو على من الإنكار عليه عب

Only a few are capable of performing 'Amr al-Marroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar,' for it requires of the knowledge how to perform it. Those ignorant might act otherwise. Its performance calls for the acquaintance with all view-points. One who lacks this knowledge might compel others to act in a manner which might not be in accord with the viewpoints of others. His actions would be thus disproportionate. His compulsion about some points might estrange others further which is contrary to the very essence of this duty and is not likely to serve any useful purpose.¹

Those who consider it to be 'Farz-e-Aain' interpret the Quranic verse otherwise. To adduce their viewpoint reference is made to another Quranic verse in which also the word "min" is used for 'Tabeez'.² Such an approach in the interpretation of the Quran is erroneous. In the light of this interpretation the translation of the verse would be, "Allah will pardon some of your sins". Whereas the standard translation is: "Allah will pardon all your sins". For the scho-

1. al-Kashshaf, Vol. I, p. 224

2. Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. II, p. 35.

lars subscribing to this viewpoint¹ the Quranic verse (III:104) implies that the whole Ummah has as a duty to perform 'Amr al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'.

Moreover, they do not consider the knowledge as a pre-requisite of performing this duty. Each Muslim, they insist, has a knowledge of the fundamentals of Islam pertaining to both duties and forbidden acts. One cannot think of a Muslim ignorant of these fundamental points. Any Muslim is therefore capable of performing the duty of enjoining good and forbidding wrong. Both the scholar and the layman can perform it alike. On this point Allama Abdul Qadir Audauh Shaheed makes the following observation:

إن وضع واجب الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر على عاتق

- 1. This interpretation is erroneous, for the Quranic verse does not bear the implication that this duty is incumbent on all Muslims. As Farz-e-Kifaya it is certainly applicable to all, though its performance by a few exonerates others. The above interpretation is thus without any valid ground.**

الجاهل لن يؤدي إلى الأضرار التي يتوقعونها لأن الجاهل بطبيعة الحال لا يأمر ولا ينهى إلا ما هو ظاهر لا خلاف عليه كأداء الصلاة والتي على السرقة والزنا

To entrust the responsibility of performing 'Amr al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' to the layman should not cause fear in the minds of scholars. The layman, it may be safely assumed, will enjoin and forbid acts that are too familiar such as enjoining prayers and forbidding fornication and stealing.¹

Mufti Sheikh Mohammad Abduhu regards it as 'Farz-e-Aain' in the light of the Quranic verse (III:104) on these grounds:

No Muslim, the Quran assumes, can be ignorant of the acts termed as good and wrong. Such a knowledge is not at all difficult to gain. What is good in the Quranic sense is recognised universally as good. So are the forbidden acts which every man instinctively disapproves. For a knowledge of these directives one need not glean specialized works such as 'Hashia Ibn Abidin, Fatahal-Qadeer and Mabsoot'. Enough guidance in this respect is provided by the Quran, 'Sunnah' and man's own conscience. No one can manage to remain ignorant of it. A Muslim is sup-

1. al-Tashree al-Jinai al-Islami, p. 495

posed to know it well. Those who interpret the duty of 'Amr al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' in general terms appear to imply that a Muslim need not know and appreciate the difference between good and wrong acts. Such a viewpoint is certainly not in accord with the spirit of 'Din'.¹

The same point is elaborated at another place by him thus:

فريضة الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر أكد من فريضة الحج ، ولم يشترط فيها الامتطاعة لأنها مستطاعة دائماً

The duty of 'Amr al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is, in a certain sense, more desirable than that of performing Haj. Only those who can afford are asked to perform Haj. However, no such prerequisite is required for this duty and it can be performed by all.² ○

Included in the performance of 'Amr al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' are both the achievements of a 'Mujtahid' (Scholar) and the efforts of a layman towards the same end. Both the scholar and the layman can perform it in their own respective ways. For the learned the pre-requisite is obviously a thorough knowledge of the Quran and Ahadith. Whereas for a layman his familiarity with the basic postulates of Islam is

1. Tafseer al-Quran al-Hakeem (al-Manar) Vol. IV, p. 27.

2. Ibid., Vol. IV, p. 35.

sufficient. The learned can doubtless tackle the delicate issues involved in the performance of this duty. None the less, even a layman can deliver persuasively the teachings of Islam. In sum, those who do not possess a thorough knowledge of Islamics cannot and should not be exonerated from the performance of this duty.

Objection Against the Viewpoint of the Majority of Scholars:

Most of the scholars, as pointed out earlier, are of the view that its performance is incumbent on the whole Ummah but its performance by a few exonerates others. Since every Muslim is not capable of performing it, they are to be exonerated. This view is, however, self-contradictory. Every Muslim is supposed to perform a duty only on being capable to do so. Those incapable of doing a duty are not required to perform it. In the light of this principle this duty should not be considered as incumbent on the whole Ummah. Only those who are capable to do so are supposed to perform it. Imam Shaatibi and a host of other classical authorities hold the view discussed above. In the words of Allama Shaatibi:

إن الطلب وارد على البعض ، دون البعض ، كيف كان ،
ولكن على من فيه أهلية القيام بذلك الفعل المطلوب ، لا على
العموم جميعاً

Only a few are required to do it. Not all but those capable of doing so are to

perform it. It is not, therefore, a duty incumbent on all.

In evidence of this contention these writers make reference to the Quranic verse, which makes it plain that a certain group is entrusted with the responsibility of performing this duty. Referring to a number of other Quranic verses it is pointed out:

وفي القرآن من هذا النحو أشياء كثيرة ورد الطلب فيها
نصاً على البعض لا على الجميع

Many Quranic injunctions are addressed to a few and not to all.

Commenting on the Quranic verse (III : 104) Imaam Razi mentions these two points that explain away the viewpoint about the performance of 'Amr al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' by a few Muslims. First, a thorough knowledge is required for its performance. Next, in his own words,

إنا أجمعنا على أن ذلك واجب على سبيل الكفاية بمعنى أنه
متى قام به البعض سقط عن الباقي ، وإذا كان كذلك كان المعنى
: ليقم بذلك بعضكم فكان في الحقيقة هذا إيجاباً على البعض ، لا
على الكل

There is consensus on the view that 'Amr al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' happens

to be 'Farz-e-Kifaya'. In other words, its performance by a few exonerates all others. According to the Quran, a band out of the community has to perform this duty. This proves it beyond any shadow of doubt that the duty is not incumbent on all.¹

Refutation of this Objection

This view is similar to the one expressed by Imam Shaatibi who considers the duty as 'Farz-e-Kifaya' incumbent on those capable of doing so. However, those scholars who construe it as incumbent on all Muslims point out the repercussions which may arise, if it is not performed at all. The whole Ummah, they rightly hold, shall be answerable for this lapse. This in turn involves another point. If this duty is 'Farz-e-Kifaya' why should the whole Ummah be answerable in case it is not performed ?²

That the Quran asks a few believers to perform this duty is a controversial point. Some scholars believe that the duty is incumbent on all. Reference is made in this context to 'Jihad' which, though also 'Farz-e-Kifaya' is incumbent on all, for according to the Quran :

War is obligatory on you all.

1. **Mafatih al-Ghaib, Vol. II, p. 20**
2. **Some scholars do not share this view. Only those capable of performing this duty, they believe, shall be answerable.**

As it is, the above injunction is addressed to the whole Ummah.

The Quran, no doubt, asks of a band of Muslim to perform this duty but it does not imply that the duty is not incumbent on the whole Ummah. The address is made in general terms as those who are to perform this duty are not specifically named.¹ None the less, its performance is incumbent on a few Muslims and others are therefore exonerated. For al-Bayzawi,

خاطب الجمع ، وطلب فعل بعضهم ليدل على أنه واجب
على الكل حتى لو تركوه رأساً أثموا جميعاً بولكن يسقط بفعل
بعضهم . وهكذا كل ما هو فرض كفاية

It is addressed to all but demands of a few to perform it. It is therefore incumbent on all, for it is not at all performed, the whole Ummah shall be answerable while its performance by a few exonerates all others. This principle holds true for each 'Farz-e-Kifaya'.²

In line with this view is the observation made by Sheikh Ismail Haqqi:

إنه من ، في قوله (منكم) التبعيض ، وتوجيه الخطاب
إلى الكل مع إستاد الدعوة إلى البعض لتحقيق معنى فرضيتها

1. For a detailed discussion on this point see Muslim al-Suboot, Fawatih al-Rahamat, Vol. I, pp. 63-66 and Rooh al-Maani, Vol. IV, pp. 21-22.

2. Anwar al-Tanzil www.nagorikpathagar.org

على الكفاية ، وأنها واجبة على الكل ، لكن بحيث إن أقامها البعض سقطت عن الباقين ، ولو أدخل بها الكل أثموا جميعاً لا بحيث يتحتم على الكل إقامتها

The word "min" in the expression "min-kum" is used for "Tabeez". Though required of a few, the address is made in general terms so as to emphasise that it is 'Farz-e-Kifaya' incumbent on all. So, if it is performed by a few, all others are exonerated from the duty. However, if it is not performed by anyone, the whole Ummah shall be answerable. It does not bear the implication that it is obligatory on all.¹

The Right Approach

Reproduced below are the two view points which have given rise to a heated controversy. As it is, none of the two above discussed view points is in the right direction. The right approach to this point is found only in Imam Shatibi's work, "al-Mawafiqat Fi Usool al-Shariat", which has been commented upon by Sheikh Abdullah Daraz. Imam Shatibi, as pointed out elsewhere in the book, is of the view that this duty is incumbent on those who are capable of performing it. This contention is adduced by the Quranic verse (III : 104) Disagreeing with this

1. Rooh al-Bayan, Vol. I, p. 352.

view Sheikh Abdullah Daraz remarks:

هذه الآيات لا تدل على أن الطلب متوجه إلى البعض بل إن
الطلب واجب على الجميع فعلى غير المتأهلين أن ينهضوا بالقادرين ،
ويعاونوهم له ، ويعاونوهم بكل الوسائل ، ليتحقق هذا المهم
من المصلحة ، فإن لم يحصل هذا المهم من المصلحة أثم جميع
المكلفين : المتأهل وغيره

That this duty is demanded of a few is not substantiated by the Quranic verses. Those subscribing to the other viewpoint hold that the duty is "Wajib" and it should be performed by a few with the assistance and co-operation of all. If it is not at all performed, both capable and incapable of performing it shall be answerable.¹

Imam Shatibi, it is worth noting, expresses the view similar to the one held by Sheikh Abdullah Daraz in another place thus:

قد يصح أن يقال : إنه واجب على الجميع على وجه
من التجوز ، أن القيام بذلك الفرض قيام بمصلحة عامة ، فهم
مطلوبون بسدّها على الحملة ، فبعضهم هو قادر عليها مباشرة
وذلك من كان أهلاً لها . والباقيون — إن لم يقدرُوا عليها —
قادرون على إقامة القادرين ، فمن كان قادراً على الولاية فهو
مطلوب بإقامتها ، ومن لا يقدر عليها مطلوب بأمر آخر وهو

1. al-Mawafiqat. Vol. I, p. 176 n. 2

إقامة ذلك القادر وإجباره على القيام بها ، فالقادر إذاً مطلوب بإقامة التمرض ، وغير القادر مطلوب بتقديم ذلك القادر إذا لا يتوصل إلى قيام القادر إلا بالإقامة من باب ما لا يتم الواجب إلا به ، وهذا الوجه يرفع مناط الاختلاف ، فلا يبقى للمخالفة وجه ظاهر

Generally speaking, inviting others to good is "Wajib" as its fulfilment is obligatory on all. Some are capable to do it. Those incapable should persuade the capable ones to perform it. In other words, those capable are to perform it while those incapable are required to persuade the capable ones to perform this duty. Both capable and incapable are thus entrusted with the responsibility of its performance. Such an interpretation of the point under discussion is and should be acceptable to all.¹

The controversy whether this 'Farz-e-Kifaya' is incumbent on all or a few is resolved in the light of Imam Shatibi's interpretation. So is the other controversial aspect of this point whether it is 'Farz-e-Kifaya' or 'Farz-e-Aain' resolved. Along this line of approach Sheikh Mohammad Abduhu argues that 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is 'Farz-e-Aain'. Those believing it to be 'Farz-e-Kifaya' refer to the Quranic verse (III: 104). according to which a

1. al-Mawafiqat, Vol. I, pp. 178-9.
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band of people is to perform this duty. Moreover, such writers hold that the word "min" is used for "Tabeez". For Sheikh Mohammad Abduhu, however, this duty is 'Farz-e-Aain' though it appears to be 'Farz-e-Kifaya'. In so doing he interprets the Quranic verse under discussion thus. Should the word "min" be for "Tabeez", the verse would mean that let there arise out of you a distinguished Ummah that should invite others to good and perform 'Amr bi al-maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. The address would be also in general terms, for all believers are directed to make the selection of such an Ummah. Then it should be also assumed that there are two types of duties, one incumbent on all Muslims and the other on this particular Ummah that is to invite others to good. Only a sound interpretation of the term "Ummah" can set things in the right perspective. The word "Ummah" does not stand for a particular band. It connotes, in fact, a well-knit organisation that makes joint efforts for a certain cause. Muslims as the whole indeed constitute this "Ummah". It should be a collective responsibility to guide the course of "Ummah" and point out the lapses, if any¹

To invite others to good is, no doubt, quite a task. Nonetheless, all of us should strive for the same end. Those capable should perform it at a large scale and those lacking in the pre-requisites should do it in their own way. Those incapable, as already submitted, should at least persue

ade the capable ones to perform it and should extend them all possible help. In sum, they should indirectly participate in the duty of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'.

Further Clarification of this Viewpoint :

Reproduced below are the viewpoints of both groups of the scholars who consider the duty of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' as either 'Farz-e-Kifaya' or 'Farz-e-Aain'. There is consensus on the former viewpoint of which the details are as follows :

1. Even if the duty is considered as 'Farz-e-Kifaya', it is a duty incumbent on all. Those who disagree with it are guilty of a misinterpretation. In the words of Allama Amadi :

لا فرق عند أصحابنا بين واجب العين والواجب على الكفاية
من جهة الوجوب لشمول حد الواجب لهما ، خلافاً لبعض
الناس مصيراً منه إلا أن واجب العين لا يسقط بفعل الغير ،
بخلاف واجب الكفاية ، وغايته الاختلاف في طريق الإسقاط ،
وذلك لا يوجب الاختلاف في الحقيقة

For the companions there was no difference between 'Farz-e-Kifaya', and 'Farz-e-Aain' in terms of its "Wujub", for both of them fall under the head of "Wajib". Some scholars interpret it otherwise on the ground that the performance of "Wajib-e-Aain" by a few does not exonerate all others whereas it does so in respect of Farz-e-Kifaya'. This, however, only indicates

the difference in principles valid for the two duties and does not at all question the "Wajib" of the two duties.¹

2. 'Farz-e-Aain' is incumbent on each and every Muslim but the incumbency of 'Farz-e-Kifaya' is in general terms. In other words, both of these are duties either individual or collective and are to be performed. Those who fail to perform 'Farz-e-Kifaya', either intentionally or unintentionally, shall be answerable. Its performance by a few, however, exonerates all others. Discussing the point of "Wajib Alal Kifaya" Maulana Abdul Ali Ansari remarks:

الواجب الذي من شأنه أن يثاب الآخرون ولا يعاقب

التاركون ، إذا أتى به البعض . وإن لم يأت أحد يعاقب الكل

Those who perform such a duty ('Farz-e-Kifaya') shall be rewarded. If it is performed by a few, others are exonerated. However, if it is not at all performed, all shall suffer on this account.²

Arrangements must therefore be made by the Ummah for its performance by, at least, a few persons.

3. The point which duty ('Farz-e-Kifaya' or 'Farz-e-Aain') is more desirable has not been discussed at length, as informed by Jalal al-Mahdi. One may, however, infer that 'Farz-e-Aain' is

1. al-Ahkam fi Usool al-Ahkam, Vol. I, pp. 141-2

2. Muslim as-Sabeet, Vol. I, pp. 62-3

superior to 'Farz-e-Kifaya' for the former duty is incumbent on each and every Muslim. However, a number of scholars such as Allama Abu Ishaq Asfaraini, Imam al-Harmain and Allama Abu Mohammad Juwaini think otherwise. For them, those who perform 'Farz-e-Kifaya' help others exonerate from this duty. But one performs 'Farz-e-Aain' for only himself. Looked at from this angle, one can hardly belittle the significance of 'Farz-e-Kifaya'.

4. What constitutes the performance of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahj An al Munkar' is to persuade someone to offer prayers or to dissuade a drunkard from drinking wine. Such a duty is to be performed constantly as, for example, to persuade someone to offer prayers. It will not be, therefore, altogether wrong to refer to 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkir' as 'Farz-e-Aain'. For forbidding certain acts the duty is not to be performed constantly. An instance in point is to protest against the un-Islamic tenor of the discussion in a given meeting. Such a duty can be performed by anyone of the audience. However if no one objects to it, all those present there shall be liable to punishment in the Hereafter. Thus, in certain respects the duty is no more than 'Farz-e-Kifaya'.

5. The performance of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' by only an individual or a few does not exonerate all others. Those ignorant of the tenets of Islam are to be guided. As

it is, it is not an easy task. Scattered all over the world about eight hundred million Muslims belong to various linguistic and cultural groups. So are the problems of these millions of persons numerous. It is thus imposible for only a particular band of persons to do justice to the performance of the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-'Munkar'. People familiar with the local problems of Muslims belonging to different places are required to perform the duty properly. The Quranic advice on the strategy for its performance is as follows:

If a contingent
From every expedition
Remained behind,
They could devote themselves
To studies in religion.
And admonish the people
When they return to them,—
That thus they (may learn)
To guard themselves
(against evil).

(IX : 122)

فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِنْ كُلِّ
فِرْقَةٍ مِنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ
لِيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ
وَلِيُنْذِرُوا قَوْمَهُمْ
إِذَا رَجَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ

Relevant portions of Qazi Bayzawi's comment on the above-quoted verse are reproduced below:

فهلا نفر من كل جماعة كثيرة كقبيلة وأهل بلدة جماعة
قليلة . . ليجعلوا غاية سعيهم ومعظم غرضهم من الفقه ، إرشاد
القوم وإنذارهم

There should arise a band of people out of

Muslims in all sections and towns to guide and admonish others. ¹

This duty, it is obvious, is to be performed everywhere, as pointed out by Allam Baghwi:

Jurisprudence stands for the knowledge of the duties of Islam which are of two types- 'Farz-e-Aain' and 'Farz-e-Kifaya'. Prayers fasting and other duties are of the former type. Not only should one perform these duties but acquire also the knowledge of its incumbency such as that of Haj and Zakat. Such a knowledge which may help one form his own judgement in matters relating to the religion constitutes 'Farz-e-Kifaya'. If the people in a town lack this knowledge, all of them shall be answerable. On the contrary, if they possess it, everyone is exonerated. In future they are to be guided in the light of this knowledge thus gained.²

For guiding the laymen it is imperative that there should be scholars in each and every town. If there is no such person in a town, all the inhabitants of the town shall be answerable to Allah

6. In Imam Ibn Tayimia's view;

الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر لا يجب على كل أحد

1. Anwar al-Tanzeel

2. Maalim al-Tanzeel. vol. III, p. 138

بعينه ، بل هو على الكفاية ، كما دل عليه القرآن . ولما كان الجهاد من تمام ذلك كان الجهاد أيضاً من فروض الكفاية

'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is, as the Quran tells, **'Farz-e-Kifaya'**, not **'Farz-e-Aain'**. **'Jihad'** too happens to be **'Farz-e-Kifaya'**.¹

In the event of **'Jihad'** all those who are able to fight, according to the scholars, are to take part in it as an obligatory duty. If they are too weak or negligent it is the duty of their neighbours to come to their rescue. Should they also be unable to resist the enemy, it is incumbent in turn on their neighbour and it is thus possible that at a given stage it may be even incumbent on all Muslims.²

The same analogy holds good for **'Amr bi al Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'**. If the Muslims at a given place fail to perform this duty, it is the duty of their neighbours to perform it. This incumbency is in accord with **'Shariah'**. Like **'Jihad'** the performance of **'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'** may also be incumbent on all Muslims at a given stage.

Though it is **'Farz-e-Kifaya'** by consensus, it happens to be **'Farz-e-Aain'** in the following condition:

1. **al-Jasta fi Islam**, p. 66

2. **Fatah al-Qadeer**, Vol. IV, pp. 280-1.

1. Those directed by the Islamic state should perform it as 'Farz-e-Aain', as described by Nizamuddin Nishapuri :

إن نصب لذلك رجل تعين عليه بحكم الولاية ، وهو المحتسب

Those appointed by the government for performing 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar', known as 'Muhtasib' ought to do it as an obligatory duty.¹

2. Should one come to know of the defiance of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' at a given place, he is to perform the duty as Farz-e-Aain ', as pointed out by Mulla Ali Qari thus :

إن الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر فرض كفاية إن علم به أكثر من واحد وإلا فهو فرض عين على من رآه

'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is doubtless 'Farz-e-Kifaya'. However, if everyone is ignorant of it, one who possesses the knowledge has to perform the duty as 'Farz-e-Aain'.²

3. According to Ibn Arabi Maliki, it is 'Farz-e-Aain' for those who possess requisite knowledge :

الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر فرض كفاية ..
وقد يكون فرض عين إذا عرف المرء من نفسه صلاحية النظر والاستقلال بالجدال أو عرف ذلك منه

1. Gharaib al-Quran, Vol. IV, p. 30

2. al-Mubeen al-Moin, p. 89,

Though 'Amr bi al-Marooḥ wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is 'Farz-e-Kifaya', for those who are capable of performing it well it is 'Farz-e- Aain'.¹

4. If no one is performing this duty, those who are capable should do it as 'Farz-e- Aain'. In the opinion of Imam Ibn Tayimia :

وهو فرض على الكفاية ، وبصير فرض عين على
القادر الذى لم يقيم به غيره

It is applicable as 'Farz-e-Aain' for those who are capable in case the duty is not at all performed.²

The same view is shared by Imam Ghazali thus:

إن الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر واجب وإن فرضه
لا يستقط مع القدرة إلا بقيام قائم به

'Amr bi al-Marooḥ wa Nahi An al-Munkar' happens to be 'Wajib' but its incumbency is on the capable, if it is not performed by any one.³

In sum, the duty is to be performed by at least a few persons. That it might not be performed at all is thus out of question. So is any lapse in its performance disallowed.

1. Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. I, p. 122.

2. al-Jasta fi—Islam. p. 37

3. Ahya-e-Uloom al-Din, Vol. II, p. 274

CHAPTER IV

Meaning and Scope

'Amr bi al-Maroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar' bears the connotations of a revolutionary task entrusted to Muslims. For its performance it is necessary to know what it stands for. Without gaining such a knowledge it might be impossible to do justice to this duty. Generally speaking, **'Maroof'** connotes universal virtues. So is the term **'Munkar'** that embraces all such acts considered universally as wrong and evil. It is not, therefore, surprising to note that the meaning and scope of **'Amr bi al-Maroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar'** has been confined to preaching morals. However, the Quranic connotations of this term are all-embracing. Over the centuries the Ummah has narrowed down its meaning and scope. The duty, according to the Quran, is not synonymous with the mere preaching of ethical principles. Included in its scope is the effort for preserving and establishing the Islamic way of life. Only those ignorant of its real meaning seem to be content with interpreting it in terms of moral preaching which, they believe, serves

the purpose. They hardly feel concerned for upholding the Islamic principles. On the contrary, they regard such an effort to be beyond the scope. On being told to do this duty Muslims, generally speaking, retort that in preaching morals they have performed the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. This view stems not only from a misinterpretation of this term but also from the ignorance, in general, of the real meaning of this Quranic term. As a result, they are in dark about the duty which is to be performed by them. Allah, it is perhaps needless to mention, demands this duty of the Ummah.

Real Meaning of the Term

The Quranic term, 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar', in fact, stands for the following points.

First, the Quran has used this term with reference to the mission of the prophets. The prophets, it is common knowledge, were not mere preachers of morals. The moral preaching, no doubt, constitutes partially their mission. But the real aim of the prophets was to make people subservient to Allah. Moreover, they saw to it that it was a total obedience and in all spheres of life such as beliefs, morals, culture, trade, politics and social laws. In sum, to make people accept the Will of Allah in each and every respect is one of the constituents of the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. The prophets performed the same duty. Thus

the duty is not related to a particular sphere of life but to all departments of life.

Like the prophets the Ummah has also been assigned the duty of performing "Amr bi al-Maroo' wa Nahi An al-Munkar". And for performing this duty the honorific appellation of "the best community" has been bestowed on Muslims. If the duty is interpreted in terms of moral preaching, such a duty has been performed by different groups down the ages. For example in our own times the moral preaching is a truism of the day, though the signs of moral degeneration are obvious everywhere. A spate of volumes on morals do appear every year. Similarly, a number of organisations, most of which are headed by non-Muslims, are engaged in preaching morals. Should Muslims also interpret the duty in terms of preaching morals, they cannot lay the claim for their superiority over others. Muslims have thus not to act as moral preachers. They have to launch radical reforms in all spheres of life which alone can lend the colour of the prophetic mission to their efforts and distinguish them as "the best community". Allah has not bestowed the title of "the best community" on Muslims for merely preaching morals in a given part of the world. In recognition of their efforts for upholding and enforcing the Will of Allah in all matters of life Muslims have been referred to as "the best community". According to Allama Abu Hayyan Andaulsi, Muslims have been described as "the best community", for

سبقهم إلى الإيمان برسول الله وبادارهم إلى نصرته ، ونقلهم
عنه علم الشريعة . وافتاحهم البلاد

they were the first to believe in the Prophet and help him in his mission. Moreover, they transmitted 'Shariah' to others and conquered many lands in Allah's cause.¹

Muslims have been directed in the Surah, "House of Imran" to make the call for inviting others to good and perform the duty of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. The two duties are not different from each other. The latter duty is, in a certain sense, the elaboration of the former one. 'Dawat ila al-Khair' stands for inviting others to Islam and 'Shariah'. The different aspects of this duty, discussed at length by the classical writers, are as follows:

Imam Razi:

الدعوة إلى الخير جنس تحت نوعان : أحدهما الرغبة في
فعل ما ينبغي وهو الأمر بالمعروف ، والثاني الرغبة في ترك ما
لا ينبغي وهو النهي عن المنكر

The call involves both enjoining and forbidding of certain acts. 'Amr bi al-Marooif' comprises the acts that are to be enjoined while the forbidding of certain acts constitutes 'Nahi An al-Munkar'.²

1. al-Bihar al-Muheet, Vol. III, p. 29.

2. al-Tafseer al-Kabeer, Vol. III, p. 20.

Nizammuddin Qummi Nishapuri:

'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'
doubtless elaborates the concept of 'Dawat
ila al-Khair'.¹

The two duties — 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' and 'Dawat ila al-Khair' — aim at making people believe in and uphold the Will of Allah in all matters of consequence.

Comments of the Classical Writers:

To hold 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' synonymous with the preaching of morals is an innovation, for in the course of thirteen centuries not a single writer has interpreted the Quranic concept in such terms. Scholars and writers of all shades of opinion do agree that the scope of the Quranic concept of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is quite comprehensive, encompassing beliefs, prayer, morals, trade and all other spheres of life. Any attempt to narrow down its scope impairs the very purpose of this duty. Below are reproduced the comments of classical writers which leave no room whatsoever for interpreting this Quranic concept in terms of the moral preaching:

Qazi Shaukani:

أخرج ابن أبي حاتم عن أبي العالية قال : كل آية ذكرها
الله في القرآن في الأمر بالمعروف فهو الإسلام ، والنهي عن المنكر

1. al-Gharaib al-Quran, Vol. IV, p. 30.

فهو عبادة الأوثان . انتهى . وهو تخصيص بغير تخصيص
فليس في لغة العرب ولا في عرف الشرع ما يبل على ذلك

On the authority of Ibn Ali Hatim it is reported that Abul Aliya made the following remark: 'All the verses referring to this concept, in fact, mean preaching Islam. 'Amr bi al-Marooif' stands for Islam whereas 'Nahi An al-Munkar' implies forbidding idolatry. This interpretation cannot be, however, substantiated by the 'Shariah' or the Arabic language. It has a general purport.¹

Abu Hayyan Andaulsi:

فسر بعضهم المعروف بالتوحيد . والمنكر بالكفر
ولا شك أن التوحيد رأس المعروف والكفر رأس المنكر
ولكن الظاهر العموم في كل معروف مأمور به في الشرع . وفي
كل منهي نهى عنه في الشرع

Some scholars have interpreted the concept of 'Amr be al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' with reference to monotheism and polytheism. Monotheism is doubtless the first and foremost "Khair" that is to be enjoined. So is polytheism the worst wrong to be forbidden. Nonetheless, the interpretation should be in general terms. All that is in accord with "Shariah" is "al-Marooif" and all that is forbidden by "Shariah" is 'al-Munkar'.²

1. Fatah al-Qadeer, Vol. I, p. 388

2. al-Bahar al-Muheet, Vol. III, pp. 20-21

Abu Bakar Jassas:

المعروف هو أمر الله . . . والمنكر هو ما نهى الله عنه

‘Maroof’ includes the lawful and ‘Munkar’ the forbidden.¹

Imam Razi:

رأس المعروف الإيمان بالله ، ورأس المنكر الكفر بالله

The basis of “Maroof” is the faith in Allah and that of “Munkar” is the denial of Allah.²

Haddadi:

والمعروف هو السنة : والمنكر هو البدعة

‘Maroof’ is ‘Sunnah’ whereas ‘Munkar’ is the innovation.³

Allama Sayed Mahmood Alausi:

والمبتدأ من المعروف : الطاعات ومن المنكر : المعاصي
الى أنكرها الشرع

“Maroof” includes all that is to be followed while all that is forbidden in “Shariah” constitutes ‘Munkar’⁴

Allama Ibn Hajar Hateemi:

المراد بالأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر: الأمر بواجبات
الشرع : والنهي عن محرماته

1. Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. II, p. 41

2. al-Tafseer al-Kabeer, Vol. IV, p. 523

3. Rooh al-Bayan, Vol. I, p. 959

4. Rooh al-Maani, Vol. IV, p. 28

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Included in 'Amr bi al-MarooF wa Nahi An al-Munkar' are the acts both the desirable and the forbidden.¹

Ibn Malik:

(المنكر) هو ما ليس فيه رضا الله من قول أو فعل
والمعروف و ضده

What is contrary to the 'Will of Allah is 'Munkar' and what is not happens to be "MarooF".²

Mulla Ali Qari:

المنكر ما أنكره الشرع ، وكرهه . ولم يرض به
'Munkar' stands for all that is forbidden
or undesirable according to "Shariah".³

Allama Manadi:

(من رأى منكم منكراً) شيئاً قبحه الشرع فعلاً أو قولاً
(فليغيره)

All that is held undesirable by "Shariah" be it verbal or actual, comprises 'Munkar'.⁴

Imam Ibn Tayimia:

يدخل في المعروف كل واجب . وفي المنكر كل
قبيح . والقبايح هي السيئات وهي المحظورات كالشرك والكذب
والظلم والفساحش

1. al-Zawajr, Vol. II, p. 146

2. Mabariq al-Azhar, Vol. I. p. 48

3. al-Mubeen al-Moln, p. 188

4. al-Tafseer, Vol. II, p. 48

Included in "Maroof" is all that is "Wajib" and in 'Munkar' all that is forbidden. Acts such as that of polytheism, oppression and moral debauchery are the ones forbidden by "Shariah".¹

The preaching of morals is, in fact, one of the constituents of the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. The scope of the term 'Maroof' is vast enough as it includes the whole 'Shariah', the law, 'Sunnah' and the teachings of the Prophet. All that is opposed to 'Maroof' might be referred to as 'Munkar'. The point being a very important one deserves a fuller elaboration,

'Shariah' is 'Maroof' and all that is Contrary to it 'Munkar'

Without the Law a human society is unimaginable. Allah alone is the Law giver and His Law governs both the personal and public life of man. In other words, the legislation of the Law by human beings is forbidden. It is the Divine Law which is to be called 'Maroof' and all that is not in accord with it is 'Munkar'. Those believing in the Divine Law perform 'Maroof' while those ignoring the Divine Guidance are ruled over by either their leaders or their own judgements. To make people follow the Divine Guidance constitutes the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar' which frees peo-

1. al-Aqeeda al-Isfahaniya, p. 121.



ple of their subservience to all those other than Allah. Those who believe in Allah are to make it a point to uphold the Divine Law and resist the implementation or operation of anyother law.

Allah requires of believers a total submission and the implementation of the Divine Law in their life. Allah alone has the authority to legislate the Law and this responsibility is not to be shared by human beings. Not only is the defiance of 'Din' one of the constituents of 'Munkar' but an attempt to alter the Divine Law also amounts to 'Munkar'. As it is, we ought to perform all that is 'Maroof' which involves the efforts for upholding the Will of Allah in all matters of consequence. As remarked by Ibn Tayimia.

الأمر والنهي من لوازم وجود بنى آدم . فمن لم يأمر
بالمعروف الذى أمر الله به ورسوله ، وينه عن المنكر الذى
نهى الله عنه ورسوله ، وإلا فلا بد أن يأمر وينهى ، يأمر
وينهى إما بما يصاد ذلك وإما بما يشترك فيه الحق الذى أنز
له الله بالباطل الذى لم ينزله الله ، وإذا اتخذ ذلك ديناً كان
ديناً مبتدعاً

To forbid certain acts is inevitable. Those who either fail to perform this duty or present it in an adulterated form fail to do justice to this duty. In so doing they deviate from the path suggested by Allah and the Prophet. Such an attempt to perform 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' which is not in consonance with 'Shariah' amounts to introducing a new religion, for

it might be radically different from Allah's Din'.¹

The two terms—'Munkar' and 'Maroof'—are, as may be observed in the light of the above discussion, rooted in 'Shariah'. The beliefs and acts relating to prayers, conduct, dealings, trade and culture as ordained by 'Shariah' are 'Maroof'. So are the forbidden acts Munkar'. The performance of 'Amr bi al-Maroofo wa Nahi An al-Munkar' should therefore be done in these terms of reference.

'Shariah' on 'Maroof' and 'Munkar'

Without removing a persistent misunderstanding in the use of the two terms—'Maroof' and 'Munkar'—the real meaning of these terms cannot be brought out. The two terms bear the implications of desirability and undesirability. It should not, however, create the impression that only such acts which are generally considered as desirable or undesirable stand for 'Maroof' and 'Munkar'. In interpreting these terms one should not lose sight of the Quranic connotations. All that is held desirable by 'Shariah' is, in fact desirable. So are the undesirable acts forbidden by 'Shariah' which are to be dubbed undesirable. Whether the desirability or undesirability of such acts has a general currency or not is immaterial. Only such generally acclaimed desirable acts which have a theological sanction are indeed 'Maroof'. Same holds true for 'Munkar'.

