

Divine Laws Governing Victory and Defeat from the Qur'anic Perspective

Ali Karbalaee Pazouki

Department of Theology and Islamic Studies, Faculty of Theology and Islamic Studies, Allameh Ṭabāṭabā'ī University, Tehran, Iran.

Email: karbalaepazoki@atu.ac.ir

ORCID: 0000-0002-7247-8202

Abstract

From the perspective of the Holy Qur'an, victory and defeat are not merely the consequences of material or military superiority and human will; rather, the framework of divine laws governing individual, social, and historical human life plays a decisive role. This study identifies these laws and explains their interrelationship in bringing about divine assistance. Using a descriptive-interpretive method and content analysis, and drawing on Qur'anic verses and exegetical views, the present study elucidates the system of divine laws that influence victory and defeat. The findings indicate that these laws can be classified into four interconnected levels: doctrinal (faith, sincerity, and reliance on God); ethical (piety, patience, perseverance, and avoidance of pride); social (unity, obedience to leadership, consultation, and discipline); and defensive (defensive preparedness, the development of up-to-date capabilities, and knowledge of the enemy). The findings show that, from the Qur'anic perspective, divine assistance results from the harmonious interaction of these laws. Accordingly, the Qur'an provides a systematic and multidimensional theory of victory applicable to all contexts, including society and warfare, in which doctrinal, spiritual, and value-based laws; social laws; and the utilization of hard-power components, natural laws, material means, and human will constitute parts of a unified system for achieving victory.

Keywords: Defeat, Victory, Divine Laws, Qur'an, Warfare.

Introduction

The causes of victory and defeat in society and warfare have long been among the most fundamental questions in religious and political thought. In contrast to materialist theories, which sometimes emerge in the form of Marxist historical and economic determinism or the primacy of individualism and freedom in liberalism and existentialism (Motahhari, ۲۰۱۲ AD/۱۳۹۱ SH: ۱۳۳), the divine religions, particularly Islam, open another horizon before humanity and speak of the sovereignty of a set of fixed and universal divine laws over history, the destiny of societies, and warfare. From this perspective, victory and defeat are neither random events nor merely the consequences of material and human factors. Rather, they take place within the framework of "Divine Laws," laws through which divine will operates in history by means of natural, ethical, social, and spiritual causes. The human factor constitutes one of the essential conditions within these laws (cf. Motahhari, ۲۰۱۲ AD/۱۳۹۱ SH: ۲۰۴-۲۰۹).

One of the divine laws governing history is the assistance and victory of the people of truth in their struggle against the people of falsehood. This law, however, is conditional upon the perseverance of believing people, their endurance of hardships and afflictions, and their steadfastness in the struggle against disbelief. Thus, the Qur'an states:

"They endured patiently the denial and persecution they suffered until Our help came to them. None can change the Words of Allah." (cf. Sadr, ۲۰۰۲ AD/۱۳۸۱ SH AD/۱۳۸۱ SH: ۷۰)

In the Qur'an, the victory and defeat of nations are subject to fixed and unalterable rules, rules that the Qur'an refers to as "Divine Laws": "You will never find any change in the way of Allah." (al-Fatḥ: ۲۳; al-Aḥzāb: ۶۲)

Accordingly, social phenomena, including warfare, are not merely military events in the Qur'an; rather, they constitute arenas in which divine laws manifest themselves and become actualized throughout history. Human beings and their diverse circumstances play a fundamental role in this process. In this regard, Shahid Sadr presents human beings as the foundation of historical and social transformations, conceptualizing this role as a relationship between the dependent and the independent, or between cause and effect (Sadr, ٢٠٠٢ AD/١٣٨١ SH: ١٤٦).

The significance of this study lies in the fact that a review of the research literature indicates that most existing studies have focused on explaining the concept of divine laws, identifying their manifestations, examining the philosophy of history from the Qur'anic perspective (such as the book *al-Sunan al-Tarīkhīyyah fī al-Qur'an al-Karīm*), or addressing the laws and ethics of warfare. By contrast, relatively few studies have attempted to explain the factors underlying victory and defeat as a coherent system of divine laws. Although some studies in social theology have examined doctrinal, ethical, social, and material factors separately, they have paid less attention to their systematic interrelationships. Consequently, no comprehensive theory of the Qur'anic logic of victory and defeat, or its place within the Qur'anic theology of history, has been presented.

This study seeks to provide a coherent account of the theology of victory and defeat in the Holy Qur'an through a descriptive method and thematic exegesis, using conceptual and content analysis of Qur'anic verses and drawing on exegetical views. The central question of this article is: 'What are the divine laws governing the victory and defeat of nations in warfare from the Qur'anic perspective?' The main hypothesis is that the Qur'an presents victory and defeat not as the result of a single factor, but as the outcome of the interaction of a set of divine laws in four domains: doctrinal, ethical, social, and defensive preparedness, in all of which human will plays an important role.

The following sections examine these domains in turn from the perspectives of the Qur'an and its exegetes. The four laws examined in this study are general principles. The factors and conditions discussed under each principle are the elements through which that law is actualized and which play a fundamental role in its realization, much like the relationship between cause and effect. Identifying these laws and the factors that shape them...

١. Literature Review

The concept of "divine laws" has become an important subject in Qur'anic studies, the philosophy of history, and social theology in recent decades. Although rooted in classical exegetical works, this concept has also received attention in contemporary research as a framework for explaining the fixed divine laws governing history and human society. Classical exegetes, in their commentaries on verses such as "You will never find any change in the way of Allah," (al-Aḥzāb: ٦٢; al-Fath: ٢٣) "There have been examples before you," (Āli 'Imrān: ١٣٧) and "The established way of Allah with those who passed away before," (al-Aḥzāb: ٣٨) have understood divine laws as fixed and unalterable laws of God governing history and human societies (cf. Ṭabarī, ١٩٩١ AD/١٤١٢ AH; Fakhr Rāzī, ١٩٩٩ AD/١٤٢٠ AH; Ṭabrisī, ١٩٨٢ AD/١٤٠٣ AH; Ṭabāṭabā'ī, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH).

Contemporary studies have addressed the theoretical explanation of *Sunnat Allah* and its relationship to divine will, human free will, and the laws governing social transformations. These works show that divine laws are not limited to ontological laws; rather, they are fixed patterns governing individual and social human life, whose realization is connected to voluntary human behavior. In this regard, Raharjou et al., regard *Sunnat Allah* as the governing principle of divine order and civilizational transformations, extending its scope to social and historical laws (Hashi, ٢٠٢٥).

Another body of research has focused on warfare in the Qur'an. In a study of Islamic law of war, *Ahmed al-Dawoody* examines the rules of jihad and highlights the relationship between divine will and the Islamic legal order (al-Dawoody, ٢٠١١). Joel Hayward, in his analysis of the ethics of war in the Qur'an, likewise demonstrates that victory and defeat in the early Islamic wars cannot be explained solely through military factors; ethical and religious elements also play a fundamental role in understanding these events (Hayward, ٢٠١٢). In the English-language literature, scholars such as Firestone (١٩٩٩), Cook (٢٠٠٥), and Bonner (٢٠٠٦) have examined warfare in the Qur'an primarily from the perspectives of jihad, the ethics of war, just war theory, and humanitarian law, devoting less attention to the divine laws influencing victory and defeat.

Arabic-language scholarship has also produced works on subjects such as "*al-Sunan al-Ilāhīyyah fī al-Qur'an al-Karīm, Sunan al-Naṣr wa al-Hazīmah, and Fiqh al-Naṣr wa al-Tamkin fī al-Qur'an al-Karīm*" (Ali Muhammad Muhammad al-Ṣallābī, ٢٠٢٥). These works generally emphasize the role of faith, piety, patience, unity, and obedience in bringing about divine assistance. However, they predominantly adopt descriptive and educational approaches and do not analyze the relationships among these factors within a coherent theoretical framework.

