

The Flag Will Not Fall

Question:

Can people abandon their ideals and turn back when a leader departs?



This is not merely an emotional or political question. It is a question that Almighty God posed to the Islamic Ummah in the Noble Qur'an, raising it as one of the most historic moments in the life of Islam. It was a question that was recorded forever in history in the third year after the Hijrah, on the battlefield of Uhud, when the rumor of the martyrdom of the Noble Prophet, peace be upon him, suddenly spread among the Muslims.

The Battle of Uhud was among the bitterest days for the Muslims. After a group of archers disobeyed the Prophet's command, peace be upon him, and the scene of battle changed, a cry suddenly rose: "Muhammad has been killed!" This deadly rumor struck the souls of the Muslims so deeply that some stopped fighting, some took the path of flight, and others sank into shock and bewilderment. Those who had imagined that everything was tied to the presence of the Prophet, peace be upon him, now saw themselves in utter darkness. It was as though, with the departure of one person, everything had come to an end.

At this critical moment, the Qur'an was revealed in order to erase this thinking from the minds of the believers forever:

"Then if he dies or is killed, will you turn back on your heels? And whoever turns back on his heels will never harm Allah in the least; and Allah will reward the grateful."

This luminous verse, which the martyred Leader of the Islamic Revolution cited in his final meeting with the nation's Assembly of Experts, now stands before us like a lamp in the dark night of his loss, and in this difficult moment, it can take us by the hand.

1. The Nature of the Islamic System: Supra-Personal and Based on a School of Thought:

The most important message of this statement by the martyred Leader is its emphasis on the Islamic Revolution as a "system." A system, unlike a state or individual-centered governments, possesses clear principles, foundations, objectives, and a defined path that are not dependent on the physical life of individuals. By citing the noble verse and the event of the Battle of Uhud, the Leader of the Revolution shows that the Noble Qur'an's reproach of those who imagined that everything would come to an end with the departure of the Noble Prophet underscores the importance of this principle: Islam, and the system that arises from it, is not tied to any one person.

2. The Role of Individuals in the Islamic System: Carrying Out a Mission:

The martyred Leader explicitly affirms the role of individuals: "Individuals have roles; they have missions that they must carry out; they have important roles that

they must fulfill." This balanced view, while honoring the position of leadership and the profound impact of influential figures, protects the system from the affliction of personality worship and absolute dependence on an individual. Within this framework, every personality is tasked with fulfilling his or her mission in a particular period of history, and after that, the path continues through the believers and by relying on the school of thought.

3. The High Capacity of the Islamic System for Continuity:

The martyred Leader's reference to transitions and to the system's continuity after them demonstrates this system's high capacity for managing transitions and passing through crises. The Islamic system is founded upon the people and their faith, and it has clear legal mechanisms for its own continuity. This wise structure, which evolved under the guidance of Imam Khomeini, may God have mercy on him, and later the martyred Leader, guarantees the continuation of the Revolution even in the most sensitive periods.

4. A Message to the Community of Believers in the Present Circumstances:

For an audience that is mourning these days over the loss of a wise Leader, these statements carry several clear messages:

a. Neither Turning Back nor Stopping:

According to the noble verse, true believers are those who, when leaders depart, not only do not turn back, but continue the path with steadfastness.

b. Continuing the Path by Relying on Faith and Law:

The Islamic system, with its firm structure, has a clear path for continuation. This path, relying on the Constitution, the Assembly of Experts for Leadership, and the accompaniment of the people, has always continued and will continue.

c. A Path That Endures Despite the Departure of Personalities:

The greatness of the martyred Leader's personality does not lie in stopping the Revolution in his name, but in directing and guiding it forever toward the correct path. Now, the duty of the believers is to hold fast to that path and guard it.

This statement by the Supreme Leader of the Revolution left behind the most essential lesson for the days after him: the Islamic Revolution is not dependent on any person. This system is the continuation of the path of the prophets, and by relying on the faith of the Ummah and its own firm structure, it will continue on its path. A deep understanding of this truth and practical adherence to it constitute the best way to honor the memory and path of that wise Leader.