1. al-Hasbata fi al-Islam, p. 87

The general condemnation of certain acts does not necessarily make them 'Munkar, unless they are condemned by 'Shariah' itself. 'Shariah' is to act as the touchstone for determining the desirability or undesirability of an act. In Imam Raghīb's view,*

المعروف اسم لكل فعل يعرف بالعقل أو الشرع
حسنة والمنكر ما ينكر بهما

All that is rational and sanctified by 'Shariah' is 'Maroof'. Similarly, all that is irrational and forbidden by Shariah is 'Munkar'.¹

One should not, however, give a free play to reason in determining 'Munkar' and 'Maroof'. Reason bridled with 'Shariah' can alone be helpful. As it is, what is in 'Shariah' is as such rational. Imam Raghīb had this point in mind in holding reason synonymous with 'Shariah' as evident from the above quotation. Should there be some confusion in determining 'Maroof' and 'Munkar' one should turn to 'Shariah', as set out by Imam Raghīb in his discussion on 'Munkar' thus:

المنكر كل فعل تحكم العقول الصحيحة بقبحه ،
أو تتوقف في استقباحه واستحسانه العقول فتحكم بقبحه الشريعة

All that is irrational is 'Munkar'. In case there is some confusion, the ruling of 'Shariah' should be the deciding factor in estab-

1. al-Mafradat fi Gharib al-Quran, Cf. 'Arf'.

lishing whether a given act is 'Munkar'.

All that is held desirable by 'Shariah' is, in Ibn Abi Jamra's opinion, 'Maroof', even if a certain act is considered as good by society, it is 'Shariah' not the social norms to determine what is 'Munkar' or 'Maroof'.

يطلق اسم المعروف على ما عرف بأدلة الشرع من
أعمال البر سواء جرت به العادة أم لا

All that is sanctified is by 'Shariah' is 'Maroof' whether it conforms to social traditions or not.²

The determination of 'Maroof' or 'Munkar' is not dependent upon the popular notions among Muslims, though this principle is erroneously applied by some scholars. All such popular notions about 'Maroof' and 'Munkar' which are in line with 'Shariah' are no doubt valid. However, if such notions are rooted in sources other than 'Shariah', these are to be condemned. Being Muslims we all have to follow 'Shariah' and to believe in such 'Maroof' and 'Munkar' which are specified by Shariah. A Muslim cannot dare deviate from this path by following 'Munkar' or forbidding 'Maroof'. According to Allama Ibn Jareer Tabari:

أصل المعروف كل ما كان معروفاً ففعله جميل مستحسن

1. al-Mafradat fi Gharib al-Quran Cf. 'Nakr'

2. Fatah al-Bari Vol. 10, p. 342

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غير مستقيم في أهل الإيمان بالله ، وإنما سميت طاعة الله معروفاً لأنه مما يعرفه أهل الإيمان ولا يستنكرون فعله . وأصل المنكر ما أنكره الله ورأوه قبيحاً فعله ولذلك سميت معصية الله منكراً لأن أهل الإيمان يستنكرون فعلها ويستعظمون ركنها

All that is explicitly specified by 'Shariah' is 'Maroof'. The believers enjoin it and do not ignore it. For example, the obedience to Allah is 'Maroof' as every believer knows well. All that is forbidden by 'Shariah' is 'Munkar' believers shun it. For example, to commit a sin is 'Munkar' as every believer knows well. They, in fact, consider it as something very serious.¹

On the approach of Muslims in this respect Imam Shaukani observes:

إنهم يأمرون بما هو معروف في هذه الشريعة . وينهون عما هو منكراً . فالدليل على كون ذلك الشيء معروفاً أو منكراً هو الكتاب أو السنة

They enjoin all that is enjoined by Shariah and forbid all that is forbidden by Shariah In short, they turn to the Quran and Sunnah for determining 'Maroof' or 'Munkar'.

This explains away the point, that the classical writers, it is worth noting, have not interpreted 'Maroof' or 'Munkar' with reference to then pre-

valent philosophical or logical parametres. They have consistently used the terms referred to in 'Shariah'. For them, 'Maroof' and 'Munkar' stand respectively for a total submission to Allah and acts of transgression, 'Halal' and 'Haram', and obligatory duties and the forbidden acts. Allah's will might be ascertained in the light of 'Shariah' alone which informs us what is desirable or undesirable, 'Halal' or 'Haram' and obligatory or forbidden. 'Maroof' has been interpreted by Allama Ibn Aseer in these words:

« المعروف » اسم جامع لكل ما عرف من طاعة الله والتقرب إليه والإحسان إلى الناس وكل ما ندب إليه الشرع وسهى عنه من المحسنات والمقبحات ، وهو من الصفات الغالبة أى أمر معروف بين الناس إذا رأوه لا ينكرونه

'Maroof' being a comprehensive term connotes a total submission to Allah, efforts to follow His will, dealing fairly with others and other such good acts as enjoined by 'Shariah'. So does 'Munkar' stand for the forbidden acts. 'Maroof' bears the implication of generally acclaimed virtues.¹

'Maroof', as pointed out by him,

المنكر . . . ضد المعروف وكل ما قبحه الشرع
وحرمه وكرهه فهو منكر

is contrary to 'Munkar' which stands for all that is forbidden by 'Shariah'.

For Allama Sawi,

المعروف : المراد به ما طلبه الشارع إما على سبيل
الوجوب كالصلوات الخمس : وبر الوالدين . وصلة الرحم .
أو الندب كالنوافل وصدقات التطوع . . المنكر : المراد به
ما نهى عنه الشارع إما على سبيل الحرمة كالزنا والسرقه ، أو
على سبيل الكراهة

‘Maroof’ stands for the acts enjoined by Allah such as saying prayers five time daily, dealing fairly with parents and other relatives and for the acts referred to as desirable such as saying ‘Nafil’ prayers and other acts of charity. ‘Munkar’ stands for all the forbidden acts such as homicide, fornication, and stealing etc.¹

According to Allama Abdul Qadir Abduhu Shaheed,

الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر يدخل فيه الأمر
بكل ما أوجبت الشريعة عمله . أو حيت للناس فعله من صلاة
وصيام وحج وتوحيد وغير ذلك . والنهي عن كل ما خالف
الشريعة من أفعال وعقائد ، فيدخل فيه النهي عن التثليث وعن
القول بصلب المسيح وقته ، ويدخل فيه النهي عن الترهيب وعن
شرب الخمر وعن أكل لحم الخنزير وغير ذلك مما تخالف فيه
الشريعة الإسلامية الأديان الأخرى

‘Amr bi al-Marooif’ includes all the acts enjoined by ‘Shariah’ such as saying prayers,

1. al-Hashiya al-Sawi Ala Tafseer al-Jalalain,

fasting, performing Haj and believing in monotheism. 'Nahi al-Munkar' constitutes the forbidden acts in addition to those which are contrary to 'Shariah' such as the belief in Trinity, crucification of Jesus. Included in it also are the renunciation of life, drinking, eating pork and such other acts that are forbidden by 'Shariah'.¹

In sum, the terms 'Munkar' and 'Maroof' are not to be interpreted in the manner one wishes to. The terms of reference must be in accord with 'Shariah' which alone can guide us on deciding what is 'Maroof' or 'Munkar'. Any attempt at interpreting it otherwise amounts to the defiance of Allah, which is doubtless something awesome.

1. al-Tashree al-Jinai al-Islami, Vol-I, p. 497

CHAPTER V

Comprehensiveness of the Concept

'Amr bi al-a-roof wa Nahi An al-Munkar' involves the acts of both preaching and guiding to be done in a systematic manner. Preaching should be followed by guiding those who are willing. The role of guidance in making the call is doubtless the deciding factor in the success or failure of preaching. If the people are not trained well, mere preaching might prove fruitless. Without a proper arrangement for training people the success of the effort for the invitation to Islam is a remote possibility.

The audience for the invitation or guidance is doubtless different from each other. Those to be invited to Islam are non-believers whereas guidance is for those who are already in the fold of Islam. Notwithstanding this apparent difference the nature of two duties is almost same. The God-fearing would make the people too God-fearing and would train them in the same fashion. On the contrary, non-believers resort to

different approaches. As already indicated, the twin duties of the invitation and guidance are, in the main, alike.

The Muslim Ummah has to perform both the duties of preaching and guidance. In other words the performance of the duty of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is to be done in both Islamic and non-Islamic societies. Non-Muslims are to be preached while Muslims are to be guided. As pointed out by the classical writers, 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' constitutes a total submission to Allah, inviting others to Islam, resistance to polytheism and denunciation of all forms of 'Shirk' and fighting in the cause of Allah. Included in it also are the implementation of the Law, adherence to Sunnah and shunning all innovations. The nature of this duty involves both preaching and guidance. This viewpoint is adduced by the Quranic verses which make mention of the two types of duties together. In addition to inviting others to Islam Muslims have to reform themselves also. To bring out the point clearly a detailed discussion is to be made.

'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is to be Performed in non-Muslim Societies also.

The Quran demands of Muslims the performance of the following duty:

**Ye are the the best
Of People, evolved**

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ

For mankind,
Enjoining what is right,
Forbidding what is wrong,
And believing in God.

(III : 110)

لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَ
تَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ

Muslims are to perform, this duty, one may legitimately infer from the above verse, in non-Muslim societies as well. The Muslim Ummah, as the Quran sets out, has been evolved for performing the duty of 'Amr bi al-MarooF wa Nahi An al-Munkar', a duty which is quite a task. Others are free to choose anyway of life. However, Muslims being 'the best of peoples' are adherents of the Islamic way of life and therefore they have no option whatsoever in selecting a way of life other than the Islamic. In case they deviate from it, they are no longer 'the best of peoples'. For the Ummah the performance of 'Amr bi al-MarooF wa Nahi An al-Munkar' should be an ideal, for this duty is incumbent on them. On the Day of Judgement they will be rewarded or punished accordingly. The point that Muslims have been evolved for the good of mankind is explained by Sheikh Abu al-Saood thus:

أخرجت للناس : صفة لأمة . واللام متعلقة بأخرجت .
أى أظهرت لهم ، وقيل : بغير أمة أى كنتم خير الناس للناس
فهو صريح فى أن الخيرية بمعنى النفع للناس . وإن فهم ذلك
من الإخراج لهم أيضاً ، أى أخرجت لأجلهم ومصلحتهم

Muslims are characterised by the fact that they 'have been evolved as the best of peoples for mankind' in general. Another plausible interpretation of the above verse might be that Muslims are the best guides for others. Nonetheless, it is beyond doubt that Muslims are for guiding others and for this purpose they have been evolved.¹

In Imam Razi's Opinion,

قوله : أخرجت للناس . فيه قولان : الأول أن المعنى كنتم خير الأمم المخرجة للناس في جميع الأعصار . فقوله : أخرجت للناس أى أظهرت للناس : حتى تميزت وعرفت . وفصل بينهما وبين غيرها . والثاني أن قوله للناس من تمام قوله كنتم . والتقدير كنتم للناس خير أمة

There are two interpretations of the Quranic verse. According to some, Muslims are for guiding others and they are the best of peoples evolved down the ages. For rendering this duty Muslims stand apart from other communities. For the other group of scholars Muslims are the best Ummah for mankind.²

On the point under discussion Hazrat Abu Huraira offers the following comment:

1. Irshad al-Aqal al-Kitab al-Kareem. Vol. II, p. 496

2. Mafateeh al-Ghaib, Vol. III, p. 27

كنتم خير أمة أخرجت للناس . قال :خير الناس للناس
تأتون بهم في السلاسل في أعناقهم حتى يدخلوا في الإسلام

“Ye are the best of peoples evolved for mankind” means that Muslims are the best, for they guide and invite others to Islam.¹

Ibn Hajr makes the following observation on Hazrat Abu Huraira's interpretation:

أى خير بعض الناس لبعضهم . أى أنفعهم لهم ، وإنما
كان ذلك لكونهم سبباً في إسلامهم

Some people are good for others in the sense that they do others the best service by inviting them to Islam.²

1. Bukhari, Kitab al-Tafseer, It does not, however, imply that Muslims forcibly convert others to Islam. They are the best for others because they are a model for others to follow. By inviting others to 'Khair' they perform the best service for mankind and thus attract even their worst enemies. Only when Muslims possess the best character and other virtues, non-Muslims will be attracted to them and by following them non-Muslims will endear themselves to Allah.
2. Fatah al-Bari, Vol. 8, p. 156.

The above-quoted comments, though mainly literal, help one appreciate the ideal Muslims being the best of people stand for. The Ummah is in the best interests of other groups, communities and nations, for it guides them to the best way of life by inviting them to Islam which sums up the definition of 'Amr bi al-Maroofo wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. This duty is thus to be performed in non-Muslim societies as well. Only those ignorant of the import of the relevant Quranic verse can dare differ with this definition and nature of the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroofo wa Nahi An al-Munkar'.

'To act as Witnesses' also Constitutes 'Amr bi al-Maroofo wa Nahi An al-Munkar'.

A similar idea is expressed in the Quran in another place:

Thus have we made of you
An *Ummat* justly balanced,
That ye might be witnesses
Over the nations.
And the Apostle a witness
Over, yourselves:

(II: 143)

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ
أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِّتَكُونُوا
شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ
وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ
عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا ؕ

The Muslim Ummah is here referred to as 'an Ummat justly balanced' which is similar to the expression 'the best of peoples'. Only 'the best

of peoples' might 'have a balanced approach in all matters. The import of the above-quoted Quranic verse is in consonance with that of the verse (III:110) in which Muslims have been referred to as "the best of peoples" for performing 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'.

Reform of the Muslim Society—another Constituent of 'Amr bi al Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'

One should not, however, interpret 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' in terms of only preaching non-Muslims as it includes also the reformation of the Muslim society. The Ummah should not lose sight of the either component. First, Muslims should themselves imbibe the spirit of 'Maroo'f' and 'Munkar'. Without practising these principles mere preaching can do no good. According to the Quran itself, 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' comprises the two components as elaborated by Allama Sawi:

قوله (للناس) : إنما عبر باللام دون « من » إشارة
إلى أن هذه الأمة نفع ورحمة لنفسها وللخلق عموماً في الدنيا
بالدعاء لجميع الأمم ، وفي الآخرة بالشهادة للأتقياء .

The Quran refers to this duty as 'for mankind including both the Ummah itself and all others. In so doing it will have the best of both the worlds. Muslims are required to invite others to Islam and be a witness to the mission of the Prophets on the Day of Judgement.¹

1. Hashia al-Sawi Ala Tafseer al-Jalalain, Vol. I. p. 153.
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For Mulla Jiwan,

أخرجت للناس ، أى للأنبياء للشهادة على دعوتهم ،
أو للكفار لقتالهم ، أو للمؤمنين عامة

The Muslim Ummah is for the guidance of mankind and be a witness to the mission of the prophets.

For performing this duty the Ummah should address itself to both Muslims and non-Muslims.¹

Allama Sawi's remark, quoted above, makes it explicit that the Ummah has to work in both Muslim and non-Muslim societies and this will accrue to it the best of both the worlds. Being "the best of Peoples" it is expected of performing 'Amr bi al-Maroofo wa Nahi An al-Munkar' in both the societies. This also explains away Mulla Jiwan's contention that it should address both Muslims and non-Muslims who are to be dealt with in the manner the expediency calls for.

**'Amr bi al-Maroofo wa Nahi An al-Munkar'—
A General Duty**

To appreciate the all-embracing nature of this duty one should take note of the following Quranic verse:

Let there arise out of you
A band of people
وَلْيَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ
إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ

1. al-Tafseerat al-Ahmadiya, p. 124
www.nagorikpathagar.org

Inviting to all that is good,
 Enjoining what is right,
 And forbidding what is wrong :
 They are the ones
 To attain felicity

بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَى عَنِ
 الْمُنْكَرِ

(III : 104)

The other Quranic verse (III : 110) bearing the implication that the Ummah is for guiding mankind is in line with the above-quoted verse. Muslims, as the verse sets out, are not supposed to guide a particular section of society. The directive is made in general terms. Only when the duty of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is carried out in all societies, the Ummah will be exonerated from the duty as pointed out by Allama Syed Mahmood Alausi:

حذف المفعول الصريح من الأفعال الثلاثة إما للإعلام
 بظهوره . أى يدعون الناس ولو غير مكلفين ، ويأمرونهم
 وينهونهم ، وإما للقصد إلى إيجاد نفس الفعل كما يقال فلان
 يعطى أى يقومون بالدعوة والأمر والنهى وبقومنها

Those to be invited to Islam and made to perform 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' are not specified in the Quran. This in itself is indicative of the fact that these are to be performed in all societies. Since there is no specification, the scope

of the invitation to Islam and 'Amr bi al-Maroofoo wa Nahi An al-Munkar' should be taken as comprehensive.¹

As rightly remarked by Allama Alausi, the two duties are to be carried out in all societies because the Quran has not limited it to any particular one.. Moreover, what is important is its performance. The Quran has given a general directive which is to be followed. Millions of persons today are totally ignorant of Islam. Muslim will be doing justice to 'Amr bi al-Maroofoo wa Nahi An al-Munkar' in preaching Islam to such persons. If Muslims fail to preach the message of Islam to all, they shall also be held responsible for the acts of such ignorant persons. That each and every person should be informed of Islam is the Will of Allah. Muslims should strive to enjoin 'Maroofoo' and forbid 'Munkar' everywhere, be it a town or a country. All have to be made obedient to Allah and adherents of 'Shariah'.

The concept of 'Amr bi al-Maroofoo wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is indeed very comprehensive including all that is found in 'Din'. Ibn Arabi Maliki rightly observes:

الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر باب عظيم هو ابتداء الدين والإسلام وهو أيضاً انتهاءه

Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar is a vast topic. It constitutes both the introductory and fundamental points of the religion.²

Both preaching and guidance, as the above discussion sets out, happen to be the components of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar.' It is to be performed in both Muslim and non-Muslim societies. In a non-Muslim society it comprises the criticism of un-Islamic acts and beliefs, the presentation of Islam as an alternative to other religions and to sacrifice life for upholding and popularising the Islamic way of life. In a Muslim society the duty stands for the reformation of the popular beliefs and making the Muslims believe in and strive for upholding the Islamic way of life.

2. Ahkam al-Quran, Vol-I, p. 294

CHAPTER VI

Inviting others to Islam

Islam, as we all know, was revealed to the Prophet in a hostile environment. Islam had nothing in common with the then prevailing way of life. Masses were both hostile and ignorant. Those willing to accept Islam were forcibly dissuaded from doing so. Nonetheless, the situation changed with the passage of time and Islam gained much in depth and rootage. This was, however, possible on account of the innumerable sacrifices made by the companions of the Prophet. Rare are such illustrations of utmost devotion to a certain cause in the whole world history. Though few in number they defeated those who were superior to them in every respect. Without feeling demoralised about the resistance at a large scale the companions of the Prophet adhered faithfully to their conviction and ultimately won the battle. The ideal of the kingdom of Allah was realised. The early history of Islam is, in fact, illustrative of the performance of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Broadly speaking, the following three components contributed

to the phenomenal rise of Islam:

- (i) Invitation to and preaching of Islam.
- (ii) Jihad fi Sabeel Allah (fighting in Allah's cause) and
- (iii) Establishment of the Islamic State.

'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' comprises all the three above mentioned components, for these aim at enjoining 'Marooif' and forbidding 'Munkar'. An invitation without the concept of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' cannot be the invitation to Islam. Same holds true for 'Jihad' and the Islamic state. All these institutions should be directed to performing 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. First, let us discuss the point of inviting others to Islam.

Preaching of Din and Shariah

The use of words 'Amr' and 'Nahi' in the term 'Amr bi al Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' creates the impression that it can be performed only forcibly. The above discussion on the comprehensive scope of the term, however, negates this impression. It includes the task of preaching and inviting others to Islam as explained by some writers.

Muslims being the best of peoples, according to the Quran, enjoin 'Marooif' and forbid 'Munkar'. Allama Ibn Jarir Tabari comments thus on the Quranic concept:

قوله : (تأمرن بالمعروف) فإنه يعنى تأمرن بالإيمان

بأقـه ورسولـه والعمل بشرائعـه ، (وتنهون عن المنكر) يعنى
وتنهون عن الشرك بأقـه وتكذيب رسولـه وعن العمل بما نهى عنه

‘Ye enjoin ‘Maroof’ implies that Muslims direct others to believe in Allah, the Prophet and ‘Shariah’. ‘Ye forbid ‘Munkar’ stands for the denunciation of all that is forbidden by Allah, the Prophet and ‘Shariah’.¹

For Mulla Jiwan,

(تأمرن بالمعروف) أى بالإيمان بمحمد والقرآن أو بجميع
الطاعات : وتنهون عن المنكر) أى عن الكفر وسائر المعاصى

‘Ye enjoin ‘Maroof’ means the enjoining of the belief in the Prophet and Quran and of all that is to be followed. Similarly, ‘Ye forbid ‘Munkar’ bears the implication of forbidding all that is to be shunned.²

On the point that a band of Muslims should perform ‘Amr bi ‘al-Marooif wa Nahi An al Munkar’ Imam Shaukani remarks:

عن الضحاك فى قوله (يأمرن بالمعروف) قال : يدعون
إلى الإيمان بأقـه ورسولـه ، والتفقات فى سبيل الله ، وما كان من

1. Jamey al-Bayan, Vol. IV, p. 28 .

2. al-Tafseerat al-Ahmediya, p. 124

طاعة الله ، ويهون عن الشرك والكفر

According to Zabbhak the directive 'Let there arise out of you a band of people for enjoining 'Maroof' implies the belief in Allah and the Prophet, spending money in Allah's cause and following all that is to be followed. To forbid 'Munkar' stands for forbidding all forms of doubt and transgression.¹

In the face of such an explicit statement no one can dare deny that the duty of 'Amr bi al Maroof wa Nahi An al Munkar' involves the invitation to Islam and forbidding polytheism and such other acts. On this point Abu al-Aliya is of the opinion:

كل ما ذكره الله في القرآن من الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر فالأمر بالمعروف : دعاء من الشرك إلى الإسلام والنهي عن المنكر : النهي عن عبادة الأوثان والشياطين

The Quranic reference to 'Maroof' and 'Munkar' connotes inviting others to Islam and forbidding others from worshipping idols and other spirits.²

The Prophet was Entrusted the Duty of 'Amr bi al-MarooF' in Mecca

To appreciate the real nature and scope of the duty of 'Amr bi al-MarooF' the best recourse is

1. Fatah al-Qadeer, Vol. I, p. 364

2. Jamey al-Bayan, Vol. X, p. 109

to look at the Prophet's biography and his approach. Since his life offers a model for all Muslims to pattern after, it is the safest as well as the best recourse. In the Surah 'al-Araf' he has been directed to perform 'Amr bi al-Maroof'. Since this Surah is Maccan, one may legitimately infer that the duty involves preaching in a predominantly non-Muslim society as well. As long as the Prophet stayed in Mecca he was engaged in preaching Islam. It is, therefore, an erroneous view that only the Islamic state has to arrange for the performance of 'Amr bi al-Maroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Preaching and inviting others to Islam lie at the core of the concept of 'Amr bi al-Munkar', as set out in the Surah 'al-Araf' thus:

Hold to forgiveness;
Command what is right;
But turn away from the ignorant.
(VII: 199)

خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ
بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ
عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ

'Maroof', the derivative of 'Arf' as used in the above verse, stands for the religion and 'Shariah'. The Prophet was directed to enjoin 'Maroof' in a society which, we know well, was hostile to this concept. On preaching the oneness of Allah the Prophet was subjected to all forms of humiliation and torture in a degree undreamt of. Nonetheless, instead of giving in he persuasively carried on his mission of enjoining 'Maroof'. The preaching of the religion, it is worth nothing, is

to be done in entirety. The point under discussion is elaborated by Imam Ibn Jarer Tabari in these words:

إن الله أمر نبيه ﷺ أن يأمر الناس بالعرف ، وهو المعروف في كلام العرب . . فن المعروف صلة الرحم من قطع وإعطاء من حرم ، والنفو عن ظلم . وكل ما أمر به من الأعمال أو ندب إليه فهو من العرف ، ولم يخص الله من ذلك معنى ، فالحق فيه أن يقال قد أمر الله نبيه ﷺ أن يأمر عباده بالمعروف كله لا ببعض معانيه دون بعض

The Prophet was directed by Allah to enjoin 'Maroof'. In the Arabic usage 'Arf' is synonymous with 'Maroof'. And 'Maroof' bears the implication of treating fairly relatives and others, including the hostile ones, and enjoining all that is ordained by Allah. 'Maroof' is not to be interpreted in narrow terms. The Prophet was directed to enjoin all that is 'Maroof'. He was not supposed to enjoin some specific acts that fall under the category of 'Maroof'.¹

Two other classical exegetes namely Khazin and Baghwi have also interpreted the term 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f' while highlighting the fact that

1. Jamey al-Bayan, Vol. IX, p. 98

‘Maroof’ encompasses the whole religion. According to Khazin,

(وأمر بالعرف) يعنى وأمر بكل ما أمرك الله به ،

وهو ما عرفته بالوحي من الله عز وجل وكل ما يعرفه الشارع

The enjoining of ‘Arf’ implies enjoining all that is ordained by Allah as we know from ‘Wahy’ and the Prophet.¹

In Allama Baghwi’s opinion,

(وأمر بالعرف) أى بالمعروف وهو كل ما يعرفه الشرع

‘Arf’ or the enjoining of ‘Maroof’ includes all that finds mention in ‘Shariah’ and is held desirable by it.²

For Allama Syed Mahmood Alausi,

قال عطاء : المراد بالعرف كلمة لا إله إلا الله .

وهو تخصيص من غير داع

Ata has interpreted ‘Arf’ with reference to ‘La ila ha il Allah’

However, this interpretation is not sound, for it ought to be in general terms.³

1. al-Tawel ala Maani al-Tanzeel, Vol. II. p. 270

2. Maalim al-Tanzeel, Vol. p. 270

3. Rooh al-Maani, Vol. IX, p 147

‘Amr bi al-Marooḥ’ is Interrelated with ‘Nahi An al-Munkar

In the Quranic verse(VII:199) mention is made of ‘Amr bi al-Marooḥ’ without any reference to ‘Nahi An al-Munkar’. Some holds true for a number of ‘Ahadith’.

Like-wise ‘Nahi An al-Munkar’ alone is referred to some Quranic verses and Ahadith. Nonetheless, the import of all such sayings is the same for the two concepts are intertwined. According to Alaqmi and Mulla Ali Qari

الأمر بالشئ نهي عن ضده

لأن النهي عن المنكر شامل له . إذ النهي عن الشئ أمر بضده

The enjoining of an act implies the forbidding of all that is contrary to the act, Since ‘Nahi An al-Munkar’ is intertwined with ‘Amr al-Marooḥ’, the two terms are not explicitly mentioned. To forbid an act amounts to enjoining what is contrary to it.¹

The Prophet used to Enjoin ‘Marooḥ’ and Forbid ‘Munkar’

The point under discussion is explicated in the Surah ‘al-Aaraf’ :

1. al-Mubeen al-Moin. p. 189

Those who follow the Apostle,
 The unlettered Prophet,
 Whom they find mentioned
 In their own (Scriptures),
 In the Law and the Gospel;
 For he commands them
 What is just and forbids them
 What is evil: he allows
 Them lawful what is good
 (And pure) and prohibits them
 From what is bad (and impure);
 He releases them
 From their heavy burdens
 And from the yokes
 That are upon them.
 So it is those who believe
 In him, honour him,
 Help him, and follow the Light
 Which is sent down with him,
 It is they who will prosper

الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ
 الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ
 الْأُمِّيَّ الَّذِي يَجِدُونَهُ
 مَكْتُوبًا عِنْدَهُمْ
 فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ
 يَأْمُرُهُمْ
 بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَاهُمْ عَنِ
 الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ
 الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ

(VII: 157) عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبِيرَاتِ وَيَضَعُ
 عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَالْأَغْلَالَ
 الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ
 فَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِهِ وَعَزَّرُوهُ
 وَنَصَرُوهُ وَاتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ
 الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ مَعَهُ
 أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

The three duties of the Prophet, according to the Quran, are, he enjoins 'Maroof' and forbids 'Munkar', he allows all that is pure and prohibits the impure, and he releases the followers from burdens and yokes. The enjoining of 'Maroof' and forbidding of 'Munkar', in fact, includes the other two duties. In performing the first duty the Prophet performs the remaining two duties. According to Ibn Taiymia,

هو الذى أمر الله على لسانه بكل معروف ، وسهى عن كل منكر ، وأحل كل طيب ، وحرم كل خبيث . . فيه كمل دين الله المتضمن للأمر بالمعروف والنهى عن المنكر وإحلال كل طيب وتحريم كل خبيث . . وتحريم الجائث يندرج فى النهى عن المنكر كما أن إحلال الطيبات يندرج فى الأمر بالمعروف لأن تحريم الطيبات مما نهى الله عنه وكذلك الأمر بجميع المعروف والنهى عن كل منكر مما لا يتم إلا للرسول الذى تم الله به مكارم الأخلاق المندرجة فى المعروف .

It is through the Prophet that we know what is 'Maroof' and what is 'Munkar'. He allowed all that is pure and prohibited the impure. With his mission the religion reached its culminating point . To disallow the impure things constituted partially 'Nahi An al-Munkar'. So does the permission for eating all that is pure

include 'Amr bi al-Marooḥ'. To prohibit the pure things is an act forbidden by Allah. The enjoining of 'Marooḥ' and forbidding of 'Munkar' forms part of the Prophetic mission. He enjoined all that is 'Marooḥ'.¹

The performance of this Duty by the Prophets in all Sections of Society

The Prophet, as evident from the above-quoted Quranic verse, enjoined 'Marooḥ' and forbade 'Munkar' in the Jewish Society. In addition to it he preached the same to Christians and all others. His training of the companions also constitutes the performance of 'Amr bi al-Marooḥ wa Nahi Anal-Munkar'. Muslims being the followers of the Prophets are supposed to carry on this mission throughout their life. 'Amr bi al-Marooḥ wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is not applicable the Jewish society alone, as pointed out by the classical exegetes such as Ibn Kathir :

يأمرهم بالمعروف وينهاهم عن المنكر (هذه صفة الرسول
صلى الله تعالى عليه وآله وسلم في الكتب المتقدمة: وهكذا كانت

1. al-Jasta fi al-Islam, p. 64
www.hagorikpathagar.org

حاله عليه الصلاة والسلام : لا يأمر إلا بخير ولا ينهى إلا عن شر . . . ومن أهم ذلك ما بعثه الله به من الأمر بعبادته وحده لا شريك له ، والنهى عن عبادة من سواه كما أرسل به جميع الرسل قبله

That the Prophet 'Commands them what is just and forbids them what is evil' is testified by all the Scriptures. Whatever is enjoined by the Prophet is doubtless 'Khair' and whatever is forbidden is 'Shar'. The preaching of the Oneness of Allah is the first and foremost duty of Prophets, including the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.-u.h.)¹

Allama Baghwi comments on the Quranic verse (VII ; 157) thus ;

(يأمرهم بالمعروف) أى بالإيمان و (ينههم عن المنكر) يعنى عن الشرك . قيل : المعروف : الشريعة والسنة ، والمنكر : ما لا يعرف فى شريعة ولا سنة ، وقال عطاء : يأمرهم بالمعروف : بخلق الأنداد ومكارم الأخلاق وصلة الأرحام ، وينههم عن المنكر : عن عبادة الأوثان وقطع الأرحام

(The Prophet) "Commands them what is Just" means the invitation to 'Iman' and that he 'forbids what is evil' implies that he forbids them to associate anyone with Allah. Many scholars are of the view that 'Maroof' is synonymous with 'Shariah' and all that is forbidden by 'Shariah' is 'Munkar'. Ata has interpreted the concept of 'Amr bi al-MarooF' in terms of forbidding all forms of idolatry, treating relatives fairly and practising morals. Similarly 'Nahi An al-Munkar' stands for the forbidding of all forms of idolatry and severing blood relationships'.¹

In the opinion of Shaikh Ismail Haqqi,

(يأمرهم بالمعروف) أى بالتوحيد وشرائع الإسلام
(وينهاهم عن المنكر) أى عن كل ما لا يعرف فى شريعة ولا سنة

The Quranic phrase, "(the Prophet) commands all that is just" means the invitation to monotheism and 'Shariah'. That he "forbids what is evil" includes all that is forbidden by 'Shariah'.²

Ibn Jareer, Tabari is of the view:

ويأمر هذا النبى الأئى أتباعه بالمعروف ، وهو الإيمان
بالله ولزوم طاعته فيما أمر ونهى ، فذلك المعروف الذى يأمرهم .

1. Maalim al-Tanzeel, Vol. II, p. 245

2. Rooh al-Bayan, Vol. I, p. 780

وبهاهم عن المنكر ، وهو الشرك بالله والانتها عما نهاهم الله عنه

The 'Unlettered Prophet' enjoins 'Maroof' which constitutes the belief in Allah, and a total obedience. Likewise 'Munkar' is forbidden by the Prophet, which comprises polytheism and indulgence in all that is forbidden by Allah.¹

Imam Razi's comment on the Quranic verse is both perceptive and comprehensive hence it is reproduced in entirety:

مجامع الأمر بالمعروف بحصوره في قوله عليه الصلاة والسلام . التعظيم لأمر الله والشفقة على خلق الله . وذلك لأن الموجود إما واجب الوجود لذاته ، وإما ممكن الوجود لذاته . أما الواجب لذاته فهو الله جل جلاله . ولا معروف أشرف من تعظيمه وإظهار الخضوع والخشوع على باب عزته والاعتراف بكونه موصوفاً بصفات الكمال ، مبرأ عن النقائص والآفات . منزها عن الأضداد والأنداد . وأما الممكن لذاته فإن لم يكن حيواناً فلا سبيل إلى إيصال الخير إليه لأن الانتفاع مشروط بالحياة ، ومع هذا فإنه يجب النظر إلى كلها بعين التعظيم من حيث إنها مخلوقة لله تعالى ، ومن حيث إن كل ذرة من ذرات المخلوقات لما كانت دليلاً قاهراً أو برهاناً باهراً على توحيده وتنزيهه فإنه يجب النظر إليها بعين الاحترام . وأما إن كان ذلك

المخلوق من جنس الحيوان فإنه يجب إظهار الشفقة عليه بأقصى ما
 يقدر الإنسان عليه ويدخل فيه بر الوالدين وصلة الأرحام
 وبث المعروف . فثبت أن قوله عليه الصلاة والسلام : التعظيم
 لأمر الله ، والشفقة على خلق الله كلمة جامعة لجميع جهات
 الأمر بالمعروف . . قوله (وبنهاهم عن المنكر) والمراد منه
 أصداد الأمور المذكورة وهي عبادة الأوثان ، والقول في
 صفات الله بغير علم ، والكفر بما أنزل الله على النبيين ، وقطع
 الرحم وعقوق الوالدين

'Amr bi al-Marooif' stands also for the performance of all the duties ordained by Allah and love for His creatures. The two types of beings are—the Creator and the creatures. Allah alone being the Self-Subsistent belongs to the former category while all creatures being His creation fall under the latter category. Allah being the Creator deserves all worship and praise. The creatures are to acknowledge His Greatness and Perfection. The creatures, including the non-living ones, are to be appreciated for being His creation. Moreover, all objects in the world are the signs of Allah and affirm the truth that He is the creator. The living beings are to be loved of which the manifestations are; treating fairly one's parents, enjoining all that is good and maintaining terms with one's relatives. In other words, general submission to and

a firm faith in Allah and love for His creatures constitute 'Amr bi al-Marooḥ'. That the Prophet 'forbids what is evil' means that all that is not in accord with the above discussed definition of 'Amr bi al-Marooḥ' is to be forbidden such as worshipping idols, loose talk about the qualities of God, indifference to the teachings of the prophets, severing blood ties and misbehaviour with one's parents etc.