Similarly, Muhammad Baqir Sadr's book "*al-Sunan al-Tarīkhīyyah fī al-Qur'an al-Karīm*" (٢٠١٣ AD/١٤٣٤ AH) presents the historical laws of the Holy Qur'an through a thematic exegetical approach. In this work, he seeks to uncover the laws of history in the Qur'an, the characteristics of historical laws in the Holy Qur'an, the analysis of social elements in the Qur'an, the role of human beings in the movement of history, and the interaction of historical elements in their broad sense. The present study focuses, however, on warfare, the role of human beings, and divine assistance within it.

In Persian-language scholarship, scholars have generally examined divine laws within the framework of Qur'anic history, succession, gradual enticement, the destruction of nations, divine assistance, the alteration of blessings, and the decline of civilizations. Examples include the following studies:

"Divine Laws Governing the Movement of History from the Perspective of the Qur'an and *Nahj al-Balāghah*," by Ali Asghar Rajabi and Morteza Tahami (۲۰۲۱ AD/۱۴۰۰ SH) review the concept and characteristics of historical laws in the Qur'an and *Nahj al-Balāghah*, drawing on Qur'anic verses and commentators' views on *Nahj al-Balāghah*. Their findings indicate that, according to the teachings of the Qur'an and *Nahj al-Balāghah*, historical events are governed by specific laws, just as other domains of existence are governed by their own particular laws.

"Divine Assistance in Supporting the Camp of Truth from the Perspective of the Qur'an," by Mohammad Ezzati Bakhshayesh (۲۰۲۰ AD/۱۴۰۳ SH) examines the Qur'anic evidence for divine assistance and explains the conditions and requirements for its realization. It demonstrates that faith, acting for the sake of God, perseverance on the path of truth, reliance on God, and defensive preparedness constitute prerequisites for benefiting from this definitive divine law.

Mesbah Yazdi, in "Society and History in the Qur'an," (۲۰۱۲ AD/۱۳۹۱ SH) discusses divine laws and the role of human free will in their realization. Abdullah Javadi Amoli likewise examines divine laws within various political, social, cultural, and economic frameworks. He argues that it is appropriate to establish an independent discipline to explain these laws (Javadi Amoli, ۲۰۲۰ AD/۱۳۹۹ SH: ۱۰, ۵۸۶).

Among contemporary exegetes, Allamah *Ṭabāṭabā'ī*, in *Tafsir al-Mizan*, analyzes the verses concerning the Battles of *Badr*, *Uḥud*, and *Ḥunayn*, presenting victory and defeat as the outcome of the interaction between divine will and human voluntary behavior. He also emphasizes the unchangeability of divine laws

(Ṭabāṭabā'ī, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ٤). Nevertheless, his primary objective is not to formulate an independent theory of Qur'anic laws governing victory and defeat.

Javad Soleimani, in the article "The Law-Governed Nature of History in the Qur'an from the Perspective of Shahid Sadr," (٢٠١٠ AD/١٣٨٩ SH) seeks to extract, in a concise, systematic, and coherent manner, Shahid Sadr's Qur'anic perspectives and deductions concerning the principle that history is governed by laws and some of the laws governing it.

These studies demonstrate that the Qur'an regards history as subject to a set of enduring laws. However, relatively little attention has been devoted to explaining a system of divine laws influencing victory and defeat in warfare and the role of human beings in this process. The innovation of the present study lies in presenting such a systematic model and explaining the relationships among these laws within a Qur'anic theory of the logic of victory and defeat in warfare. Although these laws also govern other areas of social life, the present study focuses on their operation in warfare.

٢. Divine Laws and the Qur'anic Logic of Victory and Defeat

The Holy Qur'an explains victory and defeat within the framework of "Divine Laws," fixed and universal laws through which divine will operates in history by means of natural, ethical, and social causes, as well as unseen assistance. The term *Sunnah* literally means an established method or way (Rāghib Iṣfahānī, ١٩٩١ AD/١٤١٢ AH: ١, ٤٢٩). In Qur'anic usage, it denotes the fixed divine laws governing the administration of the world and society. Verses such as "You will never find any change in the way of Allah," (al-Faṭḥ: ٢٣) "You will never find any alteration in the way of Allah," (al-Fāṭir: ٤٣) and "There have been examples before you" (Āli 'Imrān: ١٣٧) emphasize the stability, universality, and systematic nature of these laws.

Divine laws are understood as God's unalterable laws governing history, actualized through human voluntary behavior, and not in conflict with human free will (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ١٣, ١٣٣-١٤٠). Muhammad Baqir Sadr further developed this perspective through his theory of "Historical Laws in the Qur'an," emphasizing that history moves according to fixed laws whose subject is human voluntary behavior, rather than historical determinism (Sadr, ٢٠١٣ AD/١٤٣٤ AH: ٨٣-٨٥).

An examination of Qur'anic verses and exegetical views shows that the divine laws governing the realization of divine assistance in all domains form a coherent, multilayered system that cannot be reduced to a single factor or level. These laws begin with the reform of beliefs and inner motivations, continue through ethical virtues, manifest themselves in the social organization of the believing community, and ultimately, at the defensive and civilizational levels, lead to the development and preservation of power, the management of threats, and the continuation of authority. To provide a coherent explanation of this system, the present study classifies the divine laws governing defeat and victory in warfare into four main categories: first, the doctrinal law, which forms the spiritual foundation of the combatants' efforts; second, the ethical law, which organizes their individual and collective conduct along the path toward divine assistance; third, the social and collective law, which concerns their organization and cohesion; and fourth, the defensive law, which relates to the development of power, preparedness, strategic vigilance, and knowledge of the enemy. Together, these four categories represent the Qur'anic framework of understanding the laws governing victory and defeat in all individual and social domains, including warfare, which is the subject of this study.

٣. The Doctrinal Law of Divine Assistance

The doctrinal law forms the foundation of the Qur'anic system of divine assistance, because a monotheistic orientation organizes combatants' motivations and provides the conditions for realizing the ethical, social, and defensive laws. Accordingly, this section examines the three essential pillars or conditions of this law, intention, sincerity, and reliance on God, drawing on Qur'anic verses and exegetical views. Thus, the doctrinal law refers to the monotheistic orientation of the motivations of Muslim combatants, based on three factors: "Divine intention, sincerity, and reliance on God, which together provide the conditions for the realization of divine assistance."

٣,١. **Intention and Sincerity: The Foundation of the Divine Law of Victory**

Among the factors influencing victory, the Holy Qur'an assigns a fundamental position to human intention. In Qur'anic thought, divine intention is not merely a mental belief; rather, it is a force, conviction, affirmation, and heartfelt submission (faith) that organizes the individual and social conduct of believers. If intention determines the overall direction of the believing community's movement, sincerity determines the quality and ultimate purpose of that movement. From the Qur'anic perspective, all actions, including jihad, gain divine value and become a means of realizing divine assistance only when performed solely for God. Accordingly, the Qur'an distinguishes between "Fighting" and "Jihad in the way of Allah," because not every battle constitutes jihad, nor does every combatant fall under the promise of divine assistance. Rather, jihad enters the divine framework when it is purified of motivations such as the pursuit of fame, ethnic or tribal partisanship, the desire for spoils, and the pursuit of superiority.

The most important verse in this regard is verse ٥ of Surah *al-Bayyinah*:

"And they were not commanded except to worship Allah, being sincere to Him in religion." (al-Bayyinah: ٥)

The meaning of this verse is not restricted to individual acts of worship; it encompasses all actions, including jihad. Exegetes have regarded sincerity as a condition for the acceptance of all actions. *Fakhr Rāzī* emphasizes the continuity of sincerity from the beginning to the end of an action and does not regard jihad undertaken with the motivation of seeking spoils, fame, or superiority as an instance of sincerity and divine assistance, even if it results in military victory (Fakhr Rāzī, ١٩٩٩ AD/١٤٢٠ AH: ٣٢, ٢٤٣). *Qurṭubī*, likewise, drawing on the Prophet's well-known hadith, "Whoever fights so that the word of Allah is supreme is in the way of Allah," identifies divine intention, rather than mere presence on the battlefield, as the criterion for determining whether jihad is "In the way of Allah." (Qurṭubī, ١٩٨٤ AD/١٤٠٥ AH: ٧, ٣٧٦)

Among contemporary exegetes, Allamah *Ṭabāṭabā'ī* describes sincerity as the essence of servitude and maintains that all spheres of life, including politics, jihad, and social relations, must be organized around an orientation toward God. Accordingly, a society whose conduct is dominated by material motivations, even if it possesses military power, will not benefit from the full measure of divine assistance (cf. *Ṭabāṭabā'ī*, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ٧, ٣٩٤).

