



## An Analysis of the Causes of Failure in Islamic Movements from the Perspective of the Noble Qur'an

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### Abstract

Every Islamic movement, in its pursuit of victory and the realization of its objectives, must inevitably endure significant hardships. The sacrifice of life and wealth, along with the willingness to undergo adversity, plays a decisive role in bringing any revolution to fruition. Safeguarding the values of the revolution and conducting a systematic assessment of its vulnerabilities are therefore indispensable. Neglecting the internal and external threats that confront an Islamic movement may ultimately lead to its downfall, and the internal factors often exert a deeper and more destructive influence. The Noble Qur'an, in numerous verses, warns believers of these dangers and cautions them against falling into the pitfalls that undermine collective strength. Given that the nascent Islamic government founded by the Prophet Muhammad—peace be upon him—constitutes a complete and divinely guided model of a religious movement established in tandem with revelation, reflection upon Qur'anic teachings provides a robust framework for examining the vulnerabilities of Islamic movements. The central question explored in this study is as follows: which internal threats, according to the Qur'anic verses, undermine an Islamic movement, and how can these threats be addressed and overcome? Among the principal causes of weakness and failure in Islamic movements are communal discord and division, the absence of competent leadership, and the refusal to obey a legitimate and wise leader. These challenges can only be prevented or mitigated through cultivating unity and solidarity within the community, grounded in a sound understanding of the Qur'an and adherence to a prudent, insightful leader who upholds Qur'anic principles and calls the community to cohesion and the avoidance of factionalism. Employing a descriptive-analytical methodology, this study examines the most significant internal vulnerabilities that threaten the structural integrity of Islamic movements, drawing upon relevant Qur'anic verses and associated scholarly sources.

**Keywords:** Noble Qur'an, causes of failure, Islamic movement, discord, competent leadership, lack of piety, worldliness.

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## Introduction

Throughout history, numerous revolutions have emerged with diverse aims; some have achieved success, while others have succumbed to failure and fallen short of realizing their intended goals. Among these movements, certain revolutions have been grounded in religious principles and spiritual teachings, whereas others have lacked such foundations. The present study focuses specifically on Islamic movements and revolutions—movements that, throughout their complex trajectories both before and after achieving victory, confront a wide array of vulnerabilities. If these vulnerabilities are neglected and no effort is made to address them, the movement will inevitably face a serious crisis, one that may ultimately lead to its collapse and dissolution. The Islamic order established in the Prophet Muhammad's era stands as the earliest and most exemplary model of an Islamic movement under his divinely guided leadership. A review of that period reveals a set of challenges and dangers that, although mitigated by the Prophet's wise leadership and divine support, nevertheless caused losses and difficulties—most notably the bitter defeat in the Battle of Uhud, which resulted from worldliness and disobedience to leadership. The Noble Qur'an, while emphasizing the necessity of defending the integrity of the Islamic order, addresses the vulnerabilities of Islamic movements in numerous verses. These verses contain fundamental principles—and at times immutable divine laws—the observance of which protects Islamic revolutions and governments from decline and decay in every era. This study examines the most significant internal threats that endanger an Islamic movement. It should be noted that the aim is not to provide an exhaustive catalog of all vulnerabilities; rather, the investigation is confined to those explicitly mentioned in the Qur'an—such as disobedience to leadership, injustice and oppression, deviation from revolutionary values, worldliness and indulgence, and discord and conflict. Nonetheless, additional destructive factors can be identified through reflection on sources such as *Nahj al-Balāgha* and the traditions of the Ahl al-Bayt, including authoritarianism and arbitrariness, lack of oversight, tendencies toward violence, and similar issues.

In this context, several relevant studies have also been taken into consideration:

1) The book *The Failure of Islamic Movements in History* by Sayyid Mohammad Hossein Tabatabai, which offers a historical-analytical study of the causes of failure in Islamic movements with reference to Qur'anic verses, emphasizing the role of social, cultural, and political factors.

2) The article *The Role of Faith and Unity in the Success of Islamic Movements* by Fatemeh Rahimi, which, through an analysis of Qur'anic texts, highlights the decisive influence of faith and unity on the success or failure of

Islamic movements and concludes that weak faith and lack of unity constitute major factors in their downfall.

