An Islamic View of the Battlefield

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God loves not the transgressors.1

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I. INTRODUCTION

This article examines the relationship between God and war from an Islamic viewpoint. The Qur'an, the ultimate source of Islamic faith and Islamic law, presents the concept of Man2 as a conflicted being, torn between warfare and peaceful spirituality. Man’s being (nafs) is prone to violence.3 However, nafs is not static or fixed, nor is nafs incorrigibly evil.4 Nafs is an evolutionary being that can be schooled in spirituality.5 God has empowered Man with knowledge with which Man may suppress his warfare inclinations and establish peaceful communities through submission, justice, and spiritual humility. Thus, Man carries ontological tensions in his nafs. Man’s raw nafs impels him toward mischief and bloodshed, but Man’s schooled nafs envisions a life of peaceful spirituality, seeking God’s friendship.6 Each individual, generation, and nation experiences these ontological tensions in nafs in choosing a way of life. (Tensions should not be confused with contradictions; no contradictions exist in God’s design.) Islam as a revealed religion furnishes guidance (huda)7 to Man’s nafs, a guidance by which nafs overcomes its tendencies of warfare and seeks a life of spiritual submission.8

1. Qur’an, sura (verse) al-Baqara 2:190. This article uses “God” and “Allah” interchangeably.
2. Professor of Law, Washburn University. Thanks are due to Dominique Honea for her research assistance and Professor Bradley Borden for constructive criticism of an earlier draft. The law review staff at Barry University School of Law has also worked hard to make this article a stronger piece, for which I am highly grateful.
3. Here, the word “Man” is used to include both men and women. The Qur’an uses the word “insan” to describe human beings. These words are gender neutral. See, e.g., Qur’an, sura ar-Rahman 55:3 (God has created insan (Man)); Qur’an, sura al-Alaq 96:6 (“[N]ay, but man doth transgress all bounds . . .”); Qur’an, sura al-Zalzala 99:3 (insan (Man) cries, “What is the matter with her [the Earth shaken in convulsion]?”). Sura 76 of the Qur’an is titled as al-Insan (Man).
5. Qur’an, sura an-Naziat 79:40 (restraining nafs from lower desires).
6. Qur’an, sura al-Fajr 89:27 (righteous nafs will be in rest and satisfaction). Nafs is a neutral term, describing a being. The Qur’an uses the word “nafs” to describe even the being of God. See Qur’an, sura al-An'am 6:54 (God has prescribed mercy for His nafs). Man has a choice to develop his nafs. He can either choose a path of spiritual excellence or a path of low desires. Man’s nafs is a developmental being and not a static fixture. Man’s accountability before God is founded on Man’s freedom to mold his nafs.
7. Qur’an, sura Yunus 10:62-64 (believers who direct their nafs and constantly guard against evil are God’s friends).
8. Qur’an, sura al-Baqara 2:2 (the Qur’an is a book of huda, i.e., guidance).
Per the Qur’an, God is the Creator and the Artist of the universe.\textsuperscript{10} His creations, including the unfolding story of Man, carry artistic beauty and suspense. Man, as a conflicted being torn between warfare and submission, interfaces with Satan, another creature God has created in His universe.\textsuperscript{11} God has created Satan as Man’s avowed enemy.\textsuperscript{12} Satan is constantly tempting Man to shun the spiritual path of peace and submission and revert to his raw \textit{nafs} of mischief and warfare.\textsuperscript{13} Satan, however, has no physical authority over Man.\textsuperscript{14} Satan can only mislead Man by offering a vision of life that celebrates aggression, arrogance, acquisition, predation, and base freedoms without responsibilities (\textit{shahawaal}).\textsuperscript{15} When Man fails to school his \textit{nafs}, he reverts to mischief and warfare; thus, Man falls into the abyss of ignorance as he shuns the knowledge of peaceful spirituality. Ignorance produces violence, unleashing physical and mental injuries. This fall, however, is neither preordained nor permanent. Individuals, generations, and nations may reject warfare and embrace peaceful spirituality. God will change the condition of a people determined to change themselves.\textsuperscript{16} Through God’s mercy, which is inexhaustible and timeless, Man’s option to submit to peaceful spirituality is always available.\textsuperscript{17} \textit{Nafs} “gets every good that it earns, and it suffers every ill that it earns.”\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{10} Qur’an, \textit{sura} al-Hashr 59:24. This article is not written as an exegesis of the Qur’an, but as an “explagesis.” Exegesis is the critical interpretation of a scripture. Explagesis is the explanation of a scripture with full understanding that the explanation may be defective, inadequate, or erroneous. Exegesis celebrates human intellect, whereas explagesis is anchored in human humility, which assumes that human intellect might be able to understand the divine meaning of a scripture, but that there is no such guarantee. Thus, explagesis adds humility and self-doubt to the enterprise of exegesis.

\textsuperscript{11} God is the sole author of the human story, part of which has already unfolded, and the rest of which is in the process of being unfolded. On the Day of Judgment—the final day, a day that will most certainly come but nobody knows when—the human story will have come to an end. Meanwhile, the human story will continue to unfold for an unknown period of time in the future, with an inbuilt element of surprise, as it has unfolded for an unknown period of time. The human story has been staged amidst a magnificent and dynamic context of God’s other creations in the past. These other creations constantly interact with human beings, influencing human events, human reactions, and human understanding. God’s other creations are animate and inanimate, visible and invisible, mortal and immortal. Animals and plants are visible and mortal, as are human beings. Some mortal creations have already become extinct; others reproduce themselves to sustain their species and genres. Visible planets and stars scattered in space seem durable, but their ultimate fate has not been revealed to human beings. Among God’s invisible, and possibly immortal, creations are angels and \textit{jinns}. Thus Gabriel, the archangel, has brought God’s messages to His prophets, including Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad, to be transmitted to tribes, nations, and the whole of mankind. Guardian angels, who have been allotted to each human being, record in fine detail everything that the human being does. This is so because God prefers to have full and accurate accounts. In the seventh century, Gabriel brought the Qur’an to Prophet Muhammad over a period of twenty-two years. The Qur’an was revealed in small portions, mostly in response to concrete facts, so that the Prophet could solve human problems, one at a time, and show the way. In addition to the Old and New Testaments, the Qur’an is also God’s creation—a book of instruction, the Final Testament—which furnishes immutable, though inherently flexible, norms of understanding and behavior regarding what human beings may or may not do.

\textsuperscript{12} Qur’an, \textit{sura} Yusuf 12:5.

\textsuperscript{13} Qur’an, \textit{sura} an-Nisa 4:117-19 (discussing how Satan misleads Man, prompting Man to follow false desires, to be cruel to animals, and to deface the beauty of nature).

\textsuperscript{14} Qur’an, \textit{sura} Ibrahim 14:22.

\textsuperscript{15} Qur’an, \textit{sura} Maryam 19:59 (discussing generations that do not submit to God, but rather follow lusts).

\textsuperscript{16} Qur’an, \textit{sura} ar-Rad 13:11 (telling that God does not change the condition of a people unless they first change what is in their hearts).

\textsuperscript{17} Qur’an, \textit{sura} al-Araf 7:156.

\textsuperscript{18} Qur’an, \textit{sura} al-Baqara 2:286.
Warfare, therefore, embodies the failure of nafs to attain peaceful spirituality. It is an expression of Man’s unschooled nafs. By contrast, the efforts to outlaw war are spiritual undertakings. Islam prospers the most when individuals, tribes, and nations shun violence, abandon the lower desires of nafs, and strive to live in a state of gratitude and submission. In its mission of spiritualization, Islam is the opposite of warfare. It shuns all forms of gratuitous and aggressive violence. Islam repudiates the notion of holy aggression or holy war. Violence to spread the faith of Islam is strictly forbidden, for the Qur’an says in unambiguous words: “Let there be no compulsion in religion.” Muslims understand that the ontological tensions between peace and warfare, between belief and unbelief, constitute a permanent human condition. God could have created a universe of believers, but He did not. Each individual, each generation, and each nation must express its own faith and make its own efforts to reach God by seeking peaceful spirituality and discarding the lower desires of nafs. Muslims have not been burdened to save humanity from unbelief. Each individual is free to construct and school his or her own nafs.

While Islam teaches peaceful spirituality, it does not forbid believers from entering the battlefield, as a matter of self-defense, to fight aggressors, occupiers, and predators. Complete abstinence from violence is no part of Islamic faith—a faith that is both idealistic and pragmatic. Ideally, Muslims will worship God in peace. Pragmatically, warfare will remain part of the human condition because individuals and nations fail to school their nafs in spirituality. If war is imposed on Muslims through aggression, Muslims are instructed to fight. This pragmatic allowance for war, though in self-defense, complicates the idealistic message of peaceful submission. Non-Muslims accuse Islam of being a violent religion because Islam does not shun all forms of violence under all circumstances.

Even in the Muslim world, the permission for lawful counter-violence is susceptible to misinterpretation, abuse, and confusion. Battlefields are complex, even irresolute, normative undertakings, particularly when the wars of aggression are indistinguishable from the wars of self-defense. Confusion strikes deeper when wars break out between believers on opposite sides. In such wars, the battlefield may no longer be conceptualized in terms of good and evil. Every aggressive war is the war of raw nafs. It is a fundamental breach of spirituality. Each warring side may be convinced that it is fighting a war of self-defense and not aggression, but self-righteousness is no indication of righteousness. For this reason, the Qur’an

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19. Id. at 2:256.
22. Qur’an, sura al-Baqam 2:216.
24. The U.S. occupation of Iraq in 2003 has unleashed complex waves of violence. The notion of jihad has been invoked to fight the occupiers. The Shia-Sunni conflict in Iraq, however, is contrary to the teachings of Islam. Muslims are instructed to resolve their disputes through negotiation and mediation. This instruction becomes muddled because sympathy for the occupier on the part of the Shias, who have benefited from the fall of Saddam Hussein, angers the Sunni. However, the Shia-Sunni civil war in Iraq has little to do with Islam. It is a worldly war to control the oil resources and governmental powers.
strongly recommends that believers settle their disputes through peaceful means. God orders the faithful believers to be patient at the time of anger and to excuse those who treat them badly.25 Furthermore, the Qur'an reminds the believers that they are but a single brotherhood: "So make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers; and fear Allah, that you may receive mercy."26 This commandment mandates that faithful believers adopt patient and peaceful behavior when disputes break out between them and others. The rule is doubly reinforced if parties on both sides of the dispute are faithful believers.

This article explains four important points. Part II examines the conceptions of warfare, including holy war, that occupy the non-Islamic theological world. It concludes that Islam rejects all notions of holy war fought to summon or please God. Muslims do not fault God for human wars, but recognize that wars occur primarily from the failure of Man to school his inclinations away from warfare and toward spiritual knowledge. Part III presents the thesis that God has created Man as a conflicted being, torn between inclinations toward warfare and spiritual submission. Peaceful submission to God, and not warfare with fellow human beings—believers or non-believers—are the ideals that Islam presents to its followers. Part IV explains God's contract with Satan, whom God has created to tempt Man away from spiritual submission and toward warfare. Thus, Man's test to submit to peaceful spirituality has been made harder. Man must not only overcome inclinations of warfare from within, but he must also shun Satan's temptations to lead a life of base freedoms, arrogance, and bloodshed. Part V furnishes an understanding of satanic nations that operate under Satan's influence and fight believers through invasions, occupations, and other excesses. According to Islam, however, satanic nations eventually self-destruct. Part VI highlights Prophet Muhammad's two major wars to illustrate the dynamics of a spiritual battlefield, concluding that the believers may not automatically assume that, no matter what they do in the battlefield, God is on their side.

II. ISLAM REJECTS HOLY WARS

This section examines the conceptions of holy war that exist in the non-Islamic world. A holy war has been defined as one in which God Himself enters the battlefield to fight and defeat the enemy.27 It may also be defined as a war in which humans fight with God, on behalf of God, in the name of God, or against the enemies of God. Islam repudiates all these conceptions of holy war. God is All Powerful28 and needs no armed assistance from human beings to win His battles. God is "free of all needs from all creation."29 God has no enemies who can harm Him, for He is

25. Qur'an, sura Fusilat 41:34.
27. Patrick D. Miller, Jr., Short Notes, The Divine Council and the Prophetic Call to War, 18 VETUS TESTAMENTUM 100, 101 (1968). The concept of holy war was a "joint participation of human or earthly forces and divine or heavenly armies." Id.
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*al-Mateen,* "[t]he Lord of unbreakable might."30 God has no battles to fight. He is above and beyond all controversies, disputes, conflicts, and wars, for God is the holder of power over all things.31 He is the Sole Sovereign of the universe.32 This fundamental Islamic belief in God's total and unshared Sovereignty preempts all notions of holy war that solicit armed action from men to fight for God. Furthermore, God does not recommend, let alone mandate, war as a method of dispute resolution for human conflicts. The conception of holy aggression as a method of conflict resolution is contrary to the teachings of Islam.

**Struggling with God**

One conception of holy war, found in the Old Testament, asserts that a direct struggle exists between Man and God.33 Genesis narrates the story of Jacob, Abraham's grandson, wrestling with God.34 Fearful that his brother Esau is planning to wage a war against him, Jacob adopts a preemptive strategy to appease Esau with property gifts.35 Jacob sends his children, wives, servants, and animals across the brook in search of Esau. So, left alone without family or property, Jacob finds himself wrestling with a man until the breaking of the day.36 It is unclear whether the man with whom Jacob is struggling is human, an angel, or God. It is also unclear who wins the struggle. But seeing that he is not prevailing over Jacob, the man wrenches Jacob's hip, thus disabling him in the wrestling duel. Despite suffering an injury, Jacob refuses to let the man go unless the man blesses him.37 Concluding that Jacob has the power to successfully struggle with God and with men, the man renames Jacob as Israel.38 He even blesses Jacob, now synonymous with Israel.39 The man, however, declines to disclose his identity. At the end of the story, Jacob claims, "I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared."40

Figuratively, the story captures the struggle between Man and God. In its biblical context, Jacob represents the nation of Israel, which refuses to submit to God without a struggle waged during the darkness of the night. God wounds the nation of Israel to demonstrate that He can hurt a people that challenges His authority. If the notion of wrestling is transformed into a metaphor for spiritual struggle, the story of Jacob underscores a fundamental point that knowing God requires active engagement with Him, and that thoughtless obedience is inadequate in bridging the distance between Man and God.