Although divine intention (faith) and sincerity determine the direction of combatants' efforts and constitute the foundation of the system of divine laws governing victory, they are neither independent nor sufficient factors for overcoming the enemy. Rather, they must be accompanied by practical action and observance of natural laws and material means. The most important verse in this regard is verse ٧ of Surah *Muḥammad*:

"O! Believers! If you stand up for Allah, He will help you and make your steps firm." (Muḥammad: ٧)

Exegetes, despite differences in their interpretive approaches, agree on several points. First, "Helping Allah" means supporting the religion, the Prophet, and the divine law, not assisting the Self-Sufficient God; second, the verse's conditional structure indicates that divine assistance is not an unconditional promise; rather, its realization depends on human action. *Ṭabarī* and *Ṭabrisī* have interpreted this assistance as believers' victory on the battlefield of jihad. Allamah *Ṭabāṭabā'ī* regards this verse as expressing one of the social divine laws, meaning that God has willed the victory of religion to be realized through the system of causes and the efforts of believers, and that faith alone is insufficient (cf. *Ṭabarī*, ١٩٩١ AD/١٤١٢ AH: ٢٢, ٢٤٤-٢٤٦; *Ṭabrisī*, ١٩٨٢ AD/١٤٠٣ AH: ٥, ٩٨; *Ṭabāṭabā'ī*, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ١٨, ٢٣٨-٢٤٠).

Accordingly, divine intention (faith) determines the overall direction of the believing community's movement. At the same time, sincerity specifies the quality, ultimate purpose, and purity of this movement from all that is other than God. When these two conditions are fulfilled, divine assistance arrives: "And it is incumbent upon Us to help the believers." (al-Rūm: ٤٧) Helping and granting victory to the believers is a commitment undertaken by God and a right granted to them.

A society that employs jihad as a means of expansionism, revenge, the pursuit of spoils, or the pursuit of superiority (social, military, political, or economic), even if it achieves military success, does not attain genuine victory from the Qur'anic perspective and will ultimately be destined for defeat. It will not be included among those who receive divine assistance. Thus, sincerity links faith and action in jihad. Without it, faith alone does not provide the conditions for the realization of divine assistance. Faith and sincerity, moreover, are not by themselves sufficient conditions for victory; rather, when accompanied by practical action, effort, and

the use of material means, they provide the conditions for victory in warfare as part of a divine law.

٣,٢. **Reliance on God within the Framework of the System of Causes and Effects (*Tawakkul*)**

Another foundation of the doctrinal law of victory in the Qur'an is reliance on God after establishing the necessary mechanisms within the system of causes and effects. *Tawakkul* is among the fundamental concepts of the verses concerning jihad. However, it is sometimes mistakenly seen as opposed to planning, strategic deliberation, and the use of material means. An examination of Qur'anic verses demonstrates that *Tawakkul* does not mean abandoning means, but rather trusting in God after employing all legitimate resources. Accordingly, reliance on divine assistance, entrusting the outcome of one's efforts to God, and *Tawakkul* constitute one of the divine laws of victory and the link between faith and action.

The most important verse in this regard is verse ١٥٩ of Surah *Āli 'Imrān*:

"It is by Allah's mercy that you "O! Prophet" were lenient with them. ... And consult with them in the matter. Then, once you make a decision, put your trust in Allah. Surely Allah loves those who trust in Him." (*Āli 'Imrān*: ١٥٩)

This verse was revealed after the Battle of *Uḥud*, when the Muslims were defeated because a group of archers disobeyed. In light of the verse's content, "Consultation, resolve, and reliance on God" occur in sequence. A person must first fulfill their duty and then entrust the outcome to God (cf. Makarem, ١٩٩٨ AD/١٣٧٧ SH: ٣, ١٧٣-١٧٤). Thus, the verse expresses the truth that *Tawakkul* is the outcome of rationality, deliberation, and informed decision-making, not a substitute for them.

God also states: "If Allah helps you, none can defeat you. But if He abandons you, then who else can help you after Him? So in Allah let the believers put their trust."

(Āli ‘Imrān: ١٦٠)

Despite differences in expression, exegetes have understood *Tawakkul* as trust in God accompanied by using the means. Drawing on the hadith "Tie it and trust in Allah," in which a man asked the Prophet whether he should tie his camel's knee and trust in God or leave it untied and trust in Him, and the Prophet replied, "Tie the camel's knee and trust in Allah," (Tirmidhī, n.d.: ٥, ٤١٧) they explain that employing means and relying on God are not contradictory matters but complementary ones (Makarem, *ibid.*). Ṭabrisī regards *Tawakkul* as the fruit of certainty and a source of tranquility and perseverance for the believer on the battlefield (Ṭabrisī, ١٩٨٢ AD/١٤٠٣ AH: ١, ٥٢٨).

Accordingly, from the Qur’anic perspective, *Tawakkul*, as a fundamental factor in realizing the divine law of assistance, is not a passive state or a substitute for planning, whether considered generally or specifically in the context of jihad. Rather, it gains meaning through consultation, decision-making, and the use of means. A society and a fighting force that utilize all legitimate capacities while entrusting the outcome to God and placing their trust in Him have fulfilled one of the important conditions for realizing the divine law of victory.

In the context of the Battle of *Badr*, the Qur’an states: "And in Allah let the believers put their trust." (Āli ‘Imrān: ١٢٢)

It continues: "And victory is not but from Allah, the Exalted in Might, the Wise."

(Āli ‘Imrān: ١٢٦)

In light of the foregoing discussion, the three elements of intention (faith), sincerity, and *Tawakkul* play essential roles in realizing the doctrinal law, which provides the necessary foundations for divine assistance and victory. The following section examines the role of ethical virtues in this regard.

٤. The Ethical Law of Divine Assistance

Alongside doctrinal foundations, the Qur'an emphasizes ethical virtues that guide the individual and collective conduct of believers and create the conditions for the realization and continuation of divine assistance. Accordingly, the second section examines the most important ethical factors governing victory and divine assistance in all affairs, particularly jihad, including piety, patience and perseverance, and avoiding pride.

Thus, ethical law requires that combatants' conduct be accompanied by piety, patience, perseverance, and the avoidance of pride, thereby creating the conditions for realizing the higher law of divine assistance.

٤.١. Piety: The Most Important Ethical Virtue in Realizing Divine Assistance

The Holy Qur'an identifies piety as the most important ethical virtue in realizing divine assistance. If faith determines the direction of the community's movement and sincerity purifies its motivation, piety regulates the quality of believers' individual and social conduct (social piety). Accordingly, beyond being an individual virtue, piety is a social and strategic principle that plays a fundamental role in realizing divine assistance.

An examination of Qur'anic verses demonstrates that piety plays a role in at least three domains: it is a condition for the descent of divine assistance, a factor in insight and discernment in momentous decisions, and a means of facilitating relief in times of crisis.

In the context of jihad and warfare, collective piety plays a fundamental role. From the Qur'anic perspective, piety is a condition for the descent of divine assistance in warfare. One of the most important verses in this regard is verse ١٢٥ of Surah *Āli Imrān*:

"Yes! If you are patient and mindful of Allah and the enemy attacks you suddenly, your Lord will reinforce you with five thousand angels, specially marked." (Āli ‘Imrān: ١٢٥)

These verses concern the Battle of *Badr*, but they express a general principle: divine assistance depends on patience and piety (cf. Ṭabāṭabā’ī, *ibid*: ٤, ١٣). Piety is presented in this verse as a condition for the continuation of divine assistance. *Fakhr Rāzī* explicitly states that if divine assistance were granted unconditionally, divine testing would have no meaning. Accordingly, victory is made dependent upon the believers’ adherence to these two principles: patience and piety (Fakhr Rāzī, ١٩٩٩ AD/١٤٢٠ AH: ٨, ٣٥٠-٣٥٢).