Proposed research directions for future studies in this field include:

- examining the impact of economic factors on the failure of Islamic movements;
- a comparative analysis of Islamic movements and other historical revolutions from a Qur'anic perspective;
- investigating the role of media and propaganda in the formation or collapse of Islamic movements;
- studying psychological dimensions of success and failure in Islamic movements.

The central research question of this study is: What are the most critical causes of failure in Islamic movements from the perspective of the Qur'an, and how can these challenges be resolved? This article seeks to identify these factors based on the teachings of the Noble Qur'an, with a particular focus on two key elements—disobedience to leadership and worldliness—which represent foundational causes of weakness and eventual collapse in Islamic movements.

### Conceptualization of “Movement”

The term “movement” (*nahḍah*) in lexical sources denotes motion, uprising, or initiative (Amid, 1981, vol. 2, p. 1929). In Dehkhoda's dictionary, it is defined in terms of uprising, rising, migration, movement, intent, or purpose (Dehkhoda, 2006, vol. 2, p. 3076). Likewise, in Mo'in's dictionary, “*nahḍah*” is described as “uprising to achieve social and political objectives” (Mo'in, 1984, vol. 4, p. 4869). The Arabic root *nuḥūd* means “to rise from a place” (Al-Farāhīdī, 1990, vol. 3, p. 408). A closer look at Arabic expressions indicates that the term has historically been used in religious and historical texts to signify a purposeful uprising or movement. For example, a narration from Imam Ṣādiq (‘a) states: “Indeed, the Commander of the Faithful (‘Alī ‘a) mobilized the people against Mu‘āwiyah” (Kulaynī, 1987, vol. 1, p. 134). In *Nahj al-Balāghah*, it is mentioned: “Successful is the one who rises with a wing” (*Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon 5), indicating that those who rise with support or allies will be successful. This meaning is corroborated in exegeses of *Nahj al-Balāghah* (Makārim Shirāzī, 1990, vol. 12, p. 142).

### Challenges Facing Islamic Movements

The following are the most significant challenges confronting Islamic movements from the Qur'anic perspective:

#### 1. Discord, Division, and Internal Conflict

The Qur'an emphasizes the importance of unity among Muslims and

identifies division as a source of weakness for the Islamic community. In Surah Al-‘Imrān, it is stated: “And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided” (Al-‘Imrān, 3:103). This verse demonstrates that internal division weakens the movement and renders it vulnerable to adversaries. Division is not only detrimental but, from the perspective of polytheists, also invalidates the call to monotheism. The Qur’ān emphasizes reconciliation and brotherhood among believers: “Indeed, the believers are but brothers, so make settlement between your brothers” (Al-Ḥujurāt, 49:10). Similarly, in Surah Al-Anfāl: “Obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute, lest you falter and your power departs” (Al-Anfāl, 8:46). These verses indicate that internal discord stems from disobedience to divine guidance, leading to weakened faith and societal cohesion. Leaders and revolutionaries must avoid internal disputes. Those who foment division are strongly admonished in the Qur’ān: “Then they divided their matter among themselves into sects, each rejoicing in what it had” (Al-Mu’minūn, 23:53); “Among those who divided their religion and became sects” (Ar-Rūm, 30:32). In contrast, unity is a manifestation of true monotheism. Both ‘Alī ‘a and Imam Khomeinī emphasized unity as a divine blessing and a necessity for the strength of the Islamic community (Makārim Shirāzī, 1990, vol. 12, p. 142).

## 2. Lack of Piety

Piety is highlighted in the Qur’ān as a crucial factor for communal unity. Justice and compassion reduce conflict, whereas injustice fosters strife. In lexical terms, piety (*taqwā*) means preservation and safeguarding. Martyr Morteza Motahhari identifies it as one of the most important religious and human virtues (Rāghib Isfahānī, 1989; Motahhari, n.d.). Divine piety entails adherence to the Qur’ān, Ahl al-Bayt, and prophetic tradition. A pious Muslim contributes to unity, whereas lack of piety fosters fragmentation: “And indeed this is your community, one community, and I am your Lord, so fear Me” (Al-Mu’minūn, 23:52). Selective adherence to religion, based on self-interest, leads to division (Makārim Shirāzī, 1990, vol. 14, pp. 258–259). In Islamic movements can result in serious, irreparable harm. A competent leader ensures cohesion, stability, and protection against deviation. The Qur’ān emphasizes the necessity of leadership, exemplified in the appointment of ‘Alī ‘a by the Prophet Muhammad (ص) (Al-Mā’idah, 5:3). Absence of leadership represents a fundamental defect capable of nullifying prior achievements. Imam ‘Alī ‘a notes that people require governance to establish security and justice (Nahj al-Balāghah, Sermon 40). Disobedience to leadership historically led to failures, such as the Kufans’ rebellion against ‘Alī ‘a (Nahj al-Balāghah, Sermon 208).