34. *It* is disputed whether Jacob was wrestling with an angel or God. It appears that the wrestling with God makes more figurative, if not literal, sense.
36. *Id. at* 32:22-24.
37. *Id. at* 32:26.
38. *Id. at* 32:28. Israel means "he struggles with God." *Id.*
39. *Id. at* 32:29.
40. *Id. at* 32:30.
In contrast, the concept of Man struggling with God is absent in Islam. Even the metaphorical meaning of struggle as an effort to understand God would be contrary to the Islamic law of submission. In Islam, Man submits to God and does not struggle with Him. Submission highlights Man's inferiority, mortality, and limited knowledge. Submission, however, does not mean ignorance. Islam is a religion of knowledge that challenges Man to school his raw *nafs* and shun falsehood to attain a state of spirituality.41 However, Man schools his *nafs* through reflection, appreciation of God's creations, and awe-bound intellect. For Muslims, any notion of struggling with God would imply Man's arrogance.42 Islam entertains no such concept of holy war in which Man wrestles with God in order to demand favors or understanding.43

**Islam Repudiates the Gods of War**

Islam repudiates a cosmic view under which different gods exercise distinct powers over the universe.44 It denies the existence of all gods except One God, who is the God of all creatures, including human beings, whether they believe in Him or not.45 All powers and forces flow from and toward One God. In dismantling each and every form of polytheism, Islam denies the existence of gods of war. Over the centuries, numerous mythologies and belief systems have envisioned the powers of gods of war. These gods of war foment conflicts, take part in battles, and shed blood. Some fight against human beings. Some fight with each other. Some participate in human wars. Since death and life are closely tied to each other, some belief systems hold the gods of war to be the gods of fertility as well.

Indra, one of the most ancient gods of war in the world, whom Hindus continue to worship even today, debuted as a god of war.46 He was recruited as a formidable evil spirit in the pre-Islamic Persian mythology of Zoroastrians.47 And yet, Indra was also the god of fertility.48 When drought threatened the life of man and beast alike, Hindus prayed to Indra for the needed rain that would moisten the soil and bring food from the earth.49 Mars, the Roman god of war, was also the god of fertility.50 This dichotomy emerged in differing characterizations of Mars. Some Romans believed that Mars was a god of fertility, while others worshipped him as a god of war.51 The two congregations disputed with each other in their differing

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42. Id. at 2:206; Qur'an, *sura* al-Araf 7:36, 40.
44. Qur'an, *sura* al-Rad 13:16 (providing that God has no partners).
45. Qur'an, *sura* al-Ikhlas 112:1-4. This *sura* has a special status in describing the purity of faith, for it captures a conception of God that rejects all associations (*shirk*) with Him.
51. Id.
roles of the same god. In the Aztec mythology, Nahuan Xipe is not only the god of war, but is also the god of yellow grain. He brings both destruction and grain to feed.  

The war-god as an embodiment of both destruction and regeneration captures a more latent human belief that war is good. The destruction of war is visible, but its regenerative lore is illusive. But a mythology needs both reality and illusion to construct the heart of the paradox. In Greek mythology, therefore, war is seen as a necessity to test the king’s chariots and new Thracian horses, and to let great deeds happen in the battlefield so that heroes can be admired and epic poems can be written. One commentator provides that “A good war refreshes everyone.” Mythological gods of war are thus the ancient versions of holy wars in which gods fight with each other for supremacy and control. These mythologies also reflect the pre-rational human understanding of a conflict-ridden world in which no single entity is in control.

The Qur’an repudiates the conception of a conflict-torn universe and the attendant notions of gods of war and fertility. It rejects the concept of partnership (al-shirk) that embodies polytheistic mythologies and firmly commands Muslims not to associate any partner with God. Rejecting the thesis that the universe is in moral or physical chaos, the Qur’an clarifies that the universe has been created in truth and for a just purpose, and any notion of partnership in the creation or the functioning of the universe is untrue. The Qur’an provides: “He (God) has created the heavens and the earth for just ends: Far is He above having the partners they ascribe to Him!” Furthermore, the Qur’an calls for unity among diverse communities of believers in the following verse: “Say: ‘O People of the Book! come to common terms as between us and you: That we worship none but Allah; that we associate no partners with him.’” This call for unity shuns the conceptions of holy war between Muslims, Jews, Christians, and other believers of One God. In the following verse, the Qur’an rejects the belief that human fertility comes from any other source but God: “Do they indeed ascribe to Him (God) as partners things that can create nothing, but are themselves created?” Islam recognizes no separate god of fertility.

52. Id.
53. Hopkins, supra note 46, at 85-86.
55. Qur’an, sura an-Nisa 4:48 (prohibiting shirk or setting up partners with One God). Shirk is the most detestable sin under Islam. Id.
56. Qur’an, sura an-Nahl 16:3.
57. Id.
58. Qur’an, sura aal-e-Ilmran 3:64 (inviting Jews, Christians and other peoples of the book to find a common ground in the unity of God).
59. Qur’an, sura al-Araf 7:191 (teaching, in its context, that God alone is the ultimate source of creation, including human fertility).
60. Id. at 7:189-91 (telling that when a woman gives birth to a child, it is a mistake to attribute the credit to anyone but God).
God's War against Satan

Islam rejects the view that God is engaged in an epic battle with Satan,\(^61\) for God is al-Qawiy,\(^62\) al-Qaadir\(^63\) and al-Qadeer.\(^64\) In the non-Islamic literature, however, a fantastic conception of holy war presumes either that God is not the Creator of Satan, or Satan, though God's creation, has rebelled against God.\(^65\) A related implication of this holy war mandates that human beings fight on the side of God and help God defeat His enemy. Under this conception, religion is seen as a way to fight with God against Satan. This conception of holy war also warns that God can lose this war if human beings drift away from religion and side with Satan. In the cosmic war between good and evil, God and Satan are the chief warriors, whereas human beings are the hired soldiers on each side. The origin of this cosmic war is traced back to the presumed rebellion of angels that God had created to administer the affairs of the world.\(^66\)

Zoroastrianism, an ancient Persian religion, may have influenced the rebellious conceptions of Satan. It presents the cosmic struggle as a combat between Ormuzd, the source of light, and Ahriman, the source of darkness.\(^67\) Zoroaster is the human prophet who receives instructions from a supreme deity, known as Ahura-Mazda or Ormuzd. Ormuzd is the creator and ruler of the universe; he shares no external attributes with human beings; and he is the repository for all good.\(^68\) Ahriman embodies unhappiness, wickedness, impurity, and the evil of the world, "all that man has to hate, and fear, and seek protection from."\(^69\) The two forces, Ormuzd and Ahriman, are in perpetual combat, opposing each other in every way. This dualism stems from a basic Zoroastrian belief that evil cannot come out of good, and neither can an all-powerful good create evil. This separation of evil from good stood in the way of understanding monotheism, even though Ormuzd is a much stronger force than Ahriman.\(^70\) While Ormuzd is stronger than Ahriman

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61. Qur'an, sura al-Anaam 6:100 (revealing that God created jinns, but some falsely believe that jinns are equal to God).
62. Qur'an, sura Hud 11:66. This attribute of God affirms the belief that nothing can overpower or defeat God.
63. Qur'an, sura al-Anaam 6:65. This attribute of God reminds human beings that God is in control of all things, without exception.
64. Qur'an, sura ar-Room 30:54. This attribute of God strongly affirms that God is in complete control of all worlds and creatures therein and that nothing happens in violation of God's will.
65. Leo Jung, Fallen Angels in Jewish, Christian, and Mohammedan Literature: A Study in Comparative Folk-lore, 16 Jewish Q. Rev. 45, 45 (1925) (providing that the conception of Satan under both Christianity and Islam is similar, except that according to Islam, Satan does not rebel).
69. Id. at 380. See also Alexander H. Krappe, A Persian Theme in the Roman de Renard, 58 MOD. LANGUAGE NOTES 515, 518 (1943) (comparing misogynist stories in literature that attribute the creation of good animals to Man and bad animals to Woman, a form of dualism that leads back to Zoroastrianism).
70. Whitney, supra note 68, at 380.
and wins most battles, Ahriman is not subject to Ormuzd’s sovereignty. This pre-Islamic Persian doctrine of two irreconcilable forces of good and evil may have influenced conceptions of Satan which developed in Middle Eastern theological traditions, particularly Judaism and Christianity.

The Qur’an rejects the thesis that there exists a cosmic battle between God and Satan or that the purpose of the Prophesy is to restore the kingdom of God that has been corrupted by rebellious Satan and his party. No creature possesses any power to challenge God; thus, the idea of the world gone out of control is no part of the Islamic faith. God remains in full control of all His creations and creatures, including Satan and his followers. Satan believes in God. Although he is not a disbeliever, his mission is to mislead Man. Satan’s imperial goal is to spread base freedoms in the world. The Qur’an states clearly that Satan has no coercive authority (sultanate) over those who believe and put their trust in God. However, Satan does have enticement powers over those who take him as patron and those who join partners with God. The Qur’an refutes the notion that Satan can establish any sultanate over Man. The word “sultan” is specifically used in the Qur’an to clarify that Satan has no physical or coercive authority over human affairs.

Satan demands time and respite from God to show that Satan is indeed superior to Man. If Satan is given the power to entice, Man is given the knowledge to resist and reject Satan. Thus, a great contest has been created between Man and Satan, each having unique powers. Satan cannot possess Man, nor does Satan have any authority over Man. Satan, however, may invite men, women, tribes, and nations to do Satan’s work. In this sense, Satan’s friends could be more lethal than Satan himself. However, Satan will not be held accountable and will meet no punishment until the Final Day. Satanic individuals and nations, on the other hand, have not been granted any such immunity.

Satan’s freedom from imminent accountability has a stated purpose. Satan serves God’s design to test Man for his spirituality. Satan requests respite so that he can mislead Man on earth and “put them all in the wrong.” This term of the contract is further clarified. God stipulates that Satan has no coercive authority over any human being. Furthermore, Satan will be unsuccessful in tempting the

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72. BOYD, supra note 66. However, there is no one view of Satan in Judaic and Christian scholarly literature.
73. Qur’an, sura al-Anaam 6:100 (providing that some falsely regard jinns as equal to God).
75. Qur’an, sura al-Baqara 2:102 (revealing that Satan can harm no one without Allah’s permission).
76. Qur’an, sura an-Nahl 16:99-100. See also Sahih al-Bukhari 5:32 (telling that the Prophet said Satan takes a different path than the one taken by Omar, who would become the second caliph after the Prophet’s death).
77. Qur’an, sura an-Nahl 16:99-100.
78. Qur’an, sura al-Hijr 15:42.
79. Id.
80. Id.
81. Id. at 15:37-38 (telling that Satan has been given respite until the Day of Judgment).
82. Id. at 15:39. There seems to be no exception to the universal rule of temptation. It applies to all men of all ages, including prophets.
83. Id. at 15:42.
believers, for they will reject Satan.\textsuperscript{84} However, Satan will have the power to mislead every man and woman, including prophets.\textsuperscript{85} Satan has numerous tools to mislead Man, including base freedoms, pursuit of lowly desires,\textsuperscript{86} fascination with sexuality, arrogance, self-righteousness, and a false sense of non-accountability.\textsuperscript{87}

**Particularism and Holy Wars**

A shift occurs in the conception of holy war when we move from ancient Zoroastrianism to ancient Judaism. The Judaic conception of holy war appropriates God (Yahweh) for the protection of Israel and Israelites.\textsuperscript{88} Yahweh is the one and the only God in the universe.\textsuperscript{89} However, Yahweh has a favorite people and a favorite nation, i.e., Jews and Israel. In what have been called "Yahweh wars,"\textsuperscript{90} God fights on behalf of His favorite nation, not against Satan, but against other human beings, tribes and nations. He fights against the "enemies (of Israel) and (their) horses and chariots and an army greater" in size.\textsuperscript{91} The Yahweh wars are the ones in which God does not simply intervene to defeat the enemies of Israel. "For the LORD your God is the one who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you victory."\textsuperscript{92} This direct involvement of God on behalf of Israel presents a conception of God who enters the battlefield to personally defend His nation, thus giving rise to what has been called particularism.

Repudiating the notion of particularism, Islam presents a Universal God, the God of all creatures, nations, and worlds.\textsuperscript{93} No one nation or people can claim a special relationship with God to the detriment of other nations and peoples. The nearest to God is one who is greatest in piety.\textsuperscript{94} This central doctrine of the Qur'an refutes the notion of a nationalist God who sees the world through the eyes of the most favored nation. Individuals, and not nations, are the focus of Islam. Each human being maintains a separate account with God, and each human being is judged according to his or her record of faith and good deeds, for God is al-Haseeb\textsuperscript{95} and al-Haq.\textsuperscript{96} There is no collectivist punishment or collectivist favorit-

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\textsuperscript{84.} Id. at 15:40.
\textsuperscript{85.} Old Testament prophets were tempted. Jesus was tempted. Prophet Muhammad was tempted. See Qur'an, sura an-Najm 53:19-23; Qur'an, sura al-Isra 17:73-74 (temptation away from false gods of Uzza, Lat, and Manat). See also Gustav Weil, Frank K. Sanders & Harry W. Dunning, An Introduction to the Quran, 5 BIBLICAL WORLD 181, 185 (1989).
\textsuperscript{86.} Qur'an, sura Maryam 19:59.
\textsuperscript{87.} See infra discussion accompanying notes 253-77.
\textsuperscript{88.} Lewis Bayles Paton, The Origin of Yahweh-Worship in Israel, 28 BIBLICAL WORLD 113, 125 (1906).
\textsuperscript{89.} In Hebrew religion, other names for One God are El and Elohim. Raphael Patai, The God Yahweh-Elohim, 75 AM. ANTHROPOLOGIST 1181, 1182 (1973) (explaining the merger of different names in Hebrew religious thought for One God). New translations omit references to these different names of God. See Exodus 15:1-3 (New Int'1 Version).
\textsuperscript{90.} Gwilym H. Jones, "Holy War" or "Yahweh War?", 25 VETUS TESTAMENTUM 642, 643-44 (1975).
\textsuperscript{91.} Deuteronomy 20:1 (New Int'1 Version).
\textsuperscript{92.} Id. at 20:4.
\textsuperscript{93.} Qur'an, sura al-Fathiha 1:2.
\textsuperscript{94.} Qur'an, sura al-Hujjataat 49:13.
\textsuperscript{95.} Qur'an, sura an-Nisa 4:6. This attribute of God warns human beings that God keeps accurate accounts and that He would hold them accountable.
ism. Of course, an entire nation may fall away from the right path and meet punishment. 97 This state of affairs, however, does not condemn all members of a fallen nation, for some individuals may still hold to the right path. God fights for no one nation or people against others, because God is above and beyond human warfare. God has no enemies, because He is the guardian over everything. 98

The more popular conception of holy war refers to earthly wars between nations and tribes, and sometimes between religions and ideologies. Religious particularism has been a remarkable source of holy war. It embodies a belief of a religious group that its members have a special and exclusive relationship with God. Concepts such as "the chosen people, God's people, [and] the elect" express the sentiments and beliefs of religious particularism. 99

The Bible has been interpreted both by Jews and Christians to advocate religious particularism. The crusades were holy wars as European Christians, charged with religious particularism, set out to fight and defeat Muslims who had conquered Jerusalem. Religious particularism has also been used to initiate, promote, and defend the creation of Israel in 1947—as a land that God has allocated exclusively to Jews. 100 The colonization and establishment of Christian America itself drew its religious justification from religious particularism, as conquering armies of Christian Europeans viewed Native Americans, with their non-Christian beliefs, as savages destined to lose their land, freedom, and lives. Colonization was thus part exploitation and part holy expedition. 101

Religious particularism is not inherently aggressive. A group claiming to have a special relationship with God may be completely peaceful with little interest in worldly affairs. Or the group may fully participate in worldly affairs, but without embracing a militaristic viewpoint. Religious particularism is problematic only when the group claiming a special relationship with God is aggressive in its outlook or acquisitive of worldly resources.