Thus, when a person advances toward perfection, righteousness, and piety, they act in harmony with the laws governing the universe, which guarantees their survival (Motahhari, ٢٠١١ AD/١٣٩٠ SH: ٢٠٥).

In the Qur’an, piety is the source of insight and the ability to distinguish truth from falsehood. Verse ٢٩ of Surah *al-Anfāl* states:

"O! Believers! If you are mindful of Allah, He will grant you a criterion to distinguish right from wrong." (*al-Anfāl*: ٢٩).

Ṭabarī interprets *Furqān* as the ability to distinguish truth from falsehood (Ṭabarī, ١٩٩١ AD/١٤١٢ AH: ١١, ١٢٧). Allamah Ṭabāṭabā’ī expands this meaning of *Furqān* beyond theoretical understanding and belief to a form of practical insight that protects individuals from errors in individual and social decision-making (cf. Ṭabāṭabā’ī, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ٩, ٥٦). Accordingly, many defeats result not from inadequate equipment but from errors in judgment and incorrect assessments, and the Qur’an presents this strategic capacity as a fruit of piety.

Piety also provides the conditions for relief in times of crisis. The Qur’an states in Surah *al-Ṭalāq*:

"And whoever is mindful of Allah, He will make a way out for them, and provide for them from sources they could never imagine." (al-Ṭalāq: ٢-٣).

Although these verses were revealed in the context of family laws, their application is not restricted to that context, and their ruling is general. *Qurṭubī* regards this promise as encompassing all spheres of life (cf. *Qurṭubī*, ١٩٨٤ AD/١٤٠٥ AH: ١٨, ١٥٨-١٦٠). Allamah *Ṭabāṭabā'ī* likewise emphasizes that piety frees individuals from personal and social dead ends, provides them with a way out of the difficulties of life, and secures their happiness in this world and the Hereafter (cf. *Ṭabāṭabā'ī*, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ١٩, ٣٢٠-٣٢٦).

Piety, however, is not merely a negative state of avoidance and abstention. Rather, it is a spiritual state within the soul that strengthens and revitalizes the spirit and grants it immunity, enabling a person to confront challenges and resolve problems (Motahhari, ٢٠٠٠ AD/١٣٧٩ SH: ٢٠٢-٢٠٤). Imam Ali, in a beautiful analogy concerning the salvific power of piety, states:

"The example of piety is like well-trained, obedient, and docile mounts whose reins are in the hands of their riders, and which calmly carry their riders toward Paradise." (Nahj al-Balāghah, Sermon ١٦)

Accordingly, a community that preserves piety, including among its combatants in matters of jihad, will benefit from divine relief and a way out even under the most difficult circumstances. Taken together, these verses and exegetical views show that collective piety in the Qur'an is not merely an individual ethical virtue; it is one of the most important factors in the divine law governing the victory and defeat of nations and in warfare. Piety creates the conditions for the descent of divine assistance, sharpens strategic decision-making, and opens paths of deliverance in times of crisis. Therefore, a community or fighting force that distances itself from this principle will remain vulnerable to error and defeat, even when it possesses material resources.

٤,٢. Patience and Perseverance: The Divine Law of Endurance and the Condition for the Continuation of Divine Assistance

Following piety, the Holy Qur'an identifies patience and perseverance as the most important ethical virtues for the continuation of divine assistance and the attainment of victory. If piety protects individuals from deviation and error, patience keeps them steadfast on the path of truth. For this reason, in the verses concerning jihad, patience is consistently mentioned alongside piety, faith, and obedience, and is regarded as one of the essential conditions for victory.

In Qur'anic thought, patience does not mean passively enduring hardships; rather, it is an active force for perseverance in the face of military, psychological, and social pressures. An examination of the verses demonstrates that patience has three essential functions: it is a condition for the realization of divine assistance, a factor in gaining superiority over the enemy, and a guarantee of the stability of the believing community.

Regarding patience as a condition for the realization of divine assistance, God states:

"Yes! If you are patient and mindful of Allah and the enemy attacks you suddenly, your Lord will reinforce you with five thousand angels, specially marked." (Āli 'Imrān: ١٢٥).

In this verse, alongside piety, patience is identified as a fundamental factor in divine assistance and victory. *Ṭabarī* interprets patience in this verse as steadfastness in jihad and refraining from fleeing (Ṭabarī, ١٩٩١ AD/١٤١٢ AH: ٦, ٢٥). *Ṭabrisī* likewise understands patience as continuing obedience to God under difficult circumstances and in jihad (Ṭabrisī, ١٩٨٢ AD/١٤٠٣ AH: ١, ٤٩٨).

The second effect of patience is that it helps gain superiority over the enemy. In verses ٦٥ and ٦٦ of Surah *al-Anfāl*, the Qur'an addresses the Prophet:

"O! Prophet! Inspire the believers to fight. If there are twenty steadfast among you, they will defeat two hundred." (al-Anfāl: ٦٥)

This verse attributes the Muslims' superiority not to the size of their forces or their equipment, but to their patience and perseverance. *Ṭabarī* explains that patience refers to steadfastness on the battlefield and resistance to the enemy's pressure (cf. *Ṭabarī*, ١٩٩١ AD/١٤١٢ AH: ١١, ٢٦١-٢٧٠). Allamah *Ṭabāṭabā'ī* likewise regards the secret of this superiority as the spiritual and ethical strength of the Islamic army, supported by patience and arising from faith in God (*Ṭabāṭabā'ī*, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ٩, ١٢٢).

Imam Ali regards patience as the key to victory:

"The key to triumph is adherence to patience." (Ghurar al-Ḥikam: ٧٠٧, hadith ٩٩)

The third effect of patience is that it guarantees the stability of the believing community. At the conclusion of Surah Al 'Imran, the Qur'an states:

"O! Believers! Patiently endure, persevere, stand firm, and be mindful of Allah so that you may be successful." (Āli 'Imrān: ٢٠٠)

"O! Believers! Be patient, encourage one another to patience, maintain bonds and communication with one another, both in times of ease and in times of hardship and adversity, and be mindful of Allah so that you may prosper." (Āli 'Imrān: ٢٠٠)

Allamah *Ṭabāṭabā'ī* considers "Be Patient" to refer to individual patience, "Encourage one another to patience" refer to social endurance and patience (and resistance against the enemy), and "*Rābiṭū*" to be broader than "*Ṣābirū*," in the sense that human beings should, under all circumstances and through mutual accommodation, organize all aspects of their lives through social cooperation and mutual assistance (*Ṭabāṭabā'ī*, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ٤, ٩١-٩٢). In this verse, the Qur'an identifies three levels of patience that lead to social well-being: individual patience, social patience, and patience under all circumstances and in all matters so that the social order may be properly organized (*Ṭabāṭabā'ī*, *ibid.*).

Accordingly, patience in the Qur'an is not merely an individual virtue; rather, it constitutes the foundation of social resilience and the continuity of the strength of the believing community. The totality of the verses concerning patience indicates that patience is one of the factors constituting the divine law governing victory and defeat. Patience creates the conditions for resistance, increases the human capacity to withstand enemy pressure, and enables the effective utilization of material resources. In warfare, if combatants lose this virtue, they will be vulnerable to defeat even if they possess faith and military capabilities. Hence, it has been said that patience and victory always accompany one another.

In light of the foregoing verses, unseen forms of divine assistance, which themselves constitute a divine law and which sometimes occur through the sending of angels, instilling fear in the hearts of the enemy, or natural events, are attained through patience and piety.

Of course, when patience is regarded as a factor in the divine law of victory, it means heroic patience: "Enduring difficulties through knowledge, reason, intelligence, contentment, and faith, while using opportunities to achieve victory." Passive and comfort-seeking patience, by contrast, creates the conditions for defeat, misery, and humiliation. Accordingly, the supplication of believers is to ask God for patience:

"They said, "Our Lord, pour upon us patience, make our feet firm, and grant us victory over the disbelieving people." (al-Baqarah: ٢٥٠)

Thus, patience is one condition for realizing the ethical divine law that provides the basis for divine assistance.