In sum, the Prophet invited mankind to the right path marked by the gnosis of Allah, a moral way of life and mutual love. The believers were guided by him to 'Shariah' and thus attained spiritual perfection. This role of the Prophet is illustrative of his performance of the duty of 'Amr bi al-Marooḥ wa Nahi An al-Munkar'.

'Amr bi al-Marooḥ wa Nahi An al-Munkar' and 'Anzar' (Warning)

'Amr bi al-Marooḥ wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is, in fact, synonymous with the preaching of religion and inviting others to accept it. In other words, it is similar to the preaching of the Oneness of Allah. The concept of 'Amr bi al-Marooḥ wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is rooted in the belief that Allah alone deserves all obedience and those who transgress shall be subjected to eternal punishment. 'Anzar', 'Tabshir', 'Iblagh' and 'Tazkeer' are some of the Quranic terms used for illustrat-

ing this point. Take the term 'Anzar' (warning) as an instance in point. It has been recurrently used in the Quran in the context of the prophetic missions. The Prophet has also been referred to as 'Nazeer' or 'Nazeer-e-Mobeen'. The second piece meal of 'Wahy' runs thus:

O thou wrapped up
(in a mantle)!
Arise and deliver thy warning!
(LXXIV: 1-2)

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُدَّثِّرُ
قُمْ فَأَنْذِرْ

In another Surah the Prophet is addressed thus:

But thou art truly
A warner, and every people
A guide.

(XIII: 7)

إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُنْذِرٌ
وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ

'Anzar' as evident from the above quoted Quranic verses, means the warning against the disastrous repercussions arising out of the transgression and the denial of Allah. Nonetheless, it should not be interpreted in the literal manner as above. It includes the guidance to mankind in general. Those who pay no heed to 'Anzar' are doomed to a terrible punishment. Imam Ibn Taiymia has rightly pointed out in the light of this comprehensive definition of 'Anzar' that

نفس الإنذار أمر بالمعروف ونهي عن المنكر

'Anzar' means enjoining 'Maroof' and forbidding 'Munkar'.¹

1. al-Hasba fi al-Islam, p. 71

Like 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' the concept of 'Anzar' is comprehensive.

The preaching among Muslims constitutes 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'

The preaching of Islam, as already indicated, is to be done among non-Muslims. Muslims are to be guided. Likewise those who have gone astray are to be invited to Islam.

However, Muslims today are in need of both guidance and the preaching of Islam. Most of the Muslims doubtless believe in the fundamentals of Islam and consider the Quran and Sunnah as the only sources of guidance. Nonetheless, Muslims there are who have deviated widely from the path of Islam. Guided by their cultural ethos they indulge in acts which are by no means Islamic. Some of them have grown even sceptic of the very fundamentals of Islam. Like non-Muslims they also need the preaching of Islam.

The people of the Book had gone astray before the advent of the Prophet. His message was for them both guidance and the only way to salvation. The Quran abrogated the laws of the days and replaced them with 'Shariah'. Though the people of the Book had been foretold of the advent of the Prophet, they stubbornly rejected the message. Misconstruing their own scriptures they clung tenaciously to their whims. A few among them were, however, sane enough to realise the truth and embraced Islam. This role of theirs is referred to in the Quran as an instance

in point of the performance of 'Amr bi al-Marooḥ wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. (III:114).

'Amr bi al-Marooḥ wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is thus to be performed in both Muslim and non-Muslim societies. Some righteous persons had been performing this duty among the people of the Book before the advent of Islam. The preaching of religion has, therefore, been interpreted in general terms by the classical exegetes, as evident from the following comment of Imam Jarcer Tabari on the Quranic verse (III:114):

ويأمرؤن الناس بالإيمان بالله ورسوله وتصديق محمد ﷺ
وما جاء به ، (ويهون عن المنكر) يقول: ويهون الناس عن
الكفر بالله وتكذيب محمد ﷺ وما جاءهم به من عند الله

They invite others to the belief in the Prophet and bear testimony to the Prophet's mission. That they forbid 'Munkar' implies that they condemn all such moves which aim at dissuading others from accepting Islam or from believing in the Prophet.¹

According to Jassas,

صفة لهؤلاء الذين آمنوا من أهل الكتاب ، لأنهم آمنوا
بالله ورسوله ودعوا الناس إلى تصديق النبي ﷺ والإنكار على
من خالفه، فكانوا ممن قال الله تعالى (كنتم خير أمة أخرجت للناس

1. Jamey al-Bayan, Vol. IV, p. 35

The righteous among the people of the Book accepted Islam and the Prophet in addition to inviting others to embrace Islam and resisting opponents and denigrators of Islam. In so doing they joined the community referred to in the Quran as "the best community".¹

'Amr bi al-Maroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar'—a duty involving scholarship

The performance of this duty calls for a scholarly approach. Those performing it should be well versed in all the branches of knowledge and the knowledge thus gained should be used for preaching Islam. It is thus a duty which involves the reliance on scholarship. The Prophet himself preached Islam logically in the Meccan period. Whatever he said he adduced it with incontrovertible proofs. He was thus able to illustrate the superiority of Islam over all other ways of life then prevalent. A logical presentation of Islam based on sound arguments is certainly one of the features of 'Amr bi al-Maroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Classical exegetes, as informed by Imam Razi, unanimously subscribe to the view that

(وأمر بالعرف) أى بإظهار الدين الحق وتقرير دلائله

enjoining 'Maroof' should be done in a convincing manner along with a logical representation of Islam as the only right path.²

1. *Ahkam al-Quran*. Vol. II, p. 42

2. *Ma'ateeh al-Ghaib*, Vol. IV, p. 347

In line with it is the view of Ibn Arabi Maliki:

ومن الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر نصرة الدين
بإقامة الحجة على المخالفين

The preaching of Islam should be done convincingly and this forms part of 'Amr bi al Maroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar'.¹

In sum, the invitation to Islam and the forbidding of polytheism and all acts of transgression and of all that is forbidden by 'Shariah' constitutes 'Amr bi al-Maroofo wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. This should be, however, performed in a convincing manner and everyone should be persuaded of the fact that it is the only way to salvation. Those performing this duty are doubtless fortunate and those negligent of it are likewise unfortunate, for they attach no importance to the duty that is ordained by the Quran.

1. Ahkam al-Quran. Vol. I, p. 122.

CHAPTER VII

Strife in Allah's Cause

(Jihad fi Sabeel Allah)

'Jihad fi Sabeel Allah', an exclusive term in 'Shariah', stands for striving heart and soul in the cause of Allah by putting at stake one's life, property, abilities and all that one has. This alone ensures the obedience to Allah and the real adherence to Islam as pointed out in the Quran thus:

And strive in His cause
As ye ought to strive,

(XXII: 78)

وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ
جِهَادِهِ

ۛ

'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is 'Jihad fi Sabeel Allah'

'Jihad fi Sabeel Allah' being comprehensive in scope includes 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Those who enjoin 'Marooif' and forbid 'Munkar', in fact, strive in the cause of Allah.

Commenting on this point Allama Ibn Abid. observes:

هذا عام يشمل المحامد بكل أمر معروف ونهى عن المنكر

The concept of 'Jihad' embraces the duty of enjoining 'Maroof' and forbidding 'Munkar'.¹

One of the forms of 'Jihad' is to strive for upholding forcibly the Islamic way of life, give a crushing blow to all mischief makers and create an atmosphere conducive to the Islamic way of life. It is inevitable to resort to the means involving war to put an end to the forces hostile to Islam. Those who are capable should not feel shy about using force to pave the way for the establishment of the Islamic way of life.

War in Allah's Cause—a Manifestation of 'Amr bi al-MarooF wa Nahi An al-Munkar'

In the Meccan period the Prophet and his companions were not in a position to wage war against the anti-Islamic forces, for they being weak were subjected to all kinds of torture and humiliation for accepting and inviting others to Islam. At the stage of intolerable exploitation the Prophet migrated to Madina where Muslims gained much in terms of numerical strength and other resources. They were then directed to establish the Islamic way of life by a show of strength. This directive is referred to in the Quran as

1. Red al-Mukhtar, Vol. III, p. 301

‘Qital fi Sabeel Allah’. Such a war was, however, waged only in the cause of Allah. This noble aim of the war made it part of the duty of ‘Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkir’. Though it was operative in Medina, reference is made to it in the Meccan Surahs as the duty of ‘Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar’ had already been ordained in Mecca. In his book, ‘al-Muwafiqat fi Usool al-Shariah’ Imam Shatibi remarks:

الجهاد الذى شرع بالمدينة فرع من فروع الأمر
بالمعروف والنهى عن المنكر وهو مقرر بمكة

‘Jihad’, though effective in Medina, forms part of ‘Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar’ which had been ordained in Mecca.¹

Commenting on Imam Shatibi’s view, Shaikh Abdullah Daraz observes:

بل هو أعلى فروع

‘Jihad’ happens to be the supreme constituent of ‘Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar’.²

Views of the Classical Scholars

Such a war may, however, be waged in certain conditions. Scholars of all shades of

1. al-Muwafiqat fi Usool al-Shariah’, Vol. III, p. 50

2 Ibid., Vol. II, p. 50

opinion agree on the point that the war in Allah's cause for establishing the Islamic way of life is one of the important constituents of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Of these scholars the views of the following writers are reproduced below. For Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbas,

(كنتم خير أمة أخرجت للناس) يقول (تأمرونهم بالمعروف) أن يشهدوا أن لا إله إلا الله والإقرار بما أنزل الله وتقاتلونهم عليه ولا إله إلا الله هو أعظم المعروف (وتنهونهم عن المنكر) : والمنكر هو التكذيب وهو أنكر المنكر

'Ye are the best of people for mankind' bears the implication of enjoining 'Maroo'f'. In other words, Muslims are directed to make others believe in the oneness of Allah and in the supremacy of Islam as the only right path. For achieving this end Muslims are to have 'Jihad'. The assertion that Allah is one is the best 'Maroo'f'. So is the forbidding of the denial of Allah the main 'Munkar' to be forbidden.¹

Endorsing Hazrat Abdullah b. Abbas's view Qaffal adds:

تفضيلهم على الأمم الذين كانوا قبلهم إنما حصل لأجل أنهم يأمرون بالمعروف وينهون عن المنكر بأكد الوجوه وهو القتال ، لأن الأمر بالمعروف قد يكون بالقلب واللسان واليد

1. Jamey al-Bayan, Vol. IV, p. 28.

وأقواها ما يكون بالقتال ، لأنه إلقاء النفس في الخطر ، وأعرف
 المعروفات الدين الحق والإيمان بالتوحيد والنبوة ، وأنكر
 المنكرات الكفر بالله ، فكان الجهاد في الدين تحملاً لأعظم
 المضار لغرض إيصال الغير إلى أعظم المنافع وتخليصه من أعظم
 المضار، فوجب أن يكون الجهاد أعظم العبادات ولما كان أمر
 الجهاد في شرعنا أقوى منه في سائر الشرائع لا جرم صار ذلك
 موجباً لفضل هذه الأمة على سائر الأمم . وهذا ما روى عن ابن
 عباس رضي الله عنه

Muslims are referred to as the best of people for their performance of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. 'Jihad' is one of the means to achieve this end. 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is to be performed in various ways of which the most effective is 'Qital'. The greatest 'Maroo'f' is the preaching of Islam and the belief in the Oneness of Allah and the prophethood. The worst 'Munkar' is the denial of Allah. The underlying spirit in 'Jihad' is to invite mankind that is best for it. 'Jihad' is doubtless the best form of obedience to Allah as evident from 'Shariah'. This entitles Muslims to be referred to as "the best of People". Abdullah bin Abbas's view is therefore justified.¹

1. al-Tafseer al-Kabeer, Vol. III, pp. 27-8

Imam Ibn Taiymia is of the view :

بين سبحانه أن هذه الأمة خير الأمم للناس ، فهم أنفعهم لهم ، وأعظمهم إحساناً إليهم لأنهم كلوا الناس بأمرهم بالمعروف ونهوا عن المنكر من جهة الصفة والقدرة حيث أمروا بكل معروف ونهوا عن المنكر كل أحد وأقاموا ذلك بالجهاد في سبيل الله بأنفسهم وأموالهم وهذا كمال النفع للخلق

The Quran makes it explicit that Muslims are 'the best of people for mankind'. They are, therefore, to devote themselves to the welfare of mankind which can be performed, at its best, in the form of enjoining 'Maroof' and forbidding 'Munkar'. For achieving this end they are to launch war which is the noblest form of doing good to mankind.¹

He adds further,

فعلوم أن الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر وإتمامه بالجهاد هو من أعظم المعروف الذي أمرنا به

He adds further,

إن الله أمر المؤمنين بالإيمان والعمل الصالح ، وأمرهم

1. al-Hasba fi Islam, p. 64

بدعوة الناس وجهادهم على الإيمان والعمل الصالح ، كما قال تعالى (ولينصرن الله من ينصره إن الله لقوى عزيز ، الذين إن مكناهم فى الأرض أقاموا الصلوة وآتوا الزكوة وأمروا بالمعروف ونهوا عن المنكر و الله عاقبة الأمور

To fight in the cause of Allah, it is a commonplace, is the noblest of all that is described as 'Maroof'. Muslims have been asked by Allah to do good and also invite others to Islam and other good acts. They are to launch war in pursuance of this aim. The Quran speaks of such Muslims thus: Exalted in might and able to enforce His Will they are those who, if we establish them in the land, establish regular prayer and give regular charity, enjoin the right and forbid wrong: with God rests the end and decision of all affairs.¹

The extract from the Surah Haj, as referred to in Imam Ibn Taiymia's observation, sums up the role Muslims are to perform as rulers of the land. 'Jihad' like the preaching of Islam is an indispensable part of "Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar".

1. Ibid, pp. 66 and 86

According to Allama Ibn Jareer Tabari,

ولتكن منكم أمة ... ويأمرون بالمعروف) ويقول
يأمرون الناس باتباع محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم ودينه الذى جاء به
من عند الله (وينهون عن المنكر) يعنى وينهون عن الكفر بالله
والتكذيب بمحمد وبما جاء به عن عند الله مجهادهم بالأبدى
والحوارح حتى يتقادوا لكم بالطاعة

'Let there arise out of you a band of people ... to enjoin 'Maroof' implies that Muslims should invite others to Islam. That they should forbid 'Munkir' means that they should fight in the cause of Allah to resist all opposition to Islam. They should carry on their fight unless others accept Islam.'¹

For Allama Qartabi,

إن أحسن أوصاف المؤمن الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن
المنكر ورأسها الدعاء إلى الإسلام والقتال عليه

Muslims are characterised by their performance of the duty of 'Amr bi al-MarooF wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. To launch a war for this aim is included in this duty.²

In Imam Razi's view,

1. Jamey al-Bayan, Vol. IV, p. 27

2. al-Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. IV, p. 47

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رأس المعروف الإيمان بالله ، ورأس المنكر الكفر بالله . والجهاد يوجب الترغيب في الإيمان والزجر عن الكفر ، والجهاد داخل في باب الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر

The greatest 'Maroof' is the faith in Allah while the denial of Allah happens to be the worst 'Munkar'. 'Jihad' is one of the means of preaching Islam and resisting 'Kufr'. On account of this point 'Jihad' is considered as one of the constituents of 'Amr bi al-Maroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar'.¹

In line with this is the viewpoint* of Sarkhasi:

وقد سمى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم الجهاد سنم الدين وفيه أمر بالمعروف ونهى عن المنكر وهو صفة هذه الأمة ، وفيه تعرض لأعلى الدرجات : وهو الشهادة

'Jihad' has been termed as the prime duty involving 'Amr bi al-Maroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Muslims are to perform it. The noblest act is to lay oneself to sacrifice in the cause of Allah.²

Shah Waliullah's View point

Shah Waliullah has interpreted the concept of "the best of people" with reference to the preaching of Islam and thus carrying on the mission

1. al-Tafseer al-Kabeer, vol. IV, p 523

2. Shireh al-Kabeer, Vol. I, pp. 19-20.

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of the Prophet. Islam is the final Divine Message abrogating all other messages. The all-round degeneration in all walks of life, Shah Waliullah rightly observes, necessitated the advent of the Prophet. The religions of the day destitute of any spiritualism comprised mere soulless rituals:

سنت الحاجة إلى إمام راشد يعامل مع الملل معاملة
ال خليفة الراشد مع الملوك الخائرة . . . وهذا الإمام الذي يجمع
الأمم على ملة واحدة يحتاج إلى أصول . . . منها أن يدعو قوماً
إلى السنة الراشدة . ويزكيهم ، ويصلح شأنهم ، ثم يتخذهم بمنزلة
جوارحه فيجاهد أهل الأرض ، ويفرقهم في الآفاق ، وهو قوله
تعالى (كنتم خير أمة أخرجت للناس)

The need was felt for a guide to instruct the warring groups and lead them to the right path. The features of the new religion ought to be these; it should guide mankind to the right path and make people perfect and strive in the cause of Allah. For performing this duty Muslims have been referred to as 'the best of people'.

Persian and Roman civilization had their hegemony at the time Islam appeared on the scene. To enforce Islam it was, therefore, necessary to give these civilization a crushing blow.

لما أراد الله تعالى إقامة الملة العوجاء . وأن يخرج
لناس أمة تأمرهم بالمعروف وتنهاهم عن المنكر . وتغير رسومهم

الفاصلة كان ذلك موقوفاً على زوال دولة هذين متيسراً بالتعرض
 لخالهما فإن خالهما يسرى في جميع الأقاليم الصالحة أو يكاد يسرى
 ففرض الله بزوال دولتهما . وأخبر النبي ﷺ بأن هلك كسرى
 فلا كسرى بعده ، وهلك قيصر فلا قيصر بعده . ونزل الحق
 الدامغ لباطل جميع الأرض في دمع باطل العرب بالنبي ﷺ
 وأصحابه . ودمع باطل هذين الملكين بالعرب ودمع سائر
 البلاد كلها ، والله الحجة البالغة

Soon after the decline of the Persian and Roman civilization a new religion was evolved by Allah, characterised by the call to enjoin 'Maroof' and forbid 'Munkar'. Since these cultures had their hegemony the world over, these were destroyed by Islam. The Prophet anticipated the downfall of Caesar. Islam being the quintessence of the truth crushed all falsehood. First, in Arab Islam was triumphant and later on asserted itself in both Persia and Rome. Finally, Islam became the chief religion of the world. Allah is doubtless the best to set out the truth.¹

The Muslim Ummah has to enforce Islam the world over. This ideal may be realised by dint of dedication to and sacrifice in this cause, referred to in the Quran as 'Jihad' as well as 'Amr bi-al-Marroof wa Nahi An'al-Munkar'.

1. Hujjat Allah al-Baligha, Vol. I, pp. 118-19

CHAPTER VIII

The Islamic State

Authority required to perform 'Amr bi al-Marooft wa Nahi An al-Munkar'

In the Surah, 'The House of al-Imran' there occurs the following verse preceded by the one directing Muslims to enjoin 'Marooft' and forbid 'Munkar' and to invite others to Islam:

Be not like those
Who are divided
Amongst themselves
And fall into disputations
After receiving
Clear Signs:
For them
Is a dreadful Penalty—

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ
تَفَرَّقُوا وَاخْتَلَفُوا مِنْ
بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ
وَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ

(III: 105)

Muslims are not only asked to perform 'Amr bi al-Marooft wa Nahi An al-Munkar', but also to

1. An outline of the Islamic state is sketched here.

refrain from disputations. The underlying idea in the two directives is that unity among Muslims is called for an effective performance of the duty. The duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' can be successfully performed by the Islamic State. Those who fall into disputation can never be at the helm of affairs and they have to lead their life as subjects. As a result, they are not in a position to enforce their own way of life. Muslims have been, therefore, asked to be united and thus be in the seat of power to perform effectively the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. If Muslims are not the rulers, it will be impossible for them to enforce the Islamic way of life.

Imam Razi has perceptively explained the inter-relationship between the two verses in both general and particular terms. Allama Rashid Raza prefers its explanation in terms of the performance of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'.¹ Reproduced below is the explanation made by Imam Razi:

إنه تعالى لما أمر بالأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر وذلك مما لا يتم إلا إذا كان الأمر بالمعروف قادراً على تنفيذ هذا التكليف على الظلمة والمتعالمين ولا تحصل هذه القدرة إلا إذا حصلت الألفة والمحبة بين أهل الحق والدين لا جرم حذرهم تعالى من الفرقة والاختلاف لكي لا يصير ذلك سبباً لعجزهم عن القيام بهذا التكليف

'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' can be effectively practised, if Muslims are in a position to enforce its dictates. Such a position can be gained when Muslims are united and dominant in all fields, including the political. Accordingly, Muslims have been directed to refrain from falling into disputations, for it might render them incapable of performing the duty of **'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar.'**

Same is the viewpoint of Allama Nizamuddin Nishapuri.² Moreover, the concept of **'Amr bi al-Marooif'** contains in itself the idea of unity among Muslims, as pointed out by Imam Ibn Taiymia thus:

ومن الأمر بالمعروف والأمر بالاعتكاف والأجماع والنهي
عن الفرقة

'Amr bi al-Marooif' bears the implications of maintaining unity and refraining from all disputations. Without holding the position of authority Muslims cannot do justice to **'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar.'**

In other words, without the patronage of the political system the duty of **'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'** cannot be performed well. It does involve politics. Those at the helm of affairs, according to the Quran, are to enjoin **'Marooif'** and forbid **'Munkar.'** For an effective

1. *Mafatih al-Ghaib m*, Vol. III, p. 21

2. *Gharib al-Quran*, Vol. IV, p. 33

enforcement of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar', the role of the state cannot be underrated.

Muslims acting as rulers are directed by the Quran thus :

(They are) those who
If we establish them
In the land, establish
Regular prayer and give
Regular Charity, enjoin
The right and forbid wrong;
With God rests and the end
(And decision) of (all) affairs.

(XXII: 41)

الَّذِينَ إِنْ مَكَّنَّاهُمْ
فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا
الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا
الزَّكَاةَ وَآمَرُوا
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ
الْمُنْكَرِ ۚ وَلِلَّهِ عَاقِبَةُ
الْأُمُورِ

- 1 Though the verse quoted above refers to the migrants, the directive is applicable to all Muslims. Some exegetes interpreting the verse literally hold the view that the verse is addressed to the migrants alone. However, there is almost an agreement on the general purport of the verse. For Qatwa, companions of the Prophet are addressed whereas according to Hazrat Abdullah b. Abbas not only companions but the helpers and migrants are required to act in this manner. A number of the classical authorities such as Hasan Basari, Abu Aliya and Akram consider Muslims in general whereas for Ibn Abi Najeeh rulers are to act thus. Allama Qartabi agrees with Zahrak that all Muslims are to perform this duty in addition

The Manifesto of the Islamic State

The above verse serves the purpose of the manifesto of the Islamic state outlining the duties incumbent on it. The nature of the Islamic state is evident from the above verse. Commenting on this Quranic verse Hafiz Abdul Barkat Nasfi observes:

هو إخبار من الله عما ستكون عليه سيرة المهاجرين إن
مكنهم في الأرض وبسط لهم في الدنيا وكيف يقومون بأمر الدين

Given a chance to be the rulers the migrants would act in the manner as anticipated in the above-quoted Quranic verse.¹

Characteristics of the Righteous

The four characteristics of the righteous, as described in the Quran, are; the establishment of regular prayer and of regular charity, and the enjoining of 'Maroof' and forbidding of 'Munkar'. While the first two virtues are personal, the others are public duties throwing light on their character. Ahmad Mustafa al-Maraghi, a modern exegete, recapitulates the import of the Quranic verse thus:

إنهم هم الذين كملوا أنفسهم باستحضار المعبود والتوجه إليه
في الصلاة على قدر الطاقة وكانوا عوناً لأنهم بإعانة فقرائهم وذوى
الحاجة منهم ، وكلوا غيرهم فأفاضوا عليهم من علومهم وآدابهم ،

to other obligatory ones al-Ahkam at-Quran Vol.
XII, p. 73

1. al-Bahar al-Muheet, Vol. VI, p. 376

ومنعوا المفاصد التي تعوق غيرهم عن الوصول إلى الرقي الخلقى
والأدب السامي

They dedicate themselves to Allah and concentrate on their prayers. Moreover, they help the needy, be they their own brethren on non-believers, contribute to the spread of knowledge and forbid all that is immoral and evil.¹

According to Allama Ibn Jareer Tabari,

يعنى بقوله (إن مكناهم في الأرض) إن وطنا لهم في البلاد
فقهرروا المشركين، وغلبوهم عليها وهم أصحاب رسول الله ﷺ
يقول: إن نصرناهم على أعدائهم وقهرروا مشركي مكة أطاعوا الله
فأقاموا الصلاة مخلوذة (وآتوا الزكاة) يقول: وأعطوا زكاة أموالهم
من جعلها الله له (وأمرؤا بالمعروف) يقول: دعوا الناس إلى توحيد
الله والعمل بطاعته وما يعرفه أهل الإيمان بالله (وهوا عن المنكر)
يقول: ونهوا عن الشرك بالله والعمل بمعاصيه والذي ينكره أهل
الحق والإيمان بالله

“If we establish them in the land” implies their dominance over the non-Muslims. The persons referred to in the Quran are the companions of Prophet (P B.U.H). If they rout non-Muslims, they will obey Allah and establish regular prayer. That they will “give regular charity” stands for a system of charity which will help such persons as recommended in the Quran. Simi-

1. Tafseer al-Maraghi, Vol. XVII, p. 120
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larly the enjoining of 'Maroof' means that they will invite others to the Oneness of Allah and good acts. The forbidding of 'Munkar' implies the resistance to all forms of polytheism and acts of transgression.¹

For Imam Shah Waliullah

(أقاموا الصلاة وآتوا الزكاة) أشار إلى إقامة أركان الإسلام
(وأمرهم بالمعروف) يعلم إحياء علوم الدين (ونهيهم عن المنكر)
يعلم الجهاد مع الكفار وأخذ الجزية منهم - لأنه لا منكر أشد
من الكفر ولا نهى أقوى من قتل أهله وأخذ الجزية منهم وإقامة
الحدود والتعزير على العصاة من المسلمين

That they will establish regular prayer and give regular charity "implies the enforcement of 'Shariah.' The enjoining of 'Maroof' includes the revival of the study of Islamics. Similarly the forbidding of 'Munkar' consists of fighting in the cause of Allah and realising 'Jazia' from non-Muslims, for the denial of Allah is the worst 'Munkar' and as a last resort non-Muslims should be either killed or made to pay 'Jazia'. Included in it also is the prosecution of Muslim criminals as ordained by 'Shariah.'²

On the concept of 'Amr bi al-MarooF wa Nahi An al-Munkar' Allama Qartabi observes :

1. Jamey al-Bayan, Vol. XVII, p. 115

2. Izala al-Khifa, Vol. I, p. 23

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إن الأمر بالمعروف لا يليق بكل أحد وإنما يقوم به السلطان إذا كانت إقامة الحدود إليه والتعزير إلى رأيه والحبس والإصلاح له والنفي والتغريب . فينصب في كل بلدة رجلاً صالحاً قوياً أميناً ويأمره بذلك ويمضي الحدود على وجهها من غير زيادة قال الله تعالى (الذين إن مكناهم في الأرض أقاموا الصلوة . . .) الآية

Everyone is not capable of performing 'Amr bi al-Maropf'. It can be effectively performed by the ruler, for he holds the authority to frame such laws that may be in accord with Shariah. His is the final words in all matters of consequence such as the legislation of laws and treatment of prisoners. The head of the state should entrust to an honest, strict and righteous person the responsibility of enforcing the dictates of 'Shariah' in all matters. For Allah says: 'If we establish them in the land, (they are those who) establish regular prayer. . . . 1

In the words of Imam Ibn Taiyama;

«الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر لا يتم إلا بالعقوبات الشرعية فإن الله يزرع بالسلطان ما لا يزرع بالقرآن وإقامة الحدود واجبة على ولاة الأمور وذلك نحصل بالعقوبات على ترك الواجبات وفعل المحرمات

'Amr bi al-Maropf wa Nahi An al-Munkar remains ineffective unless the law is oper-

1. al-Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. IV, p. 47

ative in a society. The state is the best agency to enforce the directive of the Quran. It is obligatory on the rulers to enforce the law which would result in the enjoining of 'Maroof' and forbidding of 'Munkar'.¹

The Quran demands of a ruler to be obedient to Allah be keen about enforcing the law and to invite others to Islam. He should enjoin 'Maroof' and forbid 'Munkar' and punish those who transgress. Above all, he should fight in the cause of Allah in order to establish the Islamic way of life.

'Amr bi al-Maroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar' Implies the Enforcement of the whole Shariah

Of the many duties of the Islamic state, only a few, as evident from the comments of the classical writers, are recounted. The state is to serve Islam in every respect. The scope of 'Amr bi al-Maroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar' as pointed out elsewhere, is vast, as the term 'Maroof' embraces all such beliefs and acts recommended by 'Shariah' and 'Munkar' comprises all such acts and beliefs that are condemned by 'Shariah'. What is required of the head of the Islamic state is described by Allama Mohammad Khateeb Sharbini in these words:

(وأمرُوا بالمعروف) أى الذى أمر الله تعالى به ورسوله
(ونها عن المنكر) أى الذى نهى الله ورسوله عنه

1. *al-Hasba fi Islam*, p. 57

“They enjoin ‘Maroof’ stands for enjoining all that is recommended by Allah and the Prophet. So does they forbid ‘Munkar’ mean all such acts and beliefs forbidden by Allah and the Prophet.”¹

In performing ‘Amr bi al-MarooF wa Nahi An al-Munkar’ the head of the Islamic state, in fact, enforces ‘Shariah’ in the state.

The performance of ‘Amr bi al-MarooF wa Nahi An al-Munkar’... the ideal of the Islamic State.

Central to the Islamic state is the concept of ‘Amr bi al-MarooF wa Nahi An al-Munkar’. It is indeed the hallmark of the Islamic state that differentiates it from other types of state. The Islamic state should make all efforts to realise the ideal of performing ‘Amr bi al-MarooF wa Nahi An al-Munkar’. Without its performance the state ceases to be the Islamic state, as pointed out by Ibn Arabi Maliki:

الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر الذي هو أصل الدين
وخلافة المسلمين

‘Amr bi al-MarooF wa Nahi An al-Munkar’ is the foundation on which rests the Caliphate.²

In the opinion of Allama Ibn Taiymia,

إذا كان جماع الدين وجميع الولايات هو أمر ونهي فالأمر الذي
بعث الله به رسوله هو الأمر بالمعروف والنهي الذي بعث به هو النهي

1. al-Siraj al-Muneer, Vol. II, p. 553

2. Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. I, p. 293

عن المنكر ، وهذا نعت النبي والمؤمنين

The Islamic state is characterised by its performance of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' as ordained in the Quran and transmitted to us by the Prophet. The performance of this duty is a remarkable feature of the Prophet as well as of the righteous.¹

For its performance the Islamic state should make use of all its resources. Firmly persuaded of this point Ibn Taiymia and Qaiym hold:

جميع الولايات الإسلامية مقصودها الأمر بالمعروف والنهي
عن المنكر

The purpose of an Islamic state is to perform 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'.²

The point is elaborated by Imam Ibn Taiymia thus:

والولايات كلها : الدينية مثل إمرة المؤمنين ، وما دونها
من ملك ووزارة وديوانية سو ، كانت كتابة خطاب أو كتابة حساب
لمستخرج أو مصروف في أرزاق المقاتلة أو غيرهم . ومثل إمارة
حرب وقضاء وحسبة وفروع هذه الولايات إنما شرعت للأمر
بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر

All the departments of the Islamic state such as revenue, defence, judiciary and its sub sections should be created with a view

1. al-Hasba fi al-Islam, p. 37.

2. al-Hasba fi al-Islam, p. 37

to perform 'Amr bi al-Marroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar'.¹

Supervision of the Society—Part of 'Amr bi al-Marroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar'

The Islamic state should be not only governed by 'Shariah' in all matters but it should also make arrangements for supervising the morals and conduct of general Muslims. This being an important feature of 'Amr bi al-Marroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar' has been elaborated by the classical writers such as Ibn Khaldun:

أما الحسبة فهي وظيفة دينية من باب الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر الذي هو فرض على القائم بأمر المسلمين يعين لذلك من يراه أهلاً له ، فيتعين فرضه عليه ، ويتخذ الأعوان على ذلك ويبحث عن المنكرات ويؤدب على قدرها ويحمل الناس على المصالح وهذا نعم النبي والمؤمنين

'Amr bi al-Marroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar' involves the supervision of society—a duty incumbent upon the head of the Islamic state. A righteous person should be appointed 'Muhatsib' to keep a vigilant eye on the attitudes, beliefs and acts of the populace. He will be assisted by other officials who will help him punish the offenders and take steps for social reform.²

1. Ibid., pp. 44-5

2. Muqadimah Ibn Khaldun, p. 225.

Broadly speaking, the task may be divided into the following three sections:

(i) To reform the morals and religious practices of the populace such as the establishing of regular prayer, appointment and supervision of 'Imams' and 'Muwazzins', control over the interference of the incapable persons in matters relating to Islam and the maintenance of the Islamic social laws and morals.

(ii) To exercise a general vigilance over matters such as fraud in dealings, adulteration of food items, sale of contraband items, hoarding and all such acts that are forbidden by 'Shariah'.

(iii) Provision for general amenities of life such as the supply of water, proper arrangements for traffic, inns, demolition of old houses etc.¹

The state cannot do such works on its own. With the active co-operation of people, these works can be accomplished. Even a common man may take the government to task for such governmental acts or practices that are not in accord with 'Shariah'. Nonetheless, for those appointed 'Muhtasib' it is an obligatory duty whereas for general public it is not so. The 'Muhtasib' has to take a note of these nine points: (i) For the 'Muhtasib' the duty of such a supervision is 'Farz-e-Aaain, while for others it is 'Farz-e-Kifaya'. (ii) The 'Muhtasib' has to dedicate himself to this duty but others are not supposed to do so. (iii) People should consult the 'Muhtasib' in matters about which they are in doubt. (iv) It is obligatory for the 'Muhtasib'

1. al-Ahkam al-Sultaniya, p. 231

to guide those who seek his guidance while for others it is not an obligatory duty. (v) The 'Muhtasib' owes the responsibility of locating commitment of 'Munkar'. However, others are free from this responsibility. (vi) In collaboration with his assistants the 'Muhtasib' has to carry-out his job. This is not applicable to others.¹ (vii) The 'Muhtasib' enjoys the authority to punish those found guilty while others cannot exercise such an authority.² (viii) For performing this duty the 'Muhtasib' is entitled to some form of remuneration. However, others cannot lay such a claim. (ix) The 'Muhtasib' has the right to use his discretion in certain circumstances. Others are not allowed to do so.³

The Islamic state, as evident from the above discussion, is to arrange for the performance of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. In no circumstance it can be exonerated from its performance. Since it is a duty ordained by Allah, the state owes this responsibility. It determines also how far a state is Islamic in its nature.