In holy wars involving religious particularism, God is an important combatant in the battlefield. God must assist His most favored nation in all battles. The most favored nation may enter the battlefield to defend or promote its earthly interests, and may have no spiritual matters at stake. What makes this war a holy war is not the purpose of the war, but rather the involvement of the most favored nation. Whenever the most favored nation enters the battlefield, it regards the war as a holy war, regardless of the war's purpose. God protects His most favored nation in battles against nations that have no special relationship with God.

96. Qur'an, sura Yunus 10:32. This attribute of God affirms that God is truthful, and no falsehood or error touches Him.
101. Louis Ruchames, The Sources of Racial Thought in Colonial America, 52 J. NEGRO HIST. 251, 253 (1967) (telling that Christians as chosen people could do to non-Christians as they saw fit).
The Qur’an nowhere mentions the notion that God personally fights on behalf of a favored nation. In fact, the Qur’an specifically rejects the claims of Jewish and Christian particularism in these words: “The Jews and the Christians say: ‘We are sons of Allah, and his beloved.’” Say: “Why then doth He punish you for your sins? Nay, ye are but men, of the men he hath created.” Jews and Christians enjoy no special status in God’s kingdom. They are part of the human species, just like other nations and religious communities. No community is God’s beloved on a permanent basis, even though some communities may come closer to God through piety and submission.

More importantly, God has created a pluralistic human world with diverse nations and tribes who speak their own particular languages. Social bonding derived from human identities, such as nationality and language, is necessary for living a successful aggregative life. In this diverse world, however, no nation or tribe has been granted a most favored nation status with God. The Qur’an supports diversity and pluralism in the following verse: “O Mankind, surely We created you of a male and a female, and made you tribes and nations that you may know each other; surely the most honorable of you with God is the one who is most pious.” Furthermore, the Qur’an affirms pigmenetic (color) and linguistic diversity among human beings as God’s signs, rather than sources for discrimination and prejudice. This shift from identities to piety as a criterion for closeness to God rejects all forms of particularism derived from national or religious formations. Individuals, and not groups, draw closer to God through worship and good deeds. Closeness to God is not status; it is earned honor.

The notion of piety as the basis for seeking closeness to God is a theme that suffuses the Qur’an. The best of the peoples that evolve from the human species, says the Qur’an, are those who enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, and who believe in One God. Again, the Qur’an rejects all forms of particularism derived from status and national identities. The Qur’an demands behavior and effort to construct a world of justice and laws. Individuals, whether they are Muslims, Christians, Jews, or any others, may access God through piety. No national, religious, ethnic, linguistic, or color barriers have been placed between Man and God.

Under the commands of the Qur’an, therefore, no nation of believers or religious group may claim God to be on their side in a battlefield just because they happen to be Jews, Christians, or Muslims. No such blanket promise is available to any group of believers. As a general principle, God forbids believers from killing each other, “unless it be by mistake.” Hence, when believers fight with each other, they violate God’s law. Wars may be fought in self-defense, and God might

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104. Qur’an, sura ar-Room 30:22 (variation in human languages is God’s sign).
106. Qur’an, sura ar-Room 30:22.
help a nation or a group if He so wills. God’s help, however, cannot be taken for
granted in any war, including the wars against nonbelievers. This fundamental
conception separates Islam from both Judaism and Christianity.

Supernatural Battlefields

Islam rejects superstitions. Accordingly, it reduces armed conflicts to the ra­
tional dynamics of Man and nature. Nature, in the guise of weather conditions,
may influence the outcome of a war. Weather conditions are not arbitrary acts of
God; they are determined by God’s laws of nature. Human factors, including the
relative strength of armed forces, the quality and quantity of weapons, strategies,
tactics, logistics, and the fighting spirit of combatants, are often considered the
more critical factors in determining the outcomes of armed conflicts. Even natural
forces are brought under warfare control, thus minimizing the role of nature in the
conduct of war. The rationalist/materialist view does not repudiate God’s exis­
tence, oneness, or authority. It simply asserts that God does not intervene on the
battlefield. The forces of nature and Man, though both God’s creations, determine
the fate of armed conflicts.

The rationalist/materialist expulsion of supernatural forces from the battlefield
is a new phenomenon in human history. For centuries, the battlefield has been
closely associated with the supernatural. Fortune, a fatalistic label attached to a
set of mysterious and unknowable forces, was considered the decisive factor in pre­
religious battlefields. Fortune was morally blind and, accordingly, the battlefield
was uncertain in that the wicked might defeat the righteous. Furthermore, Fortune
was powerful and defied the logic of human resources, giving victory to the weak
and humiliating the strong. Thus, Fortune served as a counterforce to both self­
righteousness and resource invincibility. Even the mightiest armies with full faith
in their military mission could not predict victory against the uncertain and formi­
dable Fortune. In these times, fortune-tellers, astrologers, and seers were as critical
to the conduct of war as were the generals.

Religious communities began to subject battlefields to God’s will. Since
God is righteous and just, the moral blindness of Fortune gave way to God’s pur­
poseful morality. The battlefield was now considered a trial,\textsuperscript{115} and defeat in war was taken as God's chastisement. In God-dominated battlefields, human resources consisting of soldiers, strategies, and weapons were still considered secondary causes that in themselves could not determine the outcome. God could defeat a mighty army to chastise a nation, its prince, or its people. In terms of the effectiveness of human resources, God-dominated battlefields were similar to Fortune-driven battlefields. God does not reward military preparedness, but "controls war for a corrective purpose."\textsuperscript{116} This supernatural view of the battlefield also acted as a deterrent against aggression, because mere warfare resources and invincible armies assured no victory. In God-dominated battlefields, defeat could not be attributed to a morally erratic Fortune. Defeat served as a depressing reminder that God was unhappy with the nation and that a soul-searching reform was necessary to please God.

Alternatively, one could conceive battlefields as places of trial subject to God's will. In supernatural battlefields, God helps one side against the other, although He does not personally fight with sword and shield. The laws of nature continue to influence armed conflicts, and human factors are not rendered meaningless. However, God may tilt the battlefield in favor of one party. This divine intervention adds supernatural dimensions to the battlefield.

In supernatural battlefields, Satan may also influence combat outcomes, not to defeat God, but to defeat armies of believers. In Islam, Satan's rule is confined to misleading believers.\textsuperscript{117} Satan has no inherent powers to manipulate the forces of nature, such as winds and storms, to defeat believers. Nor does Satan personally fight in inter-human combats. But he can whisper confusion and doubt in the hearts and minds of the believers who might lose the battle if they are not firm-footed.

Those who believe in One God—Muslims, Jews, or Christians—are not compulsive warriors. In Islam, there is no theological or psychological relationship between believing and killing. However, Man does kill, and the human species is prone to violence. We learn from the Qur'an that Man, as a species, is inclined toward creating mischief (fasad) and shedding blood (dimaa).\textsuperscript{118} This inclination toward mischief and bloodshed can be overcome through knowledge of God and self-knowledge, but overcoming becomes difficult for two distinct reasons. First, the gravitational pull of the Original Man is toward war.\textsuperscript{119} Second, Satan is constantly luring Man away from self-knowledge and knowledge of God.\textsuperscript{120} A peaceful world can be established not by turning away from God, as the secular literature has us believe, but by turning towards God, who comprehends "all things in mercy and knowledge."\textsuperscript{121} Accordingly, the believers submit to One God, saying: "(God

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{115} Id. at 226.
\item \textsuperscript{116} Id. at 224.
\item \textsuperscript{117} Qur'an, \textit{sura} al-Hijr 15:39-42.
\item \textsuperscript{118} Qur'an, \textit{sura} al-Baqara 2:30.
\item \textsuperscript{119} Id. at 2:11-12.
\item \textsuperscript{120} Id. at 2:36.
\item \textsuperscript{121} Qur'an, \textit{sura} al-Ghafir 40:7.
\end{itemize}
is) Lord of the East and the West: there is no god but He: take Him therefore for (thy) Disposer of Affairs.\footnote{122}

Islamic Beliefs on Holy Wars

According to Islam, God is no warrior.\footnote{123} He does not fight. He is not at war with Satan. He is not at war with Man. He is not at war with any other god, for there is only One God, who is Supreme. One God exercises complete control over all forces, apparent or hidden, created or uncreated. To conceive that God is engaged in combat is tantamount to limiting His power, and to assert that His creatures have spun out of control is to challenge His authority.\footnote{124} While such ideas have been received in non-Islamic theological literature, they are incompatible with the conception of One Almighty God that the Qur’an presents. In Islam, any notion that creatures disobey God will be condemned under the highly refined notion of \textit{shirk}, that is, associating other powers with God.\footnote{125} Furthermore, God does not foment human wars, nor does God seek human bloodshed or desire human sacrifice. Shedding blood to please God is no part of Islamic faith. God is above and beyond war and bloodshed. It is nothing but \textit{tahrif} (distortion) to assert that God is combative, adores battlefields, or relishes bloodshed.

According to the Qur’an, God is compassionate and merciful.\footnote{126} One law that He has prescribed for himself is Mercy.\footnote{127} There is no showdown between God and Satan, for Satan himself admits that he is subject to God’s sovereignty.\footnote{128} There is not even a showdown between Man and Satan, because many human beings support Satan. The showdown, the perpetual struggle, is between Satan and believers, and the believers are not just Muslims. Believers include God-fearing Jews and God-fearing Christians, and others who believe in One God, give charity, take care of old parents, and do not covet a neighbor’s house or usurp others’ lands and property. This expanded definition of believers is most candidly embodied in the following verse of the Qur’an: “Those who believe, and those who follow the Jewish (scriptures), and the Christians and the Sabians, any who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and work righteousness, shall have their reward with their Lord; on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.”\footnote{129}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[122.] Qur’an, \textit{sura al-Muzzammil} 73:9.
\item[123.] Qur’an, \textit{sura al-Baqara} 2:279 (mentioning war from God against those who demand usury, but this war is a metaphorical reference to God’s displeasure with lenders who offer loans with unconscionable interest rates and refuse to forego the remains of the usury).
\item[124.] Neil Forsyth, \textit{Opposition or Combat? A Reply to H.A. Kelly}, 103 J. AM. FOLKLORE 73, 74-75 (1990) (explaining that God’s power is impliedly limited if we admit that God is engaged in combat, even if He wins His wars easily).
\item[125.] Qur’an, \textit{sura al-Hashr} 59:23-24 (explaining that God has no partners and He is irresistible).
\item[126.] Qur’an, \textit{sura al-Fatiha} 1:1.
\item[127.] Qur’an, \textit{sura al-Anaam} 6:54.
\item[128.] Qur’an, \textit{sura al-Hijr} 15:36 (telling that Satan addresses God as “My Lord”).
\item[129.] Qur’an, \textit{sura al-Baqara} 2:62.
\end{footnotes}
Why God Permits Warfare

Ignoring ontological tensions in human \textit{naf\textsuperscript{s}} and discounting human freedom to choose peace or warfare, some intellectuals, poets, and philosophers wonder why God has created evil, murder, misfortune, war, and death. In addition, some men and women question why helpless communities suffer and morally corrupt nations prosper, gain power, and ruthlessly rule the innocent and the powerless. In view of suffering, injustice, and lawlessness in human affairs, some find it hard to believe that God exists, or that He is kind and merciful. The mystery of death, "from whose bourn no traveller returns, puzzles the will"\textsuperscript{130} and weakens the belief of many when their dear ones are killed in a battle's collateral damage or terrorist attacks. The periodic, and sometimes persistent, reign of evil over nations, regions, and the world confuses individuals and communities. Why does God not punish evildoers and warmongers?

Muslims do not raise such questions. They submit to God's will under all circumstances, good and bad. It is part of their faith to accept, and not question, the ontological tensions in the creation of the universe. They do not shift the blame of human warfare to God,\textsuperscript{131} nor do they label the cruelties of battlefields as the doings of God. They consider war as the choice that some nations and groups make out of ignorance and arrogance and view war itself as an indication that Man has drifted away from peaceful spirituality. Human warfare emanates not from God, but rather from the failure of a nation or a generation to school its \textit{naf\textsuperscript{s}}' tendencies toward war and away from spiritual knowledge.

III. MAN'S CONFLICTED BEING

According to the Qur'an, Man is contentious in most things he thinks and does.\textsuperscript{132} Man's contentious behavior emerges from Man's embodied tensions between warfare and spiritual submission, as his conflicted being is so constructed from the moment of his creation. The Qur'an discloses that God held discussions with angels and Satan when He created the concept of Man.\textsuperscript{133} These conceptual discussions took place before Man was shaped into physical being. When God announced in the heavens that He was planning to create Man, the angels expressed reservation.\textsuperscript{134} The angels reasoned that Man would make mischief (\textit{fasad}) on earth and shed blood (\textit{dimaa}).\textsuperscript{135} Note the freedom of expression that God allows in the heavens in that He was soliciting comments from angels about His brand new idea of creating Man. This exchange of views between God and the angels did not suggest that angels knew more than God, or that Man's inherent inclination toward

\textsuperscript{130}. WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, HAMLET act 3, sc. 1.
\textsuperscript{131}. Qur'an, \textit{sur}a al-Baqara 2:53 (providing that Man's \textit{naf\textsuperscript{s}} is not free from blame, for it incites ignorance and evil, but God is merciful).
\textsuperscript{132}. \textit{Id}.
\textsuperscript{133}. \textit{Id} at 2:30-34.
\textsuperscript{134}. \textit{Id} at 2:30.
\textsuperscript{135}. \textit{Id}. See also \textit{Id} at 2:36 (telling that both Man and Satan are banished from the heavens, each as the other's enemy).
mischief and bloodshed was known only to angels and not to God, or that angels had misunderstood Man's inherent nature. Everyone in the heavens knew what Man would do on earth. There was no confusion in any quarter that Man is inclined towards fasad and dimaa. The angels were apprehensive, however, because their knowledge was limited. In expressing discomfort with Man's aggressive nature, the angels did not know that Man would be given a powerful additional quality. In view of that additional quality to be bestowed on Man, God said to the angels, "I know what you do not know."