٤,٣. Avoiding Pride and Self-Admiration: The Divine Law of Preserving Victory

One of the most important ethical factors governing victory and defeat is avoiding pride and excessive reliance on material capabilities. Accordingly, the Qur'an does not regard defeat solely as the result of military weakness; rather, it sometimes presents it as the direct consequence of an ethical deviation. The clearest example is the Battle of *Hunayn*, in which the Muslims, despite their numerical superiority, initially suffered defeat. God says:

"Indeed, Allah has already given you victory in many regions and on the day of *Hunayn*, when your great numbers impressed you, but they availed you nothing ... Then Allah sent down His tranquility upon His Messenger and upon the believers." (al-Tawbah: ٢٥-٢٦)

These verses concern the Battle of *Hunayn*. After the conquest of Mecca, the Muslims set out toward *Hunayn* with their largest army. Some, upon observing the large number of troops, reportedly said, "Today, we will not be defeated because of our small numbers." However, the *Hawāzin* tribe's sudden attack caused the army to disperse. After the Muslims regrouped around the Prophet (PBUH) and divine tranquility descended upon them, their complete defeat and the army's disintegration were prevented (Rasuli Mahallati, ١٩٨٥ AD/١٣٦٤ SH: ٣, ١١٠).

Allamah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, emphasizing the distinction between "Numerical Superiority" and "Being impressed by numerical superiority," explicitly states that the problem of the Muslims at *Hunayn* was not their possession of power, but their attachment to it and their independent reliance upon it. Thus, the Qur'an clearly distinguishes between using means and becoming dependent on them (cf. Ṭabāṭabā'ī, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ٩, ٣٠٥-٣١٣).

Accordingly, from the perspective of the Qur'an and the narrations, excessive reliance on power and self-admiration are not merely individual moral vices; rather, they are among the social and historical factors that contribute to defeat. Communities and combatants who seek victory in their own capabilities, attribute

it to themselves, and become heedless of its true source create the conditions for being deprived of divine assistance. For this reason, Imam Ali, in Letter ٥٣ addressed to *Mālik Ashtar*, repeatedly warns him against pride and arrogance and directs his attention toward reliance on divine power.

Therefore, avoiding pride and self-sufficiency should be regarded as one of the most important ethical divine laws for preserving victory, ensuring its continuity, and promoting both individual and collective flourishing.

٥. The Social Divine Law Governing the Realization of Divine Assistance

After explaining the doctrinal and ethical laws governing divine assistance, the Qur'an speaks of another level of divine laws which, in addition to improving social life and strengthening the organizational structure of the Islamic community, contribute to their victory in warfare against the enemy.

The Qur'an explicitly states that nations and societies, insofar as they are nations and societies, and not merely collections of individuals, have their own laws, patterns of rise and decline, and destinies that operate according to those laws. "Having a common destiny means that society itself possesses laws." (Motahhari, ٢٠١١ AD/١٣٩٠ SH: ٢, ٣٤٦)

A social divine law refers to the collective spirit and shared identity governing societies. It takes shape through social unity and cohesion, obedience to leadership, participation, and consultation, creating the conditions for divine assistance.

٥.١. Social Unity and Cohesion: The Divine Law of Power and Victory

The Qur'an calls Muslims to unity around the divine axis and states in verse ١٠٣ of Surah *Āli 'Imrān*: "Hold fast, all together, to the rope of Allah and do not be divided." (*Āli 'Imrān*: ١٠٣)

Exegetes have interpreted "The rope of Allah" as the Qur'an, the divine religion, or any factor that unifies Islamic society. They have emphasized that holding fast to

this common axis is a condition for the formation of a unified community and for preserving its social strength (cf. Fakhr Rāzī, ١٩٩٩ AD/١٤٢٠ AH: ٨, ٣١١-٣١٢; Ṭabāṭabā'ī, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ٣, ٣٦٩; Shaykh Ṭūsī, n.d.: ٢, ٥٤٥; Fayz Kāshānī, n.d.: ١, ٣٦٥-٣٦٦).

Social unity and cohesion transform the Islamic community's capacities into collective power. This truth also holds in warfare. Just as internal disagreement and conflict, in the Qur'anic logic, are among the most important factors weakening power and creating the conditions for the defeat of societies, so too does social cohesion constitute a basis for collective strength.

The most important verse in this regard is verse ٤٦ of Surah *al-Anfāl*:

"And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute with one another, lest you lose courage and your strength depart; and be patient. Indeed, Allah is with those who are patient." (al-Anfāl: ٤٦)

Although this verse relates to the context of the Battle of *Badr*, its content is not restricted to that event; rather, it constitutes a comprehensive law governing the life of all societies. By linking "Dispute" to "Loss of courage and weakness" and "The departure of your strength," the Qur'an demonstrates that disagreement, before strengthening the enemy, internally erodes the will and cohesion of a society.

Exegetes have understood dispute to refer to any form of disagreement that weakens the unity of society. Ṭabarī interprets "*Dhahāb al-Rīḥ*" as the disappearance of a society's power, strength, and prestige (Ṭabarī, ١٩٩١ AD/١٤١٢ AH: ١١, ٢١٤). Allamah Ṭabāṭabā'ī likewise identifies this verse as one of the clearest manifestations of the divine law governing social life and understands *Rīḥ* to encompass all manifestations of power, including political power, security, social influence, and civilizational capacity. Therefore, this verse should be regarded as a comprehensive law concerning the rise and fall of societies, rather

than merely as an instruction for the management of a particular military battle, namely the Battle of *Badr* (cf. Ṭabāṭabā'ī, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ٩, ٩٥).

Accordingly, unity in the Qur'an is not merely a moral virtue or a religious and social recommendation; rather, it is one of the factors constituting the divine law governing the victory and defeat of societies. When a society preserves its cohesion, coordination, and common will, it creates the conditions for power and divine assistance. Conversely, as disagreement and fragmentation spread, its political, social, and military capacities will gradually erode. Thus, societies and armies often suffer defeat as internal cohesion collapses before the enemy overcomes them.

Imam Khomeini, as one of the most prominent political, social, and religious leaders of the contemporary era, placed considerable emphasis on this Qur'anic teaching. He regarded unity and avoiding division as key to the victory and survival of the Islamic community (cf. Mousavi Khomeini, ١٩٨٩: ٨).

٥,٢. **Obedience to Divine Leadership: The Divine Law of Preserving Command Structure and Achieving Victory**

Alongside social and military unity and cohesion, the Holy Qur'an identifies obedience to divine leadership as another factor within the social divine law governing the realization of victory. If unity protects society from division, obedience to leadership transforms that unity, in decision-making and action, into order, coordination, and power.

For this reason, the Qur'an attributes the defeat at *Uḥud*, before attributing it to the military power of the *Quraysh*, to the Muslims' weakness, disagreement, and disobedience. In this way, it demonstrates that internal factors play a decisive role in determining the outcome of wars.

The most important verses in this regard are verses ١٥٢ and ١٥٣ of Surah *Āli ‘Imrān*:

"Indeed, Allah fulfilled His promise to you when you were slaughtering them by His permission, until you lost courage, disputed among yourselves over the matter, and disobeyed after He had shown you what you loved." (Āli ‘Imrān: ١٥٢)

The verse continues:

"When you were climbing up, fleeing without looking back at anyone, while the Messenger was calling you from behind." (Āli ‘Imrān: ١٥٣)

These verses concern the Battle of *Uḥud*, when a group of archers, contrary to the Prophet's (PBUH) emphasis and command, abandoned their position at the *Uḥud* pass. This created the conditions for the *Quraysh* army's sudden attack and altered the course of the battle. The Qur'an does not regard this event merely as a military error; rather, it presents it as an example of violating one of the divine laws governing victory and defeat.

The expressions "You lost courage," "You disputed" and "You disobeyed" in this verse indicate a gradual process leading to defeat. First come fear of the enemy, followed by disagreement within the army, and finally disobedience toward the Prophet (PBUH), thereby creating the conditions for defeat at *Uḥud*.

In his commentary on verse ١٥٢ of Surah *Āli ‘Imrān*, *Ṭabrisī* regards obedience to the legitimate commander as a condition for preserving the order of the army and ensuring the success of the community. He maintains that because the archers and guards at the *Uḥud* pass failed to comply with the Prophet's command, although they had initially achieved victory, their eventual disobedience to the leadership resulted in their defeat (cf. *Ṭabrisī*, ١٩٥٢ AD/١٣٧٢ AH: ٢, ٨٧٦-٨٨١).