'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is 'Wajib' for the Head of the Islamic State

As pointed out earlier, the Islamic State owes the responsibility of performing 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. The head of the Islamic state is, therefore, answerable for it and

1. This point is discussed at length in the next chapter, "Means and Ways"
2. For a detailed study see the chapter, "Scope and Pre-requisites".
3. al-Ahkam al-Sultaniya.

the duty is considered as 'Wajib' for him. Among the writers who are of this opinion Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan states:

فيه إيجاب الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر على من مكنته الله في الأرض وأقدره على القيام بذلك

Those at the helm of affairs are to perform 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. The duty is indeed 'Wajib' for them.¹

First and the foremost duty of the head of the Islamic state should be the performance of this duty, for he enjoys the authority to enforce it Imam Ibn Taiymia points out rightly:

ذوو السلطان أقدر من غيرهم ، وعليهم من الوجوب ما ليس على غيرهم ، فإن مناط الوجوب هو القدرة ، فيجب على كل إنسان بحسب قدرته

The rulers are in a better position to perform 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar', for they enjoy the authority which makes it incumbent on them to perform it. Others are also asked to perform the duty within their own sphere and in proportion to the position they hold.²

Those negligent of this duty, in the opinion of Imam Shaukani, are sinners:

من كان أقدر على الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر كان ذنبه أشد وعقوبته أعظم ومعصيته أقطع . بهذا جاءت حجج الله ، وقامت براهينه . ونطقت به كتبه ، وأبلغته إلى عباده رسله

1. Fatah al-Bayan, Vol. VI, p.193

2. al-Hasba fi al-Islam, p. 37

Those capable of performing of this duty shall be taken to task for their negligence as declared in the Quran. In line with this are the views of the Prophet.¹

The Quran bears testimony to the observation made by Imam Shaukani. Commoners and those incapable may be spared. However, the head of the Islamic state shall be dealt with severely for this lapse, as he enjoys the authority to perform and enforce 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'.

Guidance of the rulers—a Constituent of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'

The Islamic state being a theocratic state should be headed by an honest, God-fearing and righteous person. Since the ruler is also a human being, he may neglect the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. The heads of the state, it is common knowledge, often go astray. Should the ruler be negligent of this duty. Muslims owe a duty to guide and reform.

The performance of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is the duty of both the state and an individual Muslim. The head of the state is to guide general Muslim. So do general Muslims have the responsibility to guide the ruler, if he is negligent about enforcing 'Shariah'. It is a mutual business as discussed in one of the sayings of the Prophet (P.B.U.H).

1 Majmoos al-Rasail, p. 3

من أكرم سمسان الله في الدنيا أكرمه الله يوم القيامة ،
ومن أهان سلطان الله في الدنيا أهانه الله يوم القيامة

Those appointed rulers are to be respected. Those who pay him respect shall be rewarded in the Hereafter. On the contrary, those defying the head of the state shall be punished on the Day of the Judgment.¹

Though Muslims are to guide the ruler on performing 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Mun'kar' the guidance should be made in a graceful manner. In so doing, one should not be prompted by the motive of humiliating the ruler. The manner in which the ruler is to be guided is suggested in the following saying of the Prophet (P.B.U.H).

من أراد أن ينصح السلطان بأمر فلا يبد له علانية ،
ولكن ليأخذ بيده . فيخاور به . فإن قبل منه فذاك . وإلا كان
قد أدى الذي عليه له

Those intending to guide the ruler should tell do so in privacy. It should not be done publicly. In guiding the ruler in privacy one discharges the duty of guiding the ruler.²

Imam Ghazali's View point

The preaching is the best method to guide

1. **Muhammad Ahmad, Vol. V. p. 49.** In Tirmizi, however, part of this saying is reported.
2. **Ibid., Vol. III, p. 404**

the rulers. This practice in vogue in the Islamic states for centuries has been fruitful. Nonetheless, in case the ruler turns a deaf ear to the preaching, the following strategy, as recommended by Imam Ghazali, should be adopted:

If the ruler is ignorant of 'Shariah' the public should remove his ignorance. In so far as the defiance of the indifferent ruler by robbing him of his undersirable valuables such as the silken dress, pots for drinking wine etc. might result in the erosion of his authority which is forbidden. However, to act as a silent spectator to his indulgence in 'Munkar' is also crime. For tackling this baffling situation one should devise a way to ensure the forbidding of 'Munkar' as well as of maintaining his prestige. One is free to use his discretion in such a situation, for there is no hard and fast rule for checking it.¹

Should the head of the Islamic state be ignorant of some directives of 'Shariah', he should be advised accordingly. If he knowingly encourages 'Munkar' and be indifferent to 'Maroof', one should feel free to overthrow such a ruler. For it might result in moral anarchy in society. It may be legitimately inferred from Imam Ghazali's observation, quoted above, that Muslim should not hesitate in replacing a ruler who pays no heed to the duty of 'Amr bi al-MarooF wa Nahi An al-Munkar'.

1. Ahyia Uloom al-Din, Vol. II, p. 280

Allama Ibn Hazam's View point

The point under discussion has been discussed at length by Imam Ibn Hazam and Allama Ibn Bakar Jassas. They have dealt with the point how to tackle the ruler who is indifferent to the performance of 'Amr bi al-Maroofoo wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Moreover, the attitude towards the traitors in an Islamic state has also been treated. Reproduced below is the gist of Imam Ibn Hazam's view point:

Scholars of all shades of opinion have the consensus on the point of 'Amr bi al-Maroofoo wa Nahi An al-Munkar' as 'Wajib' for the head of the Islamic state. Scholars are, however, at variance on the nature of the performance of this duty. Should it be a mere belief of the ruler or it should have its apparent manifestations? If those defying the ruler are themselves transgressors, the Ummah should lend all possible help to the righteous ruler.

Some scholars are of the view that the public should use force as a last resort to enforce 'Amr bi al-Maroofoo wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. If those protesting against the impious ruler are too weak to use force, they should not protest publicly. They should, nonetheless, consider the acts of the ruler as wrong. Many companions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) subscribe to this viewpoint.

Some authorities take exception to such

a view on the ground that the protest marked by a show of force might result in bloodshed and anarchy in the Islamic state. In refutation of this point the writers subscribing to the other viewpoint argue that it is permitted by 'Shariah' to kill the mischief-makers. And those indulging in 'Munkar' doubtless breed mischief. Uncalled for carnage and the molestation of women etc should, however, be avoided in any case. To refrain from using force is contrary to the concept of 'Jihad' as well. 'Jihad' as we all know is fighting in the cause of Allah and it involves bloodshed. No Muslim can therefore question the 'Wujub' of 'Jihad'. Given non-Muslims inflict all sorts of torture on Muslims, it is 'Wajib' for all Muslims to wage 'Jihad' against them. In other words, the taking up of arms is justified against both non Muslims and such Muslim rulers who indulge in 'Munkar'. This view is corroborated by the Quran and "Sunnah".

The commitment of any wrong, however localised,¹ should be brought to the notice of the 'Imam' and he be requested to check it in the light of 'Shariah'. Should the 'Imam' do so, no further protest is to be lodged. He would continue to enjoy the leadership of Muslims. If the 'Imam'

1. This sweeping generalization is not sound. On this point Imam Ghazali's view, as quoted above, is opposite.

turns blind to such complaints, he is to be dethroned and replaced by a pious head of the state. This view is in accord with the Quranic verse asking the believers to help each-other in good deeds. None of the 'Wajibat' is to be ignored.¹

View point of Jassas

Not a single Muslim writer whether classical or modern has questioned the 'Wujub' of 'Amr bi al-Maroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Members of 'Hashwiya' group and those ignorant of 'Ahadith' disagree with the view of taking up arms against the rebels. They consider it as mischief-making. Such an opinion is contrary to the Quranic verse which asks the believers to kill the mischief-makers unless they accept the Divine Guidance. The rebels, as evident from the Quranic verse, are to be dealt with severely. Nonetheless, a section of Muslims considers the taking up of arms as undesirable, even if the ruler indulges in 'Munkar'. Those who subscribe to such a view are not indeed the well-wishers of Islam. This view has gained a general currency. As a result, mere anarchy is let loose in the religious life and the hegemony of Islam is lost. These evils are attendant upon the indifference to the performance of 'Amr bi al-Maroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar'²

1. al-Fasal fi al-Mallal p. 170-6.

2. Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. II, p. 40

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According to Imam al-Harmain,

إذا جار والى الوقت ، وظهر ظلمه وغشمه ، فلم يَزجر
حين زجر عن سوء صنيعه بالقول فلاهل الحل والعقد التواطؤ
على خلمه ولو بشهر الأسلحة ونصب الحروب

Should the head of state be indifferent to the evil and act in an arrogant manner, all Muslims should make efforts to unseat him. In pursuance of this aim the resort is to be made to using force.¹

Commenting on Imam al-Harmain's view Imam Navui observes;

هذا الذى ذكره من خلمه غريب ، ومع هذا فهو محمول
على ما إذا لم تخف منه إثارة مفسدة أعظم منه

That the arrogant ruler should be dethroned, as pointed out by Imam Harmain, sounds apparently odd. However, this is the only way to put an end to mischief..²

A host of scholars, including Imam Ibn Hazam and Allama Abu Bakar Jassas agree with Imam Navui. Nonetheless, the move to replace the ruler is justified in exceptional cases for putting an end to mischief.

1. Shirah Muslim al-Navui, Vol. I, p. 52

2. Ibid., p. 52

CHAPTER IX

Revival of 'Diyn' and the Reformation of the Ummah

The Law of the Rise and Fall of Nations

An ideal society comprising only the pious is an Utopia. Both pious and impious persons there are in every society. The righteous should perform the duty of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' to guide and reform the society. In case such an effort is not made, the fabric of the social network shall be found torn asunder. The best persons in a society are those who enjoin 'Marooif' and forbid 'Munkar'. Nations prosper as long as ethical principles are adhered to. Any group or community is bound to perish, if it turns indifferent to evils. Contrary to it, the civilization headed by the righteous expands vastly. This is a Divine Law. The decline of nation may take a long time but its decline consequent upon its moral depravity is ineluctable, as pointed out in the Quran thus:

And fear tumult or oppression,

وَاتَّقُوا فِتْنَةً لَا

Which affecteth not in
particular (Only) those of
you who do wrong:
(VIII: 25)

تُصِيبَنَّ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا
مِنْكُمْ خَاصَّةً

Zaynab b. Hajash is reported to have asked the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) of the rout of Muslims in case some of them are righteous. The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) replied in affirmative and told her that it might be possible in a society marked by evil.¹

Allah's Penalty does not spare the pious too. The point should not be, however, generalized. For a better appreciation of the point we should try to go to the heart of the matter.

Reformers not affected by the Penalty

Some righteous persons are content with their own righteousness as they do not preach righteousness among others. Some persons, however, refuse to be the silent spectators. Not only do they perform good deeds but invite others also to good deeds.

That both the righteous and mischief-makers are affected by the penalty is not substantiated by the Quran which, on the contrary, states that the righteous survive the penalty whereas those indulging in sins are perished;

1. Bukhari

In the end We deliver
Our apostles and those
who believe:
Thus it is fitting on Our part
That we should deliver
Those who believe !

ثُمَّ نُنَجِّي رُسُلَنَا وَالَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا كَذَلِكَ حَقًّا عَلَيْنَا
نُجْمُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

(X: 103)

The Prophets being the embodiments of all virtues strive in the cause of Allah. For performing this sacred duty they are delivered. Likewise the believers are also delivered. The believers are, however, affected by the penalty, in case they have given up the performance of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkir'. The Prophet (P.B.U.H) is reported to have remarked:

ما من قوم يعمل فيهم بالمعاصي، ثم يقدرن على أن
يغيروا، ثم لم يغيروا إلا يوشك أن يعذبهم الله منه بعقاب

If the believers who are capable as well turn indifferent to evils in a society, the whole society is punished.¹

According to another saying of the Prophet (P.B.U.H),

إن الله عز وجل لا يعذب العامة بعمل الخاصة، حتى
يروا المنكرين ظهرانيهم. وهم قادرون على أن ينكروا، فلا
ينكروه. فإذا فعلوا ذلك عذب الله الخاصة والعامة

If a few persons are sinners in a society, it is not perished. However, if people

1. Abu Daud. Kitab al-Malahim

turn indifferent to evils, all members of the society suffer the Penalty.¹

In sum, people taste the Penalty in case the public, in general, indulges in sins or the righteous turn blind to the commitment of sins. On the other hand, the believers preaching and inviting others to good deeds are delivered of the Penalty. The classical authorities on 'Hadith' such as Ibn Abi Jamra and Allama Qartabi hold the same view.

The view Corroborated by the Quranic Account of the People of Israel

This view is corroborated by the Quran. All the worldly activities were prohibited to Israel on the Sabbath day. Some law-breakers transgressed and were admonished by the pious persons. Some persons, however, took another stand and told the preachers:

Why do you preach
To a people whom God
Will destroy or visit
With a terrible punishment?

(VII: 164)

لِمَ تَعِظُونَ قَوْمًا ۚ اللَّهُ
مُهْلِكُهُمْ أَوْ مُعَذِّبُ
بِهِمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا

To this the preachers replied:

To discharge
Our duty to your Lord
And perchance they may fear Him.

(VII: 164)

مُعَذِّرَةً إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُم
وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ

1. Musnad Ahmad, Vol. IV, p. 192.

Among the people of Israel there were thus three groups. One group consisted of law-breakers; the second comprised the preachers and the third group consisted of such persons who were silent spectators of this act of transgression.

The Quran refers to these three groups in these words:

When they disregarded the warnings
 That had been given them,
 We rescued those who forbade
 Evil; but We visited
 The wrong-doers with a
 Grievous punishment, because
 They were given to transgression.
 When in their insolence
 They transgressed (all) prohibitions,
 We said to them:
 'Be ye apes,
 Despised and rejected'

فَلَمَّا تَسَوَّأَا
 ذِكْرُوا بِهِ أَنجَيْنَا الَّذِينَ
 يَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ السُّوءِ وَأَخَذْنَا
 الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا
 بَعْدَٰى بِبَٰئِسٍ
 بَمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ فَلَمَّا
 عَتَوْا عَنْ مَا نُهُوا عَنْهُ
 قُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُونُوا قِرَدَةً
 خَٰسِيْنَ

(VII: 165-8)

The wrong-doers, as evident from the above verse, are visited with a grievous punishment. Contrary to it, those who forbid evils are saved. It may be thus safely assumed that those who perform the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' are not affected by the Penalty.

The Quran makes no mention of the fate of those who act as silent spectators. Some scho-

lars are of the view that they along with the preachers were also delivered. However, a number of exegetes take exception to this view and hold that they were also visited with the grievous punishment. The latter view is borne out by the above-quoted sayings of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) A society, including those pious persons who give up the performance of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar', is doomed for the punishment, as pointed out by Imam Shaukani:

‘فإن كل من يتأهل للأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر معرضاً عن ذلك غير قائم بحجة الله ولا مبلغ لها إلى عباده فهو شريككم في جميع ما اقترفوه من معاصي الله سبحانه مستحق للعقوبة المعجلة والمؤجلة قبلهم كما صح في قصة من تعدى السبب من أتباع موسى عليه السلام فإن الله تعالى ضرب من ترك الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر بسخط عذابه . ومسخهم قردة و خنازير مع أنهم لم يفعلوا ما فعله المعتصمون من الذنب ، بل سكتوا عن إبلاغ حجة والقيام بما أمرهم به من الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر . والحاصل أنه لا فرق بين من فعل المعصية وبين من رضى بها ولم يفعلها وبين من لم يرض بها لكن ترك النهي عنها مع عدم وجود ما يسقط ذلك عنهم

Those who fail to perform 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar', though they are capable of doing so, shall be treated as an accomplice of the wrongdoers and will meet the similar fate. The testimony to this viewpoint is afforded

by the Quranic account of the people of Israel who were given to transgression and were deformed into despicable apes for their acts of transgression.

Some of them were not so much given to transgression but they were guilty of neglecting the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. In other words, the wrong-doers, the silent spectators of wrong-doings and those guilty of neglecting the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' are to meet the same fate.'

Guidance of the Wrong-doers incumbent on the pious persons

Whenever the Divine Message is presented in a society, people are found divided into two main categories of the believers and the non-believers. The pious among them devote themselves heart and soul to the propagation of the Divine Message. This zeal is not kept up by next generations. They remain to be the believers but their life is marked by hypocrisy. The Quran speaks of such persons thus:

But after them there followed

A posterity who missed

Prayers and followed after lusts

فَخَلَفَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ

خَلْفٌ أَضَاعُوا الصَّلَاةَ

وَاتَّبَعُوا الشَّهْوَاتِ (XIX: 25)

Such believers are, in fact, a disgrace and prove

often worse than the avowed enemies of Islam. The pious among the believers owe the responsibility of guiding those who have gone astray. If such an effort is not seriously made, it might result in the destruction of the very fabric of the faith. On this point the Prophet (P.B.H.U) is reported to have made this apt remark:

ما من نبي بعثه الله تعالى في أمة قبل إلا كان له من أمته حواريون وأصحاب يأخذون بسنته ويقتلون بأمره ، ثم أنها تخلف من بعدهم خلوف يتولون ما لا يفعلون ويفعلون ما لا يؤمرون ، فمن جاهدكم بیده فهو مؤمن ، ومن جاهدكم بلسانه فهو مؤمن ، ومن جاهدكم بقلبه فهو مؤمن ، وليس وراء ذلك من الإيمان حبة خردل

The Prophets who were sent down before me had a host of faithful companions. However, there followed a posterity who deviated widely and indulged in what was forbidden. Therefore, those who fight in the cause of Allah either physically or verbally are 'Mumin'. Those who fail to do so are unfaithful.¹

The Guidance of others is self-Guidance

In a morally debased society even the pious persons are liable to go astray. The only way to salvation lies in a sustained struggle against all that stands for evil and in a concerted effort in the cause of good. Any lapse on this part might

1. Muslim, Kitab al-Iman.

land the pious in a precarious situation. Often do the reformers give up their effort because of feeling demoralized with the corrupted way of life. This doubtless smacks of defeatism and it leads to the surrender to and an acceptance of evil.

The People of Israel Went Astray For Neglecting 'Amr bi al-MarooF wa Nahi An al-Munkar'

Among the people of Israel a few persons preached but on realising the failure of their mission they gave in. This resulted in the dominance of evil in the whole society. A Muslim cannot, however, dare opt for this attitude. Consequent upon their indifference to 'Amr bi al-MarooF wa Nahi An al Munkar' the people of Israel fell out of Allah's Grace and were doomed to the punishment. On the authority of Abu Daud it is reported:

قال رسول الله ﷺ ما دخل النقص على بني إسرائيل كان الرجل يلقي الرجل فيقول يا هذا اتق الله ودع ما تصنع فإنه لا يحل لك ، ثم يلقاه من الغد فلا يمنعه ذلك أن يكون أكيله وشريبه وقعيده . فلما فعلوا ذلك ضرب الله قلوب بعضهم على بعضهم . ثم قال (لعن الذين كفروا من بني إسرائيل على لسان داود وعيسى بن مريم)

The genesis of the fall of the people of Israel, according to the Prophet (P.B.U.F), lay its origin in their general indifference to preaching. For the wrong-doers the preaching was like the raining upon

rocks. Moreover, the preacher felt no qualms of conscience in maintaining his terms with the wrong doers. This resulted in their condemnation¹ by Allah as reported in the Quran:

Condemnation of the People of Israel for neglecting 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'

The Quran has taken to task the Rabbis and the doctors of law among the people of Israel for watching silently the moral depravity and the defiance of Allah's directives:

Many of them dost thou see, reaching each other in sin and rancour
 And their eating of things Forbidden. Evil indeed, Are the things that they do.
 Why do not the Rabbis And the doctors of law forbid Them from their (habit Of) uttering sinful words
 And eating things forbidden? Evil indeed are their works:
 (V: 65-6)

وَتَرَىٰ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ يُسَارِعُونَ
 فِي الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَ
 أَكْلِهِمُ السَّخْتِ لَبِئْسَ مَا
 كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾ لَوْلَا
 يَنْهَاهُمُ الرَّبَّانِيُّونَ وَ
 الْأَخْبَارُ عَنْ قَوْلِهِمُ الْإِ
 ثْمَ وَأَكْلِهِمُ السَّخْتِ
 لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ

Commenting on the import of the above Quranic verse Imam Razi states:

إن الله تعالى استبعد من أهل الكتاب أنهم ما نهوا سفلتهم وعوامهم عن المعاصي وذلك يدل على أن تارك النهي عن المنكر

1. Abu Daud, Kitab al-Malahim.

منزلة مرتكبه لأنه تعالى ذم الفريقين في هذه الآية على لفظ واحد

Allah does not expect of the learned to be a party to the wrong doings of the general public. Those who fail to enjoin 'Maroof' commit 'Munkar' as in the above verse both the learned men and the wrong-doers have been condemned.¹

According to the other exegetes too, the Quran has more strongly condemned those who fail to enjoin 'Munkar' than the wrong-doers. The wrong doers, as evident from the Quran, merely do evil things while the attitude of the indifferent learned men is termed as 'evil indeed are their works'.

The above verse should be a lesson to the Muslim Ummah, for the indifference to the duty of preaching and guidance might land them in the same ignomible position. Allah loves those who enjoin 'Maroof' and forbid 'Munkar'. The above-quoted verse has been taken as a warning by the classical authorities. In the opinion of Ibn Jareer,

كان العلماء يقولون ما في القرآن آية أشد توبيخاً للعلماء
من هذه الآية ولا أخوف عليهم منها

No other Quranic verse condemns the learned men more severely than this one. It has evoked awe among them down the centuries.²

1 Mafatih al-Ghaib, Vol. III, p. 138

2. Jamey al-Bayan, Vol. VI, p. 170

Similar to this are the views of Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbas, Zuhak and Attar Tabae. While referring to the fall of the people of Israel the Prophet (P.B.U.B) asked the Ummah to make it a point to

كلا ، والله لتأمرن بالمعروف وتنهون عن المنكر ولتأخذن

على يد الظالم ولتأطرنه على الحق أطراً

enjoin 'Maroof' and forbid 'Munkar' and to resist the transgressor ruler and invite him to the truth.¹

The Early period of the Islamic History is the Ideal

The early period of the Islamic history is ideal in every respect. It happens indeed to be the most glorious period in the world history. God-fearingness and other virtues held its sway and 'Maroof' was upheld everywhere. 'Khair' reigned supreme in all walks of life. The Prophet (P.B.U.H) is to be credited for having preached persuasively the Divine Guidance. His accomplishment remains to this day as a constant source of inspiration. Nonetheless, the indifference of Muslims increased with the passage of time. Visualising it in his life time the Prophet (P.B.U.H) had foretold:

خيركم قرني ثم الذين يلونهم ثم الذين يلونهم قال عمران :
فلا أدري قال رسول الله ﷺ بعد قرنه مرتين أو ثلاثاً ثم يكون

5

1. Adu Daud, Kitab al-Malahim

بعدهم قوم يشهدون ولا يستشهدون ويخونون ولا يؤتمنون وينذرون
ولا يوفون ، ويظهر فيهم السمن

The best period is the one as long as I am with you. Other generations would follow me. Hazrat Umar tells that the Prophet (P.B.U.H) mentioned two or three periods which would be followed by such as marked by evil. They would act as witnesses but their witness would not be worth consideration. They would indulge in all kinds of innovations and be given to a luxurious life.¹

For striving in Allah's cause and performing 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' Muslims of the first generation have been extolled by the Prophet (P.B.U.H). This criterion holds good for Muslims of all ages, as remarked by Allama Qartabi:

إن قرنه إنما فضل لأنهم كانوا غرباء في إيمانهم لكثرة الكفار وصبرهم على أذاهم وتمسكهم بدينهم . وإن أواخر هذه الأمة إذا أقاموا الدين وتمسكوا به وصبروا على طاعة ربهم في حين ظهور الشر والفسق والمهرج والمعاصي والكبائر كانوا عند ذلك أيضاً غرباء . وزكت أعمالهم في ذلك الوقت كما زكت أعمال أوائلهم

Muslims of the first generation have been praised for fighting in the cause of Allah in a society dominated by forces of evil.

Though they were subjected to all forms of persecution, they did not give in. Likewise Muslims of succeeding generations are entitled to Allah's Grace if they resist evil and stick faithfully to the tenets of Islam. In so doing they will be as perfect as the Muslims of the first generation.¹

Society always hostile to Islam

Human society whether in the early or later period of the Islamic history has been hostile to Islam. Blessed are those who do not give in and preach Islam in a society that is not ready to accept Islam:

بدأ الإسلام غريباً وسيعود كما بدأ غريباً فطوبى للغرباء

Islam had its beginning in a hostile society. This hostility would persist. This provides the pious Muslims with a golden chance to preach Islam.²

Preaching of Islam in a hostile Society

Anti-Islamic forces would be dominant, the Prophet (P.B.U.H) foretells, in the later period of the Islamic history. The righteous would find themselves reduced to a minority. Forces of evil would reign supreme the world over. Atheism would become the way of life. On nearing it the companions asked the Prophet (P.B.U.H)

1. al-Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. IV, p. 72
2. Muslim, Kitab al-Iman.

of the attitude of the pious Muslim in such an eventuality. (P.B.U.H) To this the Prophet (P.B.U.H) replied:

أناس صالحون في أناس سوء كبير : من بعضهم
أكثر ممن يطيعهم

Few righteous persons would be there in the majority of the wrong-doers. Few would follow the guidance of the righteous.¹

In other words, the righteous persons should not feel demoralised and frustrated to see the ascendancy of the evil forces. They being the successors of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) are to carry on their mission of guidance and preaching. Reference has been made to these righteous persons in one of the sayings of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) thus:

الذين يصلحون إذا أفسد الناس

They are guides who make efforts to check wrong doings.²

Though these righteous persons would find themselves in an odd position, instead of giving in they would carry on their mission and in it lies their achievement. The ascendancy of the forces of evil would not deter them from continuing their mission. Allama Ibn Athir comments on this point thus:

1. Musnad Ahmad, Vol. II, p. 177

2. Ibid., Vol. VI, p. 73

إنه (أى الإسلام) كان فى أول أمره كالغريب الوحيد الذى لا أهل له عنده ، لقلة المسلمين يومئذ. وسعود غريباً كما كان : أى يقل المسلمون فى آخر الزمان. فيصبرون كالغريباء ، فطوبى للغريباء : أى الجنة لأولئك المسلمين الذين كانوا فى أول الإسلام ويكونون فى آخره ، وإنما خصهم بها لصبرهم على أذى الكفار أولاً وآخرأ ولزومهم دين الإسلام

Islam was something new for the society in which it appeared first. A similar situation would obtain afterwards. Muslims would be in a minority. It is therefore a golden chance for the pious persons in the sense that in performing their mission they would be like the Muslims of the first generation and would be blessed with Paradise for having resisted the forces of evil and borne all forms of torture.¹

These guides would meet with the opposition that every reformer has to face. They would be subjected to torture, contempt and would also be betrayed by their own friends. Their own relatives would turn into the worst enemies. Expatriation from the homeland might also follow. In one of 'Ahadith' they have been referred to as the outcasts from their own tribe.² Their lot would be similar to that of 'Muhajirin' and it connotes their helplessness and oppression. As pointed out earlier, it is not an easy task to

1. al-Nihaya fi Gharib al-Hadees, Vol. 3, p. 152.

2. Musnad Ahmad, Vol. I, p. 398

undertake the responsibility of guidance and preaching.

Opposition from Within

The pious persons would be faced with, it is possible, the opposition from within their own co-religionists. Such an eventuality is consequent upon the general ascendancy of evil. Even those who profess Islam would be so much involved in wrong doings that they would oppose any move of preaching and guidance. Muslims, in the real sense of the term, would be few. This would obviously result in an opposition from within. The righteous would feel alienated from general Muslims. This feeling of alienation is indeed a good sign as it is indicative of their firm faith. As evident from the sayings of the Prophet, (P.B.U.H) the majority of Muslims lags behind the pious persons who are far superior to the masses in respect of piety and God-fearingness.

الذين يصلحون ما أفسد الناس من سنتي

They would indeed guide the Ummah:

They would render 'Sunnah' free of all distortions.¹

In line with this is another saying of the Prophet (P.B.U.H):

الذين يحيون سنتي ، ويعلمونها الناس

They would revive 'Sunnah' and invite others to it.²

1. Tirmizi, Kitab al-Iman

2. Madarij al-Salikin, Vol. III, p. 123

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On the purport of this 'Hadith' Imam Auzai remarks:

أما أنه ما يذهب أهل الإسلام ولكن يذهب أهل السنة، حتى ما يبقى في البلد منهم إلا رجل واحد

Muslims there would be but they would not be the adherents of 'Sunnah'. There might be left single person in a town who adheres to 'Sunnah'.¹

This point is discussed at length by Imam Ibn Qaiyum:

Muslims stand apart from non-Muslim. So do the faithful from Muslims; the learned from the ignorant and the adherents of 'Sunnah' from the innovators stand apart. Above all, the most distinguished are those who suffer in Allah's cause. Such persons are indeed Allah's faithful servants and feel themselves alienated from others. Though those who have gone astray might be in a majority, they are poles apart from the tenets and teachings of Islam.

Those who follow the directives of Allah and of 'Sunnah' find themselves alienated from general masses. This feeling is commendable as it has been praised by the Prophet (P.B.U.H). The pious persons might feel estranged everywhere or at a particular place, in all groups or in a particular group. Nonetheless, those who feel

1. Kashaf al-Karba, p. 10.

alienated are the real servants of Allah for they follow faithfully the teachings of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) and dissociate themselves from all that is not in accord with the teachings of the Prophet (P.B.U.H)

The real Islam preached and practised by the Prophet (P.B.U.H) and his companions is in a distorted form, though the rituals have remained intact. Few persons practise the real Islam today. This point can be appreciated well in the light of this sordid fact that Muslims today are divided into no less than seventy-two groups.¹ How can all these groups, differing greatly from each other in many respects, be simultaneously on the right path? Many of these groups openly defy the teachings of Islam, often even contrary to the very teachings of Islam. Their innovations are a consequence of their interest in worldliness and in the pleasures of the flesh. To accommodate their whims and unbridled desires they have dared to misconstrue Islam and take pride in so doing.

The pious Muslims have to pocket all sorts of insults in performing his duty of guiding others. He might be even tortu-

1. This alludes to the 'Hadith' reporting to seventy-two groups in the people of Israel. Muslim, according to the Prophet, would be divided into seventy-three groups, of which only one would be on the right path (Tirmizi) www.nagorikpathagar.org

red in the manner the pagans persecuted the companions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) in the early history of Islam. His efforts to guide is likely to provoke and antagonise those having vested interests. In sum, the pious would be faced with all forms of resistance and condemnation. What accounts for this hostility is the hardened attitude of the wrong-doers. The pious stands apart from general public in all respects such as the manner of prayer and all other modes of life. Since the pious persons are wedded unflinchingly to the ideals of Islam, their temperament and attitude would be in sharp contrast to the prevalent ones. So would be the difference in the life style. The pious persons would find themselves deserted by others. Nonetheless, they would invite everyone to the path ordained by Allah and Sunnah. Moreover, he would perform the duty of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' among those who are given to enjoining 'Munkar' and forbidding 'Marooif'

There would be an opposition from within if the believers go astray. Those who make efforts to check are indeed fortunate and blessed. The term 'Sunnah', one should not lose sight of this point, is an all-embracing concept that includes both the systems of beliefs and acts.

Those who follow 'Sunnah' in all respects are

1. Maderij al-Salikin, Vol. III, pp. 123-6.

indeed the adherents of 'Sunnah'. It connotes also that one should follow 'Sunnah' scrupulously without giving a free play to one's desires. As aptly observed by Ibn Rajab Hanbali,

أما السنة الكاملة فهي الطريقة السالمة من الشهوات والشبهات
كما قال الحسن ويونس بن عبيد وسفيان والفضيل وغيرهم

'Suunah' stands for a firm belief, free of all doubts. Other scholars such as Hazrat Hasan Basari, Yunus b. Obaid, Sufyan Sauri and Fuzail b. Ayaz also agree on this point.¹

Adherence to 'Sunnah'

The later period of the Islamic history marked by the ascendancy of the forces of evil has been termed as the period of mischief and chaos. Such a period is indeed the testing ground for the believers. Though faced with the numerous mischiefs, they are to adhere to 'Sunnah'. Atheistic ideas have been in vogue down the centuries. Often have they shaken the belief. Ours is the age of doubt, schism and mischief. The ideas of the day rooted in atheism are posing a very serious challenge to our social, economic, ethical, intellectual and cultural life. The believer can, however, meet this challenge by the firmness of his faith. For him the only ideal should be the one ordained by Allah and the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) Reproduced below is an extract from one of the sermons of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.):

1. Kashaf al-Karba, p. 12.

من يعيش منكم بعدى فسرى اختلافاً كثيراً . فعليكم
بسنتى وسنة الخلفاء الراشدين المهديين تمسكوا بها ، وعضوا عليها
بالنواجذ ، ولما كن ومحدثات الأمور . فإن كل محدثة بدعة وكل
بدعة ضلالة

In the future you will be confronted with mischief. The only way to steer clear of it lies in the adherence to 'Sunnah' and the obedience to the righteous caliphs. You must refrain from all innovations, for it makes you go astray.¹

The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) laid much emphasis on acting in a righteous manner in the midst of mischief, as evident from these two reports:

من أحيا سنة من سنتى قد أميتت بعدى فإن له من الأجر
مثل أجر من عمل بها من الناس لا ينقص من أجور الناس شيئاً المتمسك
بسنتى عند فساد أمتى له أجر شهيد

Those who revive 'Sunnah' shall be rewarded. So shall be those rewarded who follow it.² Those who make efforts to preserve 'Sunnah' shall be blessed like a 'Shaheed' (Martyr).³

The same saying is reported in these words also:

1. Ahmad and Abu Daud.
2. Ibn Maja, Kathir b. Abdullah regards the saying as unauthentic. However it is in line with many other sayings. (al-Targheeb wa-al-Tarheeb, Vol. I. p 52)
3. al-Tabrani.

