

Chapter 2: Two Kinds of Wala'

The Holy Qur'an has talked much of *Wala'*, *Muwalat* and *Tawalla* (friendship and cooperation). This Celestial Book has discussed a number of questions under these headings. A thorough study of the Holy Qur'an indicates that from the Islamic point of view there are two kinds of *Wala'*; negative and positive i.e. on the one hand the Muslims have been asked not to accept one kind of *Wala'* and to refrain from it, and on the other hand they have been asked to observe another kind of *Wala'*.

The positive *Wala'* enjoined by Islam has two forms; general and special. Again the special form of *Wala'* is further subdivided into several categories; *Wala'* of Love, *Wala'* of Imamate, *Wala'* of Leadership and *Wala'* of Control. Now we take up each of them briefly.

Negative Wala'

The Holy Qur'an has strictly warned the Muslims against accepting the friendship or tutelage of the non-Muslims. This does not mean that Islam is in any way against the Muslims having good relations with the fellow human beings or it exhorts them to be always hostile to the non-Muslims and not to do any good to them. The Holy Qur'an expressly says:

"Allah does not forbid you to show kindness or to deal justly with those who did not fight against you on account of your religion and did not drive you out from your homes. Surely Allah does not love the unjust people" (Mumtahina, 60: 8)

Islam does not say that good fellowship should be exclusively confined to the Muslims or that a Muslim should not be philanthropic to others. How could a religion, which, in the words of the Qur'an, has described its Prophet as a blessing to all the worlds, say that?

Actually the idea is that the Muslims must never be unmindful of the designs of the enemy despite his claim of friendship. They should always be vigilant and should not take the pretensions of the enemy on their face value.

A Muslim must regard himself as a member of the Muslim body politic and a part of the whole. To be a

member of a particular society automatically imposes certain conditions and limits. The non-Muslims being members of a different society, the relations of the Muslims with them must be such as may not be incompatible with their being members of their own society. They should in no way jeopardize their own independence and integrity. Hence the relations of a Muslim with the non-Muslims cannot be similar to those which he has with the fellow Muslims.

The Muslims should have as close and cordial relations with one another as the members of the same body politic should normally have. According to Islam the negative aspect of this friendship demands that a Muslim, while dealing with a non-Muslim, should always be alive to the fact that he is facing a member of an alien body; and the relations of a Muslim with a non-Muslim should not be similar to those with a Muslim, in the sense that Muslim should not practically become a member of the non-Muslim society or assume such a shape that his membership of the Muslim society should in no way be unrecognizable. He should at no time ignore that he is a member of the Muslim body politic.

A Muslim may be nice and friendly to a non-Muslim but at the same time he should not take him as a member of the same body to which he himself belongs. There is no contradiction between these two attitudes.

Thus there is no contradiction between negative *Wala'* and the principles of fellow-feeling and philanthropy. Fellow-feeling requires a man to be concerned with the destiny, welfare and happiness of all human beings. As such a Muslim is naturally concerned with the salvation of all other human beings and is interested in their becoming Muslims. But so long as this target is not achieved those who have embraced Islam cannot be sacrificed for the sake of those who have not come under the fold of Islam.

Suppose certain people are afflicted with a certain disease. The fellow-feeling requires us to do everything possible to see that they are cured and to treat them with tenderness and sympathy so long as they are ill. But that does not mean that those who are suffering from a contagious disease should not be segregated from those who are sound in health. That is why Islam allows a Muslim to be benevolent to the non-Muslims but it does not permit him to undertake allegiance to them.

Islam is a religion of love towards mankind. It loves even a polytheist, not because of his polytheism, but because of his being a creation of Allah. At the same time it feels concerned because he has gone astray.

Had it not loved him, it would have been indifferent to his bad-luck.

In Islam there exists love and hatred both. But both are logical and reasonable, not emotional and haphazard. The friendship and enmity produced by pure emotions are blind feelings and have no logical basis. On the other hand, rational friendship and enmity produced by a sort of consciousness, stem from a concern in the destiny of a fellow being.

Let us take an example. The parents have two kinds of attachment to their child, one logical and the

other sentimental. Logical attachment sometimes may impel them to take an action, which may apparently cause pain and distress to their child. For instance they may submit him to a surgeon.

In such a case they may weep and shed tears, but they ask the surgeon to perform the operation as early as possible and amputate the festering limb, if necessary. They shed tears out of their emotional attachment, and ask for surgical operation and amputation out of their logical attachment.

In case they give preference to their emotional attachment and do not agree to amputation, they virtually acquiesce in giving their child in the pale of death. But because of their intellectual logic and keen interest in his welfare, they ignore their emotions and agree to the pain and inconvenience to their child.

To get himself cured any sensible person may occasionally submit himself to the surgeon and ask him, for example, to amputate one of his fingers. He does not like to suffer the pain of amputation. He knows that the loss of a finger will cause him much inconvenience. Still his reason and logic require him to bear the pain and agree to this organic defect. In such cases it is reason and logic, and not emotions, which induce a person to ask for a surgical operation.

In order to eliminate corruption from a society in which infidelity and ignorance prevail, Islam gives instruction for armed struggle, "***Fight them until revolt is rooted out***" (al-Baqarah, 2: 193).

At the same time for the security of the society it warns the Muslims against opening their heart to the infidels. There is no contradiction between this policy and the principle of entertaining goodwill towards all.