Allamah *Ṭabāṭabā'ī* likewise, in his commentary on this verse, considers victory to be dependent upon obedience to command. Failure to observe this principle creates

the conditions for disagreement and fear and ultimately leads to defeat (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, ۱۹۹۶ AD/۱۴۱۷ AH: ۴, ۱۲۲-۱۳۴).

Accordingly, obedience to divine leadership in the Qur'an is one of the factors constituting the social divine laws governing victory and defeat. The experience of *Uḥud* demonstrated that even a community endowed with faith, piety, and courage, and one that had been promised victory, may lose a battle and create the conditions for its own defeat if it abandons the chain of command.

Therefore, the Qur'an presents obedience to legitimate leadership as a pillar for preserving order, cohesion, and the effectiveness of society in realizing divine assistance. Given the circumstances of warfare confronting Iranian and Islamic society today, the importance of unity and obedience to leadership as a Qur'anic principle of victory is being experienced tangibly.

۵.۳. Consultation and Participation in Decision-Making: The Divine Law of Collective Rationality in Achieving Victory

Another factor within the Qur'an's social divine laws governing the realization of victory is the principle of consultation and reliance on collective rationality. The Qur'anic verses reject administering Islamic society through authoritarian decision-making or erroneous individual judgment and emphasize participation, collective deliberation, and drawing on others' experience in managing society and warfare.

The significance of this issue lies in the fact that the command to consult was revealed after the Battle of *Uḥud* and under circumstances in which the previous decision, which had itself resulted from consultation, had apparently led to defeat. Nevertheless, the Qur'an did not reject the principle of consultation; rather, it again commanded the Prophet (PBUH) to consult with others, showing that the defeat

resulted from abandoning discipline and disobeying, not from the principle of consultation itself. God says:

"It was by Allah's mercy that you were gentle with them ... So pardon them, ask Allah to forgive them, and consult them in matters. Then, when you have made a decision, put your trust in Allah." (Āli 'Imrān: ١٥٩)

The Qur'an also states, in describing the believing community:

"And their affairs are conducted by mutual consultation." (al-Shūrā: ٣٨)

Most exegetes have related the occasion of revelation of verse ١٥٩ of Surah *Āli 'Imrān* to the events following the Battle of *Uḥud*. They emphasize that despite the apparent consequences of that battle, God once again commanded the Prophet (PBUH) to consult with others to demonstrate that consultation is a lasting principle in the administration of Islamic society and that the defeat at *Uḥud* resulted from disobedience to command, rather than from the principle of consultation itself (Makarem Shirazi, ١٩٩٨ AD/١٣٧٧ SH: ٣, ١٦٦).

Fakhr Rāzī presents consultation as a means of fostering the development of ideas and increasing precision in decision-making, while considering it compatible with decisiveness in implementation (cf. *Fakhr Rāzī*, ١٩٩٩ AD/١٤٢٠ AH: ٩, ٦١-٦٧).

Allamah *Ṭabāṭabā'ī*, in his commentary on verse ١٥٩ of Surah *Āli 'Imrān*, states that through the revelation of these verses, God approved the Prophet's method, since the Prophet (PBUH) consulted others regarding public and military affairs. This indicates that his sound method was approved by and in accordance with divine pleasure (*Ṭabāṭabā'ī*, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ٤, ٦٤-٧٠).

Accordingly, consultation and collective participation in the administration of society and warfare are not merely a moral recommendation or a managerial method in the Qur'an; rather, they constitute one of the factors within the social divine law governing the realization of victory. A social or military leader who

uses collective wisdom and, after reaching a decision, implements it with unity and discipline will be better able to confront crises and achieve victory.

٥, ٤. **Order, Preparedness, and Collective Discipline: The Divine Law of Preserving the Power of Society**

Alongside unity, obedience, and consultation, the Holy Qur'an also emphasizes order and collective discipline as factors within the social divine law governing the realization of victory. If unity and leadership protect society from division, order and organization transform this capacity into effective power in practice. Accordingly, disorder, confusion, and the abandonment of responsibility are not merely managerial weaknesses; they violate a divine law governing the preservation of societal power.

God says:

"Indeed, Allah loves those who fight in His cause in ranks, as though they were a solid structure firmly joined together." (Şaff: ٤)

These verses were revealed in response to the Muslims' desire to know which deeds were most excellent, and the Qur'an presents jihad, accompanied by order and steadfastness, as one of the prominent manifestations of such deeds. The comparison of the believing community to a "Solid structure firmly joined together" also demonstrates that the power of society does not arise solely from the faith of individuals; rather, it depends on coordination, the division of responsibilities, and the strength of the relationships among them, in a word, on their organization.

The term "*Şaffan*" means placing several things in a straight line (Rāghib, ١٩٩١ AD/١٤١٢ AH: s.v. *ş-f-f*). In this verse, it refers to orderly and coordinated positioning on the battlefield. "*Bunyān marşūş*" means a structure or building that has been reinforced with lead (*Raşāş*), so that it is resistant to forces of destruction

(Ṭabāṭabā'ī, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ١٩, ٢٤٩). In this verse, "*Bunyān marṣūṣ*" thus conveys the order, steadfastness, and coordination of the Muslim combatants on the battlefield (Ṭabrisī, ١٩٨٢ AD/١٤٠٣ AH: ٥, ٢٧٨).

Accordingly, order and discipline in the Qur'an are not merely military necessities; rather, they constitute one of the factors within the social divine law governing the formation and preservation of societal power. A society that operates with organization, coordination, and responsibility can use its human and material resources. Conversely, disorder and confusion create the conditions for weakness and defeat, even when a society possesses faith and material capabilities.

٦. The Divine Law of Defensive Preparedness and Civilization-Building

Although social divine laws transform the believing community into a cohesive power by creating unity, order, obedience, and participation, preserving and sustaining this power requires a level beyond social organization. Alongside its emphasis on internal cohesion, the Holy Qur'an calls upon the Islamic community to maintain continuous preparedness, generate power, realistically understand threats and the enemy, and attend to the laws governing the rise and fall of nations. The defensive divine law governing the realization and continuity of divine assistance means enhancing resilience in the face of enemy attacks through three dimensions: "Preparedness and power generation, knowledge of the enemy and strategic vigilance, and the circulation of power." These dimensions will be examined below.

(It should be noted that today it is necessary to move from a defensive doctrine toward a doctrine of offensive deterrence.)

٦,١. Preparedness and Power Generation: The Divine Law of Deterrence and Power

After explaining the doctrinal, ethical, and social divine laws and the factors that shape them, the Holy Qur'an identifies other factors for realizing divine assistance, which may also be described as "Civilization-building divine laws."

These verses demonstrate that faith, sincerity, piety, patience, and unity can never substitute for power and preparedness. Rather, the Islamic community must mobilize all its human, scientific, economic, managerial, and military capacities for defense and deterrence. In the Qur'anic logic, however, power is not an instrument of domination; rather, it is a means of preserving security and justice and preventing aggression.

The most important verse in this regard is verse ٦٠ of Surah *al-Anfāl*:

"Prepare against them whatever you are able of power and steeds of war, by which you may deter the enemy of Allah and your enemy, as well as others besides them whom you do not know, but Allah knows." (al-Anfāl: ٦٠)

Although the occasion of revelation of this verse relates to the period of the establishment of the Islamic state in Medina and the need for preparedness in the face of the ongoing threats posed by the *Quraysh* and other enemies, the wording of the verse is general and encompasses all times (cf. Makarem Shirazi, ٢٠٠٠ AD/١٣٧٩ SH: ١٠, ٢٢٤). Accordingly, the verse prevents Muslims from relying exclusively on unseen assistance and calls upon them to provide all material means of power.

The expression "Whatever you are able" is general and indicates that the Qur'anic command is not restricted to any particular type of power. Rather, the Islamic community is required, in accordance with the resources and circumstances of each era, to provide all means of power and deterrence (ibid: ٢٢٥).