من تمسك بسنتي عند فساد أمتي فله أجر مائة شهيد

Those who adhere to 'Sunnah' in the period of doubt and mischief will be blessed as much as one hundred martyrs are blessed.¹

The significance of the adherence to 'Sunnah' and the condemnation of innovations are evident from the above-quoted sayings. Innovation is synonymous with the distortion of 'Diyn' for being contray to 'Sunnah'. According to Gha-zeef b. Haris Shimali,

أن النبي ﷺ قال : ما أحدث قوم بدعة إلا رفع مثلها من السنة ، فتمسك بسنة خير من إحداث بدعة

Those indulging in innovations, according to the Prophet (P.B.U.H.), are denied 'Sunnah'. It is therefore imperative to adhere to 'Sunnah'.²

For Abdullah b. Dailmi,³

بلغني أن أول ذهاب الدين ترك السنة . يذهب الدين سنة سنة كما يذهب الحبل قوة قوة

I have been told on the authority of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) that the indifference to 'Sunhah' is the first stage of going astray. People would lose 'Diyn' as long as

1. al-Bayqahi

2. Musnad Ahmad, Vol. IV, p. 105

3. He is considered as a companion by some writers.

they go on ignoring 'Sunnah'. This would finally render them devoid of 'Diyin'.⁷

On this point there occurs the statement:

من وقر صاحب بدعة فقد أعان على اهدم الإسلام

Those who contribute to the propagation of an innovation aim at demolishing Islam.²

Like the preaching of Islam, the adherence to 'Sunnah' is not an easy task today. Nonetheless, the pious persons are not deterred by the hardships. In the opinion of Imam Zahari,

كان من مضي من عنماثنا يقولون : الاعتصام بالسنة نجاة

The only path to salvation, according to the classical writers, lies in the adherence to 'Sunnah'.³

To Resist Mischiefs is 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'

The adherence to 'Sunnah' bears the implications of inviting others to Islam, making efforts to enforce the Will of Allah and the resistance to all that is un-Islamic. Those who do so indeed perform 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Even in the later period some pious person, the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) foretold, would

1. Darmi, Muqadimah
2. al-Bayqahi.
3. Darmi, Muqadimah

perform this duty in encountering the anti-Islam movements:

سيكون في آخر هذه الأمة قوم لهم مثل أجر أولهم
بأمرون بالمعروف . وينهون عن المنكر . ويقاثلون الفتن

Some Muslims of the later period shall be rewarded as much as the companions, for their enjoining of 'Maroof', forbidding of 'Munkar' and resistance to the mischief of the day.¹

In line with it is another saying of the Prophet (P.B.H.U.):

إن من أمتي قوماً يعطون مثل أجور أولهم . ينكرون المنكر

Some of the Muslims of the later period shall be blessed like those of the early period for forbidding 'Munkar' ²

Guides in all the ages

Islam is the final message of Allah delivered by the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) for all ages. In view of its finality there would be born in every age such persons who would carry on the mission of its preaching. Notwithstanding the moral debasement and other evils in Muslim society, there would always be a group of Muslims to perform the duty of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. These righteous men would resist all challenges and avert the attempts to distort

1. al-Bayqahi.

2. Musnad Ahmad, Vol. IV, p. 62

Islam. They would be neither demoralised nor would they accept defeat. All sorts of sacrifice would be made by them in Allah's cause and those opposing these righteous men would 'never succeed in their evil designs':

لا تزال طائفة من أمتي قائمة بأمر الله لا يضرهم من خلفهم
أو خالفهم حتى يأتي أمر الله وهم ظاهرون على الناس

There would always be a band of people among Muslims that would uphold Islam. None can do any harm to these righteous men. They would hold their own till the Day of Judgement.¹

The learned persons, in Imam Bukhari's view, comprise this band. Interpreting the above-quoted saying of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) in general terms Imam Nauvi says:

يَحْتَمِلُ أَنْ هَذِهِ الطَّائِفَةُ مَفْرُقَةٌ بَيْنَ أَنْوَاعِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْهُمْ
شَجْعَانٌ مُقَاتِلُونَ ، وَمِنْهُمْ فَقَهَاءٌ ، وَمِنْهُمْ مُحَدِّثُونَ وَمِنْهُمْ زُهَادٌ
وَأَمْرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّاهُونَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَمِنْهُمْ أَهْلُ أَنْوَاعٍ أُخْرَى
مِنَ الْخَيْرِ ، وَلَا يَلْزَمُ أَنْ يَكُونُوا مُجْتَمِعِينَ بَلْ قَدْ يَكُونُونَ مُتَفَرِّقِينَ
فِي أَقْطَارِ الْأَرْضِ ،

The band of people consists of scholars, jurisprudents, authorities on 'Ahadith,' those who enjoin 'Maroof' and forbid 'Munkar' and all such persons who do good deeds. Such righteous persons may be found spread all over the world.²

1. Muslim, Kitab al-Amara

2. Shirah Muslim, Vol. II, p. 143

The Prophet (P.B.U.H) is reported to have remarked:

يحمل هذا العلم من كل خلف عدوله ينفون عنه تحريف
الغالين . وانتحال المطلقين وتأويل الجاهلين

The just among the believers are the faithful and righteous. They refute false claims, convince the ignorant and check the excesses.¹

The performance of this task is referred to by the Prophet (P.B.U.H) as the revival of 'Diyn'

إن الله يبعث هذه الأمة على رأس كل مئة سنين يجدد لها دينها

At the end of each century Allah sends down such men who bring about the revival of 'Din'.²

These 'Mujaddidins' (Reformers) are to be credited for preserving the real Islam and for keeping the 'Ummah' on the right path.

All religions other than Islam are in their distorted forms because of the deletions, accretions and innovations made by the followers of those religions. Islam is, however, the only message preserved in its pristine purity. Whenever, an attempt is made to distort it, the move has been successfully aborted by a band of dedicated scholars. The Ummah given to enjoin 'Māroof' and forbidding 'Munkar' cannot be entrapped. The learned among Muslims have always successfully countered such moves aiming

1. al-Bayqahi

Abu Daud, Kitab al-Malahim,

2. Mustadrak Hakim, Vol. IV, p. 522

at adulterating 'Diyn'. As a result, these moves both from without and within have miserably failed in bringing about any change, however minor, in the fundamentals and spirit of Islam.

Same holds true for the Ummah. The revivalistic spirit has always been to the fore. Consequently, it has been possible for the "Ummah" to remain, by and large, on the right path. This was, in fact, foretold by the Prophet (P.B.U.H.):

إِنْ أُمَّتِي لَا تَجْتَمِعُ عَلَى ضَلَالَةٍ

The Ummah never agrees on what is wrong. His vision has come true down the ages and it would presumably hold true in the future as well.

The Whole Ummah is to perform the duty of Reformation

Reformers there have been among Muslims in all ages and they, as we noted, have performed well the duty of preserving 'Diyn' and countering all challenges. Whether this duty is to be performed by a band of believers or by all Muslims is a question worth consideration. One gets the following clue from the Quran for answering this question:

The Believers, men
And women, are protectors,
One of another: they enjoin
What is just, and forbid
What is evil: they observe

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ
بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ
يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

Regular prayers, practise
Regular charity, and obey
God and His Apostle.
On them will God pour
His Mercy: for God
Is Exalted in power, wise

وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ
وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ
الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَ
رَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ
اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ
(IX: 71)

The performance of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar', as evident from the above verse, is the duty of each and every Muslim. The believers are required to enjoin 'Marooif' and forbid 'Munkar' as it happens to be their characteristic. Those neglecting this duty, in Imam Razi's view,

فقد نعت المؤمنين بأنهم يأمرون بالمعروف وينهون عن المنكر ، فالذى هجر الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر خارج عن هؤلاء المؤمنين المنعوتين في هذه الآية

are outside the fold of the 'Mumineen' as mentioned in the Quran. One of their characteristic is the performance of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'.¹

For Abdul Qadir Audubhu Shaheed,

إن جمهرة الفقهاء توجب الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر على كافة أفراد الأمة لا على فئة معينة منها

Most of the jurisprudents are of the view that the performance of 'Amr bi al-Marooif

1. Ahiy Uloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, p. 340

wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is 'Wajib' on all Muslims.'

'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' and 'Tawassi bi al-Haq' (The Mutual Teaching of Truth)

Synonymous with 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' are two other Quranic terms: a) 'Tawassi bi al-Haq' (the mutual teaching of Truth), and b) 'Tawassi bi as-Sabr' (the mutual teaching of patience and constancy). According to the Quran it alone is the key to success:

By (the Token of)

Time (through the Ages),

Verily Man

Is in loss,

Except such as have Faith,

And do righteous deeds,

And (join together)

In the mutual teaching

Of Truth, and of

Patience and Constancy.

وَالْعَصْرِ ۝ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي

خُسْرٍ ۝ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا

وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا

بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ۝

'Haq' (Truth) stands for 'Diyin' while 'Sabr' (patience) connotes the firmness of and constancy in belief. Muslims should therefore teach each other both truth and constancy as it leaves no room whatsoever for any deviation from the right path. As long as the Muslim society has arrangements for teaching truth and constancy the question of Muslims going astray does not at all arise. Such an arrangement will help the 'Ummiah' realise its faults. Likewise in

1. al-Tasree al-Jinai al-Islam. Vol. I. p. 495

the absence of such an arrangement the chances of Muslims going astray are more and might eventually bring about their rout.

Islam aims at evolving a society conducive to 'Khair' (goodness) and averse from 'Shar' (evil, wrong-doing). The members of the society should be made to realise this point. As a consequence, the forces of evil would not be able to exercise any influence. Not only should 'Maroof' flourish in society but it should also be the axis round which all activities should revolve. Similarly, those with evil designs should find themselves isolated and outcast from society. Muslims have been asked by Quran to help each other in righteous deeds and to dissuade each other from indulging in any 'Munkar':

Help ye one another
In righteousness and piety,
But help ye not one another
In sin and rancour :

(v: 2)

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَ
التَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا
عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ

The performance of 'Amr bi al-Maroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar' ensures an atmosphere conducive to 'Khair' and the chances of people going astray are remote. There should be a strong public aversion to evil and applause of righteous deeds: This is the best course for a society. Such an arrangement is in the best interest of mankind, as pointed out by the Prophet (P.B. U.H.):

انصر أخاك ظالماً أو مظلوماً : قال : يا رسول الله هذا

ننصره مظلوماً فكيف ننصره ظالماً ؟ قال : تأخذ فوق يديه

Help your brother whether he be the oppressor or the oppressed. Those present there sought a clarification how the oppressor is to be helped. To this the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) replied that by dissuading the oppressor help can be rendered to him.¹

‘Amr bi al-Marooḥ wa Nahi An al-Munkar’ and Guidance’

The two terms—‘Amr bi al-Marooḥ wa Nahi An al-Munkar’ and guidance—are used interchangeably in the Quran. Guidance connotes sincerity, help one achieve perfection and purification. It being an exhaustive term is interpreted variously. The term, in Allama Ibn Athir’s view stands for doing good to others. In other words the invitation to Islam, reformation of morals and the imparting of training, both theoretical and practical, constitute the components of this terms.

All Muslims should be sincere to one another and it should find its manifestation in the act of guidance and reformation of one another. The ruler should be a well-wisher of his subject. So should they be sincere to the ruler. Like-

1. Bukhari

wise, the poor and the rich should help each other. The layman should point out the flaws of the scholars who should also take care of the laymen. In sum, an atmosphere congenial to righteous acts and marked by piety and righteousness should prevail in an Islamic society. Muslims themselves should be held responsible for any act of diversion from the path of Islam. A Muslim should not only himself lead a life of righteousness but also help other Muslims follow the same path. According to Hazrat Tameem Darsi,

أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ ﷺ قَالَ : الدِّينُ : النَّصِيحَةُ قُلْنَا : لِمَنْ ؟

قَالَ : لِلَّهِ . وَلِكِتَابِهِ . وَلِرَسُولِهِ وَلِأَئِمَّةِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ . وَعَامَّتِهِمْ

‘Diyn’, according to the Prophet, (P.B. U.H.) signifies benevolence and sincerity to Allah, the Scripture, the Prophet (P.B. U.H.) and other brethren, including both the learned and the layman.¹

The above quoted saying of the Prophet (P.B. U.H.) indeed sums up the qualities a believer possesses. Sincerity, as referred to earlier, may be interpreted in two ways; a Muslim should maintain the firmness of his belief, and he should preach the same to others. The duty is thus both personal and collective. Scholars have attached a great significance to the above saying and think it as basic to the belief. A summary of Imam Nauwi’s explication of this saying is reproduced below:

1. Muslim, Kitab al-Iman

Sincerity to Allah bears the implication of a firm belief in His Oneness, an acceptance of all that is told by Him, a complete surrender to His Will, and love for Him. The criterion of love and hatred should be framed in the light of His dictates. Those who love Him should be held dear by other Muslims. Similarly the transgressors should be dealt with severely for their transgression of His will. A believer should also make an overt acknowledgement of His bounties. Moreover, he should invite others to the acceptance of Islam.

Similarly sincerity to the Scripture connotes that the believer should pay it due regard, recite it seriously, get familiarity with all that is enjoined or forbidden by it, gain insights from its contents, reflect on its allusions, and follow its orders in all respects. Apart from it, one should preach its teachings and invite others to its. What constitutes the sincerity to the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) is as follows; bearing witness to his Prophethood, a firm faith in his teachings, a total submission to his orders, tremendous love for him and the refutation of all charges levelled against him, his teachings and his mission. A Muslim should love only the lovers of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.). In addition to all this he should follow and preach 'Sunnah', convey his message to others and invite

others to it. The believer should also take due care in gaining knowledge of his teachings and in preaching it to others. Included in it also is the effort to model one's life after the prophet's. The believer, it is required of him, should shun all innovations.

In so far as the sincerity to the rulers the believer is supposed to follow them in their such directives that are in accord with 'Shariah,. Should the learned go astray, they should be made to realise their mistakes. Similarly, Muslim should help them get acquainted with the problems of general Muslims. They should be obeyed in matters that are not un-Islamic. The scholars should also be paid due reverence by following them. Muslims in general should be guided, helped in their problems and familiarised with the directives of 'Diy'. Both verbal and practical guidance should be imparted to the illiterate Muslim masses. The believer is expected to give all Muslims a fair treatment and take care of their interests. They should be trained to obey Allah.¹

That Muslims should be benevolent to one another has been emphasised by the Prophet and he used to make his companions take a vow for this. As reported by Hazrat Jareer b. Abdullah,

1. Shirah Muslim, Vol. I, p. 54

بَايَعْتُ النَّبِيَّ ﷺ عَلَى النَّصْحِ لِكُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ

I took pledge with the Prophet that I would be sincere to all Muslims.¹

Guidance of Muslims is thus an important duty. The methods, ways and means and others details about achieving this objective are discussed in next chapters, which, it is believed, would help one appreciate fully the nature, scope and ways and means of the performance of the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar',

1. Muslim, Kitab al-Iman

CHAPTER X

Conditions

'Amr bi al-Marouf wa Nahi an al-Munkar' is to be performed in all ages and everywhere, as pointed out by Imam Ghazali,

عموم الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر يقتضى الوجوب
على كل حال

According to the Quran and Ahadith the 'Wujub' of 'Amr bi al-Marouf wa Nahi An al-Munkar' holds valid for all times.¹

Nonetheless, there are certain conditions to be fulfilled for performing this duty. Some of the conditions are controversial. According to Imam Ghazali, these conditions are five in number; 'Takleef' (eligibility), 'Iman' (faith), 'Adalat' (righteousness), 'Hukoomat' (permission)² and

1. Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, p. 281
2. 'Hukoomat' has not been laid down as a condition by Imam Ghazali, as he refers only to the permission of the state. This condition is, however, redundant in the sense that 'Amr bi al-Marouf wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is to be performed by the state itself. The point is discussed at length in the next section.

‘Qudrat’ (power).¹ Of these the first three are essential, for without fulfilling these the performance of this duty is not incumbent. The last two conditions deal with the expediencies in which the ‘Wujub’ of the duty is either valid or invalid. A detailed discussion is made on the point under discussion to explain it.

‘Iman’

Basic to the duty of ‘Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar’ is ‘Iman’. A Muslim alone is to perform this duty, as informed by Imam Ghazali.

هذا نصرة للدين ، فكيف يكون من أهله من هو

جاحد لأصل الدين

1. Ahiya Uloom al-Din, Vol. II. pp. 274-84. On the condition relating to ‘Ihtisab’ he says:

It stands for the duty involving ‘Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar’.

In Allama Mawardi’s view,

‘Ihtisab’ implies the enjoining of Marooif, when it has been neglected by all and the forbidding of ‘Munkar’ when it is openly committed. Undoubtedly, the concept of ‘Ihtisab’ is closely related to that of ‘Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar’. None the less it is merely part of the whole. The scope of the term ‘Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar’ is vaster than that of ‘Ihtisab’. In other words, ‘Ihtisab’ covers only a particular department of life whereas ‘Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar’ governs the whole life, including reformation, preaching, invitation, fighting as well as politics. The conditions for the two duties are nonetheless similar.

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The duty aims at establishing Diyn'. How can a non-believer hostile to Diyn' perform it.'

Since the underlying spirit of this duty is to establish and uphold 'Diyn', only the believers are entrusted with the responsibility of its performance. That non-Muslims are exempted from its performance is reflective of tolerance in Islam. Allama Abdul Qadir Auduh Shaheed elaborates this point thus:

Since the duty of 'Maroof wa Munkar' is synonymous with 'Shariah', its incumbency on non-Muslims is pointless and amounts to coercion in the matter of accepting a religion, which is alien to Islam. Non-Muslims are thus free to believe what they wish to. There is no compulsion in this matter.'

'Adalat'

Only those who themselves follow the spirit of 'Amr bi al-Maroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar' some scholars hold, should perform this duty. For both the Quran and 'Ahadith' chide those wrong-doers who preach others. The Quran speaks of them thus:

Do ye enjoin right conduct
On the people, and forget
(To practise it) yourselves.

(II: 44)

أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ
بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ

1. Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, p. 274

2. al-Tashree al-Jinal

O ye who believe!
 Why say ye that
 Which ye do not ?
 Grievously odious is it
 In the sight of God
 That ye say that
 Which ye do not.

(LXI: 2-3)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَ
 تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ
 كَبُرَ مُقْتَدِرًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ
 تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ

So do 'Ahadith' condemn mere preachers. First and foremost for the preacher is self-perfection. After having attained perfection he should guide others. Should it not be so, his preaching would be fruitless. The real asset is perfection while guidance or preaching is almost the 'Zakat' of that asset. This contention is, however, called in question by Imam Ghazali on the following ground:

كل ما ذكره خيالات - وإنما الحق أن للفاسق أن يحسب
 وبرهانه هو أن تقول هل يشترط في الاحتساب أن يكون متعاطيه
 معصوماً عن المعاصي كلها ، فإن شرط ذلك فهو خرق للإجماع ثم
 حسم لباب الاحتساب إذ لا عصمة للصحابة فضلاً عن دونهم

The contention as mentioned above is pointless. There is no such pre-requisite. To insist on it amounts to the very negation of this duty because none, including the companions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.), can claim perfection.¹

1. Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, p. 275

Those who consider it as a pre-requisite, however, hold that the preacher should be, generally speaking, a righteous person. Even this modified form of this pre-requisite is unacceptable to Imam Ghazali. For him, just as a drunkard can take part in 'Jihad'; so can any believer dissuade others from committing 'Munkar'. Looking at this point from a different angle he remarks that the two acts of, wrong-doing and forbidding 'Munkar' are different from each other. A sinner

يجب على الانتهاء والنهي ، فن أين يلزمني من العصيان
بأحدهما أن أعصى الله تعالى بالثاني وإذا كان النهي واجباً على
فن أين يسقط وجوبه بإقداى

might contend that both shunning sins and forbidding 'Munkar' are his duties. Yet his neglect of one duty cannot render him not eligible for performing the other duty. Why should he be forced to neglect the other duty also? His neglect of a certain duty cannot exempt him from performing the other ones.¹

Moreover, he lays down this general principle:

إصلاح الغير لا يراد لإصلاح النفس ، ولا إصلاح النفس
لإصلاح الغير ، فالقول بترتب أحدهما على الآخر تحكم
To strive for making others perfect is not
to be linked up with self-perfection. One

1. Ahlya Ulloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, p. 276

preaches others not for the sake of self perfection. It is, therefore, pointless to consider self-perfection as a pre-requisite.¹

'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is, in fact, a duty in its own right. One is not supposed to take it up after having performed all other duties. 'Shariah' asks the believers of the performance of each duty. Imam Ghazali's view is shared by Allama Abu Bakar Jassas:

إن ترك الإنسان لبعض الفروض لا يسقط عنه فروضاً
غيرها . ألا ترى أن تركه للصلاة لا يسقط عنه فرض الصوم
وسائر العبادات . فكذا من لم يفعل سائر المعروف ولم ينه
عن سائر المنكر فإن فرض الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر
غير ساقط عنه

One's neglect of some duties does not exempt him from performing all other duties. For instance, one who does not say prayers is not supposed to give up fasting as well. Likewise, one who is not very particular about all 'Maroo'f wa Munkar' is not exempted from performing 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'.²

Nonetheless, it is common knowledge that the preaching by only a righteous person bears fruit while that of a wrong-doer has no impact whatsoever on his audience. Whether a wrong-doer is

1. Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, p. 275

2. Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. II, p. 40

to be exempted on this ground is discussed by Imam Ghazali thus:

من علم أن قوله لا يقبل في الحجة لعلم الناس بفسقه
فليس عليه الحجة بالوعظ إذ لا فائدة في وعظه ، فالفتى يؤثر في
إسقاط فائدة كلامه . ثم إذا سقطت فائدة كلامه سقط وجوب
الكلام

One who realises that his preaching would prove inconsequential is not supposed to perform this duty, for his obvious wrong-doings will shear his preaching of all its impact. Such a person is therefore exempted from its performance.¹

This, however, holds true for only verbal preaching. Such a person can and should participate in a forcible forbidding of 'Munkar'. He is supposed to use his power in this manner, as pointed out by Imam Ghazali:

أما الحجة القهرية فلا بشرط فيها ذلك فلا حرج على الفاسق
في إراقة الخمر وكسر الملامى وغيرها إذا قهر

أما الآيات التي استدلو بها فهو إنكار عليهم من حيث تركهم
المعروف لا من حيث أمرهم ، ولكن أمرهم دل على قوة علمهم
وعقاب العالم أشد لأنه لا عذر له مع قوة علمه

In a forcible attempt at forbidding 'Munkar' no self-perfection or righteousness is involved. Even a sinner, if he is able to,

1. Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn. Vol. II, p. 276

should destory wine and other forbidden instruments.

The Quran does chide those who fail to do righteous deeds. They are not, however, criticised for enjoining 'Maroof'. Since they enjoin 'Maroof', it reflects their awareness of all that is to be enjoined or forbidden. And, the scholars, as we all know, will be dealt with severely for having committed sins knowingly.¹

Hazrat Saeed b. Jubayr's following remark is quite apt:

لو كان المرء لا يأمر بالمعروف ولا ينهى عن المنكر حتى لا يكون فيه شيء ، ما أمر أحد بمعروف ولا نهي عن منكر

Should perfection be taken as a prerequisite for performing 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar', the duty cannot be at all performed by anyone.

Imam Malik comments on Jubayr's remarks thus:

صلى ، من ذا الذى ليس فيه شيء ؟

Saeed b. Jubayr rightly points out that no one is perfect.²

So far the discussion has been made along the legalistic lines. In so far as the justification of this viewpoint, it is doubtless desirable that the preachers should themselves be righteous persons. According to Hafiz Ibn Katheer,

1. Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, p. 276

2. Tafseer Ibn Kathir.

ذهب بعضهم إلى أن مرتكب المعاصي لا ينهى غيره وهذا ضعيف . والصحيح أن العالم يأمر بالمعروف وإن لم يقعله ، وينهى عن المنكر وإن ارتكبه . لكنه — والحالة هذه — ممنوع على تركه الطاعة وفعله المعصية لعلمه بها ومخالفته على بصيرة ، فإنه ليس من يعلم كمن لا يعلم

Some writers are of the view that a sinner is not entitled to dissuade others from indulging in sin. This viewpoint, is, however, unsubstantial. The learned, be he a sinner, has to forbid 'Munkar'. This will be no doubt something shameful for him. What makes his offence more serious is the fact that though he knows what is forbidden, he brazenly indulges in it. The learned persons are more guilty than the ignorant ones.¹

To preach Islam verbally and practise it otherwise is a mockery bringing disgrace to both Islam and the one who does so. Those who preach what they themselves do not follow are not considered seriously by others. The Quran asks believers to preach what they actually practise. If they act otherwise they are, according to the Quran, hypocrites. The believers should look on angels as their model. Shuaib, a prophet (P.B.U.H), asked the people to follow him:

**I wish not,
in opposition to you, to do**

وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُخَالِفَكُمْ

1. Tafsir Ibn Kathir,

إِلَى مَا أَنْتُمْ عَنْهُ ۚ
 That which I forbid you to do. ۚ
 I only desire (your) betterment
 To the best of my power;
 الْإِصْلَاحَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ (xl: 88)

Those who preach what they do not practise are, as informed by the Prophet (P.B.U.H), doomed to hell. On seeing such a person those in hell would question him thus:

أَنْتَ كُنْتَ تَأْمُرُ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَى عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ؟

Did you not use to enjoin 'Maroof' and forbid 'Munkar'? (Yet you are placed here).

To this he would reply,

إِنِّي كُنْتُ أَمُرُ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَلَا أَفْعَلُهُ ۚ دُئِنْتَنِي عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأَفْعَلُهُ

I no doubt used to preach 'Maroof' but I did not practise it. Though I used to forbid 'Munkar', I indulged in it.¹

The Government or Its Permission

It is contended by a few scholars that people in general are not to perform the duty of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Only the ruler or those deputed by him are to perform this duty.

Let us first discuss the point whether the ruler or masses should carry on this duty.

1. Bukhari, *Kitab al-Fatan*

In performing 'Amr bi al-MarooF wa Nahi An al-Munkar' one has, no doubt, to resort to using power. Masses, particularly the oppressed ones, have been directed to rise against the tyrant rulers who are given to acts of transgression. To adduce this point the following two 'Ahadith' are quoted.

أفضل الجهاد كلمة عدل عند سلطان جائر

سيد الشهداء حمزة بن عبد المطلب ورجل قام إلى إمام جائر فأمره ونهاه فقتله ؟

The best form of 'Jihad' is to tell the truth to a tyrant ruler.¹ Hamza b. Abdul Muttalib is the leader of martyrs. One who enjoins 'MarooF' on a tyrant ruler and dissuades him from indulging in 'Munkar' and is killed in this cause is a righteous person.²

In the opinion of Imam Nauvi,

قال العلماء ولا يختص الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر بأصحاب الولايات ، بل ذلك ثابت لآحاد المسلمين . قال إمام الحرمين : والدليل عليه إجماع المسلمين فإن غير الولاية في الصدر الأول والعصر الذي يليه كانوا يأمرون الولاية بالمعروف وينهونهم عن المنكر مع تقرير المسلمين إياهم وترك توبيخهم على التشاغل بالأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر من غير ولاية

1. Abu Daud, Kitab al-Malahim

2. al-Targheeb wa al-Tarheeb, Vol. IV, p. 2

Not only those in power but Muslims in general are to perform the duty of 'Amr bi al-Marooḥ wa Nahī Anal-Munkar', as explained by the classical writers. This view has the consensus of the whole 'Ummah'. For those who were not in power used to enjoin 'Marooḥ' and forbid 'Munkar', as evident from the early history of Islam. In so doing, they were never discouraged.¹

Muslims are characterised, as recorded in the Surah, 'Haj', by the fact that should they be in power, they establish prayer, give charity, and enjoin 'Maḥooḥ' and forbid 'Munkar'. The purport of the verse makes it crystal clear that Muslims in general are to perform the duty. Commenting on the idea expressed in the verse Hazrat Umar b. Abdul Aziz observes:

ألا إنها ليست على الوالى وحده ولكنها على الوالى والمولى عابه

It is to be noted that the verse is not addressed to the ruler alone. On the contrary, both the ruler and masses are to perform it.²

Next point to be explored is whether the permission of the state is required for performing the duty.

Those who consider the permission as a pre-requisite have in mind the idea of the performance

1. Shirah Muslim, Vol. I, p. 51

2. Tafseer Ibn Kathir, Vol. III, p. 226

of this duty in an organised manner. Should everyone be free to discharge the duty, it would result in chaos. Though Imam Ghazali does not regard it as a pre-requisite he concedes the point:

ربما ينتدب لها من ليس أهلاً لها لقصور معرفته أو قصور
ديانته ، فيؤدى ذلك إلى وجوه من الخلل

Sometimes incompetent persons, lacking in piety, scholarship and righteousness, perform this duty, which breeds many other evils.¹

According to Allama Abdul Qadir Auduhu Shaheed,

والذين يشترطون إذن الإمام يقصلون من هذا الشرط
تنظيم الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر

Those who consider the permission of the ruler as a pre-requisite for the performance of this duty are interested in carrying it out in an organised form.²

Since the Quran does not refer to the permission of the ruler as a condition, most of the scholars attach to it no importance. As pointed out by Imam Ghazali,

هذا الاشتراط فاسد فإن الآيات والأخبار التي
أوردناها تدل على أن كل من رأى منكراً فسكت عليه عصي
إذ يجب نهيه أينما رآه وكيفما رآه على العموم . فالتخصيص بشرط

1. Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, p. 281

2. al-Tashree al-Jinai, p. 501

التفويض من الإمام تحكم لا أصل له

this condition is unnecessary, for the duty, as evident from the Quranic verses and Ahadith, is a general one. One who acts as a silent spectator to the commitment of 'Munkar' is a transgressor. He is asked by the Quran to forbid 'Munkar' in every possible way. It is, therefore, absurd to consider the permission of the ruler as a pre-requisite for the performance of this duty.¹

Making reference to the above quoted Ahadith Imani Ghazali adds :

فإذا جاز الحكم على الإمام على مراغمته فكيف يحتاج
إلى إذن الإمام

استمرار عادات السلف على الحسبة على الولاة قاطع بإجماعهم
على الاستغناء عن التفويض ، بل كل من أمر بمعروف فإن كان
الوالى راضياً به فذاك وإن كان ساخطاً له فسخطه له منكر
يجب الإنكار عليه فكيف يحتاج إلى أذنه

When the ruler himself is to be censured as part of this duty, how can his permission be regarded as a pre-requisite? The tradition of the criticism of the rulers by the scholars and pious proves itself that no such permission is required. Moreover,

1. Ahiya Ulloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, pp. 276-77

if the ruler disapproves some acts which are 'Maroof', to amounts itself to committing 'Munkar'. In sum, 'the permission is not at all necessary'.¹

'Amr bi al-MarooF wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is thus to be performed neither by rulers nor with their prior permission. It is a duty incumbent on all Muslims. Allama Saaduddin Taftazani makes this observation:

كان المسلمون في الصدر الأول وبغده يأمرّون الولاية
 بالمعروف وينهونهم عن المنكر من غير تكبير من أحد ولا توقيف
 على إذن فعلم أنه لا يختص بالولاية بل يجوز لأحد الرعية
 بالقول والفعل

Muslims always criticised the rulers as part of their performance of 'MarooF wa Munkar' in the early period of Islam. In so doing they never met with any opposition or resistance. Nor were they required to obtain the permission from the rulers. It makes the point clear that this duty is not incumbent exclusively on the rulers and is to be performed both verbally and practically by all Muslims.²

'Wujub'—its conditions

(1) Takleef (eligibility)

Of all the conditions the first is one's eligibility in terms of reference as ordained by

1. Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, pp. 276-77

2. Shirah al-Maqasid, Vol. II, p. 180

Shariah'. Should someone who is not eligible according to 'Shariah', forbid 'Munkar', it is not forbidden. He will be, in fact, rewarded for it. Imam Ghazali comments on the justification of this condition in these words:

إنه شرط الوجوب ، فأما إمكان الفعل وجوازه فلا يستدعى إلا العقل حتى أن الصبي المراهق للبلوغ المميز . وإن لم يكن مكلفاً ، فله إنكار المنكر . وله أن يريق الخمر ويكسر الملامى . وإذا فعل ذلك نال به ثواباً ولم يكن لأحد منعه من حيث أنه ليس بمكلف ، فإن هذه قرينة ، وهو من أهلها

The condition is technical by nature. Even one who is not of age may forbid 'Munkar'. If he does so, he will be rewarded. He is not to be discouraged for doing so, as it is reflective of his wish to be pious.¹

2) Qudrat (Power) Next pre-requisite is to possess the power to perform the duty. For one who is not powerful, the duty is not 'Wajib', as informed by the Prophet(P.B.U.H),

من رأى منكم منكراً فليغيره بيده . فإن لم يستطع فليسهه . فإن لم يستطع فليقلبه . وذلك أضعف الإيمان

One who witnesses the commitment of 'Munkar' he should check it forcibly. Should he be unable to do so, he should condemn it. If he is not capable of so

1. Whether both adults and minors are to perform this duty will be discussed later.

doing he should feel that the act is wrong. This last type of reaction to 'Munkar' is indicative of the fact that his faith is not firm.¹

Those who are powerful enough should check 'Munkar' forcibly. Otherwise he should lodge his protest against it. The last recourse is to condemn it. As pointed out by Imam Abu Bakar Jassas,

أخبر النبي ﷺ أن إنكار المنكر على هذه الوجوه
الثلاثة على حسب الإمكان . ودل على أنه إذا لم يستطع تغييره بيده
فعلية تغييره بلسانه ، ثم إذا لم يمكن ذلك فليس عليه أكثر من
إنكاره بقلبه

To check 'Munkar' the believer should follow anyone of three methods as suggested by the Prophet (P.B.U.H). Should he not be powerful enough to check 'Munkar' forcibly, he should, at least condemn it preferably in public or personally.²

Grounds for Inability

According to 'Shariah', on the following grounds one is exempted from the performance of this duty.

1. Muslim, Kitab al-Iman
2. Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. II, p. 36

Physical Inability

On the possible forms of the inability to perform the duty is, as set out by jurists, physical inability. As remarked by Imam Ghazali,

ولا يحق أن العاجز ليس عليه حجة إلا بقلبه

It is common knowledge that the weak are not to check 'Munkar' forcibly. They should condemn it personally.¹

Lack of Knowledge

Another ground is the lack of knowledge. Those ignorant of the concept of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' are, as stated by Allama Abdul Qadir Auduhu Shaheed, not required to perform it.

ويلحق بالعجز الحسى العجز العلمى

Included in the provision of the physical inability is also one's lack of knowledge.²

The nature and scope of 'Maroo'f wa Munkar', as already indicated, are too vast. Erudition and insight are called for appreciating certain teachings of Islam. One is, however, required to enjoin and forbid the 'Maroo'f wa Munkar' that he knows well. Unaware of his limitations one might do harm to the very purpose of this

1. Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, p. 280

2. al-Tashree al-Jinal, p. 498

duty. Classical writers, therefore, state explicitly that only the erudite among the believers should exercise their discretion in ascertaining 'Maroof wa Munkar'. Others should confine themselves to what they are familiar with. In Imam al-Harmain's opinion,

إن الحكم الشرعى إذا استوى فى إدراكه الخاص والعام
ففيه للعالم وغير العالم الأمر بالمعروف والنهى عن المنكر ،
وإذا اختص مدركه بالاجتهاد فليس للعوام فيه أمر ونهى بل الأمر
فيه موكول إلى أهل الاجتهاد

Such acts that are well-known can be enjoined or forbidden by both the scholar and the layman. However, issues involving the use of discretion should be left to only scholars who are to decide the matter.¹

In line with it is the view of Imam Nauvi:

إنما يأمر وينهى من كان عالماً بما يأمر به وينهى عنه ،
وذلك يختلف باختلاف الشيء فإن كان من الواجبات الظاهرة
والحرمات المشهورة كالصلاة والصيام والزنا والخمر ونحوها
فكل المسلمين علماء بها . وإن كان من دقائق الأفعال
والأقوال ، وما يتعلق بالاجتهاد لم يكن للعوام مدخل فيه ولا
لهم إنكاره بل ذلك للعلماء

Only those versed in 'Maroof wa Munkar' should enjoin or forbid them. Should

1. Shireh al-Maqasid, Vol. II, p. 281

an act be controversial, the scholars alone are entitled to pass any judgement. In matters that are commonly known such as prayer, fasting, drinking and fornication everyone is free to enjoin or forbid them accordingly.¹

The same point is restated by Imam Ghazali thus:

العامى ينبغي له أن لا يحتجب إلا فى الحليات المعلومه

A commoner should perform the duty (of enjoining and forbidding) in respect of acts that are commonly known.²

Fear of Repercussions

One is likely to neglect the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar,' on being afraid of consequences. On this point Imam Ghazali makes the following observation.