Imitating is human nature. Man—often unconsciously adopts the ideas and notions of others. The Qur'an says

"O you who believe! Take not My enemies and your enemies for friends. Would you offer them strong love while they have rejected the Truth which has come to you" (al-Mumtahina, 60: 1).

It continues to say

"If they have the upper hand of you, they will be your enemies and will stretch out their hands and tongues towards you with evil intent. They love to see you turn away from your faith". (al-Mumtahina, 60: 2)

Here the Holy Qur'an gives the reason why the Muslims should be cautious and vigilant while dealing with the non-Muslims. It says that they like to persuade others to adopt their customs, their way of thinking and religion. Had it been merely a question of their wish and liking, there was not much danger in it. The Holy Qur'an points out that they earnestly strive for misleading the Muslims.

This position makes it essential that the Muslims should be prudent about their relations with the non-Muslims. They should always remember that they belong to a Unitarian society totally different from that

of the non-Muslims. Anyhow, that does not mean that the Muslims should have no social, economic or political contact with them. The point to be kept in mind is that all such relations must be in keeping with the overall interests of the Muslim society.

General Form of Positive Wala'

Islam wants the Muslims to live an independent life as a militarily coordinated and socially homogeneous unit. To enable the Muslim society to grow strong and vigorous every Muslim is expected to consider himself to be a member of it. The Holy Qur'an wants the Muslim society to be superior to all others. It says:

"Don't be discouraged or grieved. You alone will have true dignity if you are true believers". (Ale Imran, 3: 139)

Faith is the criterion of the superiority of the Muslim society. It is its motivating force, the sanction for its independence, the mainstay of its personality and the essential pre-requisite of its unity. The Holy Qur'an says

"Don't dispute with one another lest you falter and your strength departs from you: But be steadfast!" (al-Anfal, 8: 46)

Internal discord and dissension pull down the structure and personality of the society. Faith is the basis of mutual friendship, love and loyalty among the Muslims.

The Holy Qur'an says:

"The believers, men and women are the Waly (guide) of each other; they enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. They keep up prayers and pay zakat and obey Allah and His Messenger". (al-Tauba,9:71)

The Muslims are closely linked together and as such they support one another. They are interested in one another's fate, in reality in their own fate, for they, all together form one compact unit. That is why they exhort one another to do the good and abstain from doing the evil.

This exhortation and this restraint stem from mutual *Wala'*. That is why in the Holy Qur'an the sentence **"They enjoin the right and forbid the wrong"**, has been placed immediately after the statement that the Muslims are Waly of one another.

Interest in the fate of another person originates from the interest in that person himself. A father who is interested in his children automatically feels himself concerned with their future. But he may not feel interested in the children of others, and because of his not being interested in them, he is not likely to be concerned about their fate. Hence their good or bad behavior is not likely to produce positive or negative feelings in him.

The exhortation to do the right and to restrain others from doing the wrong are the outcome of these very positive and negative feelings. Such feelings do not arise without the existence of love and attachment.

If a man is disinterested in a particular person, he will be indifferent to his behavior and conduct. But if he is interested, his attachment will not allow him to remain unconcerned. That is why the Holy Qur'an has connected the exhortation for the good and the restraint from the wrong under the head of *Wala'*.

The Holy Qur'an has mentioned two other things which follow this exhortation and restraint. It says: **"They offer prayers and pay zakat"**. Prayer represents the relation between the Creator and man and zakat represents the goodwill among the Muslims who support one another because of their mutual affection and sympathy. Then the Qur'an says **"As for these, Allah will have mercy on them; and they will have lasting happiness"**. Later we will elucidate this passage further and will show that not only this but many other verses of the Holy Qur'an which mention general *Wala'*, imply a sort of responsibility of the Muslims in respect of the mutual goodwill among them.

The Holy Prophet has said **"The Muslims in their mutual affection and sympathy are like the human body. If one part of it suffers, all other parts feel uneasy"**.

In respect of the Holy Prophet and those who received training under him the Holy Qur'an says :

"Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah and those with him are hard to the disbelievers yet kind among themselves". (al-Fath 48: 29).

This verse refers both to the special form of positive *Wala'* and the negative *Wala'*. As we have said above many verses of the Holy Qur'an point out that the enemies of Islam have always been trying to turn the negative *Wala'* into a positive one and the positive *Wala'* into a negative one. In other words they do their utmost to make the relations between the Muslims and the non-Muslims cordial and between the Muslims themselves hostile on one pretext or another.

For this purpose they fan the sectarian differences. In our own time these aliens have become more active in this respect.¹ They have been spending huge sums of money to sow the seeds of discord among the Muslims. Unfortunately they have been able to produce certain elements among the Muslims whose only concern is to convert the positive Islamic *Wala'* into a negative one and the negative Islamic *Wala'* into a positive one and this is the most severe blow which these wicked persons deal to the Holy Prophet.

This is the most deplorable tragedy with which Islam is faced today. Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib has said "It is really disturbing and most surprising that the enemies, despite their being in the wrong, are united, and you despite your being in the right, are divided".

We pray to Allah to protect the Muslims from the machinations of these wicked people.

1. "Muslims should be awake, Muslims should be alert that if a dispute takes place among Sunni and Shi'ah brothers, it is harmful to Muslim ummah. Those who want to sow discord are neither Sunni nor Shi'ah; they are agents of the superpowers and work for them. Those who attempt to cause discord among Muslims are people who conspire for the enemies of Islam and want them to triumph over Muslims. They are the supporters of America and Russia." (Imam Khomeini).

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