## 3. Selfishness and Ambition

The Qur’ān identifies selfishness (*maniyyah*) and excessive ambition as

primary causes of internal strife in Islamic movements. Such traits are referred to as *baghy*, meaning pursuit beyond legitimate limits (Jazrī, 1985, vol. 1, p. 143; Qurshī Banābī, 2009, vol. 2, p. 207). Leaders driven by personal desires create internal divisions, undermining the movement's purpose. The Islamic movement's uniqueness lies in its aim to fully implement divine laws, regardless of material gain. Leaders must exemplify humility and piety; Imam 'Alī 'a practiced simple living, subsisting on minimal resources, demonstrating responsibility toward all members of society.

#### **4. Rumor-Mongering**

Spreading rumors is strongly condemned in Islam. Rumors, defined as unverified information aimed at harming reputations or social stability (Dehkhoda, 2006), threaten social cohesion. The Qur'ān warns: "Do not follow that of which you have no knowledge; your hearing, sight, and heart will be questioned" (Al-Isrā', 17:36). Historical instances, such as false reports about the Prophet's death in the Battle of Uhud, illustrate how rumors weaken faith and morale. The Qur'ān prescribes the maintenance of social sanctity, admonishing individuals to speak only of verified matters (Yūsuf, 12:101; An-Nūr, 24:19).

#### **5. Worldliness and Materialism of Movement Leaders**

Attachment to material wealth obstructs human and social development. The Qur'ān describes this as *atrāf*, meaning indulgence in worldly abundance (Rāghib Isfahānī, 1992, vol. 1, p. 512). Sayyid Qutb asserts that indulgence leads to societal decay (Shādhilī, 1992, vol. 2, p. 74). Prior to the Islamic Revolution, elite consumerism fostered inequality and corruption. Post-revolutionary leadership emphasized simplicity and avoidance of luxury, following the example of Imam Khomeinī (Rahbar, 1999, vol. 19, p. 188).

#### **6. Non-Adherence to Islamic Principles**

Failure to adhere to Islamic principles endangers both the movement and society. The Qur'ān states: "O you who believe!

Whoever among you turns back from his religion, Allah will bring forth a people He loves and who love Him" (Al-Mā'idah, 5:54). Commitment to faith preserves social cohesion and prevents deviation (Al-'Imrān, 3:102).

#### **7. Negative Cultural and Social Influences**

Foreign cultural influences pose significant challenges to Islamic movements. The Qur'ān warns: "And never will the Jews or the Christians approve of you until you follow their religion" (Al-Baqarah, 2:120). Historical examples show that foreign cultural infiltration can exacerbate internal conflicts, highlighting the need to preserve Islamic identity (Al-Mā'idah, 5:48).

#### **8. Corruption and Hypocrisy**

Corruption and hypocrisy undermine Islamic society. The Qur'ān mentions:

“When the hypocrites come to you, they say, ‘We testify that you are indeed the Messenger of Allah’” (Al-Munāfiqūn, 63:1). Hypocrisy weakens unity, fosters enmity, and enables internal disruption (Al-‘Imrān, 3:120). Vigilance and moral integrity are crucial to countering these threats.

### **9. Lack of Proper Understanding of the Qur’ān**

Failure to comprehend the Qur’ān accurately leads to misguided actions and division. The Qur’ān admonishes: “Do they not reflect upon the Qur’ān, or are there locks upon their hearts?” (Muḥammad, 47:24). Correct exegesis, informed by knowledge and reflection, is necessary to maintain unity (Al-‘Imrān, 3:7).

### **10. Failure to Learn from Past Civilizations**

Neglecting lessons from previous nations invites decline. Imam ‘Alī ‘a and the Qur’ān emphasize historical reflection: “There have already been ways of life before you” (Al-‘Imrān, 3:137). Awareness of history strengthens present movements, prevents mistakes, and safeguards Islamic unity.