Exegetes have likewise regarded "Power" as a general concept encompassing all means of strength and power. The late *Shubbar*, citing the hadith "Indeed, power means archery," considers archery one of the most important manifestations of

power in the era of revelation, rather than the entirety of the concept (Shubbar, ٢٠٠٠ AD/١٤٢١ AH: ٢٩٠).

Shaykh Ṭūsī, citing *Farra'*, refers to a narration from the Prophet (PBUH) in which he said: "Indeed, power means archery." However, he explicitly states that this narration does not restrict the meaning of *Quwwah* to archery; rather, archery was a prominent manifestation of power during the era of revelation. Therefore, every weapon and defensive instrument that, in any given period, contributes to superiority and power falls within the scope of this verse (Ṭūsī, n.d.: ٥, ١٤٨).

Allamah Ṭabāṭabā'ī describes the address in this verse as a general command and interprets the phrase "By which you may deter" as referring to the creation of deterrence and prevention of aggression, rather than domination and expansionism (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ٩, ١١٦).

An examination of the verses and exegetical views shows that preparedness and power generation are factors within the divine law of preparedness governing the realization of divine assistance. This principle can be understood from verse ٦٠ of Surah *al-Anfāl* and its exegetical interpretations. A society that develops its scientific, economic, managerial, and military capabilities in line with the conditions of its time creates the conditions to benefit from divine assistance. Conversely, neglecting power generation and preparedness eliminates part of the conditions of this divine law and exposes society to weakness and defeat.

٦,٢. Knowledge of the Enemy, Strategic Vigilance, and Avoidance of Surprise Attacks

Another Qur'anic divine law governing divine assistance is knowing the enemy and maintaining constant vigilance in the face of threats. From the Qur'anic perspective, part of the defeat of nations results not from a lack of resources, but

from negligence, miscalculation, and an inability to recognize the threats the enemy poses.

Accordingly, the Islamic community must continuously monitor its surrounding environment and adjust its preparedness based on current realities and potential future threats.

One of the most important verses in this regard is the final part of verse ٦٠ of Surah *al-Anfāl*: "By which you may deter the enemy of Allah and your enemy, and others besides them whom you do not know, but Allah knows." (*al-Anfāl*: ٦٠)

The expression "And others besides them" refers to the Qur'an's mention of "Unknown Enemies." Combatants should not organize their defensive preparedness solely around overt threats; they must also account for emerging and concealed threats.

For example, in comparison with the early Islamic period, in addition to the Meccan polytheists, the hypocrites, the Jews of Medina, and the Iranians of that period were potential enemies whose activities should not have been overlooked (Shubbar, ٢٠٠٠ AD/١٤٢١ AH: ٢٩١; Makarem Shirazi, ٢٠٠٠ AD/١٣٧٩ SH:٧, ٢٢٧-٢٢٨).

Today, vigilance toward the enemy is no longer limited to awareness of its concealed military forces. Rather, knowledge of advanced weapons and technologies, including nuclear weapons, ballistic missiles, drones, and biological weapons, is also of great importance.

The Qur'an, in verse ١٠٢ of Surah *al-Nisā'*, instructs Muslims not to allow them to be caught by surprise even while performing congregational prayer on the battlefield. It states:

"And let them take their precautions and their weapons." (*al-Nisā'*: ١٠٢)

The occasion of revelation of this verse concerns the Prayer of Fear, at a time when there was a possibility of a sudden enemy attack. Thus, even worship should not result in negligence of security responsibilities.

Exegetes have regarded these two verses as expressing a comprehensive principle within the Islamic defense system: "Avoiding surprise and maintaining preparedness." On this basis, even worship should not lead to negligence regarding security requirements and the enemy's presence.

Accordingly, maintaining preparedness, continuously monitoring the surrounding environment and the enemy, and adopting a realistic approach to identifying threats constitute fundamental elements of the Islamic defense system (cf. Ṭabrisī, ١٩٨٢ AD/١٤٠٣ AH: ٢, ١٠٢; Fayḍ Kāshānī, ibid: ١, ٤٩٣; Ṭabāṭabā'ī, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ٥, ٦٢).

An examination of the Qur'anic verses concerning defense indicates that strategic vigilance and the avoidance of surprise attacks are not merely temporary measures; rather, they constitute factors governing the preservation of the authority of the Islamic community, the strength of Muslims, and the continuity of the defensive tradition. This principle is so significant that even prayer should not become a cause of negligence toward it. By warning of both overt and covert threats from the enemy, the Qur'an calls on the believing community to exercise foresight, maintain constant vigilance, and remain prepared to confront any surprise attack. It regards security and defensive preparedness, alongside faith and worship, as part of the system of causes through which divine assistance is realized. Today, such vigilance must extend to nuclear, missile, drone, and biological threats.

٦,٣. The Circulation of Power and the Succession of Nations

One of the laws governing victory and defeat is the "Circulation of Power" and the "Succession of Nations." The Qur'an does not regard victory and defeat as

accidental or permanent occurrences; rather, it presents them as subject to fixed divine laws governing history. From this perspective, no society is guaranteed the preservation of its power merely by virtue of its affiliation with a particular religion or its historical record; likewise, no nation is condemned to perpetual defeat. The continuity of power depends upon adherence to the divine laws. One of the most important verses in this regard is surah *Āli ‘Imrān*: ١٤٠:

"If a wound has touched you, a similar wound has touched the other people. Such days We alternate among the people, so that Allah may make evident those who believe and take martyrs from among you."

This verse revealed after the defeat at the Battle of *Uḥud*, shows that victory and defeat are part of the divine laws governing history. Accordingly, one should neither become arrogant because of victory nor despair because of defeat; rather, the underlying causes should be thoroughly investigated.

The same meaning is expressed in other verses:

"And if you turn away, He will replace you with another people; then they will not be like you." (Muḥammad: ٣٨)

Most exegetes, commenting on verse ٣٨ of Surah *Muḥammad*, have narrated that the Companions asked the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) who God referred to in this verse. The Prophet (PBUH) placed his hand on Salman's shoulder and said: "This man and his people. I swear by Him in whose hand is my soul, if faith was suspended from the Pleiades, a group of Persian men would attain it." (Makarem Shirazi, ٢٠٠٠ AD/١٣٧٩ SH: ٢١, ٤٩٨)

Elsewhere, the Qur'an states:

"And if He wills, He can remove you and replace you with whomever He wills after you." (al-An'ām: ١٣٣)

Most exegetes have regarded *Āli 'Imrān*: ١٤٠ as referring to the consequences of the Battle of *Uḥud* and surah *Muḥammad*: ٣٨ as a warning to Muslims who were negligent in fulfilling their responsibilities, particularly jihad and charitable giving. These verses point to one of the permanent laws governing history and one of the divine laws. If a people turn away from divine assistance, fail to observe individual and social piety, neglect unity and obedience to leadership, and follow their carnal desires, God will replace them with another people. The "Alternation of days" and the circulation of power among peoples have likewise been interpreted in terms of divine wisdom and the testing and trial of nations (*Ṭabāṭabā'ī*, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ٤, ٣٨), as indicated in the continuation of the passage and in Qur'an ٣:١٤١.

Allamah *Ṭabāṭabā'ī* regards these verses as Qur'anic evidence for the law-governed nature of history. In his view, the transfer of power among nations is a natural consequence of their adherence to, or deviation from, the divine laws, particularly faith and piety, and takes place in accordance with higher divine interests, whose full dimensions may not necessarily be known to us (see *Ṭabāṭabā'ī*, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ٤, ٢٨-٢٩; Makarem Shirazi, ٢٠٠٠ AD/١٣٧٩ SH: ٢١, ٤٩٧).

Conclusion

The central question of this study was: According to what rules and divine laws does the Holy Qur'an explain the victory and defeat of societies, particularly in the context of warfare, and what is the relationship between these laws and human individual and social behavior? A systematic examination of the Qur'anic verses and an analysis of the views of exegetes demonstrated that, from the Qur'anic perspective, victory and defeat are neither random occurrences nor merely the products of materialistic approaches that seek to explain them through historical and economic determinism, as in Marxism, or through freedom and the primacy of

the individual, as in liberalism and existentialism, or solely through military power. Rather, they are realized within a framework of divine laws governing the individual, social, and historical life of human beings, in which human beings themselves play a fundamental role.