The additional quality that God bestowed on Man is the knowledge of all names, a knowledge that angels do not have. The angels confessed to God that they do not have the knowledge of all names, that their knowledge is limited, and that they know only what they have been taught and nothing more. The angels' confession demonstrates that which distinguishes Man from angels—the knowledge of all names, which God has conferred on Man, but not on angels. The exchange also implies that Man's knowledge of all names furnishes a counterbalance to his qualities of fasad and dimaa. This implication is sound because the dialogue between God and angels, narrated in the Qur'an, clarifies that the angels' concern about Man's capacity to engage in mischief and bloodshed arose at a point when Man had not yet been given the knowledge of all names. But as Man's inclination for aggression was infused with the knowledge of all names, and as Adam successfully demonstrated his ability to tell names in the company of angels, God ordered the angels to bow down to Adam, which they did. The angels expressed no further concern, reservation, or objection about Man's capacity for aggression. There is a tacit understanding in the heavens that Man, though aggressive, is a worthy creature because he has been given the knowledge of all names.

The knowledge of all names does not mean that Man has complete knowledge of all things. Naming creatures, things, thoughts, and beliefs is a cognitive quality; it is a form of knowledge. Naming requires the power of distinction, for names distinguish one person from another and things from each other. For example, Man can recognize the differences between horses, mules, and donkeys, even though the three animals are closely related to each other. In Man's ability of naming lie the elements of his understanding, yet naming does not constitute a thorough or complete knowledge of persons or things that Man can successfully name. The Qur'an uses the names of the three animals mentioned above to make the additional point that Man, though familiar with these animals, does not know everything that God creates. Additional verses of the Qur'an further reinforce the

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136. Id. at 2:30.
137. Id. at 2:31-33.
138. Id. at 2:32.
139. Id.
140. Id. at 2:34.
141. Sahih Muslim 34:6454. The Prophet has said: "There would be a time when knowledge would be taken away, and ignorance would take its place and there would be bloodshed on a large scale." Id. This hadith contemplates a direct connection between ignorance and warfare.
point that Man’s knowledge is limited. Despite limits on his intellect, however, the
capacity to acquire knowledge is Man’s defining attribute.

In the realm of war, Man can suffer from delusions of understanding derived
from defective knowledge. One such recurrent and dangerous delusion is the ag­
geressor’s belief that aggression would yield peace. War for the sake of war and
acquisitive wars to seize others’ resources are blatant aggressions, reminding us of
the angels’ initial concern that Man is inclined toward fasad and dimaa. However,
the wars of defective understanding constitute a unique genre. The Qur’an identi­
fies such wars in the following words: “When it is said to them: ‘Make not mis­
chief on the earth,’ they say: ‘We are only ones that put things right.’”143 This
example accurately describes an aggressor who attacks a country, but justifies ag­
geression in a self-styled, noble mission of “putting things right” or promoting
peacemaking (sulh). In further describing such aggressors, the Qur’an does not
condemn them as liars or hypocrites, but simply points out cognitive defects in
their claimed nobility. “Of a surety, they are the ones who make fasad, but they
realize it not.”144 Note the charge of lack of realization.

A Consciousness of Accountability

A profound and good faith sense of accountability runs through Islamic con­
sciousness, as practicing Muslims are constantly aware of their obligations under
Islamic law. There is no such understanding that one can get away with breaches
and violations of law. The Qur’an clearly establishes a Day of Accountability,
when nothing will be hidden and all records will be opened.145 To explain these
records, human limbs, including hands and legs, will testify.146 Even human hearts
will unfold the intentions with which acts and omissions were done.147 On the Day
of Accountability, the girl-child buried alive is asked for what sin she was slain.148
On that day, men and women will realize that death was no end to their story and
that their accounts149 have been kept with a stunning degree of accuracy.150 And on
that day, wealth and power will come to no one’s help.

In worldly transactions as well as in submission to God, Muslims must exercise
good faith.151 Compliance with Islamic law cannot be technical and deceptive. All
obligations must be performed honestly and sincerely.152 Good faith is the cardinal
principle of performance of duties. The Qur’an demands honesty in fact and con­

143. Qur’an, sura al-Baqara 2:11.
144. Id. at 2:12.
146. Qur’an, sura an-Noor 24:24; Qur’an, sura ya-Seen 36:65.
147. Qur’an, sura al-Baqara 2:225 (providing that in matters of oath, God calls to account for what is in
your heart); Qur’an, sura al-Ahzab 33:5 (providing that God forgives the mistakes of a person whose heart is
innocent).
150. Qur’an, sura al-Arbiya 21:94; Qur’an, sura Saba 34:3.
151. The purity of heart is a central theme of the Qur’an.
152. Qur’an, sura al-Macda 5:1.
demns the “tainted heart” that conceals evidence.\textsuperscript{153} Persons who carry one thing in their hearts and say another from their tongues are condemned.\textsuperscript{154} Good-faith compliance with God’s laws is even more necessary when Muslims enter the battlefield, for there they are transacting in matters of life and death.

**Man’s Empowerment**

Two developments enhance Man’s empowerment: minimization of Satan’s sultanate and the subjection of the physical world to predictable and verifiable laws of nature. The Qur’an presents an orderly world bound by the laws of nature, a world in which the night follows the day and the day follows the night, one in which the sun cannot overtake the moon and the moon cannot overtake the sun, as each circulates in its own mathematically precise orbit.\textsuperscript{155} And such is the artistry of God, who sustains all things in perfect order.\textsuperscript{156} “Dominion and awe belong to God; He establishes order in the heights of heaven.”\textsuperscript{157} These are the signs, says the Qur’an, for those who have vision.

An orderly world subjected to laws is a more reliable world. Man has been given the knowledge to understand the laws of nature that furnish both stability and dynamism to the world. The more knowledge that Man has about God’s laws of nature, the more assured Man is in conducting the affairs of individual and communal life. This orderly world allows Man to plan for the future. Thus, an orderly world empowers human beings to choose between good and bad deeds and is cushioned to absorb the effects of Man’s choice.

Satanic powers over forces of nature will create an arbitrary world where Satan could use earthquakes, storms, winds, water, and even human machines to test believers or to forcibly turn them away from God. Even if such a power is exercised within the domain of natural law, Satan will have tremendous authority over earthly affairs, powers that Man with his limited knowledge cannot counter. This line of reasoning would also drag God into the war, since only God has the knowledge to counter-manipulate the winds to save those who believe in Him. We have begun to decode that the forces of nature obey definite laws of physics, chemistry, and motion. Thus, it takes a leap of faith to believe that Satan could control the motions of wind and water to punish believers. An orderly world may still be unpredictable because Man may not be able to precisely foretell natural events that destroy men and property, but to say that Satan has arbitrary powers over the winds creates an arbitrary world. Consistent with this viewpoint, one may further contend that the biblical story of Job has changed through time and that Satan never had any control over the destructive powers of nature.

\textsuperscript{153} Qur’an, sura al-Baqara 2:282. This verse is the law of evidence designed to prevent fraud in commercial transactions. This verse recommends that contracts be reduced to writing, and that once a contract has been made, parties must not conceal evidence. Verse 2:283 contains the principle of good faith, suggesting that a person who conceals evidence has a tainted heart. Id. at 2:283

\textsuperscript{154} Qur’an, sura al-Fath 48:11.

\textsuperscript{155} Qur’an, sura ya-Seen 36:38-40. See also Qur’an, sura ar-Rahman 55:5.

\textsuperscript{156} Qur’an, sura an-Naml 27:88.

\textsuperscript{157} Job 25:2 (New Int’l Version).
The Story of Job

The Old Testament’s story of Job—who fears God and eschews evil—explains that, initially, God tested Man through Satan’s agency, giving broad powers to Satan to directly harm a believer’s children, property, and person.\(^\text{158}\) It is unclear from the story whether Satan manipulated the forces of nature to inflict injury on Job, or whether he exercised his authority subject to the realm of natural law. There is ample indication in the Biblical text that he employed Chaldeans and Sabaeans who raided Job’s animals and carried them off.\(^\text{159}\) Satan might have persuaded Chaldean and Sabean raiding groups to attack for acquisition, a common occurrence in earthly affairs. Chaldeans and Sabaeans had the power to resist Satan and refuse to carry out his orders. However, if they fell for Satan and stole Job’s animals, no laws of nature were breached. It is consistent with the laws of nature for human beings to inflict harm on each other, regardless of whether the motivation to cause harm comes from within or from Satan. This conception of Satan has been preserved in the Qur’an, in that Satan tempts human beings from all sides to do unlawful things;\(^\text{160}\) but “not a leaf doth fall but with (God’s) knowledge.”\(^\text{161}\)

Some biblical parts of Job’s story, however, raise questions about an orderly world subject to the laws of nature. For example, a mighty wind destroyed the four corners of the house in which Job’s sons and daughters were feasting.\(^\text{162}\) It appears to be Satan who ordered the mighty wind to destroy the house. Or, since everything was being done with God’s permission, God might have ordered the mighty wind to do the job. In either case, the orderly universe seems to have been breached with the issuance and enforcement of a bill of attainder, that is, a specific law aimed at a named individual. If this bill of attainder originated with Satan, and if Satan continues to have the authority to issue and enforce bills of attainder against specific individuals, an orderly universe based on general laws of nature is fundamentally undermined. This is so because bills of attainder constitute person-specific arbitrary commands by which the sovereign acts according to his momentary impulses without regard for any consistency or application of similar laws to similar situations.

The biblical story of Job mentioned in the Qur’an makes no reference to Satan’s control of natural or human powers.\(^\text{163}\) Satan’s role in the biblical story is much more extensive than in the Qur’anic story. In the Old Testament, the misfortune that befalls on Job is Satan’s doing.\(^\text{164}\) What is most significant about the biblical story is the fact that Satan kills Job’s animals, servants, and children with


\(^\text{159}\) Job 1:14-15 (New Int’l Version) (Sabeans stole the oxen and donkeys); Job 1:17 (New Int’l Version) (Chaldeans stole the camels).

\(^\text{160}\) Qur’an, *sura al-Araf* 7:17.


\(^\text{163}\) Qur’an, *sura Sad* 38:40-45.

Later, Job is inflicted with painful boils from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head. In inflicting these horrible pains upon a perfect and upright man, Satan is not out of God's control, nor is Satan tormenting Job to offend God. In fact, Job's ordeal is brought about by an explicit contract between God and Satan. God specifically empowers Satan, first over all that Job has, and later over the very person of Job. However, God asks Satan to save Job's life. The purpose of this contractual ordeal is to test Job's fidelity to God. The ordeal is based on the assumption that it is easier for men and women to love God when they have children, wealth (several thousand sheep, camels, asses, and oxen), and gorgeous mansions, but the same men and women waver in their commitment to God (and even curse God) when their earthly blessings have been brutally destroyed.

Even if Satan used other human beings and natural forces to destroy Job's family and property, his powers over Man and nature are formidable. What is most disturbing about the biblical story is the simple fact that God would test a firm believer through Satan's agency. Islam diminishes Satan's authority by denying him success, and even access, to firm believers. His sultanate has been reduced only to those men who invite him to be part of their lives.

Of course, one may argue from an Islamic viewpoint that Satan had no such powers over firm believers, even before Islam, because the Qur'an clearly indicates that God laid down limitations on Satan's powers at the time Man and Satan were expelled from the heavens, denying Satan any authority over firm believers. That is why the Qur'an simply states that Job stood firm through distress. It does not confirm the collusive scheme between God and Satan to test Job's fidelity through torture and intentional infliction of extreme emotional distress.

IV. God's Contract with Satan

The ideological battle between Man and Satan began at the time of Man's creation when Satan refused to recognize Man as a spiritual entity. Ironically, however, both Man and Satan disobey God's commands. Satan disobeys by refusing to recognize Man, and Man disobeys by obtaining carnal knowledge. Both are expelled from the heavens, but the concept of original sin is absent in the Qur'an. In fact, while Satan is rejected for his disobedience, Adam and Eve are forgiven. This forgiveness erases the concept of original sin, because Man's journey outside the heavens begins with a forgiven mistake. Each member of the human species is born innocent without any burden of hereditary sin. Each human being is born

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166. Id. at 2:7-8.
167. Id. at 1:11-12 (Satan surmises that Job would curse God if Job's possessions were taken away; accepting Satan's challenge, God allows Satan to test Job by destroying his possessions); id. at 2:5 (God allows Satan to test Job with bodily punishment).
168. Id. at 2:6.
169. Id. at 2:10 ("What shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?").
171. Qur'an, sura Sad 38:40-45.
with a clean slate, in a state of submission, and thus in the fold of Islam. Each human being is fully responsible for his or her intentions and deeds during earthly life. Gustav Weil correctly points out that "the Qur'an knows absolutely nothing of the condition of inward corruption transmitting itself to posterity in consequence of the sin of Adam."\(^{173}\) Weil concludes his essay by saying, "So it must be plain to every unprejudiced reader of the Qur'an that Muhammad by no means denied the freedom of the human will."\(^{174}\) On the contrary, Islam emphasizes human free will to do good and to do wrong—a concept embodied in the notion of individual accountability.\(^{175}\)

Thus, according to the Qur'an, earthly life begins with expulsion of two significant creatures from heavenly circles, Man and Satan.\(^{176}\) Man enters the earth with inclination toward mischief and bloodshed, but with no corruption of heart or soul. Man is gifted with the potential for unlimited knowledge, the ability to know right and wrong through effort and submission. One prayer that the Qur'an teaches human beings is for an increase of knowledge,\(^{177}\) yet Man’s knowledge is limited. By contrast, Satan enters the earth as a condemned creature with the unlimited power to tempt Man away from God and toward irresponsible freedoms and conflict. The interaction between Man and Satan sets the dynamics of human life operating under a complex set of tendencies. Human life is constructed around free will, temptations, mischief, bloodshed, and knowledge. Because each individual strikes a different and unique combination of these diverse elements, each human life is unique, but accountable.\(^{178}\) No individual can be punished for the acts of others, and no individual is saved from accountability through the intercession of another human being. God retains the power of forgiveness, a power that He exercises in the realm of justice and accountability.