Among these factors, the most critical is disunity, a direct consequence of internal division. As the Qur’ān instructs: “And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided” (Al-‘Imrān, 3:103). Historical examples such as the battles of Jamal and Šiffin demonstrate that internal conflicts can erode Islamic movements. Imam ‘Alī ‘a stated: “Division is the fire of sedition, and unity is the lamp of guidance” (Nahj al-Balāghah, Wisdom 176). Division not only jeopardizes the movement’s objectives but also diminishes the Islamic identity, weakens collective power, and facilitates external intrusion.

## **The Consequences of Division**

The consequences of division are as follows:

### **1) Weakness and Fragility**

The Qur’ān presents division and internal strife in the Islamic community as causes of weakness and failure: “And do not dispute, lest you lose courage and your power departs” (Al-Anfāl, 46). Disputes among the mujahidīn lead to vulnerability in struggle and facilitate the penetration of enemies. Social weakness results in intimidation by other powers and the squandering of energy and opportunities (Jazrī, 1364, vol. 3, p. 449). Such conflicts diminish internal capabilities, embolden external adversaries, and ultimately endanger the movement.

### **2) Loss of Prestige and Authority**

Historical accounts of Islamic revolutions and movements indicate that many failed due to discord and internal strife. Allāmeḥ Muhammad Jawād Mughniyah attributes the failure of Arab states and the success of Israel to disunity among Arab countries (Mughniyah, 1424, vol. 3, pp. 490–491). The Qur’ān also underscores the harmful effects of division, urging unity and solidarity. Division

diminishes Muslim dignity and authority, allowing inferior individuals to assume control. The story of the people of Mūsā (‘a) illustrates how Pharaoh’s policies sowed division, weakening some groups intentionally (Qasas, 4).

### **3) Fragmentation of Social Classes**

Pharaoh, through arrogance and claims of divinity, exacerbated ignorance and imposed oppression. To consolidate his rule, he divided the people of Egypt into two groups: the Qibtiyān, indigenous people with wealth and power, and the Sabtiyān, meaning the Children of Israel, who were enslaved and deprived (Makārim Shirāzī, 1374, vol. 16, pp. 11–12). This policy of division constitutes the foundation of tyrannical governance, which fears the unity of the populace.

### **4) Weakening of the Elite and Empowerment of the Lowly**

Verse 65 of Sūrah Al-An‘ām illustrates that God may send punishment from the heavens or the earth or cause division and discord among people. Such division diminishes the influence of the elite and increases the power of the morally deficient and incapable. The expression “punishment from beneath the feet” signifies the empowerment of individuals in lower social strata who lack ethical refinement (Mūsavī Hamadānī, 1374, vol. 7, p. 193).

### **5) Restrictions and Punishment under Specific Laws**

In the story of the people of the Sabbath, the Jews were divided, and God imposed not only severe punishment but also stricter laws to prevent further discord. They fished on the Sabbath, a day when fish were abundant, and thus were tested (Al-A‘rāf, 163). Their disobedience led to their transformation into apes, depriving them of divine mercy (Al-A‘rāf, 166). The Sabbath’s sanctity applied specifically to those who caused discord, and God will judge these disputes on the Day of Resurrection (An-Nahl, 124). According to some traditions, Mūsā (‘a) called the Children of Israel to respect Friday, but they preferred Saturday; restrictions and punishments were thus imposed (Makārim Shirāzī, 1374, vol. 11, p. 452).

### **6) Ignition of Sedition and War**

The Qur’ān warns that division can lead to war and sedition, endangering not only the instigators but the entire community (Al-Anfāl, 52). These verses illustrate a consistent divine principle whereby nations, including Pharaoh’s people and previous disbelievers, were punished for rejecting God’s signs. This law applies universally, regardless of strength or weakness, yielding similar consequences for those who deny divine guidance (ibid., vol. 7, p. 206).

### **7) Conflict and Defeat**

The Qur’ān admonishes Muslims to avoid disputes, as they lead to weakness and defeat (Al-‘Imrān, 152). In the Battle of Uhud, Muslim failure was attributed to internal strife. God’s promise ensured eventual victory over enemies, but disobedience and division delayed success. Imam ‘Alī (‘a)

emphasized that a fragmented Islamic community will succumb to adversaries united in falsehood, whereas Muslims are dispersed in truth (Nahj al-Balāghah, Sermon 27).