The study's findings indicate that these laws can be organized into four interconnected dimensions. First are the doctrinal laws, which shape society's monotheistic orientation and warfare. Second are the ethical laws, which provide the foundation for society's resilience in the face of crises. Third are the social laws, which transform individual capacities into social power. Fourth is the defensive law, which contributes to the consolidation of the Islamic community and provides the foundation for the emergence of Islamic civilization. Divine assistance is likewise one of the fixed laws and established principles through which God assists the believers in society and in war and jihad; it is realized through the continuation and proper functioning of the aforementioned laws.

The analysis of the verses demonstrated that these four dimensions, each of which consists of several constituent factors, have a sequential and complementary relationship with one another, and none of them alone guarantees the realization of divine assistance. Faith without power and defensive preparedness does not lead to social authority. In contrast, material power without faith and reliance on God, ethical values, and social cohesion will not, from the Qur'anic perspective, remain sustainable.

Accordingly, the most important finding of this study is that the Qur'an does not present a single-factor theory of victory. Rather, it outlines a coherent system of divine laws and regards the realization of divine assistance as dependent upon the synergistic interaction of doctrinal, ethical, social, and defensive-preparedness factors together with human will and agency. This study's innovation lies in reconstructing and analyzing, for the first time, the divine laws that contribute to

the realization of victory and defeat within a coherent, four-level hierarchical framework.

Accordingly, the Qur'anic theory of victory and defeat views spirituality and materiality, faith and rationality, ethics and power, unity and the use of defensive means not as mutually opposed or as requiring the primacy of one over the other, but as interacting and complementing one another. Naturally, various conditions and factors influence the realization of these laws. The outcome of this set of divine laws, together with human will, which plays a fundamental role, is the realization of divine assistance and the victory of Islam and the Muslims.

The four levels of divine laws are summarized in the following table:

Level of Divine Laws	Main Components	Function in the Realization of Divine Assistance
Doctrinal Law	Intention, faith, sincerity, reliance on God	Establishing a monotheistic orientation, trust in God, and providing the spiritual foundation for victory
Ethical Law	Piety, patience, perseverance, avoidance of pride	Preserving the stability, perseverance, and moral integrity of society throughout the process of realizing divine assistance
Social Law	Unity and cohesion, obedience to leadership, consultation, order, and collective discipline	Transforming individual capacities into collective power and enhancing social effectiveness
Defensive (Civilizational) Law	Defensive preparedness, power generation, knowledge of the enemy, strategic vigilance, avoidance of surprise attacks, and the use of material means	Creating deterrence, preserving authority, and providing the conditions for the realization of divine assistance

References

Persian

Javadi Amoli, A. (۲۰۲۰ AD/۱۳۹۹ SH). *Tafsir Tasnim*. (Vol. ۱۵). Qom: Isra Publishing.

Soleimani, J. (۲۰۱۰ AD/۱۳۸۹ SH). "The Law-Governed Nature of History in the Qur'an from the Perspective of Shahid Sadr." *History of Islam in the Mirror of Research*. ۷(۱), Issue ۲۵.

Rajabi, A; Tahami, M. (۲۰۲۱ AD/۱۴۰۰ SH). "Divine Laws Governing the Movement of History from the Perspective of the Qur'an and *Nahj al-Balāghah*." *History of Islam*. ۲۲(۸۶), ۱۷۷-۲۰۴.

Rasuli Mahallati, S. H. (۱۹۸۵ AD/۱۳۶۴ SH). *The Life of the Prophet of Islam*. Tehran: Islamic Publishing House.

Sadr, M. B. (۲۰۰۲). *Historical Laws in the Qur'an*. (Mousavi, J. Trans). Tehran: Islamic Publishing House.

Ezzati Bakhshayesh, M. (۲۰۲۵ AD/۱۴۰۴ SH). "The Divine Law of Assistance in Supporting the Camp of Truth from the Perspective of the Qur'an." *Rah-Tusheh*. ۶(۲۳), ۹۵-۱۲۴.

Makarem Shirazi, N, et al. (۱۹۹۸-۲۰۰۰ AD/۱۳۷۷-۱۳۷۹ SH). *Tafsir Nemuneh*. (New Edition). Tehran: Dar al-Kutub al-Islamiyyah.

Mesbah Yazdi, M. (۲۰۱۲ AD/۱۳۹۱ SH). *Society and History in the Qur'an*. Qom: Imam Khomeini Educational and Research Institute.

Motahhari, M. (۲۰۱۲ AD/۱۳۹۱ SH). *Collected Works: Philosophy of History*. (Vol. ۱۵). ۷th Ed. Tehran: Sadra.

Motahhari, M. (۲۰۱۱ AD/۱۳۹۰ SH). *Collected Works*. (Vol. ۲: *Society and History*). Tehran: Sadra.

Motahhari, M. (۲۰۰۰ AD/۱۳۷۹ SH). *A Study of Nahj al-Balāghah*. Tehran: Sadra.

Mousavi Khomeini, A. R. (۱۳۸۹ AD/۱۴۱۸ SH). *Revolution Sahifeh*. ۴th Ed. Tehran: Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Printing and Publishing Organization.

Arabic

Nahj al-Balāghah.

Rāghib Iṣfahānī, M. (۱۳۹۱ AD/۱۴۱۲ AH). *al-Mufradāt fī Gharīb al-Qur'an*. (al-Dawudi, S. Ed). Damascus: Dar al-Qalam.

Tirmidhī, M. (۱۳۷۰ AD). *Sunan Tirmidhī*. (Shakir, A. et al. Ed). Egypt: Sharikah Maktabah wa Matba'ah Mustafa al-Babi al-Halabi.

Rāzī, F. (۱۳۹۹ AD/۱۴۲۰ AH). *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*. Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-'Arabi.

Shubbar, S. A. (۲۰۰۰ AD/۱۴۲۱ AH). *Tafsir Shubbar*. Qom: Basirati Publications.

Sadr, M. B. (۲۰۱۳ AD/۱۴۳۴ AH). *al-Sunan al-Tarīkhīyyah fī al-Qur'an al-Karim*. Qom: Specialized Research Center for Shahid Sadr.

Ṣalābī, A. M. (۲۰۲۰ AD). *Fiqh al-Naṣr wa al-Tamkīn fī al-Qur'an al-Karim*. Turkey: Dar al-Asalah.

Ṭabāṭabā'ī, M. H. (۱۳۹۶ AD/۱۴۱۷ AH). *al-Mīzān fī Tafsir al-Qur'an*. Qom: Islamic Publications Office.

Ṭabarī, M. (۱۳۹۱ AD/۱۴۱۲ AH). *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'an*. Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah.

Ṭabrisī, F. (۱۳۹۳ AD/۱۴۱۴ SH). *Majma' al-Bayān fī Tafsir al-Qur'an*. Tehran: Naser Khosro.

Ṭūsī, M. (n.d.). *al-Tibyān fī Tafsir al-Qur'an*. Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-'Arabi.

Fayḍ Kāshānī, M. (n.d.). *Tafsir al-Ṣāfi*. Tehran: Islamiyah Bookstore.

Qurtubī, M. (۱۳۶۴ AD/۱۳۸۴ AH). *al-Jāmi' li Ahkām al-Qur'an*. Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Misriyyah.

English

Dawoody, A. (۲۰۱۱ AD). *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bonner, M. (۲۰۰۶ AD). *Jihad in Islamic History: Doctrines and Practice*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Cook, D. (۲۰۰۵ AD). *Understanding Jihad*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Firestone, R. (۱۹۹۹ AD). *Jihad: The Origin of Holy War in Islam*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Hashi, I. S. (۲۰۲۵ AD). "Sunnatullah in the Holy Quran as a Fundamental Principle of Tawhidic Epistemology." *Revelation and Science*. ۱۹(۲).

Hayward, J. (۲۰۱۲ AD). "The Qur'an and the Just War: A Theological and Ethical Analysis." *Journal of Military Ethics*. ۱۱(۳), ۱۹۴-۲۱۲.
<https://doi.org/۱۰.۱۰۸۰/۱۵۰.۲۷۵۷۰.۲۰۱۲.۷۰۸.۲۲>