The interaction between Man and Satan is a significant part of earthly life, including warfare. In Islam, Satan is believed to be a real creature, just as human beings are real. Satan, however, is an invisible creature, as are germs and bacteria, which the unaided human eye cannot see. Satan is not just one individual, but rather is a species, just as human beings are. Per the Qur’an, Satan is not an angel, much less a fallen angel. He is a jinn, a distinct species made out of smokeless fire.\(^{179}\) He is neither a state of mind nor Man’s darker side. As God’s creation, Satan is Man’s primary enemy, and his mission is to mislead Man from the right path and tempt Man to live a life of base freedoms, mischief, and bloodshed. Men and women so recruited join Satan and pursue his agenda of misleading others. The Qur’an mentions the Party of Satan (Hizb al-Shaitan)\(^{180}\) that consists of human

\(174\) Id.
\(176\) Qur’an, sura al-Baqara 2:36 (telling that Adam is expelled from the heavens for acting upon Satan’s temptation); Qur’an, sura al-Hijr 15:34 (telling that Satan is expelled from the heavens).
\(177\) Qur’an, sura ta-Ha 20:114.
\(178\) Qur’an, sura al-Isra 17:7 (“If ye did well, ye did well for yourselves; if ye did evil, (ye did it) against yourselves”).
\(179\) Qur’an, sura al-Kahf 18:50; see also Qur’an, sura ar-Rahman 55:15.
\(180\) Qur’an, sura al-Mujadila 58:19.
beings who lead the satanic life of immorality, arrogance, spiritual ignorance, discord, and warfare. The satanic party may consist of individuals, groups, tribes, and nations. Again, the Qur'an leaves open the possibility that by exercising free will, members of the Party of Satan will abandon their ways of mischief and bloodshed. In mentioning the Party of Satan, the Qur'an also refers to the Party of God (Hizb Allah). The Hizb Allah is a label to describe believers who resist Satan and hold on to the right path, worship One God, and form a community with other believers who lead morally responsible and spiritually fulfilling lives.

The Party of Satan and the Party of God should not be taken to mean that God and Satan are engaged in an epic battle, and that human beings are invited to join one side or the other. Satan is completely subservient to God and will always remain so. These parties are human fellowships which follow distinct pathways. Individuals, groups, nations, and generations that follow the right path belong to the Party of God, and those who pursue irresponsible freedoms, predation, mischief, and bloodshed belong to the Party of Satan. Human beings have been given the spiritual freedom to choose one party or the other. Satan actively recruits for his party, while God has sent messengers and other holy men and women to show the path of belief. God Himself does not recruit for His party. He has no need to do so. God is in complete control of all His creations.

The human story of fasad and dimaa (mischief and bloodshed) is profoundly related to God's contract with Satan at the time Man was created. After God fashioned Man in due proportion and breathed into him His spirit, and after Man passed the knowledge test, God asked all conferees to bow down to Man. All angels obeyed the order and bowed down to Man. Satan, who is a jinn and not an angel, disobeyed the order and refused to perform the sujud. Satan's disobedience is surely an act of defiance, but it is by no means repudiation of God's sovereignty over the entire universe. Satan continues to believe in God's authority over the entire creation. In his refusal to prostrate, Satan does not set himself as equal to God or even as God's opponent. Satan's ill will is toward Man and not toward God. Satan refused to obey God's order not because Satan finds fault with God, but because Satan finds fault with Man. Satan continues to believe in God's

181. Qur'an, sura Fatir 35:6 (Satan invites his party).
183. Id.
184. Id. at 58:19, 22.
185. See supra discussion accompanying notes 61-66.
188. Id. at 15:30.
189. Sujud negates self-superiority. It is an act of self-effacement. It is the recognition of an unequal relationship, as the one who performs the sujud acknowledges the superiority of the one for whom prostration is done. The Qur'an states with clarity that those who shun self-pride prostrate before their Lord. Qur'an, sura al-Araf 7:206. This verse implies the negative, also, in that those who are haughty find it difficult to perform the sujud. The most difficult thing for the pagans of Makka, particularly those who believed in the concept of honor, was to accept the sujud as part of salat (prayer). Prostration was considered the repudiation of honor and an act of humiliation. See Roberto Totti, Muslim Attitudes Towards Prostration (sujud): I. Arabs and Prostration at the Beginning of Islam and in the Qur'an, 88 STUDIA ISLAMICA 5, 19 (1998).
authority. Even in his ill will towards Man, Satan continues to address God as "My Lord." 190

God expelled and rejected Satan for his defiance toward Man. 191 Satan’s expulsion from the heavens conferred upon him a new freedom to roam the world. This expulsion means that Satan is no longer part of the heavens and thus no longer obligated to engage in virtue that God likes and rewards. Thus, Satan fell from God’s grace and embodied a new notion of freedom that broke loose from spirituality and virtue. 192 Now, Satan’s task is to mislead Man and divert him from the path of spirituality and virtue. 193

In misleading Man, however, Satan has God’s approval. 194 In fact, Satan has struck an agreement with God. 195 Satan solicited a promise from God so that his enterprise of temptation is not aborted or sabotaged. Accordingly, Satan asked God for “respite” till the day the dead are raised. 196 This request for respite is Satan’s freedom from accountability for a fixed period of time. 197 Satan knows that he is ultimately accountable to God and that he cannot escape God’s punishment. However, Satan petitioned God for freedom of action for a fixed amount of time. 198 God granted Satan’s request for both respite and the fixed amount of time, agreeing that Satan is free to act and that he will have no accountability until the Day of Judgment. 199

190. Qur’an, sura al-Hijr 15:36, 39. The story of Satan as Lucifer who rebelled against God before the world was created has no foundation in the Old or New Testament. The story entered into Western literature in the third century through the scriptural interpretations of an Egyptian philosopher. See Henry Ansgar Kelly, Satan the Old Enemy: A Cosmic J. Edgar Hoover, 103 J. AM. FOLKLORE 77, 78 (1990).

191. Neither the Old nor the New Testament explains the fall of Satan, even though there are poetic references to his fall in the New Testament, such as Jesus saying, “I saw Satan fall as lightning from heaven.” Luke 10:18 (New Int’l Version); see also William Caldwell, The Doctrine of Satan: III. In the New Testament, 41 BIBLICAL WORLD 167, 168 (1913), and Jung, supra note 65, at 45-48 (claiming that a similar story of Satan’s expulsion had existed in Jewish literature).

192. The Old Testament furnishes no account of the fall of Satan. See Caldwell, supra note 191, at 168.

193. Qur’an, sura al-Araf 7:17. In the New Testament, New International Version, Satan is known by many distinct names, including, “the prince of devils” (Matthew 12:24); “the prince of this world” (John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11); “Beelzebub” (Matthew 12:24; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15); “our common enemy” (Matthew 13:39); “the old serpent” (Revelations 12:9, 20:2); and “great red dragon” (Revelations 12:3). See Caldwell, supra note 191, at 167. In the Old Testament, New International Version, Satan is cast as “the lying spirit” (1 Kings 22:22); the “evil spirit” (1 Samuel 16:14); and the “adversary” (1 Peter 5:8). In the apocalyptic literature, Satan is also a punisher. Caldwell, supra note 191, at 169. In the New Testament, Satan’s primary duty is the origination and perpetuation of sin. Id. In his article, Caldwell concludes that Satan is completely under God’s dominion, and no one should shift his sin to a temptation proceeding from Satan. Id. at 172.

194. The Book of Jubilees (135-105 BC) narrates Satan’s story, in which Satan requested God to leave a regiment of demons under Satan’s control so that he could mislead men. God granted Satan’s request. See William Caldwell, The Doctrine of Satan: II. Satan in Extra-Biblical Apocalyptic Literature, 41 BIBLICAL WORLD 98, 100 (1913). Caldwell claims that the writers of the New Testament were familiar with the contents of the Book of Jubilees. The Book of Enoch (200-64 BC) was an influential book when the New Testament was being written. According to this book, God sent angels (called watchers) to instruct the children of men to do good deeds. However, these watchers began to lust after the daughters of men and procreated hybrid children (giants). The Book of Enoch further shows that Satan had influenced these watchers.

195. Service contracts are also mentioned in the Old Testament, Judges 17:10 (New Int’l Version) (priestly services contracted for ten shekels, clothes, and food); 1 Samuel 9:7-8 (New Int’l Version) (contracting for a guide to show the way). See Pryor, supra note 186, at 47.


197. Id. at 15:37-38.

198. Id. at 15:36-39.

199. Id. at 15:37-38.
Satan demanded the respite agreement from God to show that he is indeed superior to Man, but God's universe has balance. If Satan is given the power to entice, Man is given the knowledge to resist and reject Satan. Thus, a great contest has been set between Man and Satan, each having unique powers. Satan cannot possess Man, nor does Satan have any authority over Man. Satan, however, may invite powerful men, women, tribes, and nations to do Satan's work. In this sense, Satan's friends could be more lethal than Satan himself. When individuals and nations become satanic, they exercise the accumulative powers of Man and Satan. They are then more deadly, because human beings are empowered to kill each other. This point is developed more fully in the next section.

The concept of contract illuminates Satan's mission to mislead Man away from high spirituality and toward mischief and bloodshed. Other concepts, such as rebellion, delegation, permission, license, or order, do not fully capture the events of Satan's expulsion from Heaven. God did not order Satan to mislead Man. There is no support in the Qur'an that Satan had rebelled against God. God did not delegate His authority to mislead Man to Satan, because God does not mislead, and delegation of authority would mean that Satan is acting as God's agent. The concept of license also fails to the extent that a license is often revocable. Permission and contract are the two concepts that come close to explaining what transpired between God and Satan. Mere permission, however, does not explain fully the additional terms that Satan must obey to perform his part of the agreement. It appears that God and Satan have entered into an agreement under which Satan has the freedom to mislead Man from all directions until the Day of Judgment.

Satan's contractual freedom to act without God's interference has a stated purpose. Satan requested respite from accountability so that he can mislead Man on earth and "put them all in the wrong." God stipulated that Satan has no authority over Man, for Man is free to reject Satan. Satan cannot coerce Man to do evil and cannot possess Man. However, Satan has numerous tools to mislead Man, including the notion of freedom that he himself enjoys. Although the Basic Code (the Qur'an or the Sunna) does not explain what benefits God draws from this contractual arrangement, Satan nonetheless seems to perform an indispensable service in carrying out God's plan to test human beings through temptation and invitation to evil, mischief, and warfare.

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200. *Id.* at 15:33 (arguing that Man is created out of clay and implying that Man is thus not worthy of respect).


202. An argument may be made that the contract concept does not apply, because what is the remedy if Satan or God breaches the contract? In law, the breach of contract often has a remedy. However, contracts cannot be defined in terms of, and reduced to, breaches and remedies. A contract may not be confused with its enforcement. A view of contracts reduced to breaches and remedies does not capture the essence of contract, which provides a medium to construct a future relationship of shared expectations.


204. *Id.* at 15:42.

Little Success with Believers

There is an additional clarification of God’s contract with Satan. Satan’s power to mislead Man is universal and ceaseless until the day of reckoning. No human beings, including God’s prophets and messengers, are exempt from Satan’s temptation away from the right path. However, Satan has little success with believers who put their trust in One God. This fact has been affirmed in the Bible as well as in the Qur’an. In Paradise, Satan tempted Adam and Eve and exposed them to sexuality. They fell for Satan’s temptation, warning humanity that Satan’s d’awah (call or invitation) must be taken seriously. Satan tempted Job (Ayoub) to curse God, which Job, despite suffering extreme adversity, refused to do. Satan tempted Jesus for forty days. Jesus was asked to turn stone into bread, jump down from the top of the temple, and worship Satan in exchange for all the kingdoms of the world, an offer that Jesus rejected in firm words: “Get thee behind me, Satan.” Though unsuccessful, Satan is an avowed enemy of believers.

In view of the Christian belief that Jesus is God’s Son and divine, Satan’s temptation of Jesus may be interpreted as a direct struggle between God and Satan. From an Islamic viewpoint, however, Jesus is God’s human prophet. Satan’s temptation of Jesus will therefore be seen as a contest between Satan and a human prophet. In both cases, Satan must fail. The Qur’an’s thesis does not require divinity as a precondition for rejecting Satan. Ordinary men and women may resist Satan and reject him completely. This empowerment of ordinary men and women to oust Satan from their personal lives increases human accountability for human acts. Thus, Satan cannot be blamed for what men and women choose to do.

As we move from the Biblical era to the Qur’anic era, we find that Satan’s role is changed and diminished. The Old Testament clarifies the point that Satan cannot

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207. Qur’an, sura al-Hijr 15:38.
208. Qur’an, sura al-Hajj 22:52 (telling that Satan attempted to influence the desires of all prophets and messengers).
209. Qur’an, sura Saba 34:20.
211. Qur’an, sura al-Baqara 2:35-36; Qur’an, sura al-Araf 7:27 (warning human beings not to follow Satan); Qur’an, sura ya-Seen 36:60 (reminding human beings that Satan is their open enemy).
212. See Job, supra notes 162-69.
215. id. at 4:8-10. Jesus also spoke these words to Peter, his disciple, when Peter objected to the suggestion that Jesus would be killed and resurrected. Jesus saw Peter as a tempter and rebuked him, saying “you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men.” id. at 16:23.
216. Qur’an, sura Yusuf 12:5.
217. John 3:16-18 (New Int’l Version) (telling that God gave His only Son to the world, not to condemn the world, but to save it through His Son).
218. Qur’an, sura an-Nisa 4:171 (Jesus, the son of Mary, was God’s prophet); Qur’an, sura al-Maeda 5:116 (Jesus would say he never asked anyone to take him or his mother Mary as gods).
219. The Qur’an, however, does not mention any encounter between Jesus and Satan.
220. Qur’an, sura al-Araf 7:27 (warning human beings about Satan’s seduction and implying that they can indeed resist Satan’s temptations).
act without God’s permission and that his role as Man’s adversary is by no means a rebellion against God. The Book of Job defines the powers, as well as the limits, of Satan’s powers.

In dramatically reducing Satan’s powers, the Qur’an correspondingly increases Man’s powers over the affairs of the world. The world is no longer an arbitrary or chaotic place at the mercy of Satan’s will. The world is subject to God’s laws, which no one, including Satan, can subvert. The sun and the moon circulate in their orbits with precision. The night follows the day and the day follows the night with scientific certainty. “It is not permitted to the Sun to catch up the Moon, nor can the Night outstrip the Day: Each [just] swims along in [its own] orbit [according to Law].” Therefore, Satan does not control the forces of nature and has no arbitrary power to manipulate them to destroy human infrastructure founded on the laws of nature.

Man also acts within the realm of a scientific world that has been ordered and is not subject to chaos or frivolous sport. Man has been given the knowledge to further understand the scientific world and master its workings. The understanding of the weather, for example, empowers Man to manage his affairs with even more certainty and predictability. Thus, the harshness of the weather, including extreme cold or heat, can be overcome to prevent the abrupt disruption of human affairs. Lack of knowledge increases Satan’s influence, for Satan exploits superstitions to lead Man away from God’s worship, which includes a grateful understanding of God’s creations. The perpetual warfare that disrupts the lives of believers and innocent pre-believers, such as children and other forms of life, stems from Man’s raw nafs that Satan corrupts even more.

**Exorcisms**

According to the contract embodied in the Qur’an, Satan has no possessory power over human beings. Satan’s powers are confined to temptation, but Satan cannot coerce Man to commit wrongs or control Man through adverse possession. Demonology through adverse possession constitutes no part of Islamic faith. Consequently, exorcism, the expulsion of demons from human bodies,
which occupied medieval Christians, has no place in Islam. Possessory demonology assaults the concept of human free will in that if a believer devoted to God can be adversely possessed by demons and thrown off the right path, he could not have the free will to reject Satan. But if a believer can successfully deter Satan through devotion to God, he would have the freedom to both reject and accept Satan in his life.