In summary, the primary effects of division include the humiliation of Muslims and loss of prestige, domination by tyrants and the lowly, war and bloodshed, and the weakening and defeat of the community.

### **Preventive Factors Against Division and Discord**

The Qurʾān explicitly outlines several key factors that prevent division:

First, the call to unity, as in Sūrah Al-ʿImrān: “And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided” (Al-ʿImrān, 103). This verse urges Muslims to cling to the divine bond and avoid division, constituting a fundamental preventive measure. Second, the emphasis on brotherhood in Sūrah Al-Ḥujurāt: “Indeed, the believers are but brothers” (Al-Ḥujurāt, 10). This highlights mutual support and the avoidance of disputes. Third, avoidance of suspicion and negative assumptions, as in: “O you who believe! Avoid much suspicion” (Al-Ḥujurāt, 12). Suspicion can provoke division, and the Qurʾān warns against it. Fourth, encouragement of consultation and dialogue: “And their affairs are [conducted] by mutual consultation” (Ash-Shūrā, 38). This promotes social cohesion and reduces discord.

Fifth, cooperation and mutual assistance: “And cooperate in righteousness and piety” (Al-Māʾidah, 2). This reinforces unity and prevents division through collective action in virtuous endeavors.

The most crucial factors are:

#### **1) Adherence to Religion**

Disagreements are inevitable, but they do not become problematic unless they escalate into conflict. The Qurʾān urges Muslims to cling to divine guidance and the Prophet’s example, resolving disputes through faith and obedience. True believers may differ, but adherence to religion and prophetic instruction mitigates division (Al-ʿImrān, 103; Al-Anfāl, 46).

#### **2) Reference to the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ) and the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa)**

God designates the Qurʾān and the Prophet as authorities for dispute resolution (An-Nisāʾ, 59). Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) also instructs Ibn ʿAbbās to address the Kharijites according to the Sunnah, recognizing multiple interpretations of the Qurʾān (Nahj al-Balāghah, Letter 77). The Ahl al-Bayt serve as guides to maintain unity (Al-ʿImrān, 103; An-Nisāʾ, 59).

#### **3) Enjoining Good and Forbidding Evil**

Commanding good and preventing evil are fundamental religious principles. Neglect leads to societal weakness and decay. Muslims are instructed to promote virtue and prevent vice (Al-ʿImrān, 104–105). These principles

function both individually and collectively, with the collective duty forming part of Islamic governance. Historically, institutions such as the *hisbah* administered social oversight and encouraged virtuous behavior. Imam ‘Alī (‘a) emphasized their necessity (Nahj al-Balāghah, Wisdom 31). Imam Khomeinī (r.a) similarly underscored informal communal oversight to correct behavior (Khomeinī, 1369), and Motahharī described it as a means to advance Islamic goals (Motahharī, 1385).

#### 4) Reconciliation Among People

The Qur’ān highlights the importance of reconciliation and warns against false oaths, particularly in Sūrah Al-Baqarah and Ash-Shūrā. Sūrah An-Nahl (125) emphasizes inviting to good and reform with wisdom. The term *islāḥ* appears nearly 80 times in the Qur’ān, including resolving familial and communal disputes (Markaz Farhang va Ma‘āref Qur’ān, 1385). Imam ‘Alī (‘a) stated: “Reconciliation among people is superior to a year of prayer and fasting” (Nahj al-Balāghah, Letter 47), and Imam Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq (‘a) considered it a beloved charity. Even natural disagreements among believers may escalate, but reconciliation prevents hostility and promotes communal cohesion (Al-Anfāl, 1; Al-Hujurāt, 9; An-Nisā’, 35; Al-An‘ām, 153). Reform strengthens social bonds, consolidates affection, and contributes to the success and authority of the Islamic community.

In Islam, acts of worship are prescribed in a manner that, whether intentionally or not, calls both the individual and the community toward cohesion and practical unity.