لا يقف سقوط الوجوب على العجز الحسى بل يلتحق به ما يخاف عليه مكروهاً بناله ، فذلك فى معنى العجز

Not only does the physical inability exempt one from its performance but also the fear of consequences arising out of the performance of this duty is a valid ground for not performing it.³

1. Shirah M. slim, Vol. I, p. 51

2. Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, p. 281

3. Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, p. 280

For Muhadith Ibn Batal,

والنصيحة لازمة على قدر الطاقة إذا علم الناصح أنه يقبل
نصحه ويطاع أمره ، وأمن على نفسه المكروه ، فإن خشي أذى
فهو في سعة

In performing the duty of guiding others one should bear in mind his own position. Should he feel that he is in a position to influence others, he should certainly perform it. On the contrary, if it involves some repercussions, it is not binding on him to perform the duty.¹

Different forms of Suffering

Reproduced below is the gist of Imam Ghazali's views on the sufferings attendant upon performing the duty of 'Amr bi al-MarooF wa Nahi An al-Munkar':

يطلب الإنسان لنفسه ولأقاربه والمختصين به أربعة
أشياء : العلم ، والصحة ، والثروة ، والجاه ، ويكره في هذه
الأربعة أمرين : أحدهما زوال ما هو حاصل موجود ، والآخر
انتفاء ما هو متظر مفقود .
فرجع المكروه إلى قسمين : أحدهما خوف امتناع المتظر ،
وهذا لا ينبغي أن يكون مَرخصاً في ترك الأمر بالمعروف والنهي
عن المنكر .

Knowledge, health, wealth and rank are the coveted things for everyone. On realis-

1. Shirah Muslim al-Nauvi, Vol. I, p. 54

ing that he is either deprived of or denied anyone of them, one feels offended. It is therefore undesirable to neglect the performance of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' for the fear of losing any such coveted item.¹

For instance, if a student overlooks the mistakes of his teacher for the fear of being deprived of getting further education, or if a patient turns blind to the wrongs of a physician for the fear of the denial of his consultation. Likewise if one acts as a silent spectator to the wrong doings of his patron. After presenting these instances in point the Imam remarks:

هذا كله لا يسقط وجوب الحسبة لأن هذه زيادات
امتنت ، وتسمية امتناع حصول الزيادات ضرراً مجازاً ، وإنما
الضرر الحقيقي فوات حاصل ، ولا يستثنى من هذا شيء إلا ما
تدعو إليه الحاجة ويكون في فوائده مغلور يزيد على مغلور السكوت
على المنكر

In all such eventualities one is not exempted from performing his duty of guiding the wrong-doers, for in so doing the guide is likely to lose what is not permitted to give up the duty for the fear of the denial of what is not due to him. The real loss is involved in cases where one is likely to lose his due. There is no exception to this rule. Exceptions may be admitted in cases where one is likely to suffer.²

1. Ahl'ya Uloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, p. 282

2. Ibid

Elaborating the idea implied in exceptions he states:

أما في العلم فثل أن يكون جاهلاً بمهمات دينه . ولم يجد
إلا معلماً واحداً ، ولا قدرة له على الرحلة إلى غيره . وعلم أن
المحتسب عليه قادر على أن يسد طريق الوصول إليه لكون العالم
مطيعاً له أو مستمعاً لقوله ، فإذا الصبر على الجهل بمهمات الدين
معدور ، والسكوت على المنكر محذور . ولا يبعد أن يرجح
أحدهما ويختلف ذلك بتفاخر المنكر وبشدة الحاجة إلى العلم
لتعلقه بمهمات الدين

فهذه الأمور كلها إذا ظهرت وقويت لم يبعد استنناؤها
ولكن الأمر فيها منوط باجتهاد المحتسب حتى يستغنى فيها
قلبه ، ويزن أحد المذنبين بالآخر ، ويرجع بنظر الدين لا
بموجب الهوى والطبع فإن رجح بموجب الدين سمي سكوته
مدارة ، وإن رجح بموجب الهوى سمي سكوته مداينة ، وهذا
أمر باطن لا يطلع عليه إلا بنظر دقيق ، ولكن الناقد بصير ،
فحق على كل متدين فيه أن يراقب قلبه ويعلم أن الله تعالى مطلع
على باعته وصارفه أنه الدين أو الهوى ، ويستجد كل نفس ما
علمت من سوء أو خير محضاً عند الله ، ولو في فلة خاطر أو
لفتة نظر من غير ظلم وجور . فما الله بظلام للعبيد

If there is only one scholar versed in the fundamentals of Islam in a town someone finds him indulging in 'Munkar'. He is, however, permitted to opt for not criticising the scholar, should he feel that

the scholar would refuse to impart him knowledge. If he feels it strongly that he would suffer more on account of criticising the scholar, he may act as a silent spectator to the scholar's wrong doings. Similarly, if there is only one physician in a town indulging in 'Munkar', who is likely to turn hostile to the person who tries to dissuade him, one may not make it a point to criticise. Same holds true for a poor person dependant upon the financial support of a rich person who is found indulging in 'Munkar'. If the poor has no other means and is likely to starve for offending the rich person, he may overlook the rich man's indulgence in 'Munkar'. In other words, in exceptional cases one is exempted. Should one feel in doubt in such a situation, he should better seek guidance from the scholar. In so doing, his only concern should be to seek guidance. A scholar having insights into 'Diyn' can guide him. Allah knows everything. A believer should bear this in mind and make heart-searching. He should convince himself whether he is prompted by his own selfish motives or by the real danger in obtaining exemption. Whatever one does is recorded by Allah and everyone will be judged in the light of his acts. Allah is not certainly unjust.¹

Discussing another form of suffering Imam Ghazali observes:

أما القسم الثاني وهو فوات الحاصل فهو مكروه ومعتبر
في جواز السكوت في الأمور الأربعة إلا العلم

No one likes to be deprived of what he possesses. Excepting knowledge, the principle is applicable in the remaining cases.¹

As it is, one cannot be deprived of the knowledge he possesses. One's own ignorance might result in this loss. As such no other external agency can harm anyone in this respect. The fear of the loss of knowledge is therefore out of question. In so far as health is at issue, there does exist a danger in this respect. The one who is criticised may even kill the guide. In such a situation it is not incumbent on one to perform this duty. So is the case with wealth. It is, nonetheless, far better to sacrifice one's health or wealth in the cause of Allah. Imam Ghazali lays down the following general principle:

ولكل واحد من الضرب والنهب حد في القلة لا يكثر
به كالحبة في المال ، واللطمة الخفيفة ألمها في الضرب ، وحد في
الكثرة يتعين اعتباره ، ووسط يقع في محل التنبه واجتهاد ، وعلى
المؤمن أن يجتهد في ذلك ويرجع جانب الدين ما أمكن

In so far as violence is at issue, it is almost impossible to do full justice. Same

1. *Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn*, Vol. II, p. 283

holds true for property, as it is quite likely for one to commit an act of omission or commission. In certain cases one feels compelled for using his own discretion. The pious should exercise it carefully and make it a point not to lose sight of the fundamentals of 'Diyn'.¹

Should one feel shy about the status of those to be guided, two points are to be borne in mind. First, one's status should not be the sole consideration. For example, in certain cases it is permissible to blacken one's face and in so doing the status of the offender should not matter at all. Similarly, if one given to luxurious modes of transport has to walk on foot for performing this duty, it should not be considered as a genuine excuse. The guilty should be taken to task on this account. On this point Imam Ghazali adds further:

قد دلت العمومات على تأكيد وجوب الحسبة ، وعظم
الخطر في السكوت عنها ، فلا يقابله إلا ما عظم في الدين
خطره ، والمال والنفس والمروءة قد ظهر في الشرع خطرها ،
فأما مزايا الجاه والحشمة ودرجات التجميل وطلب ثناء الخلق
فكل ذلك لا خطر له

The import of the Quran and Ahadith, generally speaking, implies the 'Wujut' of criticism. To feel shy of checking others in undesirable. Moved by the

considerations of personal gain, status and such other motives, one should not neglect this duty, for the 'Diyn' does not attach any importance to such vaingloriousness.¹

Fear of Hostility is not a Genuine Ground

That the act of guidance or reformation might antagonise and make others hostile should not be a deterrent for one performing the duty of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Those who love Allah are hardly afraid of any reproachment:

Fighting in the way of God,
And never afraid
Of the reproaches
Of such as find fault.

(V: 54)

يُجَاهِدُونَ فِي
سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا
يَخَافُونَ كُومَةً لَّائِمٍ

In his comment on the above-quoted verse Hafiz Ibn Kathir observes:

أى لا يردهم عما هم فيه من طاعة الله وإقامة الحدود وقتال أعدائه والأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر لا يردهم عن ذلك راد ، ولا يصدمهم عنه صاد ، ولا يحبك فيهم لوم لائم ولا عدل عاذل

They follow Allah, enforce the Law, fight against His enemies, enjoin 'Marooif' and forbid 'Munkar'. No one can prevent

1. Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, p. 284

them from performing their duty. Nor are they afraid of any reproachment or repurcussion.¹

According to Hazrat Abadah b. Samat's report,

روى عن عبادة بن الصامت أنه قال : يا بعنا رسول الله ﷺ أن نقول بالحق أينما كنا لا نخاف في الله لومة لائم .

We had pledged before the Prophet (P.B. U.H.) that we would ever speak the truth and would never be afraid of the reproachment of any enemy of Allah.²

The reports is corroborated by another 'Hadith transmitted by Hazrat Abu Zar:

أوصاني خليلي ﷺ بنحوال من الخبر : أوصاني أن لا أخاف في الله لومة لائم وأوصاني أن أقول الحق وإن كان مرأ

The Prophet (P.B.U.H) gave some pieces of sound advice as his last word, He advised me to ignore all reproachments in my efforts for Allah's cause and to speak the truth, be it too harsh.³

As pointed out by Allama Qartabi,

أجمع المسلمون فيما ذكر ابن عبد البر أن المتكر واجب تغييره على كل من قدر عليه ، وأنه إذا لم يلحقه بتغييره إلا

1. Tafseer Ibn Kathir, Vol. II, p. 70

2. Bukhari

3. al-Targheeb wa al-Tarheeb, Vol. IV, p. 11

الاورم الذى لا يتعدى إلى الأذى فإن ذلك لا يذنبى أن يمنعه من تغييره

There is consensus among Muslims, as reported by Ibn Abd al-Bar, on the point the all those who are capable should forbid 'Munkar'. In so doing, reproachment should not be a serious consideration.¹

On the point under discussion Imam Ghazali holds:

ولو تركت الحسبة بلوم لائم أو باغتيال فاسق أو شتمه
أو تعنيفه أو سقوط المنزلة عن قلبه أو قلب أمثاله لم يكن
للحسبة وجوب أملا إذ لا تنفك الحسبة عنه

Should one give up the duty for the fear of reproachment or hostility, it would be impossible for anyone to perform this duty, for criticism entails such repurcussions.²

The Suffering of Others

A discussion has been made, so far, on the repurcussions to be faced by the person engaged in performance of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Should the life or property of his family members or relatives be in danger as a consequence of his performance of this duty, he should better refrain from its performance. For it is forbidden to put other Muslims to incon-

1. al-Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. IV, p. 48

2. Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, p. 284.

venience. However, if the life or property is not endangered, with reference to the degree of the incidence of 'Munkar' the decision is to be taken.

Conditions for Exemption from Duty

One is exonerated from the responsibility of performing 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi an al-Munkar', if he is not in a position to perform it. Whether this exoneration is to be granted on the basis of certain conditions or in a loose manner is discussed by Imam Ghazali thus:

إن غلب على الظن أنه يصاب لم يجب ، وإن غلب أنه لا
يصاب . ح ومجرد التجويز لا يسقط الوجوب فإن ذلك ممكن
في كل حبة

Should one feel strongly that the performance of this duty would put him to much inconvenience, he should better give it up. On the contrary, he is to perform this duty in absence of any danger. In establishing one's position sheer hypothesis should not be the criterion, for criticism entails some dangers.¹

One should be exonerated in case he is firmly persuaded of the imminent dangers. Such a knowledge can be gained in this manner:

أعنى بالظن الذي يجوز مثله ترك استئصال الماء

1. Ahl'ya Uloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, pp. 281-2

والعلول إلى التيمم ، فإذا انتهى إلى هذا الحد لم يعد أن يرخض
في ترك الحسبة

Knowledge in such matters is synonymous with the dictates of common sense. Same holds true for giving up ablution without exploring properly the possible sources of getting water. However, if one has a conviction about serious repercussions he stands exonerated from this duty.¹

The Path of Consistency

Conditions governing both the incumbence of or exemption from the duty of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' are: One is, no doubt, entitled to exemption from this duty, but it is applicable in genuine cases, Moreover, it is a concession by its nature. The fearless may perform it even in the face of all dangers. The righteous are marked by their bravado, consistency and devotion to Allah's cause by proclaiming the truth and rejecting falsehood. The 'Hadith' reported by Hazrat Umar speaks of this quality of the righteous:

أنه تصيب أمتي في آخر الزمان من سلطانهم شدائد لا
منه إلا رجل عرف دين الله ، فجاهد بلسانه ويده وقلبه ،
والذي سبق له السوابق ، ورجل عرف دين الله فصديق
، ورجل عرف دين الله فسكت عليه ، فان رأى من يعمل

1. **Ahyia Ulloom al-Din, Vol. II, p. 283.**

الخير أحبه عليه ، وان رأى من يعمل بباطل أبغضه عليه ، فذلك
الذى ينجر على إبطانه كله

In the later period the Ummah would be subjected to oppression by those in power. Nonetheless, deliverance is for those who fight in Allah's cause. Allah's Grace and all the bounties of the world and of the Hereafter would be bestowed on such warriors. Next to them are those who bear witness to 'Diyin' in both their private and public life. They are followed by those who recognised the truth but acted as quiet witnesses. Those who love the righteous and hate the transgressors would also be delivered, for he had love of righteous acts and hatred for wrong-doings.¹

The fighting for the truth doubtless calls for an indomitable courage and heart and soul dedication to 'Diyin'. Blessed are those who act thus, as informed by the Prophet (P.B.U.H).

ألا لا يمنن رجلا مهابة الناس أن يتكلم بالحق إذا علمه
ألا إن أفضل الجهاد كلمة حق عند سلطان جائر

One should not give in for fear of others. It is to be noted that the most blessed is the one who speaks the truth in the presence of a tyrant.²

1. Mishket al-Masabeeh.

2. Muanad Ahmad, Vol. III, p. 19.

The best form of 'Jihad', as evident from the above quoted saying of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) is to speak the truth in the presence of a tyrant. In other words, the more one risks in this cause, the more he makes himself entitled to blessings. Allama Khattabi's comment on the 'Hadith' quoted above explains why the speaking of the truth in the presence of a tyrant is referred to as the best form of 'Jihad'.

إنما صار ذلك أفضل الجهاد لأن من جاهد العدو كان
 متردداً بين رجاء وخوف لا يدري هل يغلب أو يغلب ،
 وصاحب السلطان مقهور في يده ، فهو إذا قال الحق ، وأمره
 بالمعروف فقد تعرض للتلف ، وأهدف نفسه للهلاك ، فصار ذلك
 من أفضل أنواع الجهاد من أجل غلبة الخوف

It is the best form of 'Jihad', for the one who fights for this cause on a battle-ground might be confident, in a certain degree, of his victory as well as of survival. However, one who dares to speak the truth in the presence of tyrant is well aware of the imminent punishment. It is also worth noting that such a person tells something to one who is superior to him in every respect. For his indifference to repercussions, and a show of bravado, and fearlessness such a person is said to have performed the supreme form of 'Jihad'¹.

1. Ma'alim al-Sunan, Vol. IV, p. 350

The history of the Muslim Ummah bears eloquent testimony to the fact that a number of righteous Muslims have kept up the tradition of bravado and fearlessness. In certain periods of history Muslims no doubt acted as quite witnesses to the spread of 'Munkar'. Nonetheless, instances of a fearless resistance to all forms of 'Munkar' are not few. This has been indeed a characteristic of the Ummah down the centuries. Spiritually decadent and out of Allah's Grace would be the Muslim society given to indulgence in 'Munkar' and it would perish ultimately, as evident from the following 'Hadith'

إذا رأيت أمتي تهاب أن تقول للظالم : يا ظالم ، فقد تودع

منهم

When you find the Ummah afraid of dubbing a tyrant as a tyrant, it should be concluded that it is out of Allah's Grace and is likely to incur Allah's penalty for being given to sins.¹

Love of property and life is the main obstacle in performing 'Amr bi al Maroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Such an attitude is no doubt innate in human nature. One is legitimately afraid of those in power, for his life, job and other assets might be at stake. Nonetheless, fear on such ground is not worthy of a Muslim. The conviction that Allah alone is the Sustainer helps

1. al-Targheeb wa al-Tarheeb, Vol. IV, p. 11

one free himself of all bondage. If one is afraid of physical suffering or economic loss, it smacks of lack of a firm belief in Allah. The Prophet, (P.B.U.H) therefore, infused into his followers the conviction that Muslims should enjoin 'Maroofof' and forbid 'Munkar' without any fear of repercussions, as this is the quality of Muslim:

يا أيها الناس مروا بالمعروف وانها عن المنكر قبل
أن تدعوا الله فلا يستجيب لكم ، وقبل أن تستغفروه فلا يغفر
لكم، إن الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر لا يدفع رزقاً ولا
يقرب أجلاً

O people, enjoin 'Maroofof' and forbid 'Munkar, before you are summoned by Allah. The performance of 'Amr bi al-Maroofof wa Nahi An al-Munkar' neither deprives one of his bread nor does it endanger one's life.¹

Fear of breeding another vice

One should reflect on the consequences attendant upon the performance of 'Amr bi al-Maroofof wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. That its performance should not give rise to another vice should be thoroughly looked into. Similarly, one should see to it the forbidding of a minor 'Munkar' should not result in the indulgence in a major 'Munkar'. One of the conditions making this

1. al-Targheeb wa al-Tarheeb, Vol. IV, pp. 9-10

duty incumbent, in the words of Allama Az al-Diyn Abd al-Malik, is as follows:

أن يغلب على ظنه أنه إن نهاه لا يلحقه مضرة ، ولا يزيد
المنهى عنه أيضاً في منكراته متعتاً لإنكار

Those performing this duty should ensure that the forbidding of 'Munkar' does not endanger themselves and those preached do not tend to act stubbornly.¹

The two possible repurcussions of the performance of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' are; those performing it might suffer or it might lead to another 'Munkar' or the attitude of those indulging in 'Munkar' might be hardened. Should there be such an eventuality, one should better give up its performance. Another aspect of the point under discussion is brought out by Allama Sa'ad al-Diyn Taftazani thus:

منها (أى من شرائط الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن
المنكر) انتفاء مضرة ومفسدة أكثر من ذلك المنكر أو مثله .
وهذا في حق الوجوب دون الجواز ، حتى قالوا : يجوز وإن ظن
أنه يقتل ولا ينكى نكابة بضرب ونحوه ، لكن يرخص له
السكوت

One of the conditions for the performance of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is that the forbidding of 'Mur-

1. *Mabariq al-azhar Shirah Mashariq al-Anwar*,
Vol. I, p. 50

kar' should not lead to chaos and mischief. It should be one of the considerations for determining the 'Wujub' of this duty. Some authorities are of the view that one should perform this duty only in case there is no risk. One is allowed to act as a silent spectator, if he apprehends some risk.¹

Imam Ghazali is, however, opposed to this generalisation. One doubtless achieves martyrdom if he sacrifices his life in Allah's cause, Imam argues, but in so doing he should see to it some really good results are obtained. One's sacrifice should not go in vain, as it is against the dictates of both common sense and 'Diyn':

أن يعلم أنه يصاب بمكروه ولكن يبطل المنكر بفعله
كما يقدر على أن يرمى زجاجة فيكسرها ويريق الخمر أو يضرب
العود الذي في يده ضربة مختطفة فيكسره في الحال ، ويتعطل عليه
هذا المنكر ولكن يعلم أنه يرجع إليه فيضرب رأسه ، فهذا ليس
بواجب وليس بحرام بل هو مستحب

Should one be persuaded of the fact that his preaching would be really fruitful, even if it entails some risk, one should perform the duty of forbidding 'Munkar'. For example, if one is in a position to destroy the glass of drinking wine or musical instruments, he should carry on his duty. In such a situation the performance of this duty is neither obligatory

1. Shirah al-Maqasid, Vol II: p. 180

nor forbidden but desirable.¹

the gist of Imam Ghazali's views on the point under discussion is reproduced below:

Should one feel that his performance of the duty would be fruitful, he should make it a point to go ahead. What is important is that the possibility of success of this move should be ensured.

However, in an otherwise situation such as that of an armed drunkard, one should better avoid the performance of his duty. For there is a strong possibility that the armed drunkard would kill the preacher and resume drinking wine. In this case one's sacrifice would go waste. The teachings of 'Diyā' aim at doing good. There is no point in performing this duty in such an odd situation. It should be in fact, forbidden to perform the duty in this case. One should perform this duty in case it proves really fruitful and does not land the preacher in any serious trouble. It is forbidden for one to perform the duty in case he is aware of the dreadful repercussions of his preaching that might endanger the life of his family members or friends. The forbidding of one 'Munkar' as stated earlier, should not give rise to the incidence of another 'Munkar' Should one feel that his preaching would provoke and antagonise other, he should not insist on the performance of this

1. Ahlīya Uloom al-Diyā, Vol II, p. 280.

duty. What is the spirit of 'Diyn' is that people should not indulge in 'Munkar'. The total elimination of 'Munkar' is not at all the aim of 'Diyn'. An evaluation of the repercussions attendant upon forbidding 'Munkar' can be easily made on being forbidden to eat meat if someone is likely to indulge in cannibalism, it is better not to preach him. On the contrary, on being forbidden to commit murder if some one is likely to rob the preacher of his valuables it is better to preach him. In sum, the preacher should exercise his discretion, as no hard and fast rule can be drawn.¹

Imam Qaiym's discussion on this issue is both perceptive and apt. The aim of this duty, in his opinion, is to achieve all that is to the liking of Allah and the Prophet (P.B.U.H). Should the forbidding of a certain 'Munkar' result in the occurrence of another serious 'Munkar', it is not permissible to perform the duty in such a contingency. 'The Imam adds further:

إنكار المنكر أربع درجات : الأولى أن يزول ويخلفه
ضده ، الثانية أن يقل وإن لم يزل بجملته ، الثالثة أن يخلفه ما
هو مثله ، الرابعة أن يخلفه ما هو شر منه . فالدرجتان الأولىان
مشروعتان والثالثة موضع اجتهاد ، والرابعة محرمة

The forbidding of 'Munkar' might lead to the following results; i) the 'Munkar' is re-

placed by 'Maroof'; ii) the 'Munkar' loses some of its hold; iii) it is replaced by another 'Munkar' of the same degree; iv) it is replaced by a major and more ignominious 'Munkar'. The first two results are in line with the spirit of this duty. In case of the third result one has to exercise discretion whereas to obtain the result mentioned in the last, is forbidden .

To illustrate the point the Imam instances an example. It would be wise to make those indulging in 'Munkar' take part in games as a result of preaching. Should they leave it on their own, it is possible that they might find for themselves a worse past time. Similarly, one addicted to reading immoral literature should not be preached, if it is apprehended that he would turn to atheistic literature. An episode recounted by Sheikh al-Islam Imam Ibn Taymiya illustrates the point well. Once on his way he found some Tartars drinking wine but he advised his friends not to ask the Tartars to stop drinking, for as long as they would be in their senses, they would be busy in killing and bloodshed of innocents. The drinking of wine, he told his friends, is no doubt forbidden but with a view to make people turn subversive to Allah. But those who are addicted to carnage should be allowed to remain in a state of drunkenness.¹

How to ensure Ineffectiveness

Often do the preachers feel sceptic about the

1 al-Aalam al-Mawqain, Vol. II, pp. 15-16.

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effectiveness of their preaching. One should, however, carry on the performance of the duty of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' without any such consideration, as the duty is 'Wajib'.¹ According to Imam Nauvi, it is the duty of Muslims to enjoin 'Marooif' and forbid 'Munkar' without bothering about its success or failure:

قال العلماء : ولا يسقط عن المكلف الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر لكونه لا يفيد في ظنه ، بل يجب عليه فعله فإن الذكرى تنفع المؤمنين ، وقد قدمنا أن الذي عليه الأمر والنهي ، لا القبول ، وكما قال الله عز وجل (ما على الرسول إلا البلاغ)

The apprehension that the performance of the duty would not accrue desired result does not exempt one from the performance of this duty. Even if one feels it strongly, it, he should carry on his duty. For a piece of sound advice does bring about sooner or later some changes. One's duty, as already pointed out, is to perform 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' and it is not his business to anticipate its effect. Even the Prophet (P.B.U.H) is, in sum, a messenger 'as he is not supposed to force people to believe in his teachings.¹

Thus without any regard for the effectiveness it is incumbent on one to perform the "Wajib" duty of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. One

1. Shirah Muslim, Vol 1 p. 51

should, however, see to it that the performance of this duty does not entail serious repercussions. Discussing the pre-requisites of 'Wujub' of 'Amr bi al Maroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar' Allama Az-al-Din Abd al-Malik remarks:

أن يغلب على ظنه أن نهيهِ مؤثر لا عبث

One should ensure that the performance of the duty would not be in vain.¹

For Imam Ghazali, the duty is not incumbent on one who is convinced of the ineffectiveness of this duty. Nonetheless, one should better perform the duty, for it amounts to the preaching of 'Diyin' and people, even if they do not practise, get acquainted with 'Shariah'. According to Imam Ghazali,

إن يعلم أنه لا يفيد إنكاره ، ونكته ، لا يخاف فلا تجب عليه الحسبة لعدم فائدتها ، ولكن تستحب لإظهار شعائر الإسلام وتذكير الناس بأمر الدين

Should those preaching be convinced of the ineffectiveness or failure of the duty, it is not incumbent upon them to perform the duty. However, it is desirable, for it propagates the fundamentals and teaching of Islam.²

1. Shirah Mashariq al-Anwar, Vol. I, p. 50
2. Ahya Uloom al-Diyin, Vol. II, p. 250.

Since the performance of this duty is fruitful in the sense that it amounts to the preaching of Islam, some authorities consider it as 'Muha-tasb', others as 'Wajib'. In itself it is line with the underlying spirit of the concept of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Allama Sa'ad al-Din Taftazani thinks otherwise on the ground that performance of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' in a hostile and indifferent society might lower the prestige of 'Diyn'. Thus it is not 'Wajib', as evident from his discussion on the conditions relating to 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar':

منها تجوز التأثير بأن لا يعلم عدم التأثير قطعاً لئلا يكون
عبثاً واشتغالا بما لا يعنى، فإن قيل يجب وإن لم يؤثر إعزازاً للدين
قلنا ربما يكون إذلالاً

One of the pre-requisites is a strong possibility of its success. Should there be sufficient ground to prove that the performance of this duty would have no effect, it would be a vain pursuit. It might be argued that even in such an eventuality it serves the purpose of 'the propagation of 'Diyn'. However, it sometimes results also in lowering the prestige of 'Diyn'.¹

1. Shirah al Maqasid, Vol. II, p. 180

Another possibility of Success

While discussing the possible success or failure of the performance of the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' we, generally speaking, think of immediate effect. However there is another possibility which should be also taken into account in making such discussions. Looked at from this angle, the relevance of this duty does not appear little. Elaborating this point while making allowance for the psychology of the Ummah, Imam Muhammad makes this preceptive observation:

وفي الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر بسعه الافدام
وإن كان يعلم أن القوم يقتلونه وأنه لا يفرق بينهم بسية ،
لأن القوم هناك مسلمون معتقدون لما يأمرهم به فلا بد من أن
فعله ينكس في قلوبهم وإن كانوا لا يظهرون ذلك

A Muslim should perform the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' in all circumstances, however hostile, for his act does not amount to mischief making. He intends to guide those who share his beliefs and they are, therefore, likely to be influenced by guidance, even if they tend to be reluctant.¹

The following two responses to such preaching are possible. First one is the momentary and at the spur of the moment whereas the other

1 Shirah al-Sayr al-Kabeer Vol. III pp. 239-40

type of response assumes a definite shape with the passage of time. Those given to acts of transgression and moral debauchery are not at first prepared to appreciate such preaching. The guide has to risk even his life in performing his duty and any change for good appears to be a remote possibility. Nonetheless, after reflecting on the message people do realise their mistake and make heart-searching. This feeling of repentance is evoked in even the killer of the pious preacher. People, in general, feel repentant and turn to the message. The performance of the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroofoo wa Nahi An al-Munkar', as evident from the history of Ummah, has always had some good results. Even if the effectiveness of the preaching is considered as a remote possibility, it might bring about the desired results in the future. It is nonetheless quite a task to perform the duty in hostile and indifferent circumstances. However, if the pious and the learned do not take lead in this direction, it would be unjust. The significance of 'Amr bi al-Maroofoo wa Nahi An al-Munkar' even when it appears as fruitless:

Let us discuss the point in the light of the sayings of the Prophet (P.B.U.H). A number of 'Ahadith' bear the implication that one should retire to solitude in the wake of the ascendancy of evil forces. At the other end of the scale; there are 'Ahadith' in praise of those who do not give up their efforts in a hostile atmosphere in and carry on their mission in the hope that it

would have some effect in future. The following three 'Ahadith' make it clear that one is exempted from the performance of the duty of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' when he feels convinced of the ineffectiveness of its performance:

اتمروا بالمعروف وتناهوا عن المنكر حتى إذا رأيت
شحا مطاعاً وهوى متبعاً ودنيا مؤثرة وإعجاب كل ذي رأى
برأيه فعليك خاصة نفسك ودع العوام

i) You are to enjoin 'Marooif' and forbid 'Munkar'. However, if you find people, in general, given to unbridled passions, this-worldliness and indifferent to 'Shariah' you should have no concern for them and concentrate on your own perfection.¹

In a variant reading of this 'Hadith' it is said that one may give up his efforts on finding himself too helpless.²

يوشك أن يأتي زمان يغربل الناس فيه غربلة تبقى حثالة
من الناس قد مرجت عهودهم وأماناتهم . واختلفوا . فكانوا
هكذا - وشبك بين أصابعه - فقالوا : كيف بنا يا رسول الله ؟
فقال : تأخفون ما تعرفون . وتنفرون ما تنكرون . وتقبلون على
أمر خاصتكم ، وتندرون أمر عامتكم

1. Tirmizi

2. Ibn Maja

عن أنس بن مالك قال : قيل : يا رسول الله متى ندع الاتهام بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر ؟ قال : إذا ظهر فيكم ما ظهر في بني إسرائيل إذا كانت الفاحشة في كباركم والملك في صغاركم . والعلم في رذالكم

ii) The day is approaching fast when the righteous would be few whereas the wrong doers would be in majority. People, in general, would be treacherous and undependable and there would be no distinction between the righteous and the transgressors. (This he demonstrated by joining his fingers). At this the companions asked him what to do. In his reply the Prophet (P.B.U.H) told them to adhere to 'Maroof' and to shun 'Munkar' in these circumstances. He asked them also to follow the righteous and to be indifferent to the acts of 'masses'.¹

iii) As reported by Anas b. Malik the Prophet (P.B.U.H) indicated the following signs in the society in which the preaching of 'Maroof wa Munkar' might become ineffective. In such a situation the elders would be found indulging in acts of sexual licentiousness, the lowly would be at the helm of affairs and the scholars would be wrong-doers.²

1. Abu Daud, Musnad Ahmad, Vol. II, p. 220

2. Musnad Ahmad, Vol. III, p 187

These 'Abadith' no doubt explicitly describe the circumstances in which the performance of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is likely to prove ineffective but it is not incumbent on Muslims to give up the performance of this duty in such circumstances. On this point Allama Abu Bakar Jassas makes this apt comment:

يعنى - والله أعلم - إذا لم يقبلوا ذلك واتبعوا أهواءهم
وآراءهم فأنت في سعة من تركهم

Should the people be found given to unbridled passions, it is permissible to give up the performance of the duty.¹

Maulana Mohammad Ashraf Azimabadi, an Indian commentator of Abu Daud, offers the following explication of the 'Hadith':

هذا رخصة في ترك الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر
إذا كثر الأشرار وضعف الأخيار

When the wrong-doers are in majority and the righteous are reduced to a minority' it is not allowed to perform anymore the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'.²

According to Allama Saaduddin Taftazani,

الحديث : فلا يدل إلا على نفي الوجوب عند فوات
الشرط بلزوم المفسدة وانتفاء الفائدة

1. Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. II, p. 38

2. Aaun al-Mabood, Vol. IV, p. 217

The above quoted 'Hadith' implies that duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is no more 'Wajib' in case its performance might be fruitless and it might give rise to some other vice.¹

One is allowed to sever his links with others and society, if he finds it impossible to maintain and preserve his 'Iman' which is doubtless superior to all other things. For defending 'Iman' one is allowed to renounce each and everything. In such a condition the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' ceases to operate. Nonetheless, the benefactors of society are not deterred by circumstances, however unfavourable. Though they have the permission to give up the duty, they do not avail themselves of this provision, for their giving in would aggravate the situation further. Their stopping would result in the ascendancy of 'Munkar'. One might renounce society for preserving his 'Iman' and this is reflective of his concern for 'Iman'. But the one who is not deterred by unfavourable circumstances is, according to 'Ahadith', doubtless superior to those who opt for renunciation. Such a person is devoted to the cause of preaching 'Maroo'f' and forbidding 'Munkar'. 'Ahadith' dealing with this point are quoted below:

من خير معاش الناس رجل ممسك عنان فرسه في سبيل الله
بطير على منته كلما سمع هبة أو فزعه طار عليه يبتغي القتل

1. Shirah al-Maqasid, Vol. II, p. 180

والموت مظانه ؟ أو رجل في غنيمة في رأس شعبة من هذه الشعف أو بطن واد من هذه الأودية يقيم الصلاة ويؤتي الزكاة ويبعد ربه حتى يأتيه اليقين . لبس من الناس إلا في خير

i) The best course for one is that of a total submission to Allah. Unlike others he confronts the dangers in taking part in fights. Another course for him is to renounce life and retire to a hill where he establishes prayers, gives charity and worships Allah till his last breath. His relationship with others is steeped in goodness.¹

This 'Hadith' should not be, however, interpreted in the sense that the fighter in the holy cause and the monastic are on equal footing. Such a notion issues from a mistaken view of the teachings of Islam. It is not, therefore, surprising to find another 'Hadith' which accords a superior position to the fighter:

عن أبي سعيد الخدري قال قيل : يا رسول الله . أى الناس أفضل ؟ فقال رسول الله ﷺ : مؤمن يجاهد في سبيل الله بنفسه وماله . قالوا : ثم من ؟ قال : مؤمن في شعب من الشعاب يتقى الله ويدع الناس من شره

**As reported by Hazrat Abu Saeed Khadari
The Prophet told his companion that the**

best among Muslims is the one who sacrifices his life, property and all that he possesses in Allah's cause. Next to him is the one who retires to a valley and being a Godfearing person he shuns all sins.¹

According to a 'Hadith',

المؤمن القوى خير وأحب إلى الله من المؤمن الضعيف .
وفي كل خير

A powerful Muslim is better than a weak Muslims though both being righteous are good.²

On the import of the above-quoted 'Hadith' Imam Nauvi remarks:

المراد بالقوة هنا عزيمة النفس والتمريضة في أمور الآخرة .
فيكون صاحب هذا الوصف أكثر إقداماً على الطور في الجهاد .
وأمرع خروجاً إليه ، وذهاباً في طلبه ، وأشد عزيمة في الأمر
بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر والصبر على الأذى في كل ذلك
واحتمال المشاق في ذات الله تعالى وأرغب في الصلاة والصوم
والأذكار وسائر العبادات وأنشط طلباً لها ومحافظة عليها
ونحو ذلك ، وأما قوله **وفي كل خير** فمعناه في
كل من القوى والضعيف خير لاشتراكهما في الإيمان مع ما

1. Bukhari

2. Muslim

Power with reference to a Muslim connotes his will power and firmness of belief, for this alone motivates him to take lead against the enemies in 'Jihad'. Such a Muslim is likely to overpower the enemy, possess the courage to enjoin 'Maroof' and forbid 'Munkar', and withstand all hardships in this cause by putting up a show of fortitude and bravado. Similarly he would be keen about performing prayers, fasting, remembrance of Allah and all other forms of worship. In so doing he would feel happy and would do his level best to defend it. As rightly pointed out by the Prophet (P.B.U.H) both the mighty and weak type of Muslims are righteous, for both are blessed with 'Iman'. The latter, though incapable of doing other desirable acts, perform worships also.¹

In line with the two above quoted 'Ahadith' is this 'Hadith':

الْمُؤْمِنُ الَّذِي خَالَطَ النَّاسَ وَيَصْبِرُ عَلَى أَذَاهُمْ أَكْبَرُ
أَجْرًا مِنَ الَّذِي لَا يَخَالِطُهُمْ وَلَا يَصْبِرُ عَلَى أَذَاهُمْ

A Muslim who tolerates all hardships and maintains his relationship with others is doubtless superior to that Muslim who fails to do all this.²

1. Shirah Muslim, Vol. II, p. 337.

2. Musnad Ahmad, Vol. II, p.

Allama Muhammad b. Ismail al-Saghani comments on it thus:

فيه أفضلية من يخالط الناس مخالطة يأمرهم فيها
بالمعروف وينهاهم عن المنكر ويحسن معاملتهم فإنه أفضل من
الذى يعتزلهم ولا يصبر على المخالطة

This 'Hadith' accords a superior position to the Muslim who keeps on enjoining 'Maroof' and forbidding 'Munkar', as he maintains his terms with others. On the contrary a stay-at-home type of Muslim does not show any ability to withstand hardships.¹

Though the performance of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' ceases to be a duty in unfavourable circumstances, as evident from the 'Ahadith' and the views of classical authorities, its significance and desirability cannot be belittled. The duty is to be performed, for it is likely to bring about some good results in the future. If no effort is made in this direction, little hope is there in the future.