Adverse possession and invited possession are distinct. While adverse possession takes place against the manifest will of the believer, invited possession takes place when the believer invites a jinn to possess him. This invitation could take place through bad acts and rejection of faith. When men and women surrender to Satan, they let their bodies and spirits be controlled by Satan. Islam does not acknowledge the satanic adverse possession of Man, but possession through invitation is consistent with free will and freedom to commit wrongs. According to the Qur’an, “Some He (God) hath guided: Others have (by their choice) deserved the loss of their way; in that they took the evil ones, in preference to Allah, for their friends and protectors, and think that they receive guidance.” This verse demonstrates that preference for God is always available to every human being. However, individuals may invite Satan to guide their lives. When they let Satan direct their lives, they are indeed possessed. The cure for the invited possession of Satan is faith and good deeds, not ritualistic, superstitious, or prophetic exorcism.

V. SATANIC NATIONS

This section describes the characteristics of satanic nations, which the Qur’an identifies as the friends of Satan (aw-liyaa-ash-Shaytaan). Satan invites individuals to follow a way of life that repudiates God, embraces freedoms without accountability, and shuns responsibility towards family, community, and the world. Satan’s mission, however, is not confined to individuals. His mission cultivates entire nations away from God and toward a life of fasad and dimaa. The friends of Satan can be individuals, groups of individuals, and even nations that abandon...
spirituality, labeling it as the cult of the primitive and the product of fables. The Qur'an provides the examples of Ad and Thamud, two distinct nations, whom Satan lured away from the right path. These nations were destroyed, as is evident from the ruins of their buildings, even though they were intelligent and skillful people. When a nation adopts Satan's ideology, repudiates God from community life, and resorts to bloodshed and mischief, it becomes satanic in its character and deeds. Satanic nations follow in Satan's footsteps.

It is important to first note that Satan does not physically fight with Man; his fight is ideological. The design of God's creation is clear—the ideological battle is framed between Man and Satan, while the physical battle is framed between Man and Man. There is no direct physical battle between Satan and God or between Satan and Man. Satan is not God's enemy, nor is Satan in any competition with God. God is supreme and Satan submits to God's sovereignty. Satan believes in God and His Powers. Satan's mission is to mislead believing men and women and divert them from the path of peace, compassion, submission, and responsibility. Satan performs his contract obligations by misleading Man and lures Man toward his inclination for mischief and bloodshed. Satan is not a single entity but has a progeny. Satan as a species is committed to evil. Satan's mission is to spread confusion, freedom, mischief, materialism, and doubts about One God's existence and unity. More importantly, his mission focuses on recruiting individuals and nations among human beings who would embrace his ideology. Satanic nations adopt Satan's ideology and also engage in physical wars. Thus, satanic nations can be more destructive than Satan himself. However, whereas Satan's lease does not expire until the Day of Judgment, satanic nations live only for a short while, after which they are either reformed or destroyed.

The Enemy of Believers

The most remarkable identity of satanic nations is their inherent mistrust of believers. Satanic nations see religion as a source of human ills and strife, and they see believers as irrational human beings who devote their lives to God, who satanic

239. Qur'an, sura al-Anfal 8:31; Qur'an, sura an-Nahl 16:24 (telling that the unbelievers see the revelations as tales of the ancients).
241. Id.
242. Even a predominantly satanic nation may have believers who are part of the nation in the ethnic, linguistic, or cultural sense, but not in the spiritual sense. One therefore must be careful in labeling nations as satanic. Likewise, a community of believers may have individuals who subscribe to the ways of Satan. Because of this complexity, no nation or community is purely satanic.
243. Qur'an, sura an-Noor 24:21 (kurutwat an-Shaitan).
244. The pre-Islamic Persian view of Satan is founded on dualism, which divides the cosmos into good and evil, God and Satan. The two forces battle each other for domination and victory. Monotheism, by definition, rejects dualism to the extent that Satan is not God's adversary; he is simply God's creature, whose services have been contracted for to create a balanced world in which human beings experience a tension and strive to reject evil and to do good. See supra text accompanying notes 67-71.
246. Qur'an, sura Ibrahim 14:9-13 (describing the exchange of ideas between prophets and disbelievers).
nations believe "does not exist." Thus satanic nations defend and promote Satan in the cosmic war between Satan and Man. When satanic nations rise to prominence and play a dominant role in worldly affairs, the ideological war between Satan and Man becomes an ideological/physical war between satanic nations and believers. Satanic nations then do what Satan does, and the two become allies in their war against believers. The satanic nations' undertaking is clear. They mislead Man, believers in particular, into a life of freedoms, atheism, materialism, pride, and war. The believers' mandate is to overcome their own inclinations toward mischief and bloodshed. Thus, believers are set against themselves and satanic nations. The believers, because they are human beings, must first overcome their own inclinations toward mischief and bloodshed. They must also resist the assaults of Satan and satanic nations. Thus, the communities of believers and satanic nations are locked into an ideological struggle that may periodically erupt into physical wars. When the communities of believers thrive, the satanic nations are frustrated. When the satanic nations are successful, the communities of believers are dismayed.

Despite these tensions and ideological struggles, true believers are prohibited from engaging in aggressive wars. They do not initiate wars to steal land that belongs to other people. They do not use force to usurp natural resources, conquer peaceful cities, spread freedoms, or impose racial, ethnic, religious, or ideological imperialism. True believers, subscribing to God's revelations given to Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad, are men and women who have schooled their nafs into spiritual submission. They are not prone to violence, nor do they have predatory cravings to seek worldly goods for themselves or for their people. In this sense, all true believers are peaceful. They all have conquered their raw nafs (that leads to mischief and bloodshed) through knowledge and faith. The Qur'an prohibits Muslims from gratuitous wars with Jews, Christians, and other peoples of the book, stating,

And dispute ye not with the People of the Book, except with means better [than mere disputation], unless it be with those of them who inflict wrong [and injury]: but say, "We believe in the revelation which has come down to us and in that which came down to you; Our God and your God is one; and it is to Him we bow [in Islam]."

This command clarifies that communities of believers, though belonging to diverse religious traditions, share a sense of spiritual solidarity.

249. Qur'an, sura al-Isra 17:64 (describing the composite doings of Satan and the friends of Satan).
250. Id. at 17:65.
251. Qur'an, sura al-Baqara 2:190 (stating that God does not like transgressors).
Spread of Base Freedoms

Satanic nations, pursuing the ideology of Satan, believe in spreading base freedoms that undermine the spiritual foundation of peaceful submission to God's will. Satan entices Man to pursue base freedoms, identified in the Qur'an as *shahawaat* and *ahwaa* (lusts/desires).253 *Shahawaat* and *ahwaa* can be so forceful that the person begins to see good in evil and evil in good. The Qur'an captures this transformation in the following verse:

Is he, then, to whom the evil of his conduct is made alluring, so that he looks upon it as good, (equal to one who is rightly guided)? For Allah leaves to stray whom He wills, and guides whom He wills. So let not thy soul go out in (vainly) sighing after them: for Allah knows well all that they do?254

Satan rules the kingdom of *shahawaat*,255 a kingdom in which men and women are tempted to pursue base freedoms at the expense of harming frail children,256 ignoring old parents,257 and cheating helpless orphans,258 weak neighbors, and other vulnerable people.259 Satan uses the power of promise to entice away from good deeds and toward lusts and base freedoms.260 *Shahawaat* and *ahwaa* may not be confused with legitimate freedoms that every individual needs to live a meaningful life. Political, social, economic, and cultural rights and liberties embodied in the International Bill of Rights, for example, are to a large part compatible with Islam.261 Such rights and liberties do not fall under the concept of *shahawaat* and *ahwaa*. Some Islamic countries stretch the meaning of *shahawaat* and *ahwaa* to deny legitimate personal freedoms to believers,262 even though such a broad interpretation is incompatible with Islam.

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253. *Qur'an*, *sura Maryam* 19:59 (posterity that follows *shahawaat*); *Qur'an*, *sura al-Anaam* 6:71 (Satan invites man for earthly *shahawaat*); *Qur'an*, *sura an-Nisa* 4:27 (those who follow *shahawaat* drift away from the right path); *Qur'an*, *sura Muhammad* 47:14 (those who follow their own *ahwaa* consider their evil to be good).
254. *Qur'an*, *sura Fatir* 35:8. The Prophet's Sunna also describes base freedoms in the following authentic hadith: "The inmates of Hell are five: the weak who lack power to (avoid evil), the (carefree) who pursue (everything irrespective of the fact that it is good or evil) and who do not have any care for their family or for their wealth. And those dishonest whose greed cannot be concealed even in the case of minor things. And the third, who betray you, morning and evening, in regard to your family and your property. He also made a mention of the miser and the liar and those who are in the habit of abusing people and using obscene and foul language." Sahih Muslim 40:6853.
255. *Qur'an*, *sura al-Anaam* 6:71 (those whom Satan has enticed into following earthly lusts).
258. *Qur'an*, *sura an-Nisa* 4:2, 10.
The Qur'an clarifies that Satan promises what he cannot deliver.\(^{263}\) Satan promises victory in the battlefield against the believers, but he is unable to fulfill his promises because God has given him no such powers.\(^{264}\) Good fortune, fame, glory, and worldly possessions are some of the enticements that Satan offers to direct men and women away from the path of piety and spirituality.\(^{265}\) These enticements shorn of spirituality lead Man toward self-destruction.\(^{266}\) In offering a fun-filled conception of life, Satan tempts men and women to do what is immoral (al-Fahshaa) and unlawful (al-Munkar),\(^{267}\) but an immoral and lawless life is doomed to failure and unhappiness. Immoral and unlawful acts lead Man away from a higher self and bring punishment,\(^{268}\) and satanic nations that love al-Fahshaa and circulate immorality and base freedoms among the believers receive a grievous chastisement.\(^{269}\)

Satan cannot force anyone to do wrong, but satanic nations can.\(^{270}\) While Satan has no power to possess any human being and compel him or her to commit a wrong, satanic nations do. Satan attracts Man with temptation, false promises, cunning, and lies. By contrast, satanic nations use not only temptation, false promises, cunning, and lies, but also aggression, to spread shahawaat and al-Fahshaa.\(^{271}\) These nations believe that religion thrives in the absence of personal freedoms, and therefore religion would lose its grip over the believers once base freedoms are vigorously introduced into the communities of believers.\(^{272}\) For example, the Qur'an instructs men and women to dress modestly and refrain from exploiting their sexuality through revealing dress.\(^{273}\) Breach of the modesty rule is condemned as al-Fahshad.\(^{274}\) Base freedoms or shahawaat\(^{275}\) entice men and women

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263. Qur'an, sura an-Nisa 4:120; Qur'an, sura Ibrahim 14:22.
264. Qur'an, sura al-Anfal 8:48 (Satan allures for war).
265. Qur'an, sura al-Isra 17:64 (Satan makes promises of wealth and children to delude minds).
266. Id. (Satan leads his followers to destruction).
267. Qur'an, sura an-Noor 24:21. Al-Fahshaa means unlawful sexual acts, including sexual exposure, exhibitionism, pornography, obscenity, and other sexual acts that distract men and women from piety and spirituality. By contrast, al-Munkar means the denial of faith and constructs a viewpoint that rejects the tenets of the Islamic faith. Id.
268. Id.
269. Id. at 24:19.
270. Colonization and occupation are the means to coerce a people to adopt the ways of the occupier. Satan cannot adversely possess, but an armed nation can. The Soviet occupation of Afghanistan to forcibly bring it under atheistic communism was coercive, inviting jihad to resist the Soviet occupation and the communist ideology.
271. In 1979, the theocratic revolution in Iran declared that the United States is the Great Satan that had imposed a Westernized king on a religious community. See Joseph Betz, Just a War: America's 2003 War of Aggression against Iraq, 9 NEXUS 145, 153 (2004).
273. Qur'an, sura an-Noor 24:30-31 (dress modestly); see also Tafsir Al Kathir, sura an-Noor, The Rulings of Hijab, http://www.thesoholybook.org/en/a.47281.html (last visited Oct. 25, 2006); Qur'an, sura al-Ahzab 33:59 (outer garments are recommended to prevent molestation); Qur'an, sura an-Noor 24:60 (older women are exempt from wearing outer garments, but even they must not wantonly display their beauty).
274. Qur'an, sura an-Noor 24:19, 21.
275. Qur'an, sura an-Nisa 4:27 (lusts turn you away from God).
to dress immodestly and expose their sexuality. Oppressive systems may go a step further and ban religious attire.\textsuperscript{276} It is easier for the believers to resist Satan, for Satan simply entices and does not physically coerce, but satanic nations may inflict physical, monetary, and psychological punishment on believers to enforce \textit{shahawaat}. Thus, satanic nations can be more fierce than Satan himself. When believers are coerced against their will to abandon their religiosity and embrace \textit{shahawaat}, the ideological battle turns into physical war.

Satanic nations may not use Satan as a scapegoat. They cannot outsource responsibility to Satan or blame Satan for their immoral and unlawful acts. Most often, they do not. Satanic nations do not claim that they are doing Satan's work. Their ideologies of base individual freedoms (\textit{shahawaat} and \textit{ahwaa}) are often intellectualized and rationalized in positive terms.\textsuperscript{277} In fact, many satanic nations do not even believe in Satan and dismiss the creature as a superstitious invention of religion that has no basis in reality. Despite their denial of Satan's existence, the satanic nations continue to promote Satan's ideology in sophisticated philosophical and intellectual frameworks. Regardless of justification, when satanic nations adopt Satan's ways for committing immoral and unlawful acts and imposing their ideology of base freedoms on others, their deeds constitute distinct wrongs. Just like individuals, satanic nations are free to reject the ways of Satan and the ideology of \textit{shahawaat}, mischief, and bloodshed.

**Supremacy Complex**

Satanic nations believe that they are superior to other nations. They invoke this superiority to tempt other nations to follow their way of life. If other nations refuse to do so, satanic nations are prepared to use force to impose their will on others. The superiority complex is Satan's attribute. The Qur'an constantly reminds us to shun feelings of superiority: "Do not walk on the earth with pride and insolence, for you cannot rend the earth asunder or reach the height of the mountains."\textsuperscript{278} "And swell not thy cheek (for pride) at men, nor walk in insolence through the earth; for God loves not any arrogant boaster."\textsuperscript{279} Satan refuses to bow down to Man because, according to the Qur'an, Satan is a supremacist. Satan believes he is a superior being.\textsuperscript{280} Satan makes a big deal out of the fact that he is a \textit{jinn},\textsuperscript{281} a creature made out of smokeless fire.\textsuperscript{282} The irony, however, is that de-

\textsuperscript{276} Ali Khan, \textit{Turkey's Headscarf Ban: Suppressive Rulings}, NAT'L L.J. (July 2006), available at http://www.law.com/jsp/nlj/PubArticleNLJ.jsp?id=1153386329522. There is no suggestion here that Turkey is a satanic nation. The article simply points out that Turkey is a satanic nation. The article simply points out that the suppression of religious attire by means of civil and criminal punishment furnished a distinction between Satan and Man. Whereas Satan entices believers to give up their religious dress, human systems may be more aggressive and demand the same through fear of punishment.