Prayer occupies a central role in this framework. The Qur’an not only invites believers to engage in supplication with God—“And your Lord says, ‘Call upon Me; I will respond to you. Indeed, those who disdain My worship will enter Hell humbled’” (Ghafir, 60)—but also embodies the highest concepts of prayer. A closer examination reveals that many of these concepts are presented collectively; for instance, in verses 191–194 of Surah Al-Imran. The recommendation to pray for forty believers before praying for oneself underscores Islam’s emphasis on the spirit of communal unity. Salat (ritual prayer) serves as the symbol of worship in Islam. Every Muslim is required to recite Surah Al-Fatiha, which encompasses the essence of the Qur’an, ten times daily during prayers. Although recited individually, the pronouns and grammatical structures often appear in the plural, such as: “You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help. Guide us to the straight path” (Al-Fatiha, 5–6). Additionally, believers are instructed to face the Kaaba during prayer: “We have certainly seen the turning of your face, [O Muhammad], toward the heaven, and We will surely turn you to a qiblah with which you will be pleased. So turn your face toward al-Masjid al-Haram. And wherever you

[believers] are, turn your faces toward it” (Al-Baqarah, 144). This directive reflects the Qur’an’s intent to cultivate a collective consciousness and unity among believers, even when performing solitary prayers. Congregational prayer further strengthens communal cohesion. The emphasis on attending mosques and performing prayer in congregation—“And bow with those who bow [in worship]” (Al-Baqarah, 43)—alongside numerous hadiths promising reward, constitutes one of Islam’s mechanisms for fostering unity.

The Friday prayer holds particular importance, with the Qur’an urging believers to leave all occupations, including commerce, to attend: “O you who have believed, when [the adhan] is called for the prayer on Friday, then proceed to the remembrance of Allah and leave trade. That is better for you if you only knew” (Al-Jumu‘ah, 9). Attendance at both daily congregational prayers and Friday prayers strengthens communal bonds and collective consciousness, highlighting the importance of public gatherings for the cohesion of the faithful. Hajj rituals also serve to solidify unity among Muslims. One of the wisdoms behind the obligation of Hajj, according to the Qur’an, is for believers to observe mutual benefits: “So that they may witness benefits for themselves” (Al-Hajj, 28). Among the most significant benefits is the reinforcement of brotherhood and unity, demonstrating the strength of believers when unity is preserved. The prohibition of argument and conflict during Hajj—“Hajj is [during] well-known months, so whoever intends Hajj therein [by undertaking pilgrimage]... there should be no sexual relations, nor sin, nor dispute during Hajj” (Al-Baqarah, 197)—and the wearing of uniform, simple ihram clothing while performing rituals together, aim toward the same purpose. The Qur’an also highlights the selection of a competent leader as crucial for societal direction. The leader functions like a compass in the sea; without guidance, people cannot reach their destination. Divine teachings grant the leader a special status, with leadership being appointed by God: “It is for God to appoint leaders from among you” (Al-Imran, 164). Following a leader, particularly within an Islamic movement, is essential for success, and disobedience may lead to failure, as observed in the Battle of Uhud. The Qur’an equates submission to God and His Messenger with genuine faith (Al-Ahzab, 36), and criticizes those who refuse the arbitration of the Prophet (An-Nisa, 88), emphasizing that people should not place themselves above the Messenger (At-Tawbah, 120). The Qur’an outlines key qualities of a competent leader: divine guidance, humility—“And lower your wing to those who follow you among the believers” (Ash-Shu‘ara, 215)—steadfastness—“So remain on a right course as you are commanded” (Hud, 112)—consultation—advising compassionately, forgiving errors, seeking forgiveness, and consulting the people before acting with reliance on God (Al-Imran, 159)—clarity in speech and action—“Proclaim what

you are commanded and turn away from the polytheists” (Al-Hijr, 94)—faith in the mission—“The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord” (Al-Baqarah, 285)—solidarity with the oppressed—“And keep your soul patient with those who call upon their Lord morning and evening” (Al-Kahf, 28)—adherence to principles—“For you is your religion, and for me is my religion” (Al-Kafirun, 6)—broad-mindedness—“Have We not opened your breast for you?” (Ash-Sharh, 1)—pioneering—“And I am commanded to be among the first Muslims” (Az-Zumar, 12)—and removing barriers and superstitions—“And He removed from them their burden and the shackles which were upon them” (Al-A’raf, 157). The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), through obedience to divine laws and education, exemplifies these qualities. Ibn Khaldun likened leadership to the heart in the body, while Al-Farabi regarded the Prophet as the “first chief” (Ibn Khaldun, n.d.; Al-Farabi, 1322). Leadership, from the Qur’anic perspective, is both social and spiritual, guiding souls toward God (Motahhari, 1378). The absence of a competent leader brings serious consequences to movements. Peoples who disobeyed their leaders faced destruction (Al-Anfal, 46). Disobedience can have severe outcomes, as demonstrated in the Prophet’s directive to Abdullah ibn Jubayr during battle, where neglect led to Muslim defeat (Qomi, 1367). In Imam Ali’s era, the Kharijites’ rebellion threatened governance, ultimately leading to their own destruction. Therefore, following leadership ensures the safety and success of the community (Noor, 52; Al-Ahzab, 71). Islam also addresses the struggle against extravagance and materialism in three stages. First, the Qur’an condemns excess and worldliness, emphasizing the transient nature of worldly life relative to the Hereafter, directing believers toward divine pleasure and good outcomes. Second, Islam seeks to prevent extravagance in society. Third, should individuals pursue worldly gains at the expense of others, appropriate measures are implemented to prevent injustice.