Absolute Power

The 'Wujub' of 'Amr bi al Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar, is nullified, as evident from the above discussion, in case it entails risks or is not likely to do any good. Nonetheless, in

1. Sabal al-Salam Shirah Buloogh al-Maram,
Vol. II, p. 282

absence of these two grounds a Muslim has to perform this duty, as remarked by Imam Ghazali:

أن يعلم أن المنكر يزول بقوله وفعله ، ولا يقدر له
على مكروهه فيجب عليه الإنكار ، وهذه هي القدرة المطلقة

If the guide knows that it is both safe and suitable to perform the duty, it is incumbent on him to perform the duty of 'Nahi An al-Munkar' as he enjoys the absolute power.¹

Inability to enforce 'Maroof wa Munkar' or to preach it

One should not lose sight of the fact that it might not be possible for one to perform the duty either physically or verbally. Such an inability exempts him from the performance of this duty. As stated by Abu Bakr Jassas,

وهي على منازل : أولها تغييره باليد إذا أمكن ،
فإن لم يمكن ، وكان في نفيه خائفاً على نفسه إذا أنكره بيده
فعليه إنكاره بلسانه فإن تعذر ذلك لما وصفنا فعله إنكاره بقلبه

'Amr bi al-Maroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar' can be performed at various levels. First is at the physical level. Should one be unable to do so for the fear of some risk, it is his responsibility to condemn 'Munkar' verbally. Even it be not pos-

1. Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn. Vol II, p. 280

sible for him, he should make this condemnation privately.¹

Elaborating this point Qazi Ayaz says:

إن غلب على ظنه أن تغييره بيده يسبب منكراً أشد من قتله أو قتل غيره بسببه كف يده واقتصر على القول باللسان والوعظ والتخويف فإن خاف أن يسبب قوله ذلك غير بقلبه وكان في سعة

If one is pretty sure about the risks such as his own murder or that of others, attendant upon checking 'Munkar' physically, he should perform the duty in another manner. By preaching against Munkar' he should carry out his duty. Should he find it also difficult, he should condemn 'Munkar' personally.²

On the point under discussion Allama Manadi is of the opinion:

فإن لم يستطع الإنكار بيده بأن ظن لحوق ضرر به فليسانه أى بالقول كاستغاثة أو توبيخ أو إغلاظ بشرطه . فإن لم يستطع ذلك لوجود مانع كخوف فتنة أو خوف على نفس أو عضو أو مال فقلبه

If one is incapable of enforcing Maroof' wa Munkar', in case he apprehends a great risk, he is supposed to condemn 'Munkar

1. Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. II, p. 35

2. Shirah Muslim al-Nauvi, Vol. I, p. 51

by seeking help of others. In case he is not able to do it as well, for fear of some risk, he should believe in the heart of his heart that 'Munkar' is evil.¹

The Performance of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' at a personal level:

So far we have discussed in details the grounds related to the performance of this duty at the level of enforcement and preaching. Let us take up the performance of this duty at a personal level. One is permitted to do on being firmly persuaded of the risks attendant upon the performance of this duty in a manner other than this. In other words, one is not allowed to opt for this mode if he is capable of carrying out this duty in any one of the above mentioned two ways. The consensus of the *Ummah* on this view, as stated by Qartabi on the authority of Ibn Abd al-Bar, is as follows:

إذا أنكر فقد أدى ما عليه إذا لم يستطع عليه سوى ذلك

In performing the duty at a personal level one is said to have discharged his duty, subject to the condition that he cannot perform it otherwise.²

In this context Mulla Ali Qari makes an apt observation:

من يغير المراتب مع القدرة كان من العاصين ومن

1. Shirah al Jamey al-Sagheer, Vol. II, p. 418

2. Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. IV, p. 47

تركها بلا قدرة أو يرى مفسدة أكثر من المصلحة ويكون منكراً
لقلبه فهو من المؤمنين

If one disturbs this order, despite his ability, he commits a sin. He is, however, one of the faithful who gives up this duty on apprehending some grave repercussions as a result of the performance of this duty.¹

On this point Ibn Hajar Hatimi comments thus:

يجب تغيير المنكر بكل طريق أمكنه . فلا يكفي الوعظ
لمن أمكنه إزالته بيده ، ولا كراهة القلب لمن قدر على النهي باللسان

One is supposed to perform this duty in a way he is capable of doing it. Those in power are not permitted to opt for the role of a preacher. So are the preachers not allowed to do it personally?

A Muslim may no doubt be in a helpless position, but he can certainly perform the duty in this own way. Those neglecting or ignoring the duty totally are, in fact, destitute of faith, as recorded in the following 'Hadith':

وليس وراء ذلك من الإيمان حبة خردل

One who dose not condemn 'Munkar' even personally does not have even an iota of faith.³

1. al-Mobeen al-Moin. p. 189
2. Fatah al-Mobeen, p. 220
3. Muslim.

The righteous being repugnant to evil do not like to associate themselves with the wrong doers, for it is impossible for one to be a party to that he abhors. It is, therefore, essential that the righteous should keep themselves away from those practising evil, as pointed out by Allama Abu Bakar Jassas:

وسعه السكوت عنهم (إذا لم يقدر على تغيير المنكر)
بعد أن يجانبهم ويظهر هجرانهم

Those incapable of performing the duty do not join the company of sinners, as this is the only mode of expression for them.¹

A Muslim is not expected of giving in easily. Though incapable of performing the duty for certain reasons, he tries his level best to gain the power required to check 'Munkar', for he cannot bear it. According to Manadi,

يكرهه به ، ويعزم أنه لو قدر فعل

A Muslim (incapable of performing the duty) would abhor 'Munkar' with the conviction that he would check it once he gets enough power.²

Ibn Hajar Hatimi is of the view:

يكره ذلك به ، ويعزم أنه لو قدر عليه يقول لو فعل أزاله

1. *Akham al-Quran*, Vol. II, p. 38

2. *Shirah al-Jamey al-Sagheer*, Vol. II, p. 418

He would not only detest 'Munkar' but would avow also to forbid 'Munkar', if he were capable.¹

1. Fatah al-Mobeen, p. 220.

CHAPTER XI

Means and Ways

Means of forbidding 'Munkar'

What should be the ways and means for the Ummah for performing the duty of 'Amr bi al-Marooof wa Nahi al-Munkar' is a point worthy of study. Muslims being the believers in the Hereafter and in Allah and His Prophet have been faced with this question. Imam Ghazali deals with this aspect in detail. He, however, makes the discussion on the ways and means with reference to their level. For Allama Abdul Qadir Auduh Shaheed there are many resources for its performance. In all there are eight modes in Imam Ghazali's opinion, to perform the duty.

- 1) First consideration should be that one need not be curious about exploring one's weaknesses.
- 2) Owing to ignorance men are found sometimes indulging in 'Munkar' without realising at all that they are guilty. On being told to reform themselves they would certainly respond. I-

this case one should overlook their past activities,

3) Those indulging brazenly in 'Munkar' should be reminded of the Hereafter. A brief account of the righteous should also be presented to make them learn a lesson.

4) Should one be indifferent to preaching, he should be dealt with sternly. Nonetheless, such an offender is not to be abused.

5) If preaching fails to have any effect, one should forbid 'Munkar' by a show of power. For example, the musical instruments or the silken dress should be destroyed. The forbidding of all forms of 'Munkar' is not, however, possible. Many are the 'Munkar' that cannot be checked in this manner.

6) Those committing 'Munkar' should be threatened of such consequences that are in accord with the spirit of 'Shariah'. One may be intimidated of killing but it is not permissible to threaten him with the inflicting of pain on his kith and kin.

7) The offenders should be beaten and arms might be taken up against an offender, if the contingency calls for it.

8) Should one be unable to forbid 'Munkar' on his own, he should seek help from others.'

Advice as a Means for Guidance

Broadly speaking, the means for the perfor-

mance of 'Amr bi al-Marooḥ wa Nahi An al-Munkar' may be divided into the following two categories: guidance by advice and by a show of force. Advice is to be preferred to a show of force for achieving this end. In the first instance the guilty should be preached. Should it fail to do any good, a show of force becomes doubtless ineluctable. However, only on ensuring the failure of the first mode one should opt for the other mode. According to the Quran,

If two parties among
The Believers fall into
A quarrel, make ye peace
Between them: but if
One of them transgresses
Beyond bounds against the other,
Then fight ye all against
The one that transgresses
Until it complies with
The command of God:
But if it complies, then
Make peace between them
With justice and be fair:
For God loves those
Who are fair (and just).

(XLIX: 9)

وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَيْنِ مِنَ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا
فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا
فَإِنْ بَغَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا
عَلَى الْأُخْرَىٰ فَقَاتِلُوا
الَّتِي تَبْغِي حَتَّىٰ تَكْفِيَ
أِلَّا أَمْرَ اللَّهِ ۚ فَإِنْ
فَاءَتْ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا
بِالْعَدْلِ وَاقْسُطُوا
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ

Muslims have been directed to make peace, if two parties among them dispute. In so doing

the arbitrator ought to be just. Should a group transgress beyond limits, the oppressed group is to be extended all help. In other words, guidance by advice is the first priority. Should it fail, the offenders are to be punished. In consonance with the import of the above Quranic verse the authorities have laid down a general principle that a stern step is to follow preaching, as evident from the view of the following scholars:

أمر الله بالدعاء إلى الحق قبل القتال ، ثم إن أهدأ
الرجوع قوتلت

Allah has directed Muslims to make peace, which is to be followed by fighting. Those who deny the truth are to be fought against.¹

Zamakhshari:

يبتدىء بالسهل ، فإن لم ينفع ترقى إلى الصعب

An easy course should be taken to begin with. If it fails, a stern step is to be taken.²

Ibn Arabi Maliki:

إن الله سبحانه أمر بالصلح قبل القتال ، وعين القتال عند

البنى

1. *Ahkam al-Quran*, Vol. III, p. 493

2. *al-Kashshaf*, Vol. I, pp. 224-5.

Allah prefers making peace to fighting.
In case there is a case of transgression,
fighting is to take place.¹

Abu Abdullah Qartabi:

فالمُنكر إذا أمكنت إزالته باللسان للنهي فليُفعل. وإن لم
يُمكنه إلا بالعقوبة أو القتل فليُفعل. فإن زال بدون القتل لم يجر القتل

Should it be possible to forbid 'Munkar' verbally it is to be done likewise. However, if killing is the only course open, this is to be opted for. However, killing should be avoided, if it is possible to put 'Munkar' under check.²

Is General Public Entitled to Use Force for Performing the duty,

Before resorting to the use of force it is essential, as evident from the discussion made above, to use all other ways and means. Every Muslim has to follow this directive with regard to the performance of the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. However, the question whether the state alone or an ordinary Muslim citizen is entitled to using force is a controversial point. Quoted below is the gist of their views. For Imam Qartabi,

قال العلماء : الأمر بالمعروف باليد على الأمراء. وباللسان
على العلماء ، وبالقلب على الضعفاء يعني عوام الناس

1. Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. II, p. 224

2. Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. IV, p. 49

Authorities are of the view that the state should use force for this end while Muslims, in general, should refrain from it.¹

Thus a general principle, as informed by the Imam, has been laid down bearing the implication that the state, in view of its enjoying power, is entitled to this mode where as Muslims, in general are to act as preachers to perform this duty by persuasion and other such methods. Those incapable of even so doing should perform the duty in their own way. This principle does not, however, imply that the Muslims who are not in power should turn indifferent to the commitment of 'Munkar'. They should make efforts to forbid it in their own way. Islam stands for eliminating 'Munkar' initially in a peaceful manner and finally by a show of force.

Use of force for checking 'Munkar'

Two courses are open for using force in performing 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. One of the possible ways is to use force for checking 'Munkar' forcibly, as for example, the destruction of drinking glasses and musical instruments. The other mode is to use force against those indulging in 'Munkar', such as the beating of the person intending to commit fornication. Should the offender resist, he should be killed. On the first mode Imam Gi'azali comments thus:

3. Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. IV, p. 49.

كسر الملامى ولإراقة الخمر فانه تعاطى ما يعرف كونه
حقاً من غير اجتهاد فلم يفتقر إلى الإمام

Without even seeking prior permission of the Imam one is allowed to destroy items used in committing 'Munkar'.¹

In the opinion of Qazi Ayaz,

حق المغير أن يغيره بكل وجه أمكنه زواله به قولاً كان
أو فعلاً، فيكسر آلات الباطل ويريق المسكر بنفسه ، أو يأمر
من يفعله . وينزع المفضوب ويرده إلى أصحابه بنفسه أو بأمره
إذا أمكنه

Those forbidding 'Munkar' are allowed to use the mode that they think fit for this end. They may forbid it either verbally or physically. Included in it is the destruction of such items. Those performing this duty should do all that they can do.²

According to Hafiz Ibn Qayim,

لا ضمان في كسر أواني الخمر وشق زقاقه

No compensation is to be paid for having destroyed the drinking glasses and jars.³

1: Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn, Vol. II p. 277

2: Shirah Muslim al-Nauvi, Vol. I, p. 51

3: al-Taraq al-Hikmya, p. 256.

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Of the 'Shafeyi' school of thought the representatives are Imam Ghazali and Qazi Ayaz whereas Hafiz Qayim is of the 'Hamabali' school of thought headed by Imam Ahmad. Those subscribing to the 'Hanafi' school, however, make a distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims owner of such items. Should the owner of wine glasses be a Muslim, he is not to be paid any compensation for its destruction by either Muslims or non-Muslims. The rationale behind this view is that in Islam there is no worth of items disapproved by 'Shariah'. However, if the owner is a non-Muslim, compensation is to be paid. Whether the damage is done by Muslims or non-Muslims is immaterial. Since a non-Muslim regards these items carrying some worth, he is to be paid compensation. As remarked by Allama Kashani,

لا يجب الضمان بإتلاف الخمر والخنزير على المسلم سواء
كان المتلف مسلماً أو ذمياً لسقوط تقوم الخمر والخنزير في
حق المسلم . ولو أتلف مسلم أو ذمى خمر أو خنزيراً يضمن عندنا
خلافاً للشافعي

If a Muslim is deprived of wine or pigs, he cannot claim compensation. Since such items are forbidden for non-Muslims, these do not carry any price for a Muslim. Nonetheless, if a Muslim robs a non-Muslim of his wine or pigs he is to be paid compensation for his loss. This view of 'Hanafis' is contested by Imam Shafeyi

who does not agree on giving compensation in any case.¹

Use of force against those indulging in Munkar

As regards the viewpoint of scholars about the use of force against those committing 'Munkar', Allama Abdul Qadar Shaheed's remark is worth noting:

إذا شوهه الجاني وهو يرتكب الجناية كان لأى شخص أن يمنعه من القوة عن ارتكاب الجريمة وأن يستعمل القوة اللازمة لمنعه سواء كانت الجريمة اعتداء على حقوق الأفراد كالسرقة أو اعتداء على حقوق الجماعة بحرب الخمر والزنا . وهذا ما يسمى بحق الدفاع الشرعى العام

One finding a Muslim indulging in 'Munkar' every Muslim is entitled to use force for checking it. The form of 'Munkar' may be theft, drinking wine and fornication. This amounts to upholding 'Shariah'.²

Allama Abu Bakar Jassas has discussed at length the point under question, of which the relevant passages are quoted below:

It may be either possible or physically impossible to check a particular 'Munkar'. If it may be possible to check, those in power should do it forcibly. It might

1. Baday al-Sanaye, Vol. VII, p. 167

2. al-Tashree al-Jinai, p. 86.

be possible to check the 'Munkar without using force. Should one be persuaded of the fact that on being forbidden the offender would resist, it is permissible to kill such a hardened wrong-doer. This view is in line with the saying of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) that one of you who observes the commitment of 'Munkar' should check 'Munkar'. In sum, if there is no other way out to forbid 'Munkar', it is necessary to kill the one indulging in 'Munkar'.

According to Imam Muhammad, the robber depriving someone of this valuables deserves to be killed and the valuables should be returned to the owner.

Imam Abu Hanifa thinks that the robber, if found in the toils of this work, is to be killed. Even if one intends to hurt someone, he is to be punished severely. This provision is, however, conditional subject to the condition one is totally helpless. Similarly, those levying unlawful taxes are to be killed. A Muslim is allowed to kill, if he finds such person persisting in their unlawful acts. Preaching in this case cannot serve any useful purpose. If they are warned, it is possible that they would refrain from it.

All such persons indulging in grave 'Munkar' publicly are to be criticised and checked with reference to the might and

capability. This viewpoint is in accordance with the Quranic verse: 'Then fight ye all against the one that transgresses until it complies with the command of God' (XLIX : 19). The transgressors, as directed by the Quran, are not to be spared unless they give up their acts of transgression and comply with the command of God."¹

Clarification of a Misunderstanding

In exceptional circumstances relating to self-defence or in the defence of others the guilty might be killed. In so doing, one might be prompted by other personal or collective interests. In so far as the question how for the killing in self-defence and 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' are akin in spirit, the answer is positive. There does exist a difference between the two. To act in self-defence or for the protection of rights of others is inferior to the performance of the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' which doubtless involves large interests. In dissuading someone from committing either murder or suicide or fornication one helps not only the weak but follows also the dictates of 'Shariah'. In sum, the forbidding of all such acts forbidden by 'Shariah'², without any consideration for selfish interest, amounts to the forbidding of 'Munkar'.

1. Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. II, pp. 37-38.

2. al-Tashree' al-Jinal, pp. 511-12.

Condition for the use of Force by General Public

A number of condition should be taken into account in forbidding 'Munkar', which are as follows:

1) The Commitment of 'Munkar'

Generally public may resort to using force if the commitment of 'Munkar' is going on. Mere apprehension of such an act does not justify the use of force. Similarly, if 'Munkar' has already been committed, the offender is to be preached. In the words of Imam Ghazali:

The three possible stages of sin are i) the sin has already been committed; in this case the state is look into the matter. People, in general, are not supposed to take their responsibility. ii) the other possibility may be that the sin exists and the sinner is found indulging in it. In this eventuality the sin is to be checked at all costs subject to the condition that it does not give rise to some greater evil. People, in general, are entitled to forbid such 'Munkar'. iii) another possibility may be that the sin is likely to be committed as, for example, one may be found making arrangements for drinking wine. Should one feel that on being told he would refrain from doing so, he should be preached. Use of force either by the state or by general public is not allowed unless the offender be a hardened wrong-doer.

In this case he is to be dealt with sternly.¹

Discussing the enforcement of penal laws Allama Ibn Najeelb remarks:

قالوا : لكل مسلم إقامته حال مباشرة المعصية . وأما بعد الفراغ منها فليس ذلك لغیر الحاكم

If one is found in the act of committing sin he, according to jurisprudents, is to be checked by each and every Muslim. Nonetheless, the officials alone are competent to take any action, if the act has already been committed.²

To adduce the point jurisprudents argue thus:

لوعززه حال كونه مشغولاً بالفاحشة فله ذلك وأنه حسن لأن ذلك نهى عن المنكر . وكل واحد مأمور به ، وبعد الفراغ ليس ينهى عن المنكر ، لأن النهي عما مضى لا يتصور فيتمحض تعزيراً وذلك إلى الأمام

One has the right to check the one found doing some 'Munkar' for it amounts to 'Nahi an al-Munkar' which is incumbent on all. However, to check the offender when he has already committed some wrong is absurd as the official alone is competent to enforce penal laws with regard to his commitment of 'Munkar'.³

1. *Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn*, Vol. II, p. 281

2. *al-Bahr al-Raiq Shirah Kanz al-Deqaiq*, Vol. V, p. 42

3. *Ibid.* , Vol. V, p. 42

The authorities have made it plain that it is an unlawful act to use physical force against the one who has already committed a crime:

للمحتسب أن يعزر المَعزَر إن عَزَرَهُ بعد الفراغ منها

The officer appointed by the state has the authority to take action against those who use force against the person who has already committed a crime.¹

To illustrate the point this example may be instanced. If someone kills anybody in self-defence, he is not guilty, according to 'Shariah', of having committed murder. This doubtless proves that one is entitled to resort to using physical force when some wrong is being committed. Contrary to it if the murderer, after having committed the murder, is slain, those who kill him shall have to pay 'Qassas' ² (Blood money). To sum up, the use of physical force after the commitment of a crime is not lawful.

Use of Physical Force in a Just Measure

Masses are allowed to use physical force in exceptional circumstances. The limits should not be transgressed in so doing. One of its conditions, according to Imam Ghazali, is:

أن يقتصر في طريق التغيير على القدر المحتاج إليه

1. al-Bahr al-Raiq Shirah Kanz al-Daqaïq, Vol. V, p. 42

2. Bahr al-Raiq, p. 302.

One should use physical force in a measure that is called for checking 'Munkar'.¹

For example, one may physically drag out the unauthorised occupant of his property but to catch him by his beard is not justified. The use of physical force in an uncalled for large measure is in itself a wrong according to 'Shariah. For instance, to destroy the wine pot for throwing away wine is not justified, if it is possible to achieve the end of throwing away wine without destroying pots.² Similarly, if someone kills the robber who has broken into his house without raising an alarm shall have to pay 'Qassas'³ (Blood money).

Imam Ghazali clinches the issue by laying down this general principle:

ليس إلى آحاد الرعية إلا الدفع وهو إعدام المنكر، فما زاد على قدر الإعدام فهو إما عقوبة على جريمة سابقة أو زجر عن لاحق ، وذلك إلى الولاة لا إلى الرعية

"O People, in general, are no doubt entitled to forbid 'Munkar' but for determining the penalty for the excesses the state alone is competent.⁴

It should not Result in mischief

The use of physical force in performing the

1. Ahiya Ulloom al-Diyn. Vol. II, p. 290.

2. Ibid, p. 290

3. Bahr al-Raiq. p. 309

4. Ahiya Ulloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, p. 291

duty of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is justified subject to the condition that it does not give rise to mischief. Generally speaking, it does not entail serious repercussions. However, on taking up arms the risk is manifold. Imam Ghazali, therefore, suggests that arms should not be taken up against an offender unless it is ensured that it would not result in mischief-making. Dealing with the various stages of performing this duty, which are in all eight, Imam Ghazali comments on the seventh one thus:

الدرجة السابعة مباشرة الضرب باليد والرجل وغير ذلك مما ليس فيه شهر سلاح ، وذلك جائز للآحاد وبشروط الضرورة والاعتصار على قدر الحاجة في الدفع ، فإذا اندفع المنكر فينبى أن يكف . . فإن احتاج إلى شهر سلاح وكان يقدر على دفع المنكر بشهر السلاح وبالجرح فله أن يتعاطى ذلك ما لم تثر فتنة

Next stage (the seventh one) is inflicting physical assaults on the offenders. This does not, however, imply the use of weapons. Such a course of action is open to all, provided the situation demands of it and it is done in a just measure. One should stop once 'Munkar' has been checked. Should the situation call for the use of weapons, it must be ensured that it would not give rise to mischief-making.¹

1. Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, p. 291-92.

Use of physical force against the group of wrong doers

So far the discussion centres round an individual who has committed 'Munkar'. In so far as an organised group of wrong-doers is at issue, the question whether a counter group is to be formed is both important and complicated. Such an arrangement might be a deterrent but it might result also in mischief. As pointed out by Imam Ghazali,

أما جمع الأعوان وشهر الأسلحة فذلك قد يجر إلى فتنه
عامة ففيه نظر

To organise those who can help and to take up arms (for checking 'Munkar') might give birth to mischief and is, therefore, a question worthy of deliberations.¹

Moreover, rare are occasions, as remarked by Imam Ghazali himself, when it might be necessary to form a group or party to counter the wrong-doings of a particular group. However, should there be such an eventuality, an organisation comprising all those intending to help should be formed to wage war against those indulging in 'Munkar'. This is, nonetheless, the last stage which involves the formation of a group for fighting against the offenders. It is quite likely that the other group might also strengthen itself. Classical writers are at variance with each other in answering to the query whether such a group

1. Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, p. 277

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is to be formed with the concurrence of the state or the ruler. Masses are not, according to some classical scholars, entitled to act in this fashion. For it would generate mischief all over the state leading eventually to its disintegration. On the other hand, the concurrence of the state is ruled out by some writers. This viewpoint is reasonable, for those performing the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo' wa Nahi An al-Munkar' may have to opt for any course and in so doing one should not feel shy of obstacles and repurcussion. This duty, as pointed out earlier, aims at eliminating 'Munkar' and fighting in Allah's cause. Like the soldiers taking part in wars those fighting in Allah's cause should also be allowed to fight. Though the fighting for performing this duty is a remote possibility, it cannot be ruled out altogether.¹

It is, nonetheless, difficult to subscribe to Imam Ghazali's stand. If people, in general, are allowed to fight, it would render it impossible even for the state to restore order in the country.

One may, however, pertinently raise the question why it is not permissible to form groups for checking 'Munkar' while individuals are allowed to do so. In discussing this point we should not lose sight of the following two aspects. First, an individual performing the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo' wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is justified to take an extreme step subject to the condition that his act does not engender mischief. He forfeits this right in case some trouble is appre-

1. *Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn*, Vol. II, P. 292

hended. Looking at the point from this angle one may easily perceive the point that the involvement of group is likely to aggravate complications. 'If an individual fights against the other, there is little room for mischief as compared to the fighting between two organised groups individuals and groups cannot be thus treated alike.

Moreover, even an individual is entitled to take an extreme action of homicide in exceptional circumstances. Those learned in jurisprudence, generally speaking, therefore opine that the state alone has the right to take any action in matters that may entail bloodshed, as evident from the following quotations.

Ibn Arabi Maliki is opposed to the view that masses should be allowed to use force. In exceptional cases such as in defence of an innocent person one might kill the offender. Generally speaking, according to him,

فإن لم يقدر إلا بمقاتلة وسلاح فليتركه وذلك إنما هو إلى السلطان لأن شهر السلاح بين الناس قد يكون مخرجاً إلى الفتنة وآيلاً إلى فساد أكثر من الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر

Should it be felt that 'Munkar' can be forbidden only by a show of physical or by taking up arms, it is better to give in. The state is the competent body to deal with the situation. For the use of physical force by public is in itself risky which often leads to mischief. As compared to the performance of 'Amr bi al-Marooif

wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. the mischief is a greater evil.¹

In the opinion of Imam al-Haramain,

يسوغ لأحد الرعية أن يصد مرتكب الكبيرة إن لم يندفع
عنها بقوله ما لم ينته العمل إلى نصب قتال وشهر سلاح فإن انتهى
الأمر إلى ذلك ربط الأمر بالسلطان

Every citizen in the Islamic state has a right to forbid 'Munkar' subject to the condition that it is by persuasion and it does not entail bloodshed. Should the situation be grave, the matter must be left to those in power.²

According to Allama Jarullah Zamakhshari,

الإنكار الذى بالقتال فالإمام وخلفاؤه أولى لأنهم أعلم
بالسياسة وأمعنم عدتها

Only the ruler and his deputies are entitled to wage war for 'Nahi An al-Munkar'. They being experienced and resourceful are in a better position.³

Groups are thus forbidden to use arms in performing 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. In exceptional circumstances like individuals these groups may be granted this right. For example, if a village is raided by dacoits, general public is allowed not only to resist them but

1. Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. I, p. 122,

2. Shirah Muslim al-Nauvi, Vol. I, p. 52.

3. al-Kashshaf An Haqiqat-Tanzeel, Vol. I, p. 225

also to kill the dacoits.

In sum, a group may use physical force or take up arms subject to the following conditions; i) the state is not in a position to perform this duty, ii) there is no possibility of any mischief and (iii) inactivity is likely to result in great evil.

Nonetheless, such a permission is likely to be granted in quite exceptional circumstances. Any group, generally speaking, is not allowed to take up arms or to use physical force against any individual or a group for performing the duty of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'.

CHAPTER XII

Limits and Regulation

Besides being important the duty of the performance of 'Amr bi al-Maroo' wa Nahi An al-Munkar' calls for great care. It is quite a task to do full justice to its performance. In performing this duty itself one is liable to commit 'Munkar'. In view of this point we have discussed in detail the framework in which the duty is to be performed.

The Distinction between 'Amr bi al-Maroo' and 'Nahi An al-Munkar'

There is, in fact, no difference between 'Amr bi al-Maroo' and 'Nahi An al-Munkar' the enjoining of good implies in itself the forbidding of evil. However, a close study of the two terms brings home the point that 'Amr bi al-Maroo' is positive in nature whereas 'Nahi An al-Munkar' is negative. For example, the acts pertaining to the guidance, benevolence, training, fair treatment and cooperation, falling under the head of 'Amr bi al-Maroo' are constructive in spirit. 'Nahi An al-Munkar' stands for forbidding all that might

prove harmful for Muslims in the world as well as in the Hereafter.¹

‘Wujub’ of ‘Amr bi al-Maroof’

The authorities consider the following grounds which make the ‘Wujub’ of ‘Amr bi al-Maroof’:

الأمر بالمعروف تابع للمأمور به ، فإن كان واجباً فالأمر به واجب ، وإن كان ندباً فندب

‘Amr bi al-Maroof’ is to be viewed in the light of all such acts that are, referred to as ‘Wajib’ in ‘Shariah’. Should the

1. The distinction between ‘Munkar’ and ‘Maroof’ ought to be made, as elaborated by Imam Ghazali :

“The term ‘Munkar’ is an all-embracing one as compared to ‘Maasiat’. All that is not approved in ‘Shariah’ is ‘Munkar’ whether committed by the eligible or the non-eligible. One is to be accused of ‘Maasiat’ in terms of reference fixed up by ‘Shariah.’ For example, a child drinking wine cannot be punished, though he is committing ‘Munkar’ and it is, therefore, to be forbidden. Similarly the lunatic indulging in fornication is to be checked as this act is in itself undesirable. Whether the act is done publicly or privately is of no importance. Similarly all ‘Munkar’ however great or small, is to be checked. Fornication as compared to ogling is a serious ‘Munkar’ but both these acts being ‘Munkar’ are to be checked”. *Ahiya Ulloom al-Diyn*, Vol. II, p. 285

given act be 'Wajib', it is to be enjoined.
So is the case with 'Mandub'.¹

'Wujub' of 'Nahi An al-Munkar'

On the 'Wujub' of 'Nahi An al-Munkar' Allama Abu al-Sauood states:

أما النهى عن المنكر فواجب كله فإن جميع ما أنكره
الشرع حرام

All that is forbidden by 'Shariah' is to be forbidden and this is 'Wajib'.²

The learned writer is, however, mistaken in opining so. Both 'Amr bi al-Marooif' and 'Nahi An al-Munkar' are governed alike. Both of these are to be performed with regard to the degree of 'Marooif' and 'Munkar'. Such a criterion alone should be the deciding factor in determining the 'Wujub' of the given duty. In line with this view is the remark of Mulla Ali Qari:

إذا كان المنكر حراماً فإنه حينئذ واجب الزجر عنه، إذ لو
كان مكروهاً لم يجب بل يندب، وكذا الأمر بالمعروف تبع لما
يؤمر به ، فإن وجب فواجب وإن ندب فنندوب

If the 'Munkar' is a forbidden one, it is an obligatory duty to check it. Should

1. Mabariq al-Azhar Shirah Mashariq al-Anwar, Vol. I, p. 50.
2. Irshad al-Aqal al-Saleem ila Mazaya al-Kitab al-Kareem, Vol. II, p. 489.

the act be 'Makrooh' its forbidding is not an obligatory duty. Same holds true for determining the 'Wujub' of 'Maroof' which is to be done in the light of the fact whether a given act is 'Wajib' or 'Mandub'.¹

Inquisitiveness is to be avoided

Inquisitiveness about the weaknesses of others is not allowed by 'Shariah'. There occurs in the 'Quran',

And spy not on each other

وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا

(XLIX:12)

According to the Prophet (P.B.U.H.)

إن الأمير إذا ابتغى الرية في الناس أفسدتهم

When people grow inquisitive about others it would ruin them.²

There occurs another 'Hadith':

إنك إن اتبعت عورات الناس أفسدتهم

If you spy on each other, it would corrupt them.³

'Munkar' is to be checked, if it is committed publicly. On being told that the beard of someone is stained with wine Abdullah b. Masood replied:

1. al-Mooben al-Moin, p. 182.