\textsuperscript{277} Susan Pace Hamill, \textit{An Evaluation of Federal Tax Policy Based on Judeo-Christian Ethics}, 25 VA. TAX REV. 671 (providing that intellectualized individualism as the foundation of community or economy is atheism).

\textsuperscript{278} Qur'an, \textit{sura} al-Isra 17:37.

\textsuperscript{279} Qur'an, \textit{sura} Luqman 31:18.

\textsuperscript{280} Qur'an, \textit{sura} Sad 38:75 (telling that Satan refuses to prostrate because he is proud).

\textsuperscript{281} Qur'an, \textit{sura} al-Kahf 18:50.

\textsuperscript{282} Qur'an, \textit{sura} al-Rahman 55:15.
spite his superiority complex, Satan is not an angel; angels are made out of light, whereas Satan was born out of fire.\textsuperscript{283}

Satan’s self-proclaimed supremacy is founded on two distinct but related theses. We learn that Satan refuses to bow down to Man because he is proud (\textit{takbara}) and believes he is one of the high ones (\textit{aaliin}).\textsuperscript{284} Here, we also learn that whereas angels bow down to Man as God has commanded them to do, Satan does not.\textsuperscript{285} However, Satan is not an angel, and the concept of the fallen angel is no part of the Qur’an.\textsuperscript{286} Angels do not fall, because they are made to obey and worship God.\textsuperscript{287} They may ask questions, but they cannot disobey. Satan is a \textit{jinn}, not an angel.\textsuperscript{288} One essential difference between \textit{jinns} and angels is the constitution of their being. Angels are made out of light and \textit{jinns} are made out of smokeless fire, yet both are invisible to Man’s naked eye.\textsuperscript{289} Furthermore, \textit{jinns} are free to obey or disobey God and His commandments.\textsuperscript{290} In this freedom, \textit{jinns} are similar to Man.

The second reason for Satan’s self-proclaimed supremacy is derived from proto-racism. Satan argues that he is superior to Man because his genetic material is better than that of Man.\textsuperscript{291} Satan refuses to acknowledge the dignity of Man, who Satan says is made out of clay.\textsuperscript{292} “Allah said to (Satan): ‘What prevented thee from bowing down when I commanded thee?’ He said: ‘I am better than he (the man): Thou didst create me from fire, and him from clay.’”\textsuperscript{293} Satan presumes that the fire he is made of is superior to clay, but there is no indication in the Qur’an that such an inference is justified or empirically true. Thus, Satan commits the classical mistake of a racist supremacist who associates elements of superiority and inferiority to obvious differences without having any credible proof that the mere difference is a source of inferiority or superiority. On the basis of these two reasons, Satan refuses to acknowledge the inherent dignity of Man.

Satanic nations, following the characteristics of Satan, acquire a superiority complex. This complex may be derived from racial, linguistic, or cultural attrib-
utes, or some other notion of superiority. The Qur'an recognizes that nations and tribes have been made to foster the feelings of shared heritage and for the members to cultivate a sense of belonging.294 There is nothing wrong with a sense of national identity; in fact, such a sense of identity is healthy for personal development and national solidarity. However, satanic nations go beyond the call of shared identity. They use nationalistic identity to conquer other nations, to commit aggression against weaker nations, and to practice predatory policies. They justify these undertakings of exploitation of others often in the name of their own superiority. When satanic nations use armed aggression to actualize the fruits of their superiority complex, warfare results. Such is God's law that most satanic nations are destroyed, as were Sodom and Gomorrah.295

Cunning and Lies

Satanic nations use cunning and lies, the tools that Satan himself uses, to wage an ideological war against believers, to spread shahawaat, to circulate al-Fahshaa, and to justify aggression for the acquisition of worldly goods (alhaakumut-Takaasuru).296 We learn from the Qur'an that Satan uses cunning to entice Man away from peaceful submission to God.297 We also learn that Satan “descends on the people who lie” (affaakin).298 Satan is a cunning creature who lures Man toward ideologies such as atheism and agnosticism that weaken the faith and affirm their supremacist sentiments drawn from nationalism, racism, and wealth. In promoting Satan’s ideology, satanic nations also use cunning and lies to defend and justify aggression against believers. They distort the image and character of believers to paint them as cold killers who kill and maim to attain a spiritual high. They argue that the essentialist nature of puritanical believers is violent and merciless.299 They contend that the believers are addicted to violence. On the basis of these lies, satanic nations engage in battle with those who take their faith seriously and refuse to submit to hegemony. Satanic nations invent prejudicial labels such as fundamentalists, extremists, and fanatics to discredit believers. Satan strikes a friendship with satanic nations that mistrust religion and see faith as a road to irrationality and as proof of a closed mind.

Satan stokes the confidence of his allies, praises and highlights their deeds, and invites them to denigrate believers and to attack them. Reminding the Prophet about the events in the battle of Badr,300 the Qur'an states:

295. “Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy. They were haughty and did detestable things before Me. Therefore I did away with them as you have seen.” Ezekiel 16:49-50 (New Int'l Version); “He looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah, toward all the land of the plain, and he saw dense smoke rising from the land, like smoke from a furnace.” Genesis 19:28 (New Int'l Version).
296. Qur'an, sura an-Nisa 4:76.
297. Qur'an, sura al-Shuara 26:221-22.
298. Khan, supra note 23, at 54.
Remember Satan made their (sinful) acts seem alluring to them, and said: "No one among men can overcome you this day, while I am near to you": But when the two forces came in sight of each other, he turned on his heels, and said: "Lo! I am clear of you; lo! I see what ye see not; Lo! I fear Allah: for Allah is strict in punishment." 301

Satan's encouragement to warfare builds upon two distinct tools of cunning and lies. Satan first tells satanic nations that their aggression is in their interest and that they would draw immense benefits from attacking the believers and finishing them off. Satan also tells his allies that their military power is far more superior than that of believers. 302 This combination of self-righteousness and invincibility 303 prepares satanic nations to commit aggression against communities of believers. But when the believers fight hard, Satan abandons his allies, leaving them in the battlefield to face defeat and humiliation. 304

Following Satan's strategies, satanic nations may use cunning and lies to persuade their allies to commit aggression against believers. They may also employ the tools of "self-righteousness" and "invincibility" to prepare armies to go to the battlefield. These tools on the battlefield are to some extent indispensable conditions for combat. Soldiers fight harder when they believe that the war is just and that they have superior weapons and a sound war plan to defeat the enemy. Without these tools, no army, whether that of believers or nonbelievers, would be able to fight effectively. Soldiers need confidence to enter the battlefield. Neither an ill-equipped armed force, nor a well-equipped armed force fighting for an unjust cause, is likely to fight harder and win. Satanic nations are doing exactly what an army of believers would do. What distinguishes the two armies, however, is the underlying truth. Satanic nations knowingly prepare their soldiers on the false hopes of cunning and lies. They use these tools to cover the true motives of their aggression, and they underestimate the fighting spirit of the believers. It is in this context that the Qur'an reminds the believers that they are capable of winning over the so-called "self-righteous" and "invincible" satanic nations: "So fight ye against the friends of Satan: feeble indeed is the cunning of Satan." 305

Self-Destruction

It appears to be God's law that satanic nations destroy themselves. The Qur'an mentions the armies of the Pharaoh and Thamud, which were destroyed. 306 But God does not fight to destroy satanic armed forces, nor does He send forces from Heaven to fight satanic nations. In fact, God never sends soldiers from Heaven to

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302. Ibn Kathir, supra note 300.
303. Id.
304. Id.
305. Qur'an, sura an-Nisa 4:76.
engage in any battlefield. A single blast, the Qur'an says, can turn human armed forces into quiet ashes. God is powerful enough to wipe out strong armies if He so decides. Most often, however, satanic nations commit suicide due to their own moral degradation. The Qur'an mentions the story of Thamud, a people who did extremely well in worldly matters, carving houses in the mountains, but refused to submit to God. To explain their eventual destruction, the Qur'an draws an important distinction. Persons and nations that safeguard their souls succeed, but those who corrupt their souls fail. The people of Thamud met obliteration because they had corrupted their souls through inordinate wrongdoing. The theme of self-destruction through wrongdoing is constantly reaffirmed in the Qur'an: “When Our punishment struck them, no cry did they utter but this: Lo! We were wrongdoers.” This verse may be read to conclude that God punishes wrongdoers. It also means that the wrongdoers invite self-destruction, a meaning consistent with the notion of human freedom and accountability.

VI. BATTLEFIELDS OF THE BELIEVERS

Even though God prefers that human beings resolve their disputes without wars, the Qur'an does not prohibit war under all circumstances. War is permitted to defeat aggressors who use violence as a predatory means to acquire land and resources that belong to others. Permissive war should not be confused with optional war. Permissive wars are conditional and fact-based. They are not ideological or preemptive. Optional wars are wars of choice, waged even though peaceful means of dispute resolution are available and effective. In Islam, wars are not permitted to spread God’s message or to convert non-Muslims to Islam, nor are wars to rule the world permitted. Wars are permitted when the communities of believers are occupied or controlled to the extent that they cannot freely worship and practice their religion. Even permissive wars must come to end when the enemy is sincerely prepared to end an injustice that has lawfully provoked the war or inclines towards peace.

The believers do not assume that no matter what they do, God is on their side. Islam does not teach any such self-righteousness. The believers know that God is

308. Id. at 36:29.
309. Qur'an, sura al-Shams 91:11-14; Qur'an, sura al-Araf 7:73-76.
310. Qur'an, sura ash-Shams 91:8, 9.
311. Id. at 91:11.
312. Qur'an, sura al Araf 7:5.
313. Qur'an, sura al-Baqara 2:217 (tumult and oppression are worse than slaughter, and war is permitted when the enemy has forcibly foreclosed access to God); id. at 2:190 (fight against those who fight you); id. at 2:192 (fight to resist forcible evictions); id. at 2:193 (fight until justice prevails); Qur'an, sura an-Nisa 4:75 (fight on behalf of helpless women and children who are crying for help).
314. Qur'an, sura at-Tawba 9:13 (fighting is allowed against those who initiate aggression against you).
315. Qur'an, sura al-Baqara 2:191 (fight if they turn you out from your homes and nations).
316. Id. at 2:256 (telling that there is no compulsion in religion).
317. Id. at 2:217.
the sustainer of all human beings and forms of life.319 God is also the God of non-believers. His mercy is available to all320 Islam offers no self-righteous presumption that the believers would win every war. Even when their cause is just, the believers fight with humility, shunning feelings of pride and invincibility.321 As discussed elsewhere, self-righteousness and invincibility are satanic delusions that assure defeat and not victory. Satan and his allies plan for the physical and spiritual destruction of the believers, but the believers remain steadfast and patient. In ideological battles, the believers understand the distinction between schooled and unschooled nafs. Without knowledge, no human being can appreciate God’s might and beauty. Without knowledge, no human being can understand the beauty of his own potential and the potential of the universe. During their lifetimes, believers have a chance to develop their personal and shared spirituality. Personal barbarism is the failure to develop the nafs. Entire nations turn barbaric when they ignore or suppress their spiritual development. The believers vouch for the unity of knowledge, secular and spiritual, needed to develop the self and cultivate submission to God. They know their enemy. They know that Satan recruits individuals, tribes, and nations to wage war.

Believers are forced to fight two distinct wars, physical and ideological. Physical wars shed blood. They are primarily materialistic, waged to capture land and resources. They are also genocidal, conducted to erase entire communities and subjugate nations. Ideological wars are waged to weaken the faith; to promote atheism, self-indulgence, and consumerism; and to spread shahawaat that corrupt the soul and sever the individual from reflection, submission, family, and community. The two wars may merge when predation and corruption are combined to create an aggressive plan of looting resources.322

The battlefield is much more complex in the spiritual sense when the believers fight with each other. According to the Qur’an, “Whoever slays a believer inten-

319. Qur’an, sura al-Fatiha 1:2.
320. Qur’an, sura al-Araf 7:156. “Abu Huraira reported Allah’s Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: There are one hundred (parts of) mercy for Allah and He has sent down out of these one part of mercy upon the jinn and human beings and the insects and it is because of this (one part) that they love one another, show kindness to one another and even the beast treats its young one with affection, and Allah has reserved ninety[-nine parts of mercy with which He would treat His servants on the Day of Resurrection.” Sahih Muslim 37:6631.
321. Qur’an, sura al-Baqara 2:190 (fight but do not cross limits). The critics of the current war in Iraq, for example, condemn the war as predatory and deceptively ideological. They ridicule the notion that the democratization of Iraq was the primary cause of the U.S. invasion. For them, the notion of spreading democracy is an ideological cover to deceive the world. The cunning and lies that went into the justification for the war are highlighted to show its satanic roots. Some believers see forced democracy as a euphemism for spreading satanic shahawaat. The critics also offer a counter-explanation for the war. They see the war as an imperial enterprise to subdue the nation of Iraq and subject it to U.S. and Israeli strategic interests. The Iraqi oil resources, though not usurped, have been placed to serve U.S. interests. Iraq has been subdued so that it does not attack, harass, or pose a threat to Israel. In previous centuries, Church edicts were issued to support predation, expulsion, usurpation, and massacres of the native people in the Americas and elsewhere. A divine right was asserted to dispossess Native Americans and take away their land and resources. And when the Native Americans, labeled savages by the armies of God, resisted the predatory demands of the divine invaders, they were slaughtered in thousands. See Fred M. Kimmey, Christianity and Indian Lands, 7 ETHNOHISTORY 44, 53 (1960) (concluding that Christianity was used as a theoretical justification for the seizure of land).
tionally, his reward is Hell for ever. Allah's wrath is against him and He has cursed him."323 This prohibition is doubly reinforced when believers fight with each other. In ignorance, however, each side may sincerely believe that God is on its side. The wars between radicalized Shias and Sunnis, which are becoming increasingly bloody, are not spiritually linear since both groups believe in One God, the Qur'an's authenticity, and the Prophet's integrity and final ministry.324 The spirituality of the battlefield is even more confusing and unclear when believers belonging to the same school of jurisprudence fight with each other. One can safely say that it will be difficult to determine which side God is supporting when the believers fight with each other over worldly matters, such as power, resources, and national and linguistic pride. God perhaps leaves such battlefields to the pure logic of warfare, which consists of fighting resources, strategic supremacy, and logistical intelligence. God might similarly withdraw from the battlefield when unbelievers fight with each other. Though it is blasphemous under Islam to compare God with human beings,325 the parable of a loving and just father who withdraws from the foolish fights of his own beloved children provides insight into God's behavior.326

From an Islamic viewpoint, the believers cannot take the battlefield for granted. They know that God does not fight for any nation or religion. Believers must, therefore, see the battlefield in real terms. Strategies, logistics, soldiers, and weapons are essential components of the battlefield. The Qur'an reminds believers about the stark reality of the battlefield and instructs them to seriously prepare for the battlefield, including "the steeds of war."327 But still, according to the Qur'an, the battlefield is not simply a contest of force or resources.328 Numbers and weapons matter, but they do not win the war.329 Submission to God's laws does not cease to exist in times of war. For the believers, therefore, the battlefield is not simply a place of weapons and numbers; it is also a test of obedience to God's laws.