Justice, from the Qur’anic perspective, is both a human and social attribute, innate in human nature, with a natural inclination toward fairness and aversion to oppression (An-Nahl, 90). God commands justice and benevolence, and the emergence of Islamic movements is necessary to combat oppression and establish justice (Al-Hadid, 25). Imam Ali, as the implementer of a justice-based Islamic system, regarded tyranny as a source of societal decline and prioritized the application of justice (Nahj al-Balagha, Letter 27). Imam Khomeini similarly emphasized the protection of the underprivileged, with the Qur’an warning of divine punishment for oppressors (Al-Hajj, 45; Al-Anfal, 25). Improper distribution of public wealth constitutes one form of injustice, leading to inequality and severe consequences (Amini, 1977). Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq affirmed that through the establishment of justice, all will be provided for

(Kulayni, 1344). Economic justice requires removing illegitimate wealth from affluent groups and ensuring societal needs are met (Motahhari, 1372).

## Conclusion

The Qur'an places great emphasis on recognizing the vulnerabilities and pitfalls of Islamic movements, with the verses related to the Battle of Uhud providing a clear example of such weaknesses. Disobedience to leadership and worldly-mindedness are two primary factors that lead to weakness and failure. Many movements in Islamic countries fail due to the absence of competent leadership. In Iran, however, an aware and capable leadership fostered insight and unity among the people, ultimately bringing the revolution to fruition. The Qur'an also warns against dangers such as abandoning jihad, oppression, injustice, and internal strife, calling Muslims to avoid these afflictions. A revolution aimed at reform must pay attention to internal vulnerability assessments to prevent deviation. Therefore, it is essential that leaders and pioneers of a movement remain vigilant, forming trustworthy groups tasked with identifying and addressing these vulnerabilities.

The factors contributing to the failure of Islamic movements can be summarized as follows, with the most significant discussed in this study:

- 1) Division and lack of unity
- 2) Absence of piety
- 3) Disobedience to movement leadership
- 4) Selfishness and excessive ambition
- 5) Spreading rumors
- 6) Worldliness and pursuit of comfort among movement leaders
- 7) Lack of adherence to Islamic principles
- 8) Negative cultural and social influences
- 9) Corruption and hypocrisy
- 10) Misunderstanding of the Qur'an
- 11) Failure to learn lessons from the decline of past nations

These factors are among the principal causes of the collapse of Islamic movements, which, if left unchecked, lead to their disintegration. Preventing such outcomes requires fostering unity and cohesion within society, grounded in a correct understanding of the Qur'an and obedience to a strong and prudent leadership. A leader must prioritize the Qur'an in all matters and, with firm resolve, guide the nation toward unity and avoidance of division. Believers should support one another, refrain from disputes, avoid suspicion and mistrust, and steer clear of rumor-mongering, thus creating the foundation for Islamic solidarity. Leadership should consistently consult with experts in societal affairs, as this strengthens social relations and helps prevent division. Moreover,

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negative cultural and social influences, particularly among the youth, must not be allowed to take root. A leader must exemplify piety, directing society along the path of truth, divine pleasure, scientific advancement, and moral integrity, with the goal of achieving an ideal, virtuous society. The leader must cleanse governance of corrupt individuals, hypocrites, irresponsible actors, and those seeking indulgence, and ensure that public wealth is used effectively to build a strong Islamic nation supported by diligent and committed citizens. This approach ensures that the entire community is invested in the progress of the Islamic state and spares no effort in pursuing positive endeavors for the advancement of the country.

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