2. Abu Daud

3. Ibid.,

إنا قد نهينا عن التجسس، ولكن أن يظهر لنا شيء نأخذ به

We have been told not to spy on each other. However, if someone confesses the commitment of 'Munkar' he is to be prosecuted accordingly.¹

The sinner should not make his crime publicly so that it does not come to the knowledge of everyone. That is why the Prophet(P.B.U.H.) is reported to have said:

من أصاب من هذه القاذورات شيئاً فليستر بستر الله فإنه

من يبد لنا صفحته نقم عليه كتاب الله

One who indulges in sin should keep it concealed. However, if he makes his crime public he is to be prosecuted according to the dictates of the Law.²

This makes it plain that one who conceals his having committed sin follows 'Shariah'. It is, therefore, unlawful to be inquisitive in connection with the performance of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Similarly to break into the house of someone or to extract information from neighbours is unlawful and the one who does 'Munkar' within his house shall be answerable to Allah. As long as his act is confined to the premises of his house, no one has a right to prosecute him. Once the Caliph Hazrat Umar is reported to have chided someone for committing 'Munkar' within house. On being told so the person accused Hazrat Umar of

1. Ibid.,

2. Mautta

having committed three 'Munkar' and elaborated his point by telling that you have spied on me which is not allowed by Allah. Moreover, instead of getting in my house, after my permission you broke into my house. Hazrat Ummar, on hearing this clarification, did not take any further action, and asked him to repent.¹

Even if it is clear that some 'Munkar' is being committed inside a house, such as the noise of musical instruments or of the drunkards is audible it is not permissible, according to Abul Hasan Mawardi, to enter the house, for it might aggravate further the situation. To expose evils for performing the duty of 'Nahi An al-Munkar' is not allowed.²

Imam Ghazali, however, thinks otherwise. He is of the view that one should barge in a house with the intention of forbidding 'Munkar'. He, however, holds it unlawful to make a search of one's dress for locating a bottle of wine or the musical instruments. Should the signs of trading in liquor be very clear, one is allowed to forbid it and thus perform the duty of 'Nahi An al-Munkar'.³

Imam Ghazali's viewpoint appears as both rational and sound. It is, no doubt, unlawful to interfere in one's personal affairs but on coming to know of the blatant indulgence in 'Munkar' some action is to be taken. Any lapse on this

1. Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, p. 285

2. al-Ahkam al-Sultaniya, p. 243

3. Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn. Vol. II, p.285.

account is liable to give birth to many more evils.

Should the commitment of 'Munkar' be irrevocable, it is better to take an action in anticipation. For example, if it is reliably learnt that someone is intending to commit homicide or fornication,¹ the matter is not to be given short shrift.

In sum, inquisitiveness with regard to the performance of 'Amr bi ai-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is, generally speaking, unlawful, except in very exceptional circumstances. As rightly pointed out by Imam Ghazali,

وقد أمرنا أن نستر ما ستر الله ، وننكر على من أبدى لنا

صفحة

We have been asked to conceal what is hidden by Allah and to prosecute if someone makes his sin public.

Elaborating the point under discussion he adds:

معنى التجسس طلب الأمارات المعرفة ، فالأمانة المعرفة
إن حصلت وأورثت المعرفة جاز العمل بمقتضاها ، فأما طلب
الأمانة المعرفة فلا رخصة فيه أصلاً

Inquisitiveness stands for a search for signs. Should the signs be well known, the matter is to be treated accordingly.

1. al-Ahkam al-Sultaniya, p. 243

To make an effort for gaining such knowledge is, however, unlawful.¹

Actions against Non-Controversial 'Munkar'

For committing a non-controversial 'Munkar' alone some action is to be taken. This is not applicable to acts called in question by the authorities. One of the conditions of action, in Imam Ghazali's opinion, is

أن يكون كونه منكراً معلوماً بغير اجتهاد ، فكل ما هو محل

الاجتهاد فـ: حجة فيه

that a given 'Munkar' is considered as 'Munkar' by all authorities. Controversial matters are not to be treated in the same manner.²

The import of the Imam's stand on this point is as follows:

A 'Hanafi' cannot hold a 'Shafeyee' guilty for following Imam Shafeyee. So is the case for a 'Shafeyee'. Only those defying the principle of their own school are guilty. In such a case every one has the right to take action. It is improper to follow the principles of another school for one's convenience. Similarly, the leader acting against what he himself preaches is guilty. He being the leader is not allowed to follow the others.³

1. Ahiya Ulloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, pp. 285-6

2. Ahiya Ulloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, pp. 282

3. Ibid.

On the point whether the officers appointed by the state can use their discretionary power in such matters Allama' Abul Hasan Mawardi informs us that the Shafeyee jurisprudents believe that the officer is free to take any course. Some of the scholars subscribe to this view while others opine that the officer does not have a right to compel others to follow him.¹

In discretionary matters it is better to leave the option open. Compulsion in such matters amounts to acting against the spirit of 'Shariah'. It would result also in putting public to inconvenience. As aptly remarked by Mulla Ali Qari,

لا إنكار في المختلف فيه بناء على أن كل مجتهد مصيب
أو المصيب واحد إلا أن المخطيء غير متعين لنا ، مع أن الإثم
موضوع عنه وعن

ليس له - على الأصح - أن يحمل الناس على مذهبه
سواء كان مجتهداً أو مقلداً ، فلم يزل الخلاف بين الصحابة والتابعين

No action is to be taken in respect of controversial matters, for it is almost impossible to ascertain who is at fault. Moreover, in such matters one is not guilty of having committed a sin.

It is better to say that the officer appointed by the state is not entitled to compel others to adhere to his viewpoint. There have been differences over such matters

1. al-Ahkam al-Sultaniya, pp. 231-2.

among the companions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) and those next to him.¹

Innovations are to be definitely checked

One may exercise discretion in ascertaining details of 'Shariah'. However, as far as the fundamentals are at issue, there is no room for discretion. Anyone calling in question the very fundamentals of Islam cannot be referred to as the one exercising discretion. Such a move is to be certainly checked. Any digression along this line is dubbed innovation by Imam Ghazali who makes the following observation:

البدع كلها ينبغي أن تحسم أبوابها ، وتكر على المبتدعين
بدعهم وإن اعتقدوا أنها الحق

All innovators and their innovations are to be checked, though they may claim to be on the right path.²

Action against Anti-Shariah Literature

Any attempt to circulate an anti-Islamic book among Muslims is unlawful, according to Qaiyum such books are to be destroyed as evident from 'Shariah'.

الكتب المتضمنة لمخالفة السنة غير مأذون فيها . بل مأذون
في محققها وإتلافها ، وما على الأمة أضرار منها

1. al-Mobeen al-Moin, p. 190

2. Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, p. 287

الكتب المشتعلة على الكذب والبدعة يجب إتلافها وإعدامها ،
وهي أولى بذلك من إتلاف آلات اللهو والمعازف وإتلاف آنية
الخمر ، فإن ضررها أعظم من هذه

لا ضمان في تحريق الكتب المضلة وإتلافها

No permission can be granted for writing anti-Islamic books and it is permissible to destroy them, for there is nothing more pernicious for the Ummah than these. Such books that draw upon innovations and falsehood are also to be destroyed. These being harmful are worse than the musical instruments and drinking pots. No compensation is to be paid for its destruction.¹

This view point appears as parochial today but in view of the great harm such literature has done to the Ummah, it is not altogether unjust or parochial. The Muslim Ummah is a united group subscribing to only one ideology. Without this ideological unity the Ummah cannot perform the role it has been assigned to do. This accounts for the ban on such literature that aims at eroding the very fundamentals of Islam. The Ummah has to be firmly grounded in its philosophy and ideology of life, without which it cannot combat the forces of evil. The history of Islam provides ample evidence to prove that un-Islamic beliefs had their heyday in the Islamic society at the time when the grip

1. al-Taraq al-Hikmiya fi al-Siyass, pp. 254-6

of the Islamic ideology was loose on the masses. At this time it was no wonder that there were born exponents of atheism among Muslims.

This strict attitude towards the anti-Islamic literature does not imply that Muslims should be denied their freedom of expression in any degree. What is, in fact, aimed at is that Muslims, in general, should be provided with an atmosphere conducive to the practice of their faith and beliefs. Rejoinders to anti-Islamic literature in a scholarly fashion are not, at all, disallowed. Such a crusade, at the scholarly level, is termed as 'Wajib' by Imam Ibn Qaiyyum:

أما كتب إبطال الآراء والمذاهب المخالفة لها فلا بأس بها ،
وقد تكون واجبة ومستحبة ومباحة بحسب اقتضاء الحال

The books contradicting anti-Islamic literature are permissible. It might be even a 'Wajib' to do in accordance with the demands of circumstances.¹

Reformation of Kith and Kin

It is an important duty to enjoin 'Maroof' and forbid 'Munkar' among one's own relatives. Nonetheless, in so doing, the limits are not to be transgressed. A discussion is made below on the performance of this duty in respect of parents and their children. This being an intricate relationship calls for a detailed discussion.

1. al-Taraq al-Hikmiya fi al-Siyasa, p. 256

Children, according to 'Shariah' may be put under the following two heads i) adult and ii) minor. Some difference in the mode of the performance of this duty exists with regard to the two categories of children.

Reformation of Minor Children

To carry out the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' among minor children is synonymous with their training and upbringing in terms of reference set out by Islam. Much importance has been attached, as evident from a number of 'Ahadith', to the upbringing of children. The Prophet (P.B.U.H) is reported to have told:

لأن يؤدب الرجل ولده خير من أن يتصدق بصاع

It is better for one to bring up his children properly than to give a measure in charity.¹

'According to the other 'Hadith',

ما نحل والد ولداً من نحل أفضل من أدب حسن

There is no better gift from a father to his child than to train him well.²

The proper training of children not only accrues blessings to the parents but it happens also to be their duty as ordained by 'Shariah'. In discharging this duty they have every right to punish children, as stated in the following 'Hadith':

1. Tirmizi

2. Ibid.

مروا أولادكم بالصلاة ، وهم أبناء سبع سنين ، واضربوهم
وهم أبناء عشر

Ask your children, when they are seven years old, to say prayer. After attaining the age of ten years they are to be beaten, if they neglect prayers.¹

In respect of both sayings prayers and observing fasts the children should be dealt with sternly.²

Parents being responsible for the education and training of their children may compel them to gain the knowledge of the teachings of Islam.³

Father being the head of the family owes the responsibility of bringing up children properly. Nonetheless mother shares the responsibility equally. Mary had prayed to Allah thus:

"O my Lord! I do
Dedicate unto Thee
What is in my womb
For Thy special service
So accept this of me:
For Thou hearest
And knowest all things".

(41: 35)

رَبِّ إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لَكَ
مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ
مِنْى ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ
السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

Explaining the importance of this prayer Allama Abu Baker Jassas says:

1. Abu Daud
2. Rad al-Mukhtar al-Darr al-Mukhtar, Vol. III, p. 261
3. al-Bahr al-Raiq

بدل على أن للأم ضرباً من الولاية على الولد في تأديبه وتعليمه وإمساكه وتربيته لولا أنها تملك ذلك لما نذرت في ولدها

This brings out the fact that the mother also shares the responsibility of training and bringing up a child. Had it not been so, she (Mary) could not make such a prayer.¹

Both father and mother are entitled to punish the child.²

Reformation of Adult Children

Parents forfeit their right of punishing their children on their coming of age. Ibn Abidin, therefore, argues,

أما الكبير فكالأجنبي

One's son on coming of age is like a stranger.³

Some writers, however, think that parents have the same right even after the children come of age. In 'Bahr al-Raiq' is recorded:

ذكر الأسبيجاني أن للأب أن يؤدب ولده البالغ إذا وقع منه شيء⁴

According to Asbijani parents have the right to punish the guilty children, even if they have come of age.⁴

1. Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. II, p. 12
2. Rad al-Mukhtar, Vol. III, p. 261
3. Rad al-Mukhtar, Vol. III p. 261
4. al-Bahr al-Raiq, Vol. IV p. 171

The apparent contradiction between these two viewpoints is resolved by studying the version of 'Shariah' in respect of minor and adult children. Minor children are dependent wholly on their parents whereas the adult ones being independent are responsible for all their acts. Parents are, therefore, justified in punishing the delinquent children. This does not hold true for the adult ones. Nonetheless, the adult children are not wise enough for a long time. One's father may be justified in guiding his delinquent child, even if he has come of age. As stated in 'Dar Mukhtar',

(والعلام إذا عقل واستغنى برأيه ليس للأب ضمه إلى نفسه) إلا إذا لم يكن مأموناً على نفسه فله ضمه لدفع فتنة أو عار . وتأديبه إذا وقع منه شيء

One's father is not allowed to force his son to live with him when he has come of age. Should the father be in doubt about his conduct, he may keep him with himself and punish him for his wrongs.¹

This role can be performed by one's guardian as well. According to 'Shariah' it is desirable to keep relationships intact and to forbid 'Munkar'. Such a role ensures these:

والظاهر أن الجدة كذلك بل غيره من العصبات كالأخ والعم فإن دفع المنكر واجب على كل من قدر عليه لا سيما من

1. al-Dar al-Mukhtar Shirah Tanweer al-Absar, Vol. II, p. 883

يلحقه عاره ، وذلك أيضاً من أعظم صلة الرحم والشرع أمر بصلتها
وبدفع المنكر ما أمكن

One's grand father is just like the father. So are brothers and uncles. For forbidding 'Munkar' anyone of them can take the initiative subject to the condition he is eligible for doing so. It is in the best interests of the persons concerned, as it helps keep the relationships intact. Moreover, it ensures the forbidding of 'Munkar' and the maintenance of relations, on which has been laid much stress in 'Shariah'.¹

Parents do owe some responsibilities to their adult children as well. Though father is not supposed to provide financial support to his adult child, he should sponsor his adult child pursuing religious education.² Similarly, the efforts to dissuade one's children from indulging in 'Munkar' amounts to the performance of the duty of 'Nahi An al-Munkar'. In other words, parents may perform this duty among their adult children as well.

Reformation of Parents

It is doubtless difficult to perform this duty among one's parents. If one finds his parents indulging in 'Munkar' owing to the lack of knowledge, the children should preach them. They are not, however, allowed to resort to a mode

1. al-Dar al-Mukhtar Shirah Tanweer al-Absar, Vol. II, p. 883
2. al-Bahr al-Raiq, Vol. IV, p. 200

of preaching that involves a show of physical force against them. According to the Quran;

Say not to them a word
Of contempt, 'nor repel them,
But address them
In terms of honour. (XVII : 23)

فَلَا تَقُلْ لَّهُمْ آيٍ وَلَا
تَنْهَرُهُمْ بِاللُّغَمِ
قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا

Parents, if they kill their children, have not even to pay the blood money.

ولا يقاد الوالد لولده

For the sake of children the father is not to be killed.¹

So is the case with the son. For example, if someone kills the mother of his son, the son cannot claim for the blood money.² In case one's parents are non-Muslims, on the battleground their Muslim children should avoid attacking their own parents. They are, nonetheless, free to kill them in self-defence. Children are not allowed, in the opinion of jurists to enforce 'Hadd' (Penalty) on their parents. In the words of Imam Ghazali,

فإذا لم يجز له إيدأؤه بعقوبة هي حق على جناية سابقة فلا

يجوز له إيدأؤه بعقوبة هي منع من جناية مستقبلية متوقعة بل أولى

It is unlawful for the son to penalise his father for his past crimes and for the crimes he intends to do in the future.³

1. Tirmizi

2. Fatah al-Qadeer. Vol VIII, p. 260

3. Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, p. 280

On observing one's parents indulging in 'Munkar' the child should check them only once. If they persist, he should ignore and pray to Allah for their guidance and for overlooking their acts of omission and commission.¹ Without resorting to physical force the children are allowed to forbid 'Munkar' being committed by one's parents.² For example, if they are found drinking wine, the wine should be destroyed without saying a word to them.

Reformation of Wife

Let us discuss the point how for the husband is authorised and justified in performing the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' in respect of one's wife and vice-versa. According to the Quran,

Men are the protectors
And maintainers of women,

(IV: 34)

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ
عَلَى النِّسَاءِ

In the social set up desired by Islam men are the protectors of women. The husband is supposed to provide not only financial help to his wife but also to take care of her faith and beliefs. Like one's guardian he should exercise his authority in respect of his wife. Explaining the purport of the term 'Qawwam' Allama Ibn Kathir says:

1. Rad al-Mukhtar, Vol. III, p. 261
2. al-Tashree al-Jam'i, p. 509

الرجل قيم على المرأة أى هو رئيسها وكبيرها والحاكم عليها
ومؤدبها إذا اعوجت

Husband is the protector of wife in that he is her master, senior and guardian. He should reform her also, if she goes astray.¹

For Jassas,

تضمن قوله (الرجال قوامون على النساء) قيامهم عليهن
بالتأديب والتدبير والحفظ والصيانة

The Quranic phrase 'Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, bears the implication of their guidance, security and maintenance.'²

'Amr bi al-MarooF wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is not doubt 'Farz-e-Kifaya, but if one is in a position to perform this duty, it becomes 'Farz-e-Aain' for him to do so on coming to know of the defiance of the directives related to 'MarooF wa Munkar'.

It- is common knowledge that husband knows best the conduct of his wife and children. Moreover, he has an absolute authority on them as well. It is not, therefore, surprising that the performance of 'Amr bi al-MarooF wa Nahi An al-Munkar, is almost 'Farz-e-Aain' for him. On this point Imam Nauvi aptly remarks:

1. Tafseer Ibn Kathir, Vol. p. 491

2. Ahkam al-Quran, Vol. II, p. 229

ثم إنه قد يتعين كما إذا كان في موضع لا يعلم به إلا هو ،
 أولا يتمكن من إزالته إلا هو . وكن يرى زوجته أو ولده أو غلامه
 على منكر أو تقصير في المعروف

In certain cases 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar' tends to be 'Farz-e-Aain', as for example, on enjoying the authority to check it, if it is in his knowledge. One who finds his wife or children or slaves indulging in 'Munkar' or neglecting 'Maroo'f', he should perform this duty as it is 'Wajib' on him.¹

The husband has the right to beat his wife, if he finds her disloyal:

As to those women

On whose part ye fear

Disloyalty and ill-conduct,

Admonish them (first),

(Next) refuse to share their

وَالَّتِي يَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ
 فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ
 فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ

(And last) beat them (lightly);

(IV: 34)

For making one's wife follow 'Maroo'f' and give up 'Munkar' one may exercise this right of admonishing and beating. However, in so doing the husband should not lose sight of the following points:

i) The husband is entitled to take action against his wife, if she refuses to quench the sexual thirst of his husband without any proper reason. Same holds true for her acts of indecorum and

1. Shirah Muslim, Vol. 1, p 51

ill-conduct. Other acts for which the wife is to be punished are her refusal to obey the directions of her husband in respect of dress, loans and contact with others¹⁾

ii) The wife has a right to make claim for her subsistence and on demanding it she is not to be punished.²

iii) If the husband is found guilty of beating his wife without any genuine grounds, he would be prosecuted.³ iv) One is to be punished for committing such 'Munkar' for which no penalty is specified by Shariah. Those indulging in these 'Munkar' would be met with penalty to be executed by the state. As pointed out by Allama Kashani,

إذا ارتكبت معصية سوى النشوز ليس فيه حد مقدر
فلزوج أن يؤدبها تعزيراً لها لأن الزوج أن يعزر زوجته كما
للمولى أن يعزر مملوكه

The husband is allowed to punish his wife for indulging in 'Munkar' other than those for which penalty is ordained by Shariah, excepting her disobedience to the husband. Like a master the husband is entitled to punish her.³

v) In punishing the wife one should not cross the limits set by 'Shariah', as evident from 'Hadith' that the beating should not be ruthless.

1. Kanz al-Daqaq, Vol. V, p. 48-49

2. Ibid.,

3. Kanz al-Daqaq, Vol. V, pp. 48-49

4. Badaye al-Sanaye fi Tarteeb al-Sharaye, Vol. II, p.334

It is unlawful to transgress this limit. Abdullah bin Abbas thinks some light object should be used for beating and in a manner that does not cause any injury. So does Qatawa remark that the beating should not cause any deformation in the body.¹ If someone is found guilty of beating his wife ruthlessly, he would himself be liable to punishment:

ان ادعت على زوجها ضرباً فاحشاً وثبت ذلك عليه عزر

If it is proved that the husband is guilty of beating his wife mercilessly, he would be punished.²

If the wife succumbs to injuries as a result of the husband's beating he, according to Hanafi jurisprudents, would have to pay blood money.³ vi) Should the wife be disloyal, she should be, at first, admonished. If it does not work, the husband should refuse to share bed with her. The husband is justified in punishing her, if the two above mentioned steps fail to make any change. To resort to punishment without taking the initial steps is highly improper and unlawful for the husband.⁴

The punishment is justified, if it is hoped that she would mend her ways. Any excess on the part of husband is deplorable.⁵

1. Jamey al-Bayan, Vol. V, p. 41

2. Tanweer al-Absar, Vol. III, p. 262

3. Hidaya, Fatah al-Qadeer, Vol. IV, p. 217

4. Badaye al-Sanaye fi Tarteeb al-Sharaye, Vol. II, p. 334

5. al-Tashree al-Jinni, pp. 516-17

Reform in all walks and all departments of life forms part of the performance of 'Amr bi al-Marroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Included in it are faith, belief, dealings, prayer and all other matters. The husband is allowed to punish his wife in respect of certain matters. Should the wife be not only disloyal and of ill-conduct but also be indifferent to the duties ordained by Allah, the best course for the husband is to divorce such a wife. Separation is far better than living with an atheist wife. As stated in 'Bahr al-Raiq',

يستحب طلاقها إذا كانت سليطة مؤذية ، أو تاركة

للصلاة لا تقيم حدود الله

It is better to divorce her, if she is a problem for the husband, gives up saying prayers and defies the limits set out by Allah.¹

Allama Abideen adds:

الظاهر أن ترك الفرائض غير الصلاة كالصلاة

Negligence about other duties is like neglecting prayers.²

Hazrat Abdullah b. Masood is reported to have said that he would prefer appearing before Allah as the one who did not pay 'Mihr' to his wife

1. al-Bahr al-Raiq, Vol. III, p. 237

2. Rad al-Mukhtar, Vol. II, p. 572

to as the one whose wife did not say prayers.¹

Reformation of the husband

Women are dependent on men or, in the words of Imam Ghazali, their status is like that of a child in relation to his father. She is within her rights to draw the attention of the husband to the directives of 'Shariah' if she finds him indulging blatantly in 'Munkar'. She is not, however, allowed to chide or beat the husband.²

1. Rad al-Mukhtar, Vol. II, p. 572 It is not out of place to add that the husband according to Hanafi view point, is entitled to punish his wife for neglecting prayers.
2. Ahiya Uloom al-Diyn, Vol. II, p. 280

CHAPTER XIII

Characteristics

Only those possessing certain characteristics or virtues can perform well the duty of 'Amr bi al-maroof wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Some of the qualities required of those performing have already been discussed. A discussion is made on some other characteristics.

Prayer

A Muslim, as ordered by Allah and His Prophet, has to enjoin 'Maroof' and forbid 'Munkar'. All that is enjoined by Allah is 'Maroof' whereas all that is forbidden is 'Munkar'. The two terms sum up the fundamentals of Islam being synonymous with the enforcement of the Divine Guidance. Those practising themselves 'Maroof' are the best to enjoin 'Maroof, whereas those indulging in 'Munkar' cannot dare forbid 'Munkar' to others. Those who do not themselves do what they preach can hardly bring any change in others. For fulfilling his mission a Muslim ought to be an embodiment of the virtues he

preaches among other. 'Namaz' helps him perform effectively the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroofoo wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Luqman's advice to his son is marked by the same point:

O my son! establish
Regular prayer, enjoin what is
Just, and forbid what is wrong:
And bear with patient constancy
Whatever betide thee; for this
Is firmness (of purpose)
In (the conduct of) affairs.

(XXXI: 17)

يُتَبَقِّ أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ
وَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
وَأَنْهَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ
وَاصْبِرْ عَلَى مَا
أَصَابَكَ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ
عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ

The directive "to establish regular prayer", explain: the exegetes, symbolises self perfection, turning to Allah and feelings of God-fearingness and piety. By 'Amr bi al-Maroofoo wa Nahi An al-Munkar' is implied the concept of inviting others to Islam and their guidance and training. Though the two tasks appear as distinct, these are, in fact, intertwined. The establishment of regular prayers, though it is not a pre-requisite, enables one to perform the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroofoo wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Those neglecting prayer can hardly discharge this duty.

The qualities demanded of those performing this duty are developed in one as a result of his establishment of regular prayer. It makes one think of the world as a testing ground and of the

answerability in the Hereafter. This would prompt one to do only such acts that are enjoined by Allah. God-fearingness is immersed in such a man and he is thus capable of doing full justice to the duty of performing 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Prayer, according to the Quran, is the source of all virtues, for it infuses the spirit of Islam into one and thus his moral faculties are developed fully. It enables one to lead life marked by piety, subservience and an aversion to sins and 'Munkar', as recorded in the Quran thus:

...establish

Regular prayer: for Prayer

Restrains from shameful

And unjust deeds;

And remembrance of God

Is the greatest (thing in life)

Without doubt.

أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ ۖ إِنَّ
الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ
الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ
وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ

(XXIX: 45)

The above-quoted Quranic verse helps one ascertain the importance attached to the establishment of regular prayer in the performance of the duty of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar'.

Patience

In performing the duty of 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' one is required to bear with patient constancy whatever befalls him. Those lacking in this characteristic are not com-

petent to perform this duty, as remarked by Imam Razi:

من يأمر بالمعروف وينهى عن المنكر يؤذى فأمره بالصبر

Those enjoining ‘Maroof’ and forbidding ‘Munkar’ are teased by others, Keeping this point in mind Luqman advised his son to practise patience.¹

Same reason accounts for the reference to both “the mutual teaching of truth” and “of patience and constancy” in the Surah “Asr”. The former one implies the preaching of ‘Diy’ or the performance of ‘Amr bi al-MarooF wa Nahi An al-Munkar’ among Muslims while the latter stands for practising patience and constancy in preaching ‘Diy’. In sum, patience and constancy are indispensable qualities for those engaged in this mission. Imam Ibn Taiymia’s remark bears an additional testimony to this contention:

أمر الله الرسل . وهم أئمة الأمر بالمعروف والنهي
عن المنكر بالصبر

Allah has asked the prophets, the leaders of the mission of ‘Amr bi al-MarooF wa Nahi An al-Munkar’, to bear the hardships with patience and constancy.²

What is true for the prophets holds true for their followers.

1. Mafatih al-Ghaib (al-Tafseer al-Kabeer) Vol. VI, p.578
2. al-Hasbata fi al-Islam, p. 71

The performance of the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo' wa Nabi An al-Munkar' is in fact, quite a task that entails many hardships for those engaged in its performance. Only those who are endowed with exceptional fortitude, bravado and indomitable courage, absolute fearlessness, complete self-control and total submissiveness to Allah are competent for this task. Those lacking in self-restraint can hardly preach others. The quality of patience and constancy being an all-embracing one, helps one overcome all obstacles in performing the duty uninterruptedly. As already stated, one destitute of this characteristic is not fit for doing this task.

Forgiveness and Indulgence

With regard to 'Amr bi al-Maroo' forgiveness and indulgence are mentioned:

Hold to forgiveness; **حُذِّ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ**
 Command what is right; **وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ**
 But turn away from the ignorant. **الْجَاهِلِينَ**
 (VII: 199)

Forgiveness is closely linked with the concept of 'Maroo' wa Munkar'. Those performing this duty should be, generally speaking, of a charitable disposition. They are not supposed to resort to coercion in any form. Similarly, in matters concerning the payment of money one should not be forced into paying off debts.

All these directives are meant to develop morally sound relationships in society.¹

To possess the virtue of forgiveness precedes that of guiding others. It bears the implication that only those morally perfect are indeed competent to perform the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroofoo wa Nahi An al-Munkar,' for it entails, as already stated, the incurring of the displeasure of others. On who is swayed by his instinct is not a happy choice for performing this duty.

In addition to forgiveness mention is made also of turning away from the ignorant. If those preached turn indifferent to preaching, one should not be provoked and better turn away from them. For it is unbecoming on the part of the preachers to quarrel with the ignorant.

Deliberations, discussions and fruitful debates for achieving this end are not at all ruled out. However, if these result in quarrels and are likely to serve no purpose, one should better refrain from it.

This provision for turning away from the ignorant does not imply that one should be a silent spectator to the defiance of and revolt against the directives of Allah and His Prophet (P.B.U.H). No concession whatsoever is admissible in matters of consequence, for it would lead to the disruption and enfeebling of the

1. Rooh al-Maane, Vol. IX, pp. 146-7

very fabric of 'Shariah'. The duties ordained by 'Shariah' are to be discharged in any case. A lenient view of things may be taken in matters of conduct and dealings. Clarifying this significant point Imam Razi says:

الحقوق التي تستوفى من الناس وتؤخذ منهم إما أن يجوز إدخال المساهلة والمسامحة فيها . وإما أن لا يجوز . أما القسم الأول فهو المراد بقوله (خذ العفو) ويدخل فيه ترك التشدد في كل ما يتعلق بالحقوق المالية . ويدخل فيه أيضاً التخلق مع الناس بالخلق الطيب ، وترك الغلظة والفظاظة . ومن هذا الباب أن يدعو الخلق إلى الدين الحق بالرفق واللطف . وأما القسم الثاني وهو الذي لا يجوز دخول المساهلة والمسامحة فيه فالحكم فيه أن يأمر بالمعروف ، والعرف والعارفة والمعروفة هو كل أمر عرف أنه لا بد من الإتيان به . وأن وجوده خير من عدمه . وذلك لأنه لو اقتصر على الأخذ بالعفو . ولم يأمر بالعرف . ولم يكشف عن حقيقة الحال لكان ذلك سعيًا في تغيير الدين وإبطال الحق وأنه لا يجوز

The matters involving human beings may be dealt with either sternly or lightly. That one should hold to forgiveness amounts to opting for a lenient attitude towards the payment of debts, conduct and dealing. It includes also a fair treatment to every one and inviting others to Islam politely. In matters other than these there is no room for forgiveness and 'Maroof' has to be enjoined. People should feel afraid

of committing such acts that are forbidden by 'Shariah'. Any lapse on this account would open the flood gates for innovations and changes in 'Diyn' and the truth would be beclouded. This is, of course, disallowed.¹

According to Ibn Jareer Tabari,

ذلك وإن كان أمراً من الله نبه به، فإنه تأديب منه عز ذكره
لخلقه باحتمال من ظلمهم أو اعتدى عليهم لا بالأعراض عن جهل
الواجب عليه من حق الله ولا بالصفح عن كفر بالله وجهل
وحدانيته وهو للمسلمين حرب

Though the prophets have been asked to turn away from the ignorant, this is also the Divine Will that they should not allow the transgressors and enemies of Islam to operate.²

Devotion

Devotion lies at the core of all missions. Any Act, however noble, done without the intention of serving Allah is worthless. It is, therefore, essential for those engaged in the mission of performing 'Amr bi al-Marooif wa Nahi An al-Munkar' to make a frequently a heart searching and ensure the fact that in performing it there is no intention other than that of seeking Allah's Blessings and of obeying His Will.

1. al-Tafseer al-Kabeer, Vol. IV, p. 347

2. Jamey al-Bayan, Vol. IX, p. 98

Blessed are those who engage themselves in the noble act of performing the duty of 'Amr bi al-Marooef wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Only those dedicated heart and soul to the cause of obeying Allah can perform this duty well. Nonetheless, it is quite possible that those engaged in this mission may go astray, for in performing this duty one might grow complacent and do the preaching for gaining fame. Those preached are likely to benefit from the efforts of such a preacher but the preacher himself gains nothing, if his efforts are devoid of sincerity. As a matter of fact his preaching is not likely to do any good. As pointed out by Mulla Ali Qari, one sincere to this cause alone stand fair chances of success:

من أهم شروط الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر أن يكون صاحبه مخلصاً في فعله ، طالباً لإظهار دين الله وإعلاء كلمته وإطاعة أمره في بريته ، دون الرياء والسمعة والحمية لنفسه وطبيعته، فلئما ينصر ويزول به المنكر إذا كان صادقاً في مقام الإخلاص . قال الله تعالى (إن تنصروا الله ينصركم ويثبت أقدامكم

Devotion is one of the important pre-requisites for performing 'Amr bi al-Marooef wa Nahi An al-Munkar'. Those performing it should be devoted to this cause for enforcing Allah's Will and making mankind subservient to His Commands. In so doing, one should not be prompted by the motives of gaining fame. Those who are sincere to the cause are indeed

helped and they get success in forbidding 'Munkar'. Allah has promised to help those who Help Him and to keep them firm.¹

So should those performing this duty not forget that they are carrying out the mission for which the prophets were sent down. They should not lose sight of the fact that in so doing they are following in footsteps of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) and his companions. Any lack in devotion and sincerity to the cause would result in failure. Those lacking in the spirit of the prophets fail to do any justice to this duty. Discussing the limits and regulation of the duty of 'Amr bi al-Maroo'f wa Nahi An al-Munkar', Nizamuddin Nishapuri holds:

كل ذلك إيماناً وإحتساباً . لا سمعة ولا رياء . ولا
لفرض من الأغراض النفسانية والجسمانية وذلك أن هذه الدعوة
منصب النبي ﷺ والخلفاء الراشدين بعده

Those doing this duty should perform it with the intention of earning Blessings. Any intention other than this such as that of gaining fame or respectability should not be there. For it has been the mission of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) and of the four guided Caliphs.¹

1. al-Mubeen al-Moln, li Faham al-Arbaeen, pp. 193-4

1. Gharalb al-Quran Dar Ghaib al-Furqan, Vol. IV, p. 31-32

In sum, it is a noble cause for upholding and enforcing Allah's 'Diyin', for making man subservient to Allah and for freeing man of all shackles. It is doubtless a sacred duty and if it is performed insincerely one cannot hope to get any reward in the Hereafter.

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Glossary

A list of the recurrent terms used in the book

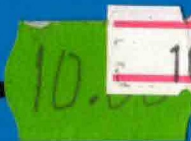
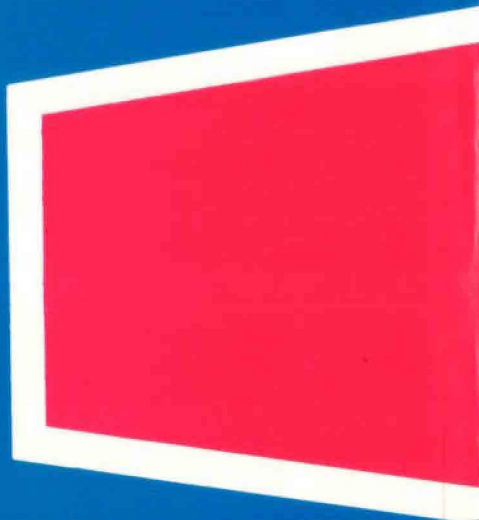
Diyn	: The Islamic way of life as ordained by the Quran
Farz	: Duty
Farz-e-Ain	: Absolute duty
Farz-e-Kifaya	: Conditional duty
Hadith	: Sayings of the Prophet(P.B.U.H.)
Iman	: Faith, belief
Jihad	: Fighting or striving in Allah's cause
Khair	: Goodness
Maroof	: Good, just, all that is enjoined by 'Shariah'
Munkar	: Wrong, evil, all that is forbidden by 'Shariah'
Shariah	: The Islamic religio-legal system
Sunnah	: The conduct of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.)
Ummah	: The Muslim community



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