The following discussion of two wars in which the Prophet himself participated demonstrates that cruelty against the enemy is never permitted, and proportionality in the use of force is part of the Islamic law of war. The believers fight hard, "like one solid structure,"330 but within the bounds of God's laws.331 They do not auto-

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323. Qur'an, sūra an-Nisa 4:93.
324. Muhammad Qasim Zaman, Sectarianism in Pakistan: The Radicalization of Shi'i and Sunni Identities, 32 MOD. ASIAN STUD. 689 (1998) (describing the radicalization of sectarian identities in Pakistan, partly in reaction to the 1979 Iranian revolution); Emmanuel Sivan, Sunni Radicalism in the Middle East and the Iranian Revolution, 21 INT'L J. MIDDLE E. STUD. 1 (1989) (discussing attempts by both Sunnis and Shias to minimize the jurisprudential gaps and divergent historical viewpoints about the first four caliphs).
325. Islam rejects the notion that man is made in the image of God. According to the Qur'an, nothing resembles God. Qur'an, sūra al-Ikhlas 112:4.
326. Qur'an, sūra al-Jathiyā 45:23 (God withdraws from those who willfully go astray).
327. Qur'an, sūra al-Andāf 8:60.
329. Id.
matically presume that they will win every battle or every war. The logic of the battlefield remains complex and even incomprehensible. The fact that even the Prophet suffered setbacks in the battlefield shows that warfare is not a preferred method of dispute resolution, for none is assured of complete victory.332

The Prophet’s Wars

The Prophet’s wars furnish clues into the spirituality of the battlefield, including God’s promises to help the believers, the role of Satan in distracting believers toward booty, and the inclination for cruelty and revenge that naturally arises amidst high emotions when fellow soldiers are killed and mutilated. In studying these wars, one caution is mandatory: no Muslim nation or group may take for granted God’s intervention that we find in the Prophet’s wars. What we see in the Prophet’s wars, fought for the most part against nonbelievers, must not be generalized and extended to all battlefields involving Muslims against non-Muslims. Muslims may still pray to God for their victory, as did the Prophet. They must obey the laws of war that Islam mandates. But God’s promise to help the Prophet in his wars cannot be stretched to conclude that God has made a similar promise to help Muslims in all their wars.

Among the Prophet’s wars, the most important war is the Battle of Badr (AD 624).334 The Qur’an calls the day of this battle yawm al-furqan, that is, the day of right and wrong when the forces met. Muslims won this battle. The other important war is the Battle of Uhud (in January of AD 625), which the Muslims lost. These battles, fought one after the other, present complex dimensions of the battlefield in which God, Man, angels, and Satan participate to produce specific outcomes. Both battles are mentioned in the Qur’an, teaching important lessons in the logic of the battlefield.

Battle of Badr

The battle of Badr is specially mentioned in the Qur’an as a reminder to the Prophet and his companions that God had helped Muslims to win the battle, in which they constituted a “weak little force.”337 The number of Muslim warriors in the battle of Badr was just over three hundred and ten.338 Despite their meager resources in men and weapons, the Muslims prevailed over the enemy.

333. The Prophet participated in a total of nineteen battles (al-Maghazi, which is the plural of Ghazwa, means “military expeditions”). Sahih Bukhari 59:285.
334. Badr was fought in the month of Ramadhan in the second year of Hijra. Badr is an area between Makkah and Medina and is known by the well that was dug by Badr bin ‘An Nayrn. See Ibn Kathir, supra note 328.
335. Qur’an, sura al-AnFar 8:41.
336. According to the Islamic calendar, Uhud was fought in the month of Shawwal in the third year of Hijra. See IBN ISHAQ, supra note 332, at 369.
337. Qur’an, sura aal-e-Imran 3:123.
battle, the Prophet informed the Muslim soldiers that God had sent angels to fight with them, a fact reported in the Qur'an.³³⁹

Islamic history and Sunna both confirm that angels participated in the battle of Badr. Many soldiers at Badr reported seeing the angels fighting with them.³⁴⁰ One Badr warrior reported a *hadith* in which the Prophet confirmed that, per Gabriel, some of the best angels participated in Badr.³⁴¹

It is unlikely, however, that the angels fought with swords and shields, killing the enemy. The angelic help added a spiritual dimension to the battlefield, the precise understanding of which is unavailable. The sequence of events at Badr suggests that angels were sent to reinforce the fighting spirit of the Muslims. The Qur'an seems to suggest that the Prophet prayed for God's assistance in the battle of Badr,³⁴² a fact also reported in the Sunna.³⁴³ In fact, on the day of the battle of Badr, the Prophet supplicated God to fulfill His promise, saying: “O Allah! If your Will is that none should worship You (then give victory to the pagans).”³⁴⁴ This strong pleading suggests that the Badr battlefield carried high stakes for the survival of Islam. Responding to the Prophet’s unambiguous appeal, God sent three thousand angels and promised to send even more (five thousand) if the enemy were to recruit more soldiers to undertake hot pursuit of the Muslims.³⁴⁵ However, what is most significant in the Qur'an’s message is that the promised angelic help was “good news” (*bushra*) that came to “firm the hearts of believers.”³⁴⁶ There is no reliable evidence in the Basic Code that positively assigns any combative role to the angels.

The help of angels, however, may not be reduced to mere psychological factors. Distinguish between two examples. Suppose an army fights a war with the subjective assurance that their nation is behind them, although this subjective assurance has no basis in reality. Contrast this with where there is indeed national support for the war. In both cases, the armed forces may derive fighting spirit. The fighting spirit derived from the reality of national support is not purely subjective; it is both subjective and objective. What occurred at Badr was both subjective and objective. The Muslim soldiers believed that God’s angels were helping them; this belief was not purely subjective, but had a basis in reality. Neither God nor the Prophet was making up the story of angels to pump mere psychological power in Muslims to fight harder. The presence of angels was a reality that transformed the battlefield in favor of the Muslims. It appears, however, that no laws of nature were breached and that no angels killed or maimed the enemy. The presence of

³⁴⁰ Ibn Ishaq, *supra* note 332 (one soldier reporting that angels were dressed in white turbans).
³⁴¹ Sahih Bukhari 5:327.
³⁴³ Sahih Bukhari 5:289.
³⁴⁴ Id.
³⁴⁵ Qur'an, *sura* aal-e-Imran 3:125. However, the enemy was unsuccessful in recruiting more soldiers; therefore, the additional angelic help would have been unnecessary.
³⁴⁶ Id. at 3:126.
angels unlocked the fighting spirit in the Muslims, a spirit that would have been impossible to acquire in any other way.

**Battle of Uhud**

The battle was fought on the mountain of Uhud. This was a battle that the Quraysh pagans waged to avenge their defeat at Badr, saying: “Men of Quraysh, Muhammad has wronged you and killed your best men. So help us with this money to fight him, so that we may hope to get our revenge for those we have lost.”

Uhud was a battle of spiritual ordeal, firmness of faith, brutality of the enemy, revenge, anger, war crimes, and forgiveness. It was also a battle in which Satan enticed the believers away from the battlefield in quest of booty, a point mentioned in the Qur'an: “Of a truth it was Satan who caused those of you to fail in duty who turned back when the hosts met.”

Uhud demonstrates that even when the Prophet fights, the battlefield’s earthly realities do not change. The enemy was committed to avenge the defeat at Badr. An enemy army of three thousand men with two hundred horses, under the command of brave and strategic generals, such as Khalid bin al-Walid, was fully prepared to battle a thousand Muslims under the Prophet’s leadership. The Prophet was wearing protective gear, fully cognizant of the fact that he, too, was vulnerable to enemy attack. Despite military precautions, the Prophet was hit with a stone on his face, which smashed a canine tooth and cut his lip. The enemy’s attack on the Prophet was severe and close. The Prophet’s bodyguards were killed, man after man. One Muslim shielded the Prophet with his body as arrows were falling on his back. The Prophet himself was engaged in the battle, shooting from his bow.

Uhud demonstrates that not even prophets are safe on the battlefield, and not even the Prophet’s enemies lose their power to cause serious injury. God does not change the sword’s killing logic whether the fighters are believers or nonbelievers.

Satan was also present at the Uhud battlefield, not with weapons or soldiers, but with his power to whisper. Before the battle began, the Prophet ordered Abdullah bin Jubair to command a batch of archers stationed at a strategic location on the battlefield, saying: “Do not leave this place; and if you should see us conquering the enemy, do not leave this place, and if you should see them conquering us, do not ‘come to help us.’” The archers were authorized to shoot at the enemy cavalry but under no circumstances leave the strategic opening for the enemy to attack from behind. As the battle developed and the enemy retreated from the battlefield, the soldiers began to shout in excitement, “[T]he booty, the booty!” Commander Abdullah reminded the archers about the Prophet’s orders against deserting the

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347. *IBN ISHAQ, supra* note 332, at 370.
349. *Ibn Kathir, supra* note 348.
352. *IBN ISHAQ, supra* note 332, at 373.
strategic station under any circumstance, but the call for booty was too tempting to resist. As the archers vacated, the enemy captured the post. This error turned the battle. Many Muslims were killed.

The Basic Code, however, does not make Satan the scapegoat for the Muslims' defeat at Uhud. Did Satan whisper to the archers, “Disobey the Prophet! Go for the booty!”? There is some indication in the Qur’an that at Uhud, Satan caused them to fail because of what they had done. Note that the Qur’an does not shift the blame to Satan. It simply registers the fact that Satan was successful because the believers were already inclined toward committing a wrong, that is, disobeying orders in order to capture booty. Sahih Bukhari also reports the event, describing that Satan entered the Uhud battlefield and misled the believers: Aisha, the Prophet’s wife, narrated that Satan whispered in the ears of the front ranks of Muslim forces: “O Allah’s Worshippers, beware of what is behind!” On this, the front ranks started fighting with the back ranks and killed each other. In fact, the Qur’an states that “God did indeed fulfill His promise” for the Prophet’s victory, but the battle turned against the Muslims because soldiers lost discipline, disobeyed orders, and went for the booty. This theme is consistent with the broader thesis that God withdraws from you when you withdraw from God.

Another important lesson that emerges from Uhud is the human inclination toward revenge brutality and the spiritual constraints that Islam places over such raw inclinations. One episode captures the lesson. The Prophet’s uncle Hamza, who had killed the key enemy leaders in the battle of Badr, was the prime target in Uhud. Wahshi, an Abyssinian slave and a consummate javelin marksman, killed Hamza, a killing for which his pagan master had promised him freedom. Out of vengeful brutality, Hamza’s body was subsequently dismembered.

Pagan women were the chief mutilators. Hind, whose father Utba was killed at Badr, was the leader of the mutilation pack at Uhud. The pack cut off the ears and noses of dead Muslim soldiers and made them into anklets, collars, and pendants. Hind extracted Hamza’s liver from his body and, in accordance with the pagan religious traditions, chewed it in hatred. However, she was unable to swallow it and spat it out. Satisfied with slaked vengeance, Hind mounted on a high rock to praise Wahshi and shouted that “a war that follows a war is always violent.”

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354. Id. at 3:152. Sura aal-e-Imran contains numerous verses that comment upon the battle of Uhud.
355. Sahih Bukhari 59:161, 394. This narration, however, may not be confused with the Sunna, which is strictly the Prophet’s speech and deeds.
356. Id.
357. Qur’an, sura aal-e-Imran 3:146, 152.
358. IBN ISHAQ, supra note 332, at 376.
359. Id. at 385. Pagan women read poetry to incite men to fight. Id. at 374. Arab women were also part of the warfare tradition. See Nabia Abbott, Women and the State on the Eve of Islam, 58 AM. J. SEMITIC LANGUAGES & LITERATURES 259, 262 (1941) (Arab women coveted to be called munjibah, “mother of heroes”).
360. IBN ISHAQ, supra note 332, at 385.
361. Id.
362. Id.
After the battle was over, grieving families searched for the dead. The Prophet went out seeking his Uncle Hamza and found his slain body without ears and nose, his stomach ripped open and the liver missing. The Prophet was furious over the cruelty against his uncle. In the heat of passion and grief, the Prophet expressed feelings of revenge, stating: “If God gives me victory over Quraysh (the Pagans), I will mutilate thirty of their men.” 363 Responding to the Prophet’s grief and anger, other Muslims expressed similar sentiments for vengeful mutilation. However, when cooler thoughts were restored, no decree for mutilation was issued. The Qur’an affirms this reversal of passion in the following words: “And if you punish, let your punishment be proportionate to the wrong that has been done to you, but if you show patience (sabr), that is the best for those who are patient.” 364 As a broader principle, God instructs the Prophet to shun harshness and embrace mercy in dealing with wrongdoers, Muslims or non-Muslims: “It is part of the Mercy of Allah that you deal gently with them. Were you severe or harsh-hearted they would have broken away from you.” 365 Any assertion, therefore, that the Islamic battlefield is soaked with vengeful brutality and acknowledges no legal constraints is contrary to teachings of the Basic Code.

VII. CONCLUSION

Islam rejects all conceptions of holy war. Muslims are not allowed to engage in any aggressive war to spread Islam or to impose its faith or laws on others. Muslims do not believe that God is at war with Satan, nor that He needs human help to win this battle. Any such belief is contrary to God’s unity and sovereignty. God is above all human conflicts, and He has no conflict with Satan or any other force in the universe. God is supreme and in complete control of all things that exist or belong to the world of the unknown. Wars occur when human beings shun the path of peaceful spirituality and pursue their inclinations for warfare. Muslims are permitted to enter the battlefield to fight oppression and occupation. They fight hard to defeat the enemy. While a religion of peace and spiritual submission, Islam is also a pragmatic religion that recognizes the existence of satanic nations with their corrupt ideologies of shahawaat and predations. Against such satanic nations, Muslims are utmost vigilant.

363. Id. at 387.
364. Qur’an, an-Nahl 16:127. See Reuven Firestone, Disparity and Resolution in the Quranic Teachings on War: A Reevaluation of a Traditional Problem, 56 J. NEAR E. STUD. 1, 5-6 (1997) (describing different exegetical theses of warfare that Muslims have derived from the Qur’an, including one that asserts that the Qur’an in its revelational period evolved from a more peaceful message to a more militant ideology).